

was equal to the breadth of ten millet seeds. A hundred millet seeds, or ten inches was a foot. The Chinese foot is really based on the human hand, as is the European foot upon the foot. It strikes the Chinese as very incongruous when they hear that we measure cloth, wood-work, masonry, etc., which they regard as especially matters for the hand by the foot. Of the jade tubes above mentioned, there were twelve, and these formed the basis for the measurement of liquids and solids 4,000 years ago. They are mentioned in the oldest Chinese documents with the astrolabe, the cycle of 60 years, and several of the oldest constellations. It is likely that they will be found to be an importation from Babylon, and in that case the Chinese foot is based on a Babylonian measure of a span, and should be nine inches in length.

#### TORONTO LUMBER CASE.

A special sitting of the York Civil Assizes was held before Mr. Justice Armour at the Court House, Toronto, on Feb. 9, to hear *Lockie et al. v. Tennant et al.* The plaintiffs, Mr. J. S. Lockie and Mr. T. S. Playfair, are the trustees of the American Lumber Company, which is now in liquidation, and they bring the action to recover \$10,000, the amount of two promissory notes. These notes were given by the defendants, J. & F. Tennant, in paying for lumber purchased from the British Canadian Lumber and Timber Company. The notes passed into the hands of the plaintiffs, being endorsed by the British Canadian Company. The defendants refuse to pay the notes on the ground that they received no value for them, the lumber having been burnt at Midland before it came into their possession. His Lordship found as follows:—"I find that the non-removal of the lumber before the fire was as much the fault of the B. C. Lumber Company as of the defendants. I do not think that the non-removal affects the question upon whom the loss by fire will fall. I find the lumber was to be measured and inspected at the time of the shipment, and that the lumber which was destroyed by fire was never measured nor inspected. I find that under the construction of the contract the British Canadian Lumber Company must bear the loss of the lumber destroyed by fire. I find that the defendants, the Tennants, have paid for the lumber shipped in the contract. I find that the present plaintiffs are entitled to recover against the defendants the amount of the two notes. I find that the British Canadian Lumber Company are bound to indemnify the defendants against payment thereof, and direct that they do so indemnify them against the payment thereof and against the costs of this suit. Mr. B. B. Osler, Q. C., and Mr. Gordon for the plaintiffs, and Mr. Christopher Robinson, Q. C., and Mr. McDonald for the defendants.

#### Saw-Mill Statistics.

Some idea regarding the improvement in saw mill machinery may be gathered from the figures of the last census, says the *Chicago Lumberman*. It is stated that the total horse-power used in saw mills of America is represented by 641,665. In 1870 the power per hand was 4.28, and in 1880 5.56, showing an increase of 30 per cent. That is, in 1870 one man did the work of 4.28 horse-power, while in 1880 he took care of the lumber, &c., produced by 5.56 horse-power. The percentage of increase of the total power for ten years was 23.09.

#### When Wood is at its Prime.

"From the best data I can get," says a writer in an exchange, "my opinion is that the time when wood is at its best is when it is ripe. That point is reached in November or December. At that time the year's growth is complete. The wood takes a rest and will last better and wear better than when cut at any other time. It also has time to season before insects can bore it. The hickory, ash, and oak are liable to become 'powder posted' or worm eaten if cut in the early part of the season because the wood is full of sap and green. The tree cut at that time is like an animal killed in hot weather and is attacked by flies that deposit their goods, producing the worm that eats wood. Another reason for cutting in the fall or early winter is the fact that the tree

in the early part of the season is full of sap, which ferments and commences to decay immediately. Before the wood has time to season the sap destroys the life of the wood. Hickory is peculiarly liable to be worm eaten, and when the worms once start to work it they never leave it until it is all consumed, literally ground to powder.

#### Concerning Railroad Ties.

A railway journal says. Railway construction is bound to go on until it reaches a point at which it ceases to be profitable. The consumption of ties will increase at a corresponding rate, while the question of future supply will become more serious and pressing as the cost increases and our native forests become thinned. It is pretty certain that wooden ties will not be discarded until our timber resources are far less abundant than they are now, or until some other material as cheap and as serviceable is substituted for wood. It is not likely, however, that any such material will be found, but it is more than probable that the durable properties of wood, especially the soft and porous kinds that are now available for ties, will in time be very much increased by some of the preservative methods that have already proved very effective so far as they have been tried. But these methods are not likely to be used very extensively in this country until the cost of ordinary ties is considerably more than it is now.

#### Hardwood.

Although the season is so favorable for the getting of hardwood logs the manufacturers of hardwood lumber are not taking the advantage of it that the handlers of pine are. The downward price of hardwood, and the sluggishness of the markets, have made many a manufacturer decidedly tired, and until the demand and prices improve, it will take more than a cold winter to induce him to pursue his business with enthusiasm. Lumber manufacturers will not suffer from this apathy. If there is a partial halt until a portion of the heavy stock of poor lumber is worked off, a double object will be the result—a part of the obstruction that now lies in the way of the welfare of the trade will be cleared away, and the better grades will advance.—*Northwestern Lumberman.*

#### A Sheffield-Made Palace Car.

Messrs. Craven Bros., Darnall Carriage and Wagon Works, Sheffield, have just completed for the Buenos Ayres Great Southern Railway, Limited, a sleeping and dining car, which is believed to be the largest of its kind ever constructed in England. It is 56 feet in length in the body, and 60 feet long over the buffers. The internal dimensions are nine feet four inches wide by nine feet five inches high. The body of the car is of East Indian teakwood. The end, frame and body are built solid, with the addition of steel plates and angles to the sides of the car. The bogie trucks are made entirely of steel, with Mansell's patent boss wheels.

The *Winnipeg Times* of Feb. 4th, says:—Major Camp, the celebrated lumber king arrived in the city last night from Minneapolis. He was seen by a *Times* reporter this morning and said: "Business is generally dull in the lumbering line this winter, there being very little going on with the exception of hauling of logs. The roads in the woods are very good winter, being in a far better condition than any previous year. The amount of lumber to be cut this winter for manufacturing purposes will be almost equal to that cut last season. This applies generally to the whole Northwestern lumber cut. The price of lumber is lower than last year, there having been a recent decline of \$2 per thousand. There are 2,000 men employed this year along the Mississippi."

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