

### Lumbermen's Association

The annual meeting of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association was opened in Winnipeg on Wednesday evening, with a good attendance of both active and honorary members, among the latter being noticed D. C. Cameron, of the Rat Portage Lumber Co., Mr. Beecher, of the British Columbia mills, Timber and Trading Co., R. Mathers, of the Keewatin Lumber Co., David Ross, lumber manufacturer, of White-mouth, and others.

In the absence of president Jas. B. Mathers, of Glenboro, who is in British Columbia at present, the chair was taken by vice-president H. Byrnes, of Winnipeg, who after the reading and adoption of the minutes of the last meeting proceeded to read the following address:

To the members of the Western Retail Lumber Association:  
Gentlemen:

It affords me much pleasure to welcome so many members to this our eighth annual meeting. I am pleased to congratulate you upon the successful and prosperous year just closed in all branches of business and specially in the lumber trade. Our province and adjoining territory has been blessed with a bountiful harvest, which has enabled the public in general to settle their liabilities as promptly as usual, thus placing trade on a firm and substantial basis. There appears to be a favorable prospect for a good immigration to our land next season, which will certainly have a beneficial influence on the lumber trade.

Your directors as requested at the last annual meeting, looked into the matter of fire insurance also a telegraphic code. Your secretary communicated with the secretary of the Northwestern Lumber Association of Minneapolis, and from information received your directors deemed it not advisable to attempt forming a fire insurance company at the present time, as our membership is not large enough to ensure its success, and considerable expense would be incurred in procuring a charter, etc. Two telegraphic codes were purchased, and after looking into the matter we came to the conclusion that they would be seldom used, and would in all probability lead to confusion and mistakes as they are complicated, there being so many different grades, sizes and length of lumber, and few manufacturers use the same terms.

We wish to express our thanks to the Rat Portage Lumber Co. and other honorable members who so kindly entertained us last summer, by a lumber excursion through the picturesque Lake of the Woods and up Rainy River to Fort Francis, which was one of the most enjoyable excursions on record, and was duly appreciated by all who were able to attend. Our thanks are also due the officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway Co., who so generously granted free transportation to all members attending.

We regret very much the removal, by death, of three of our esteemed brother members, Mr. Gibbard of Wapella; Mr. Wyatt, of Virden, and Mr. Nichol, of Boissevain, during the past year.

At our last annual meeting our membership stood at 164, during the year 4 honorary and 45 active members were accepted by your directors and secretary, 21 have withdrawn or sold

out to others who belong now in their stand, leaving our membership at this present year. This is indeed gratifying as our increase for 1897 was only 4 over the year previous. During the year a great many applications were refused, as they were from points where there are sufficient yards to supply the trade and in fact in many cases one member less at these points would be an improvement instead of one extra. If all these applicants were able to get stock the competition would be so great and the business of each so much less, it would have a very depressing influence on the financial ability of a great many which would soon result in failure, and our honorary members would eventually have to shoulder a large portion of the losses.

Before closing, I wish to thank my fellow officers for their very able assistance and faithful work performed during the past year. All matters brought before them received their most careful attention and consideration.

We are glad to see so many members present at the meeting. A pleasant and profitable feature of this convention is the bringing together members, active and honorary, renewing old acquaintances and forming new ones, and leading to free and full discussion on all matters relating to the trade.

Many subjects no doubt will come up at this meeting, which I trust will receive your most careful consideration. I am yours truly,

JAS. B. MATHERS President.

Mr. Byrnes added a few words of comment to the address, stating that the past year had been a good one, the demand for lumber having been large, and prospects for the new year was very favorable.

The financial statement was next presented by Secretary-Treasurer John Dick, and adopted. It showed total receipts of \$2,618, of which \$748 was carried forward from last year, the balance being made up of fees and dues. Disbursements were \$1,889, leaving a balance in the bank of \$729. The principal items of expense were salary and travelling expenses of the secretary and expense of meeting of directors.

After the disposal of the reports, the election of officers was proceeded with, resulting as follows: President, H. Byrnes, Winnipeg; vice-president, R. H. O'Hara, Brandon.

Messrs. Campbell, Stevens and McManus were appointed to nominate a board of directors. They selected the following names, which were accepted and confirmed by the meeting: A. M. Stewart, of Morden; A. J. Hughes, of Souris; Wm. Armstrong, Portage la Prairie; G. M. Miller, Virden; T. A. Cuddy, Minnecoma; D. Sprague, Winnipeg.

After the elections no business was brought formally before the meeting, but a lengthy informal discussion followed, principally on the question of living up to the by-laws. While the honorary members were restricted in certain ways, it was claimed that the rules in their favor were not lived up to as they should be by the active members. One representative of a large manufacturing company indeed stated that unless this rule was more closely observed, his company would withdraw from the association. Two of the new directors intimated that they could not accept office unless an understanding was come to to ad-

here to the by-laws. It was urged that the time had come when the by-laws should be and could be carried out. It was urged that the home manufacturers, who are members of the association, should have the support of the retail dealers, in view of what they had done and were doing for the association. It was pointed out that lumber prices were advancing in the States. Some of the retail dealers stated they had brought lumber in from the States on account of the difficulty in getting dry stock from the mills here in some lines. Some again brought in low grade stuff to compete with other dealers in their territory. Mr. Armstrong said that while the United States lumber was offered cheaper on a few qualities, yet taking it all through, there was nothing in favor of the imported stuff in the line of lower prices. He considered the Canadian lumber worth \$1 per thousand more than the imported, except on a few low grades.

It was stated that the home manufacturers would be able to supply the trade this year at as low prices as imported stuff. One dealer stated that in his district lumber was being hauled across the boundary by consumers who evaded the duty.

After much desultory discussion of this nature, it was decided to adjourn to meet again the following evening. In the meantime the new board of directors would meet with the object of formulating a policy to lay before the meeting when it should re-assemble.

The meeting was resumed on Thursday evening and a further discussion followed on much the same lines as on the previous evening. The directors were not able to report any decided plan for action, but the prevailing opinion seemed to be that an effort should be made to enforce the by-laws more effectively. The directors will take up the question of prices etc., with the manufacturers, and hope to have something to report shortly.

### The Lumber Trade.

The saw mill at Pine River, Man., on the Dauphin railway, owned by T. A. Burrows, was burned on Saturday last.

A saw mill has been erected by the Columbia Lumber Co., of Golden, B.C., at a point about two miles east of Notch Hill. The company's mill at Golden has been enlarged and supplied with new plant, which will increase the capacity to 80,000 to 90,000 feet per day. The new plant includes a complete new steam power plant of 400 horsepower, and a machine shop. The company's mill at Moberly was burned down on Feb. 2.

The Montreal Trade Bulletin says. The present year has commenced with bright prospects for the lumber trade, prices having advanced from 10 to 15 per cent on the common grades, and as much as 20 per cent on the better qualities. Lumber, which a short time ago could have been bought at \$7 to \$8, is now worth \$9 to \$10, and other kinds, which were selling at \$10 are now worth \$12. There is considerable excitement in the Ottawa lumber sections, where United States buyers have been making large purchases for Tonawanda. A party in the trade here stated to the writer that he never remembered so many United States buyers being around the hotels at Ottawa as there have