

IGNORANCE WANTED.

Under this curious heading the *Northwestern Lumberman* in a late issue prints a thoroughly practical and sensible editorial. From it we clip the following paragraphs:—

There is considerable questioning among the wholesale dealers of this city, (Chicago), and probably elsewhere, as to the usefulness of lumbermen's exchanges, the gathering and publication of statistics, and the information that is conveyed in lumber journals. There are those who, on the spur of the moment, would be inclined to annihilate the whole outfit of informative means, at one blow. They claim to think that the reason why wholesaling lumber of late years has become less profitable than it was a few years since is because of the publication of statistics, and the circulation of exact and comprehensive data about the manufacture and trade in lumber. How such information cuts down margins and destroys profit the reactionary individual who croaks at knowledge do not attempt to explain. This is doubtless because the reason, if any at all, must appear to their own discredit, since full and accurate data regarding logging, manufacture, visible supply, state of demand, prices, transportation, new fields of operation, etc., can do no hurt to anybody, save in one way; it may prevent an individual or a class from getting the advantage of some other individual or class. It must be confessed that the tendency of the times is to narrow down profitable margins in all kinds of business. But the recalcitrant individuals in the lumber trade make a mistake when they think, or pretend to think, that a thorough knowledge of the business at large is the cause of the loss of profits. The general survey of the situation now obtainable through exchanges and trade journals prevents a blind following of surface, or only apparent indications, that would surely lead the trade into many an irretrievable disaster from which it is now able to escape. In fact if the trade would more closely follow the light as it is reflected by the exchanges and the trade journals it would often be saved from losses it now experiences.

When the reactionary lumberman attributes a loss of profits to the general spread of information by means of exchanges and trade journals, he is getting the vehicle in front of the team, so to speak. The causes of an overloaded market, and a consequent decline in values, would have existed the same without the means of circulating data. The evil results of overproduction and overtrading would, in the absence of widespread knowledge, be much worse than now.

Let us suppose that there were no lumbermen's exchanges, and no lumber journals, and the manufacturers and dealers in lumber were obliged to rely on the daily press for their information. Every intelligent lumberman knows that what lumber news there would be sifted through the news columns of the daily press would either be wide of the truth through lacking of means for acquiring accurate information, or else it would be garbled for private advantage. It would be utterly without benefit, and often would be a cause of damage by conveying a false impression.

An extensive circulation of trade knowledge no doubt prevents a monopoly of advantages by a single class. All are reduced to a legitimate basis. The retailer becomes as well informed as to the sources of supply and the ways of reaching them, the cost of freights, prices, etc., as the wholesale merchant himself. On the other hand the general trade is kept fully posted on the amount of log crop, and the outlook for supplies, the development of producing districts, and the new directions of trade. The manufacturer also has the benefit of obtaining a comprehensive view of the whole situation.

The publication of facts concerning the lumber business may prevent the hoodwinking of any section of it, and thereby deprive some men of the advantages they had contrived for their own benefit; but at the same time all are guarded against surprises and sudden disaster. It would seem to a close observer that the latter benefit were immeasurably greater than the former.

The man who grumbles at trade associations and the collection and dissemination of data

concerning his own business is behind the times. He acknowledges that he is not equal to the situation. He the same as avers that unless he can take advantage of his neighbors' ignorance he cannot make money. There is no use in arguing with such a man. The subject has been referred to in this article in order to straighten up the few really good men who, under the disappointment of the past unprofitable year, have unthinkingly snatched at a fallacious reason for their misfortunes. We are confident that if they take a second thought in the matter they will conclude that what they need is more, instead of less, light in the lumber business.

SAWDUST.

One of the greatest eye-sores to a mill man of anything in connection with his business is the huge pile of sawdust usually obtaining vast proportions in the neighborhood of his mill. Inventions for the utilization of this large output of waste material have become quite numerous of late. Alcohol, gas, and other commodities have been evolved therefrom. Sawdust conveyors have been patented to take this waste and dump it into the fire-box for fuel, which is one of the best methods yet discovered for disposing of it, as it is a valuable labor saver; but while the sawdust is thus consumed the slabs and edgings formerly used for fuel accumulate about as fast as did the former before being utilized as above. A prominent Ludington man says they have introduced gangs in order to save a good percentage of this waste, and thereby increase their output of lumber from the same quantity of logs by the great reduction of the saw kerf. This may do in large establishments, but we apprehend it will be after the present generation of mill men shall have passed off the stage of action, and pine timber has become much scarcer than at present, before the circular saw will lose caste, as it is almost an absolute necessity in any well regulated saw mill of either large or small proportions, and stands without a rival in the mills of the smaller class. The introduction of lath machines and other manufacturing devices with a view of utilizing the slabs, edgings, and other waste product of a mill, in connection with a sawdust carrier to the furnace, is the best plan yet devised for disposing of what is useless material under other conditions.

