

# THE RETAILER AND Wood-Worker

## THE BUILDING OUTLOOK FOR 1897.

INFLUENCED by the general depression in business, the building trade in Canada has for some years been in a state of inactivity, and much below what might be expected in a young and vigorous country. As each year passed by, it was hoped that the worst had been encountered, yet the season of 1896 proved to be one of the least prosperous. The unsettled condition of the country politically, and the uncertainty with regard to the tariff both in Canada and the United States, had a depressing effect, and many buildings which would otherwise have been erected still remain in a embryo state until the action of the government is made known. The low rentals obtainable in many of the larger cities offered little inducement to speculators, and consequently a few office buildings constituted the major portion of construction. Thus the local demand for lumber has been reduced to a very fine point, and retail dealers have suffered in common with every other line of business in any way dependent upon building operations.

With the object of learning as far as possible the conditions likely to prevail in the building trades during the approaching season, letters were dispatched to architects in the different cities, asking their opinion of the outlook. The replies received, although pointing out that many projected works are yet in an unsettled state, and may or may not be proceeded with, afford some degree of encouragement. It is generally conceded that little change will be made in the tariff by the government, and the official announcement of this fact will be certain to stimulate building operations and restore confidence to business in general.

In Toronto, the new building at the north-west corner of Yonge and King streets is perhaps the largest yet arranged for; the plans are being prepared by Messrs. Darling & Pearson. A large hotel and several other buildings of some prominence are spoken of, but are not yet regarded as certainties. The renovation and remodelling of office buildings is likely to account for a considerable expenditure, as the owners will be compelled to improve their properties in order to retain their tenants. Montreal architects report the season to be opening up somewhat brighter than last year, with several undertakings hanging in the balance. The towns adjacent to Montreal are apparently more prosperous. In the city of Ottawa the prospects for building operations are decidedly encouraging, a number of recent fires having assisted in this direction. The rebuilding of the departmental block and the new building of the C. Ross Company are the most important works now under construction. The addition to the Protestant hospital and a proposed opera house will

reach in value \$100,000, while other buildings equally costly are either under way or contemplated. In western Ontario architects do not take a discouraging view of the future. A \$60,000 hospital is talked of at London, and two buildings of good size will be erected in Hamilton. The bulk of the work in the latter city, however, will consist of residences and alterations to existing buildings. In the vicinity of Stratford a fair amount of building is reported, and at Owen Sound elevator and flour shed extensions comprise the main work. There are a large number of buildings commenced or projected at Rat Portage and other mining towns in north-western Ontario, and in these will be consumed a large amount of lumber, the structures being mostly of frame.

Very few large buildings are likely to be erected this year in Manitoba and British Columbia. A large university building will probably be built at Winnipeg, at a cost of \$60,000. In the Pacific coast province the cheaper class of buildings promise to predominate, particularly in the vicinity of mining operations. From the maritime provinces favorable reports are received, the work now in sight at St. John being greater in extent than for any season for the past ten years.

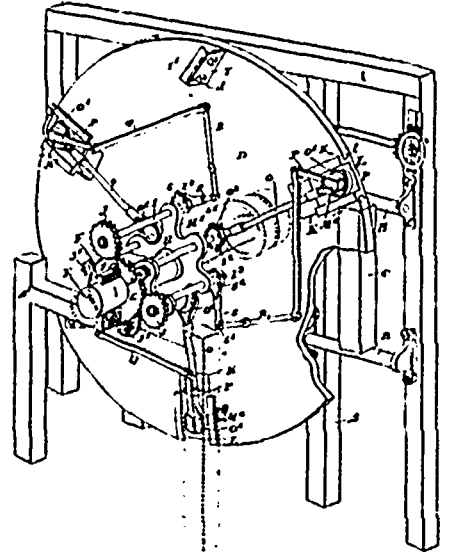
No small amount of material and labor promises to be utilized in 1897 by government work, the appropriation made by the Dominion parliament for canals alone reaching five million dollars. Comparing the situation with past years, we think there is a fair prospect of an improvement in building during the present season. The low price of lumber and other building materials affords a splendid opportunity for speculators to erect good buildings at a very low cost, and it is reasonable to suppose that this fact will be given due consideration by the wise investor, and that projected works will be proceeded with during the present season.

