



DEVOTED TO THE LUMBER AND TIMBER INTERESTS OF THE DOMINION.

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PETERBOROUGH, Ont., JAN. 15, 1884.

THE value of the lumber shipments from Ottawa to the United States during 1883 was \$610,108, against \$500,281 in 1882 an increase of \$109,827.

A CURIOUS incident occurred in Dallas, Ga., recently. A bale of cotton was taken to a compress to be weighed and stored. When put on the scales it was observed that the bale was warm. The trier was inserted and the bale found to be on fire in the centre. It was taken out, and when opened burst into flames. Some considered it a case of spontaneous combustion, others that a spark might have fallen into the bale from the gin. At all events, the occurrence was uncommon.

A FOURTH in the series of lumbermen's and land lookers' excursions to Mississippi (over the Illinois Central railroad) will start from this city on the evening of January 15th. It is expected that a large number will take this opportunity to visit the south. A round trip ticket to Jackson at \$20 will be furnished the excursionists. For information and maps of the timber and agricultural regions to be visited, apply to M. S. Baldwin, agent for Phillips, Marshall & Co., 123 La Salle street, this city.

THE *Monetary Times* says:—The Pembroke manager of the Quebec Bank writes us on 27th December:—"Business promised well hereabouts last spring for lumbermen, but sales were few and considerable disappointment in prices was experienced; and the outlook at present is not encouraging—the local trade fair but less than previous year; payments not easily; wages high with outlook for next summer fair." Writing from St. Ann de Bellevue, Quebec, on the subject of the timber trade, Messrs. J. & B. Grier tell us "that our dimension timber business has been very satisfactory, demand being good and prices about the same as last year's. The Lachine timber market has been very active, prices all around equal to last year's. Our Upper Ottawa timber arrived in Quebec somewhat late, and we concluded that it would be better to hold till next season than to sell at prices offered last fall."

THE importance of the Glasgow shipping trade may be gathered from the printed list of ship-owners entitled to vote for the election of the Clyde Trustees. Five hundred and seventeen ship-owners are voters. Several own fleets of steamships worth millions sterling, while no voter owns less than 100 tons. The estimated value of vessels owned on the Clyde is £26,000,000 sterling, or, in round numbers, \$130,000,000.

We learn that French ingenuity has hit upon a plan to substitute other woods for mahogany, by the following process, and which might be practised on birch, ash, lime, and &c., with every prospect of success. The first operation is to plane the surface of any species of close-grained wood until it is perfectly smooth, and then rub it with diluted nitrous acid, to prepare it for the materials to be subsequently applied. These consist of one and a half ounces of dragon's blood, dissolved in a pint of spirits of wine, and one-third of that quantity of carbonate of soda, mixed together and filtered; the liquid in this state is then laid upon the wood with a soft brush, and when dry the application is repeated, with very little alteration, till the wood possesses all the appearance of mahogany.

The Ottawa Citizen says:—That the condition of the square timber trade at the close of 1883 was unsatisfactory, not only to producers but as well to the merchants of Quebec, is no news to any person in the trade. This unfortunate state of one of our most important industries is, however, not consequent upon anything that could be remedied in this country excepting, perhaps, by a reduction in the quantity produced. In the early part of the season the prospects of a fair season's business were, by the more sanguine, considered very promising, but these anticipations were unfortunately not realized. Doubtless some lots of Ottawa timber were sold at good prices, which amply repaid the producer the high prices of production of last winter, and gave a good profit on the year's business, nevertheless a very large quantity of our timber remains in first hands at Quebec.

FORESTRY.

THE letter by R. W. Phipps, which we publish in another column, deserves thoughtful consideration by those who wish to see our forests less wastefully ravaged, and even a re-production of woodland, where the denuding process has been carried too far. Mr. Phipps suggests one means by which this desired end can be attained.

HOW TO LOG.

