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## A Suppressed Document

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# The Bradley Report on Logging Operations in Newfoundland, 1934:

## A Suppressed Document

Peter Neary

IN FEBRUARY, 1934, FOLLOWING a prolonged financial crisis brought on by the Great Depression, parliamentary self-government was replaced in Newfoundland by "Commission of Government." Under this system, which lasted until Newfoundland became a province of Canada in 1949, the country was administered by a governor and six commissioners, all British appointees. By law three of the commissioners had to be "drawn from Newfoundland and three from the United Kingdom."<sup>1</sup>

One of the early actions of this new government was the appointment of F. Gordon Bradley, a lawyer and the leader of the opposition in the last House of Assembly, "to enquire into conditions surrounding the employment of men in the lumber woods."<sup>2</sup> The background to this inquiry was the rising tide of complaints about wages and working conditions of Newfoundland loggers, especially those employed by the contractors and subcontractors who supplied wood to the country's two foreign-owned pulp and paper manufacturing companies. These were the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company Limited at Grand Falls and the International Power and Paper Company of Newfoundland Limited at Corner Brook which, like their counterparts elsewhere, were now contending with adverse economic circumstances. It was this discontent which led to Bradley's appointment. Decided on by the Commission on 3 April 1934, this was confirmed by the governor three days later,<sup>3</sup> the inquiry having been set up in accordance with the provisions of the Public Enquiries Act, 1934, another commission innovation.

<sup>1</sup> United Kingdom, *The Public General Acts*, 1933-4 (London 1934), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Newfoundland Archives, GN 38/S1-1-1, Commission of Government Minutes, 3 April 1934, No. 132, 23.

<sup>3</sup> The date of Bradley's commission is given on p. 1 of his report. The copy of the report used here is in the Newfoundland Archives, GN/1/3/A, Governor's Office, Miscellaneous Despatches and Local Correspondence Received 1850-1952, file 627.

Peter Neary, "The Bradley Report on Logging Operations in Newfoundland, 1934: A Suppressed Document," *Labour/Le Travail*, 16 (Fall 1985), 193-232.

Bradley was given the following terms of reference:

(1) To enquire into and report on the conditions of work and living and the terms of employment in the case of men employed in forest operations of all kinds. (2) To enquire into and report on the method of supply of stores to the workmen where such stores are supplied, and on the prices charged for stores as compared with ordinary market prices. (3) To enquire and report as to the number of families of such workmen who are living on public charity while the men are at work. (4) To enquire into and report on any other circumstances in connection with forest operations which in your opinion should be brought to the notice of the Government. [and] (5) To make any recommendations which you may think fit on the subject of employment in forest operations in Newfoundland.<sup>4</sup>

On 17 April the government also asked Bradley to investigate "The present position with regard to the manufacture of staves for drums and barrels."<sup>5</sup> Though Claude Fraser was originally named to act as secretary to the inquiry, this work was in practice undertaken by G. Bernard Summers, a member of the Newfoundland bar then practising in Corner Brook (in June Fraser was named secretary [deputy minister] of the Department of Natural Resources).<sup>6</sup>

From 2-19 April Bradley took evidence in St. John's, travelling next to Howley where he met Summers on April 20.<sup>7</sup> Then until 22 May, the two men took evidence from St. George's in the west to Botwood in the east, travelling both on the main line of the Newfoundland Railway and on lines owned by the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company Limited. Some witnesses "feared to appear to give evidence, and would only come at night." Still others "hesitated to speak freely until given an assurance that their names would not be disclosed." "This timidity," Bradley concluded, "arose out of fear that knowledge of their appearing before me would be interpreted by their employers as an act of hostility, and would result in a refusal of future employment. I do not know how far such fears were justified but there are substantial grounds for believing that they were not wholly without foundation." Nonetheless, the commissioner heard from a broad cross section of people working in the industry in the area and was able to accumulate a wealth of information. From 22 May to 5 June Bradley and Summers continued their work at St. John's, in the Conception Bay area, and on the south shore of Trinity Bay. They then toured the northeast coast of the island from Clarenville to Hampden, White Bay, travelling on board the motorboat *M.F. Grant*. From Hampden they made their

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>6</sup> See Newfoundland Archives, GN 38/S1-1-1, *Commission of Government Minutes*, 3 April 1934, No. 132, 23; and 1 June 1934, No. 375, 59. In October 1934, Summers was appointed Assistant Secretary for Justice and in 1940, Secretary for Justice. Following war service and the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation, he joined the Department of External Affairs and served in various posts of the Canadian foreign service both in Ottawa and abroad. He was ambassador to Iran and ambassador to Chile.

<sup>7</sup> The account that follows is based on Bradley's report, 2-5.

way, partly on foot, to Lomond, Bonne Bay, and then returned to St. John's, where Bradley submitted his report on 22 August.

As leader of the opposition, Bradley had not opposed Commission of Government as such, but he had been highly critical of the procedure by which it had been brought about and had favoured a system in which Newfoundlanders would retain some electoral voice in their own affairs.<sup>8</sup> His bold report on logging again cast him into opposition, for in a slashing attack he condemned the relationship between capital and labour in the forestry as fundamentally unjust.

In the Commission of Government, Sir John Hope Simpson, one of the members from the United Kingdom, was as the commissioner for natural resources responsible for forestry matters. Though in private he had himself been highly critical of the way the two pulp and paper companies operated in the country, Hope Simpson concluded that Bradley had misrepresented the situation before him. Accordingly, the commission decided against the publication of the report; this, it told London, might "lead to a strike throughout the lumber woods."<sup>9</sup> Hope Simpson's view was that Bradley had "failed to investigate the particular conditions which were the subject of complaint last winter, and which were confined to the operations of independent contractors and sub-contractors" and had instead "taken the opportunity to make what is in fact a political attack on the foreign companies."<sup>10</sup> For the Commission to publish the report while not intending to act on it would place Bradley "in the position of champion of the workers as against a reactionary Government, whose interest was in favour of foreign capital."<sup>11</sup> This was unacceptable. Instead, Hope Simpson showed the companies Bradley's report in confidence and then struck a deal with them: in return for burying the document, the government extracted from the companies a commitment to pay the loggers they employed directly a minimum net monthly wage of \$25.00 from 1 January 1935.<sup>12</sup> Subsequently, the Commission took other steps to improve working conditions in the industry and in 1938 passed two acts relating to logging camps.<sup>13</sup> In the second half of the 1930s there was also an important burst of union activity

<sup>8</sup> See my *The Political Economy of Newfoundland, 1929-1972* (Toronto 1973), 52-3.

<sup>9</sup> Public Record Office, Dominions Office series 35, file 498/N1020/16, Anderson to Thomas, 2 November 1934, 17. Transcripts of Crown copyright records in the Public Record Office appear by permission of the controller of H.M. Stationery Office.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Hope Simpson to Harding, 1 November 1934, 8.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>12</sup> For developments after the report was submitted see *ibid.* (whole file), especially "Extract from Press Communiqué of the Sixty-first Meeting of the Commission of Government, held in the Colonial Building on Tuesday, December 4th, 1934 at 10 a.m.;" and Newfoundland Archives, GN 38/S1-1-1, Commission of Government Minutes, 26 October 1934, No. 778, 118, and 30 October 1934, No. 798 and No. 802, 121.

<sup>13</sup> *Acts of the Honourable Commission of Government of Newfoundland 1938* (St. John's 1938), 373-90.

among Newfoundland loggers which the Bradley report may be said to have signalled.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the poor reception it had given his 1934 report, the Commission of Government appointed Bradley to the magistracy the following year. Later he was J.R. Smallwood's close associate (they knew each other in the 1930s) in the campaign to bring Newfoundland into Confederation. In April 1949, he became secretary of state for Canada, the first resident of the new province to serve in the federal cabinet. By this time the events of the 1930s were fading fast in the memory of Newfoundlanders for whom World War II had begun a period of unprecedented prosperity. In these circumstances nothing much was heard again of Bradley's damning 1934 report until the papers of the Commission of Government were recently opened to researchers. What the document now offers the labour and social historian is a fine description of an industry at a certain stage in its development and a compelling account of what life was like near the bottom in one hard-pressed little society during the Great Depression. It is for these reasons that (abbreviated and with minor editorial changes) it is published here just over half a century after it was suppressed by an administration which, in the 1930s at least, found the job of governing Newfoundland a "ceaseless anxiety."<sup>15</sup>

### Bradley Report

THE FOREST OPERATIONS OF Newfoundland consist of: (1) Pulpwood cutting; (2) Pitprop cutting; (3) Saw-log cutting; (4) Cutting for fishery and firewood and fencing purposes.

(1). Pulpwood consists of spruce and fir cut into varying lengths from three feet up to ten feet being not less than three and a half inches in the top. (In cases in which the paper companies buy from Crown Lands 4 inch tops is the minimum size.) The AND Co. (Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co. Ltd.) cuts its wood in lengths of 4 feet 10 inches, 5 feet 2 inches, 7 feet, and 10 feet. These pieces are then put through a slash mill at their plant to cut them into lengths suitable for their grinders. The International Power and Paper Company (Nfld.) Limited, (hereinafter called "The IP&P Co.") cuts only four foot wood. All their grinders take this size and they do not use a slash mill. Three and one half foot wood is exported.

#### *Woods Contracts.*

THE SYSTEM OF CUTTING pulpwood on what are known as Company lands, whether freehold or held under timber licence, as at present practised, is known as the contract system. The paper company enters into agreements with a

<sup>14</sup> For details of this see Thomas K. Liddell, *Industrial Survey of Newfoundland* (St. John's 1940), 16-19.

<sup>15</sup> Public Record Office, Dominions Office series 35, file 496/N1012/161, Walwyn to Harding, 1 September 1936, 25.

number of experienced men, each of whom undertakes to cut for the company a number of cords of wood ranging from one, to fifteen, but usually from two, to five, thousand, in lengths specified, and at prices per cord, and subject to conditions set out in the agreements. The contractor, (as he is termed), is bound to haul this wood to the nearest river or pond suitable for driving, and pile it on the bank in position for rolling into the water in the spring. In the case of the IP&P Co. the contractors are provided with horses for hauling, in most cases, for which a monthly charge is made. In the case of the AND Co. contractors have to find their own horses. All supplies including food and "van"<sup>16</sup> must under contractors' agreements be purchased from Company stores at Company prices. Price per cord to the cutter and wages of teamsters, loaders, and cooks, are specified in the contract. The IP&P Co. pays the men direct. The AND Co. through a fund supplied and controlled by them. The contractor's books are always open to the Company. All wood is scaled by the Company officials whose decision is final.

A few excerpts from specimen contracts will serve to illustrate the real relation between the company and the contractor.

(a) "The Company will control contractor's expenditures and rates of wages to be paid employees, said wages will be paid by the Company and charged to the contractor" (IP&P Co.).

(b) "All supplies and equipment will be purchased from the Company" (IP&P Co.).

(c) "All gear and supplies shall be purchased from the Company at their current price list" (AND Co.).

(d) "In the event that after this contract is in force the Company finds it necessary to reduce their cut for the current year, it is understood and agreed that the Company has the right to reduce the quantity herein stated if notice of this reduction is given before such quantity is yarded in the woods" (AND Co.).

These examples are typical of many other clauses in these contracts and inevitably lead to the conclusion that the contractor (so called), is merely a foreman who receives as wages a lump sum which will vary with his ability to keep the cost of production below a specified figure. In the performance of the agreement he has no liberty of action whatever. . . . From the Company's standpoint this system is an excellent one. It gives them complete control over all operations and costs without immediate responsibility. It enables them to dictate the prices of wood to the cutter, and of wages, meals, and supplies of all kinds. The daily procedure in all operations is in their hands. There is thus afforded ample opportunity to cut costs in all directions to a minimum. (Contracts with the firm of J. Goodyear & Sons, Ltd., woods contractors, are an exception in part to the foregoing in that that firm handles its own supplying and payroll, and in other details, but it too is controlled as to the price paid to the cutter and otherwise.)

