

proprietors report that they have had a better trade during the past winter and summer than ever before in a similar period of time. The mildness of the weather during the present winter has no doubt made trade better than otherwise it would have been.

The Edgar Thomson Steel Works, with two 7½-ton converters and a single roll train (three high), last year produced 157,513 tons—810 pounds of ingots and rolled 136,605 tons 670 pounds of rails. This is an increase over the previous year's production of ingots of more than 30,000 tons. American Bessemer works turn out about three times as much steel in a given time as English Bessemer works having the same sized converters. This is not only true, but our English friends acknowledge it. Of course this is galling to the spirited islanders, and they are making strenuous efforts to catch up with their New World competitors. When our neighbours north of the lakes commence making Bessemer steel—as of course they will before long, if the National Policy continues to be adhered to,—they may give us a "lively shaking," as they have done in aquatic matters.

During the past fortnight the pig iron market has been exceptionally quiet, there being no pressure to sell, and but little to buy. Prices of foundry varieties are slightly higher, but with this exception there have been no changes. Neutral mill from native ore may be quoted at \$25 to \$26, 4 months' time; cinder-mixed red-short, \$26 to \$27; Bessemer, \$28 to \$30; No. 1 foundry, \$27 to \$28.50; No. 2 foundry, \$26.50 to \$27.50—all 4 months. There is still a great demand for manufactured iron, prices of which are unchanged. Bar 2.50c.; No. 24 sheet, 4.30c.; tank, 3.30c.; C. H. No. 1 boiler plate, 5½c.; homogeneous steel do. 6½c.; hoop iron for common barrel hoop 3.10c. to 3.30c.; lighter sizes, 3.20c. to 5.10c., all 60 days, or 2 per cent. off for cash. Nails in fair demand and unchanged in price. 10d. to 6d., \$3.40, 60 days, or 2 per cent. off for cash, with an abatement of 10 cents per keg on lots of 250 kegs. Pipe and tubes unchanged. Gas and steam-pipe, 55 to 57½ per cent. discount; boiler tubes, 37½ per cent. discount; oil-well casing, 85c. net; do. tubing, 25c. net. Steel is in excellent requirement, and prices without change. Best refined cast, 12c. per lb.; crucible machinery, 8c.; hammercast, 8½c.; hoe, 9c. to 11c. to 12½c., as to quality; spring-cast, 7½c.; tire-cast, 8½c.; fork and rake, 8½c.; hoe, 7½c. Railway trade supplies have been in heavy demand all summer and winter. Prices same as at date of last report, as follows: Spike, 3.15c. per lb.—30 days; splice bars, 2.60c. and track bolts, 3½c. to 4c. for square nut, and 4½c. for hexagon, cash f.o.b., Pittsburgh.

Our Pittsburgh correspondent, writing on the 13th inst., expressed as above the opinion that there would be no change in prices made at Wednesday's meeting of the Western Iron Association. That forecast is confirmed, as will be seen by the following telegraphic despatch:—

PITTSBURGH, Pa., Feb. 15, 1882.

TO CANADIAN MANUFACTURER, Toronto, Canada:—

At the Western Iron Association meeting to-day no change was made in prices. Meeting adjourned to first Wednesday in April.

PHILADELPHIA.

THE EASTERN MARKETS—IRON STEADY AND QUIET—CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION BALANCED—STEEL RAILS DECLINING—LOCAL INDUSTRIES EXPANDED—ELECTRIC LIGHTS—GENERAL BUSINESS—MR. WELL'S OPINION—CANADA'S NATIONAL POLICY.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

PHILADELPHIA, FEB 15, 1882.

Marked changes have occurred in the Eastern Iron market since date of last letter. The general tendency of prices has been in favour of buyers. The market quotations show but little variation. A month ago buyers were everywhere very anxious and rushed in orders to anticipate at once, fearing an advance of prices every hour. Circumstances seemed to justify this apprehension. Demand was very active, production seemed to lag behind, orders seemed to pile up, and everybody wanted more iron and steel than they could get.