JAPANESE HOUSES.

The Japanese houses are generally one-storied, but roomy, and of exceedingly neat appearance in and outside. They much resemble Swiss chalets, with the roof protruding over a basement veranda, from six to eight feet wide. The wooden framework of the main walls is filled with bamboo lath, covered with clay, and heavy rafters are put on it for the roof, to give the whole structure the necessary stability. No permanent partitions are found in the interior, and light wooden panels, moving on grooves in porcelain castors, divide the different compartments. They can be removed and transposed at will to form new partitions. Transparent paper serves for the window frames, and the same material, made of the bark of mulberry tree and painted over in colors with elaborate patterns, is used for curtains, portieres, and many other items of ornaments. The floors are covered with mats made of rushes, which all over Japan have the same dimensions—six feet long, three feet wide and two inches thick. The size of these mats or kins, as they are called, regulates all the measurements of a house; and if the Japanese wants to have one built, he only states to the architect the number of kins it has to contain. These mats are always kept scrupulously clean, and never allowed to be trodden upon by the sandals of the natives or the boots of foreigners, but only with stockings or bare feet. Chairs, tables, and bedsteads being almost unknown, the Japanese sit and sleep on this matting, and, except some ornamental cabinets and screens, hardly any other furniture incumbers the room. The reception and business apartments open toward the street, and the back of the house contains the living and sleeping rooms, as well as the kitchen, which are all more or less open to the view of the passersby. All the household utensils are made of lacquered papier

mache or bronze in curious shapes, elaborately ornamented, and with a view to stow them away after use in the smallest possible space, economy of space being a cardinal virtue in the construction and management of Japanese houses.

In winter the rooms are warmed by coal pans—a very insufficient method in a climate like that of Japan, but counteracted by the number of quilted gowns both sexes wear one over the other in cold weather.—*The Builder*.

THE SEQUOIA.

In Miss Gordon-Cumming's book, *Granite Crags*, we get some further information as to the mighty trees to be found in the Yosemite Valley, California. Speaking of the Sequoias, which are called in this country Wellingtonias, Miss Gordon-Cumming says nothing admirable about them but their bigness. They reminded her, when looking at them of the old Dutch toy trees in a Noah's ark, with a small tuft of foliage on the top of a large red stem. She prefers for beauty the Indian *Lawsonia*, perhaps also the *Kauri* pine of New Zealand, the *bunya bunya* of North Australia, and the *Norfolk Island* pine, all of which surpass the giant trees of the Yosemite Valley in elegance and beauty of form.

It is even doubtful if the Sequoia is entitled to be considered the loftiest of trees. The *Eucalyptus amygdalina*, which has been asserted to attain the height of 450 feet in the Victoria Ranges, is about 100 feet higher than any Sequoia of which we have heard mention. In girth, however the California trees stand pre-eminent, if Miss Gordon-Cumming's account be correct, for she tells us that a specimen has been discovered in Visalia county which measures 132 feet in circumference.

The age of some of these trees is computed at more than 2,600 years, so that accepting that date as an approximation to accuracy, they must have been growing when Constantinople (then called Byzantium) was founded by the Greeks, and when the prophet Jeremiah was in existence. It is feared, however, that these vestiges of creation must soon disappear like the *Red Indians*, before the encroachments of civilization, and (as far as trees are concerned) the pitiless lumberman.

"Wield the axe on every side,
Pity not the Forest's pride."

It is said that a law was passed by the California Government to prohibit the cutting down of trees over 16 feet in diameter, but this is rendered nugatory by burning them down, and destroying those of smaller dimensions, against which there is no penalty.

We learn from the same authority that wheat farms in California are 60,000 acres in extent (over 33 square miles.) This beats the trees, if it is to be understood that the cultivation of such a territory is under one farmer. They have potatoes of 15 lbs. weight, and cabbages 6 ft. high.