<sup>16</sup> Personal supplies (e.g., tobacco, cigarette papers, blades, antiseptic, etc.) sold to loggers in camp. For the Quebec use of the term see Centre documentaire en civilisation traditionnelle Université de Québec à Trois-Rivières, *Récits de Forestiers* (Montreal 1976).

*Jobbers' Contracts.*

A JOBBER IS A CONTRACTOR who undertakes to cut a small quantity usually from three hundred to a thousand cords. Frequently such a contractor employs only his own sons or near relatives, or neighbours, and cooking for the whole camp is done by his wife. The hauling is done either by horse or by hand-cutting. In many cases whole families go in the woods for the winter under these jobbers' contracts.

*Outside Contracts.*

THE PAPER MILLS FREQUENTLY obtain pulpwood from Crown Lands and areas of their own situated some distance from their mill operation. The IP&P Co. secured wood last year from Bonavista Bay, Notre Dame Bay, and in St. George's and St. Barbe Districts. The AND Co. purchased some in Bonavista Bay. Control is not exercised in the same way as described above over these "outside" contractors. In the very nature of things it cannot be. The bargain is simply one of purchase and sale of a given quantity of pulpwood in specified sizes and quality delivered and stowed on board ship or railway cars for a specified price, ranging from \$3.75 to \$4.60 per cord on board ship, and on railway cars for less than \$3, last season. The contractor is left to pay such prices for wood and other labour and to make such charges for supplies and board (if he runs camps), as he deems fit. As a result there was no uniformity in these outside operations. The cutters were paid as low as \$1 per cord at the stump. In some cases the cutter did the hauling and received a lump sum for both. Some cut, hauled and drove to the boom at tidewater. Very few of these contractors conducted camps; the men as a rule bought their supplies from the operator and did their own cooking. Every one of these contractors whom I interviewed readily agreed that the prices they paid were too low, but said they could do no better out of the price paid by the Paper Companies. My enquiries as to costs of hauling, driving, booming, towing, loading and stowing, have convinced me that no unfair profits were made on these operations; indeed, I am satisfied that some of them will be fortunate if they escape a small loss. The men of course [have] to take their supplies from the contractor at his prices and upon these in some cases substantial profits were made, though others sold at what I consider to be very fair prices. Enquiries amongst the men furnished abundant corroboration of the contractors' admission of insufficiency of pay. Of food they could earn but a scanty supply and for many clothing was quite out of reach. As with company operations a few skilful men by close application and strenuous work did fairly well. The ordinary cutter existed, the inefficient one ended in debt.

In addition to the price paid for the wood the Companies pay the freight and unloading costs at the mill. Estimating sea-freight at one dollar, and railway freight at one dollar and fifty cents per cord, and bearing in mind that generally speaking the distance from the stump to tidewater is at most four or five miles

in the case of Crown Lands wood, whereas much of the wood, the production of which is under the Companies' direct supervision has to be driven and towed fifty or sixty miles over lakes and streams I am satisfied that railway and boat wood from Crown lands cost much less in the boom at the mill than did the production from their own operations. The difference would probably be a dollar per cord. Moreover they take no wood under four inches in the top from Crown Lands. From their own limits they take all over three inches.

#### *The Production of Pulpwood.*

THE COMPANY HAVING determined to harvest a particular stand of timber instructs its woods department to cruise the block and lay it out for woods operations. Main roads and branch roads are then cut through the block either by the Company or contractors, which roads lead finally to the bank of a stream or pond. The area is then divided into blocks for the individual cutters.

#### *Timber.*

STANDS OF TIMBER vary substantially in quality and accessibility. The best timber consists of tall, straight trees with very little foliage beyond a plume at the top, standing on good soil, (without bog or marsh), upon which there is no underbrush. Some of these trees will give twelve to fifteen pieces of four foot pulpwood. The work of the cutter is then comparatively simple and production comparatively rapid. The worst timber is found in poor soil, frequently in marshy ground and in irregular hilly country. This type of wood has branches almost to the ground, is stunted and frequently choked with underbrush. Such trees contain few pieces of four foot wood; four, three, two, and sometimes only one. Obviously production in this grade is much slower. More trees must be cut. A lot of branching is necessary, and much time is lost in cleaning out underbrush to render the trees accessible. It is from stands of the former kind that the high man-production figures of which the public hears so much are obtained. But of this more hereafter. Between the two grades above described the timber varies and it is fair to say that the average will be nearer the low grade than the high.

#### *Camps.*

DURING THE OPERATIONS of log production the men live in camps. A camp usually consists of two buildings, a cook-house and a bunk-house. In the former the food is cooked and the men take their meals. In the latter the men sleep. Both buildings are ordinarily constructed of round logs, (though sometimes of heavy canvas), with rough board floors. The roof is frequently of round sticks, often several inches apart, sloping from a ridge pole running over the centre of the length of the building down to the side walls and covered with felt. The inside of the buildings is sometimes covered with sheathing paper. The bunks are built along both sides of the bunkhouse and there is an aisle down the centre between the two rows. The bottoms of the bunks are of rough



board or round sticks. Frequently the floor only extends to a line immediately underneath the edge of the bunk nearest the aisle. The opening between the edge of the bunks and the floor is boarded up, thus leaving the bottom of the bunk open to the ground. In some camps mattresses are supplied. A charge of 25¢ a month is usually made for these. Camp buildings vary in size and are built to accommodate from 25 to 50 or 60 men. They are frequently overcrowded. Repairs to harness and gear is done in the bunkhouse. Sweat pads and other horse tacklings are dried there. All clothing is dried there, and except in dry summer weather, men frequently return to camp wet through, for even in winter, snow falling from the trees upon the men in the bush is melted by the heat of their bodies and saturates their clothing. During wet weather men are soaked to the skin unless clothed in oil-skins, which not only impede production but are most distressing to a man engaged in the strenuous manual labour of bucksawing, teaming, loading and landing. Further, woods work is most destructive of oil-skins, as indeed it is of all kinds of clothing. Generally speaking I find that camp conditions are unsatisfactory though there are outstanding exceptions. The overcrowding of camps should not be allowed to continue. Floors should always extend to the four walls and not merely to the edge of the bunks. The bottom of the bunks should be of board and not round sticks. Similarly the roof should be of boards placed closely together and properly felted instead of round sticks several inches apart. The walls and ceiling should be completely covered inside with heavy paper or some other suitable material. The mill canvas camp is satisfactory in summer, but should be absolutely forbidden in autumn, winter, and spring. Adequate, controllable, ventilation is necessary in the roof. Floors should be scrubbed once a week at least and swept every day. Under no circumstances should harness, sweat pads and the like be dried in the bunkhouse. Adequate supplies of Jeyes Fluid or other suitable disinfectant should always be on hand and used as required. Abundant washing facilities are easily installed and should be insisted upon. The windows should be adequate and so placed as to catch the southern and western sun. For large camps there should be a special camp attendant charged with the duty of maintaining cleanliness. Considerable dissatisfaction exists in connection with mattresses. The complaint is that they are often dirty and harbour vermin. Many prefer what is called the bough-bed. This is made of boughs about eight inches long packed in the bunk almost perpendicularly. Many claim it is far more satisfactory and comfortable than a mattress if properly packed in and changed every few days. A suggestion was made by one man which I submitted to the judgment of scores. It met with almost unanimous approval. It is as follows: heavy duck sacks should be provided and one given to each man together with a filling of clean excelsior or other suitable material (not hay) when he comes to camp. When he leaves the sack should be emptied and boiled and the filling destroyed. It is then ready to be issued to another man together with a new filling. Birch rind torn in small strips is suggested as a good filler. This the men can often secure themselves.

*Food.*

THE CHIEF ARTICLES of diet are beans, beef (mainly salt), bread (hard and fresh), butter, salt fish, molasses, rolled oats, peas, pork (fatback), prunes, evaporated apples, apricots, raisins, rice, sugar, tea, potatoes and turnips. Carrots and parsnips are seldom available, cabbage only occasionally, in season. Potatoes are sometimes and turnips often absent. Fresh beef is an infrequent part of a meal. It must be remembered however that it cannot be handled in the bush in warm weather. The salt beef is sometimes black and the pork rusty. This usually happens towards the latter part of the season and is probably attributable to careless handling in camp.

The men generally testify that the food is of good quality and there is no restriction upon consumption at meals. There were complaints about the cooking and the lack of variety. As to the former, no doubt there are poor cooks, but a good deal of his failure to prepare food properly and render it attractive may be attributed to the cook's long hours. That the meals become monotonous is not surprising. Beans for breakfast six times a week is likely to pall upon the appetite after a couple of weeks despite their great sustaining value. One of the chief complaints is insufficiency of fresh meats and lack of variety of vegetables. Fresh meat cannot be handled economically in summer, but there is no reason why the supply should not be plentiful in winter. A more liberal supply of turnips, cabbage (in season), carrots, parsnips, and beets, is recommended. A greater variety of dried fruits, apricots, prunes and the like, would be helpful. Apart from these points and with an exception here and there I find that the men are substantially fed with food of good quality. Much dissatisfaction exists over the price charged for meals. It is contended that the price is too high. Where the camp is easily accessible from railway points or ports this is true. On the other hand camps so situated as to involve long or difficult portaging often make a loss. The evidence shows that some camps make a good profit on the cook house and others lost money. It is obvious that the charge for board must be a uniform one if it is to be made at all. The only justification which can be offered for the retention of the system is that if the price for food were founded on free board it would encourage malingering. It is not likely that such a result would follow to any appreciable extent in an operation in which a man's earnings depend upon results. And even if it did the foreman would soon discover the malingerer and deal with him summarily. On the whole I do not find that there is any unconscionable profit made on the boarding of the men, but it is to be observed that the cost (sixty cents per day), is almost double the ordinary cost of the same food in a man's home. The additional expense is peculiar to the operation and should be borne by it and not by the already inadequate remuneration of the workmen.

*The Cook.*

THE COOK IS USUALLY a hard worked man. Where the number of men in camp exceeds twenty five he has an assistant, (called "cookee"). In very large

camps, (say of sixty to eighty men), he may have two assistants. His work begins at about 4.00 or 4.30 in the morning when he has to prepare breakfast which is served about 6.00 or 6.30 a.m. Unless the men take their mid-day meal in the bush he must now prepare dinner, which is usually taken about mid-day. In the afternoon he must prepare for supper. This meal is an irregular one as men do not all return at the same time. Throughout the day he has to prepare and cook what may be termed stock foods, such as bread, pies, and dried fruits, and secure firewood. In a large camp a barrel of flour will not last more than two days. After supper, when men take their mid-day meal in the bush, he has to prepare and pack a lunch for each man to take with him the next day. His day's work is seldom over before 9.00 or 9.30 p.m. He is also responsible for the cleanliness of both cook-house and bunkhouse. A cook's pay varies somewhat in different operations but averages \$2.50 per day including Sundays. He is charged \$18 per month for his board, leaving a net amount of \$57 per month. Cookees pay will range from \$20 to \$30 per month with free board. In view of his responsibilities, continuous labour, and unlimited hours, I consider the cook is much underpaid. The proper remedy is to give him more help. Where this cannot be done by reason of the smallness of the camp, his wages should be advanced in proportion to the excess of his working day over ten hours. The cookee's position is similar to that of the cook and his case should be treated accordingly.

### *Teamsters.*

THE TEAMSTER HAULS the pulpwood, which has been piled near the road by the cutter, to the bank of the stream or pond after it has been scaled or measured. Occasionally a double team, that is, a pair of horses, is attached to the sled, but the single team is most commonly used. Hauling is of course all done while the snow is on the ground. The work is heavy and arduous, and the hours are long. A teamster gets up at 5.00 a.m. to feed and look after his horse. Then he gets breakfast and goes to the job at daylight. With a break for the mid-day lunch he works until dark which is about 6.00 to 6.30 p.m. Returning to camp he feeds his horse, gets his own supper and then grooms the animal. His work is over about 8.00 p.m. He must also look after and feed his horse on Sundays. For this he receives no remuneration, nor for days when he cannot haul. He pays \$18 per month for his board. He is paid \$2 per day for the days he works. A double teamster may get \$2.25.

