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UNITED ASSOCIATIONS OF LUMBERMEN.

SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION AT BUFFALO.

THE Sixth Annual Convention of the United Associations of Lumbermen was held at Buffalo on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of September. It was one of the most important meetings yet held by the organization, and was of great interest to lumbermen generally. Its meetings are never popular in the sense of being generally attended by the trade at large, as its membership is made up of delegates from the various retail organizations east and west. As the record shows, however, there was a liberal sprinkling of members of the retail trade, other than delegates, in attendance, and the manner in which the wholesale trade of Buffalo and Tonawanda entertained the visitors was in keeping with the reputation previously established in that respect.

On the program were eighteen papers to be read, on subjects touching all branches of the trade, and embracing the best thought of the members on matters of paramount importance to the industry whose interests they had met to consider. Two papers on mutual insurance among lumbermen created great interest and provoked considerable discussion, bringing out, as might be expected, considerable difference of opinion.

At the opening session President John W. Barry occupied the chair, and Secretary J. L. Lane was present to call the roll. Some sixty delegates answered to their names, including a number from Canada. The association was welcomed to Buffalo by the Mayor of the city in a brief address, to which president Barry replied as follows:—

On behalf of the United Associations of Lumbermen, it is my privilege, it is my pleasure, to extend to you and to the city of Buffalo our most hearty thanks. We accept your welcome in the spirit in which it is given, for we recognize it as the real, genuine "all-heart grade, squared true and plump. In the language of the lumberman, it is "clear and well manufactured," a welcome into the lumberman's own heart. However, we would be wanting in that nice discrimination as to the proprieties of conditions and circumstances, did we not recognize the fact that this welcome is extended us, not in a personal way, but in behalf of the great lumber industry which we represent. For be it known to all that the great lumber industry has more capital invested in it than any other industry. For proof of this I cite you to the census of 1890, from which you will learn that the capital invested in the lumber industry is double that invested in any other. Yes, more that this capital exceeds one-tenth of the aggregate capital invested in all manufacturing industries. We, being the representatives of this trade, receive these courtesies. We are the accidents of time, and the recipients of favors due to position. Truly, it is better to be born lucky than rich. I, like us, you can be lucky most of the time. But the city of Buffalo has for us added charms. We feel that we are visiting one of the landmarks of the great republic. Why, it is within the memory of man that Madison vetoed the canal bill on account of the pressure brought to bear upon him by the New England states. For, said they, it will never do to open up this waterway to encourage the people to go to the west. Think of it! Buffalo the west. But true to western characteristics you crossed the then plains, as of old the pilgrims crossed the sea, to make out of the west, as they of the east, the "home of the free." You built the canal without national aid. It is within the memory of men living here that Governor Clinton was towed in his little Seneca Chief into the canal, and after a most rapid trip of nine days found himself in New York City, and amid the booming cannons and the shouts of an excited populace he raised on high the little green keg of water which he had brought from Lake Erie and mingled it with the turbulent waters of the great Atlantic, thus sealing for all time the commerce of Buffalo, a commerce which in proportion to population is greater than that of any other city in the world.

But, sir, pleased as we are with all this, it is my unpleasant duty to mention the one objection to your welcome. As was said before, we find it "all heart," "strictly clear and well manufactured," a genuine lumberman's welcome, but after due trial and strict examination, I find it to be not "strictly dry"—in fact it is "wet stock." Now you are well aware that wet stock is very objectionable to lumbermen, but happily on this occasion this objection does not hold, for the delegates to the present convention, and

more especially those from Kansas and Iowa, as well as the members of the press, were selected with special reference to their ability to handle "wet stock" to the best advantage, so that this objection will for the present be passed unnoticed, uncorked and unknown. But sir, in all seriousness, we meet your greeting with greeting, for your roses of welcome we tender you the sweet forget-me-nots of memory. These courtesies will not be forgotten. We could not if we would, and we would not if we could.

Gentlemen of the Convention. It seems but fitting at this time that something should be said as to the future of the organization, and as to the work of your present officers. Two years ago at Cleveland I was honored with the presidency, and I then and there resolved to do all in my power to make this organization a truly representative one of the whole lumber trade. I could not see the object of having it wholly retail, for have not the retailers their local associations in which the unswerving devotions of the wholesalers to the retailers is annually recounted in unbroken concatenations of prose, poetry and song? Neither could I see the object of having it wholly wholesale, for does not each recurring moon find the wholesalers in session discussing the unlicking, unthinking propensities of the retailer, and vainly endeavoring to reduce the price list just in time for him to lay in his season's stock. No, not an organization for one, but for both. After much work and voluminous correspondence by myself and with the best of help we secured a fairly good representation of the entire trade at the Denver meeting last year. Indeed, we had a paper from a member of the Mississippi Valley Lumbermen's Association, one from the Southern Lumber Manufacturers' Association, and one from the Mississippi Association. On being re-elected last fall, after a conference with your secretary, it was decided to push this line of work to the end that at this meeting this Association could be organized into a real national association to which all differences between lumbermen might be referred, as a court of final resort. For so long as brother differs from brother in politics, so long as sister differs with sister on religion, so long as husband differs with wife on family affairs, we must expect that even lumbermen will have differences on business affairs. Indeed when we think of it the wonder is that there are not more differences, for in every transaction between two real persons there are in reality involved six distinct personalities. This is what is known as the personal trinity. For instance, take a transaction between myself, you and your secretary, there is Lane, the real Lane that God made, I am as he sees himself and Lane at I see him. Three distinct personalities. Then there is Barry, the real Barry that God made, and known only to his Maker, Barry as he sees himself, and Barry as Lane sees him. Now among the the six persons to this deal is it any wonder that differences should arise? But this organization is well calculated from its cosmopolitan character to settle these differences, for generally when differences are fully understood there is little difficulty in settling them amicably. Our firm in an experience of 23 years never had a claim which, after being shown to be just, was not freely and willingly allowed; but whether these changes will be made or not it is with you, gentlemen, to say. We can go no further. But whether or not these changes, or any changes, shall be made, each one that comes here will be the better for coming. You will return to your homes with a broader charity and a firmer faith: faith that lends man from the known to the unknown—faith that is the essential element of all human progress. You will carry with you a brighter hope; sweet

