

WESTERN RETAIL LUMBERMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

The tenth annual meeting of the above association was held in the city of Winnipeg on February 19th. There was a large attendance of members and visitors. Mr. Henry Byrnes, of Winnipeg, president of the Association, occupied the chair, and after opening the meeting called upon the secretary, Mr. Isaac Cockburn, to read the minutes of the previous meeting, which were confirmed.

The annual address of the president was then presented as follows:

[Gentlemen and Fellow Members of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association:]

I deem it an honor to be privileged, as your president for the second time, to welcome you here in attendance at this annual meeting. I regret that it is not my good fortune, owing to the effect of a disappointing harvest, to be able to offer you congratulations of prosperity in the lumber trade. I, however, can compliment you upon the wisdom exercised in your business under the existing circumstances, in anticipating so closely the effect of a short crop, by restricting your business in purchasing with caution commensurate with the absolute necessity and requirement. The farmers also have evinced a worthy caution in delaying expenditure in building and improving as much as possible, until the return of an assured good crop. Being interested in the working of the association, and wishing to acquire more personal knowledge of it, I accompanied the secretary on two trips into districts where some complaints had been formulated against some dealers for violating the price list established.

On visiting the dealers in question, we were able to harmonize the differences complained of, and start them anew to sell at the established price list, and the result was an apparent feeling to adhere to the established list. My observation has led me to believe that the association is doing much to promote a better understanding among the dealers in the conduct of business generally, and the advantage of an established price list is well borne out. Unfortunately, there has existed in the city a disruption of the price list, and lumber has been sold at no profit to the dealers, and the demoralized and slaughtering prices here have been quite injurious to members having yards in the proximity of the city, and even at considerable distances out. I may say that after an unsatisfactory experience there appears now to be a united effort on the part of the dealers of Winnipeg to make such an arrangement and agreement as will lead to reorganization and selling on an established price list in future.

You will notice that the balance on hand has increased considerably, which may be a matter for your consideration whether the annual dues may not be reduced some.

In closing, I desire to state that at the last annual meeting it was my purpose to suggest to you that it would be a fitting thing for us to join with other organizations in contributing to the patriotic fund, but this was overlooked. However, at the first meeting of the directors, the board and myself thought it proper to vote \$100 to the fund then being established for the relief and benefit of such families requiring consideration and assistance on account of our gallant fellows who volunteered to take part in the South African war, on behalf of our then gracious, beloved and revered Queen, and for whose recent death we all mingle in sorrow and are touched with pride in having had so worthy, illustrious and good woman as a sovereign. We pray God to bless her noble son and successor, our sovereign, King Edward VII, who has already stamped himself an able and worthy ruler, and has declared himself in giving expression of affection and reverence for his mother in language so worthy of a dutiful son to a wonderful mother, to closely follow in her footsteps in constitutional government.

Then followed the secretary-treasurer's report as given below:

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—I am pleased to be able to present to you such a favorable financial statement, showing a balance on hand to the credit of the association of \$2,034.21.

There are still 34 dues unpaid, many of which will be paid, but it will be necessary to purge the membership list of some names, as it will not do to inculcate carelessness in the paying of dues. The membership stands at a gain of twenty-three over that of last year. There is a

total of two hundred and four yards, and thirty-four honorary members. During the year I removed from the list seven members for directly refusing payment of their dues.

I have to report that shortly after the annual meeting I proceeded to establish price lists for the various points, and continued doing so until pretty thoroughly completed, with the exception of points west of Minnedosa, where I was advised that lists were not wanted. I did not visit the Northern Pacific points, knowing that it would be of no service, as there were non-members in competition. I have to acknowledge the active interest taken by the dealers throughout in arranging the prices, and the kind courtesy extended to me by the members, many dealers travelling considerable distances to attend meetings called for that purpose. I am glad to believe that the prices so established were generally adhered to, although there were some cases of complaint for violation of the price list, in which cases I was successful in harmonizing the difficulties which had arisen, by meeting with the dealers in question and discussing with them the grievances complained of, and securing a new start in selling on the established price list. In nearly every case a better feeling was engendered between them as a result.

