

presence of the press on that occasion than I had. Yet a secret interview has been charged against this Government, almost as a crime, since that deputation came here. It is not an unusual thing; it is rather a usual thing, when interviews take place between the Government and deputations of importance, when we have no representatives of the press present, that we ourselves have a report taken of what is said. It is not an unusual thing, when a deputation comes to see a Minister—perhaps a deputation consisting of two or three persons, or even a single individual—that the Minister, if he wants to preserve the substance of the interview, calls in his private secretary and asks him to take notes. That is done just according as the matter is important or otherwise. On this occasion the Government did think that the representations to be made by these lumbermen from Michigan might be useful for reference in the consideration of this question which they were to discuss, and the secretary from one of the departments was called in for the purpose of taking notes. He did take notes of the interview, and a full report of it will be given to the House among the papers that will shortly be brought down in connection with this lumber question. I trust that after the assurances which have been given, and the statement which I have now made, that a full report of every word that was said at that interview will be published, so that the country at large will be possessed of all the speeches that were made by each of the gentlemen comprising that deputation, and of all that happened, we will have heard the last, not only from hon. gentlemen in the House, but from the press, if they want to be fair, of this so-called secret interview.

#### American Limit Holders Object.

The manufacturing conditions which we have been urged so strongly to impose are conditions which those who have purchased limits on this side, with the intention of taking out logs to be sawn on the other side, regard as an interference with vested interests. They say, and say with much force, that the limits were purchased by them in good faith, at prices enhanced by reason of their presence as bidders at the various sales when they became purchasers. We all understand, when there is a wide field of competition among moneyed men from the other side anxious to secure limits, and perhaps willing to give large prices, away in advance of the present value, having in view the holding of these limits until a rise takes place in the value of pine timber in future years, that there would be higher bidding at the sales. They say that they purchased these limits subject to regulations from time to time, but it is contended that these regulations were mere matters of detail and would not include so important a condition as that which would require the manufacture of sawlogs in this country. They say that they paid their money and that the vendor should not render their property useless to them; that the timber is their own and they ought to be allowed to deal with it freely. There is great force in all that, Mr. Speaker, no doubt. On the other hand it is contended by those who urge

that there should be something done, and a manufacturing condition, if nothing else, imposed, that the terms of sale under which these limits were sold from time to time are just such as provided for a contingency of this nature. But the foundation of our powers is the act respecting the sale of timber on public lands. The first section of that act provides that the Commissioner of Crown Lands may grant licenses to cut timber on Crown lands "at such rates and subject to such conditions, regulations and restrictions as may from time to time be established by the Lieut.-Governor in Council." As to the construction of that clause it may be contended on the one hand that the words "from time to time" refer to the sales of timber which may take place from time to time in imposing those conditions or restrictions, or, on the other hand, refer to the regulations which may be imposed in connection with any sale that has been made. Now, under that act it has been customary to give notice to the public of sales by auction, and the conditions and terms are advertised throughout the length and breadth of the country. These conditions, stereotyped in their nature, provide that each berth is to be adjudged to the highest bidder, and so on; berths to be subject to the Crown timber regulations except in so far as these regulations may be inconsistent with any conditions herein specified and such orders in Council as now exist and may hereafter be passed affecting the timber territory. As it happens, the blank from which I am reading at the present time has the restrictive clause that the timber cut from these limits must be manufactured in the Province, which was imposed at the sale of 1890. These terms and conditions of sale are very broad, and these are the portions of the contract between the Crown and the lumbermen in which it is urged and contended that the Government has power to adopt regulations which would require the manufacture of timber in this country. There is a distinction, however, between the cases of licenses which have already been issued and licenses which have not been issued, which are to issue in the future. As to existing licenses the Government has, some time ago, declared its policy. It is all but universally admitted that it would be in the nature of an outrage on the part of the Government to have issued the licenses for the present year authorizing the holders of these licenses to go on and cut and do as they pleased with the timber, leaving them to expect that they might make their arrangements for the disposal of their cut during the present winter, as many of them have no doubt done, and then withdraw the permission which you have given them and say to them, although we told you last April you might do so subject to the usual conditions, at the present time we say we have thought better of that and we now practically withdraw the license which we gave you.

#### Protecting the Workmen.

I think, Mr. Speaker, very few will go the length of contending that this Government was called upon