

A Sample Liberal Sale

Some of the methods which prevailed in the happy days of Liberalism would be laughable if they were not so lamentable. One sale of ostensibly burnt pine which they made in the Onaping country has come in for considerable attention lately. The timber was sold in 1898 to McNeil and McLeod, and before the sale the Government had not even run a line around the timber to mark the territory. It would be thought that a line would be necessary even for the purpose of proper advertising, but the only detail given in addition to the general location of the timber alleged to have been injured by fire was the statement that there were about seven and a half million feet of timber in the area which was situated on what is called Rumsey Lake, the Dead River branch of the Spanish. It was sold by tender for a lump sum of \$20,150.00 bonus, subject to dues as the timber was cut. Soon after, upon application to the then Commissioner, the purchasers were permitted to extend their cutting on the east side of the river and kept cutting through what they called damaged timber until they reached nearly to the shore of Onaping Lake, which was many miles from where they started. Then the question of boundaries came up and they came to get the boundaries declared by the Department. The then Commissioner fixed the boundaries as far as possible and they were laid down on a map, a copy of which was furnished to the owners of the territory, the Metagami Lumber Company. The Company desired to sell out its rights to the Georgian Bay Lumber Company. Before the Georgian Bay Lumber Company would purchase, it came to the Department and inquired if the boundary shown on the plan were correct and it was told they were. The Georgian Bay Lumber Company then paid over the purchase money and got a transfer of the property. Later on, when the present Government came into office, the Georgian Bay Lumber Company were anxious to sell and made application for approval of a transfer to the Company they were selling to. Investigation had shown to the Government that a great deal more had been given than the original purchase covered, and timber cut, which the Government considered they had not paid for. But the Georgian Bay Lumber Company were in the position of innocent purchasers, who had taken every possible precaution by coming to the Department to see that the title was good before paying over their money and the Department is the only place where the title of a timber license is registered, and therefore the only place the Georgian Bay Lumber Co. could go to. The Government felt that the honor of the Crown required that they should not ruin or embarrass innocent purchasers. While this was the position on the one hand, on the other, the Government was satisfied that the quantity of timber on the territory was greatly in excess of what was expected, and that, although the territory was practically delineated on the plan they held, the Government pointed out to them the seriousness of the situation and insisted that some reasonable consideration should be paid for the timber. Finally, \$50,000 was regarded as a fair compromise or sum to be paid, and that sum was paid in and the Government allowed the transfer to go through. Now, the Government does not say that it got all the timber was worth if it were offered for sale to-day. What it does say is that, having regard to all the circumstances, the course it pursued was the best one that could be pursued and the Province has got \$50,000 that it never would have got under the late Government. In addition, a time limit of ten years was set, within which operations must be completed and the ground rent of \$3.00 a mile charged in addition to the dues.

Pulp Concessions and Competition

Much has also been said and written of the fact that for the Montreal River Pulp Concession, which the late Government gave away to friends