

CURRENT TRADE CONDITIONS.**ONTARIO.**

Shipping conditions have not improved materially during the past week. Manufacturers and dealers have been unable to get shipments through to their customers, and as a consequence business in lumber is quiet. Consumers are withholding orders until there is a prospect of obtaining their requirements within a reasonable time. Many of the white pine yards are carrying considerable lumber which has passed out of the manufacturer's hands, and unless this stock is moved before spring, which now seems improbable, it will interfere with the piling of the new cut. There is a very fair consumption of lumber by factories, whose stocks are running low, and there is bound to be an active demand in the spring. Much will depend upon the building trade, but present indications are that the volume of building throughout the province during the coming season will be fully as great as last year. The heavy demand for box and the common grades of pine will probably continue, with prices very firm.

It is definitely stated that several Georgian Bay manufacturers have placed a considerable proportion of their output for the coming season, prices in most cases being almost as good as those realized one year ago. There is now a disposition in some quarters to ask an advance, as it is claimed that the cost of getting out logs has been from \$1 to \$2 per thousand feet greater than in the winter of 1902-3.

QUEBEC AND NEW BRUNSWICK.

The outlook for spruce lumber is not as roseate as it might be. Shippers have received word from their representatives in Great Britain that business there is backward and that the disposition of buyers is to oppose the high prices that are being asked for spruce deals. There is little likelihood, however, of shippers making more than very slight concessions, as in most instances they are paying the mill men an advance over last year's figures. The United States shipments are very quiet owing to the difficulty of making delivery by rail. Under the present conditions dealers are not trying to push business. Cedar shingles have shown a little strength. Most sales are being made on the basis of \$3.40 for extras, Boston delivery. Laths have sold recently at \$3.30 for 1 5/8 inch spruce, which is ten cents less than the price last month.

UNITED STATES.

Lumbermen are patiently waiting for milder weather and the improvement in trade which is sure to come with it. The movement at the present time is light, but stocks are in such shape that prices have not been adversely affected. The knowledge that stocks of white pine at the head of the lakes have been well sold out and that this season's cut will be less than last year has a tendency to hold the market firm. Some of the larger dealers have contracted for a considerable supply to be cut during the coming season, the price being slightly less than one year ago. The smaller dealers are holding off and will place orders only when their customers begin to call for stock. From Michigan eastward the supply of the box grades of white pine is nearly exhausted and box manufacturers find it necessary

to adopt substitutes for white pine. Chicago dealers report an increase in the number of inquiries, which is regarded as indicative of a brisk spring trade. There is a plentiful supply of Norway dimension, which is not much called for at the present time.

Hardwood consuming industries are willing to increase their supply of lumber and are placing orders whenever any concessions are offered. A slight falling off in the price of basswood is predicted by some persons, based on the expected large production this year. Soft elm and rock elm are both scarce and prices unusually firm. The supply of dry maple at manufacturing points is exhausted, and it is said that a large proportion of the coming season's cut is already disposed of at fair prices.

GREAT BRITAIN.

So far as we can gather the timber trade of Great Britain is still marking time. If importers are willing to close contracts on the basis of existing prices, there has been no evidence of such willingness in the business of the past fortnight. Agents of Quebec shippers are now canvassing the trade, and it is reported that it has been most difficult to book orders at satisfactory prices. The present indications are that the volume of business this year will show a decrease as compared with last year, as there does not appear to be much probability of an increase in the consumption of lumber. The high prices are lessening the demand for pine and the business in Lancashire is still suffering from the partial paralysis of the cotton industry. At the present time the buyers seem to be in the stronger position and unless something very favorable to the market should develop a slight decline in the price of lumber for spring delivery is not unlikely. A considerable quantity of spruce deals has arrived at London and Liverpool from St. John and Halifax, which has more than supplied the immediate wants of the market. The stocks in the yards at these ports, as well as at Manchester, are larger than might be desired for the good of the trade. Notwithstanding that higher prices have been paid in some instances for pine and spruce, it is said that offerings are being made to supply spruce at five shillings per standard below the figures paid last year. The colliers are buying some timber, and a Tyne ship-building firm is in the market for square pine, rock elm and Quebec oak.

