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THE CANADA LUMBERMAN is published in the interests of the lumber trade and of allied industries throughout the Dominion, being the only representative in Canada of this foremost branch of the commerce of this country. It aims at giving full and timely information on all subjects touching these interests, discussing these topics editorially and inviting free discussion by others.

Special pains are taken to secure the latest and most trustworthy market quotations from various points throughout the world, so as to afford to the trade in Canada information on which it can rely in its operations.

Special correspondents in localities of importance present an accurate report not only of prices and the condition of the market, but also of other matters specially interesting to our readers. But correspondence is not only welcome, but is invited from all who have any information to communicate or subjects to discuss relating to the trade or in any way affecting it. Even when we may not be able to agree with the writers we will give them a fair opportunity for free discussion as the best means of eliciting the truth. Any items of interest are particularly requested, for even if not of great importance individually they contribute to a fund of information from which general results are obtained.

Advertisers will receive careful attention and liberal treatment. We need not point out that for many the CANADA LUMBERMAN, with its special class of readers, is not only an exceptionally good medium for securing publicity, but is indispensable for those who would bring themselves before the notice of that class. Special attention is directed to "WANTED" and "FOR SALE" advertisements, which will be inserted in a conspicuous position at the uniform price of 25 cents per line for each insertion. Announcements of this character will be subject to a discount of 25 per cent, if ordered for four successive issues or longer.

Subscribers will find the small amount they pay for the CANADA LUMBERMAN quite insignificant as compared with its value to them. There is not an individual in the trade, or specially interested in it, who should not be on our list, thus obtaining the present benefit and aiding and encouraging us to render it even more complete.

PREFERENTIAL TRADE.

THE address recently delivered before the Canada Club in London by Mr. Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary, on the subject of preferential trade between Great Britain and her Colonies, has awakened much interest throughout the Empire. The recent difficulty with the United States and Germany appears to have directed the attention of the British government to the necessity of devising means of binding the Empire more closely together; indeed, Mr. Chamberlain, in the address referred to, expressed the opinion that a closer union of Great Britain and her Colonies is "essential for the existence of the Empire as such."

Attention is also called, in the address, to the following resolution adopted at the Intercolonial Conference held at Ottawa in 1894: "That this Conference records its belief in the advantage of a customs arrangement between Great Britain and her Colonies, by which trade within the Empire may be placed upon a more desirable footing than that which is carried on with foreign countries," and also to a resolution moved by Mr. McNeill, in the Dominion Parliament at its present session, which declares that "it is desirable, in the interests of Great Britain and of the Colonies, that a moderate ad valorem duty, independent of any existing duty, should be imposed, both by the Colonies and by the Mother Country, upon all imports from foreign countries."

Having referred to the fact that there exists a united opinion in Canada and Great Britain regarding the necessity for closer union between the various branches of the Empire, Mr. Chamber-

lain proceeds to argue that such a union could be more happily approached from its commercial side. He points out that the consolidation of the German Empire of to-day was brought about by a commercial zollverein, which had the ultimate effect of bringing the various independent states together in political as well as commercial union. As to the possibility of preferential trade between Great Britain and her Colonies, Mr. Chamberlain frankly states that he does not consider that the proposals which have thus far come from the Colonies are sufficiently favorable to induce the mother country to depart from the policy of absolute free trade which she has established and worked upon for so many years. On this point he says, "I think we may very fairly ask our fellow subjects in the Colonies to better their offer, if, as I believe, they desire to proceed upon these lines, and if those lines do really offer the best direction in which we can proceed," and adds, "I want especially to point out that the advantages of such a proposal are so enormous to the Colonies, as they would undoubtedly lead to the earliest possible development of their great natural resources, would bring to them population, would open to them the enormous market of the United Kingdom for their products—their food, their timber, their sugar. The advantages, I say, are so enormous that it appears to me that the Colonies themselves would be bound to give to any suggestion of this kind, at all events, a careful reconsideration."

