

## CURRENT TRADE CONDITIONS.

## ONTARIO.

Little effort is being made in the direction of shipping lumber, as the weather and deep snow has rendered it impossible to accomplish satisfactory results. There is considerable lumber awaiting shipment, and an active spring trade seems to be assured. The longer the severe weather continues the greater will be the rush for stock when the spring opens. Manufacturers report many enquiries for the lower grades and shop lumber in pine, and prices of these grades are very firm. A Western Ontario manufacturer recently sold a million feet of four inch sound common plank at \$19, which is regarded as a very fair figure. No. 2 common is reported to be a shade easier, although list quotations are unchanged. Hemlock prices are holding up, sales of two-inch, 10 to 16 feet in length, being reported at \$12 and \$12.50 at the mill.

The now accepted shortage in the production of hardwood logs is strengthening lumber prices. It is not unusual to meet a manufacturer who is asking from \$1 to \$2 per thousand more for his lumber than he received last season. Birch is meeting with favor, and as the supply of dry stock is not large, prices are largely in the hands of the producer. For XXXX pine shingles \$2.60 at the mill is being asked. Cedar shingles are held at the same figure.

## UNITED STATES.

Conditions are not favorable to a heavy movement of lumber, the severity of the weather having stopped nearly all building work in the Eastern States. The outlook is good, however, as the yards are lightly stocked and dealers have been holding back orders for some time past. In the lower grades there is, comparatively speaking, considerable activity, and a report from Tonawanda states that barn and box boards are being bought up so closely that there is a possibility of a substantial advance in prices before the new cut is ready for the market. Box lumber sells as quickly as it is offered. The upper grades of pine are not expected to advance, as they are now relatively high. It will be observed, however, that our Buffalo list this week shows an advance on uppers. The Southwestern States are enjoying exceptional prosperity, and it is expected that this will bring about a hardening in prices of southern pine, which in turn will influence the northern product. Altogether, the conditions are by no means unfavorable for the pine trade, and if present anticipations are realized a good season will be experienced.

Good progress has been made in getting out hardwood logs and a full production of lumber this year is likely. The market is in a position to take an average production without causing a break in prices during the next four months at least, after which time it is impossible to predict the course of events with any degree of certainty. Values at the present time are holding well. Maple is held at \$9, \$15 and \$22 for culls, common and firsts and seconds, respectively, at the mills. White ash is in good request, the price for inch at Buffalo being \$40.

## GREAT BRITAIN.

In Great Britain buying of lumber is still being conducted with extreme caution. There seems to be considerable un-

certainty in the minds of many dealers as to the future course of prices, some contending that if there should be unfavorable developments prices would decline sharply. The ruling high prices are no doubt restricting the consumption, but the Canadian stock is being gradually reduced and will be on a reasonable basis when navigation opens in the spring. First quality pine deals continue to be regarded as good property, but only a quiet demand exists at present for the lower grades. Spruce prices are less firm than they were one month ago, probably due to the quantity of stock sold by auction and for which unsatisfactory figures have been obtained. Waney and square pine are in moderate demand at unchanged quotations.

## STOCKS AND PRICES.

In the Riding Mountain district of Manitoba spruce lumber is selling at \$12 per thousand at the mills.

Tenders are invited up to February 25th for lumber required by the Road Department of Montreal during the present year.

The Scott Lumber Company, of Fredericton, N.B., expect to cut 5,000,000 feet of logs in the vicinity of Black River, Que., this year.

The barque Stranger is about to load lumber at Weymouth, N. S., for Buenos Ayres, the shippers being G. D. Campbell & Company.

The St. George Wagon Company, of St. George, Ont., recently purchased 150,000 feet of white oak lumber from S. B. Lawrason and 50,000 feet from S. G. Kitchen.

Wright & Davis, of Duluth, Minn., have bought about 50,000,000 feet of standing timber along the south side of Pigeon river for about \$4 a thousand feet. It is understood to be a purchase for investment.

The Minnesota Log and Timber Company, of Duluth, Minn., last week sold to the R. T. Jones Lumber Company, of North Tonawanda, N. Y., 5,000,000 feet of No. 3 and better stock, which is now being cut.

