

THERE is a gratifying revival of the lumber industry on the Columbia, brought about chiefly by the action of the Union Pacific. Believing the celebrated Douglass fir of this region better adapted to railroad use for ties and bridge timbers than the Eastern pine, that road has just made contracts with several of our largest mills for a constant supply. The estimated amount required for next year is 50,000,000 feet. The prestige which Oregon lumber will receive from its adoption by that company will naturally result in creating a more general demand in that portion of the country opened to it by railroads centering here. Already this is shown by efforts of Denver parties to secure rates that will permit it to enter that market and compete with Eastern lumber on favorable terms. The Union Pacific is desirous of carrying Oregon lumber to the Salt Lake and Ogden markets in competition with California pine from Truckee brought over the Central Pacific, but there is difficulty in accomplishing this owing to the fact that the rate must be a combination one with the O. R. & N. Co., and that if the lumber goes from Pocatello to Ogden it must be reloaded upon narrow gauge cars, while if sent through without reloading it must be hauled clear to Granger, Wyo., and thence back to Ogden. Either method makes it more expensive than the haul from Truckee. It is to be hoped the difficulties will be overcome. The present benefit of the market opened by the Union Pacific goes to our larger mills, but even if they do not engage in this new business the smaller ones will soon profit by the relief from overproduction our home markets will soon experience.

WHY is it that efforts to manufacture sundry articles in the Northwest have so often proved fruitless, while similar goods imported from the East, of no better quality and no cheaper in price, meet with such ready sale? Several causes no doubt contribute to this result, but the most potent one is unquestionably a mistaken economy in the use of printer's ink. Certain goods are handled here in competition with the production of our own manufactures which cost the dealers more to place in their stores than the rival home products, and yet, because those articles have a reputation, they are able to sell them in competition with the others. No matter what intrinsic value an article may possess, if it have no reputation among consumers its sale will be slow and limited, and this reputation can only be gained by long, continuous, liberal and judicious advertising. It is worse than foolish to expect goods to force themselves forward by merit only. While one manufacturer struggles along on that principle, another with an inferior article well advertised captures the field. It is equally foolish to expect consumers to purchase goods simply because they are a home product, or to ask dealers to cease handling articles for which there is a brisk demand and substitute others with which their customers are unacquainted. Every man who undertakes to do business should have a better knowledge of human nature and the laws of trade than to expect anything of the kind. Our home products

must be advertised with all the freedom, and pushed upon the market with all the vigor, that experience shows were necessary to give to better known articles that widespread reputation among consumers which forces our dealers to handle them in preference to any other. This means printer's ink and plenty of it.

It is to be regretted that so few of our business men realize the great benefit Portland annually derives from the Mechanics' Fair, otherwise there would be more interest displayed, and a greater effort made to render it still more attractive and increase its capacity for good. Interviews with a number of retail dealers reveal the fact that during the exhibition just closed business increased from 300 to 500 per cent., and most of them report double the sales of the same period last year. There is no question but that the Fair stimulates trade in a wonderful degree and brings thousands of dollars into the city. This season the receipts of the association were larger than last year, and while this is no doubt largely due to the splendid weather which prevailed, greater effort on the part of the managers to make it a success and increased interest on the part of the people generally were important factors in achieving the result. The Fair is worthy the utmost encouragement of our business men and manufacturers, who could better afford to make annually a large cash donation than see its usefulness wane. They should also encourage the managers by frequent attendance. Such a display of interest and good will would be far more valuable as a support to the institution than the price they might pay for admittance, though the latter would perform an important mission. One who is so situated as to gaze into the faces of visitors night after night cannot but be impressed with the fact that our leading business men rarely honor the Pavilion with their presence. It certainly is shortsighted, and seems ungrateful, for them to thus neglect an institution from which they are receiving so great a benefit, and it can only be explained by assuming that they do not realize what the Fair is doing for them. If they gave it their hearty support and sought to make it representative of the whole State, as well as of Portland, the present large benefits might be increased a hundredfold. What ought to be done is to give the Fair a more public character and eliminate the feature of private gain which now contracts its sphere of usefulness. It should be converted into a mechanics' institute, managed by trustees, and its earnings, instead of going into the pockets of private individuals in the form of dividends, should be devoted to the advancement of science and the mechanical arts by the purchase of a library, the support of lectures, and, if possible, the maintenance of a school of mechanics. A number of the largest stockholders are willing to donate their stock in trust for this purpose, and possibly all might be induced to do so if the subject were properly canvassed. In this manner the annual exhibitions might be rendered doubly attractive, and the increased receipts be applied to the furtherance of the objects of the institute.