

## LUMBERMEN IN THE LEGISLATURE.

## How the Industry is Represented in the Ontario House.

Ever since the organization of the Ontario Legislature, the lumber interest has been well and ably represented in its membership, as is only reasonable in the case of so important an industry and one from which so large a share of the public revenue is derived. Latterly questions affecting the trade have not been so prominent as during the earlier years of Confederation, and the more recent struggle over the Rivers and Streams bill, but though the lumbermen of the present House may be less conspicuously brought under the public attention than formerly, they are none the less an important and useful factor in legislation.

The member most extensively engaged in the lumber trade is Mr. Erskine H. Bronson, of the firm of Bronson & Weston. Mr. Bronson is a new member of the House, having been first returned for Ottawa at the general election of 1886. He is an American by birth but has been a resident in Ottawa for many years. His father H. T. Bronson in the year 1853 manufactured the first lumber cut in Ottawa for the American market, and since that period the Bronsons have been continuously engaged in the business. Mr. E. H. Bronson has been actively identified with the industry for about twenty years. The firm own extensive mills at the Chaudiere, and are among the largest limit-holders in the country. They operate on about half a dozen of the tributaries of the Ottawa River, and their total output amounts to about 55,000,000 feet per year. Mr. Bronson has always taken an active part in public affairs, having been a member of the Ottawa city council for seven years and occupied a seat at the School Board for twice that period. He contested Carleton for the Commons in 1882, but was unsuccessful. His return as a supporter of the Mowat government for Ottawa, a constituency previously supposed to be a forlorn hope, was one of the most remarkable features of the contest of '86. Mr. Bronson's long municipal and business experience make him a valuable acquisition to the House. He expresses himself satisfied with the present timber policy of the administration. He is in favor of unrestricted free trade as between Canada and the United States, but opposed to Commercial Union, that is any arrangement which would give the Americans power to regulate our tariff as against other nations. Mr. Bronson is a member of the special committee asked for by Mr. Meredith's motion respecting timber preservation and mineral development. He occupies a seat at the end of the first row of government benches.

Immediately next to Mr. Bronson sits Mr. Thomas Murray, of North Renfrew. Mr. Murray is a veteran politician on the Liberal side, and a representative Irish-Canadian. He was first returned to the Provincial legislature in 1869, since which he has fought several hard contests with varying success in both Dominion and local elections. He has represented North Renfrew almost constantly since '79. Mr. Murray is a member of the firm of T. & W. Murray, whose headquarters are at Pembroke. In addition to mercantile business they are largely interested in lumbering, owning and operating limits on Black River, on the Northern side of the Ottawa. They purchased at the late government timber sale berth No. 1, in Biggar township, one of the most valuable sold, and intend to operate there next season. Mr. Murray has been engaged in lumbering more or less during the last twenty years, and has a thorough practical acquaintance with the industry in all its phases. Last session he introduced the bill for the better regulation of mixed drives, which became law and has proved a useful measure.

Another legislator and lumberman of long standing on the government side of the House is Mr. Robert Adam Lyon, of East Algoma, a Scotchman by birth but a resident in Canada since boyhood. Mr. Lyon resides at Michael's Bay, on the south side of Manitoulin Island. He is manager of the Michael's Bay Lumber Co., which has from \$100,000 to \$150,000 invested in lumbering on Manitoulin. They ship a large amount of cedar to Chicago in addition to manufacturing pine lumber for the Canadian market. The annual output of lumber is from 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 feet of sawn pine, 200,000 ties, 200,000 block paving posts and 10,000 telegraph poles. Mr. Lyon was first returned for Algoma in '78, and since the constituency was divided he has represented the Eastern riding. Before the extension of the railway system Mr. Lyon was obliged annually to make a journey of 300 miles on snow-shoes, in order to reach the nearest point of railroad connection which would bring him to Toronto, and regularly undertook his long tramp every winter for eight years. Mr. Lyon states that the supply of timber at Michael's Bay is nearly exhausted, owing more, however, to the ravages of fire than any other cause. His view is that the soundest economy which could be pursued by the government would be to sell the timber as rapidly as possible, invest the money and let the lumbermen take measures to protect their property from fire.

