

## REDWOOD IN CALIFORNIA.

A correspondent of a Chicago paper in describing the California redwood timber standing on the western slope of the coast range, and some of which grow to enormous proportions, says:—

A careful estimate of standing redwood places the amount at about 20,000,000,000 feet, certainly not a large supply when it is considered that the present yearly consumption is not far from 200,000,000 feet, and the demand each year is increasing.

The size of the redwood tree varies greatly with the locality. In the southern portion of the timber belt, where the rains and logs are lighter, the timber will not average more than two or three feet in diameter, and the lumber manufactured is generally hard and stinky, but further north the trees increase in size. The character of the wood changes, until in Humboldt county is found probably the finest belt of timber in the world; trees 12 to 18 feet in diameter, and from 150 to 250 feet high being no rare occurrence. In this section there are large tracts that have been estimated to have 250,000 feet to the acre, and single acres could be selected that would double or treble that amount, and the lumber is of the finest and softest quality, equal to the best eastern white pine. I speak of these large trees, but would not give the idea that that is the prevailing size. While such trees are not rare, the average size of saw logs is from six to eight feet in diameter, and most of the mills on Humboldt Bay are being built with reference to handling logs of that size. Throughout the redwood belt there is little other timber. Some pine, fir and spruce is cut, but no great amount of either.

As but few of your readers are familiar with redwood lumber it may not be out of place to give here some of its characteristics and qualities that make it one of the most valuable of the forest productions. As the name indicates, it is of a dark reddish color. It is soft, coarse grained, and very brittle. The grain usually runs very straight, and it splits readily, it being no difficult matter to split out a board one inch thick, 8 to 10 inches wide, and ten to fifteen feet long. When dry it is much lighter than pine, spruce or fir, but of the logs cut from a newly fallen tree, the butt log thrown into water will often go to the bottom like a stone, while the top logs will float like cork. It is of slow growth. Of the timber now being cut, the circles indicate that many of the trees have been standing thousands of years. The bark of the tree is very thick, soft and fibrous in character, and contains no resin of pitch, hence fires that frequently run through the underbrush of redwood forests have no effect on the standing timber.

Perhaps I can better illustrate some of the peculiar qualities of redwood by mentioning some of the uses for which it is peculiarly adapted. Its durability above and under ground causes it to be well adapted for railroad ties and posts. These were formerly split, and that readily, to any dimensions required, but on account of the waste of timber, sawed ties are now coming more into use. Shingles and shakes for roof covering are all made from redwood. When a man has covered his house with redwood shingles he considers that matter settled for life. For railroad ties and fence posts there was consumed in the year 1881 not far from 60,000,000 feet and for shingles and shakes about 13,000,000 feet, board measure.

For tannery tanks it is peculiarly adapted, as the wood resists the action of the tanning solution. A tannery in this city has been using the same tanks for 10 years, and they are apparently as good as ever they were. Our wine merchants now use redwood vats entirely, because a certain insect found in the new juice of the grape, which destroys the pine vats by boring through them, dislikes the taste of redwood, and lets it alone. As redwood much resembles Spanish cedar in color, and imparts no odor to effect the taste of tobacco, it is now being shipped quite extensively to New York to be used in the manufacture of cigar boxes.

But the principal use to which redwood lumber is put on this coast is the outside and inside finish of houses, as from 40 to 50 per cent of the lumber sawed is perfectly clear, without knot or

blemish, and much of this can be cut into planks six inches and under thick, and from 24 to 60 inches wide. It is well adapted for brackets, ornaments and mouldings of all kinds. While much of the grain runs straight, curly redwood can be selected, which when polished and varnished, rivals rosewood in its beauty.

To the extensive use of redwood in our buildings is due, in a large measure, our immunity from large fires in San Francisco and neighboring cities. There being little or no resin in the wood, a fire is easily put out, and when once extinguished it is with difficulty ignited again.

