

WHAT THE BOARD OF TRADE RETURNS REVEAL TO US.

The *Timber Trade Journal* of June 16, says: In the returns under consideration there is nothing very reassuring. Nor is there much to lament over. Our imports have slightly increased, on the whole, but the timber trade is innocent of all participation in that excess, which is, however, too small to be of any importance. The total value of our imports for the month was £30,257,443, against £33,933,934 the May previous, the difference being only £312,488, or less than 1 per cent.; while our exports are not materially changed either, though the difference is on the wrong side. Last May, that is in 1882, they were valued at £25,421,000, this May at £24,851,000, the difference being but £570,000 on the month, or about 2 per cent. on the total; which, when we consider that an enormous business is still doing, and that some trades fluctuate materially at different periods of the year, might easily be accounted for without signifying any general downward tendency. But unfortunately it is below the average of the previous months of the year, and must therefore be taken to prove that the favorable turn we are all looking for has not yet demonstrated itself.

The difference may be said to be accounted for entirely by the lessened value of the woollen goods exported, for, though there are considerable fluctuations in other articles, they pretty nearly neutralize each other. For instance, in metals there is a deficiency in the export of iron, tin, and copper of £200,000, but an increase in machinery of £211,000, and arms and ammunition £68,000, &c. We need only touch on the salient items and general tendency of these returns, as the particulars have been discussed by the daily press before our chance to notice them came around. It is remarkable, however, that the trade which employs the largest quantity of shipping tonnage very seldom obtains any special notice in these monthly revelations, so that what has to be said thereon usually appertains alone to this *Journal*.

If there were but a reasonable resuscitation of trade, the timber returns of the Government officials would appear sufficiently encouraging. We may account for a certain degree of business dissatisfaction by the numbers contending in almost every branch of trade, which has the effect of subdividing it into so many minor establishments that, though much is doing, few individual firms, in proportion to their staff and appointments, are doing a great deal. But when we find that the timber import of the country itself is diminishing, that, in fact, though the number of people competing in the trade is increasing, the business they do, as a whole, is smaller than it was a year ago, then it must be admitted that the dulness of trade has a deeper foundation than the number of competitors in it accounts for; and that appears to be the case with the timber interest now.

It happens, however, from the position of the trade itself, that this curtailment is not an evil at the present time. It is a consequence of the action of the import merchants themselves, and though indicating some restriction of trade, has the recommendation that it does not load them, as last year, with superfluous stock while they are still tolerably well supplied for the requirements of the country. It would be more satisfactory on the whole, perhaps, to see the trade expanding instead of pulling itself together, as the phase goes, but to find our wharves groaning under accumulations of wood goods for which the retail dealers seemed to have no room, and trade altogether more quiet than usual, would make but a gloomy prospect for the importer of the property. We might see greater figures on the import side without corresponding benefit to the merchants importing.

In May we called attention to the fact that the importation of foreign building timber up to the end of April was some 127,000 loads behind that of 1882, to the same period of the year; but the falling off in May was still greater, as the importation was short of that of May last year by 140,534 loads, so that up to the 31st, the total deficiency of the quantity imported at that date is 238,111 loads.

Now this amount of timber, though very great, is not any considerable portion of the British annual supply; but, at any rate, it is equal to about 5 per cent. of it, and assuming the total to average yearly about 6½ millions of loads, the first five months of 1883 have left a gap to be filled up of more than a quarter of a million loads. Now we are quite aware that this apparent deficiency—for it is so by comparison—may vanish away in a single month, because, on some occasions, such as occurred last year in the month of August, when over 900,000 loads came forward, exceeding the supply in August, 1881, a year of large importation, too, by about 180,000 loads—such a quantity is not a third part of a month's supply. But this is just the reason why it is reasonable to suppose it will remain in arrears. The supply was so full last summer that this season is not likely to surpass it, and a full importation henceforward cannot be expected to do more than keep pace with it; and what state of affairs may rule in the autumn it is too early yet to discuss, but the same reasons that ran up freights last fall are in existence still, and the later months of the year may find the import of timber checked, as it was then, for the American harvest is likely to be a plentiful one, and it is to Europe they look for their principal market, which will tempt ships away from the timber trade.