An English exchange states that furniture manufacturers of that country, especially the chair trades, are importing large quantities of American birch timber.

The story is told how a dry kiln failed to give satisfaction. When first built the thermometer showed 200 to 210 degrees of heat in all parts of the kiln, but this temperature ran down gradually until only 140 to 160 degrees could be obtained. Placing a recording thermometer inside the kiln and a recording gauge on the steam supply pipe resulted in the discovery that the fireman was in the habit of closing the steam admission valve in order to favor his boiler. After the fireman was duly warned, and the steam coil, which was badly clogged with grease and dirt, had been cleaned out, the temperature went up to the proper degree again.

## RECENT WOOD-WORKING PATENTS.

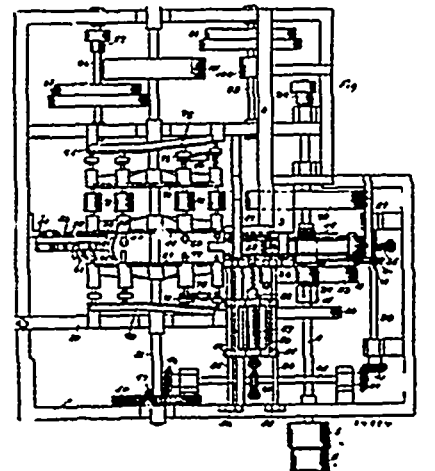
THE following patents for wood-working machines have recently been granted to Canadian inventors:



MACHINE FOR MANUFACTURING EXCELSIOR.

Patentee: H. A. Rider, Toronto, granted 8th February, 1897; 6 years.

Claim. In a machine for making excelsior packing, combination a rotating disc secured on an adjustable shaft, sets of scoring knives equidistant and supported radial guideways, and means for causing reciprocal movement to knives to cause them to travel in a straight line over the chords of the arcs of a concentric circle, and to simultaneously keep them parallel with the chords of each arc from end to end as they rotate. In combination with a rotating disc, supporting blocks peripherally equidistant and provided with side grooves, substantial radial recesses with tongues to fit into the grooves cylindrical discs provided with a plurality of disc-shaped abutting scoring knives, suitably journaled and having cylindrical shanks extending through corresponding holes in supporting blocks, means for reciprocating the blocks supplemental shanks to the disc and arms secured to the supplemental shanks, with connecting rods, eccentric spindles, gear pinions, spur wheel, etc., etc.



WOOD-TURNING MACHINE.

Patentee: Wm. T. Jones, New Westminster, B. C., granted 15th February, 1897; 6 years.

Claim. A wood-turning machine, comprising a series of fixed cutters, a rotary block, means for rotating the blocks relatively to the carrier, saw for severing the block from the strip, and reciprocating frame for holding and operating a boring tool. The combination with a saw, a boring device, and a block carrier, of a block shifter comprising a reciprocating carriage, a fulcrumed lever having a link connection with said carriage, an eccentric shaft, a finger extended radially from said eccentric shaft, and pins arranged at opposite sides of a slot opening in said lever and adapted to be engaged successively by the finger on the eccentric shaft, the pivotal point of said lever being forward of a vertical line through the axis of the eccentric shaft, etc.

H. W. Chamberlain, Ottawa, sash and frame.

Wandell P. Jones, Woodstock, N. B., clapboard, having a tongue on one edge and a rabbet on the other edge, and which, when laid on the wall, exactly resembles the clapboard in common use.

D. M. Macpherson, Lancaster, Ont., box, having a detachable cover, with notches formed in its edges and rotatable holdfasts set in the body of the box, projecting from the upper edge thereof through said notches and having their ends offset to engage said cover, etc.