I find that the teamster is underpaid. Furthermore he has to work long hours and on Sundays. At his present rate of \$2 per day he should be boarded free of cost and receive some additional remuneration for his extra hours.

### *The Loader.*

A LOADER IS A SORT of assistant to the teamster. His duty is to help load the wood from the cutters' piles on the teamster's sled. The work is hard and

destructive of clothing. It does not require any degree of skill. He receives from \$1.60 to \$2 per day of indefinite length but approximately 10 hours. He receives nothing for days or parts of days lost through weather conditions. He pays \$18 per month for his board. I find that the loader is under paid. He should receive two dollars per day and be boarded free of cost.

### *The Cutter.*

THE CUTTER IS THE chief link in the chain of production. He manufactures the pulpwood out of the standing trees and piles his product in quantities of from one cord up to perhaps four or five, (average about 1.2), close to the road so that it may be conveniently scaled or measured, and loaded on the sled, for hauling. It is perhaps as well at this point to dissipate a common impression that an ordinary fisherman or labourer with sound physique can go to the woods and almost immediately become an efficient and productive cutter. He cannot. The adaptability which characterises the average Newfoundlander usually enables him to acquire the necessary skill in a comparatively short time but no amount of adaptability can take the place of knowledge and experience. Nor is sheer strength of any avail in the absence of skill. It seems to be the opinion of woodsmen that the ordinary inexperienced man given a little more special attention and instruction from the outset should in three or four weeks acquire the ordinary man's ability to produce.

In AND Co.'s operations the Company cuts the road up through the centre of each cutter's clock. In IP&P Co.'s and most other operations each man has to cut, (or in woods phraseology "swamp") his own road. It is estimated that "swamping" takes about ten per cent of a cutter's time. It necessarily follows that an inexperienced man will lose considerable time in "swamping." Again the method of "notching" a tree with the axe before sawing, so that it will fall conveniently for branching, cutting into lengths, and carrying to the pile, must be learned. Proper manipulation of the slender bladed buck-saw is acquired by practise. The forcing of this tool by blind muscular effort is not only futile but may result in its running out of line, jamming in large trees, or breaking. The keeping of the saw in condition is an art in itself. Filing and setting must be learned. Fir requires a different tooth from summer wood and a closer setting. In raker toothed saws the clearance of the rakers is of extreme importance. The breaking of saws is attributable in part to inexperience, and particularly in winter, when saw-blades are colder and more brittle, is often a serious handicap and cause of expense to the unskilled cutter. Some men will go through a season with one saw. Others will use two a month. It is estimated that with proper care a saw should cut 20 cords of wood. The price of these saws varies with quality and camp from 60¢ to \$1.20 each.

It is claimed that nearly fifteen per cent of the cutters remain in the woods ten days and less, and that these are the incapable and inexperienced ones who cannot make their pay. But this number includes many who arrive in camp a few days before cutting ceases and experienced men who leave because of

dissatisfaction with camp conditions or the price or quality of the blocks they are sent to cut. It will include many ordinarily capable cutters in clean-up chances and scrub spruce. The proportion of totally inexperienced men will fall far below this percentage. Nevertheless there is quite a number of inexperienced men who go the woods. Unless they have friends they seldom receive proper instruction. Frequently they are sent in difficult wood where an expert will find it hard to make anything. Under such conditions the prospects of the novice are to say the least, most disheartening. Struggle as he may his day's work gives him little if anything over the cost of his board, and sometimes not even that. Is it any wonder that in such circumstances, and realizing that while he is well fed his family is perhaps hungry, the unfortunate man cannot resist the urge to leave his payless job and return home.

The plight of such men was well illustrated to me about a month ago when on July 14th I visited the police station at St. John's and interviewed men who had been arrested for illegally boarding the train. I took statements from about ten of the seventy of them. Nine of the ten had never handled a bucksaw before; they were fishermen; the tenth had about fifteen years woods experience of a casual character and had been bucksawing two seasons. As a result of innocent misrepresentation of the Company's intermediary (I cannot conceive it to have been deliberate), or their own misinterpretation of what he said, the men believed they were to be paid \$1.30 per day and board found. Some of these men walked fifty miles to secure a job at which they might earn the living which the fishery in their locality at that time did not afford them, and at the same time undertook responsibility for the payment of passage money to and from the lumberwoods amounting to approximately \$20 each. They were separated in different camps. Some had fairly good timber to cut; others, from their description of it, were in scrub spruce, and clean-up chances. Several of them worked long hours and at least one on Sunday. Their time varied from three to over twenty days. They could take nothing. I should have been surprised if they could at \$1.30 to \$1.43 a cord. It was an absurdity to take these men at such prices and the Company must bear responsibility for the blundering of its agent. The final result was that these men were marched through the street as ordinary criminals, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment, for acts arising out of a desperate plight brought upon them by the blundering of others.

Considerable controversy centres around the ability to produce of the men employed as cutters, and for this reason I have been particularly careful to secure all possible evidence upon this point. It must be borne in mind that there is a wide difference between what a man can do, when upon the result of his efforts depends a sufficiency of food and clothing on the one hand, and hunger, partial or complete, and comparative nakedness for his family, on the other, and, what he ought to do in the course of each twenty-four hours, having regard not only to his employer's interests but those of his own health and the well being of his family. Modern medical science, and indeed the industrial interests themselves, realize that more than eight hours per day of manual

labour is not only ultimately physically injurious but that it tends to reduce the efficiency of the worker within a very short period. Indeed in some industries the working day has been substantially less than eight hours for a number of years. In Newfoundland we have not yet reached this stage of advance in modern science and civilization, and the manual labourer of most kinds is expected to work for ten hours out of each twenty-four to justify his existence. There can be no doubt that such period is the extreme limit of time during which a man may consistently work at manual labour without physical injury, constituting as it does a twenty-five per cent increase over the recognized eight hour day. It must be further remembered that the degree of strenuousness enters into calculations of this kind, and I know of no more arduous form of toil in Newfoundland than woodcutting.

Evidence has been taken both sworn and unsworn from Company managers and officials and some hundreds of woodsmen, including contractors, foremen, cutters, teamsters, loaders, swamper, drivers, scalers, cooks, and camp-builders, whose experience ranges from two to fifty years and the bulk of whom have been at the work more than ten years.

According to the records furnished by the IP&P Co. 22% of their cutters cut less than one cord per day in 1933 and 78% averaged 1.3 cords per day. This cut began in September (with the exception of a few small operations in the summer months) and continued until the latter part of January. In 1932, 82% of their men cut 93% of their wood (a much smaller cut by the way), and averaged 1.4 cords per man. It is claimed that the difference was due to bad weather and that with summer cutting the men would do much better. The records of the AND Co. furnish the following statistics: 17% of the men cut less than 1 cord per day; 83% of the men cut over 1 cord per day; 36% of the men cut over 1½ cords per day. The general average for AND Co. was 1.45 cords per day. This company's production was mainly summer cut.

Assuming the correctness of these Company records in this connection, (and I have no reason to doubt their accuracy), they afford a most unreliable foundation upon which to base a conclusion as to what a man can reasonably be expected to produce per day. They take no account of the hours worked. The companies have not these records; indeed it would be difficult for them to obtain them in view of the fact that the cutters' hours are regulated by themselves. This point is however of vital importance and I have endeavoured to get first hand information from both cutters and contractors. . . . In conversation with groups of men and particularly one group in a large settlement, I acquired the impression that the general run of men frequently work 12 and 13 hours a day when daylight permits. On one occasion I reached one camp at 8:30 p.m. All the men were in. At another they were not all in at 10.00 p.m. In neither case had they any warning of my coming. . . . The high production cutter with few exceptions works for long hours and at high pressure. . . . While for a month or two in November and December (when the bulk of the cutting is usually over) there are only from nine to ten hours daylight, the summer months of June, July, August and early September, (when the bulk of the

cutting is done), afford from thirteen to seventeen such hours. (In June past there was plenty of light in the bush at 10.00 p.m.) It is not difficult to believe that the ordinary man with dependents, realising that his earnings are entirely governed by his production, will continue work while he can, particularly if his margin over expenses is a meagre one. In view of the evidence taken upon this point, . . . I find that the hours of work per day substantially exceed ten, though there is no avenue through which I can reach a correct average. The evidence of the Companies' records . . . affords . . . no reliable measure of a fair day's work, for two reasons: (1) the hours per man day are not and cannot be given with accuracy but will most certainly exceed ten hours; (2) the high cordage man is included but the low cordage man is not.

Before dealing with the other evidence on the point of fair daily production I shall refer to the many instances pointed to as evidence of what a man can, and therefore, inferentially, ought, to cut. There is a considerable number of men who *can* cut from a cord and a half to four cords in a day. There are naturally more of them to be found in the AND operation than in IP&P Co.s, for the reason that swamping and saw filing are done for the men by the former but not by the latter. . . . It is clear . . . that high cordage is produced by one or more of four factors, and in most cases at least two, and in many cases all four of them in combination, namely, (1) more than ordinary skill and experience in woodcutting; (2) strenuousness of daily toil beyond the ability of the human body to maintain for a lengthened period; (3) hours of labour far beyond even the Newfoundland standard of ten hours a day for six days a week; (4) timber of the quality and so situated as to be most easily harvested. Indeed, as to this factor, it is established that the expert cutter entirely refuses to handle poor grade stand at all.

The system which permits this sort of thing must bear responsibility for its attendant evils:

(1) Injury to physique. I have listened to numerous accounts of injuries sustained as a result of overwork. Very little expert testimony upon this question is available for the reason that in the majority of cases, where immediate surgical aid is not needed, the only evidence of impaired health is muscular stiffness, pain, or general physical slackness. That the latter results from this overwork is unquestionable. After a month or two the man who has driven himself too hard either leaves the woods to recuperate or his daily cut drops rapidly. As regards permanent impairment of physique, my conclusions rest wholly on the testimony of numerous witnesses as to what had come under their own notice, and a few who had suffered and were then suffering themselves from the evils of overwork in the woods. I fully realize that such testimony is not to be taken at face value, however honest the witness may be. He is not an expert in such matters, and will often blame strenuous labour in the woods for a given condition, when that condition is attributable to some wholly foreign factor or even constitutional weakness, though even in the latter case overstrain will surely result in temporary and sometimes permanent injury and

even death. Nevertheless, the opinions given and incidents related were so numerous and the chains of fact so logical, that they compel the conclusion that this system of piece work cutting of wood in combination with the rates of pay offered today is producing a most pernicious effect upon the physique of the man who is endeavouring to do his best.

It is significant that the large operators are this year subjecting the men to a physical examination before employing them. This procedure is to be commended. Only the sound man can support such strenuous labour without probable injury to health; too much of it is more than even he can withstand.

(2) The results, in terms of wages made by these methods, offer a tempting inducement to the employer to depress prices paid the cutter and at the same time afford him a plausible argument to justify the reduction.

The fact is that prices have been depressed, and I find that one Company's records show that only 28% of their men were married and 19% were under twenty-one years of age. Again on examining a camp of 47 men I found it contained: Age 47: One man; Between ages of 35 and 47: None; Between ages of 30 and 35: Seven men; Between ages of 25 and 30: Eleven men; Between ages of 20 and 25: Twenty-one men; Between ages of 17 and 20: Seven men. It is noteworthy that over 80% of these men were under 30 years of age and nearly 60% under 25. . . . Clearly the married man avoids the woods today whenever he can.

