

lie the benefit as heretofore, being themselves satisfied with a fair profit.

This is an age of combinations; indeed it might be said that combinations are the mainspring of civilization of the latter part of this century, by the aid of which the greatest studies have been made. We find every trade profession and calling controlled by associations—some of them indeed recognized and solidified by acts of Parliament—but of all the associations west of the Great Lakes, there is none more roundly abused than ours, and none more innocent in its effects upon the public. This Association fears not at any time to undergo an investigation into its merits. It is true beyond a doubt that no class of mercantile trade is conducted on so small a scale or margin of profit, and no association guards so well the interests of the public. The speaker was satisfied that, as more became known of the objects of the association, the prejudice against it would disappear. He was pleased to see so good an attendance; a number of subjects would come up for discussion, and he hoped the results obtained would conduce to the continued benefit of the association.

The election of officers and directors for the ensuing year was gone on with, resulting as follows:—President, J. L. Campbell, Melita; Vice-President, Alex. Block, Winnipeg. Directors—D. N. McMillan, Morden; J. M. Taylor, Portage la Prairie; K. H. O'Hara, Brandon; J. B. Mather, Glenboro; T. A. Cuddy, Minnetonka; J. Dick, Winnipeg.

Mr. Taylor subsequently resigned, and J. M. Nelson, of Carberry, was appointed in his stead.

The balance of the session was taken up in discussing amendments to the by-laws, and some changes authorized to be made. The session throughout was considered most satisfactory.

WINNIPEG, MAN., FEB. 23, 1895.

#### ELECTRICITY AND ECONOMY.

THE nature of electrical generation and dynamo working is such that only sufficient amount of current required to do the work in is used, so its economy is at once obvious. In factories where the machinery is working intermittently, and liable to great fluctuation, the economy of driving by electricity is even more marked, as the electric current can be switched on or off with the greatest ease and rapidity, after which crossed belts and fast and loose pulleys appear a heavy and clumsy, not to say unscientific, method of utilizing power.—Manufacturers' Gazette.

#### PUBLICATIONS.

The annual statistical number of the Mississippi Valley Lumberman is one of the most complete special issues of a lumber journal that has come to our table in some years. Especial care has been exercised in the gathering of statistics of the lumber trades of the particular territory covered by the journal. These tables embrace hardwoods, as well as pine, a new venture with our contemporary, and one that is not common to the gathering of lumber statistics. Outside of the special trade review features of the number, there are found in its pages several valuable articles on the saw-mill, wood-working machinery, and a history of Minneapolis as a lumber manufacturing point, all appropriately illustrated. Typographically the number is deserving of much praise.

From across the ocean comes to us a special American and Canadian edition of Timber a massive volume. The editor of this journal took a trip through Canada and the United States a year ago, and the evidences of his industry and observations are seen in this splendidly gotten up number. It contains an excellent history of the trades of these two countries. We congratulate our contemporary on the very thorough and accurate manner in which he has dealt with the Canadian trade of the several provinces. The number is profusely illustrated with portraits and illustrations of prominent lumbermen, saw mills, and lumbering scenes in the several provinces of the Dominion and elsewhere.

If a belt will not run a machine unless it is as tight as the strings of a bass viol, then it is time the pulleys were changed for broader-faced ones, and a wider belt put in place of the narrow one. A belt of the proper width to perform its work with ease can be run on by hand as easily as it can do the work required of it.



MENTION was made, I noticed, in discussing trade conditions in the WEEKLY LUMBERMAN a week ago, of the difficulty experienced in securing lumber, and especially hardwoods, of the size frequently called for by United States dealers. I was speaking to Mr. George Cormick, of Whitby, a few days ago on this point and he was telling me of an order he had received, which was going to give him some bother to fill, as our mill men were not accustomed to making up lumber of these sizes. The complaint comes, not alone from Mr. Cormick, but I have asked others on the point and a few days ago in the office of J. G. Cane & Co. I had a case cited to me of a similar kind. Lumbermen who undertake to do business for a particular locality must needs meet the requirements of that trade. It occurred to me that mill men would simply have to lay themselves out to cut wood to these particular sizes, for I judge that the cases are not exceptional and that where Mr. Cormick would get orders for certain kinds of wood of a certain size other dealers would be receiving like orders, which would mean that the mill men would find it pay to make up some quantity of wood of this character.

