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ARTHUR G. MORTIMER.

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TO VISITING LUMBERMEN.

LUMBERMEN visiting Toronto are invited to use the office of the LUMBERMAN as their own. We shall take pleasure in supplying them with every convenience for receiving and answering their correspondence, and hold ourselves at their service in any other way that they may desire.

PROTECTION TO SHANTYMEN

THE Lumbermen's Lien act carried through the recent session of the Ontario Legislature by the Commissioner of Crown Lands is designed to give to shantymen the same privileges as are extended to other workmen under the Mechanics' Lien act. It provides that wages shall be deemed a first charge on all logs and shall have precedence of all other claims or liens thereon.

In principle the measure is sound. Experience has proved that special legislation for the protection of those, who of themselves, are powerless against unscrupulous employers, has become a necessity. This particular bill, however, contains several clauses that, whilst aimed to protect one class of the community in particular, bears unfairly on another class, who unfortunately at the present time feel that their lot is not an easy one.

The bill is made to be operative only in the Algoma, Thunder Bay and the Rainy River districts—the border districts. Here, it is alleged, is the greater temptation for sharp practices on the part of jobbers, who will see an opportunity to hurry their logs out of the country, too often without paying the men who have done the burden of the work, the wages earned. While cases of this kind have occurred and have been more common to the districts named in the bill than elsewhere, it does not follow that like fraudulent acts may not be committed in other lumbering sections. In the discussion in the House preceding the passing of the measure it was pointed out by Mr. Wood that there were complaints of dishonest jobbers in the Trent and Moira districts. Mr. Dunlop said there was a desire for a bill of this nature in the Ottawa district, and Mr. White cited reasons for its extension to Essex. But aside entirely from local reasons, if the principle of the bill is sound, it should be general in its application. It should not be a case of waiting until irregularities show themselves in a community before a law already in existence is made to apply to that particular locality. This looks too much like locking the stable door after the horse is stolen.

The clause which will operate most severely on the lumbering interests is that which says that "such lien shall remain and be in force against such logs or timber in whosoever possession the same shall be found." It is not denied that there are men engaged as jobbers in lumbering, who, like those in many other lines of commerce, are working on a limited capital. They are just as honest as the men who have ten times the capital, and because of their known honesty credit is given them on the logs or timber they buy, pending the closing of sales on their part. Now, if the lumberer who gives this credit has got to take the additional risk of having a possible wage bill tacked on to his account and the very logs for which he has not yet got his pay, seized and perhaps sold at a sacrifice, through

no dishonest intent, but the unforeseen misfortune of the jobber, he is very apt to draw a strict line in future on the matter of credits, and the consequence will be the crowding out of business of many deserving men and honest jobbers. Even though the jobber should never have done otherwise than pay every cent of wages he has ever contracted he will be treated in the same way as the rascal who goes into the business with full purpose of "doing up" workmen and everybody else. When business men establish rules, forced on them by exceptional circumstances, the rules have to be general to all.

This phase of the matter is further aggravated by another clause which provides that if "such labor or services be performed or done on or after 1st day of April and before 1st day of October in any year," then action in law can be commenced within twenty days after the last day such labor or services were performed. Here we are at the close of the season and it would not be difficult for those troublesomely disposed to cause action to be entered against a jobber for the one purpose of having the logs held long enough to make it impossible, owing to the setting in of severe weather, to have them carried through to their destination that winter. Even if such action were entered with a proper purpose, serious loss on all hands would follow in the same way.

The lumbermen are not forgetful of various wise measures of the Provincial government helpful to their interests, noting specially their recent action making it a condition of timber sales that all logs cut in the territory disposed of shall be manufactured in Canada.

It is a disappointment in this latest measure that the objectionable features referred to were not at least modified and still the general principle of the bill which all lumbermen we believe approve of, preserved.

FOREST PRESERVATION.

THE tendency of human nature is to "put off," so long as the worse results that we know will eventually follow some given course of action, have not actually developed. We see this illustrated in the case of tree planting having in view the preservation and renewal of our forests.

The possibility of a scarcity of timber in this country of so much wood is passed over as the dream of an idealist or the vaporings of a mere theorist. Yet, with the inroads that are being made in our forests to-day, the time may not be so remote as we anticipate, and we will wake up too late to reap the gain that would have come from a little prudent forethought, and less of the indifference of the present day.