In case this is not done he favors stricter means for protecting the forests from destruction by bush fires.

Mr. James Clancy, of West Kent, occupies a seat about midway down the front row of the opposite benches. He has been operating in Kent since 1879, in getting out hardwood timber for the American and Quebec markets, but the supply in that section is now practically exhausted. Oak and walnut were lately shipped in large quantities from Kent, but little hardwood timber of a merchantable character remains except elm and hickory. Mr. Clancy's other interests now occupy most of his attention.

Mr. James Rayside who represents Glengarry, and, as it is almost superfluous to add, is a Scotch-Canadian, is an extensive sawmill proprietor and lumber operator. He was until lately a member of the firm of McArthur & Rayside, who owned a mill at Lancaster, in addition one at Coteau Station, at the junction of the Canada Atlantic and Grand Trunk. On the dissolution of the company one year ago, Mr. Rayside retained the Coteau mill. The output is from 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 feet, principally basswood and ash. Mr. Rayside also supplies the mills up the line of Canada Atlantic.

There are few if any members of the Provincial Legislature who have had a wider or more varied knowledge of public and commercial affairs than Col. Alpheus F. Wood, of North Hastings. He sits well up in the second row on the Conservative side. Col. Wood was for many years engaged in lumbering, and owned a saw mill in Trehvir, Hastings county. He was reeve of Madoc for 19 years, and warden of the county of Hastings for a term of ten years, in addition to holding other responsible positions. Col. Wood is a brother of Hon. S. Casey Wood, formerly provincial treasurer. He is president of the recently organized Hastings Lumber Manufacturing Co., the headquarters of which is at Madoc. In addition to purchasing logs and manufacturing lumber, the company buys lumber manufactured by portable engines, which reach many localities that are not served by stationary saw mills. They will operate extensively in the Northern portion of the County of Hastings. Col. Wood regards the policy of the administration in regard to the timber as a mistaken one in some respects. He thinks that the House should be consulted before timber limits are disposed of, and regards the increased prices received at the recent timber sales as an evidence that greater caution in disposing of so valuable a source of revenue should be exercised. Even were the government in want of money, he considers that it might be good economy to borrow rather than to part with timber cutting privileges likely to increase enormously in value before many years. Apart from this the most important change in the system, he thinks, would be the adoption of some system whereby the timber upon many thousands of acres which have been burned over might be saved. The lumber injured by fire in this manner is not sufficiently valuable to make it worth while for the lumbermen to pay full due upon it and float it to market. Col. Wood's opinion is that there should be some provision by which this partly damaged timber, not valuable to the licensee, should pass into the hands of the settler at a low figure, other wise it will soon become absolutely worthless. Local saw mills should have greater facilities than at present. Col. Wood is a member of the Committee proposed by Mr. Meredith, to enquire into forest preservation and mineral development, and should the resolution carry his practical experience in lumbering operations will prove of invaluable service. Though not a brilliant speaker, he is undoubtedly one of the most useful members of the House, and whenever he speaks it is directly to the point and he is consequently always listened to attentively.

Orson J. Phelps, of Centre Simcoe, is the oldest lumberman in the Legislature, having been engaged in the industry for 35 years. Mr. Phelps is an American but came to Canada while quite young. He served as a volunteer in the rebellion of 1837. Mr. Phelps has filled numerous municipal offices, and in 1881 was warden of the County of Simcoe. He was first returned for the Legislature for West Simcoe in 1883, and was chosen for his present constituency at the last general election. He is a member of the lumbering firm of N. & O. J. Phelps, who some eighteen years ago purchased extensive timber limits and real estate in Simcoe county, and have since that time carried on an extensive business in lumber manufacturing. They have two mills, one at Phelpsston, in the township of Flos, Simcoe county, and the other at Merrittton, on the Welland Canal. Their output of lumber amounts to between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 feet per year. In politics Mr. Phelps is a Liberal. He approves of the government's timber policy. He does not think it is possible to preserve the timber effectively from fire, holding that with the advance of settlement the danger must be an ever-increasing one, and that the best thing to be done is to realize on the timber as quickly as possible and let limit-holders take their chances. He is disposed, however, to favor a stringent law imposing a fine upon all campers who do not extinguish their fires. Mr.

