

OTTAWA LETTER.

(Regular Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.)

So far as can be learned the season in the woods in the Ottawa valley district will be a quiet one. While several firms have sent men to the woods, the number is smaller in most cases than that sent last season. Buell, Hurdman & Co., Bronson & Weston and J. R. Booth are among the firms mentioned as likely to curtail operations. Gilmour & Hughson will operate on about the same scale as last winter. They have already dispatched their crews to the woods.

The city has been visited by a large number of men seeking work in the woods. Unfortunately for them, many have been unable to obtain employment, and some who have worked in the bush for years have been obliged to return to their homes. As is always the case when the labor market is over-supplied, a considerable reduction has taken place in the wages of the woodsmen. At the beginning of the season log cutters were being engaged at \$20 per month, but at the time of writing from \$12 to \$18 is the current wage.

The sawing season being near a close, I endeavored to obtain some idea of the cut of the various firms. As far as could be learned, there has been a slight curtailment by one or two firms, but the total cut will compare favorably with that of last year. The shipments to the British market show a decided increase, however, which advantage has been offset by the stagnation in the United States trade.

During the past summer only four rafts of square timber were floated down the Ottawa river. Thus it is seen that the square timber business is gradually being abandoned, as at one time upwards of two hundred rafts found their way to Quebec en route to the British market. It is probable, nevertheless, that during the season of 1896-97 some renewed activity may characterize this business. There is yet to be found in the Ottawa valley an abundance of logs suitable for square timber.

INDIFFERENT LENGTHS.

Mr. Garcock, foreman of the Edwards planing mills, is at present enjoying a six weeks' tour through the United States.

Mr. James Lockman, head culler for the Shepherd & Morse Lumber Co., left a fortnight ago with a large gang of men for the Upper Ottawa limits.

Mr. J. R. Booth, with his characteristic generosity, has offered to give \$10,000 towards the erection of a sanatorium in Algonquin Park, near Canoe Lake.

Improvements have been made at the Edwards mills in New Edinburgh. An office has been erected containing five large compartments, also a drying shed, 165 feet long by 48 feet wide. This occupies the full length of the yard.

OTTAWA, Ont., Sept. 25, 1896.

NEW BRUNSWICK LETTER.

(Regular Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.)

The operations in the woods during the coming winter promise to be fully equal to those of last season. Up to the present a large number of camps have been started, and everything points to a successful season. The cost of all kinds of lumbermen's supplies is lower than for many years. On the Miramichi James Robinson, M. P., Richards, Lynch, and Mahone have crews at work, and R. A. Estey is commencing on the Tobique, having sent 25 men and a car-load of horses from Fredericton on the 21st ultimo. His cut will be about twenty-five million feet. H. R. McLellan is conducting operations back of Devil's Back Creek, Greenwich.

The shipments of spruce lumber from St. John to transatlantic ports up to August 31st show a considerable increase as compared with the same period last year, the figures being 99,963,334 feet in 1895 and 123,758,667 feet in 1896. The shippers were: W. M. Mackay, 75,803,060 feet; Alex. Gibson & Sons, 38,423,461; George McKean, 3,521,013; other shippers, 5,011,133. Of birch timber, 8,785 tons went this year, compared with 6,856 for the same period last year. Of pine timber there was only shipped one ton, compared with 324 tons last year. From other ports in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Mr. Mackay shipped 109,790,494 feet, against 91,111,741 feet in 1895. The quantity sent to the United States shows a falling off.

The largest cargo of lumber that has been shipped out of St. John this year went recently to Cardiff per steamer

Treasury. The lumber was furnished by W. M. Mackay and consisted of 1,400 1/4 standards.

Two shingle machines have been placed in the Aberdeen mill, Fredericton, by Donald Fraser & Sons, which, it is understood, will be run at night along with the clapboard machine and planer until the close of the season. The rotary will be closed down at night, while the usual work will continue during the day.

BITS OF LUMBER.

Lack of logs necessitated the temporary closing down of Adams & Burns' mill at Bathurst.

Messrs. Cushing & Co. have found it necessary to further enlarge their mill at Union Point.

Gibson's mills on the Nashwaak are running full blast now, the recent rains having assisted in bringing the logs down.

John Kilburn has returned from Quebec, where he has been looking after his lumbering interests. He has 80 men and ten horses at work, and intends augmenting this force.

The shingle mill of Charles McMilkin, at Marble Cove, which was recently burned, was built 16 years ago, and employed 20 men. The loss is only partially covered by insurance.

Forest fires have been raging in the vicinity of Doaktown, and for several days the mills were shut down, the men being employed in trying to save the timber. The fires have now been subdued.

D. & J. Ritchie, whose mill at Newcastle was burned recently, will erect a mill modern in every respect. They have arranged with T. W. Flett, just across the river at Nelson, to cut for them, and that mill is now rushing their logs through. About 85 men were thrown out of employment by the fire.