I RETURN NOW TO THE vital question; what is a fair day's production for a Newfoundland woodcutter? Several important factors must be considered if the conclusion reached is to be at all accurate. Both the inexperienced man and the expert cutter must be excluded from the calculation. The man whose ability we must find is the ordinary cutter with ordinary experience. The type of timber must be an average of the grades found in our forest lands. The man must be industrious and work with a reasonable degree of assiduity. I have adopted the Newfoundland standard and set the hours of work at ten per day. I have made this enquiry of hundreds of men from all parts of the country and on every occasion was particularly careful to make certain that each witness knew exactly what I meant before he considered and gave his reply. Put briefly the question may take the following form: how much will the ordinary woodcutter, working reasonably, in an average stand of timber, cut and pile by his road, per ten hour day, throughout the season? . . . After very careful consideration of all opinions offered and the facts by which they are buttressed, I have come to the conclusion that the weight of evidence overwhelmingly indicates that a fair ten hour day's production lies somewhere between 1.10 and 1.25 cords. It will probably reach the higher figure where (as in the case of most of the AND Co.'s operations) the cutter's roads are "swamped" for him by the Company. Taking the higher figure as the fair average it is now possible to ascertain what a fairly capable man can earn by an honest ten hour day's work on the basis of the rates paid last year. The IP&P Co.'s prices to the cutter are the higher and averaged



\$1.34 per cord. Taking a thirty day month and deducting the four Sundays, there will remain twenty-six working days. A cutter producing 1.25 cords per day for 26 days has a gross earning power of \$43.55.

Against this there are the following deductions:

30 days board at 60 cents per day	\$18.00
Doctor's fee	.40
1 saw blade	.90
Necessary wear and tear on clothing which must be replaced, not less than	4.00
Total deduction	<u>\$23.30</u>

Leaving a net income of \$20.25

It is to be borne in mind that this calculation takes no account of unforeseen contingencies such as illness, accident, bad weather, (which will almost certainly average two days per month), tobacco (which may almost be classified as a necessity), fire, nor of cost of transportation. Disregarding these the position is that the ordinary industrious cutter has at most \$20.25 per month to provide for his family, if he has one. And this presupposes that he is cutting in an average stand of timber. It is a fact that the practise of showing favour to the better man is evidenced in all departments of the woods operation. He is given the preference in the hauling and driving as well as in the cutting, and the man who earns nothing or comparatively nothing is frequently the ordinary industrious cutter in scrub wood or what is known as a "clean-up chance," that is, territory already cut over by another but not thoroughly cleaned up.

The next question is: Does this net income of approximately \$20.25 per month obtainable by the ordinary cutter in return for a fair day's work suffice to house, clothe and feed his family, educate his children, pay his doctor and clergyman, and provide him with at least a few simple luxuries? Clearly the answer to this question will depend upon another: What is a fair standard of living for a woodsman and his family? This is not the occasion for a sociological dissertation upon the natural rights of man, but no one will venture to gainsay that these rights will include a sufficiency of good clothing, good food, proper housing, reasonable educational facilities, and some measure of the amenities of life. No form of human activity commercial, industrial, or professional should be permitted to survive unless it can afford its workmen these things. Anything less classifies the workman as a mere beast of burden in whom animal life must be maintained that he may labour. It is to be regretted that the history of our country for the last three hundred years or more, and today, points to this classification being the accepted view in controlling circles, and amongst those so regarded none has suffered more than the Newfoundland woodsman in recent years. That his work is not ordinary unskilled labour is not disputed; that it is most strenuous is proven not only by the unanimous testimony of all acquainted with the nature of the operation, but by corroborative facts. Very complete and detailed statistics furnished me by the

IP&P Co. show that the consumption per man day of food in the woods is 6.43 pounds, enough for the proverbial ploughman. Indeed he is a ploughman save that he ploughs wood with his muscles and not earth with the aid of a horse. How hard he must work to burn up such a quantity of food per day. And yet he is not accorded the reward of even the ordinary mill labourer whose occupation involves no special skill. A comparison is startling. The mill labourer receives 30 cents per hour and works eight hours per day. His daily earnings are \$2.40. The ordinary woodsman works ten hours a day and for a month of twenty six days receives \$20.25. It is true that he receives his own food which must be added to this \$20.25, but not at the rate charged, for the cost of that food in his home would not exceed half of the 60 cents per day charged for board. Estimating the value of his board therefore at \$9.00 and adding this amount to the sum of \$20.25 calculated above, his net monthly earnings for purposes of comparison will stand at \$29.25, and his daily earnings therefore \$1.12½. His hourly earnings are therefore 11¼ cents per hour. Even if we take into account all the woods charges, board, doctor's fee, files, saws, clothing, etc., and calculate on the basis of his gross earnings he makes per day only \$1.675 or per hour \$.1675. Slightly more than half the remuneration of an ordinary labourer. It may be contended that the mill labourer is better paid than the ordinary labourer in other sections of the country. In some places the wage is 25 cents per hour; in others it is \$1.00 and even less for a ten hour day, payable in trade, (commonly called "truck") at prices that in some cases to say the least are sufficiently high. This is true. It is even seriously contended that the woodsman of today receives as much income from his work as the fisherman does from his. Such reasoning is so childishly illogical that it can be dismissed with the observation that underpayment of one class of workman is no justification for similar treatment of others. What is more to the point is that all employers of woodsmen have admitted to me that these men are seriously underpaid. Such an admission immediately throws the burden of proving the justification for that underpayment on the employer. He has failed to discharge it.

The chief argument advanced to justify the low price paid the woodsmen today is that in the parlous state into which the paper industry has fallen any additional cost placed upon the raw material, (pulpwood), increases the problem of carrying on; in other words might cause a serious curtailment of operations and possibly suspension. The statement is a bit too categorical and yet general to be accepted. As to the latter, it is a remote contingency; curtailment of output increases overhead expense and need not be feared unless demand diminishes, or the price is so low that there is no hope of invested capital securing any return whatever. Even then operations must if possible continue to some extent if serious depreciation in plant, machinery, and equipment, is to be avoided.

A basically non-existent though artificially effective distinction is usually drawn between investment conditioned upon standing back until all other obligations have been satisfied, and that accepting a limitation upon profits in

return for greater security of funds, afforded by a prior lien on assets. And so we have the various types of invested capital from what is known as the first mortgage gold bond to the ordinary common share. Fundamentally there is no difference between them. They are all investment for profit without any personal contribution to production by the investor. Bonds as such have no basic inviolability, as many a bondholder in industrial concerns knows to his cost today. Conditions have compelled him to accept a scaling down in capital or interest or both, and the acceptance in lieu thereof of another type of security. The alternative of liquidation and disaster is usually a greater evil.

And yet in the making up of the cost of manufacturing and marketing a ton of paper one of the items receiving early consideration is the bondholder's interest. The total exclusive of wood is then made up and deducted from the selling price. The balance I am told is "left for wood." Another charge against production is "depletion of woodlands," amounting approximately to a dollar a ton. This charge may be perfectly proper in a balance sheet, which in part at least, consists of artificially created items adjusted to square the statement. It may be sound business accounting but it is no more, for experienced woodsmen and the executives of paper companies assert that proper cutting (and I assume their operations are proper) far from impairing the forest actually improves it.

In 1932 the AND Co. effected a reorganization of their finances under which they were enabled to substitute 4 per cent first mortgage debenture stock for their 8 per cent cumulative preference shares, second preference shares and six per cent mortgage bonds. Their net profits for the year 1933 after providing for depreciation, depletion, income tax, contingencies, directors' fees, and first mortgage debenture stock interest, amounted to \$1,075,521.21. This showing is hardly indicative of impending bankruptcy. Further they have a contract with The Associated Newspapers Limited for the supply of all that company's requirements of newsprint for a period of twenty-five years from January 1st 1933 which is estimated to absorb the whole of the Company's output.

The IP&P Co. does not show any net profit. In fact it shows a net loss of \$169,046.15, or roughly seventy cents per cord more than was "left for wood." But when it is borne in mind that nearly twenty-five per cent of the full price received for, (not of the profits on), every ton of paper was swallowed up by this safely invested capital, first mortgage bonds and "A" and "B" debentures, while its employees are underpaid and their families are undernourished and underclothed, it is clear that a grave injustice is being done which demands immediate attention. Surely even the vested interests themselves will not argue that the profits of capital should take precedence of a living wage for labour. Incidentally about 66 cents a cord more, (or roughly \$175,000), or less than 75 cents deducted from the income derived from each \$100 bond would have given these men an adequate living. Today I understand the average price paid is \$1.50 per cord. An increase upon this price of 50 cents or \$132,500 will give the logger fair pay, as will appear in a later paragraph.

It is to be remembered that the IP&P Co's "B" debentures amounting to £1,913,700 are guaranteed as to principal and interest by the Government of Newfoundland and any further burdens imposed upon the Company might precipitate a situation which would result in the Government's being called upon to fulfill its guarantee. It is unlikely that the sum of \$132,500 increase in production costs would do this, but even assuming it to be so, is that any justification for throwing the whole burden upon the three or four thousand ill-paid loggers? Is it not the whole country's obligation? Why then permit it to be squeezed out of the earnings of the unfortunate woodsman?

The woodsman has been reduced to a standard below even tolerable existence. The same cannot be said of all other operatives and executives and entrenched bondholders of these industrial concerns. The last named have their position fortified by mortgage trust deed and the like, executives have the pressure of stock holdings, or the security of position created by the Company's fear of losses resultant from the antagonizing effect of a reduction of income; certain classes of workmen have behind them the influence of powerful unions, or the ability to interrupt production by cessation of work if driven too hard; but the woodsman has no weapons with which to fight. This was clearly evidenced in the Corner Brook strike of last September. Because of their lack of organization or funds the situation was that while hundreds were endeavouring through concerted effort to improve the position of all, there were thousands, needing food, who hardly knew of the efforts being made on their behalf, and who were entering the woods at scores of points to take the places of the very men who were fighting their battles. They were scattered, unorganized, hungry and without funds or leadership, and there was a large surplus of them. The result was inevitable. They failed. And so it is always. The aim of every industrial concern even in normal times is to procure its labour at a minimum figure. In a competitive world that attitude of mind is natural. The attack is always directed at the weakest point, and in the pulp and paper business in Newfoundland, that point is the woodsman. Operators' executives have very fairly admitted that had the woodsmen been organized they would have done better. The remedies indicated are organization or governmental action, or better still, both.

Again it is argued that the woodsmen are commonly, indeed almost exclusively, outport men, who owning their own homes, pay no rent, and raise and catch a considerable portion of their own food. They therefore require a smaller income than the town or city dweller who must pay rent and has no opportunity to raise part of his food. Indeed! while the bondholder is entitled to his interest, no return is due the outport woodsman for the money and labour he has expended on his home. That must be a contribution by him to the bondholder's funds, as must also the vegetables, fish, and other foods which he raises. Coming from a charitable organization intent on relieving distress the argument is sound, but from an employer of labour it is sheer impudence. I have questioned hundreds of men upon the point of necessary income. Their ideas vary

with their condition, the standard of living to which they have been accustomed and the sizes of their families, and assumed that they enjoyed the ordinary advantages, (so called), of outport homes. Their replies ranged from twenty, (a young unmarried woodsman), to eighty dollars, (a married town dweller), per month. Each could, in their own words, "manage to get along on that."

I find that a reasonable standard of living for the average outport workman in Newfoundland today is impossible on less than fifty dollars per month. Many of course obtain a portion of their living in kind, and that portion is derived from home investment (their homes) and labour the products of which they consume themselves, (vegetables, fish, firewood, etc.). From the calculation above made it will be seen that wages earned at last year's pulpwood prices fall short of this required amount by \$33.10 per month. What price per cord for his wood will give the woodsman the required sum?