At one point where I was asked to investigate a charge for selling at less than the price list, I knew the parties were not on speaking terms over some business difficulties. I first had an interview with the complainant, and told him I would bring them together, so as to sift the charge, and that he must make up his mind to discuss it with the dealer complained of, and in a friendly way. This he consented to do. I then interviewed the dealer complained of, who frankly admitted the charge, and after some discussion bearing upon the matter he gave me the strongest assurance that hereafter he would maintain the established prices. Upon calling the parties together a full discussion was had upon the charge made, and the dealer in the wrong having acknowledged the same, I then called the other dealer aside and mentioned to him that should he press the charge a penalty of \$25 or over would have to be levied from his opponent, and that it would be of no direct benefit to him. To the credit of the party thus appealed to he at once replied, "I do not wish to be the cause of making my opponent pay that amount, and if he now agrees to maintain the price established, I consent not to proceed against him." I did not fail to impress this good act on the mind of the other party. This happened early in the spring, and no complaint has reached me from that point since. I merely state this case in giving my experience that this is a better mode of settling matters of complaint than referring the matter to the executive committee, when doing so can be avoided, but of course there will arise exceptional cases which will make it imperative to do so.

The president in his address has referred to the state existing among the Winnipeg dealers, and I need not dwell upon it further than to say it affected members disastrously at points in the vicinity outlying the city. Those dealers have my warmest sympathy in the disturbance and loss of their business therefrom, and I do hope that upon the restoration of a price list for Winnipeg good business will again be brought about to the dealers referred to.

I feel called upon to make reference to a pernicious business coming under my notice which is being carried on by what is termed on the other side as poaching. I mean someone who is not a manufacturer and a non-member of the association, procures lumber from parties other than honorary members, and disposes of the lumber as best he can, and I am sorry to say that such a person has succeeded in making trouble and demoralizing prices in some instances to the serious detriment of some active members. I trust no member of the association will be found purchasing or supporting such a system as referred to, and if possible that some means may be brought to bear that will stamp it out.

This is an opportune time to discuss these phases on their merits, and I would like to impress upon the members present to do so fully and to go forth from this meeting resolved to act up to the resolution and by-laws of the association, and to be fellow workers together for mutual benefit.

The suggestions in the secretary-treasurer's report created a lively discussion in regard to the practice of cutting prices.

Several members stated that business in their par-

ticular localities had been adversely affected during the year by the action of non-members purchasing lumber in the United States and western manufacturers who did not belong to the Association. The result of the discussion was that an understanding was arrived at that nearly as possible hereafter the rules of the association would be adhered to by all parties. Manufacturers and the whole sale men agreed to assist the members of the Association in this direction. The address of the president and report of the secretary-treasurer were approved.

The election of officers resulted as follows: President, Henry Byrnes, Winnipeg; vice-president, J. L. Campbell, Melita, Man.; director, D. E. Sprague, Winnipeg; F. Turnbull, Melita, Man.; W. S. Burley, Neepawa, Man.; M. Stewart, Morden, Man.; J. K. Roberts, Treherne, Man., and R. H. Williams, Regina, Assiniboia.

On motion of Mr. J. L. Campbell it was decided to arrange with the railway companies an excursion to the Pacific coast during the coming summer, after which the meeting adjourned.

REDUCTION IN SHINGLE DUES.

The Dominion Government has issued the following proclamation affecting dues on shingle timber taken from Dominion lands in British Columbia:

"Whereas it is found that the rate of twenty cents per thousand chargeable on shingles in section 11 of the regulations governing the granting of yearly licenses and permits to cut timber on Dominion lands established by order-in-council of 1st July, 1898, and amending orders-in-council is not excessive in Manitoba and the North-West Territories, where shingles sell at from \$2.50 to \$3 per thousand, but in British Columbia, where they only sell for \$1 per thousand, it is apparent that the rate is too high:

"And whereas the timber used in making shingles in British Columbia is of a class which cannot be used for the manufacture of lumber being the hollow butts of trees cut down in logging, and therefore it not used for shingles, it is thus deemed advisable to modify the rate;

"Therefore, His Excellency, by and with the advice of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada is pleased to order that instead of dues being charged in the province of British Columbia on the rate of twenty cents per thousand on manufactured shingles, the said dues shall be reduced to ten cents per thousand, and the same are hereby made chargeable on shingle bolts at the rate of fifty (50) cents per cord."

End piling under sheds is probably the best method of stacking hardwoods for seasoning. A Michigan concern has used this method for several years, and finds it very satisfactory. Its sheds are 30 feet wide, 200 feet long, and high enough to take in a 16-foot board. The capacity of such a shed, the stock being well piled, is 200,000 feet. The sheds are of concrete built especially for such work. End piling costs 15 to 25 cents per thousand feet more than end piling, but the results are claimed to cost less balance this.