There are two methods of logging. One is to cull the best timber, and the other is to cut it clean. Each way has its advocate. When the first named way is pursued the operator has choice stock to offer for sale, and such stock is always wanted. But some day there is sure to come deterioration. At the end the grades cut from the leavings must necessarily be poor. The lumber on dock in the Saginaw valley is an illustration of this. When pine was everywhere plentiful the operators picked out the best. The lumber manufactured was good, and, as a rule, found ready sale. To-day the docks are piled with coarse lumber which is a drag. This lumber was sawed largely from timber which had been left. The operators who cut their timber clean as they go may not at any time have as much first class stock on hand as they may desire, but their grades are even year after year. The dealers who buy of them know what to expect. When such operators are about to clear up their lands there is no tail end to the business that will be unprofitable. We believe that more operators understand this than there did a few years ago. A steady business is now what is desired, and such a business is dependent on grades that can be easily marketed.

THE PROSPECT.

The *Monetary Times* of Jan. 4th, says:—The state of the timber trade, one of Canada's chief industries, is not encouraging. In J. Bell Forsyth & Co.'s latest circular, we read:—

"The spring business opened with a feeble

demand as the shipping houses were holding over stocks from 1882 ample for their requirements, so that a very few sales were then effected and at prices slightly under the closing figures of the previous year. During the summer months the market remained in a drooping state, only an occasional raft being disposed of with difficulty, while early in the autumn several sales were effected at fair rates; since that period everything has been stagnant, even the local market is exceedingly dull, and at present we can discern no signs of recovery from this unfortunate state of things."

The following prices for the last two months are based on actual sales at Quebec, except in some cases where no sales have taken place:

White pine in raft, for inferior and ordinary, according to average, quality, &c., measured off.....	\$0 18	\$0 20
For fair average quality, according to average, quality, &c., measured off.....	0 20	0 23
For good and good fair average, according to average, quality, &c., measured off.....	0 23	0 26
For superior, according to average quality, &c., measured off.....	0 27	0 30
In shipping order, according to average, quality, &c.....	0 20	0 23
Waney board 18 to 19 inch, according to average, quality, &c.....	0 31	0 34
Waney board 19 to 21 inch, according to average, quality, &c.....	0 34	0 36
Red pine, in the raft, measured off, according to average and quality.....	0 13	0 18
In shipping order, 35 to 45 feet, according to average and quality.....	0 16	0 22
Oak, Canada, by the dram, according to average and quality.....	0 40	0 43
Oak, Michigan and Ohio, by the dram, according to average and quality.....	0 47	0 49
Elm, by the dram, according to average and quality, 45 to 50 feet.....	0 34	0 35
Elm, by the dram, according to average and quality, 30 to 35 feet. No sales.....	0 00	0 00
Ash, 14 inches and up, according to average and quality.....	0 32	0 35
Birch, 10 inch average, according to average and quality.....	0 23	0 26
Tamarac, square, according to size and quality.....	0 12	0 13
Flatted, according to size and quality.....	0 10	0 12
Staves, merchantable pipe, according to quality and specification.....	\$350	\$360
Staves, W. O. Pungheon, merchantable, according to quality and specification.....	\$30	\$35
Deals, bright, according to mill specification, \$108 to \$110 for 1st, \$63 to \$70 for 2nd, and \$32 to \$34 for 3rd quality.		
Deals, bright, Michigan, according to mill specification, \$125 to \$127 for 1st, and \$36 to \$38 for 2nd quality.		
Deals, dry floated, according to mill specification, \$104 to \$106 for 1st, \$66 to \$68 for 2nd, and \$32 to \$34 for 3rd quality.		
Deals, bright spruce, according to mill, specification, \$36 to \$38 for 1st, \$22 to \$24 for 2nd, and \$10 to \$21 for 3rd quality.		

The timber trade is subject to periodical inflations and depressions; and periodically, production is greatly in excess of demand. When heavy stocks have to be carried over a year or two, the interest of the weakest holders is apt to drop out, and the banks become the parties chiefly interested. This experience is not lost on the banks. At present they are drawing the reins tight on lumberers; and productions will consequently be greatly decreased this winter. Still Messrs. J. Bell Forsyth & Co. express the opinion that the supply, greatly restricted as it will be, will exceed "the present very limited requirements." Of course, it is not exactly the present, but the near future requirements that will control prices; and the important question is what next year's demand is likely to be? A question more easily asked than answered.