Net earnings required are	\$50.00
Half the monthly board rate	9.00
Doctor's fee	.40
1 saw blade	.90
Wear & tear on clothing	4.00
	<hr/>
	\$64.30

His monthly cut is 32.50 cords. His wood must therefore average \$1.98 per cord. Throughout the evidence I find a singularly uniform corroboration of this figure from the most experienced contractors and cutters the country possesses. Price will of course vary with the quality of the timber, and the limits of variance in the evidence are \$1.60 and \$2.75. No one witness of course adopted both extremes; a low minimum is found with a low maximum, but the vast majority agree on an average fair price as being "about two dollars a cord."

I find that the cutter today [is] grossly underpaid, and that, conditional upon the charges presently made against [him] remaining constant, his wood must average approximately \$2 per cord if his family is to live with any degree of comfort. One more word on the cost of supporting his family. According to Company figures the actual cost of the food supplied woodsmen (apart from cooking and portaging) is 32 cents per day. The average Newfoundland family is six persons. There are therefore five at home. It is fair to say, bearing in mind retailers' profits that the food for each of these will be at least half that of the woodsman, or 16 cents per day, making a total cost of food for those at home of 80 cents per day or \$24 per month, or nearly twenty per cent more than the ordinary cutter could earn at last year's prices by a fair day's work. Is it any wonder that there are so many woodsmen's families ill fed and on the verge of nakedness today.

I cannot recommend the abolition of the present so called sub-contract method of cutting wood, whether pulpwood, pitprops or saw-logs. There is an

objection to such a course which, in our present industrial system, seems conclusive against it. The result would be to deprive the more capable man of a just reward for his additional skill, and it is a reasonable principle that a man should be rewarded in proportion to his contribution to the world's work; and the adoption of a wage system would result in the rate being based upon the production of the least efficient. At the same time employers should not be permitted to take the benefit of men's time for little more than the cost of boarding them, while their families at home, insufficiently clad and fed, are kept from downright starvation by Government dole.

I suggest for consideration the imposition upon employers of a minimum net payment for cutters, which, in the case of men boarded by the employer, should be at a rate sufficient to provide his family with bare essentials in food and clothing, say twenty dollars per month. In the event of such minimum payment being insufficient to pay his transportation home the employer should be compelled to make up the difference. The operation is the cause of such a situation whenever it arises. Why should the Government be the loser as in the case of the seventy men hereinbefore mentioned? It may be argued that such a regulation would lead to slackness on the part of the men. The answer is that it would not, save in comparatively few cases, and these a competent foreman would discover in four or five days and promptly dismiss. The man with a dependent family will not be satisfied with twenty dollars a month if he can make thirty or forty. It has been already noted that only about 28% of the men in one large operation are married and nearly a fifth are under twenty-one years of age. It cannot be argued that in this country the great bulk of ordinarily capable woodsmen belong to the young or unmarried class. Why then does the married and middle aged man shun the woods today? . . . The truth is that woods work is being largely left today to the young man without responsibilities, who, being without remunerative employment, engages in it, with the feeling that food and shelter are secured, and if he can make no surplus, there are no children at home to worry about.

*Note.*

SINCE WRITING THE above I have received an analysis of their production this year up to the 1st of August from the IP&P Co. The average price is \$1.485 per cord; average cordage per man 1.36; and gross earnings per man \$2.03 per day. The increase in price over last year is 14.5 cents per cord and to that extent is a betterment of the cutters' position. There is also an increase in cordage per man day. The showing on cordage should further improve during the balance of the season as part of the early months was occupied in collecting and piling "dropped wood," that is wood which was felled during the drive and left scattered on the ground. The increase in gross earnings to date, (amounting to 29 cents per day according to the Company's records), and the further improvement which I anticipate is accounted for by three factors: (1) this year the

Company is selecting the cutters; (2) the long hours of daylight; (3) the increase of 14.5 cents per cord.

These new figures do not in any way alter my argument or conclusions save to the extent that the improvement in price is a step towards the figure which I find is a fair rate of pay.

### *The Driver.*

DRIVING IS NOT WHAT it used to be in the days of long heavy logs upon which the driver rode down the river in caulked boots, peevie in hand. Most of the driving is now done on small brooks. The driver works in long rubbers and instead of the peevie he uses a pick-pole — a staff from 8 to 15 feet long with a sharp iron pike in one end to pull stranded junks of pulpwood off shallows or out of a "jam." In even country with a smooth flow of water the work is simple but in rough or steep country it is difficult and often dangerous. I have seen a "jam" or "plug" as it is sometimes called, give way, and jam again about a hundred yards further down river. When it gave way the men fled to the shore. A few seconds delay, a misstep, and they were lost. Five minutes after the second jam began the water rose about 10 feet and junks were "shooting" into the bush on both banks in all directions. The drive takes place in late April and May when the water (mainly snow water), is icy cold, and it is frequently raining. The junks are rolled or thrown off the bank by men called "rollers," where they have been piled by the teamsters and landers, into the stream. Frequently wings have to be built up in wide or irregular sections of the brooks to "quicken" the water or guide the junks in the deepest channel. This is done by piling junks or other convenient material in appropriate position in the river bed. Usually this is done where possible before the drive commences. On brooks with an inadequate flow dams are built so that water may be accumulated and released from time to time when available and required. A night's frost, which stops the melting of the snow, as well as the process of filling the dam, frequently causes considerable loss of time, maybe half a day or more. A similar result is caused by adverse winds where towage on lakes has to be done. As the wood must be run down the brook while the spring freshets last, (otherwise it must remain in the bush for six and perhaps twelve months), the work must continue during the hours of daylight, when water is available. A driver's day is therefore about thirteen hours. The weather is inclement and conducive [to] chills and rheumatism particularly when the men get wet; and on occasions there is substantial danger to life. The evidence affords several instances of men being hauled out of broken "jams" in the nick of time. Fortunately serious accidents have not been frequent.

Prior to the Logging Act of 1931 the drivers' wages were usually on a straight day basis whether driving all day or only a portion of the day, and no charge was made for board. When, during the operation time was lost through lack of water, the men were employed improving the stream by building dams and wings and removing rocks in the river bed. When the water was running the

work continued during daylight, frequently twelve and thirteen hours. The above mentioned Act provided that pay was to be at the rate of 35 cents per hour for a ten hour day and time and a half for overtime work. It was a bona fide but ill executed effort to better the drivers' position. It failed miserably, and it is difficult to find a driver today, who will not claim that it operated to the disadvantage of the men. The employers retaliated with a total elimination of the old system of a straight day's pay and "found." They divided rollers and drivers, paying drive rate to men classified strictly as drivers and a lower rate to the rollers. Experienced men consider that they should be classified alike. Board was charged at 25 cents and later 20 cents per meal. That meant a charge on the driver's earnings of \$1 and later 80 cents per day, for by reason of his long hours and heavy work he usually has four meals a day. He was credited only with the hours he worked at the drive. During lost time his expenses continued unabated but his income ceased entirely. Intermittent water and adverse winds played havoc with his net earnings. Here is one man's experience this spring: "I have just come from the drive and I have been there twenty-one days. We are charged 20 cents per meal and have four meals a day. Some days I worked 13 hours. It took two days to get to the job and two days to get back. We pay board for these days, and every day we are laid off with no water or head winds. I came out because I can't make any money there. For my 21 days in camp I only got \$12.75. I was thirteen days actually driving."

Allowing three Sundays for the period this works out at a net income of less than 71 cents per day. Another made \$10 in fifteen days; still another cleared forty cents in eight days.

It is only fair to say however that the men's plight as indicated in the above instances is not wholly the result of the Act of 1931, but of the change in system which it brought about coupled with an equally unwise suspension of the minimum wage clause contained in it by an Act of 1933, without any stipulation for a return to the old system.

Driving is not an operation capable of limitation to ten working hours per day. As already mentioned the spring freshets must be utilized as they come and for this purpose advantage must be taken of every possible hour of daylight. There will be many hours when water is "slack" and driving cannot proceed. But the men must remain on the job continuously. (Some driving is done on Sundays.) Their time is and must be at the disposal of the employer and he should pay for it. A system capable of producing results like the illustrations given above is nothing short of iniquitous and should not be permitted to continue.

I find that the only equitable method is to pay drivers on a straight day basis, board being provided by the employer without charge, the men to continue work (with the usual intervals for meals), while water is available, during hours of daylight not to exceed thirteen in any day.

As the work is conducted in the rainy season, is arduous and sometimes dangerous, the hours long, the risks of a wetting with icy snow water and



resultant possibilities of chills with their attendant evils substantial, the cost of extra clothing considerable, I find that a fair rate of pay is from \$2.50 per day for the inexperienced man to \$3.25 per day for a foreman or channel-tender with free board in all cases. There is little distinction between drivers strictly so called, and rollers and [stackers]. They should be paid alike.

### *Peeling of Pulpwood.*

PEELING IS THE REMOVAL of all the bark from the log or junk, thus rendering it fit to go immediately to the grinding room of the paper-mill. It is of two kinds, namely sap-peeling and hand-peeling. The former, where knots are not numerous is a simple, comparatively rapid, though filthy operation. The latter involves more time and effort.

Sap-peeling is only possible during the sap period, that is "while the sap is running in the tree." This period varies somewhat with the locality. On the West Coast it begins and ends earlier than on the East Coast. The extremes of the period are about the 15th of April and the 1st of August. The process is as follows: the tree being cut down, it is branched, the knots being notched out somewhat below the surface. A shaving is then taken off the full length of the stick down to the wood with an axe. Along the line of wood thus exposed an instrument called a "spudder" (which may be of oak but is better of steel) is inserted between wood and bark, and the latter is levered off by following around the circumference of the stick, which is then sawn into the required lengths. If the stick is fairly clear the bark will come off in one piece. If it is knotty the process is more difficult and will take more time. The wood should now be left until dried by the sun as it is extremely slippery and the cutter's clothing will become covered with the sap and probably ruined. The process of sap-peeling adds at least 50% to the time required to cut and pile a cord of rough wood, (i.e. wood with the bark still on it). Furthermore a cord of sap-peeled, (or clean-peeled), wood contains far more solid wood content than a cord of rough wood. From tests which they have made experienced witnesses testify that it takes 148 to 150 cubic feet of rough wood to make a cord (128 cubic feet) of sap- or clean-peeled wood. The system of purchasing peeled wood will therefore have to be carefully watched if the cutters' interests are to be protected.

To produce a cord of peeled wood the cutter must cut and peel 1.15625 cords. At \$2 per cord for rough wood this means \$2.31 worth of wood. The consensus of opinion is to the effect that a man will sap-peel sufficient rough wood to produce two cords of sap-peeled wood per day. Basing a day's pay on the gross monthly wage of \$64.30 already arrived at his daily wage should be \$2.55. He should therefore be paid \$1.27½ for the peeling of one cord of sap-peeled wood or for cutting and peeling this amount \$3.58½.

The evidence as to peeling with an axe or drawknife outside of the sap-peeling season is not as exhaustive as I could wish but the process is a much

more difficult one. Purchasers require that all trace of inner bark be removed. In the process of peeling it is extremely difficult to be certain that this has been accomplished. If any remains on the stick it will make its appearance in a few days as dark spots or stains, whereupon every stick has to be dealt with again. One contractor testified that he lost \$1 per cord on incompletely peeled wood. He further expressed the positive opinion that it was impossible to get all the bark off by going over the wood once. A contractor with 27 years experience in all kinds of wood production says: "I do not approve of clean peeling with a draw knife. A man has got to go over the wood several times in order to make sure that all the bark is off, and even then though the stick will appear absolutely clean, there will be strips of inner bark left adhering to the wood which discolour and show up within a week. I have known thousands of cords which had to be cleaned a second time. If this type of peeling has to be done, I think that the peeler should receive not less than \$2 per cord for the work."

With present day methods, the weight of evidence shows that outside of the sap-period it will take at least one day to clean the bark thoroughly off the quantity required to make a finished cord. This works out at \$4.86 as a fair price for a cord of clean peeled wood.

