



BUSILY engaged wading into blue books and other official documents at his room in the Rossin House I met Mr. James Connec, ex-M. P. P. for Algoma, a few weeks ago. This well-known resident of our north country was in the city as a delegate to the International Water Ways Convention, and was getting his ammunition ready for that occasion. Mr. Connec's business activities have brought him into close touch with lumbering affairs in the north, and he cheerfully granted me an interview concerning these matters. "The annual lumber output," said he, "of the Rat Portage and Keewatin district is about 75,000,000 feet, chiefly, of course, of white pine. Rather more than half the logs come from Minnesota." I enquired how this was and Mr. Connec replied that there were several circumstances that gave rise to this condition of lumbering. "For one thing," said he, "considerable lumber limits were held in Minnesota before the days of the settlement of the question of disputed territory in the Rat Portage district and this timber has not yet been all cut out and until it is a certain proportion of our cut will come from Minnesota. Again with the depression that has existed in commercial circles it has been found that logs could be got cheaper from Minnesota than in our own country. These are conveniently run into Rainy Lake. There has always been less or more of this procuring of logs from adjoining territories in the United States, local conditions making it sometimes preferable. When I was in the lumber business in Port Arthur I received a considerable quantity of my logs from Duluth. Then it sometimes depends on who own the mills. If they are owned by parties who have limits in adjoining American territory they naturally bring their supply from those points." Mr. Connec believes that the lumber trade generally in Canada will be strengthened by the passing of the Wilson free lumber bill. As a good Liberal he refers to the wisdom of the Ontario government in refusing to handicap trade with the States in any way as was proposed in certain legislation at the last session of the Ontario Assembly. He thinks there is no doubt but that there will be a noticeable revival in the saw mill business, and to some extent there will also be an extension of the planing mills of Canada.

* * * *

Mr. H. H. Cook, of the Ontario Lumber Co., has said. The changes in the United States tariff were likely to give an impetus to the lumber trade, the like of which has not been witnessed for many a year, and the Parry Sound and other districts will hum this season. Many United States firms will commence operations on an extensive scale. A year or two ago the Midland and North Shore properties could not be given away. Now the Peters' firm of Michigan have purchased these for \$25,000 and will commence operations forthwith. Mr. Miscampbell will, in the early spring, start up the old British-Canadian mills at Midland, and mills will be started all through the districts, excepting in small limits, where it does not pay to erect mills, owing to the fact that 10 per cent of the lumber is either lost or stolen before it can be marketed.

* * * *

A few days ago I drew the attention of Mr. William Little, of Montreal, who had been making a short stay in Toronto, to the remark made by Mr. Robt. Cox, the well-known lumber merchant of Liverpool, Eng., and who is at present in Ottawa, that the statistics show that the consumption of lumber in England has not varied 5% in any year during the past 40 years. "That statement," said Mr. Little, "is just somewhat wide of the mark. There is, I am sure, from some considerable knowledge of the English trade, a larger variance than 5% in 40 years, and yet practically the statement is correct. The English people are very conservative. The amount of building and extension of public works varies

very little from year to year." Then, I remarked, we can hardly look to the United Kingdom as a market where we may dispose of any unusual surplus of Canadian lumber. "That is the case," said Mr. Little, "and yet it is to be remembered that this average annual consumption of lumber in the mother land represents a very encouraging trade. Our natural outlet for lumber is the United States and if our people are only wise enough to recognize the position of supremacy as lumber producers that they now hold they will be able to place large quantities of lumber in the States at most satisfactory prices. It is the greatest foolishness imaginable for our people to be in too big a hurry to get rid of the products of the forest. They have a gold mine in these products and prices must continue to advance from year to year. It is quite true there are 3-4 large amounts of timber in the United States, but for certain sections of the States the natural market is Canada, and to Canada these people will come to buy their supplies."

* * * *

Certain Maine lumbermen take a somewhat gloomy view of the lumber clause in the United States tariff bill, so far at least as their trade is concerned. A week ago among visitors to St. John, N. B., were John Sweeney, W. H. Camhiff, C. H. Dickey and J. A. Lalbert, gentlemen actively engaged in lumbering operations down by the sea. To an interviewer Mr. Sweeney said: "The lumber business in the Aroostock country is at a standstill. We are all of us pretty well discouraged, and if it were not for the fact that we have our horses and our sleds and other possessions necessary to carry on our business, we would not strike a blow this winter. I am sure there will be little or nothing in it, but what are we going to do? We have from 20 to 30 horses and it would be next to impossible to dispose of them for anything like a reasonable price. We are, as you will readily see obliged to go ahead, but the cut this winter will be very light, much lighter than it has been for years." "No," continued Mr. Sweeney, in answer to a question, "I have no idea what the outcome of this change will be. I don't know what we are going to do about it. Things look pretty blue just now." When asked why the recent tariff changes would so seriously inconvenience the Maine lumberman, Mr. Sweeney pointed out that the Maine lumberman had to pay \$2 stumpage, whereas the New Brunswick operator had only \$1.50 to pay, and having no duty to pay it was obvious that the New Brunswick man could put the Maine man out of business.

