

# Foreign Markets for Canadian Timber Products

## GREAT BRITAIN

THE United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is the most extensive timber importing country in the world. Possessing no forest wealth of any account, her many large manufactories using wood as their raw material are dependent almost exclusively upon importations from foreign countries. The quantity of wood goods imported annually by Great Britain is enormous. For the year ending December 31st, 1897, there were received at the various ports 9,845,988 loads of hewn and sawn timber. A load as used in England is equal to 600 feet board measure, making a total import for the United Kingdom in 1897 of 5,907,592,800 feet board measure. Placing the average value at \$15 per thousand feet, this represents an annual expenditure in money of over \$88,000,000. It should be stated, however, that in that year the market was overstocked, and therefore the average import would be slightly below the above figures.

We give below the quantity of timber received in 1897 at some of the leading ports, according to their respective importance:

	Loads.
London, Eng.....	2,038,863
Cardiff, Eng.....	889,703
Liverpool, Eng.....	812,036
Hull, Eng.....	808,684
West Hartlepool, Eng.....	499,652
Newport, Eng.....	286,548
Glasgow, Scot.....	232,262
Grimby, Eng.....	396,377
Gloucester, Eng.....	221,492
Grangemouth, Eng.....	194,224
Belfast, Ireland.....	192,928
Manchester, Eng.....	186,424
Sunderland, Eng.....	167,954
Bristol, Eng.....	167,352
Leith, Scotland.....	155,445
Borrowstounness, Scot.....	131,054
Fleetwood, Eng.....	125,135
Greenock, Scot.....	128,508
South Shields, Eng.....	116,671
Dublin, Ireland.....	111,920
Plymouth, Eng.....	100,554

It has been estimated that the Dominion of Canada supplies Great Britain with timber products, including manufactures of wood, such as doors, box shooks, heading, etc., to the value of \$15,000,000. Perhaps two-thirds of this amount is represented by pine and spruce deals. In late years our manufacturers have increased their shipments of lumber to Great Britain considerably, but from the above figures there would appear to be an opening for further extending our trade. In the lines most commonly imported, such as deals, planks, and square and waney timber, we believe the prospects for business have been fairly well investigated; but there is undoubtedly a wide market yet undeveloped by Canadian lumbermen for manufactures of wood and specialties. The following letters, bearing upon the import and requirements of some of the principal centres, point in this direction:

DEAR SIR,—Regarding the best methods by which lumber manufacturers not already in the trade may bring their goods to the notice of buyers here, I would state that this can best be done either through the medium of the many old established merchants in the trade, by applying to agents or brokers on this side, or by advertising in special trade papers. There seems to be a consensus of opinion that the Canadian producer should place himself entirely in the hands of a single broker or agent, who would make it his business to watch his interests and obtain the best prices, while keeping him advised as to quality, style of preparation required for this market, etc.

It is not an easy matter to say what are the standard sizes of hardwoods in steady demand, as the demand varies from time to time and the sizes depend to a great extent upon the particular purpose for which the wood may be required. Oak, ash, black walnut, elm, maple, birch and beech are some of the hardwoods most in demand here.

There is really no end to the field which exists for the extension of trade in partially and wholly manufactured specialties in hard and soft wood. It is purely a question of price and quality, as competition is very keen, and for articles such as broom and axe handles, knife boards, spokes, carriage wood, car building materials, furniture, etc., low prices have to be accepted to secure a fair portion of the trade. The demand is very large, and Americans have obtained a hold on the market which renders competition very severe. For the most part the trade is done by merchants who import in large quantities by contract.

The Canadian wood pulp business is already established on a firm basis, and there is room for an indefinite extension of this branch of trade in both the mechanical and chemical varieties. The following are the views of a gentleman well acquainted with the lumber and pulp trade in all its bearings: "The Canadian wood pulp industry has, in our opinion, a great future. The pulp is regarded by British paper makers as in several respects superior to Scandinavian, and makes stronger and tougher paper. There will always be a good demand for it in London and Manchester, even at a trifle higher price per ton than Scandinavian mechanical. In addition to the several schemes for erecting wood pulp mills in Canada and Nova Scotia which are being carried into effect by means of British capital, our Mr. Phillips has heard quite recently that two of the leading paper-making concerns in this country are on the point of dispatching representatives to Canada to gather information with a view to the purchase of land and the establishment of mills to supply pulp for their requirements. No doubt is entertained in the best informed paper trade circles here that the Canadian wood pulp industry is capable of vast development."

J. G. COLMER,  
Secretary High Commissioner.

London, England.

