

THE USES OF TIMBER.

We think it will interest, and perchance profit, some of our readers to take a brief glance at the innumerable purposes for which timber is used. Timber merchants themselves are frequently not aware of how various are the hands into which the goods that they dispose of ultimately find their way. It may surprise some to learn that there are over sixty different trades which are daily engaged in using wood of some kind or other, and there are in the United Kingdom no less than five hundred thousand persons who are directly interested in timber, either as users or as dealers. These facts must also possess intense interest for the advertiser, who is thus able to judge of the enormous field that exists for his operations.

At the Jerusalem Subscription Rooms the other day two gentlemen were discussing this subject of the manifold uses of timber, when one of them made the smart observation that "We were rocked in a timber cradle and we shall probably be buried in a timber coffin." The remark certainly, very pointedly, serves to indicate that timber is with us from the cradle to the grave.

Look where we may, we find timber, either in its natural condition—growing—or made up as some article of furniture, or used in building—ship or house—or in a thousand other shapes. "Timber! timber! everywhere, but not a bit to eat." Stay! Did not an enterprising American once manufacture a considerable quantity of wooden nutmegs, and who will say that some of these did not find their way into a few mysterious mixtures of the cook, which are served at our tables? There are greater shams about the world than wooden nutmegs, "the manufacturer of which," said a humorous frequenter of the Baltic salerooms, only a few days ago, "did something, at least, towards encouraging business in the timber trade." "And we want it," ironically responded a Timber King, with whom of late times have not been over bright.

Dull as trade may be at times, we still continue to buy and sell timber. We have not, as yet, discovered any better material than wood out of which to manufacture our chairs, tables, couches, and other articles of domestic furniture, most of our implements of recreation, and most of our children's toys. Wood remains a favorite and will always remain a favorite, notwithstanding the keen rivalry in various respects of other materials. This is not without good reasons. What, for instance, is so pleasant and comfortable as the oak-wainscoted room? What floor is so pleasant to the tread and eye as "Pavodilos?" What ceiling looks so well as the oak-panelled? We may even go much further than this in our praise of wood. The warm pair of shoes the writer of this article ever possessed were made of wood—shoes which he has highly tested by wearing them throughout a severe winter in Sweden.

As a paving material, wood, a number of years ago, shot up to the top of the class, and stays there, little affected by all other comers. If properly laid down it will last longer than any other paving, and moreover, it is easier to repair. Besides, on the score of approaching the noiseless, in connection with the running of traffic, it is unsurpassed.

There is a great deal of nonsense talked nowadays about fire-proof construction. We do not think that we could justly be accused of unfairness if, instead of writing "fire-proof construction," we wrote "so-called fire-proof construction," for we have yet to see the building which is really fire-proof. Iron and stone in combination have been used in so-called fire-proof stair cases, and with what result?—that immediately the iron becomes heated by the flames, in case of fire, it expands, forces the stone out of position and down comes the entire erection. So much for two of the principal rivals of timber. It is a common error to suppose that wood really bursts into flame on the slightest provocation by fire. We would strongly advise anyone who differs from us to put our statement to a test. Let him take a piece of solid oak and apply a light to it with a view of setting it on fire—a by no means easy task he will find. If he continues the experiment to iron and stone, he will further find that the same amount of heat which will only scorch

the solid oak, will expand the iron and crack the stone; therefore, for safety's sake, in case of fire, a solid oak staircase easily bears away the palm from the staircase of iron and stone, for down goes the latter without note or warning when heated, but the former by its crackling, in the event of fire, gives a fair warning of the approaching danger, and affords you ample time to make your escape.

We are pleased to observe the increasing use of timber in our suburban villa architecture of the day. Both for exterior and interior work it is more used now than it has been, perhaps, for the past thirty or forty years. The revival of the Queen Anne style has undoubtedly given an impetus to the use of wood in domestic architecture. What, we ask, can be made to look prettier than a timber porch to a villa? Wooden mullions to the windows, and weather-boards to the roofs, lend quite an air of comfort and picturesqueness to the house, which inside is, perchance, made to look cosy and warm by the use of wooden chimney pieces instead of cold by those of marble or stone.

One word more we would like to say to our numerous architectural readers regarding the use of timber. Always, if possible, avoid painting it. Wood is beautiful in its natural grain, and if simply stained or varnished, will, artistically, look much better than it would were it besmeared with color, whether of a pleasing hue or not. Paint is often used to hide inferior woodwork—the general excuse being that it is preservative—but good honest timber should never have its complexion changed by color which prevents our being able to see the beauty of the natural grain of the wood.—*Timber.*

TRADE MEETING IN OHIOAGO.

There was a large attendance at the trade meeting held on Monday forenoon May 11. Mr. James Charney presided. The discussion was voluminous and animated on the proposition to make a reduction in the figures on the printed list. Mr. S. K. Martin figured conspicuously in the argument for reduction, holding that prices should be cut down so as to conform more nearly to actual selling values.

Mr. O. A. Street backed up this view with instances showing that lumber had been sold at prices much below the list.

Mr. A. C. Soper thought that the proposed cut was far too sweeping and inconsiderate, and that no such low prices as the others contended for were being made in actual sales. But the predominance of opinion went with the policy of reduction, and the pruning knife was set to work.

