

Oustysolsk, traverse Perm and skip over the Oural, about the 58° of north latitude. Great masses of linden are found in the governments of Viatka, Kostroma, Nyni-Novgorod, Kazan, Penza and Tamboro, and the north-west. Forests composed entirely of trees of this species are rarely found; it is usually mixed with oak, birch, poplar and other broad-leaved species, and different kinds of shrubs. The wood is not of any special value. It is used by carpenters, turners and sculptors, and in construction, where other woods cannot be obtained. Its principal value consists in its inner bark, which, taken from trees from five to ten years old, is used in making slippers and plaiting baskets. When twenty years old or more, the bark is macerated and divided into fine ribbon-like filaments which are made into mats and cords and cables up to a certain point, instead of hemp, and cheaper. The whole bark, when pressed, is used for sheathing wagons and sledges, making boxes and roofing houses.

The Poplar (*Populus tremula*) grows throughout the whole of Russia to the 63° of north latitude. It is not much esteemed, especially where better kinds of wood can be procured, but it propagates easily and grows quickly. It is considered incongruous when growing in woods composed of more valuable species, such as pine, birch, and oak, because it is prejudicial to their propagation. Its principal use is for firewood, but even for this it occupies the lowest rank, as well among conifers as the broad-leaved species. Poplar of the best quality, at least half a meter in diameter at the root, is used for making small toys and knick-knacks and utensils turned in the lathe, painted and varnished like Chinese wooden-ware. In the sparsely wooded districts of the South, poplar is used in construction, and if very dry before it is worked, it yields but little in solidity to spruce and even to pine. In our own time poplar has acquired much importance as a material for the manufacture of paper pulp, being considered most suitable for this purpose on account of the flexibility, lightness, and whiteness of its wood. Poplar bark is used occasionally for the fabrication of tar, and is, frequently, for this purpose, mixed with birch bark; but if the product obtained from this mixture is cheaper, it is also of inferior quality. Sabots, or wooden shoes, are made from poplar in the north-west of Russia, perhaps not so solid as those made in France from beech, but much lighter, and, consequently, more comfortable; it is also used to make shingles for the roofs of houses, of one foot in length and four inches wide. Poplar for firewood is exploited by cuttings of 30 and not more than 60 years old. Poplar wood for working should have attained the age of 90 or even 100 years. Felling should not go beyond this age, because at 90 years the heartwood is frequently rotten.

The oak (*Quercus pedunculata*) is found over the whole of Russia, excepting the northern districts. The northern limits commence in the government of Livonia, about the 58° of north latitude, thence a little to the south, traversing Novogorod, and passing Tver, they run towards the east, pass round the government of Moscow, cut those of Jaroslaw, Kostroma, Viatka and Oufa, and heading towards the frontier of Russia in Asia, cross it near the 53° of latitude. The largest oak forests are found in the governments of Kazan, Simbirsk, Nijni-Novgorod, Minsk, Mohilew, Volhynia and other western localities, and also in the Baltic provinces. In certain localities close massive woods are found composed entirely of this species of tree, but it is also found mixed with other varieties of broad leaved trees, and sometimes with pine. This oak attains enormous dimensions; its trunks are straight and its wood distinguished by its excellent quality, and the most precious of all the trees in Russia. The price has increased considerably, since oak forests belonging to individuals in the western governments have been greatly exhausted by excessive cutting. Besides the considerable use that is made of this wood in the interior of the country, there is a large foreign trade particularly with England by the Baltic ports, and with France by the Black Sea. In the docks of London and the market places of Marseille one may see oak coming from the western parts of Russia every year. These giants sometimes re-visit their country again, not in their rough state, but in the shape of vessels' keels, cable bitts, quarter decks, prows, ribs, side-planks, and other parts of ships. Oak wood is also exported in the form of wainscot-logs, used in England for carpentry, and staves for cooperage. In the interior it is also used in ship-building, carriage making, and the manufacture of many small articles. In the south, being cheaper, it is used for

railway sleepers. Bark from young trees is used in the tanneries, where it is preferred to willow bark and all other kinds, as it contains 16° of tanning material, whilst willow contains scarcely 7°, and spruce still less.

Many other woods are found in Russia besides those already mentioned, as the beech, for example, forming entire groves, but only in the more southerly countries of Podolia, Bessarabia, and the Crimea; the horn-beam, in the south-west, and some parts of the north-west; many species of willow are found everywhere; in the southerly governments of Kherson, Ekaterinoslaw, and Bessarabia they form entire forests along the inundated banks of rivers, as the Danube and the Dniester. Ash, maple, elm, cedar, white and black alder, poplar, walnut, and many varieties of shrubs are used for many purposes in those districts where other woods do not abound. Winter oak (*Quercus Robur*) is found to the west on an irregular line traced between Kovno, through Mohilew and Kien to Kischinew; and the *Quercus pubescens* in the Crimea and the mountains of the Caucasus. The limit of the horn-beam (*Carpinus Betulus*) to the north-east runs from Riga to Vitebsk, and thence, almost in a straight line, to the mouth of the Don. The beech (*Fagus Sylvatica*) extends along the frontiers of Austrian Galicia, and a straight line by the side of Moldavia; in the Crimea and the Caucasian mountains it forms very thick and magnificent forests.

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### Parisian Affairs.

IT is claimed that the secret of Free Masonry is well kept, because no secret exists. The proceedings of the interviews between the Kaiser and his allies have not been divulged for somewhat the same reason. The guesses all along the line trend to see in the meetings only *pose* for regilding the gingerbread of the Triple Alliance, slightly worn off owing to the rough handling of Italy by Menelek. The Triple, like the Dual Alliance, has no intention to break the world's peace. Even England has been declared to be "an out and out to be let alone," since she is quite resolved to secure that herself. "Are her hands free?" inquire the quidnuncs. "Has Germany's dream of possessing Cape Colony and its *et ceteras*; to swallow up Boers, Dutch, and English in detail, or, at one swoop, become an empty dream, or part of her concrete hinterland?" President Kruger's visit to England—that will not jeopardize the existence of the British Empire, is as unfixed in date as that of the evacuation of the Nile valley by the teacher of nations how to live.

The French hope against hope that the British will in time see the errors of their way and quit Egypt, despite the fresh work cut out for them at Dongola and Suakim—and that may occupy them till the arrival of the millenium. The pursuit of knowledge under difficulties is only a flea bite compared with laying down rails in the teeth of such iconoclasts as Osman Digna and his light-brigades. But time works wonders when in company with patience and perseverance. The financial combination to purchase all Egyptian bonds at par, offered by those holders who have no faith in the prosperous administration of the country, is sound. The English employing a few millions to win back the Soudan and thus uphold the sanctity of the integrity of the Ottoman empire by their new scheme, leaves no protecting to be done by the French syndicate, while it can well result in Britain's taking over the whole Egyptian debt and paying the interest on the bonds, or, if preferred, buying in the scrip. That is just the project that would have caught on with Lord Beaconsfield.

Never did Paris witness so many removals on quarter day as those which have just taken place. After allowing for the ugly rush to the suburbs for the summer, the changes were largely to seek cheaper apartments; those on the fifth story are so run on that they are positively unobtainable. Landlords cannot obtain tenants for the other stories; high rents forbid; they can hold out for a long time, as, if unoccupied, the rooms pay no taxes. The recast income tax bill aims to suppress that exemption. Quarter day is harvest time for thieves; the house porter, who collects the rents, is shadowed, and if the attempt be feasible it will be made by robbers. Oftentimes the porter is mysteriously behind in the cash balance. Thus a woman