It has been suggested to me by one large operator that in future purchasers may not be so exacting in the matter of complete removal of the inner bark. In such eventuality of course it would be fair to reduce the price to the producer in accordance with the consequent saving of time.

### *Scale.*

THE SCALING OR MEASURING of the woodcutter's product is done by means of a rod eight feet long marked in feet and tenths of a foot. The measurer is called a scaler and is a servant of the employer. All scalers are supposed to be sworn but there does not seem to be any provision for ensuring that they are qualified. One man testified that he held credentials as a scaler, and that he got them by simply writing to the Government for them. If scaling were a mere matter of measurement the operation would be comparatively simple. As conducted today however it includes making allowance for crooked sticks, loose piling, protruding knots, stained wood, holed sticks, centre rot, sap rot, air space and undersized sticks.

A cord is "the quantity of round timber that can be properly piled within a space of one hundred and twenty eight cubic feet without deduction for air spaces between the logs," (Consolidated Statutes] 1916, Cap. #183, Sec[ti]on] 42 [1]). The section is vague in that there is no definition of the phrase "properly piled." It is left to the opinion of the individual. Wood considered to be improperly piled is usually termed "loose piled," and for this the scaler makes a deduction. A further deduction is frequently made for air space caused by crooked sticks, which is clearly not contemplated by the section. Then comes the process of culling stains, holes, centre and sap-rot,

and undersized wood. In arriving at the quantity to be deducted for these various defects the scaler uses what is called his judgment, and the cutter receives credit for the whole pile as measured, less what the scaler considers fair deductions for causes mentioned above. A check scaler is employed in large operations who examines 5% of the wood scaled in the season. It is obvious that scalers will vary in their views though on the whole cut the variance is not very great according to Company records. In one large operation this year the difference between the scaler's records and the check scaler's records only amount to about .06%.

At various points around the coast I found that operators were taking from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and forty cubic feet to the cord. Various reasons and excuses, such as loose piling, snow and ice between the logs, loss through sinkage in driving, were offered for this practice. It is a most reprehensible one and the Weights and Measures Act should be amended so as to define a cord clearly and then strictly enforced.

There is unquestionably a strong feeling among the men, and even contractors, that they are not fairly dealt with in the matter of measurement and cull. Few complaints are made to the operators however, the reason being that any effort to secure their rights would stamp them as grumblers and cause discrimination against them in future. Scalers like fish cullers are human and as they are employees of the operators it is not unlikely that where any doubt exists in their minds, the balance of their judgment will lean towards the source of their living rather than towards those who fear even to complain of what they believe to be injustice. The complaint is too general to be entirely foundationless. The suggested remedy will be found under "camp inspection."

### *Camp Inspection.*

THERE IS A UNANIMITY of opinion amongst woodsmen that camp inspection as at present practised is a farce. Many camps are improperly constructed and often cold and leaky. This is of course the fault of the contractor or operator. There is ample evidence that cleanliness is often given scanty consideration, and is sometimes the fault of the men themselves. Visits by inspectors do not appear to be frequent, and in cases where improvement has been indicated to the foreman as necessary, by the inspector, he was disregarded. Apparently inspectors either lacked interest or were discouraged by lack of support from the department they represented. Further, the present staff of two is entirely insufficient. Inspection should be more rigid, and more frequent, and the officials performing the work invested with power to enforce compliance with their directions.

I suggest that every camp inspector should be a capable scaler with authority not only to order and enforce proper improvements and changes in camp conditions but to scale any wood wherever found. They should be in charge of a chief inspector to whom all operators' scalers should transmit immediately

carbon copies of all scales of wood made by them from time to time. All scalers should be required to submit to a rigid examination to ensure their qualification before being permitted to engage in the work of scaling.

### *Pitprop Cutting.*

PITPROPS ARE OF THREE sizes: 4½ feet long and 3 to 4 inches in the top; 6½ feet long and 4 to 6 inches in the top; 9 feet long and 5 to 8 inches in the top. The proportions of each size will vary with the contract but it may be stated that generally speaking this industry leads to substantial waste of merchantable timber, and in several localities where saw-mill operations are conducted there are bitter complaints to the effect that the forests are being stripped and there will soon be nothing within reasonable reach either for the mill or the fishery. One contractor last winter had to get 60% of 4½ foot props, 35% of 6½ props and 5% of 9 foot props. He was in a stand of large timber and the number of trees to be cut to get the large proportion of small wood was excessive, resulting in much timber being left on the ground to rot, mostly the lower and more valuable portions of the trees. The cull is very strict; all pieces must be quite straight and sound. It is estimated by one contractor that a man will cut 30% more pulpwood than pitprops because of the odd sizes, time lost in selecting straight and quite sound trees, and strict cull. In fact pitprop cutting is selective work, as against the mass cutting of pulpwood. The rate of pay should be proportionately higher. I am of opinion that this industry should not be permitted on Crown Lands except in conjunction with the cutting of pulpwood.

Incidentally it is to be observed that the cutting of railway ties is even more destructive and wasteful than the pitprop operation. Ties must be about 8 inches in the top to face properly as Number One. They are only seven feet long. The waste of the stick, often containing from three to five pieces of four foot pulpwood, is left to rot. It is estimated that for every 100,000 ties cut one million feet board measure of lumber is left in the woods to rot. The restriction suggested upon pit-prop cutting should also be applied to tie-cutting.

### *The Rehabilitation of the Logger and the Fisherman.*

MY LONG ACQUAINTANCE with the working man of all classes in this country and my observations and the additional information elicited by conversations in the many settlements I visited during the past four months compel the conclusion that a satisfactory solution of our surplus labour problem can only be achieved by a long term policy of education with some Government assistance. Our mineral resources are not extensive, and with two outstanding exceptions, have not proven to be of any permanent value. The apparent absence of economically recoverable coal seems to preclude the processing from the raw ore to the finished product. So far as can be seen, with the exception of a few minor industries, the hope of Newfoundland's future lies in the sea and the forest. Neither of these, because of their seasonal character, can afford a full twelve

months' work for our people. It necessarily follows that in the absence of extensive new industrial development, (and there are at present no indications upon which I can base any hope of such), our people cannot for many years expect a return in actual dollars for every month of a year's work, but will have to be content with at most seven or eight months of dollar paid labour out of each twelve. Fortunately the other four or five can be turned to profitable account by means of a little judiciously imparted training and some initial assistance. Looking back over the history of cash paid labour in Newfoundland it is apparent to one acquainted with our people that the advent of construction works and industrial expansion has not been an unmixed blessing, even apart from the public burdens which these involved. They have drawn the fisherman from his home at the end of the voyage in search of the day's pay in cash. The growing population of sons and grandsons, in search of immediate returns for their labour, neglected to break new land and develop home resources, which would constitute capital, and with proper care and attention, would continuously yield a substantial portion of necessary annual income. The grandfather's gardens, meadows, and pastures, were divided among the sons and again among the grandsons, and comparatively few additions were reclaimed from nature. The outport property capable of supporting a cow or two, or a flock of goats, a few pigs, poultry, a dozen sheep, and a horse, and of producing necessary vegetables and domestic fruit, for the grandfather's family, could not possibly yield the same service for a half dozen or more grandsons.

The forest operations cannot possibly fill up the spare time of our fishermen even assuming that they were all capable cutters. Thirty thousand is not an excessive figure at which to place the count of our fishermen in normal times. The forests do not today provide seasonal labour for more than one third of that number. In this connection it is interesting to note that the IP&P Co. and the AND Co. employed in woods operations last season a total of nearly eight thousand men. The executives of the Companies say that not more than half that number is sufficient to do the work. Furthermore the IP&P Co. informed me a few days ago that in their operations this year, which did not begin in earnest until the middle of June, they have employed only about seven hundred cutters and three hundred at other woods work up to that time. Over forty-five thousand cords, or 25% of their whole cut, had been harvested by the first week in August. The woods manager estimated that they would not require more than fourteen or fifteen hundred men at the utmost for the whole season.

Again it must be remembered that many of the loggers today are men who do not engage in fishing at all, which fact further reduces the possibilities of seasonal labour for the thirty thousand.

There seems to be a notion in some circles that a combination of fishing in summer and logging in winter is ideal. This idea is founded on the misconception that logs can be economically harvested in winter. The evidence shows that the deep snow of the forest enhances the difficulties of the logger. Clearing of underbrush is impeded, and the snow must be trampled down to get at the

trees to be cut. Even then, two, three, and sometimes four feet of the best part of the stick must be left on the stump for the snow is often five feet deep. Sometimes junks will be lost by their disappearance in the snow and the cutter loses the benefit of these. There can be little doubt that from the standpoint of economy and efficiency the best cutting months lie between June and November. The heat and flies of the summer months are annoying and the rains of October and November cause loss of time. Generally the best cutting month of the year is September. It is quite certain that the trend of all woodcutting is towards the summer months, and it may be definitely stated that winter cutting of wood is practically a thing of the past, save perhaps for some saw-mills and a few other comparatively small operations.

It cannot be gainsaid that the nearer the cutter lives to his work the less he spends on transportation to and from the operation, and settlements ought to grow up and are now growing up around various logging centres which with proper guidance and a helping hand will provide all the men necessary for the woods work. Further, such settlements afford an opportunity for organization and collective bargaining. They do not and will not include many fishermen. Like the fishery, logging does not afford all year around work. There are periods, probably aggregating three months when there will be no woods operation, and during the drive but few men are needed. The last two months of the cutting the number employed will dwindle down in each camp, to the number required to take up the hauling when the snow comes. After the drive cutting will not begin in earnest until probably the middle or latter part of June. What are these men to do with their spare time? There is no other avenue of dollar paid labour open to them. They too must turn to production for their own use.

I am convinced that a permanent solution of this surplus labour problem, brought upon us mainly by the seasonal character of our major industries, is the creation of these semi-peasant classes, fisherman-farmers and woodsmen-farmers. Any attempt to wed the fisherman to the woodsman creates a surplus of woods labour which operates to the disadvantage of the non-fisherman by shortening his chances of work, cannot provide even a majority of our fishermen with labour in their non-fishing months, depresses the rate of remuneration to all, and effectively prevents any organization of woodsmen for mutual protection. The slogan "back to the land" which we have heard so frequently during the past two or three years has a special significance for Newfoundland today. Indeed it is a vital necessity to our rehabilitation. But the ideal involved in it is not easy of achievement. Substantial guidance in modern agriculture, preferably by actual demonstration as well as instruction, and above all initial assistance, in the clearing of land and the obtaining of suitable stock: cows, goats, pigs, sheep, poultry, and horses. Precept without assistance is valueless. Both are essential. Fishermen and woodsmen are today penniless. Many desirous of taking out agricultural licenses have not even the requisite fee for the license, much less the surveyor's fee. I suggest that surveys be made by the

Department of Natural Resources and that their cost and that of the license be a deferred charge upon the land.

In this connection I draw attention to an evil existing in many parts of the country. Throughout the years fee simple grants of good agricultural lands have been acquired and held, which lands have never been operated either by the grantees or their successors in title. In other cases there are holdings not based upon any grant and held upon mere staking. Such grants and holdings are frequently found extensively around settlements where many people have little more than what is commonly termed a backyard. These grantees and holders have no moral rights and should be dealt with sternly. I suggest that they be given a short period within which to develop the holdings in cases where the claims have any legal validity under penalty of forfeiture without suit to the Crown, and in all others immediate steps be taken to prevent the acquisition of any legal right. As an alternative a substantial tax on undeveloped or abandoned lands accompanied by prompt forfeiture for non-payment would be effective.

