

concern is getting this advantage and is even laying down the cement in American bottoms, and is even getting American sand when millions of barrels could be found on the Canadian side, so that Canadians seem to be getting no advantage whatever from this work. While I do not want to weary the House by reading newspaper items, I think it would be only right that I should quote from the Detroit 'Free Press' of May 6. You would hardly expect a prominent American newspaper, such as that—although of course it has a large Canadian circulation—which has American interests at heart would be inclined to publish anything of the kind, but evidently the question was such a prominent one that they could not help taking notice of it. This article is headed 'Canadian labour gets the raw deal.' The hon. minister knows the facts. I know the district very well, and so far as I have been able to gain information there from prominent contractors, our people are convinced that they are getting a raw deal in this matter. This is the article:

CANADA LABOUR GETS RAW DEAL.

Tunnel workers mostly Italians who risk their lives for small wages.

If the investigation into the construction of the Canadian approach of the Michigan Central tunnel, which Mr. Clements, M.P., for West Kent, promises to push to the limit in the Dominion parliament, really goes deep enough, there will be other things discovered that the good people of Canada will not be pleased about,' said a resident of Windsor who has been quietly assisting to dig up facts that will throw light on the affair.

I have reason to believe, for instance, that the contractors have taken advantage of the depression in the labour market, and have cut wages to a point that is not justified by the conditions under which they are working. They took the contract at a time when labour was in keen demand and wages were good, and of course their bid was on the basis of the cost of labour at that time. They get their money with as much certainty and regularity as if they had it coming from the Bank of England, and yet, with no reason except to make a few more dollars, they are now paying labour, I am credibly informed, far less than they expected to pay when they bid for the work, and less than they could possibly hire men for if there was not a scarcity of work.

Risk lives at cheap price.

For instance, I am told that they have had a gang of men working at the bottom of a 90-foot shaft sunk on the Canadian river bank, and in the tunnel that they are drifting out from that, for a wage as low as \$1.75 a day. Think of it. Working men in a hole 90 feet under ground, where they take their lives in their hands every minute, they are down there, for 17½ cents an hour.

I am informed also that if they have not actually imported Italians to work on the tunnel, they have at least been successful in hiring a good many, and that they are hiring as few Canadian labourers as possible. In other words, Canada seems to be getting the worst

Mr. CLEMENTS.

of the deal not only in the matter of furnishing material and losing its rightful import duties, but in the matter of labour of all kinds that the contractors have to give out, and at a time too when Canadian labourers most need work.

I want to draw attention to this item also:

United States made no concessions.

John B. Whelan, collector of customs for the port of Detroit, stated in reply to questions yesterday, that practically no material has been imported from Canada for use in the construction of the American end of the tunnel, practically the only exception being a few timbers, which, as has already been stated, can be purchased cheaper in Canada than in the United States. He confirmed the statement that the United States customs department has made no such concessions as that made the contractors by the Dominion government, and that if any material had been imported for use on the tunnel approach this side of the water's edge, the full duty would have been charged on it, as was the case on both sides of the river in the construction of the Port Huron tunnel.

The appointment of Mr. Wallace as special officer in Windsor to pass on the tunnel company's importations of United States material into Canada is causing as much comment there as any other feature of the affair, but Collector Smith was very indignant over the publication of the fact in this connection. Mr. Smith says all is straight.

Mr. Smith is a very prominent gentleman there connected with party politics and evidently thinks more of looking after the elections than of his situation:

There was nothing either irregular or unusual in that appointment, he declared. The ferry company pays the salaries of the customs officers so far as they are necessary to run the boats on Sundays and after hours, and when the steamer 'Hattie' was running to Wolf's resort, where we do not of course have a regular officer stationed, we sent a special man there and the owners of the boat stood the expense. In the case of the tunnel company, they wanted their material put through without delay, and we did not always have a man that we could send on time, so they asked for a special man with the understanding, of course, that they should stand the expense. The appointment of Wallace was made in the regular way through the authorities at Ottawa.

Did any one connected with the tunnel suggest the name of Wallace? he asked.

I tell you the appointment was made in the regular way, and how many times do you want me to repeat it.

It seems to me that our Customs Department has been giving privileges it should not give, even under item 596, so far as taking material across the river is concerned. I should not take up time in reading all the different rulings which are to be found in the return I moved for. The Manufacturers' Association of Canada complain that the same advantages have not been extended to us as we have extended to the Americans under item 596 of our cus-