# THE RETAILER AND Wood-Worker

## METHODS OF FINISHING WOOD.

Wood finishing is the process of applying to the surface after it has been prepared, by filling and smoothing or otherwise a thin coating of varnish or other substance to render it durable, enhance its beauty or change its appearance. There are numerous methods of finishing, says a writer in one of our exchanges, and a variety of materials are used, the varieties of varnish being the principal. In their natural state all woods are more or less porous, consisting of bundles of hard fibres, with interstices filled with softer substance. These constitute the grain, and, as the hard or soft predominate, the wood is said to be hard, fine or close grained, or soft and open grained. To fill these softer parts or pores and give to the whole an even, uniform surface, hard and capable of a brilliant polish, is the object of the finisher's art. This hard, firm surface was formerly gained by the successive application of several coats of varnish, at least three preliminary coats being required to fill the pores; the inequalities were then reduced by fine sand or glass paper, and several additional coats laid on; the last, after becoming hard, being polished, if desired. In this operation, however, a great quantity of varnish is absorbed by the open pores of the wood, and it is consequently so expensive that it is now seldom used. Recourse is therefore had to various plans to render the wood non-absorbent before applying varnishes, and certain compounds called "fillers" are largely used for this purpose.

Richness of effect may be gained in decorative woodwork by using woods of different tone, such as amaranth and amboya, or inlaying and veneering. The Hungarian ash and French walnut afford excellent veneers, especially the burls or gnarls. In varnishing, the varnishes can be toned down to match the wood, or be made to darken it, by the addition of coloring matters. The patented preparations known as "wood fillers" are made in different colors for the purpose of preparing the surface of wood previous to the varnishing. They fill up the pores of the wood, rendering the surface hard and smooth. For polishing mahogany, walnut, etc., the following is recommended: Dissolve beeswax by heat in spirits of turpentine until the mixture becomes viscid; then apply by a clean cloth, and rub thoroughly with a flannel or cloth. A common mode of polishing mahogany is by rubbing it first with linseed oil and then by a cloth dipped in very fine brick dust; a good gloss may be produced by rubbing with linseed oil, and then holding trimmings or shavings of the same material against the work in the lathe. Glass paper, followed by rub soap, dyed oil, sulphate of iron, nitrate of silver exposed to the sun's rays, carbonate of soda, bichromate and permanganate of potash and other alkaline preparations, are used for darkening the wood; the last three are specially recommended. The solution is applied by dissolving one ounce of the alkali in one pint of boiling water, diluted to the required tone. The surface is saturated with a sponge or flannel, and immediately dried with soft rags. The carbonate is used for dark woods. Oil tinged with rose madder may be applied to hardwood like birch, and a red oil is prepared from soaked alkanet root in linseed oil. To give mahogany the appearance of age, lime water used before oiling is a good plan. In staining wood the best and most transparent effect is obtained by repeated light coats of the same. For oak stain a strong solution of oxalic acid is employed; for mahogany, dilute nitrous acid. A primary coat or a coat of wood filler is advantageous. For mahogany stains use two ounces of dragon's blood dissolved in one quart of rectified spirits of wine, well shaken, or raw sienna in beer, with burnt sienna to give the required tone; for darker stains, boil one-half pound of madder and two ounces of logwood chips in one gallon of water. A solution of permanganate of potash forms a rapid and excellent brown stain.

## GOOD MATERIALS FOR THE ROOF.

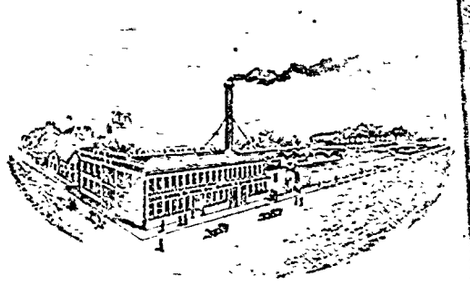
If you are ever called upon to advise a farmer about the shingles for his barn, writes C. H. Ketridge in the Mississippi Valley Lumberman, don't ever urge him to buy a cheap grade of them. These will do for the smaller and cheapest of buildings, but where a man is putting up a building that is worthy the name of a barn, a good roof is a most indispensable feature about it.

Another thing about the roof is the sheathing on which is nailed the shingles. I want you to remember this point particularly, for if you use it right it will often turn the scale in your favor in the selling of a bill. There is a prevalent idea among farmers, and lumbermen also, that anything in the form of a board will do to sheath a roof with. A more mistaken idea don't exist than this, and I'll tell you why. The roof of a building has to sustain the roughest usage from the weather of any part of it, consequently it ought to be of the best material and strongest construction. What is it that keeps shingles on a roof? Nails. What keeps nails in the boards? Friction. What lessens the friction about the nails? Shrinkage of the board. It follows then that the boards should be as dry as possible and a full inch in thickness. More would be better, but as we have to take it as the mills saw it for this western market, the ordinary undressed board has to serve. There is nothing better to nail shingles onto so they will stay on than a hemlock board, but not having that, good norway pine or even heart yellow pine is b for that purpose than the common No. 3 b with its doty streaks in it, for whenever a goes in one of these places it might as w out, as for all the good it is. . d if it i with a No. 3 board what kind of a roof h man got that has had a No. 4 board sold to for sheathing? And that is the grade th usually figured on for that purpose unless customer knows what he wants in this reg and insists on having it. But most of th don't know, e they can't see any difference the grades of boards when in the rough. The fore, I say to you who have never thought of that it will often prove to your advantage if y convince that man that you are giving him best board for his roof sheathing, for everyo can be easily shown why he should have a go roof.

## PLANING MILL OF J. R. EATON.

Mr. J. R. Eaton, of Orillia, is widely know throughout Western Ontario as a builder an contractor. Although born in Ireland, he cam to this country when a child, removing to th United States at the age of seventeen years an learning the building trade. A few years lat he returned to Canada, locating at Orillia, whe the foundation of his present business was com menced.

In connection with his contracting business



Mr. Eaton operates a large planing mill, which is shown herewith. The factory, which was first erected in 1887, now consists of a two-storey metallic-covered frame building, 60 x 115 ft., with brick engine room and dry kilns. It is fitted with the latest designs of wood-working machinery, and every facility to meet the demands of his extensive trade. The stock rooms are always well filled with finished work. Mr. Eaton has a very commodious and beautifully finished office.

A Canadian cabinetmaker spent a year's spare moments making a card table, which he sent to Queen Victoria as a diamond jubilee present. There are 10,050 pieces of various kinds of wood in the table, so arranged as to produce marvelously beautiful effects.

Having used a variety of packing for gauge glasses, I think if those who report trouble with their glasses breaking would try some of the kinds which have a rounded inside surface or some of the various moulded rings advertised, they would avoid that trouble in future always provided that the breakage was caused by the gasket, which is far from being always the case. Even if the fittings are a little out of alignment the rounded inside is preferable and may save a break, as the surface in contact is not subjected to so much of a bending strain.—Power.