It will, therefore, during the summer be almost a matter of simple calculation that the state of supply, if it does not further recede, will stand at about a quarter of a million behind last year, a difference that may be safely predicted to hold good to the end of September, and it would not surprise us if the marginal difference were increased in the same direction, though great efforts are being made to induce English importers to extend their purchases abroad.

There is one peculiarity in the Board of Trade returns which we should have noticed in its right place, but we may interlope it here rather than pass it over unnoticed. This country had to pay in 1881 and 1882 for corn food, and potatoes from foreign parts, a little over £23,000,000. For eatables and drinkables altogether about £61,000,000; from January to May inclusive. This year, for cereals and potatoes only, we have already paid £5,000,000 sterling more than over before; and this large sum going out of the country for what appears to be a superfluity of food, instead of being spent at home, may have something to do with the depression among British agriculturists. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to put an additional tax upon us that would fetch him in another six millions of money the whole country would be loud in his condemnation. Yet, somehow or other, we have been made to pay that immense sum for more eatables, when we had plenty for our money in the preceding years, and did very well without enlarging our sale of dietary. The effect of this extra draw on the public purse must be injurious to the farming interest at home, and that is reflected back on trade generally. It is believed that it is beneficial to the people at large, but it may be reasonably doubted if it does not make trade harder to live by here than ever it was before. Food is cheap and plentiful among us, yet we covet it so much that to propose to check its importation by a small duty is regarded as worse than high treason. But in America their only anxiety is how to get rid of it, and by and by, with this immensely increasing influx, we shall have to find some new market and become corn exporters ourselves. Our merchants have been doing something in this way to the extent of about three millions, including drinkable, for the first five months of each year. But, with the increasing imports of this season, our exports of commodities was only slightly augmented. Strange that those who resent the idea of a duty on the import of corn, which might lessen the quantity brought in, have no objection to offer to its being sent away again, if a market can be found for it elsewhere.

That trade is still in a very unsettled condition the returns under consideration do not contradict. But neither is there anything in them that can be regarded by the timber trade in particular as affecting their interests prejudicially. Abbreviation of the importation is

shown to be, so far, continuous, and that under the circumstances will be counted a positive good. Had it taken the course of the corn export from America (which was not any more needed in this country that we can hear of), the mischief it would have done, it will be more easy to imagine than describe. We cannot tell what is before us, but of such a calamity it is not apparent that the trade need be under any apprehension during the rest of the current year.

CARE OF SAWS.

Ewing D. Craddock, in a letter to the *Cincinnati Artisan*, says:—The saw is one of the most essential and sensitive tools used. A saw, to do the work that is required of it, should be kept in a condition to do the work. First, the saw should be well balanced on the mandrel and hang true, presenting a straight face on the log side; hang the saw plumb up and down; second, keep your saw well pointed, so that every tooth will do the same amount of work that is required of it; these are the first elements of successful mechanics; these, too, should always be closely observed; third is the shape of the tooth, to which, as a rule, but little attention is paid by the majority of sawyers. Every man has his own ideas about putting his saw in order; therefore all cannot be right. My idea is this: A saw tooth should come in contact with the kerf that is to be removed at an angle of 45 degrees. This will produce a thin cutting edge, and will be found to produce the desired result, cutting with the least power, and to economize power is a matter of interest to all. It makes the lightest running saw. As to swaging the teeth, or spring them, I sometimes run one, then the other, but the spring-tooth is, by far, the lightest running, and cuts smoother lumber. The full swage, with plenty of power, will do as good work as any. The objections I have to the full swaged tooth is that it takes more power to drive it; consequently there is more strain on the plate of your saw; besides, it cuts more kerf than the spring-tooth, making your saw more liable to buckle. All sawyers know the wider the kerf the more power it takes to drive the saw, and the less feed can be carried; but a spring-tooth will cut a quarter less than full swaged, and, as a matter of course, makes the lightest running saw. Still, each tooth cuts the same distance into the timber, and, therefore, I recommend the spring-tooth. I always spring the teeth at the extreme points, to prevent them from losing the set, for the nearer the point a tooth is set the longer it will retain its set; and file the under sides of each tooth a little beveling, say, 12 or 15 degrees, and the back straight, and you will find this kind of dress will give satisfaction in all kinds of timber. In this country, most all the sawyers run the chisel-tooth, or, as some call it the full swage, no set, and meet with good success. The reason of this is that a full swaged tooth is easier filled than a spring-tooth. Yet a spring-tooth does not require half the work to keep it up that a full swaged one does, and will make great saving in files and emery wheels.