It must be admitted by all who have given the subject any consideration that the preferential trade problem is a large and difficult one. Theoretically, it would be a most desirable thing to have an arrangement which would consolidate the British Empire, but when the many divergent interests involved are considered, the possibility of arriving at a satisfactory arrangement is open to question. Anything short of a heavy duty by Great Britain in favor of her Colonies would be of little advantage to them, and just here the question arises, would the British consumer consent to pay such a duty? On the other hand, Canada and Australia have adopted the protective system, the idea in the case of this country being to develop our manufacturing interests. If to get preference in the British markets for our natural products would involve the free admission of British manufactured goods, would our people be willing to sacrifice to a certain extent the interests of our home manufacturers?

Any arrangement which might be made would necessarily be based on the principle of conserving the welfare of the majority of the industries of the different countries concerned. It would not be possible to take into consideration the particular circumstances in connection with any one industry, and we can readily conceive that an arrangement under which advantage would accrue to the majority of the industries of Canada might work very serious disadvantage to some one particular industry. What for example would be the probable effect upon the lumber industry of Canada? If Great Britain were to discriminate in favor of Canadian lumber and against the United States, might we not reasonably expect that the United States would retaliate upon Canada by again imposing a heavy import duty on our lumber? While we would no doubt find in Great Britain a market for much of our lumber of the better class, it is extremely doubtful if we

could dispose of our low grade lumber, which now goes to the United States. As, owing to the disappearance of choice timber, we are every year manufacturing a larger quantity of low grade lumber, the question of finding a market for the same is becoming a more and more important one. Even supposing that the United States should not reimpose a duty upon our lumber, the partial closing of the British market to lumber from the United States would result in increased competition in the American home market and lessen the possibility of finding a market there for Canadian lumber.

These are points which present themselves on a first consideration of this question. It is of course yet too early to be able to consider the subject in its various phases. A conference of delegates representing the various parts of the Empire is to be held shortly to consider the question. After the deliberations of this Conference shall have been published, we should find ourselves in a better position to discuss the matter intelligently.

BUILDING TIMBER.

THE gradual disappearance of good building timber from Ontario, and the substitution of hemlock, soft elm and basswood for white pine and the better class of woods, is the cause of much wrong-doing in the building trades, and the creation of a class of buildings whose lives will be short by comparison. The high price of white or red pine joists is made an excuse by country builders to substitute hemlock instead, where the use of such uncertain lumber should be carefully eschewed. Fancy hemlock joists in the lower floor of a country farm house, where perhaps only a few inches of space exists between the damp earth and the lower edge of the joists. What is the result? A rotten floor in a few years, and a miasmatic one from the moment it is laid. Where it can be avoided, hemlock should never be employed in a situation subject to alternations of dryness and dampness. It does very well if kept constantly dry, though it has the quality of becoming very brittle if made very dry, and is not by any means a reliable wood, if subject to sudden strains. Hemlock may be used with profit in the upper floors of small or medium-sized buildings, that are not likely to be subject to heavy work, and when once in place and properly secured, does satisfactory service. For inside studding, scantlings and light roofing timbers, it will do fairly good service if skilfully arranged and properly secured. It must not be supposed that we decry hemlock as a building material. We do not. Like everything else it has its uses, and it is its improper use we object to. For rough boarding, sheeting and roof covering hemlock has no equal. It is superior to pine in nail-holding qualities, and when dry and properly machined makes a firm and solid base to "side" or shingle over, and each nail may be driven home with a certainty that it will stay where put. When covered, as under shingles, hemlock is not so likely to "swell" or "warp" in a damp atmosphere, as pine would under like circumstances. Hemlock timber, though frequently used in heavy constructions, is rarely satisfactory, owing to the unequal direction of the grain, and the difficulty of working it to correct and proper shape. While it may do passably well for temporary