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Whether or not southern pine is going to cut a figure in the Canadian market that is worth any large amount of consideration, is, perhaps, a debatable question. This, I have to remark, that meeting with lumbermen almost daily, and those engaged in different branches of the business, I find that a good many, at least, are talking about this matter. I do not think that a systematic effort has been made to put any great quantity of southern wood into Ontario, though some movement is being made to find a market for it here. But it would not take long if a decision were arrived at to rush business in that direction. The trade are frequently in receipt of price lists from the south, and these are not thrown into the waste paper basket. They are being studied, some figuring done and comparisons made, and the lists are carefully filed for reference. I find this to be the case. Prices, as nearly as one can compare these with white pine, run somewhat closely parallel. And yet there are certain grades of the foreign article where the price is lower than white pine men would care to sell their stock for, and I should be sorry to see them get prices down that low. In conversation with a group of lumbermen I found one old-timer, who knows the trade for many years back and who still keeps on the road, who does not think that southern pine will make much headway in Ontario. He believed that the action of the lumber section of the Board of Trade, taken shortly after the recent great fire, was going to have a potent influence both in Toronto and throughout the province in deciding lumbermen against handling this wood. Certainly if the Underwriters' Association take the question up and make a distinction in rates between buildings where this resinuous wood is used in construction and others that hold to native woods, a blow will be struck at southern pine. The case occurs to me as one that in a measure is in its embryo. In the meantime the subject will bear investigation and the CANADA LUMBERMAN will be glad to gather the opinions of the trade on the question.

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As the months pass by since the placing of lumber on the free list between the United States and Canada, the full import of the measure is commencing to work itself out. Possibly Canadian lumbermen were rather much carried off with the idea that the removal of the duty on lumber was going to work all one way. On the other hand it is quite evident that United States lumbermen were unnecessarily terrified at the disaster they were sure the measure would wreck upon the lumber trades of their country. Free trade is free trade and it can

hardly be made the policy of any country without cutting the two ways. Under a protective tariff there is some opportunity of shutting out imports from a foreign country. Under free trade just as sure as the country enjoying that has the freedom that enables its people to push their products into those countries that reciprocate along the same lines, so contrariwise, they have taken down the bars and they may expect that certain products will come into their country from the outside. I am not going to follow this interesting economic phase of the question any further. Perhaps it will set readers thinking. I simply mention it to remark that this is proving the experience more and more of free lumber. British Columbia lumbermen are sending cargoes almost every week into San Francisco. Washington Territory lumbermen are getting their red cedar shingles not only into British Columbia, but their salesmen have been through Toronto and Ontario points within the past few weeks pushing business. Ontario white pine men are sending in manufactured lumber in increased quantities into the United States, because of the removal of the duties. As I have noted elsewhere, reciprocity comes into play here by the southern pine men sending their supplies, not only of rough lumber but of manufactured stocks, into Ontario, and talking lumber matters the other day with Mr. Thomas Meaney, manager of the Toronto branch of Robert Thomson & Co., I learned that this firm will, the coming season, bring in Duluth pine to Toronto, and place it on sale at their various branches. And remember that Robert Thomson & Co. are large mill owners themselves, interested in selling the product of their own mills. Does not this look like a very general mixing up of the lumber products of the two countries?

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Some one has said that history is teaching by example. I have no doubt but that all of us would save many expensive experiences if we would but study history a little more, and thereby learn that some of the schemes into which we enter with so much certainty of success, had at times past been tried by others and proven to be complete failures. I would not like to say that this line of argument could with perfect safety be applied to some observations on the lumber trade that I heard discussed a little while ago when in a lumberman's office in Toronto. I met there several lumbermen who had been long enough in the business to know something of its history and outcomes, and with these a gentleman who has been quite largely engaged in building and real estate in Toronto. The present condition of business was the all important subject of discussion, and the tendency was to take a pessimistic view of affairs. I wanted to point out to these lumbermen that the evidence seemed to show that we had turned the corner, and dull as 1894 had certainly been, things were going to improve in 1895. Sales would certainly be better, and prices that were stiff to-day were not likely to relax, and perhaps would increase some. Everybody did not agree with this prognostication of mine. Lumber will be lower during 1895, said one of the company, than it is at the present time. I reminded this person that mill men had seldom held lumber at a firmer price. The answer was that this was all very well. It was natural to expect that mill men would talk about stiff prices, and anyone in their position would be likely to do the same thing. "But," joined in another of the party, "those who can go back to the year 1876 saw just this kind of business existing. There was plenty of lumber in the country and you could not move mill men from their prices. What was the result? I have in my memory at the present time the case of one large concern, with offices in Toronto, who held a large stock of lumber, for which they would not take a cent less than \$13 a thousand. No shading from this price could tempt them to part with it. They held on with bulldog tenacity, but the time came when that same lot of lumber was sold for \$7 a thousand." I do not think that conditions as they exist to-day find a fair parallel in those of 1876, but on the principle that history teaches by example, and taking my friends view of the case as correct, there is, of course, something in his way of stating it. Our friend, the builder, thought lumber was a good deal like real estate in the city of Toronto. There was no better asset for anyone to hold, if he could hold it long enough.