

APPENDIX No. 6

grade largely used by farmers per M ft. on cars is at Rat Portage, \$12, Fort William, \$10; and Columbia, \$8. The average freight thereon is, from Rat Portage, \$6; Fort William, \$10; and British Columbia, \$ The terms upon which lumber is sold are sixty days with freight as cash. Add to the wholesale cost at the point of sale the retail dealer's charge of say \$3, it will be readily seen that the cost of lumber is more than the consumers can afford to buy it at, and as a matter of fact so much so is this felt that very many farmers throughout the country continue to live in sod houses, and in more than half of the country, a few miles distant from the railway, the outbuildings are sod. In order to overcome this disability and improve the existing state of matters we ask you to make a considerable reduction in the freight rates charged upon lumber, and while we do so it is our opinion that a reduction in the price of lumber will vastly increase the demand for it, and to such an extent that in a short time the increased hauling of it will more than compensate your company for the lowering of rates. Following such increase in business, the retail dealer will be enabled to sell the lumber at a less percentage than is possible at present.

'We, as residents of this country, and having an established business in it, are greatly interested in its welfare, and know that the advancement and development of the country is of paramount importance to your company, seek to impress upon you the unfortunate position and the hard times now prevailing, and so much to be deplored; and while we may not claim to be worse off than the world generally, this is the portion of it that more closely affects our wellbeing. We feel with the natural advantages of the country and the assistance you can so readily extend in the way of cheaper freight, matters can be much improved.

'There can be no doubt that the high cost of lumber is of great consideration with the farmers in locating settlement, and the incoming stranger is most likely to at once feel the depressing influence upon him in the lack of proper buildings so general throughout the country, and which are so essential to good farming.

'We, as a retail association, feeling a like interest with your railway company in the advancement and settlement of the country, are prepared to guarantee any reduction made by you, which we feel sure will be made upon giving this matter your valuable attention, in freight rates, that the consumers shall receive the full benefit of such reduction in the cost of lumber to them. At present, we are withholding all orders for lumber that can be avoided, and should your decision in the matter be against lowering the freight rates, it will be necessary to continue the curtailment of our trade.

'Hoping to have an early reply from you,

'Yours respectfully,

'(Signed) BY THE PRESIDENT.

'It may be interesting to the public to note that ten years ago the association was as alive to the public requirements and necessities as the Canadian Pacific Railway appears to be to-day, and strangest of all, were appealing to this same Canadian Pacific Railway to reduce rates which seemed to be excessive and which was in consequence retarding the progress of the country, and this too, without prospect of profit to themselves except in the advancement of the Northwest.

QUESTION OF SUPPLY.

'About a year ago, the C.P.R. imagined they saw impending disaster unless they undertook to see to it that a stock of lumber was forthcoming sufficient to supply the incoming settlers, as set forth in the following letter written by Mr. Peters, asst. freight traffic manager, and addressed to Isaac Cockburn, secretary:—

"16th January, 1903.

"ISAAC COCKBURN, Esq.,

"Secretary Western Lumbermen's Association,

"Winnipeg.

"DEAR SIR,—Referring to our general conversation on the subject of the movement