"Hope that, like the taper's gleaming light,
Adorns and cheers the way,
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emit a brighter day."

The secretary made a few remarks urging the importance of the association, and then submitted the financial statement, which showed receipts \$312.75; expenditure \$77.73; balance on hand \$235.02.

The first paper discussed was one by Mr. L. A. Mansfield, of New Haven, on "The Contractors' Credit System," after which the subject of "Insurance" came up, being introduced by Mr. W. C. Johnson, of Fitchburg, who as president of the Massachusetts Retail Association and of the Lumber Mutual Fire Insurance Co., was well qualified to deal with it. He gave statistics showing the vast sums paid in premiums by lumbermen. The cost of insurance is about twice as much as the aggregate of fire losses. He suggested a number of remedial changes through legislation. A supplementary paper on the same subject was read by Edward Henson, of Philadelphia, and he suggested that a committee be appointed to investigate the workings of three

mutual companies now operating, and that a standard insurance committee be established by the United Associations. W. G. Hollis, of Minneapolis, of the fire insurance company organized by the Northwestern Lumbermen's Association, spoke of the risks in the west, and described them as much different from eastern hazards, and said the result was very satisfactory after a trial of eighteen months. No dividends are paid and the policy holder is charged a proportionate amount of losses, expenses, etc. A deposit is made by each policy holder, which is forfeited if the assessment is not paid. L. R. Hawes, of Sandusky, also described the operations of a lumbermen's mutual fire insurance company in which he is interested.

F. L. Wagar, secretary of the Alabama association, spoke briefly on the benefits of the united organization, and congratulated the members on the happy results attained.

At a subsequent session President Barry spoke in highly complimentary terms of the lumber press and the valuable service they render to the trade.

A paper by C. L. Blakeslee, of Albany, was read by S. H. Beach, of Rome. It was entitled "The Wholesale Consumer," and was an able argument in favor of retailers, and the acknowledgement and protection of their rights and interests. In discussing the paper, E. M. Willard, of Philadelphia, spoke of the enormous growth of the lumber interests of Buffalo and Tonawanda, and the mutual interests between wholesale and retail dealers and manufacturers. Mr. Drake, of the Texas association said the wholesale consumers are enumerated in the by-laws of the body, including the state of Texas, penitentiaries, foreign bridge companies, and all dealers who annually use 200,000 feet of lumber, and this plan leaves nothing to be decided by arbitration committees.

Other papers dealt with such subjects as "Influence of United Associations," "Local Associations," "The Territory of the Retailer," "Early Days of the Retail Trade," "What Constitutes a Regular Dealer," "Management of Retail Yards," "The Attitude of the Retailer to the Wholesaler and Manufacturer," "The Wholesaler," "The Scalper," etc., etc. The papers are to be printed in pamphlet form for distribution.

A resolution was passed recommending that all arbitration committees consists of nine members, three chosen by each of the contending parties and three by the six thus chosen.

The following were elected officers for the ensuing year.—President, G. A. R. Simpson, Minneapolis, Minn.; first vice-president, R. W. English, Denver, Colo.; second vice-president, C. W. English, Mont Clair, N. J.; secretary, John L. Lane, Kansas City, Mo.

The third day of the Convention was given up to the social feature. The delegates, with other invited friends, were taken to Niagara Falls as the guests of the Wholesale Lumber Dealers Associations of Buffalo and Tonawanda. They went by steamer to the terminus of the electric railway on the Canada side, over that road to Queenston, across to Lewiston, then back to the Falls by the new Gorge Railway. Dinner was served at the International Hotel, after which the party visited the works of the Cataract Construction Co. and Niagara Falls Paper Co., then back to Buffalo by steamer. It was a delightful trip and the visitors thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The headquarters of the Convention were at the Iroquois Hotel, in the parlors of which a reception was held. The meetings took place in the handsome room of the Builders' Exchange, one of the finest business blocks in the city.

A carriage drive about the city, headed by a tally-ho coach and four, was not the least enjoyable feature of the meeting.