

COOPERAGE STOCK.

The cooperage stock situation at the present time, says the Sutherland-Innes Company, of Chatham, Ont., is in a very unsatisfactory condition, both from the view of the manufacturer and the cooper. The demand for stock far exceeds the supply, and manufacturers are at their wit's end to know how they can keep their regular customers going. What stock has been manufactured this summer has been turned out at very great expense. In the first place, raw material is costing more than it ever did before. The labor question has been a very serious one, and wages have advanced from 50 to 75 per cent., and even at the advanced rates very of the mills who had logs to work on or few staves to joint could get their goods turned out. It has possibly been one of the most trying years for the manufacturers, on this account, that they have ever experienced, as they have had to turn down orders from old and valued customers,

irrespective of prices. The situation is almost universal, and is not confined to any one locality.

Mills nearly all over the country are absolutely bare of stock. The supply of logs put in last winter was very small—not 25 per cent. of what is usually put in—and in a great many instances the logs which were cut in the winter, and were not able to be hauled during the short winter, are still lying in the woods, as it has been impossible to do any summer lumbering in most localities. There is no doubt but that some of the coopers will suffer during the winter for lack of stock. Apple barrel buyers have already had a hard time to get their supplies, and, where possible, have obtained boxes to pack their apples in when they could not get barrels. In instances where contracts were made for apple barrels at 35 cents by the coopers, and the coopers could not get their stock, the apple packers have generously come to the help of the coopers and raised their prices up to 40 and 50 cents per barrel, to enable them to bring stock in from a long distance and at very high prices.

It is too early yet to figure on the supply of material for this winter. Timber, of course, is getting scarcer all the time, and it will require an abnormally good winter to enable the mills to stock up as they would like. There will be practically no stock of any kind carried over a year.

Everything in the way of staves or heading will certainly be cleaned out, and few, if any, hoops will be carried over. We look for very high prices of stock for the next six months. In fact, it will be difficult for coopers to get the stock they require.

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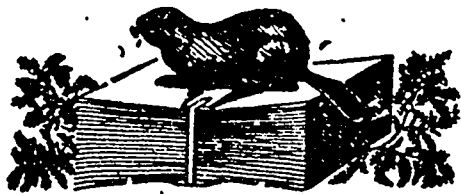
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