Again anyone who has travelled along our coastline must have been impressed with the smallness of many of our scattered settlements, often consisting of half a dozen or fewer houses. This scattering of population has entailed additional public expense, and what is of more importance, the evils attendant upon isolation, notably lack of educational facilities resulting in children growing up in crass ignorance. Many men took their families in the lumberwoods last winter, presumably because it was cheaper than to leave them at home. Among the small jobbers this was quite common, the jobber's wife frequently acting as cook for the camp. One large scale contractor reported to me that there were fifteen children in his camp. This practice should be discouraged and prevented where reasonably possible. Unless done out of sheer necessity, (and such necessity should not exist), it is a crime against the children.

The practise is not confined to lumbermen. I was informed that about eighty families of one very large settlement spend every winter in the woods. They go there to cut firewood which must otherwise be rail-hauled to their hometown. Freights are expensive and it is cheaper to take the family to the wood than the wood to the family. The children are growing up in ignorance. The effect on the rising generation can be as easily imagined as described.

Great care must be taken to prevent this tendency to scatter when taking up farm lands in connection with the lumbering industries. The people should be placed on the land in settlements laid out scientifically.

In sections where there is a reasonable expectation of permanent woods operations there will usually be found good agricultural lands. The drainage areas of the Humber, Exploits, Gander, and Bonne Bay, rivers, afford excellent examples of this. The establishment of agricultural settlements of course involves the construction of roads of communication. Some years ago the Government of the day constructed a road from Deer Lake to Lomond in Bonne

Bay. I travelled over this road a couple of months ago, and found it in extremely bad condition. Ditches were filled up, and the new growth of bush was rapidly narrowing the roadway. If repairs and in places total reconstruction are not undertaken shortly the road will disappear. The St. Lawrence Timber, Pulp and Steamship Company Limited has already expended a considerable sum in the maintenance of this road at the Lomond end. The road is adjacent to their operations and those of the IP&P Co. Both Companies have assured me through their managers, that they are willing to co-operate in every possible way with the Government in an effort to establish settlers upon the land. I have been assured that dependable men will be given the use of company horses in summer time without cost save their feed. Indeed the companies will be glad to be relieved, at this time of the year, of the expense of caring for and feeding these animals, which are only of use to them for hauling purposes in the winter season. There is good agricultural land all along this road and I am strongly of opinion that a start should be made there. It is thirty miles long, and for the most part needs widening, re-grading, ballasting, and surfacing. It should be at least twenty feet between ditches as it will carry considerable traffic. Transportation will be greatly cheapened and facilitated and the surplus hay and produce of the woodsman-farmer settlement will find a market at its very door in the companies operating the forest lands. It is true that the Humber crosses the road near Deer Lake, and that to bridge it will be extremely expensive. I suggest that a pontoon ferry will answer the purpose until it is deemed feasible to construct a permanent bridge. I estimate that proper reconstruction of this road should not exceed one thousand dollars per mile. Indeed it may perhaps be done for considerably less, though there appeared to be a complete absence of good gravel near the road. Settlers should be given frontage on the road which would not stretch out the settlement more than, at most, two miles. Ten acres to each would be sufficient. A track-laying tractor should be provided to "stump" an acre in each plot during the first year. When each man is ready, credit should be extended upon the property to provide necessary stock and implements.

Turning now to the fisherman-farmer, I have already pointed out that the partitionings of ancestral lands among descendants without adequate reclamations from nature to make up the deficiencies created by these subdivisions, have left thousands of our fishermen without the essential asset which would enable them to turn their non-earning periods into remunerative ones. Here again assistance should be given for clearing and as soon as ready extended credit for stock and implements.

Continuous supervision of all these farming activities should be provided by means of travelling inspectors who must be capable general farmers and able to give sound instruction and advice in modern agricultural methods and the handling of stock.

I know that this proposal is ambitious and expensive, and that success will not be achieved overnight. It is a long term programme of education and assistance, which, if successful, as I believe it will be, will go far in rehabilitat-



ing our impoverished people. In our present economic and industrial situation our people can sell only a portion of their year's labour to others; the rest they must sell to themselves. It is not my idea that production should be for sale, (though there is, of course, no objection where a saleable surplus exists,) but for home use by the producer. The family which has its own milk, eggs, butter, pork, mutton, wool, vegetables, and fuel, is not likely to be found on the dole list.

In connection with this suggested extension of agricultural activity the perennial dog question, which causes so much high feeling between sections of many of our communities, cannot be evaded. Thousands of our people keep and use one or more dogs for hauling purposes in winter, particularly in the securing of firewood. These animals are powerful mongrels, often of uncertain temper and predatory habits, and a nuisance to everyone but their owners. That they are in many cases of economic value to these owners is unquestionable. On the other hand they are frequently destructive of the property of others, when, as usually happens, they are allowed to roam at large. It is quite certain that their existence in many places has had a deterrent effect on the keeping of cows, sheep, and poultry, numbers of which even now are destroyed by them every year. I cannot recommend their entire extinction, but their owners should be made responsible for their complete control. I suggest that any found at large in or near any settlement where any farm stock is kept should be destroyed on sight.

#### *Utilization of Crown Lands Wood.*

MY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE profitable utilization of the non-dollar producing portion of the time of the woodsmen and fishermen assume a long term plan the beneficial effects of which will not immediately reflect into their standard of living. The situation is acute and some immediate amelioration of this condition is urgent.

Men with lifelong acquaintance with our forests have borne witness in no ambiguous terms to the fact that virgin stands of timber show many defects. Frequently the trees are irregular in size, overmature trees are rotting and fall across others, and eventually, to the ground, where they serve to choke the young sapling growth. In fact trees are a crop like cabbages, the difference being that the tree takes nearly as many years to mature as a cabbage does days. Annually merchantable timber is lost, in addition to the injury done the forest. A couple of years ago a millman who had erected a saw-mill in a large stand of timber was shortly compelled to discontinue the operation. The proportion of over-mature, decaying and fallen trees, was so great, that it did not pay to operate. That stand of timber should have been cut years ago when it would have been of value. Today it is useless. All over the country this process of growth, maturity, decay, and fall, is going on year in and year out. It is

therefore economic to harvest the forests, provided that it is done scientifically and under proper supervision. This applies to our Crown Lands equally with all others. The policy of Governments for the past thirty years or more in refusing to permit cutting on Crown Lands for export has been a mistaken one. Our spruce and fir are not of a size and quality to command a foreign market when manufactured into lumber. The local market, a very limited one, was frequently overloaded, and countless thousands of cords of pulpwood and pitprops, have been lost to the country while trees matured, died, and fell to earth. A properly regulated and controlled cutting for export in the raw state would be of incalculable value to the country. I am not unmindful of the fact that large quantities of wood are required locally for the purposes of the fisherman and farmer and the outport man generally. It has been estimated that a total of roughly 350,000 cords are required for firewood, fencing, and fishery purposes. This should be provided for in the selecting of areas to be cut for export. The creation of this export industry would unquestionably afford employment to thousands of men who today are willing to accept what they can get for their labour in a seriously overcrowded market. In the cutting, peeling, hauling, driving, booming, towing, and loading, of a cord of wood there should be at least five dollars of labour at present prices. During the past two or three years hundreds of thousands of feet of manufactured lumber has sold locally for eleven and twelve dollars per thousand. As it takes about two cords to make a thousand of sawn lumber, the labour value of the unmanufactured log is nearly equivalent to that of the manufactured articles and the time spent in sawing is eliminated. Not a cord of this Crown Lands wood should be permitted to be sold to local paper mills. Such a proceeding is of no value to the country in terms of labour. Both companies know exactly the quantity they want each year, and what they purchase from operators on Crown Lands merely reduces the amount they cut from their own limits. Furthermore the prices paid contractors cutting off the public domain last year (\$3.75 to \$4.65 loaded on ship), did not permit of anything near a living wage to the workman. Contractors cutting for export this year are receiving considerably more than the local paper mills paid last year, and should be able to pay the cutter a substantially better price. Indeed at least one contractor is paying his men \$4 per cord for shore cut, sap-peeled wood, a price which the men themselves informed me was satisfactory. How long this will last I cannot say. The sap-peeling period is about over and when the cutting is transferred to back country, where there is hauling, or driving has to be done, I fear that reduction will be made.

Obviously the absorption of any considerable portion of the plenitude of woods labour by an export industry at more remunerative prices would have a salutary effect upon the cutters' present rate of pay. Moreover in many cases the new operations would be adjacent to the men's homes. They would be relieved of serious transportation charges and in hundreds of cases be enabled to live at home, thereby avoiding the heavy board rate charged in the lumber-woods.

*Sawlog Cutting.*

SAWLOG CUTTING IS THE oldest forest industry of the country and presents practically as many angles both of logging and manufacture as there are saw-mills. There are in excess of five hundred of these scattered about the country. The consideration of the logging apart from the manufacture is hardly possible, as in many cases the millman is the cutter, either in whole, or in part, of the logs, which he manufactures into sawn lumber of the various descriptions and qualities. Most of these mills manufacture from virgin Crown Lands forests. It is claimed that about forty per cent of our timber is of a merchantable grade, and that we have no really extensive stands suitable for manufacture into lumber. We have no pine available today, and our spruce and fir are not of a size and quality capable of competing in the foreign market with the production of continental America. Our lumber market is therefore practically a local one; though I understand that two or three enterprising firms are now endeavouring to market box-wood and the like in Great Britain. There is a great deal of cutting of small and immature trees which cannot turn out a reliable product. In some mills they were sawing scantling two inches by three inches and eight feet long out of logs from which they got only the one piece.

Prior to the advent of the gasoline engine, most mills were operated by men whose sole occupation was lumbering, but this new means of producing power brought the saw-mill within the reach of many who only looked upon the industry as spare time work. An engine, a saw, and a home-made log-carriage, frequently constituted the outfit of the new type of millman, who with his sons cut and sawed a few thousand feet of lumber, which he sent to St. John's in his neighbour's schooner to be sold for the best figure obtainable. As the number of these mills increased, and in the absence of organization or control, there was a seasonal flooding of the market at St. John's, (the only considerable market). The running expenses of the carrying vessel were too great to permit of the delay entailed in holding for a price, and the inevitable result was the market was always a buyer's market. Gradually and certainly the standard dropped, immature trees were utilized, selection and grading became casual, and uniformity in size uncertain. Indeed today it is often difficult to get a thousand feet of scantling of uniform width and thickness and without a considerable portion of bark on many of the pieces; and this sells as Number 1 stock.

Speaking generally the grade of timber utilized for lumber improves in size and quality as you proceed north along the northeast coast, and the price paid for logs as a rule improves accordingly. There is no uniformity of method in measuring these logs when purchased from the logger: some are bought in approximate sizes by count, some by the running foot of the log, and some in accordance with Section 42, (2), of The Weights and Measures Act, and some by the method indicated in the said section with variations. Allowances of various kinds are made for rot, and holed, and crooked sticks. Sometimes logs are bought at the stump, sometimes hauled part way, sometimes hauled to river

or shore, and sometimes to the mill. It was impossible to ascertain what would be a fair price to pay for the logs under the varying conditions without careful and detailed examination of all the circumstances and physical conditions under which the logs were harvested in each case; the nature of the stand, type of country, length of haul, and drive, and hours worked. It is quite certain however that in the majority of cases the men are grossly underpaid. Indeed in some cases it is claimed that a large family will do better on the dole than if the head of the family cuts logs.

