

*By the Chairman :*

Q. It all came about as the result of the supervision by your association?—A. Well, of course, I don't think so.

*By Mr. Crocket :*

Q. Did you make any statement, Mr. Sprague, with reference to the conduct of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company in relation to the association?—A. Well, that matter was brought up before the committee and I have Mr. Whyte's interview in reference to that and all the correspondence that took place in connection with it.

Q. That is between the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, Mr. Whyte, vice-president, and the association?—A. And myself.

Q. As president or as an officer of the association?—A. Well, no, I did not do it as president, but this correspondence has several illustrations of the price of lumber, that is the cost of lumber delivered at Winnipeg, and I don't know whether there were any other points or not, the prices realized to the manufacturer, the amount of freight that was paid on it, what it cost the consumer, and of course the profit that the retail dealer made out of it. I think that in view of this matter having been brought up if you will allow me I will put the statement in. It is quite lengthy and you will not care probably to have it all read, but it is something I can put in because I have knowledge of all the circumstances.

Q. Well, the matter has been gone into before the committee?—A. Yes.

Q. Have you got the correspondence there?—A. Yes, I have it all here.

Q. Well, I suppose that can go in and be made part of the record?—A. I think Mr. Chairman that there would be something in it because here is a statement of the number of cars in Vancouver on September 19.

*By the Chairman :*

Q. What correspondence is that?—A. With Mr. Whyte at the time he gave the interview as to prices.

Q. That they were going into the milling business?—A. Yes, they were going into the milling business.

The CHAIRMAN.—You can put it in if you have the whole thing.

‘ EXHIBIT No. 158.

‘ *Manitoba Free Press*, Winnipeg, Friday, January 8, 1904.

‘ C.P.R. will fight lumber combine.

‘ Railway company propose to establish big saw-mills and to offer lumber for sale through agents if present mill-owners and retailers do not come down to reasonable basis.

‘ Vice-President Whyte interviewed.

‘ Discussing with the representative of the *Free Press*, the matter of the probable immigration and development in the west during the coming year, Mr. William Whyte, second vice-president of the C.P.R., yesterday pointed out that the supply and price of lumber must have a marked influence on the movement of people to the west, Mr. Whyte stated that the first want of every settler before he can make a home for himself is lumber for his house and other buildings, and cheap lumber means a great deal to the newcomer. “Unfortunately,” said Mr. Whyte at the present time there is ample evidence that the owners of saw-mills and retail dealers in lumber are endeavouring to maintain high prices for lumber and surround the retail business with restrictions which tend to influence the market. It may be possible, as claimed, that there is no combine among the mill-owners, but there certainly is an arrangement with the retail dealers' association under which that association dictates as to the location and number of retail lumber yards, and thus practically controls the market and dictates the selling price.