Thick clears and selects were cut down from \$1 to \$4 on a thousand. One inch finishing did not suffer so much, \$1 being the extent of reduction on some grades, third clear and B select being left untouched, as was proper. Twelve inch stock boards were reduced \$1 a thousand on all but the A grade, though why does not appear clear. A clean sweep of 50 cents to \$1 a thousand off 12 inch common boards was made, though dealers have said all along that all 12 inch stock was scarce and firm. The reduction of the prices of box boards appeared unreasonable, when we take into account the constant statement, for three months past, that box boards were in short supply, and firm at list prices, in most instances. After what had already been done it was not surprising that dressed and matched flooring felt the effect of the carving knife to the extent of 50 cents to \$1 a thousand, and that rough inch flooring strips were disposed of in like fashion. Beaded ceiling was not cut quite so much. Common and cull boards were reduced 50 cents a thousand, and, not, apparently, because it was actually necessary, but to show that no guilty lumber should escape. Common and cull fencing got a whack of 50 cents off for seemingly the same reason. Pickets and battens got behind a big pile of piece stuff and escaped until the butcher knife was wiped off and sheathed. In the dimension class that scapegoat of the trade, 2x8, was chipped off 50 cents worth on a thousand, and 2x12, good honest size as it is, and always in demand, was sacrificed to the amount of 50 cents to \$1 a thousand, except on 16-foot, which was allowed to go unhurt. The meeting showed its generosity on cull plank, and left that alone too. Shingles were reduced 15 to 20

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cents a thousand. The sacrificial work was finished by hitting lath a clip and taking it down from \$1.90 to \$1.75 a thousand.

While the list, as now printed, and published in the *Lumberman*, is probably nearer the average of selling prices than as it stood before, it seems as if the reductions were too general and did not discriminate sufficiently in cases of reduced and broken assortments. But the trade appears to have lost its appreciation of lumber values, and looks upon the entire commodity as a drug that deserves to be kicked and slashed more than to be treated considerately. Of course it is readily understood that now is the time of the year for the trade to depreciate values, for a new stock is to be laid in, and the manufacturers must be humiliated.—*North-western Lumbermen.*

CUBAN MAHOGANY AND CEDAR.

Speaking of Zaza, Cuba, the *Trade Bureau* says: Next to sugar timber is the leading article of export at this agency. The forests are wild and very extensive, but for want of good roads and easy means of transportation, the timber (mahogany and cedar wood) industry is confined to those lying nearer the coast.

Some persons buy the trees, generally paying from \$3 to \$4 (a dollar in Spanish is equal to .932 in American money) per tree, according to the number, as it stands, with the right to select a fixed number of trees, according to the dimensions of the forest. Others buy the land and after taking the timber off sell it again. The latter is the cheaper way, as the land at present can be bought at from \$50 to \$70 per caballeria (equal to about 33½ acres), and after taking the timber therefrom it can generally be sold at higher prices, being then convertible into pastures for stock raising.

The timber is cut and hewed at the forest in dimensions suitable for exporting, 12x12 and upwards. The rest of the tree, which is no doubt one third of it, is thrown away. Most of all the timber thus wasted could no doubt be utilized by the use of saw mills run by water power; or another way, the small branches of the tree could be sold to ship and boat builders for timber and knees, as both mahogany and cedar are excellent for those purposes. The remnants could be made into charcoal, which is used for fuel to a great extent all over the island. In this way, if the business were conducted by experienced parties with sufficient capital, the value of a tree might be worth double what it now is.

The timber thus prepared is conveyed to the seashore by teams of four to six oxen. In former years, when the forests were nearer the

coast, the expenses of conveying the timber to the seashore, were much less. Good sized timber tracts are now from 10 to 15 miles in the interior.

At the seashore the timber is sold at prices ranging from \$35 to \$40 per thousand feet of good size mahogany and cedar, and for mahogany of extra size at prices from \$50 to \$60 per thousand. The timber is then conveyed by lighters, and rafts towed by lighters, to the port of Trinidad de Cuba, which is 30 miles west of here. All the timber exported from Trinidad is taken from the forests lying east of this port, though within the jurisdiction of the consular agency. It costs \$4 per thousand feet to bring it to this port on lighters and rafts, but by arranging the business properly this price can be reduced, as the distance is only from 20 to 50 miles, and the water is very smooth all along the coast almost all the year except September and October.

When the timber reaches this port it is assorted and the ends cut off to meet the requirements of the market for which it is intended, at a cost of, say \$2 per thousand, though it is reported that this duty will be considerably reduced in a very short time. Prices in foreign countries have advanced for the last two years on account of the increased use of such wood in different industries, and if enterprising parties would enter into the business here, such exports would be largely increased. Generally the best quality and larger sizes are shipped to England, where they command a higher price.

Timber Limit Transfer.

It is understood that a large timber limit on the north shore of Lake Nipissing changed hands in Ottawa the other day. The sellers were Messrs. Mossom Boyd & Co., Bobcaygeon, and the purchaser Mr. J. R. Booth of Ottawa. It is said that the price was close in the neighborhood of \$200,000, and that \$120,000 was paid down, the balance to be paid in four months. The property was purchased by Mossom Boyd & Co. at the Government sale in Toronto a couple of years ago, and the firm are said to have cleared a snug little fortune on their investment. Mr. Booth has just launched a large steamer on Lake Nipissing, which, it is understood, will be used to tow the logs to the head of the lake.

"I Feel so Well."

"I want to thank you for telling me of Dr. Pierce's 'Favorite Prescription,' writes a lady to her friend. 'For a long time I was unfit to attend to the work of my household. I kept about, but I felt thoroughly miserable. I had terrible backaches, and bearing down sensations across me and was quite weak and discouraged. I sent and got some of the medicine after receiving your letter, and it has cured me, I hardly know myself. I feel so well.'"