## SASH, DOORS AND BLINDS.

The Chicago *Northwestern Lumberman* says. A little more weakness characterizes the sash, door and blind market, and a decrease is manifest in the volume of trade. This condition of affairs is mainly due to the same agencies which have tended to stagnate general commerce—uncertainty about crops, strikes all over the country, the high price of provisions and commodities, and other potent causes being at the bottom of dull trade everywhere; while the strike among brickmakers has directly affected the building industry, and curtailed the sales of sash, doors and blinds as well as lumber. Not only is there less building, and hence less demand in the city, but the building boom through the country has lost much of its vim, and in this business as in all others, the dealers are waiting for fair or abundant crops to restore the vigour of trade, and they are sure that a revival must result in proper season, which they deem will be a spirited one. These conditions of the market and a slight bear movement brought about something of a change in discounts to the benefit of the purchaser, as has been recorded, but everything in connection with the trade bespeaks a stability in prices from this on. There is a firmness in the upper grades of lumber which go into sash, doors and blinds, while dry lumber of the proper quality is scarce. A combination of the glass factory owners has agreed to go out of blast for 90 days, and the aggregate stocks on hand with the glass manufacturers is stated to be 250,000 boxes short of the supply last year. Scarcity and firmness in the prices of materials used brings expense to the manufacturer, and naturally tends to stiffen values. Nothing but a weakness in demand could result in reducing prices, even slightly, under such circumstances, and it would not require a very great revival in business to give them an upward impetus.

## Lumber Libel.

At Milwaukee, Wis., on June 13, Oliver Oberg et al, owner of the schooner Burt Barnes, filed a libel against a cargo of lumber and wood delivered the latter part of May on the docks of the Northwestern Sleigh Company, at Milwaukee. It is claimed by the owners of the Barnes that a charter was secured by the Barnes from the owners of the sleigh company to carry a full cargo of hardwood lumber from Pine Lake to Milwaukee at \$2.50 per thousand. On the arrival of the vessel at Pine Lake the cargo was not ready, and she loaded but 130,022 feet of it, and took on four and one-half cords of wood, both of which she delivered on the company's dock. A freight of \$325 on the lumber, and \$13.50 on the wood was demanded, but the company would only pay \$300. The amount of the libel is \$51, of which \$25 is for the lumber cargo, \$13.50 for the wood, and \$12.50 for demurrage. —*Northwestern Lumberman*.

## To Prevent Wood Cracking.

The Boston *Journal of Commerce* says a process to prevent wood from cracking is to place the wood in a bath of fused paraffin heated to 212° Fah., and allow it to remain as long as bubbles of air are given off. Then allow the paraffin to cool down to its point of congelation, remove the wood, and wipe off the adhering wax. Wood treated in this way is not likely to crack.

Box making is one of the leading industries of East Boston, where a larger number are daily produced than at any other place in the state. The four manufacturers in this line cut up 100,000 feet of lumber each day into all kinds of box material, using pine and spruce almost entirely.

## THE CORK OAK.

In the "cork tree," that species of oak whose elastic bark is of so much practical value in the manufacture of the familiar stoppers to the millions of bottles and jars in which it is becoming more and more the custom to preserve all kinds of eatables and drinkables, many of our colonies might find a profitable object of agriculture. The cork harvest in Spain, which, with France, Portugal and Italy, is the principal source from whence we derive our supplies, is becoming every year more scanty, owing to the greed of growers, who have injured the stock of trees by stripping them of their bark too frequently. The tree which produces the most valuable cork does not come to maturity for a quarter of a century, and can only be harvested to advantage every eight or ten years, but the temptation to make rapid profits has been too great to withstand, and the result has been the injury and ruin of many plantations. Some of the quick-growing varieties produce an inferior, porous kind of corks, but the best are the slowest of growth. England alone imports some 10,000 tons of cork per annum, and the quantity is yearly increasing, notwithstanding the introduction of many substitutes for cork, such as plugs of wood, whose fibres have been specially softened for the purpose, indiarubber and other contrivances. The French Government, seeing the desirability of securing as large a share of this trade as possible, have for several years past given special encouragement to the formation of plantations of the cork-oak in Algeria, and the same thing will, no doubt, be done in Tunis; but the tree will grow equally well in India, Central America, the West Indies, many parts of Africa and Australia and in the South Sea Islands, the planters in our possessions there might lay the foundation of a profitable industry by introducing some of these trees and starting their systematic cultivation. The tree besides being a most valuable one and easily cultivated, is of magnificent growth, and would form an ornament in any landscape.—*Colonies and India*.

