

gentlemen may form some estimate of the immensity of that trade. Why, Sir, that means the keeping in steady employment of eighty large mills, each cutting five million feet of lumber in a year; that means the employment each summer of upwards of 3,000 men. I ask the Finance Minister to-night while he is listening to the importunities of his followers, and of business men in this country to retain and preserve duties upon certain lines of goods so that small factories may be enabled to keep in their employment ten or a dozen hands, does he not think it is of greater interest that to the province of Ontario there should be preserved the work of two or three thousand men? Now, what has been the result of this policy? The result has been that along the line of the Georgian Bay mills which were formerly in full operation are to-day closed down; and we have, as I said before, the mortification of seeing large rafts of logs continually passing from Canada to the United States, at our cost and to our bitter experience. More than that, I can tell the Finance Minister to-night that he gives under his tariff an unfair advantage to the American manufacturer, in that upon every foot of lumber that passes from Canada into the United States a duty of \$2 a thousand is charged, while on lumber that passes from Michigan right across Lake Huron, because it is easy of access, and is poured into western Ontario—there is not a single dollar of duty charged. Now, let that be understood. If we must have a hostile duty of \$2 a thousand levied by the American Government against us, then in the name of all common sense let us have the same tariff against their lumber coming into Ontario. But there is a much better plan ahead of us, a plan that is approved of not only by the inhabitants along the shores of those lakes, but even by the lumbermen themselves. I would refer the Finance Minister to the Toronto "Globe" of 21st April, 1897, when the following resolution was adopted by a representative meeting of some of the largest lumbermen in northern Canada; and when I read the names of some of the gentlemen who were present hon. gentlemen who are conversant with the lumber business will admit the fact that these men are in a position to speak by reason of the fact that they have tens of thousands of dollars invested in the lumber interests. At that meeting there were present: Messrs. H. H. Cook, John Bertram, Robert Thompson, Hamilton; W. Thompson, Longford; J. B. Smith, W. H. Pratt and P. D. Master. The following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

Resolved, (1) That any import duty imposed by the United States on Canadian rough lumber and lumber products should be met by a similar import duty on American lumber and lumber products entering our ports; and, also, in addition, by a corresponding export duty on saw-logs and pulp-wood, in order that the product of our for-

ests cut by Americans shall not have any advantage in the same market over the similar product when cut by Canadians.

Now, I make this appeal to the Finance Minister, considering the hostile tariff that has been framed under the Dingley Bill against the white pine industry of this country, has the time not arrived when we should at least hold up our own hands in self-defence, and endeavour to keep that lumber industry in the country, as it can be kept if it is given that fair meed and share of justice that it should receive at the hands of the Government. We then would have the satisfaction of seeing employment afforded at the highest possible rate of wages to 3,000 men every year, on the north shores of the Georgian Bay.

Now, I wish to ask the indulgence of the House for a few moments while I refer to what is known as the preferential phase of the present tariff. There must be one of two things to this phase of the tariff, it must mean either one thing or the other, either that hon. gentlemen are in earnest that it should go into force, or that they are only playing a part and endeavouring to humbug the public, and to weaken the effect of their abandonment of their former principles. If they are in earnest in their intention to carry out this tariff policy, then hon. gentlemen have done wrong and have acted against the best interests of the country. It must, of necessity, be plain to hon. gentlemen, as parliamentarians of years' standing, that there is no possibility under the decision given in the past for England to accept the preference we have offered under that clause. That goes without saying, in the face of all subsequent correspondence to the Australian conference. When hon. gentlemen made this proposition, they made it with their eyes open as to what may result. If to-day it has been ascertained from the Home Government that they propose to accept this offer, and the proposition is legal, then I believe it is the duty of this Government to inform the House of the fact, and that at once. If they have not that assurance, they have erred, and erred very materially because they have, by their action, manifested hostility to the United States. What was the necessity of throwing a firebrand at the people of that republic until the Government had ascertained whether or not the Act they were attempting to place on the Statute-book could become law. But if hon. gentlemen are in earnest about this, it is a matter fraught with the greatest possible importance, for this reason: That while the hon. Premier has stated that to-day a preference could only be given to Great Britain, it must be patent to every man reading the clause and an interpretation of the treaties, that Belgium, Germany and other continental countries, which were under the favoured-nation clause, must be held to participate in the benefits of a preferential