STOCKS AND PRICES.

James Campbell, of Sharbot Lake, Ont., will supply a quantity of lumber required by the city of Kingston, Ont.

W. Doherty & Co., of Clinton, Ont., have sold their timber limits in Algoma to the St. Joe Lumber Co., of Sault Ste. Marie.

The British Columbia Government is offering for sale a timber limit situated on Vancouver Island, known as lot 617 and containing 3,080 acres.

The Dymont, Baker Company have secured the contract for the supply of lumber required for waterworks purposes at London, Ont.

A Buffalo report states that the new hemlock circular puts up the price of 2x4, 18 to 20 feet, half a dollar, but leaves the base price at \$16.50. It is agreed that the

hemlock outlook is good, but sales are very light on account of the weather.

The Dominion Government is about to construct a large pier at Douglantown, Gaspé County, Quebec, for which a considerable quantity of timber will be required.

The total log crop of Maine this winter is estimated at 750,000,000 feet. Of this about 500,000,000 feet will be spruce, one half of which will be required by the pulp mills.

The S.ott Lumber Company, of Fredericton, N. B., expect to get out 24,000,000 feet of logs during the present winter. They are operating on the Magaguadavic, Benton and Black rivers.

About 500,000 feet of lumber will be required for the wharf for the New England Fish Co., at Vancouver, B. C., the contract for which has just been awarded to Ironsides, Rannie & Campbell.

Prospects for cedar products are considered good. Posts are generally being held for a little higher price. The cedar shingle market has strengthened and further improvement is expected.

A correspondent at Menominee, Mich., states that good lumber is off at present from \$2 to \$10 per thousand feet as compared with prices last spring. Some which sold last year at \$60 brings no more than \$50 this year. Common lumber, which sold for about \$19 last year, is off \$2 this season. Hemlock sells for about \$11, as last season, but hardwoods are bringing from \$3 to \$5 more than last year.

The American Lumberman says that there is a bad shortage of elm staves, which promises to continue for a considerable time, as all elm lumber is very firm in price. Predictions are made that the price of hoops will advance before long, especially as they are considerably lower than anything else. It is noted that Minneapolis is quoting slack staves as high as Buffalo, viz., \$13.50 for first-class elm. All odd lengths are especially scarce. Heading is not so strong, but prices are well maintained, 10 1/2 cents for first-class basswood. Hoops are still quoted at \$9.75 for 6 foot coiled.

The Barbadoes lumber market is reviewed by Messrs. Munson, Son & Co., under date of February 13th as follows: "There have been no arrivals to report during the fortnight under review and the position of the market remains virtually the same. Until the crop is further advanced, thus reducing the stocks in dealers' hands, we cannot look for any material improvement. Owing to the approach of our dry season the demand for shingles has slackened, but Long Gaspé and Dimension would bring fair prices. We value a small lot of Cedar Laying at \$2.10 to \$2.15, but any large quantity would hardly bring these rates."

A Canadian cooperage firm gives out the following report on barrel material intended for shipment across the line: The cooperage stock market is in a very un-

settled condition. There are no staves on the market, hoops are comparatively plentiful, while heading is a little scarce. The output of flour barrels has been limited very greatly for want of material, and manufacturers find it almost impossible to get out stock. The demand for flour barrel staves will be greatly in excess of the supply until the new stock comes in next April or May. The following are the present prices for cooperage stock f.o.b. cars at Suspension Bridge, N.Y.: No. 1 28 1/2 in. elm staves, \$14 to \$15 per net M.; No. 1 7 1/2 in. heading, 9c per set; No. 1 5 1/2 feet patent coiled elm hoops, \$9.50 net M.; No. 1 6 feet patent coiled elm hoops \$10.50 net M.; No. 1 24 in. elm staves \$10 net M.; No. 1 5 feet hoops, \$8.50 net M.; No. 1 14 in. basswood heading, 7c per set; No. 1 13 in. head liners, 40c net M.

Messrs. A. F. & D. Mackay, of Liverpool, Eng., recently sold a quantity of birch by auction. The prices obtained were as follows: Lot 1—about 10 logs, more or less 19 in. deep and upwards, 2s. Lot 2—about 15 logs, more or less, 18 in.

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