



ELLI'S greetings to readers of the CANADA LUMBERMAN who are to be found in the wide Dominion, in nearly every state in the American Union, and reaching England, Germany and even far away India, a subscription coming to us this month from Burmah, India. I shall chat freely in this column about various matters pertaining to lumbering and kindred interests. Readers will have every opportunity given them to express themselves. Bright, shrewd sayings of the brightest and shrewdest of our business men—for where do you get them, if not in the lumber trades?—will be caught on the 'fly' by Elli as he wanders to and fro among the trade and will be recorded here. In a word it will be a page for the interchange of opinions with readers and writer, where without restraint each may feel free to say his own say in his own particular way. Your introduction to Elli.

"Take my word for it," said a lumberer to the writer a little ago, "there is not the slightest danger of the Americans tacking on an increased duty on lumber, should we reimpose the duty on logs. They want our lumber too bad."

"There can be no doubt," remarked Mr. A. H. Campbell, of the Muskoka Milling and Lumber Company, "that the yellow pine of the Southern States is going to seriously break in on the sale of Michigan pine. It will not fill the bill in every case where white pine is used, but it is a useful wood. The one great drawback will be transportation, but when there is the stuff to ship satisfactory arrangements can usually be made for shipping."

In the lumbering sections in the Ottawa region and especially out on the Pacific coast among the Indian villages and logging camps, I am told the census enumerators are having a jolly time. Two men will take an open boat with a supply of provisions and go to the Howe Sound to enumerate the population, and from there they will go northward along the coast as far as the upper end of Knight's Inlet, a distance of upwards of 300 miles. How would some of our city enumerators like the job?

"Just how far astray the daily papers will get," said lumberman John Donogh, "in their anxiety for news is shown in the boom that the city dailies are endeavoring to work up in building lines. Their prediction is that 1891 will prove a busy season and they cite the number of permits issued as proof. We are directly interested in seeing a lively trade done, and I wish the prognostications of the newspaper press were correct. The building permits are certainly a long way ahead of those of a year ago, but be it remembered that the fire limits have been widely extended within the year. Last season's building was not nearly represented by the permits registered at the city hall. There was building outside of the fire limits that these little documents told nothing about. This year the building is in the main covered by the permits."

I see that Mr. H. E. Clarke, one of the members for Toronto, drew the attention of the Legislature at its recent session to the extent of the timber cut in the Province. He quoted from statistics furnished by the Legislatures of Michigan, Wisconsin and Dakota, which show that these states, so it is stated, are so deficient in their timber that they cannot supply the home consumption for the next ten years, and also that New Hampshire and Vermont have virtually exhausted all their forests. "No one," said Mr. Clarke, "can find fault with the government if they cause to be cut down every stick of timber in the country, if it is done to make room for settlers, but such is not the case. It is being done to supply our neighbors to the south with an article that is growing scarcer every year, and must increase in value as time goes on."

I find in discussing trade questions with men engaged in any line of business that it makes a good deal of difference whose ox is gored. The color of our spectacles vary a good deal—sometimes. I had been spending a pleasant half hour in the office of a leading jobber in this city, a few days since, who in discussing the question of duty on logs, had no hesitancy in saying that it would be a serious blunder to reimpose the old duty. It would certainly materially affect his trade. I had not left this gentleman any length of time be-

fore I ran across a mill owner from the Midland district. "Well," said I, "how are things your way? Getting ready for a big season's trade?" No trade at all was the reply. The abolition of this export duty has completely killed mill operations. I have sold my mill to an American firm, and they have closed it down—so you can draw your own conclusion as to how the duty business works."

"Do you know," remarked one whose opinions on lumbering are worth something, "that the abolition of the duty on logs is going to raise a bigger noise than those Ottawa fellows ever dreamed of. It was a simple matter with one scratch of the pen to give away our forests to the Americans, but it will not be so easy to recover the ground that is now fast slipping from under us."

I had to confess that there was some cause for my friend's indignation, at the same time I asked him to read over the "Elli" page when the LUMBERMAN would get into his hands this month and see how a "house was divided against itself," some lumbermen holding to one view and others to the opposite.

"All this will not alter the cold facts that the mills in the regions directly affected by the measure are closing down one after another, hundreds of men are being thrown out of employment, and Michigan saw mills are both getting our logs and doing the cutting. Let me go back a little in history," said he. "You know that some six or eight years ago the Americans did this same kind of thing—they bought our logs, rafted them over to the Michigan shore and kept their big mills in a continued buzz. To give to our own people who surely have a right to the bounties of their own forests some show an export duty of \$2 per thousand ft. was placed upon Canadian pine logs by the Dominion Government. What was the result? Immediately our saw mills all through the Midland, Little Current, Spanish River, and other lumbering regions took on a big boom, and such men as Mr. Miscampbell, Cook Bros. and others were able to give employment to hundreds of working men. Our woods swarmed with them, villages thrived, store-keepers did a rattling trade, boats were kept running, and progress marched apace on all hands. I know what I am talking about when I say that this last movement of our government has changed all this, and the leading mills throughout the Midland, Little Current, Algoma and places along the north shore are as a consequence closed down, and will remain closed unless the duty is reimposed."