It seems almost to bring Gulliver's Travels within the bounds of probability, though of the immensity of some of the Sequoia tribe of trees there is no longer any question.—*Timber Trades Journal*.

Exhibit of Building Materials.

The "Permanent Exhibit and Exchange of Building Materials and Improvements," Chicago, is now receiving exhibits, and will soon be in shape for visitors. It is located on the third floor of the building at the northeast corner of Wabash avenue and Washington street, occupying a space 90x150 feet, less only the space necessary for stairways add light shaft, and to this may be added the floor above, if necessary. This large floor is fitted with platforms which will be rented to parties desirous of making a permanent exhibit of their goods in such a central and favorable place. The receipts from rentals will furnish the financial support for the enterprise, as no admission fee will be charged. Thus far the space has been held for the acceptance of Chicago Arms, but, after this time, space not taken up by home parties will be let to eastern exhibitors, many of whom expressed a wish to take advantage of this opportunity to show their goods in the west. The range of displays will cover everything that goes into the construction and fitting up of buildings of the better class. Stone, brick, terra-cotta, woods,

roofing materials, builders' hardware, plumbers' and gas fitters' goods, etc., will be represented. With the prospect that the new Builders' Exchange will have its rooms in the same building, and their space all applied for, the managers of the exhibit think that their enterprise will not only be successful pecuniarily but that its influence will be great.

An American View of the Hudson Bay Route.

The *Northwestern Lumberman* says:—The project for a northwestern outlet to Europe by way of Hudson's bay, British America, is making headway in the minds of the people of the Canadian North-West. Even the farmers of Dakota are awakening to the importance of the scheme. Surveys of a railway from Winnipeg to Hudson's bay have been made. The only question of feasibility now is as to the length of the navigation season on the great northern sea. Tests of this will be made the coming summer. The entire project is yet a problem, and may utterly fail on account of the difficulties of northern navigation. At the most the Hudson's bay route would become only a competing one to Europe for the surplus grains of the Northwest. It must not be forgotten that the old routes are yet sufficient to glut the grain markets of Europe, and that a new northern route over a single railroad cannot cut much of a figure in the general American grain traffic. It should not be overlooked, also, that the future grain product of this continent will mostly be wanted at home, to feed our rapidly growing population. A Hudson's bay outlet to Europe would be a benefit to the far northwestern farmer, while it would to no appreciable extent change the old lines of traffic.

Forest Preservation.

Appropos of the important question of the preservation of our forests, Canadians and Americans might profit by the experience of continental forestry schools and from the experiments carried out on the tree farms of Central Italy.* Whole districts which had been stripped of timber on the *Alps* have been re-forested, and in the *Ardenne* woods are systems of forest-farming which not only preserve the trees, but make an excellent investment on the operation. A Belgian writer residing near Ardenne says that the proprietors found that the land cultivated in trees and cut once in a hundred years—that is, the trees being selected according to their condition, and cut at the rate of 1 per cent. per annum—paid just as well as raising wheat on the same extent of land. What is wanted, then, in our forest management is the application of a vigorous system of intelligent official superintendence to the cutting of the trees, none but those marked for cutting to be allowed to be cut. This would pay even now as the management, and in the course of the not long time which will see all our unregulated forests exhausted, the forests so controlled and policed would furnish an excellent investment for the capital-employed in keeping them from present destruction.

Advice to Mothers.

Are you disturbed at night and broken of your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with pain and cutting teeth? If so, send at once and get a bottle of Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children teething. Its value is incalculable. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately. Depend upon it, mothers, there is no mistake about it. It cures dysentery and diarrhoea, regulates the stomach and bowels, cures wind colic, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, and gives tone and energy to the whole system. Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children teething is pleasant to the taste, and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best female physicians and nurses in the United States, and is for sale by all druggists throughout the world. Price 25 cents a bottle.

On Thirty Days Trial.

The Voltaic Belt Co., Marshall, Mich., will send Dr. Dye's Celebrated Electro-Voltaic Belts and Electric Appliances on trial for thirty days to men (young or old) who are afflicted with nervous debility, lost vitality and kindred troubles, guaranteeing speedy and complete restoration of health and manly vigor. Address as above.—N. B.—No risk is incurred, as thirty days' trial is allowed.