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THE CANADA LUMBERMAN is published in the interests of the lumber trade and allied industries throughout the Dominion, being the only representative in Canada of this foremost branch of the commerce of this country. It aims at giving full and timely information on all subjects touching these interests, discussing these topics editorially and inviting free discussion by others.

Special pains are taken to secure the latest and most trustworthy market quotations from various points throughout the world, so as to afford to the trade in Canada information on which it can rely in its operations.

Special correspondents in localities of importance present an accurate report not only of prices and the condition of the market, but also of other matters specially interesting to our readers. But correspondence is not only welcome, but is invited from all who have any information to communicate or subjects to discuss relating to the trade or in any way affecting it. Even when we may not be able to agree with the writers, we will give them a fair opportunity for free discussion as the best means of eliciting the truth. Any items of interest are particularly requested, for even if not of great importance individually they contribute to a fund of information from which general results are obtained.

Advertisers will receive careful attention and liberal treatment. We need not point out that for many the CANADA LUMBERMAN, with its special class of readers, is not only an exceptionally good medium for securing publicity, but is indispensable for those who would bring themselves before the notice of that class. Special attention is directed to "WANTED" and "FOR SALE" advertisements, which will be inserted in a conspicuous position at the uniform price of 15 cents per line for each insertion. Announcements of this character will be subject to a discount of 25 per cent. if ordered for four successive issues or longer.

Subscribers will find the small amount they pay for the CANADA LUMBERMAN quite insignificant as compared with its value to them. There is not an individual in the trade, or specially interested in it, who should not be on our list, thus obtaining the present benefit and aiding and encouraging us to render it even more complete.

LUMBER PRICES.

FIFTY years ago the timber supply of the North American Continent was much greater in extent than it is to-day. Each succeeding year saw a diminution in the quantity of standing timber, and naturally with this diminution and the fluctuation in the demand came a readjustment of the prices of lumber from time to time. A pamphlet issued by the Treasury Department of the Bureau of Statistics of the United States gives some figures of the average wholesale selling price of lumber for the past sixty years which are exceedingly interesting and suggestive.

The average price of extra clear white pine boards in 1840 was \$24 per thousand feet. This price remained unchanged for about 20 years, after which it advanced within four years to \$40, and since that time the range has been from \$35 to \$48. This latter figure was only reached in 1899. Within forty years, therefore, the price of the best quality of pine lumber has advanced 100 per cent.

White pine boards of common quality were selling in 1840 at \$10.50 per thousand. From 1864 to 1874 the price ranged from \$16 to \$22, the latter figure in 1873, and the highest point which has yet been reached for common pine. Since 1874 there has been no sustained advance, the price ranging from \$14 to \$17, with slight fluctuations from year to year. In 1899 the price was \$16, but in the previous five years from \$12 to \$14. The advance in the price of common boards within the sixty years under review has been only slightly in excess of 50 per cent.

The figures for cull white pine boards cover

less than the last 40 years, during which time there has been no substantial advance, the price ranging from \$9 to \$17, the latter in 1873. The lowest point was reached in 1876, since which time the price has recovered about \$4 per thousand.

The price of pine doors, 2 ft. 4 in. x 6 ft. 8 in., 1 1/4 in. thick, has declined within the sixty years. In 1840 the price per door was \$1.75, and in 1899 \$1.15. The highest price, \$2.25 per door, prevailed in 1874. For the next ten years the price ruled about \$2, since which time it gradually declined, until 80 cents was reached in 1896. Thus while lumber prices generally have advanced, doors have been produced at a lower cost. This is doubtless due largely to the introduction of improved machinery and manufacturing methods.

An advance of \$3 has been made within the period in the price of hemlock, \$9 being the quotation in 1840, and \$12 in 1899. The high point of \$16 was reached in 1871, and the low point of \$8 in 1896.