The situation is changed. Business is active, mills are busy, buyers are around looking after their supplies, but anxiety has disappeared. The producing interests have demonstrated that there is no occasion for anxiety. It is evident that there will be no surplus for months to come and that prices will lean in favour of sellers more than in favour of buyers. While this is true it must not be forgotten that buyers have chances to run which may turn things in their favour. The greatest chance is—whether a desirable one or not, your correspondent does not assert—it is the possible heavy importation of English and Scotch Iron. Ever since last fall American prices have been creeping up to the dangerous limit.

Last fall it will be remembered the Cleveland and Co. pig iron makers restricted their output 12½ per cent., and that agreement ends the last of March. It is to be supposed production will increase 12½ per cent. after that.

There are 2,000,000 tons surplus stocks in Great Britain. There is much less than one-tenth of that amount here. It is to be supposed that a favourable opportunity will be sought by foreign holders to sell some of their stocks. Last year's total exports of British pig, including Bessemer, was under 300,000 tons, but we started with over 600,000 tons, scarcely any of which we had in January. The American furnaces are expanding their production to meet the domestic demand. Whether they can or not remains to be seen, and whether English and Scotch makers will get 200,000 tons pig into our Atlantic ports this year. It also remains to be seen whether if heavy exportation begins, foreign prices will advance under the demand and thus restrict the shipments. Every consumer of pig iron can draw his own inferences from these facts and probabilities. The strong upward tendency which has controlled the market for several months has disappeared, and prices are stationary in crude iron. No. 1 Foundry can be bought at \$26 for ordinary—and \$27 for best, delivered; No. 2 can be bought from \$24 to \$24.50. Mill irons were contracted for \$22 at furnace, and some lots of the best grades were booked at \$23. Makers will not haul down their flag until the enemy gets closer. Large consumers have in numerous cases within two weeks entered into contracts extending up into summer and even to the fall months. This was done in accordance with the custom prevailing with certain firms, which is to "cover" all contracts at the time they are made, regardless of the price of iron at the time. The great Baldwin Locomotive Establishment pursues this policy, among many others.

The trade desires to avoid all unsettling agitations or fluctuations. There are in blast about 475 furnaces, which is nearly the limit that can be reached.

Very little Bessemer pig has been bought abroad; three weeks ago \$28 was asked. To-day \$26 was accepted and \$25.50; the tendency is downward. Two weeks ago Muck Bar sold at \$48 in some few cases, to-day sales were made at \$46, and \$47 is asked, demand is quite active. The bloomeries are sold up for over two months. Anthracite blooms sold within a week for \$63, delivered. Charcoal blooms are rather scarce even at \$75.

The merchant iron mills are running to their very fullest capacity, and are catching up with demand, which has been out of sight since last July. The store price of bars was increased to 3 cents. Mill price is nominally 2.8 to 2.9. A customer for 500 tons, if told the market was easier, would not know what it meant, if he attempted to place that order. Mills have from 60 to 90 days' work in hand; and work is being presented, but not as freely as a few weeks ago. The Pittsburgh manufacturers, by the time this letter reaches you, will have decided for or against an advance. Construction iron is in active demand at firm prices. The offer of foreign makers of shaped iron to furnish stocks on 30 days delivery is a warning to American makers that they have reached the limits of the market. Railway material is active in large and small lots. Over 100,000 tons have been sold within a period of two (2) weeks at prices varying from \$51.50 to \$58. English makers have relinquished the idea of business until after ocean freights have declined and the risk in foreign orders is over. Iron rails are dull. Old rails are held at \$30.50. Buyers are out of the market. Spikes are \$3.15 per keg. Mills on small material have all the orders they can fill until the first of April. The sheet iron mills are doing their best to keep customers in stocks—quotations 4½ to 5½ for common. Galvanized in active request. The demand for selected scrap enables sellers to command from \$32 to \$35.

Local industries are expanding, and Philadelphia is marching steadily