

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S REPORT.



HE annual report of Lord Strathcona, the Canadian High Commissioner, has been published and contains much of interest to the Canadian pulp and paper manufacturer. Owing to the fact that the British Board of Trade returns do not specify importations of wood pulp from Canada, the Commissioner is unable to measure the extent of the trade, but he is assured, however, by those engaged in the trade, that Canadian sulphite pulp is liked by most buyers who have placed sample orders. Though that is the case, he further understands that there will have to be some improvements in it before Canadian manufacturers can hope to oust the Scandinavian article from the market. Canadian makers will have to study uniformity in quality and in moisture. This want of uniformity is a serious fault, which Canadian makers underestimate. It is because the Scandinavians are fully alive to the importance of it that they are able to command the market.

Canadian mechanical pulp, the report states, is popular, but it would be in greater demand if it were covered with cheap canvas instead of being shipped in loose bundles. Without cover and with 50 per cent. moisture, the pulp absorbs the dirt and dust at quay sides, and the loss from this cause would go far to pay for the canvas covering.

The report further adds: "Some correspondents seem inclined to enter into a discussion upon the position of Canada and the United States in regard to this trade. Various suggestions have been made to me by which Canada might command the business. One is that a duty should be levied on pulp wood exported from Canada. A step of this kind, it is claimed, would stop the import of paper into England from the United States, which tends to interfere with the use of Canadian pulp by the makers here, owing to the low prices at which American paper is placed on the market."

Passages are quoted from a number of letters from correspondents, among which are the following:

"We beg to say we are of opinion that a duty on pulp wood on leaving Canada would stop the import of paper into England from the United States, and give that trade to Canada. Our experience is that Canada can compete with Scandinavia in the export of wood pulp to England and hold her own, so if she can do this, she will equally as well be able to compete with Scandinavia in the supply of paper to this country. The keenest competition in the pulp trade is to supply mechanical pulp for newspaper and wall paper manufacturing, and for this purpose the Canadian spruce pulp is superior.

"The low price at which the United States are dumping their paper on England is interfering very much with the English paper mills, and consequently with our import of Canadian pulp, so that the Americans are getting your wood, and, with the manufactured paper, spoiling your English demand for pulp. We have to bring the pulp over with 50 per cent. water, so that the cost of freight on the extra ton of water to each ton of pulp enables the States (by shipping paper, and so saving most of this extra freight and the cost of pressing the pulp) to ruin the English mills, and consequently stop the demand for Canadian pulp. There is a grand future in our paper and pulp

trade for Canada if she does not allow the States to deprive her of the full benefit of her forests."

An Englishman, who recently visited Canada to enquire into the possibility of developing trade in paper between the Dominion and Great Britain, is the author of the following quotation from the Commissioner's report:

"I am quite certain, after seeing for myself the vast timber tracts and water resources of the Eastern Provinces, that Canada need fear no rival so long as wood remains the cheapest material for paper making, and it is certainly a pity that the United States are allowed to deplete her best forests for the benefit of paper makers outside Canada, where, despite the low prices of certain grades of paper here, she could secure good profits and give employment to large bodies of workmen by manufacturing pulp and paper on a large scale herself.

"For the successful achievement of the ends in view it is necessary that paper and pulp should be easily shipped at Canadian ports all the year round to all the chief English and continental ports. Mills and paper buyers situated in Scotland want pulp or paper shipped direct to nearest ports, and so all over the country. With a new trade especially, all should be done that possibly can be to induce custom. London and Liverpool are fairly well looked after, even in winter, from St. John, but I have so far found it very difficult to get a quotation for freights from St. John in winter and Montreal in summer to Newcastle, Glasgow, Leith, Dundee or Cardiff. All these are pulp and paper using centres readily reached from American ports, but not in direct touch to any appreciable extent with Canada. If something could be done to arrange for regular sailings between Canada and these ports, business would be materially helped.

Still another correspondent writes to the High Commissioner as follows: "We beg to say that we have done a fairly large business in Canadian wood pulp. Large contracts have been made with some of the United States wood pulp mills, but we find that as soon as trade looks up in the latter country they do not carry out their arrangements as to delivery. So far we have not had this difficulty with the Canadian contracts, and for this reason we are anxious to encourage the Canadian business. We understand that an immense quantity of wood for pulp making purposes is sent from Canada to the United States, and that several attempts have been made to put a duty on it. If this were done we are strongly of the opinion that it would encourage the wood pulp making industry in Canada and foster the trade between that country and our own."

The pulp men of Canada will be glad to learn that Lord Strathcona is endeavoring to induce the British Board of Trade to show the imports of Canadian pulp separately in the official returns.

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