

ing to the advantage of the lumber trade.

It is true that the lumbermen have resorted to the wicked practice of trying to keep down ruinous competition. If it is any benefit to the public to have three lumber yards striving to exist where there is only a reasonable amount of business for one, then the lumbermen have done an injury to the public. Three men trying to carry on business where there was only sufficient trade to support one, would result, if persisted in, in perhaps three failures and a heavy loss to the creditors. Failures are damaging to the community in which they occur. One yard well stocked would serve the public better than three, at points where there was only sufficient business to support one. The one yard could afford to carry a better stock than the three could do and could meet the requirements of the public to better advantage.

The Association also endeavors to regulate prices, but exorbitant prices are not allowed. The margin of profit in the lumber trade is very small, averaging only about 18 per cent. This is smaller than almost any branch of business except the grain trade. "In no instance," said the president at the recent annual meeting, "has the price of lumber been advanced by the Association," but on the other hand prices have been reduced, as a result to a considerable extent of the workings of the Association. The reduction in freight rates, which enabled the dealers to reduce the price of lumber, was brought about to some extent at least through the efforts of the Association. The public are protected by the Association as the margin of profit allowed is very reasonable and the conditions prevent dealers from exceeding the regular prices or overcharging their customers for lumber.

As a result of the work of the Association the reckless credit system in the lumber trade has been remedied. The wholesale dealers sell on short dates and receive their pay more promptly. The curtailment of reckless competition and the more reckless credit evil has been a great benefit to the entire lumber trade. Wholesalers have not been making bad accounts, and as a result of the curtailment of the heavy losses which they were formerly meeting with, they have been enabled to reduce prices very materially to the retail dealers. In turn the retail dealers have been enabled to give the consumer cheaper lumber. A demoralized condition existing in any branch of trade is an injury to the community. It is also true that the improvement in the condition of the lumber trade in this country has been a benefit to the entire community. The curtailment of reckless competition, the correction of the credit evil, the prevention of failures and heavy financial losses through the better business methods introduced; the securing of more prompt payments; and lastly, the very material reductions made in prices of lumber to the consumer, are features which have been attained largely through the efforts of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association.

The Shaft house of the Sultana mine, Lake of the Woods, was burned on March 11. A number of men in the mine were nearly suffocated, and one of the miners succumbed.

PUSHING A TRADE CENTRE.

It has been said that a town or city is judged by its newspapers. There is undoubtedly a great deal of truth in the saying. The newspaper presents a picture of the life of a community, and affords strangers by far the best means of forming an opinion of a place. If this is true of the newspaper, it is also true that the commercial importance of a city may be gauged by its trade papers. An important trade centre without a trade paper would be at a disadvantage. A good trade paper is the best advertisement a commercial community can have. It is continually doing missionary work in the interest of the centre it represents. It accomplishes in each issue the work of thousands of travellers. Every copy of a trade paper is like a visit of a commercial traveller; but whereas the traveller represents a single house, the commercial paper represents an entire community of business men. The trade paper can therefore only be compared in the work it accomplishes, to the sending out weekly or monthly, as the case may be, of thousands of travellers to advertise and work up business for a community of business interests.

The trade paper must be placed at the head of the list as a means of drawing trade to a city. It advertises a city; advertises its trade interests, individually and collectively. It is a constant reminder that such a trade centre has an existence, and the appearance of the paper, in its advertising as well as in its news columns, forms an index to the importance of the place and to the progressive or unprogressive nature of its business men, as the case may be. It is therefore the duty of the business men not only to advertise but to make their advertisements interesting and attractive, if they wish to show their city to good advantage as a trade centre. Advertisements should be changed frequently, and something should be said that will interest those whom it is intended to reach. What would be thought of a paper that would print the same matter, week after week in its reading columns? The same principle holds good, though to a less extent, in the advertising columns. The business men are therefore responsible to a considerable extent for the influence their trade paper has in bringing business to their city.

In every community there are some who never make use of their trade paper. At the same time these houses are benefitted by the trade paper, though they give nothing in return for such benefit as they may receive. The trade paper brings business to a town, and some of this business will fall to persons or houses who never gave any support to the trade paper. This however, is the rule everywhere, and we cannot expect that it will be different in Winnipeg.

Besides keeping his advertising space fresh and attractive, the jobber can in other ways add to the value the trade paper will be to himself and the centre it represents as a whole. Jobbers can help to make their trade paper attractive by furnishing reliable market reports and interesting news items. It may be a little bother to you at times, when

busy, to revise a market list, but remember it is in your interest, and in the interest of the jobbing trade of the city, that these reports are prepared. Some jobbers appear to be afraid to quote prices, under the belief perhaps, that what they say may be reported to a competitor in the same line of trade. Such persons do not know the first principle of newspaper ethics, which effectually forbid the disclosing of any information in a private way. Anything reported to The Commercial will certainly not be repeated privately, or the source of such information made known. The market reports of a trade paper are one of its most valuable features. Those who refuse to give information or give misleading reports, not only injure the paper but also the community which the paper represents.

We would like the patrons of The Commercial to take the view that the paper is published in their interest, and that they are helping to advance the interests of this business community by assisting the publisher to turn out a creditable paper. They can give this assistance by keeping their advertising space attractive and by furnishing reliable market reports, and interesting news items. If you see a wrong quotation in the paper, let us know about it. If you have any news items which will be of interest to the trade, send it in, or telephone and we will call and get particulars. If there is any subject which you think should be dealt with editorially by this paper, do not be afraid to let us know about it. We are here to consider anything in the business interest of the community, and any pointers given with this object in view will be acceptable.

SETTLING OUR VACANT LANDS.

Encouraging progress is being made by the committee who are working in the interest of the settlement of the vacant lands in the organized municipalities in Manitoba. Several of the municipalities have replied favorably to the circulars sent out by the committee. It is now believed that sufficient land will be placed at the disposal of the committee on a basis which will warrant further action in the direction of forming a permanent organization to undertake the work of securing settlers for these vacant lands. Numbers of applications have been received from prospective settlers, but as yet the committee has not been able to undertake any practical work of locating settlers. Nothing can be done in locating settlers until a permanent organization has been formed, the work so far being only preliminary. The plan of carrying on the work could not be decided on until full information could be obtained regarding the basis on which land could be secured for settlers. As replies are now coming in from the municipalities which hold vacant land, the committee will in a few days be able to decide on plans for the future.

The E. B. Eddy Co. of Hull, is going into the paper bag business, and is putting in an extensive plant for that purpose. Eddy's bags will no doubt soon be found in every part of Canada. Kilgour Bros. Toronto, and the Lincoln Paper Co. of Merrittown have heretofore been the principal manufacturer.