Very little change has taken place in the price of first quality maple boards, the selling price for the past 40 years being from \$20 to \$24. Oak boards advanced sharply from 1855 to 1865, selling from \$10 to \$30 in that period and advancing gradually until 1899, when the highest price of \$36 was reached.

The price of shingles has shown a wide variation, the lowest point within sixty years for 16 inch XXX being \$1.90 in 1846, and the highest point \$5.10 in 1868. From 1864 to 1874 prices ranged from \$3.50 to \$5.00, gradually declining for the next eight years, then selling at about \$3.00 until 1891, when they declined and sold at \$2.60 until 1898, when there was an advance to \$2.85.

Recapitulating, it will be seen that the best quality of lumber is bringing considerably higher prices to-day than some years ago, while common lumber is but slightly higher. This is the natural result of the decreased production of the higher grades of lumber and the consequent increase in the production of the lower grades. The timber now available produces a smaller quantity of high grade lumber than did the timber of, say, forty years ago. The higher prices now ruling are justified to the fullest extent by the changed conditions. Indeed, it is a matter of surprise that within the period named greater advances have not taken place. The enhanced value of stumpage is alone an item which represents a considerable increase in the cost of producing lumber.

WHAT OF SPRUCE LUMBER?

PERHAPS there is no class of lumber for which the market is more uncertain than spruce. It has been subject to violent fluctuations in price, but has usually recovered the declines in a comparatively short time. The summer of 1899 was one of some depression, while last year spruce prices were higher. So far this season the market has been most uncertain, with the tendency in the direction of lower prices, particularly for British specifications.

Spruce, although quite serviceable, is a lumber which does not occupy an exclusive field. It meets with competition from yellow pine, hemlock, and other cheaper woods which cannot fill

the place of white pine. Consequently when the market weakens the effect is immediately discernible in spruce prices.

While as lumber spruce is not particularly favored, it does occupy a unique position as a pulp wood; in fact, it may be said to be the only eminently satisfactory timber for the manufacture of pulp. Large purchases by pulp manufacturers have recently had a marked influence on the price of spruce timber. In the Eastern States, where there are a number of pulp mills, spruce logs have changed hands at \$16 per thousand feet board measure.

While at times the spruce lumber market may exhibit signs of weakness, it is well for holders of stock to remember that the spruce lands will each year be drawn upon to an increased extent to furnish the raw material for pulp mills. The curtailment of its production should also be given consideration by lumbermen whenever there are indications of an abnormal supply.

THE RIVERS AND STREAMS ACT.

IN another column is printed a most important judgment affecting the tolls which may be charged by lumbermen for improvements to rivers and streams for the purpose of facilitating the floating of logs. The case was an application under the Rivers and Streams Act to fix the tolls on South Creek, in the District of Haliburton. It is believed to be the first case of the kind in which a decision has been reasoned out by a judge, and the principles on which tolls should be fixed given.

One of the most important claims made by the applicants was that a section of the Timber and Companies' Act should be applied when, as in this case, all the improvements were used by the respondent's logs, while the applicants only used for the bulk of their logs two of the lower sections. We are not aware that this point has been brought up before. The decision, it seems, is really in favor of the applicants, as, though treating the improvements as all one construction, the judge has charged the respondents a larger proportion than would have been the case if all had used the improvements equally.

A second claim made by the applicants was that the company building the improvements and running the risk of fire, or destruction of these improvements, were entitled to some allowance in that respect by the company who came in after the applicants had run the risk for two seasons. This point the judge did not think was within his province to decide under the wording of the statute. The judgment is an interesting one and will probably form a precedent for lumbermen if it should be upheld on appeal.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

FREIGHT rates represent a very heavy charge against much of the lumber exported from Canada. Last season rates were unusually high, but the indications are that they will be more reasonable this year. The Pacific coast is handicapped by freights on European shipments, while obtaining an advantage over eastern Canada in catering to the markets of Japan, China and Australia. From five to six months is usually occupied by lumber vessels in making the trip from British Columbia to the United Kingdom, three months