Much careful reflection has been given to this subject by Mr. Phipps, of the Forestry Department of the Ontario Government. In his latest report he suggests as a practical method to encourage tree planting, the opening of a large public nursery, where trees might be obtained free of cost, and that under a system of free saplings, twenty times as much planting would be done as at present. This proposition involves an expenditure of public money, which Mr. Phipps justifies in this way. "The work is national; it is the nation that desires the farmer to plant trees; it was the fault of the nation that he was ever allowed to obtain public land at first without an agreement to retain a certain portion in trees." The great error of the original settlers, he says, was taking hill and hollow, mountain and vale, indiscriminately, with the result that many mountain tops were cleared, farmed and ruined by the washing away of the soil. "That the mountain should be wooded and the sloping valley cropped, is the very A B C of forestry."

Captain Eads, an American writer on the subject refers to the indiscriminate destruction of forests in his country in the following vigorous and picturesque manner: "The United States is tearing out the heart of the country with her gang ploughs and throwing it into the Mississippi river."

The testimony of 200 farmers has been given to prove that years ago, when there was still much timber standing, most crops gave a far better return than since more has been cleared.

This is a very practical side of the question—one

that involves dollars and cents, and should weigh against the measure of sentiment that some of our too utilitarian people think surrounds this question. Otherwise future generations may rise up not to bless us, but mad enough to consign us to some unmentionable region where fire wood is supposed to be more everlasting than Canadian woods may have proved to be.

THE QUESTION OF DUTY.

OPINIONS differ among lumbermen as to the wisdom of removing the duty on logs going into the United States. Two separate interests come into conflict with each other. The mill men see only a curtailment of the work of their mills and a transference of this labor to Michigan mills. The owners of timber limits on the other hand are already feeling the impetus that the abolition of the duty is giving to the sale of their logs and lumber; and that these sales are running into large figures there can be no question. THE LUMBERMAN has taken some trouble to enquire on this point, and finds that here both mill owners and owners of limits are at one. We give a few figures that will be suggestive of what is being done in exporting. N. Holland, of the Saginaw Lumber and Salt Company will export 30,000,000 feet from Canada; J. W. Howry & Son, of Saginaw, 20,000,000; and Sibly & Bearinger as many more; about 35,000,000 will be taken from Lake Superior, and Alger, Smith & Co., will raft about 80,000,000 feet from Algoma.

The workmen recognizing what this means are agitating for a reimposition of the duty, and it is possible that at the present session of the Dominion House the matter may be taken up. But this is only one view. It does not follow, nor is it likely, that the large quantities of logs that will be rafted across the border would, if the export duty were reimposed, be cut in Canada. Some will be, but the larger quantity would remain in *statu quo*.

There is the other important phase of the question that cannot be left out in a fair consideration of the entire problem, viz: That whatever drawback does exist as a result of the abolition of the export duty, is it not more than offset by the gain in the lessening of the import duty on Canadian lumber going into the States? Let our government reimpose the duty on logs, and the United States government, it is believed, would at once retaliate by again clapping on the import duty on lumber.

It would seem to be the consensus of opinion that it was unnecessary—and it was not asked for—for our government when removing the duty on pine logs, to have also included spruce. One large Canadian concern, the E. B. Eddy Manufacturing Co., of Hull, has already interviewed the government and asked for a reimposition of the duty on this product. They use spruce in their sulphite fibre works, where by a simple process of treatment with sulphuric acid, the wood of the spruce is converted into sulphite fibre, from which the finest qualities of paper are made. The products from the works, which average 300 tons monthly, finds a ready market in Canada and the United States. The company, however, is already being handicapped because of the Americans coming over here and buying up all the available spruce. It is a serious injustice to the lumber interests of New Brunswick where the larger portion of spruce is found, while no advantage to offset this loss is presented. In the new department of the LUMBERMAN, "Eli," it will be interesting, and not without its funny side, to read the various views of the trade on this and kindred questions. There one can "speak right out in meetin'."

Among the questions that the census enumerators are instructed to ask are the following regarding the products of the forest; Number of square cubic feet of white or red pine, oak, birch and maple, elm, black or other walnut, and hickory produced for the census year; cubic feet of square or sided tamarac and all other timber; number of standard pine or spruce logs, spars and masts, thousands of staves, cords of lathwood, tan bark, firewood, pulpwood, and number of fence posts, railway ties, telegraph poles, and thousands of shingles taken out.