Low prices and a feeble demand in England will affect production on the Baltic, as well as in Canada. The *Timber Trades Journal* prints a letter from Riga, in which it is stated that shipments to England have only been made to clear off large stocks before next spring. Only small quantities are expected to come on the market next spring. Exporters are unwilling to enter into contracts at present prices. The cut will consequently be restricted there as well as here. These facts read the Riga correspondence to express the opinion that higher prices may prevail next spring.

We learn from the same journal, of the 22nd

December, that the London dock deliveries for the previous week had been unusually heavy. But in dock stocks the difference is not great; and the small difference between present stocks and those of past years is attributed to cheap freight. So much stress is laid on this fact that the opinion is expressed that "with the normal rate of freight ruling for the fall, probably the difference between the 1883 and 1882 stocks in the docks here would have been several million pieces in favor of the latter on deals alone, while the augmentation to the flooring stocks, which has turned the scale against those of 1882, is also due to cheap rate of tonnage." From this, the conclusion would seem to be fair, that any sudden impulse given to the demand might, next spring, send up prices. But that impulse may be found to be wanting.

Returning to the Forsyth circular, we find the export of the year from Quebec of the following woods exceeded that of 1882.

WHITE PINE.		
	Supply.	Export.
1883 { Square.....	7,412,034 }	10,427,000
{ Waney.....	3,789,523 }	
1882 { Square.....	8,053,066 }	7,912,160
{ Waney.....	3,127,123 }	
Stock.		
1883 { 7,780,620 } Square.		
{ 2,768,840 } Waney.		
1882 { 8,632,162 } Square.		
{ 3,354,913 } Waney.		

Of red pine the quantities that now come forward are very small compared with what they were formerly—about one tenth. The Irish market that takes much of this timber cannot now be depended on—

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883.....	498,111	1,048,960	1,610,925
1882.....	1,474,381	1,024,630	2,362,624

The sources of supply of oak for the Quebec market seem to be approaching exhaustion; the quantity found there has greatly decreased in the last decade. And the quantity wintering at Garden Island is less than usual:

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883.....	1,916,322	2,132,880	1,203,347
1882.....	1,816,719	1,957,320	1,362,163

There is encouragement to cut more elm, since the demand for it last season seems to have fully equalled the supply. And in Great Britain the stock is exceedingly small. The stock at Quebec is unprecedentedly light:

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883.....	302,631	730,920	87,424
1882.....	714,549	778,300	630,611

Ash, too, has been in good demand; and the stock on hand is light:

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883.....	263,448	343,320	135,223
1882.....	310,769	297,040	212,423

For birch there is a good demand, with a light supply; and manufacturers will of course take these facts into account:

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883.....	132,624	233,040	6,623
1882.....	251,920	212,630	78,413

American competition has of late interfered with the trade in staves at Quebec; exports thence having greatly fallen off:

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883 { Pipe.....	630	549	470
{ Pungheon.....	603	933	805
1882 { Pipe.....	563	450	293
{ Pungheon.....	1,430	850	1,007

The Quebec trade in deals is increasing:

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883.....	3,223,622	3,993,072	1,543,359
1882.....	4,611,875	3,143,633	2,507,704

The quantity of deals wintering at Ottawa is about the same as last season. In spruce deals the Quebec market is represented by these figures:

	Supply.	Export.	Stock.
1883.....	2,569,440	2,729,635	1,752,725
1882.....	3,229,960	2,737,309	1,912,920

This kind of wood, largely obtained in New Brunswick, is greatly over-produced; and it is believed this winter's cut will be, as it ought to be, small.

It may be fairly concluded, from these facts, that over-production will not be pushed dangerously far this winter. The future prospect of the timber trade is gloomy, but not hopeless. A brisk demand falling upon a moderate supply would cause a much desired revival; and even with a moderate demand, it ought not to be difficult to carry the stocks that will be marketed next spring.

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