Phelps does not favor Commercial Union, regarding the scheme now advocated by Erastus Wiman as an impossible one. He would like to see reciprocity in natural products, but regards the prospect as visionary, because the Americans would never be disposed to grant it. Mr. Phelps expects shortly to retire from active lumbering operations, as the supply in the neighborhood of his Simcoe mill is about exhausted.

Mr. James Connice, of West Algoma, who has been a member of the House since 1885, is extensively engaged in lumbering operations in that territory. He is an ardent Liberal and a ready, fluent speaker. Among others who are or have been lumbermen, though also engaged in other pursuits, are Mr. William Lees, of South Lanark, a farmer and mill owner; Mr. Isaac James Gould, of North Ontario, who is also engaged in agriculture and milling; and Mr. John Fell, of East Victoria, who was for about sixteen years operating at Fenelon Falls, but gave up the business some two years since.

## The Wood Trade in Germany.

According to a Berlin report an enormous trade was done during the year 1886 in wood for building purposes and in building material. Very large quantities of wood had been imported in 1885, before the raised customs duties came into force, and large additional importations of foreign wood added to the stock on hand. At the beginning of 1886 the prices were consequently low, but very soon all this changed, for never before has there been a year in which so many new buildings were constructed. An unexampled activity prevailed at Berlin, Hamburg, Kiel, Cologne, Munich, and numerous towns in Baden, &c., and the almost innumerable saw mills of Germany were so fully occupied that they could hardly supply the demand. Kiel alone imported no less than 104,000 cubic metres of wood, worth four million marks. At the close of the third quarter of the year nearly the whole of the immense stock had been used up. But wood was not only in demand for building purposes, a great deal was required for railway sleepers, and more particular for cask staves, on account of the exceptionally large production of spirits, the wood for these cask staves is imported from Hungary. In consequence of the unusual demand the sales of wood from the State forests yielded handsome results, the prices realised having exceeded the limits of the sale prices by 5 to 10 per cent. At the close of 1886 there was still the greatest activity prevailing, the saw mills being fully and uninterruptedly occupied. Many forests in the interior, hitherto inaccessible to trade, have been utilized by the making of good roads and by laying down temporary rails; saw mills have been constructed in the midst of forests, where the boards are now being prepared ready for use, all of which naturally saves time and money. It is quite expected that it will be found at the end of the year 1887 that it rivals its predecessors in the way of building operations, which, if piece only continues to reign, will subsequently take still grander proportions. The tile and cement factories of Germany display, of course, an equal amount of activity, and prices become gradually very remunerative. Of cement, Germany exported very considerable quantities in 1886, which, in consequence of the low sea freights, rose to no less than 3,659,915 double centners. America and the Indies are vast consumers of German cement. The lime and mortar works likewise did a very good business.—*The Chamber of Commerce Journal*.

## Canadian Shipments.

The Ottawa district of Canada is by far the largest and most important shipping point for the lumber of the Dominion, and the following figures corroborate the statistics heretofore published as to the extent of Canadian shipments, and show that the exports to the United States for 1887 did not exceed the average for the past ten years, viz., 500,000,000 feet. The average value of the lumber shipped in 1887 was \$13.17 at the ports of shipment, so far as the Ottawa district was concerned.

We are under obligations to the United States Consul at Ottawa for the following figures:

Total exports of sawed pine lumber to the United States from the Ottawa Valley district for the calendar year of 1887 as declared through the following consulates.

|            | Feet.       | Value.         | All other wood products value. |
|------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Ottawa     | 182,847,613 | \$2,628,444.45 | \$155,459                      |
| Greenville | 39,693,339  | 262,393.21     | 30,466                         |
| Prescott   | 9,497,863   | 116,513.23     | 4,192                          |
| Brockville | 36,747,472  | 429,679.64     | 33,152                         |
|            | 260,788,307 | \$3,436,030.53 | \$223,299                      |

Of the above 33,648,348 feet, value, \$610,796, was exported in bond for re-exportation.

Negotiations are said to be in progress by which the creditors of R. J. Stewart propose to buy out the lumber mills, limits, etc., of Grier & Co., of Ottawa, which are said to be worth in the neighborhood of one million dollars.