DEAR SIR,—There is an increasing demand throughout the United Kingdom for all kinds of Canadian hard and soft woods, and our chief trouble has been to keep our customers supplied. We have had large consignments during this year from our own limits in Canada, but are still very much behind with some of our orders. We are desirous of communicating with reliable firms who are prepared to fill export bills according to the required specifications of this country's markets. We can give orders for almost every kind of wood that grows in a Canadian forest, furnish prompt returns for shipments, and supply undeniable references on your side as well as on this. We have a steady demand for oak, ash, rock elm, soft elm, maple, basswood, birch, beech, chestnut, doors, etc., and are prepared to place large contracts with reliable operators who can ship any of the above mentioned woods either in lumber or cut to specification. Our inspectors in Canada are thoroughly conversant with the requirements of this country and would gladly furnish all particulars as to the culling, etc., required for this market. Last year we handled from 200 to 250 large consignments of Canadian woods, and are doing our utmost to further this trade with Canada. We have received recently a large enquiry for willow. Do you know of any firm who handles this wood?

We cannot see why the Canadians should not capture the paper market of England. It is an undeniable fact that the Americans are taking away the trade of the paper manufacturers in this country. It is also a well known fact that American paper is made from Canadian pulpwood. This trade belongs to the Canadians, and if they don't secure it they have themselves to blame, as they have the raw material and as good natural facilities for manufacturing as the Americans, and quite as good freight rates to this country. The writer remembers, about two years ago, while travelling on the north shore of Lake Superior, having seen hundreds of thousands of loads of spruce destined for the American paper mills, and he believes the same applies to all parts of Canada,

as we ourselves have recently received tempting offers from American paper manufacturers for the pulpwood on our Canadian limits. The writer believes plenty of money could be raised in England for the industry of paper manufacturing in Canada should a proper prospectus be shown.

THE M. TIMBER COMPANY OF CANADA,  
London, England.

DEAR SIR,—Before enumerating the various descriptions of timber which find here a ready demand, we beg to point out that no other industrial centre in the United Kingdom presents a more desirable outlet for the products of those who are interested in the timber trade and engaged in its manufacture in the Dominion of Canada. As the chief seat of the shipbuilding industry in this country, our city does a large trade in every kind of wood manufactured and exported from Canada. The imports to the Clyde are large and increasing, and as far as present appearances indicate are likely to continue doing so. The existing demand for nearly all Canadian woods is very good; for some it is even brisk. We believe, therefore, that there is great scope in this market for a large development in business in Canadian timber, and for the information of your lumber manufacturers we beg to enclose a memorandum of the woods which are most extensively used here.

WANey BOARDWOOD.—This timber is in constant demand by shipbuilders and house builders, and is regulated in price by size and quality. Work at present is plentiful in each of these departments of trade, with every prospect of being maintained, and as stocks are lighter than they were at the same period a year ago, our anticipations are most likely to be realized.

SQUARE WHITE PINE.—The enquiry for this timber is only moderate. Like the boardwood, the better quality of it is used mostly for finishing purposes in houses and ships, and it always commands a good price.

RED PINE.—At one time a considerable quantity of this wood went into consumption for joisting, etc., but it seems to be out of favor now, and superseded by pitch pine. Still a fair consumption takes place annually.

ELM.—Elm is largely used by shipbuilders, and the stock on hand not being excessive, rather, indeed, under what it was at the same time last year, points to the continuance of a fair demand, especially for large wood.

OAK LOGS AND PLANKS.—The former are used in ship building and railway and wagon building, and the planks chiefly for the latter industry, which is a very important one in this vicinity, and large quantities of various specifications are taken up.

ASH.—This is mostly used by cabinet makers in the manufacture of bedroom furniture, and also for drawer wood. The demand is always more or less active.

BIRCH goes largely into chair making, and there is a better demand than existed some few months ago both for logs and planks, boards and squares.

WHITE PINE DEALS.—There is always a large demand for these in the different sizes and grades of quality. At the beginning of the year, in consequence of large stocks, prices ruled low, but the present very brisk condition of our principal industries has greatly improved matters. First quality are used to a large extent for finishing purposes, such as panelling in house doors, ships, etc., and also for pattern wood for engineers. Second quality, though in fair demand, is not so much used as first or thirds, and the imports are therefore on a smaller scale. In third quality deals there is a very large consumption amongst joiners, boat builders, packing box makers, etc., and good sound planks can always be sold at their value. Fourth quality deals, both broad and narrow, are mostly used by packing box makers, but the low price, as compared with thirds, makes them in demand also by the smaller class of furniture makers.

WHITE PINE SIDINGS.—Large quantities of these are imported to this market. Since their introduction here in recent years there has been a great demand for them,