That the loggers are underpaid many millmen admit quite frankly, and throw the responsibility on the price of the finished lumber. It does not however necessarily follow that the millman-purchaser is deliberately cheating the logger. He is often in the hands of a merchant, or another millman who is the legal owner of the mill and from whom he is endeavouring to purchase it. And even the merchant is frequently in the hands of another merchant or manufacturer who consumes the mill product in the form of packages. The circle is a vicious treadmill to which are harnessed the logger, millman, and small merchant. Very little cash changes hands between the members of the group from the logger to the consuming manufacturer. The large merchant supplies the small merchant, who supplies the millman, who in turn supplies the logger. The inadequate price, almost invariably paid in goods, ultimately received from the big consumer, is passed on down through the line, and finally stops at the logger and mill employee. Looking up the line we see that the logger is compelled to sell his logs to his supplier, the millman, who must deliver his cut to the little merchant, and he in turn frequently must and can only pay his bills in lumber. Such a system lends itself admirably to injustice and positive dishonesty. It is a scramble for self-preservation all round, with the exception of the man at the bottom who has no chance to shuffle. He is lucky if he gets enough to eat. Thousands of logs are bought from men endeavouring to supplement the inadequate dole ration or to provide a little clothing for their families. As a rule there is only one purchaser for a man's logs, even if he is not in debt, and he must take what is offered in "truck" at dictated prices which are often excessive. And yet that word "excessive" must be qualified. An excessive price in cash, or even "truck" where payment for supplies is certain, may not bring an aggregate excessive profit where one hundred per cent returns are problematical. Unless some provision is made for bad debts the supplier will find himself faced with a petition for his insolvency, and so he must vary his profits with his risks. Only a thorough knowledge of the particular locality and trade will disclose these factors.

The suggestions current that merchant millowners are taking advantage of the dole system to reduce the price of logs and labour in the mill is perfectly true. Dole provides nothing but food, and those receiving rations certainly have no money to purchase clothing for their families. I cannot state definitely that there was any studied utilization of dole to depress prices of logs and labour generally but many circumstances pointed to it. It is quite certain that the

poverty of the people gave opportunity for reduction in prices, which was availed of, not so much to increase profits as to minimise losses. The logger had to sell at any price to obtain food, and the small millman was frequently in the same position. The small merchant had to sell to pay his bills and often even his supplier accepted the lumber because he had no other means of obtaining payment. The result of this vicious circle is obvious. Add to this the dole which provided some food for the logger or millman and he was prepared to use his otherwise economically useless time in cutting a few logs, or sawing a few staves, or some rough lumber, (which might be on his hands for months), to sell when he could for whatever it would fetch, thus obtaining a little additional food or perhaps some clothing.

There is no doubt that there are considerable quantities of lumber in the market today, particularly amongst that cut on the southern portion of the north-east coast, a substantial part of the cost of production of which is Government expenditure on dole. Morally the Government owns part of that lumber. Morally the purchaser of such dole produced logs or lumber is guilty of acquiescence in the situation, and taking advantage of the opportunities which it affords. Legally he is buying an article at a price. He is not bound to buy at all, and when he does he is not bound to make enquiries of the Relieving Officer or Department of Public Health and Welfare to ascertain if the purchaser is receiving dole. One experienced millman quite frankly admitted that nearly all his cutters were on dole while they were cutting for him last winter. He could not pay enough to give them a living wage. In many cases it is perfectly true that the millmen could not afford to pay more than they did; and it may be argued that they should either have refused to buy the logs, or taken steps to have the men removed from the list of dole recipients. It is easy to dictate such a course of conduct; but face to face with a dole recipient having a few logs to sell for which he requires clothing for himself or his semi-naked family, or additional food for an ailing child, a refusal does not seem quite so easy, and once such purchasing begins how and where is the buyer to draw the line.

It is in connection with these logging and milling transactions particularly that I draw attention to the improper neglect of many operators to deliver to the woodsman or millman a statement of account of his transaction. Even the paper companies, who do deliver scale slips to the men, require that they be turned in at the office when payment is made. In the saw-milling industry it is a common practise to take a man's logs at a price named or unnamed, set off against it any charges for goods obtained, and hand the logger his balance with the remark: "That is what is coming to you." No account whatever showing number or price of logs, or items or prices of articles supplied is given. I have even discovered cases where millmen have been producing lumber and delivering it to their suppliers for two years and do not yet know what they have been charged for the various articles supplied or at what figure their lumber is credited to their accounts, notwithstanding that they have asked for a state-

ment. Men are working in mills upon an unknown daily wage and receiving food from the store at unknown prices. Many refrain from asking for accounts or their rates of wages out of fear that the boss or supplier may interpret it as an evidence of suspicion and discriminate against them accordingly. That would mean complete disaster, as there is no one else to whom to turn for something to eat. Clearly the opportunities for fraud are abundant and the condition of the logger, mill worker, and many millmen, is one of abject and oppressive servitude. It is only fair to say however that I have found firms who are scrupulously careful to deliver detailed statements promptly on all transactions. The truth is that the vicious system has grown gradually and imperceptibly out of the necessities of the producer who has been compelled to market his product quickly for what it would fetch in order to obtain food or liquidate his obligations. Speaking generally the possible earnings from contract cutting . . . did not exceed sixty to seventy cents, though in a few cases it might reach \$1 per day. Where wages were paid the cutters they could live, but it is obvious that the standard was a low one. Moreover higher returns for logs frequently accompanied higher prices for goods.

The cost of manufacturing the logs into rough and matched lumber varied with the quality and size of the logs, the type of mill used, and the wages paid the operatives, from six to eight dollars per thousand. Some of these sawyers are paid as little as one dollar per day, and the helpers less — all to be taken in "truck" of course. Moreover I have encountered a considerable proportion of child labour even in the handling of machines. Better wages are usually paid in the larger mills. (In one mill the chief sawyer was paid \$3.20 per day.) They usually produce a better article from better timber, are not so helpless financially and can therefore hold their product for a better price. Some of these mills have logs cut two years ago, which they only saw as they get orders at prices they will accept. Indeed the Horwood Lumber Company and Saunders Howell Company have manufactured lumber, the former over two million feet and the latter a million and a half feet, at their mills in Horwood and Norris Arm today. These stocks were manufactured over two years ago, since which time their mills have been closed down. The big operator who manufactures from rough lumber finds it cheaper to buy from the little millman who must sell for what he can get. . . .

It is obviously impossible to go into detailed analysis of costs in the various mills visited, but as an example I take one operating a rotary saw, edger, re-saw, trimmer, shingle machine, and matcher. The cut is about 500,000 feet. Seven dollars a thousand feet was paid for logs. Towage cost was one dollar per thousand. The cost of sawing one thousand feet of rough lumber is estimated to be seven dollars. Thus the manufactured cost with no allowance for repairs, depreciation of plant, (the replacement value of which would be four to five thousand dollars) or the time of the owner, who himself operates a machine, is \$15 per thousand. It is hardly possible to avoid loss on such an operation unless the highest [going] price . . . is obtained. Fortunately for him

he is not compelled to sell immediately, or to hand his cut over to a supplier. Nevertheless he claims, and with justice, that his sales are restricted by the cheaper prices, and that unless orders increase he will be compelled to close down. His mill employees are receiving from 17 cents to less than 10 cents per hour. He admits these wages are far too low. His cutters receive seven dollars per thousand feet board measurement. Two men and a horse will cut and haul at most 500 feet a day, (the equivalent of twenty-eight straight logs, six inches in the top and twelve feet long). At the very lowest estimate it will cost forty cents a day to feed the horse. There is therefore, at most, \$3.10 left to be divided between the two men and the horse. Allowing \$1 a day for the horse, the men earn \$1.05 each per day — to be taken up in truck. They are fortunate who do as well as this. But the operator cannot be blamed. He simply cannot pay more.

The "supply" and "truck" system yet remain to be considered in connection with the logging and sawmill industry. . . . Looking through the evidence I find very little regularity in prices by locality or in profit upon various items. This is accounted for by differences in freight rates, varying land costs, the varying prices which the supplier paid the wholesale merchant, different degrees of credit risks, and of course individual ideas of profit. It would appear also that some suppliers content themselves with comparatively small profits on certain articles and make it up on others. It is not possible for me to form any idea as to the percentage of profit made by a supplier on his turnover but prices such as 14 cents per pound for beef, 16 cents per pound for pork, 25 cents per pound for Solo butter, one dollar per gallon for molasses, 10 cents a pound for sugar, 10 cents a pound for peas, 10 cents a pound for beans, and \$4.30 per sack for oats, are far too high, except where specially difficult and expensive means of transportation, such as woods portaging, motor-boat haul after delivery by steamer or schooner, and the like, must be employed.

I see no means of adequately controlling these prices. The credit system is the real evil, and it must remain the chief factor in our industrial and commercial life for some time to come. Nevertheless suppliers can be compelled to tender records of their transactions, and I suggest that it be made imperative to apprise all mill workmen of their rate of wages in writing before the commencement of the employment, and that clear and detailed invoices of all goods supplied to loggers and mill workers, and credits for logs cut, be furnished on delivery of the goods or logs, as the case may be.

The manufacture of fish drums must be considered in connection with the saw-milling industry. It is a common practice for merchants to buy coopers' stock from small mills at low prices, frequently \$4.50 per thousand, (one thousand fish staves means 1200 staves by count). These he distributes to a number of men to make up into drums. He pays 8 to 10 cents per drum, (in one case 12 cents was paid), for the making. The average outport man will make from seven to ten per day, a sum clearly insufficient to maintain his family properly, but necessity drives him and with the assistance of the dole he can get along. A large quantity of these packages were manufactured by men on the

dole particularly on the Avalon peninsula. Nor does the merchant make any large profit on the transaction. The material for a drum costs sixteen to eighteen cents, making ten cents, freight and delivery at St. John's about five and a half cents, making a total cost of thirty-one and a half to thirty-three and a half cents. The price delivered at St. John's was thirty and thirty-five cents. The situation exactly duplicates that of saw-log cutting. That what I may term dole cut logs and dole manufactured packages should not be produced goes without saying. The prevention is a matter for the Department of Public Welfare. Its continuance helps materially to keep the industry in poverty.

The saw-milling industry presents a problem. I am of opinion that more careful grading as to size and quality of product and the elimination of the manufacture of immature timber will be helpful. The establishment of a Government controlled market, through which all sales of lumber from mill to purchaser must pass, will improve and stabilize prices at reasonably remunerative figures. Increased export of pulpwood and pit-props will relieve the labour surplus which is affecting the sawmill industry equally with all others. Protection against wholesale cutting from Crown Lands of good sawlogs should be afforded in localities where efficient mills are situated, bearing in mind the people's requirements for domestic and fishery requirements. Holders of timber licenses should be compelled to operate or permit others to do so on a reasonable royalty basis, having regard to the rentals they pay.

### *Dole.*

ONE OF THE TERMS of reference contained in Your Excellency's Commission empowered me to enquire into and report upon the number of workmen employed in forest operations of all kinds whose families were living on public charity while the men were at work.

In the time at my disposal it was quite impossible to make the detailed enquiries essential to an estimate of the number of families so supported while the heads thereof were at woods work. I visited only about eighty settlements of the many hundreds in which woodsmen have their homes. My knowledge upon this point is therefore general rather than particular and is derived from statements, sworn and unsworn, and conversations with hundreds of men throughout my itinerary. I found that in some operations practically all the men were "on dole," in many a few were, and in others dole swiftly followed cessation of work. Dole recipients frequently cut a few logs where they could to supplement their rations or obtain clothing rather than sit in idleness. In some operations the number of logs cut per man did not exceed fifty or sixty. I cannot venture to set down in figures any estimate of the number. The story can never be accurately told.

### *Cutting for Fishery, Firewood, and Fencing Purposes.*

THIS IS A MOST essential industry. Though not capable of expression in terms of dollars, it constitutes an important item in the outport man's income. It is a



part of the product of his labour which he sells to himself. In the past it has been entirely uncontrolled. As a result, promiscuous cutting, in combination with fire, has denuded the country near many settlements around our coast. In the Bonavista peninsula the people have to go twenty miles, and more, to secure wood for domestic purposes. It seems to have been a practice in years gone by to destroy every tree in and near a settlement, with resultant lessening of moisture content of the soil. Reasonable control must be exercised to avoid unnecessary depletion of the sources of supply by the people, and care must be taken to prevent other industries reducing the most conveniently available sections. This is a matter to which the Government's woods department should devote particular attention.

All of which I submit for your excellency's consideration.

G. B. Saunders

F. Gordon Bradley

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