About 15,000,000 feet of hemlock piece stuff has been sold by Menominee river firms for spring delivery to Chicago and the east. The hardwood cut of the Menominee river mills this season will amount to 15,000,000 feet, practically all of which has been sold.

Messrs. Ross & Taylor, of Exeter, Ont., have recently placed their order with a Toronto firm for fifteen carloads of hemlock lumber and several carloads of pine lumber, shingles and lath. They have also ordered eight carloads from the Pacific Coast. Building operations in the Exeter district, they state, promise to be quite brisk during the coming season.

Under date of January 30th Messrs. Clairmonte, Man & Company say of the Barbadoes market: "There has been one arrival with white pine during the fortnight, viz., schooner Agatha with 62,000 feet, which were sold on private terms for St. Vincent. Our market is well stocked with white pine and spruce but prices have been fairly maintained. Last sale of white pine for a cargo on the spot was at \$25 per thousand for merchantable, and \$20 for second quality; spruce, \$21.17 for merchantable and \$17.17 for second quality.

Last sale of Gaspé Long Cedar shingles were at \$6.01; Cedar Laying, \$2.05 to \$2.07 1/2."

Millers, fruit exporters, and others continue to be hampered in their business by a scarcity of barrels. Since the stormy weather set in the backwoods stove factories have been compelled to close by reason of the difficulty in having timber brought to them through the deep snow. Thus scarcely any shipments of staves have been brought forward this year, and as a result several barrel factories in Toronto and elsewhere have not been running at their full capacity. Manufacturers say that those makers who usually were able to keep a surplus stock of 2,000 to 3,000 barrels on hand are now cleaned out. The prices of barrels are unchanged since the advance made last fall.

## TIMBER RIGHTS FOR SALE.

An opportunity to obtain some valuable timber limits will be afforded on Wednesday, April 20th, when Mr. Peter Ryan will offer for sale by public auction at the Board of Trade Rooms, Toronto, the Townships of Kitchener, Roberts, No. 107 and No. 167, each township containing 36 square miles, also Birch Island (Indian) containing 11 square miles, all in the Lake Huron district. The sale will no doubt attract a large attendance of lumbermen, as the result of the last Government sale proved that the demand for timber limits was never more pronounced than at the present time.

## STOCKS OF WHITE PINE.

The Bureau of Grades of the Mississippi Valley and the Wisconsin Valley Lumbermen's Association has compiled a stock sheet of the pine lumber in the hands of the manufacturers in the two districts, January 1, 1904, and a comparison with the stock on hand on similar dates of 1903 and 1902. As is well known, trade during the latter part of last year showed a considerable falling off, both in the Mississippi valley and the Wisconsin valley, and hence it is not surprising, says the Mississippi Valley Lumberman, that on the first of the current year stocks were somewhat larger than they were a year ago. The total increase, however, is comparatively small for the two districts combined, while the Wisconsin valley district shows a decrease from both the previous years.

In the Mississippi valley the greatest increase over last year is in the stock of dimensions on hand. This shows an increase over the figures of 1903 of about 55,000,000 feet. Thick finish and shop lumber show a slight increase over the figures of the last year and a considerable increase over the stock on hand January 1, 1902. In inch lumber there is a considerable increase in the upper grades, especially in inch shop D and better boards and strips. The increase over last year is more than 50,000,000 feet and the total on hand January 1 is three times as

great as it was the first of January, 1902. The stock of other upper grades, including No. 1, 2 and 3 boards, was larger than for either of the previous years. In the lower grades, there is a falling off as compared with both 1903 and 1902. The totals for inch lumber show more than 100,000,000 feet excess over 1902 and more than 200,000,000 feet over the previous year. The total of all stock in the Mississippi valley is about 75,000,000 feet greater than on the first of January last year, and about sixty-five million feet greater than on the first of January, 1902. The stock of shingles on hand was very much greater than on the first of either of the previous years, while the stock of lath shows a decrease over last year and an increase over 1902.

In the Wisconsin valley the stock of dimension on hand the first of the year was about 32,000,000 feet greater than on the first of January last year and more than twice the stock on hand the previous January. Thick finish and shop lumber show a decrease from last year and an in-

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