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ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED ON APPLICATION

OUR EXPORT TRADE.

THE visit to Canada of representatives of several European importing houses, for the purpose of forming a closer connection with our lumber manufacturers, is a circumstance of no little importance to the trade. It signifies a preference on the part of foreign importers, more especially those of Great Britain, to trade with this country. This, in view of the conservatism of the English people, augurs well for the prospects of future business. While our exports of lumber to the British Isles have greatly increased of late years, we do not think that the limit has yet been reached. There is reason to believe, however, that before any appreciable expansion of business is witnessed, the export trade will undergo some notable changes.

Hitherto, as our readers know, practically all the lumber exported to Great Britain has been handled by a dozen or more large shippers, who make the bulk of their shipments from Montreal, Quebec, St. John and Halifax. Their trade has largely been confined to deals and square timber, and having cultivated a market for these, they naturally discourage any attempt to digress from the beaten path.

It is only fair to say that manufacturers have found this method of selling to shippers entirely satisfactory. But there is another aspect of the case, viz., that the development of our lumber industry on the lines which would prove most profitable to the country has thereby been retarded. Our manufacturers have learned but little of the requirements of the British market, and consequently a considerable trade in specialties and partially manufactured goods has been lost. It is with a view to securing a portion of this trade that we welcome the present sentiment in favor of closer relations between the Canadian manufacturer and the importer in the foreign market. That this sentiment is recognized on this side of the water is shown by the number of manufacturers who have visited Great Britain during the past year.

The question of the best method of handling the export trade is one which has been given much careful study by the leading manufacturers in nearly every line of industry; it is one difficult of solution. In the marketing of timber products there would seem to be more obstacles

than are met with in other lines, yet it is a problem which must be dealt with in a business like manner at an early date. A movement is now on foot in the Southern States to form an association to export pitch pine, particulars of which may be of interest. It is proposed to form a joint stock company, with a capital of \$170,000, divided into \$1,700 shares, said shares being proportioned to the fifty mills included in the company according to export capacity. The company will submit every requirement to each and every mill for quotation, the lowest bidder to have the order if a sale is effected, less 2½ per cent., in consideration of which the company guarantees to pay for all purchases without other discount or commission. In making the sale the company will add at least one dollar per thousand feet to the prices quoted by the mill man. A daily bulletin of transactions, giving sales, price, shipments, etc., will be issued to each member of the company.

One objection to the above plan would seem to be that it fosters competition between the manufacturers, the removal of which would destroy entirely the working of the association. The commendable features are that it would afford an actual knowledge of the world's demand, reduce the cost of securing the business, and provide for prompt payment of stock.

UNIFORM GRADING OF LUMBER.

THE movement for uniform grading of lumber has obtained a strong foothold in the United States, and is rapidly spreading from section to section. Encouraged by the success of the Wisconsin Valley Lumberman's Association, the pioneer in the work, the southern lumber manufacturers have taken steps to inaugurate a similar system, by which to secure uniformity in grading and inspection of lumber. Nor is the movement confined to the pine trade. At the annual meeting of the Chicago Hardwood Lumber Exchange held recently, letters were read from the Cairo Hardwood Lumber Exchange and the Northwestern Hardwood Lumbermen's Association, asking that measures be taken to establish uniform rules of hardwood inspection.

Nowhere does there exist greater necessity for proper inspection rules than in Ontario, and we hope the Lumbermen's Association will prove its usefulness by taking up the work. The establishing of standard grades would undoubtedly have a beneficial effect upon prices, and would do a great deal to strengthen our position in foreign markets.

The lumber business of this province has in the past been conducted single-handed. Every manufacturer, whether pine or hardwood, has made his own inspection, and as a result there is a wide divergence as to what constitutes a certain grade. One manufacturer sets the standard higher than another, who, as a consequence, finds difficulty in disposing of his lumber. Neither can a dealer order a certain grade and know exactly what he is going to get, as should be the case.

The Wisconsin Valley Lumbermen's Association, referred to above, represents a total lumber production of 400,000,000 feet a year. An inspector is employed to visit the different plants at stated intervals and report to the management all items not in line with the rules, as well as to

instruct the individual graders in their duties. The expense of maintaining this system is raised by a tax of one cent on every thousand feet actually shipped, which has so far been found sufficient.

THE UTILIZATION OF WASTE TIMBER PRODUCTS.

LUMBERMEN should be interested in the project which is being promoted by the Rathbun Company for the establishment of charcoal iron smelting works at Deseronto. This step is being taken in pursuance of a policy decided upon by the company, as far back as 1866, to seek to find methods of manufacture that would convert the rough logs and the coarse cuttings of the mills into products that the public would buy at a profit. In furtherance of this idea, the manufacture of porous terra cotta fire-proof building material from sawdust was commenced; cedar mills were established at Deseronto, Campbellford, Lindsay and Gravenhurst, so that such coarse forest material as could not be safely floated or railed to Deseronto might be manufactured in transit; a cement manufactory was started which utilizes for fuel 3,500 cords of coarse material from forest and mills per year; chemical or wood distilling works were erected, where gas from sawdust was made for lighting the factories and town, following which came extensive charcoal works. These various industries consume a vast quantity of the by-products of the forest and mills, give employment to 1,500 men, and their products find a market in Canada, the United States and Great Britain.

By this policy the Rathbun Company have been enabled to greatly prolong their forest operations by cutting their timber carefully within prescribed bounds, at the same time, by removal of waste timber, affording protection against fire and permitting the rapid growth of young pines for future supply.

Owing to the duty imposed by the United States on Canadian charcoal, and the reduction in price of wood spirits by the Dominion government, it has been found necessary for the preservation of the charcoal industry to establish a charcoal iron blast furnace in the Bay of Quinte district, and arrangements to this end are well advanced. It is expected that a market can be found for the charcoal iron in Great Britain, Norway and Sweden.

This blast furnace, which will have a capacity of 35 tons per day, will require yearly 20,000 cords of charcoal timber, representing 20 cords of coarse timber per acre, from 1,000 acres per year. Employment will be given to about 225 men for an average of about five months during the cold weather in getting out this timber.

In view of the steady decrease in the available supply of first-class timber, and the increasing quantity of coarse material, there is no question of greater importance before lumbermen to-day than that of finding means of utilizing the present waste material from the forest and the mill and the promotion of new forest growth. Hence, as we have said, the projected enterprise at Deseronto, which appears to combine these objects, is one in which lumbermen should feel a deep interest, as in the event of success attending the venture and a sufficient market being found for Canadian charcoal iron, similar works might be established in different parts of the Dominion, with