

WESTERN RETAIL LUMBERMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION.

THE fifth annual meeting of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association was held in Winnipeg on Wednesday, February 12th. There was a good attendance and much interest exercised in discussing matters brought before the meeting. In the absence of the President, the chair was taken by the Vice-President, Mr. Alexander Black. The meeting being called to order, the proceedings and minutes of the last annual meeting were read and confirmed.

The chairman read the following address from the retiring President, Mr. J. L. Campbell, of Melita.

To the Members of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association.

Gentlemen:—It is a matter of pleasurable satisfaction to all that our Association meets this year under conditions more favorable than have existed for one or two years past. The abundant harvest with which our farmers have been blessed has brought prosperity not only to this, the most important class of our population, but also to the general public. In this renewed prosperity the members of our Association, both honorary and active, I am pleased to say, have participated in a satisfactory degree.

Our Association has made substantial progress in the way of solidification. It is true that during the past year we have had some disturbing conditions, but notwithstanding these, I am convinced that we stand stronger than ever. The immense advantages accruing to the members, both honorary and active, is becoming to be more and more appreciated. The general public, too, are recognizing more clearly the laudable objects of our Association, and are recognizing as well, that while we wish to guard our own interests, we are not unmindful of their welfare, as instance the liberal reduction in the price of lumber the past year. This wider knowledge has considerably dissipated their prejudices and they are coming to believe that, if we have faults, "they lean to virtues' side."

You will notice from the financial statement submitted to you that our balance is respectable and on the proper side. I would recommend, however, that the fees be restored, if not to their old figure, as nearly so as possible. With a commendable object in view, the dues last year were reduced 50%. We find now, that while the strictest economy has been observed, our expenditures have exceeded the accruing dues for the year by a few hundred dollars. It is exceedingly unwise for this depletion of our funds to continue. A strong treasury is an element of general strength, and, as no one can tell when our strength can be tested, I trust you will give this your very serious consideration.

During the past year a number of questions for adjustment have come before your directors. In every instance they have endeavored to obtain the fullest possible information bearing upon the various questions, and in every instance their conclusions have been based upon a conscientious desire to deal even justice to all parties. If they have fallen short in any respect, I am sure your generous nature will forgive what your good sense may have seen wrong in their judgment.

It affords me much pleasure to bear testimony to the indefatigable attention our Secretary has given to the affairs of our Association. I do not presume he needs any apology at my hands, but if there be any who have misunderstood his intention, I should simply ask to quote the words of President Tuthill, of the Mississippi Valley Lumbermen's Association:

"There seems to be in some quarters a disposition to think our Secretary is a little too persistent and pushing in the presentation and collection of claims sent to him for adjustment, but you must remember that behind every one of these claims there is a red-hot retailer with every hair turned the wrong way, impatient for his ten per cent. regardless of any explanation. It has been a wonder to me, as well as others of the directory, that he gets along with so little friction. When he gets a claim from any of our members he must ask the accused of making the shipment for an explanation of it in writing, so a complete record may be kept of all cases. We have not found our

Secretary guilty of unbusiness-like or ungentlemanly conduct in his way of doing this business, still, if he fails to collect the claim promptly he is liable to be accused of being in league with the wholesalers, or on the other hand criticised by the wholesale for over-activity in his efforts to get replies to his communications which are not unlikely to receive as tardy attention as any which comes to the wholesaler's desk."

But as I have said, I am not aware our Secretary requires any justification at my hands. The results of his labor are a sufficient commendation.

I cannot omit to make mention of the loyalty of our honorary members to the Association. The closer arrangement entered into last year, I believe, has been faithfully observed on their part. Perhaps as much cannot be said of all the active members, but I believe any breach of arrangement has been surrounded by extenuating circumstances. Taking it all in all, perhaps the new conditions of mutual fidelity between honorary and active members have been as well observed as could reasonably be expected under a change so complete and so sudden.

Several matters will come up for your consideration. As good always comes of discussion, I trust your deliberations will be full and cordial, exemplifying the good sense and harmony that have always characterized our meetings in the past.