Hold on, I said, you are showing us one side of the shield only with a vengeance. Do you suppose that Sir John Macdonald, the father of the National Policy, a measure designed specially for Canadian industries and workmen, abolished this duty solely for the fun of the thing? Did he not get in return the reduction of from \$2 to \$1 import duty on Canadian lumber going into the States, thus giving encouragement to every manufacturer of lumber in the country—and especially in the region named by yourself—and as a consequence is not manufactured lumber being shipped to the States in increased quantities by our Canadian shippers? Reimpose the duty, have the import duty raised, and the trade with the United States in Canadian lumber will be seriously curtailed.

"The experience is all against you," persisted my irrepressible friend. "I will grant that shippers are doing an increased trade because of the reduction of the import duty, but mill owners are not getting any marked benefit. There is a surplus of sawed lumber in a large number of yards consequent on the depression of a year ago, and this is being shipped across the border to-day. This stock exhausted and shippers will feel the pinch just as the mill men do to-day."

Do you mean to say that our people will cease manufacturing? You know the old adage that it is easier for the mill to come to the logs, than for the logs to go to the mill. We have got the logs and the mills are planted beside them.

"This is very plausible and might count for something if certain special factors did not exist. (1) The Americans have their own saw mills on their own side of the lines—some very large ones—and they have got to keep them running. If it were not for this it would probably pay them to 'cut' in Canada, notwithstanding the dollar duty on manufactured stuff. (2) If the duty on logs remain off for any length of time, they will have sufficient lumber in their Michigan yards manufactured from Canadian logs, cut by their own workmen, in their own mills, these without costing them a cent of duty, to be perfectly independent of manufactured stuff from Canada. In a word what need will there be for them paying even one dollar duty on lumber, when they get the stocks in free of duty in the shape of logs and manufacture, if I may so put it, on their own premises?"

There seemed to be no "downing" our saw mill friend. He recognised the fact that the owners of timber limits had a large amount of capital invested in the woods of Canada, and that the abolition of the duty on logs meant that these gentle-

men were now getting a nice turn over on their investments and from their standpoint it was perhaps proper for the government to concede to them certain privileges. But was it right for them to do this at the cost of the complete ruination of other important interests, which if not representing so large an amount of capital—though no inconsiderable sum—was a business upon which depended the livelihood of hundreds of men and their families and the sustaining of thriving and progressive villages at many points in the Province.

"I am too loyal a Canadian" said he "to take any other view of the matter" and then he left me.

THE EXPORT DUTY ON LOGS

INTERVIEW WITH A LEADING LUMBERMAN.

THE CANADA LUMBERMAN both in its editorial columns and also through its wandering scribe, "Elli," has a good deal to say in this number on the abolition of the duty on logs. It is the burning question in lumbering sections at the present time, and no apology is necessary for the prominence that we are giving it. Desiring to obtain the views of a well-known Canadian, one who is interested extensively both as the owner of limits and mills, your interviewer called upon Mr. John Bertram, president of the Collins Inlet Lumber Company, and one of the largest operators in the Georgian Bay region.

He was found in his office on Wellington street, and though up to the eyes in business, very cheerfully gave an audience and freely discussed the question.

"Let me say at the outset," remarked Mr. Bertram, "that there is no such quantity of logs being shipped from Canada to the States as is stated by the newspapers. The figure is placed at 160,000,000 feet. There will not be at the outside more than 80,000,000 or 100,000,000 feet shipped from Canada. I have heard names mentioned and figures given that are wide of the mark."

Do you not think, remarked the interviewer, that even though the figures may be exaggerated that sufficient will be shipped to have a hurtful effect on the lumbering industry?

"I do not," was Mr. Bertram's prompt reply. "So far as the Georgian Bay mills are concerned, I know that it is not so. When the proposition was made by the United States government to reduce the duty on manufactured lumber from \$2 to \$1, I think it was but a fair condition that we should abolish the duty on logs. Of course I should like to have seen entire free trade in lumber, and I can hardly fancy that there are two opinions among lumbermen on this point. I was in Saginaw, Mich., last week and was told of a large lumberman who purposes building a mill in Canada in order to cut his logs here. It costs \$1 a thousand to tow logs from Canada to the States, while the difference in the freight rates by vessel from the North Shore to Tonawanda, N.Y., is only 25 cents."

But is it not the case, was the enquiry, that the Emery Lumber Co., for example, have closed their mill at Midland?

"Yes," said Mr. Bertram, "but I would like to hear of any others. The Emery Lumber Co. were, with Mr. Miscampbell, owners of this mill. They are Americans, and own large mills in Michigan, and in order to keep these running they bought out Mr. Miscampbell's interest, closed down the mill in the meantime so that they could be assured of logs to keep their large mill on their own side busy."

Can you tell of any appreciable effect that the abolition of the duty is having on the Canadian lumber trade?

"What has been the cause of the depression in the lumber trade in Canada for the past few years?" said Mr. Bertram. "Why we have had no outlet for our coarser stuffs and you know we have immense quantities here. It has been a drug on the market. We could not export with \$2 export duty on this poorer stuff. We could not manufacture it into lumber for the \$2 import duty barred it there. It simply remained here doing no good to any one. I know now of even culls that are being shipped to the other side."

Do you anticipate, was asked, that in the event of the duty on logs being reimposed that the Americans, would retaliate by putting up their tariff and if so what would be the result?

"I can't speak for the American government," said