

whole ground again, and, to be short, I shall only emphasize one item. I will touch on lumber.

The early settlers obtained from the woods logs of sufficient size to construct houses for themselves and stables for their stock. This source of supply being limited, has been exhausted years ago. The farmer to-day has to use lumber, but, owing to a combine, prices are forced up, and farmers whose market towns are along the C.P.R. lines, cannot buy lumber at the same rates as those along the N.P.R. This fact was prominently brought out at the last session of the local House. The facts, so far as lumber is concerned, are as follows:—

The great majority of farmers are in need of lumber for stables, granaries and dwellings. New settlers on vacant, or partly improved, land, are in the same position. They have to use lumber or sods.

Twenty thousand farmers could expend \$1,000 each in lumber, amounting in the aggregate to \$20,000,000, and then not be half through building. This does not include what the new settlers that we expect, will require, neither does it include what would be used in building in cities and towns. Dairying and stock-farming are a necessity for profitable returns to the farmer. He requires buildings for live stock and buildings for his feed. Were the hon. commissioners to visit the farmers in Manitoba in February and March last, they would require no argument that this is a vital necessity.

At Swan Lake, on the N.P.R., the prices of lumber are as follows. These rates are lower than on the C.P.R.:—

	Price. Per M.	Duty. Per M.
Inch siding, No. 2.....	\$21.00	\$2.75
do do 1.....	26.00	4.00
Flooring, No. 2.....	21.00	2.75
do do 1.....	26.00	4.00
Dimension lumber.....	16.50	Free.
Shingles .....	2.50	Free.

I have also a copy of a letter which of itself clearly establishes a combine in lumber, besides what was proven before the commissioners in Winnipeg:

“ Vancouver, B.C., March 15th, 1897.

“ Messrs.....  
“ ....., Man.

“ Gentlemen,—We shall be glad to quote for shingles, in reply to yours of the 9th inst. But must first ask if you are an active member of the Western Retail Lumberman's Association, of which we are honorary members.

“ Yours truly,

“ (Signed) E. H. HEAP & Co.”

Here will be a chance to operate that provision with regard to crushing out combines. When the commissioners were in Manitoba, it was clearly proven that a combine existed in lumber in that country, and I hope that should evidence be furnished later on to prove that that combine still exists, the Government will take the matter into its serious consideration and crush out that combine by removing the duty on lumber. The writer continues:

The parties I got the letter from do not wish me to use their name. Like all business letters in up-to-date offices, it is type-written. I trust, and confidently expect, that the western members and the Government will do what is in the interest of the west, and that, as the Hon. Mr. Fielding remarked when closing the session at Winni-

peg, that the revision of the tariff will be in the right direction.

The American lumberman obtains his logs practically from the same forests, whether those forests be in the Lake of the Woods country or B.C., one north, the other south of the boundary line. Why cannot the Canadian lumberman put lumber on the market at as low a rate as the American?

In the battle for a decent tariff, the west is watching you. I have no doubt but that the member for Lisgar will do his duty.

Yours truly,

D. A. STEWART.

Delegate for the Constituency of Mountain.

And now, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the point made about getting lumber from the province of British Columbia, I may reply that that seems almost hopeless in view of the high rates of freight which exists. I was informed by a gentleman who purchased the lumber that on one car which cost him \$114, the freight alone was \$147 or considerably more than the price of the lumber itself. The statement was freely made that lumber sells on an average \$3 to \$5 per thousand cheaper in Dakota and Minnesota than in Manitoba, and yet this lumber comes pretty much from the same source. I heard a very prominent farmer, named Ben Swanson of Manitou, make the statement before the tariff commission in Winnipeg that the cost of lumber used in a barn for which a neighbour had secured an estimate was for Canadian lumber \$1,200, while he was able to procure the same lumber from the States for \$800.

Now, I propose to refer very briefly to the question of coal oil. That, if you will allow me to make a pun, was a burning issue during the recent elections in Manitoba. The farmers who appeared at our meetings asserted with gravity and sincerity—and I have no reason whatever to doubt their statements—that coal oil can be bought in Pembina, a very short distance south of the international boundary line, for from 10 to 12½ cents per gallon, and it is retailed at Emerson, just a few hundred yards north of the international boundary line, on the Canadian side, at 35 cents. The average price throughout Manitoba and the Northwest is from 40 to 50 cents per gallon. It is only fair to say in this connection that six gallons of American oil are only equal to five gallons of Canadian oil, for the Canadian measure is Imperial and the other is wine measurement. To illustrate still more strongly how deeply that country suffers from the exorbitant price we pay for coal oil, I need only mention that it takes one bushel of wheat to buy one gallon of coal oil.

Mr. DUGAS. It will take two bushels under this last tariff.

Mr. SOMERVILLE. Wheat is going up and coal oil is going down.

Mr. RICHARDSON. The price of wheat this last season was something over 60 cents, so that a bushel of wheat would purchase