

Mr. McCALL. How much per thousand feet does this creosoted timber cost?

Mr. PUGSLEY. From \$50 to \$56, according to the place where it is delivered.

Mr. McCALL. What does ordinary timber not creosoted cost?

Mr. PUGSLEY. I could not say off-hand. Our department has never purchased southern pine which is not creosoted.

Mr. McCALL. I am not disposed to criticize the department. Unquestionably there are processes for preserving timber; but it is a question whether the cost of preserving it might not be equal to the cost of buying the timber two or three times over. Southern pine should be delivered at \$16 or \$17 a thousand feet. For creosoting timber a very extensive plant is required, and many of the railways are hesitating to put in plants on account of their great cost. While the process will preserve timber for a considerable length of time, it will not protect it from ordinary wear where it comes into contact with iron.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I may say that the late deputy minister of railways, Mr. Butler, who has given a great deal of thought to this question of creosoting railway ties as well as other timber, expressed the opinion to me very strongly that it would be greatly in the public interest if creosoting works were established and if all timber used for railway ties and in the construction of wharfs were creosoted.

Mr. DANIEL. Will the minister state of whom the company he spoke of is composed, and whether this industry is to be established or not?

Mr. PUGSLEY. All I can say is that it is an English company, which was represented by two engineers who were introduced to me by the late deputy minister of railways, Mr. Butler. They were negotiating with me, and the question with them was as to whether they could get a site near the Intercolonial railway. I do not know that they have succeeded in acquiring a site, but it was represented to me that, if they could get a site, they were prepared to establish the works.

Mr. DANIEL. In what way does the minister propose to purchase this creosoted timber? Has he a purchasing agent, or does he get tenders, and, if so, from whom?

Mr. PUGSLEY. The purchases are made through the engineers, and the directions given are to get prices from the agents of the different concerns that sell this creosoted timber. There are not many of them.

Mr. DANIEL. That is, the local agents in Canada?

Mr. PUGSLEY. Yes.

Mr. BARKER. I suppose the minister is aware that for more than twenty years this question of creosoting timber for ties has been before the railway companies, but not a railway company, so far as known, has yet gone into this business, because the officials have never been able to satisfy themselves that the very large expense is justified by the extension of the life of the tie. Has the minister gone into that question before expending \$50,000 on behalf of a couple of gentlemen from England who want to establish an industry here at the expense of the government? What efforts has the minister made to ascertain whether this is really a thing that we ought to spend so much money upon, or whether it is simply a little bonus to some English gentlemen who are coming out here to try what they can do in Canada in the way of an experiment that is about twenty years old?

Mr. PUGSLEY. We do not propose, out of this vote, to pay any bonus. This is simply for the purchase of creosoted timber. At present the intention is to buy it as we have bought it hitherto—from the companies in the southern states that creosote timber. But, if works are established for the production of creosoted timber in Canada, and if it offers timber on favourable terms, we would naturally prefer to buy our creosoted timber in Canada rather than from the southern states.

Mr. BARKER. I am aware of that. But it was said that some gentlemen were going into the establishment of works for creosoting timber. Has the hon. gentleman (Mr. Pugsley) ascertained whether the Grand Trunk, for example, or the Canadian Pacific railway, who have had this question before them for twenty years have determined to go into it, or is he going it blind because he has \$50,000 of public money?

Mr. PUGSLEY. I cannot understand what the hon. gentleman (Mr. Barker) means. We are only asking the vote that is taken year after year for the purchase of creosoted timber to be used in certain waters where the teredo worm is very destructive. Incidentally, I mentioned the fact that there was a company which was contemplating the establishment of creosoting works in the maritime provinces, and said that, if these works were established, we would expect to be able to obtain the creosoted timber—or have timber which we should buy in its crude state creosoted—at a cheaper price than we now obtain material for from the southern states. As to railway ties, I have not gone into the matter fully with Mr. Butler. But I would take his opinion on this subject as quickly as I would that of any railway manager in Canada. And I know that he is strongly of opinion that it would be