CURRENT TRADE CONDITIONS.

ONTARIO.

The lumber demand is lacking in snap and in some of the upper grades of pine prices are weaker. Unfortunately, the season has been very unfavorable for fall wheat, and the yield throughout the province is little more than half that of last year. However, this is partially offset by the higher price of wheat as compared with one year ago, although it is doubtful that the present price will be maintained. The strike of builders' laborers in Toronto has curtailed the demand for lumber in that city, as retail dealers will not increase their stocks while uncertainty exists in respect to building operations. There is a very noticeable disposition on the part of operators to curtail the log production the coming season. Two of the largest firms in the Ottawa district are reported to have decided not to operate this winter, and their withdrawal will mean a large reduction in the log crop. Very few firms will operate in square timber, as the low prices of the past season have wiped out any profit in the business.

Soft elm leads the hardwoods in point of demand. Birch is holding its own, but basswood has been showing signs of weakness. Prices of other hardwoods are about steady.

The shingle market is most irregular, influenced by a sharp decline in the prices of B. C. shingles. For Ontario delivery xxxx B.C. cedar shingles are quoted at $3.00, and xxx at $2.70. These quotations, however, cannot be taken strictly as the market price, for several of the smaller manufacturers have cut 10 cents below these figures. White pine and white cedar shingles have sympathized and lower prices are the rule. Lath are also slightly weaker, 1½ inch No. 1 white pine being quoted at $3 for Toronto delivery.

MANITOBA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Harvesting operations in Manitoba and the North-West Territories are about to commence, and great interest is shown by all classes of business men in the prospective crop. It seems likely that the yield of wheat will be larger than last year, although reports indicate considerable damage by rust. During the harvesting period the retail demand for lumber is likely to be light, but this should be followed by an active Fall trade. Prices of lumber are about steady, with importations from the United States still being sold below the average market price. The interior mills of British Columbia are making considerable shipments eastward, and the export mills are comparatively busy, foreign shipments this year up to July 30th comprising thirty-seven cargoes. There is no improvement in the logging market and several of the largest camps remain closed. Recent forest fires in British Columbia have destroyed much valuable standing timber.

UNITED STATES.

Lumber prices are practically unchanged as compared with those ruling last week. The advance in the price of yellow pine has been well maintained and it is believed that the curtailment policy which is being pursued will result in a further advance in that class of lumber. The curtailment during the month of July amounted to 144,137,107 feet, which cannot but have a sustaining influence upon prices. The consumption of lumber for building purposes continues fairly active, as is shown by the fact that during the month of July the building permits taken out in twenty-six of the leading cities represented a valuation of $35,000,000, as compared with $29,000,000 for the corresponding month of 1903. Numerous orders for rush shipments indicate that retail stocks are light. Box and cull pine promises to continue scarce and any revival in the general trade would doubtless be followed by an advance in the prices of these grades. The Eastern States market is reasonably quiet, but even in this section the lower grades are scarce and strong in price. Norway and hemlock bill stuff are in good demand, such timber being able to compete successfully with southern pine. In hardwoods, elm, birch, and ash are doing better. Soft elm is scarce and selling at good prices. The supply is limited and we would not be surprised to see considerably higher prices for this class of lumber before the close of the year. Plain white and red oak are also scarce.

GREAT BRITAIN.

Notwithstanding fine weather in Great Britain during the past month, the consumption of lumber has not increased to any extent, and the outlook is somewhat disappointing. The disposition of buyers continues to be to place orders only when they know where they can dispose of the stock, which clearly indicates that there is not much confidence in the future. The depression has prevailed so long that some importers are looking for a reaction in the Fall, but at the present time signs in that direction are lacking. While the general lumber market is weak, it is refreshing to learn that Canadian pine and spruce are holding steady, no doubt due in some measure to light imports. From Manchester comes the report that there is an upward tendency in prices of spruce deals, some importers having recently advanced their quotations five shillings per standard. It is predicted that when the imports slacken off prices will further advance. There are large stocks of spruce deals on hand in Manchester and Liverpool, but it is said that the bulk of this class of lumber has now arrived. First quality pine and spruce deals have sold fairly well in a retail way, but the auction sale prices have not been satisfactory, prices realized being 10s. per standard under the value of the same lumber a few weeks ago.

STOCKS AND PRICES.

It is claimed that yellow pine lumber is now selling $1.50 a thousand higher than in did in June.

Jobbers of cooperage stock at Buffalo quote first-class dry elm flour barrel staves at $10.25 to $10.75; first-class basswood heading, 7½ to 8 cents; coiled hoops, $9 to $9.50 for 5½ foot, and $9.50 to $10 for 6-foot.

At an auction sale held by Foy, Morgan & Company, London, England, on August 10th, spruce deals brought the following prices: Ex Holmlea, from Montreal, 10-16 feet 3 x 9 in. second quality, £9 per standard; 10-14 ft. 3 x 7-8 in., £7 10s.; 11-14 ft. 3 x 9 in. third quality, £8 15s.; 11-14 ft. 3 x 7-8, £7 5s.; 11-14 ft. 3 x 9-11 in. fourth quality, £7 5s.; 10-16 ft. 3 x 9 in. second quality, £ , 10-16 ft. 3 x 9 in. third quality, £8 10s. Ex Mount Temple, from Montreal, 16 ft. 3 x 9 in. second quality, £8 15s.; 10-15 ft. 3 x 9, £8 10s.; 10-16 ft. 3 x 8-10, £7 5s.; 9-16 ft. 3 x 7, £7.

BUSINESS NOTES.

F. Fulmer & Company, lumber operators, St. Martins, N. B., are announced to have made an assignment to E. B. Jones, F. Schofield and C. B. Lockhart, of St. John.

A meeting of the creditors of William Curry & Son, lumber dealers and planing mill operators, Windsor, N. S., was held in Halifax last week. The claims presented aggregated about $23,000. George H. Curry was appointed assignee, and an advisory board was named, consisting of Rufus Curry, W. M. Christie, and C. De Wolfe Smith, to consult with the assignee as to the disposition of the estate, which it is expected will yield about fifty cents on the dollar.