ST. JOHN, N.B., Sept. 24, 1896.

MICHIGAN LETTER.

(Regular Correspondence of the CANADA LUMBERMAN.)

THE depression which has characterized the lumber trade in general would seem to have fallen with unaccountable force upon the Michigan operators. At every point the report is heard that business is at its lowest ebb. No doubt the recent financial disasters have been an important factor in disturbing the trade of the state, while political questions are also engaging the attention of capitalists. At Saginaw nearly all the mills have closed down until some of the lumber which is piled upon the docks is removed. Manufacturers have wearied of cutting lumber to augment the already large supply, while there is little or no demand.

Preparations for the woods are being made upon a very limited scale, and it is doubtful whether the quantity of logs taken out this winter will reach one-fourth of the usual output. Bay City manufacturers will operate very lightly, while the Saginaw manufacturers who obtain their supply from the Georgian Bay district will also curtail. Should the Presidential election be followed by increased trade, however, most of the mills will be in a position to make an average cut, as there are large quantities of logs being held over. It is estimated that fully 70,000,000 feet of Canadian logs will be held over until next season to save the cost of labor in sawing them.

The great Menominee river log drive has been completed for this year. The total amount of logs driven down was 330,000,000 feet, about 35,000,000 feet less than last year. It is estimated that next year's drive will be proportionately less. The drive this year has been remarkable. The main river drive was completed in fifty-two days, while last year, with 35,000,000 feet more, it took seventy-one days to finish it and then some logs were hung up.

SELECTS.

Close estimates of the amount of lumber piled in the different mill yards along the Menominee river give it as 204,483,000 feet.

The Holland & Emery Lumber Company's mill at East Tawas, which was closed down for six weeks, has just started up with 150 hands.

Alger, Smith & Co. have dispatched their last raft for the season, of 1,800,000 feet, from Georgian Bay to Cheboygan. The concern has 5,000,000 feet of logs still back in Canadian waters.

The importation of Canadian logs into the Saginaw Valley fell off over one-half during the month of August as compared with July, while the shipments of lumber

were the lightest in years. The entries were 348,775 feet of lumber and 274,846 pine saw logs, containing 16,654,100 feet, board measure, and valued at \$132,295.

Preliminary negotiations are under way for the removal of the lumbering business of the Diamond Match Co. to a site on Portage Lake, near Houghton. The company has 130,000,000 feet of logs already cut in the streams, which will suffice for two years' work, and could easily raft its remaining standing pine in Ontonagon county, when cut, to the mills there.

SAGINAW, Mich., Sept. 26, 1896.

WOOD PULP.

THE utilization of saw mill waste in the production of wood pulp is a subject which will bear the closest investigation by the promoters of important saw mill enterprises. When this industry was in its infancy it was supposed that the solid log sawed to an exact and unvarying length was an absolute necessity if success was to attend the operation of the pulp mill. But there are saw mills to-day in Maine holding contracts with the pulp mills to absorb all of their mill waste, and at a price which causes the lumberman to rub his hands with glee, as he recalls the old refuse burner or slab-piles to which so important a percentage of his mill product was formerly consigned. As the use of wood pulp extends from one class of goods to another, the industry itself assumes proportions which places it well toward the top of the list among the giant industries of the country. Of course, the waste product of our saw mills, if it were diverted exclusively to the pulp grinders, would supply but a very small percentage of the total amount of wood so consumed, and the manufacturers realize that their supply must come in the log direct from the forest. Spruce, by reason of its peculiar texture and fibre, is the great staple for use in the pulp mill. The bulk of the supply to-day comes from the Adirondacks, Northern New England and Canada. The pulp men are buying available timber tracts wherever found in order to secure an adequate supply for the future. When purchasing timber tracts or stumpage they acquire it at the market price, but in recent years they have very frequently outbid the saw mill men in their scramble for the possession of logs at the sorting boom. It is evident that West Virginia must soon be invaded on a large scale by the pulp makers, and when they come to realize the vast spruce timber resources of that state pulp factories will spring up like mushrooms on every line of railroad. Much of the timber land of West Virginia has been cut over for its poplar, oak and other hardwoods, the spruce being left for future generations to utilize. Readers who have followed our able and critical letters from West Virginia have learned that vast forests stripped of everything but the spruce are now found in many sections of that state, offering a fertile field for pulp operations. Several mills in that state are now cutting spruce exclusively, turning out something like 300,000 feet of lumber per day, and the mill waste produced in these plants would furnish the nucleus for substantial pulp operations. It is a growing industry, for, in addition to the former uses of pulp, it is now being extensively employed in the manufacture of mouldings, paper tiles for roofing purposes, and an enthusiastic advocate has recently declared its great value as a substitute for brick and stone as a building material. Lumberman's Review.