

THE LUMBER TRADE.

REQUISITION FOR IMPORT DUTY.

Following is a copy of the memorial presented to the Dominion government by the British Columbia Lumber & Shingle Manufacturers' Association asking for a duty on lumber imported from the United States:

Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, G. C. M. G., P. C., Premier, and Members of the Dominion Government:

Sirs.—On three former occasions in 1898, 1899 and 1900, we, the Lumber and Shingle Manufacturers of British Columbia, have addressed you on the subject of the anomalous and unfair conditions under which we have to carry on our trade, in the hope that some alleviation of these conditions would be effected by legislation in the direction of the imposition of customs duties on lumber and shingles imported into Canada from the United States.

We have to regret that so far nothing has been done with reference to this matter, which is of so much vital importance to us that we are forced again to bring the subject to your notice, in the hope that conditions may now permit of a favorable consideration of our desires.

The chief burden of our complaint is that our trade is unfairly discriminated against under the present tariff, being, we believe, the only manufacturing industry in Canada which is left totally without protection in our own home markets, whilst contributing largely to the more prosperous conditions of other manufacturers and producers whose manufactures we use, and for which we pay enhanced prices consequent on the protection which they enjoy under the present existing tariff from the competition and cheaper price of like manufactures and productions in the United States.

Our industry contributes largely to the revenues of both Dominion and provincial governments in timber dues and by customs duties on all machinery and supplies used in the production of our commodities, or, as we have already pointed out, we contribute to the prosperity of manufacturers of machinery and saw mill supplies of all kinds, and to that of millers and farmers by paying to them higher prices as before referred to, and to that of railways by the carriage of these supplies and of our own productions. On the other hand, when a contractor requires timber for some important government work such as a canal or bridge, a railway for bridge or trestle work, a manufacturer for a new factory or mill, or a farmer for a new barn or dwelling, and we ask for our production a mere living price, we are met with the reply that pitch pine from the United States can be obtained at cheaper prices, or pine from Minnesota can be got at less cost and that even our own description of lumber can be bought cheaper on Puget Sound, which may be possible, as they can produce cheaper, because all their supplies cost less.

The above is not a distorted representation, but the true state of our trade, and we trust that it may clearly show the injustice of the conditions under which our business lies.

We have had to base the prices of our productions on those of producers who have advantages towards cheap manufacture which we do not possess. The imposition of a duty on lumber and shingles is not sought for as a means of increasing prices, and competition between the many Canadian producers would prevent this if attempted, but the United States manufacturers having a protected home market of their own in which they make every effort to maintain prices, regularly disturb our conditions and prices by using our Canadian markets as a dumping ground in which to unload their surplus stock at prices below what they will accept in their own markets, or at which we can, under present conditions, manufacture, and it is from this unfair competition we ask protection.

The unfairness and anomaly existing in the before described condition is still further intensified by the position that not only is our Canadian home market open and free to the manufacturers of the United States, from whom neither Dominion or provincial governments derive any financial support, nor do they aid in the development of our country; but our products are shut out of their country by the duties imposed on them of \$2

per 1,000 feet of lumber, and 30 cents per M on shingles.

It is a recognized fact that the extension of this market and consequent increase of the volume of business done, assists the manufacturer in reducing the cost of production, and it is to this that we look for an improvement in our condition if our own markets are protected from invasion, but it can never be attained under present existing circumstances.

While we have to compete with our neighbors to the south in the markets of the world common to us both, a considerable portion of our product not suited to a foreign trade must be disposed of at home, and this our mills cannot do, so that in foreign trade also we are handicapped, as the lumber produced for that branch of the business has to bear to some extent the loss on the other, and producers find themselves loaded with an ever increasing surplus for which it is impossible to find a sale.

On the other hand, the manufacturer in the United States has the markets of the world at large and of Canada open to him on the same terms as ourselves, and in addition has his large home market from which we are practically debarred.