The address having been read, the chairman called upon the secretary to make his financial statement. Upon proceeding to read the statement he prefaced his remarks by stating that it afforded him much pleasure to meet so many members present on this occasion. He was glad to be able to report the goodly sum of \$811.53 as the balance on hand. There are 147 names on the membership list. Much harmony prevailed among the dealers during the year just closed, there being only two cases of complaints brought before the directorate to be dealt with during the year. He then enlarged on reciprocity as between active and honorary members, and was glad that the fairness of it was so generally recognized on the part of active members. The amendment to the by-laws requiring active members to buy from honorary members only was fairly well adhered to. He also reminded honorary members to keep before them, in shipping, the membership list, and interim notices of changes in the membership.

In referring to some grievances that were reported to him showing an evasion of the association rules in shipping through intermediate points in the mountains, the secretary urged that the utmost honor in dealing one with the other should have due regard, in order to keep good faith and fidelity in association matters in cases where the clauses of the by-laws did not reach them, and at all times as well. In conclusion, he congratulated the members upon the improved condition of the lumber business during the last year, both in increased volume of business done, and in the collection of accounts carried by them during the last four years. He thanked the directors for their good attention to the affairs of the Association and the benefit he had derived from them in their good counsels.

The election of officers was then proceeded with and resulted as follows: D. M. McMillan, Morden, president; T. A. Cuddy, Minnedosa, vice-president. Directors: A. Black and J. Arbuthnot, Winnipeg; C. E. Pieper, Gretna; J. M. Taylor, Portage la Prairie, J. M. Neilson, Carberry; J. B. Mathers, Glenboro.

The convention then adjourned.

Jarrah wood piles, 2 feet 2 inches square, driven 33 years ago at the Largs Bay pier, were found on examination to be as sound as when put in.

"THE NEW ONTARIO."

A LARGE and interested audience were present at the Canadian Institute in this city on the evening of the 15th ultimo, the attraction being a lecture by Mr. Blue, of the Ontario Bureau of Mines, entitled "The New Ontario." Mr. Blue described the title as including all that part of the province lying beyond the Mattawa and French rivers and the Nipissing, Huron, and Superior Lakes, and bounded on the north and west by lines established by Imperial Statute in 1889.

This territory was in dispute between the Ontario and Dominion governments in 1872, but was finally ceded to Ontario. Of this country little was known, but it was believed to be rich in natural resources. The immense size of this unexplored district was a revelation to many in the audience, its size being given as 100,000 square miles greater than the settled portion. "The discovery," said Mr. Blue, "of what appears to be a valuable tract of country was made only within the past year by Mr. Henry O'Sullivan, of the Crown Lands Department, Quebec, and Dr. Bell, of the Geological Survey, Ottawa. They ascertained that in the basin of the Nottaway river and its tributaries, the Waswanipi and the Mekiskan, there is a tract of rich and finely timbered land, as large in extent as the whole of England, of which nothing was known two years ago. This inspires us with the hope that regions of perhaps equal extent are yet to be found.

The Hudson Bay Company, whose only interest is the fur trade, have always discouraged explorations which might result in bringing settlers into the country. A gentleman who had been a missionary among the Ottawa and Hudson Bay slope for nearly thirty years, stated to Mr. O'Sullivan that he had seen some good land and large timber in the neighborhood of Lake Waswanipi and advised him to explore, but he was further told by the guardian for the Georgian Bay Co. at Grand Lake, Victoria, that the Indians who visited the post could not get sufficient wood to make an axe handle there. This, of course, was in keeping with the traditional policy of the Hudson Bay Company.

Of all the natural resources of the New Ontario the forest is of the most obvious value, as there is nothing to hide or obscure it. There are no doubt yet to be found large tracts of valuable timber land, although many square miles have been cut by lumbermen and many more swept by fire. The forests west of Port Arthur were swept within the memory of many now living. In one day fire is said to have ravaged a tract of forest land seventy miles long and thirty miles wide, or containing upwards of 2,000 square miles."

Concluding his remarks on the forest, Mr. Blue said he "scarcely dared to forecast what our needs would be a quarter of a century hence, for the wit of man was seeking out many new inventions. But in all probability there never would be found a substitute for wood, and he therefore urged that a conservative policy be pursued in regard to our forests, and that the Government set them apart as Crown lands."

E. Leonard & Sons, of St. John, have sold one of their latest improved Clipper portable saw-mills to Mr. R. Hoey, of Hardingville, St. John Co.