## FOREST FIRES.

The *Northwestern Lumberman*, of June 17th, says:—"Wisconsin has been visited, during the past few days, with forest fires which have destroyed large tracts of timber, and caused a large amount of damage and loss. One of the fires has swept the southwest part of Clark county, and another ravaged property through the central section of Marinette county. Reports of the ruin wrought have been coming in for several days, and in the early stages of the calamity it was feared that many towns would be encompassed by the flames. The efforts of hundreds of men in Clark county in fighting the fire were of little avail, and it swept onward, destroying millions of feet of timber. In that county, Renwick, Shaw & Crossett, of Davenport, Iowa; Cable, Gile & Holway, of La Crosse, Coburn of Maine, and Washburn, of Easta, are among the many losers on standing pine. A despatch from Neillsville, June, 12, announced spread of the fire, and the burning of the entire logging camp of F. D. Lindsay, of that place, the timber and logs being destroyed, and at that time the village of Howettsville, with Howett's mill and yards, were threatened with destruction. The loss on camp and log fixtures at Lindsay's was \$1,000; but the full loss is not stated. One man barely escaped with his life by mounting a draught-horse and fleeing before the flames. The fire sped rapidly onward, bidding fair to sweep everything clear to the Eau Claire river. Paulus' camp was only saved by heroic efforts, though one man was severely burned, as well as several head of cattle. The last reports from this section was decidedly cheering, a heavy rain having extinguished the fires in the main, and averted further danger. The number of million feet of pine burned cannot yet be ascertained. The Marinette county fires, about the Pike river region, have done much damage, and at last advices were still raging, only partial estimates of the loss being possible. It has been ascertained that at least 30,000,000 feet of standing pine has been ruined, and when the whole loss is known it must reach into the hundreds of thousands. The fire reaches into the peninsula of Michigan. A late despatch also modifies the statements of damage

in Clark county, stating that it was much lighter than the frenzied fears of the people had made it appear. The most of the fire is located about Wedges creek, and a portion of the east fork, and largely in a section previously cut over. Lindsay's was the only camp burned.

## HOUSES BUILT FOR ALL TIME.

The houses that are built now in Paris are not such as the coming generation will find "stuffy," "too small," "old-fashioned" and so on, criticisms which with us are commonly passed on the creation of the last twenty-five years; they are houses intended to last practically for all time. Built of solid stone and iron throughout, with foundations that resemble Roman work, on the traditions of which, by the way, they are built by the sturdy Southern workmen. Commercially, also, these investments prove successful, and household property, so far from being a drag in the market, is at a premium. By the judicious division into "flats," not only is every inch of space utilized—the amount of rent for an occupied room in England it would be curious to calculate—but all pockets are accommodated, from the prince who occupies the first floor above the thrifty concierge on the *rez-de-chaussée*—whose charge it is to open the door at night and keep, not only his or her own neat *logs* bright and clean, but the *porte-cochère* and the yard, with its pretty green plants and bright brass water-cock—through the intermediate *etages* to the fifth or *cinquième*, with its healthy balcony, where the large family of the modest lodger can enjoy the air and view as a compensation for the sensible distance from earth. But all own in common, from the prince to the fifth floor employee, bank clerk or civil servant, the *porte-cochère*, through which rolls from the compact stables and coach house in the yard at the back the carriages of the "first floor"—and for all alike the entrances are kept clean, the lamps bright, the oak stair case well waxed; each in his respective and well-proportioned degree making up the very comfortable rental which *Monsieur le propriétaire*, though his agent, the *concierge*, receive quarterly from his tenants.—*London Builder*.

A COTTONWOOD logging camp is running across the river at Carson's, near Tacoma, W. T., and the logs are floated from there to Seattle. One boom of logs has already been taken down. By the new process the logs are cut the right length for barrels, dried, shaved into sheets, and the barrel, except heads, are of one piece. This process has been successfully adopted for some time with elm and other tough wood; but it is yet a question whether cottonwood and timber of like nature can be worked to advantage on this plan.

The firm of Davison & Co., of Bear Lake, who have been for some time past building a circular saw mill for the manufacture of hardwood lumber, have so far completed the same that they are about ready to commence operation. The mill cost about \$7,000, will have a capacity of 30,000 feet per day, and receives its supply of logs over the Bear Lake & Eastern railway, which was recently constructed by the Hopkins Manufacturing company. The supply of logs in the country around Bear Lake is very abundant, and the market for hardwood lumber is never fully supplied, and prices are constantly advancing. This is the second mill erected at Bear Lake for the manufacture of hardwood lumber, the profitability of the industry having previously been demonstrated by Charles Buntin, and the future outlook of the place is decidedly bright.

## \$200.00 Reward!

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