We are not afraid of competing with the United States manufacturer on even terms, that is to say, on the terms of free lumber between both countries, but we must denounce in the strongest terms the unfairness of the one sided relations which now exist.

Instead of the manufacture increasing in our own country, the tendency is towards establishing new plants in adjoining United States territory, and this has already been done, the raw material being derived from British Columbia, manufactured in the United States, and thus has the advantage of both United States and Canadian markets. The inducement towards such a course must be so evident that we trust your government will see the advisability of taking measures to obviate Canadians being driven to such an alternative.

We would respectfully again urge the propriety and necessity of imposing a duty on lumber and shingles entering Canada from the United States equal to that levied by the United States on the same products when entering the United States from Canada, which at present is \$2 per 1,000 feet on lumber, and 30 cents per M. on shingles, to be lessened or abolished when it is made to appear to the governor general in council that such course has been taken by the government of the United States.

We feel that the imposition of an import duty on such terms should be due to our own dignity as a country, would be of general benefit not only to the trade, but to the people and country at large, without inflicting a hardship on any.

We again beg to urge on the government through you that the unanimous wishes of our industry throughout the Dominion receive your practical consideration during the coming session of parliament.

We have the honor to be, sirs, your obedient servants,

(Signed).
JOHN HENDRY, President,
HILTON KEITH, Act. Secy.
B. C. Lumber & Shingle Manufacturers' Association.

LUMBER YARD FOR FORT FRANCES.

A. Seamen, of Seamen & Co., railway contractors, accompanied by his manager, Capt. F. Crandall, was in town on Monday, says the Fort Frances Times, looking after the tie and bridge timber sub-contracts on this part of the road. To a Times representative Seamen said the work of getting out the ties, piling and bridge timber was being pushed as rapidly as possible. Where practicable, the material was being delivered along the right of way, so as to be ready for the graders. The amount of bridge-work is enormous, between Fort Frances and Stanley Junction, no less than six miles of open bridging being required. Mr. Seamen also said they had their sawmills in operation, the last and largest mill having been recently placed on Little Turtle lake. To meet the demand for lumber for building material, the mill at Gash Point, managed by R. Lockhart, will commence March 1st to get out dressed lumber, and will continue to do so until the ice goes out, when the sawmill

will begin cutting lumber of all dimensions. In the meantime, Seamen & Co., will open up a large lumber yard in town, and stock it with all kinds of building material, with W. Floyd in charge. As there is likely to be a great demand for lumber for building purposes, this move, on the part of Mr. Seamen, will be appreciated by the public, who will, no doubt, take advantage of such a step. Heretofore, and even at the present time, it has been impossible to get a stick of timber for building purposes, and it is with pleasure we are able to make the announcement.

J. L. CAMPBELL.

The accompanying engraving is from a photo of J. L. Campbell, of Melita, a prominent provincial lumber merchant. Mr. Campbell is now vice-president of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association, with which organization he has been closely identified for a number of years. He is always a leading spirit at the annual meetings of the association and has done a great deal towards making it the success which it is as a trade organization. He is also strong on the social side of the association and it is due to his efforts and initiative that



J. L. CAMPBELL
Vice-President Western Lumbermen's Association.

the projected trip of its members to the Pacific coast next summer has been brought about. Mr. Campbell not only takes an active interest in the lumber business but he is also prominent in public affairs in his own section of the province. He does not go into provincial politics, but is greatly interested in local school and municipal matters and has been reeve of his municipality. He has been at the point now known as Melita or in that vicinity since 1883.

MILLS FOR FORT FRANCES.