CEDAR.

Cedar timber, which a few years ago was entirely ignored in calculations as to the value of land in the northern portion of Michigan, has now obtained a rank among the valuable timbers of the state.

Thousands of acres of land from which the pine has been cut have been allowed to revert to the state in years past because considered of insufficient value to admit of taxpaying, on which hundreds of thousands of cords of cedar was standing, and which at the present time is of incalculable value because of the demand which has sprung up for cedar for railroad ties and fence posts and fencing, telegraph poles and paving. The former owners of these lands now comprehend their shortsightedness, and realize that other men are reaping fortunes from that which was discarded by them as worthless because of the then prevalent but foolish idea that the pine lands of the northwest were valueless, except for the standing pine timber, and that when that was once removed the most sensible thing the owner could do was to let the state possess it. Now, however, a thousand acres of land, well stocked with cedar, is a bonanza, and

the possessor thereof may be looked upon as a "bloated monopolist landholder."—*Lumber Trade Journal*.

HEMLOCK BARK.

The great slaughter of hemlock trees through out the country, says the *St. John, N. B. Globe*, in order to get the bark, has led to an application to the Dominion Government to place a duty on the export, in the hope that this duty will have some effect in stopping the destruction. This application will not be successful, and, if successful, it will hardly have the desired effect. The Provincial Government has just adopted some new regulations, in regard to the hemlock license, which will have some influence in preventing the destruction now so prevalent, while, at the same time, adding to the Provincial revenue. No doubt the Surveyor-General will give official notice of these in the next *Gazette*. We understand that in substance they are as follows:—

Applications to be made in the usual form for licenses.

All licenses for hemlock will expire on the 31st day of March in each year.

Each application for license must not be less than two or more than six square miles, and the upset mileage at the rate of 8 dols. per square mile must accompany the application.

The stumpage charged will be at the rate of 1 dol. per thousand superficial feet of logs cut, and the bark is not to be removed from the landings until the stumpage has been paid.

In setting the stumpage the mileage of 8 dols. per square mile will be credited for all licenses actually operated on.

The licensee is prohibited from unnecessarily destroying other growing trees on his license, and in case of violation of this section the license to be forfeited and the bark subject to seizure.

THE ELM.

The elm is by far the best and cleanest tree for the city.

The best size are those trees of about three inches in diameter four or five feet from the ground. It does not pay to set out those that are smaller than a man's wrist, because up to the size of three inches in diameter the trees can be transplanted with perfect safety, and the additional dollar cost is cheap for the four or five years' additional growth.

In digging up, the roots should be cut at least a foot and a half from the foot of the tree, making the ball three feet in diameter. For trees six inches in diameter a much larger ball should be left—a very good rule being to make the diameter of the ball in feet correspond to the diameter of the tree in inches, taken four or five feet from the ground, thus: Three inches, three feet; six inches, six feet.

It is well, but unnecessary, to keep a large mass of earth around the roots (as some seem to think very important) provided the roots are kept moist by wet straw or moss, etc. If the ground in which the tree grew should have been poor soil, it is better to remove it carefully and sift the good earth about the rootlets. Roots once dried and parched are like faded and dried bouquets—they may be soaked in water, but will never live again.

The stem should not be chopped, but in good bark, and should have a healthful appearance, straight and tall; not having the branches shoot out too low.

Some fools cut off the entire top and set out a row of bean poles. This should not be done. It is merely a trick of the nurserymen, who say "You must cut off the top as much as you do the root." Few, it is a poor rule that won't work both ways. Therefore, cut off the root as much as you do the top, and what have you? The tree men advocate cutting off the top merely to save trouble in hauling the trees. They care nothing for the looks of your trees as soon as you have paid for them. The root of the tree is its mouth and stomach; the leaves its lungs. Cut out the lungs and stomach of a boy you wish to live, will he thrive? If, however, the top be very large, it may be trimmed in a little, that is out of the tips of the largest branches.

A single-stemmed top is better than a double-stemmed top, and less apt to split apart in after years, when the branches are heavy. Here lies