* * * *

Johann Reuter, a Spanish lumber merchant of Venezuela, has been in Ottawa during the past week with the purpose of establishing a trade in Canadian pine logs between here and Venezuela. Mr. Reuter says that New York has been his market for logs for many years, but as a result of his trip to Canada, he has discovered that he can do much better by shipping from Montreal or Quebec, and at the same time get a better class of logs. His contract with the New York firm expires in December. After that date he will make Ottawa his purchasing point for Canadian pine. His yearly shipment will be 1,500,000 feet, or three or four vessel loads each year, each vessel carrying between 3,000 and 4,000 feet of logs. Montreal or Quebec will be the shipping ports. Before coming to Ottawa, Mr. Reuter visited the Michigan lumber districts, but he thinks the Michigan pine is not half as good in quality as that located down in Ottawa. Mr. Reuter states that Canadian pine is very much in demand in Venezuela, and is now being more used for building purposes than any other timber imported into South America.

* * * *

"Yes," says J. S. Pinch, of the Collins Inlet Lumber Co., who operate largely in the Georgian Bay district, "the new tariff of the United States will be a great benefit to the timber and other interests of this country. In the first place it has practically stopped the exportation of logs. Firms that formerly engaged in this business are now buying or building mills in our district. Cutler & Savage, of the Saginaw, who have exported from fifteen to sixteen million feet in the round are now building a mill at Kenabuth, near Little Current, where they will do all their cutting hereafter, and Peters another big Michigan lumberman who has sent out 20,000,000

feet of logs has bought the Parry Harbor Company's mills and his cutting will be done here. But this is not all. The freeing of lumber has increased the demand for the products of our mills and in consequence there will be an addition to the output of 30 per cent as compared with last year and you know what that means to everybody engaged in the production of supplies which the lumberman uses."

* * * *

Hon. E. H. Bronson was asked how he thought the removal of the duty would effect Chaudiere interests. He replied that it certainly would not be a disadvantage. The gain to the trade would not be as much as appeared on the surface by the removal of the duty because as he explained only about one third of the lumber cut at the Chaudiere goes to the United States market. Still the removal of the duty on lumber would be of advantage to the trade.

* * * *

Mr. John Scully, of John Scully & Co., contractors' agents, who have extensive dealings with the lumber camps, says there will be no increase in the lumber cut this year, "and I incline," says Mr. Scully, "to the belief that it will be smaller than usual. There are heavy stocks in the United States at the present time. The building trades of Chicago, Cleveland, Buffalo, New York and Boston have been very dull, and till the stocks on the other side are disposed of I do not think there will be much of a spurt. Lumbermen are later going into the woods this year than usual. Square timber that has been on the Quebec market for a year is not sold yet. I know that less men than usual are wanted this year, and wages also are lower, fully 10 per cent lower. I sent a lot of men through the other day to La Cloche and Little Current in the Georgian Bay. These men came from the Peterboro' district, and received \$1.50 to \$18 a month. Last year they would have got from \$14 to \$20 a month. There are more men offering than we can supply work to do." Many of the American firms owning limits bring their own skilled men over, and many of the workmen now are from the States, as they can be got there as cheaply as in Canada.

* * * *

"Somebody in the days that are to come," said Peter Ryan, as I chatted with him the other day about lumber affairs, "will grow rich out of Canadian lumber. But there are a good many fellows who have not the strength to hold on, and they will drop some money in the meantime. The result of my recent timber sale has in no way damped my confidence in the value of lumber as a Canadian asset. At the same time, I do not see as a result of free lumber that we are going to have an immediate boom on an extensive scale. There is a good deal of lumber in the country and United States lumbermen have heavy stocks on hand. I am told also that the banks are not encouraging investments in lumber to the extent that some might suppose. Probably they are just waiting a little to see how trade will shape."

* * * *

If the statements made by Buffalo, Tonawanda and Albany correspondents of some of our lumber exchanges are something better than mere bluff, then the new tariff bill is going to play havoc with the planing mills of those localities, Canada being the gainer thereby. In the Tonawanda correspondence of the New York Lumber Trades Journal the statement is that "The new tariff bill will, in the opinion of several mill owners, injure Tonawanda. Canadians have heretofore found it to their advantage to bring lumber to this point for dressing. The new bill changes this, and the belief is that it will ruin a few mills engaged in that business." From Albany the report is: "The removal of the duty on Canadian lumber will make it almost impossible for our planing mills to compete with Canadian dressed lumber. Some think that our Canadian cousins will immediately advance their prices \$1 per 1000 feet, but I do not believe they will, as they have large stocks on hand, not only of this year's cut, but large quantities left over from last year's, and are only too glad to sell at old prices less the duty."

Mr. G. B. Cowper, who for thirty years was chief clerk of the woods and forests branch of the Ontario Crown Lands Department, died suddenly in Buffalo a couple of weeks ago. He was 75 years of age.