Three officials of the railroad connecting at Bemidji are in town looking over the situation with a view of erecting mills and other industries here to act as feeders from the proposed road from Bemidji to Koochiching. They are well pleased with the situation of the Fort Frances and Koochiching townships, and if suitable arrangements can be made with the Ontario government and our municipal council regarding water-power, it is not unlikely steps will be taken in the near future to spend several hundred thousand dollars in building mills and erecting dams and other works. It begins to look as if Fort Frances was to have the long talked of pulp, paper and saw mills at last, with direct connection by rail to St. Paul and the east by way of Koochiching. The visitors are keeping the object of their visit as much a secret as possible, but enough was given out to confirm the above projects.—Fort Frances Times.

WILL SHUT OUT MINNESOTA LUMBER.

One effect of the withdrawal of the Northern Pacific Railway Co. from Manitoba and the operation of that company's lines in Manitoba by the Canadian Northern, will be to cut off the Minnesota lumber trade with Manitoba. Points on the Northern Pacific railway in Manitoba are supplied with Minnesota lumber, as the Northern Pacific can make a low through rate from lumber manufacturing points on its line in Minnesota to consuming points in Manitoba. When the Canadian Northern takes over the Northern Pacific lines in this province, this lumber trade will no doubt be quickly knocked out. The Canadian Northern will of course be anxious to supply the territory tributary to these newly acquired lines with lumber from the Rainy River country. This would give the Canadian Northern the benefit of the long haul on the lumber, right from the manufacturing point to the consuming market. The Canadian Northern will therefore be interested in shutting out the Minnesota lumber trade, in favor of the mills of the Rainy River district.

LUMBER TRADE NOTES.

The B. C. Mills Timber and Trading Company announces its intention to go out of the retail lumber business at Winnipeg and will henceforth confine its attention strictly to the wholesale trade. The city yard will be closed up at the end of April.

There is a promising outlook for sash and door business this year in the west and factories are making preparations to handle an increased trade. It is not expected that there will be any changes in prices as last year's list is thought to about represent values under present conditions.

Yellow pine lumber manufacturers of the United States have put a new and higher price list into effect. Conditions in regard to this lumber have been such for some time past that dealers have regularly asked and received higher prices for their stock than the official list called for and this new list is made with a view to securing uniformity in this respect.

Judging from the current comment on market conditions in the United States that country is to have another boom in the lumber trade this year. Very heavy buying has recently been noted and stocks which should be increasing at this time of the year are decreasing. Hardwood shares this condition with the softer varieties of lumber. Prices are firm and inclined to advance.

The lumber manufacturers of British Columbia are asking the Dominion government to take steps to encourage the ship-building industry of the Pacific coast in order that a mercantile fleet may be created, which will enable that province to compete with the States of Washington and Oregon in the lumber trade. It is contended that at present owing to the want of vessels the lumber manufacturers of British Columbia are not able to keep their mills running more than half the time, whereas Puget Sound mills are running full time, that is day and night. It is argued that if the proposed United States ship subsidy bill becomes law in that country it will render competition on the part of Canadian shipbuilders without assistance an impossibility, and that the Dominion government should act now in the matter and thus secure the early establishment of a fleet of vessels ample for all requirements on the Canadian Pacific coast.

The developing scarcity of white pine has led to a somewhat higher range of prices, says the American Lumberman. There has been no change in the western and northwestern lists, but some items are frequently sold above list prices and there is a generally stronger feeling which makes price cutting less frequent and serious. There is a diminishing anxiety to move what have been called surplus stocks, for the mill men are pretty well convinced that there is, as a matter of fact, no such thing as a surplus. Logging all through the north country from east to west has been progressing well excepting in Maine, where too much snow has been a serious hindrance, but on the whole a full log crop will be secured and the pine, spruce and hemlock producers are congratulating themselves on having a full supply for this season's operations, or at least as full a supply as they started out to get. The mill men are pleased with this condition because they believe that all the stuff they can turn out this year will be wanted at present prices if not higher ones, while some wholesalers affect to believe that the good log crop and an active sawing season will make margins a little better for them than they have been.

J. P. Gilbert has embarked in the newspaper business at Grand View, having established the Exponent.