THE TIMBER CARRYING TRADE.

The old prejudice against timber-carrying is not yet, perhaps, wholly eradicated. In times gone by, when wood-built vessels only were in fashion, as soon as a ship went out of class at Lloyd's, and would take too large a sum to put her back on a good letter, though still easily rendered seaworthy, she, as a matter of course, went, probably by transfer, into the timber trade, and, perhaps, for many years continued to make her two voyages out and home as regularly as any first-class vessel could have done. We could name many ships that did so, and perhaps the latest example of this kind was the old Marco Polo, of not inglorious memory, which finished her career last year by no fault of her own. But in those days timber ships came to be regarded as the *canaille* of the trade. Commanders of higher class vessels, who were eligible for a freight of more precious or more perishable commodities, treated them with something like contempt, though, perhaps, glad enough afterwards to get the chance to command one themselves. At all events, they were a sort of nautical *refugium peccatorum* for captains who could get no better berth, till Mr. Plimsoll appeared on the scene, and put an end to this ancient institution, by such a severe weeding out that our old ships, and their trade with them, went into the hands of foreigners—whether for good or evil we need not here discuss—till steam boldly entered the list and took up the timber trade; *eventually thereby effacing* foreign rivalry, and bringing the carrying trade chiefly back again to British bottoms, when, unluckily, there seems little or nothing to be got by it.

But to account for the great fluctuations in the corn carrying trade, not affecting the freight of timber, there is, perhaps, a sort of prejudice still adhering to the timber-carrying, even with iron steamers, and it is probably not considered to be any recommendation to a vessel for the transport service, for instance, that she has been employed in the timber trade. There is possibly a sort of *esprit de corps* in this. If a captain chooses to accept a low freight for grain, he is still in the corn trade. He loses no caste. He cannot be spoken of as the commander of an old timber droguer, and possibly the prestige of his ship in some prospective employment may be of more value to him than the difference in freight on a solitary occasion. We do not say it is so, but it may be so; and how else can we account for the fact that a ship accepts a freight of 5s. with a port under her lee, as it were, and within a couple of days' run, where she might, at any rate, get double as much?

That increasing facilities multiply trade no one doubts; but it may be argued that the American timber trade has been more injured than aided by the use of steam in ocean timber-carrying. In the days before mentioned, when we were paying three guineas per standard from the Gulf of Bothinia, to 75s. was the rate from the Gulf of St. L .wrence and Quebec. The difference in favc of Europe might be estimated at 15 to 20 ; cent. But when we see that 50s. can still l otained from the St. Lawrence ports, while from the Gulf of Bothnia to London is done at 25s., we know that Canadian woods are more heavily handicapped, in contending in our markets against the Baltic, than they used to be; and from Norway to the east coast 15s. per standard by steam is about the average rate. The worst is that while we are trying to account for contrarieties in trade that seem to be out of order with its natural laws, there is no appearance of any new force or stimulus to drive the whole forward in a steady current which might be expected to level in good time all inequalities by offering employment, each in his own groove, to all.

Prices still tend downward in the timber trade at least, and the business done is on a smaller scale. Not much, perhaps, but enough to show that the turn of the beam is the wrong way. And with corn it is the same. Six weeks ago, for instance, wheat took a little start upwards, and solemn farmers were seen to smile and look pleasant. But the advance could not be sustained. A fortnight ago it averaged still 33s. 9d. per quarter, but the accounts made up by the Board of Trade last Monday from the returns of 200 markets gave the average at 32s. 4d.

If the loss of the farmer were the gain of the laborer, there would be a social recompense, and trade would rather gain than lose by the transfer. But all experience teaches the other way. Bread is, or ought to be, cheap enough; but the money to buy it, and to lay out in other commodities—ay, there's the rub!—that, unhappily, seems to be getting scarcer and scarcer, among our industrious classes, every day.—*Timber Trades Journal.*

CONCRETE PAVEMENT.

The well-known Belgian system of street pavement appears likely to be superseded—especially in those cases where the first cost is not a matter of overruling consideration—by a new and improved method of concrete pavement covered with a wooden cushion or carpet, such as has already been extensively adopted in portions of London, Paris, etc. The roadbed is first covered with a six-inch coating of concrete, composed of Portland cement and broken stone, finishing off with a top dressing of the cement and of fine gravel or sand, and upon this are laid blocks of common red pine of the size ordinarily used in the Nicholson pavement. Between these blocks are left spaces about one-third of an inch wide, into which is poured bitumen, or asphalt, for an inch in depth; this fastens them to the foundation of concrete and to one another. After setting, the crevices are filled with Portland cement, and the whole covered *with a fine sharp gravel, which is* ground into the pores of the wood and forms a protective coating. The wooden blocks are previously treated with creosote, to protect them from decay, and to prevent them from swelling on becoming wet; a space of three inches is also left between the wooden blocks and the curbing on each side, as a kind of expansion joint.—*Boston Journal of Commerce.*

PRESERVATION OF WOOD.

The decay of wood when exposed to the action of time and weather, is the result of a sort of fermentation process produced by the action of heat and moisture in the watery and albuminous ingredients of the wood, which gradually converts the sound timber into a rotten mass and renders it useless for any mechanical purpose, this process at the same time being assisted by the boring insects that make their homes within the cells of the decaying wood and live on the nutriment of the juices.

The fence builder is lead to believe that a post will last a greater length of time if only set opposite in the position from which it grew. A coating of oil and charcoal is supposed to protect the posts that enter the ground till not a man will live to see them rotted. Heating till quite a depth has been converted into charcoal has not prevented the process of decay, or kept the insects from eating the cooked food within. A change that will make use of the whole material must meet a process of preparation that will reach the entire depth of the wood. Timber that has been steamed under a pressure of one hundred pounds to the square inch must feel the effects of heat in all the liquid ingredients contained within the pores, especially when the pressure is reduced and the vacuum pumps put on.

In the creosote process the timber is confined within a large cylindrical boiler and held under a pressure of steam until it has penetrated the wood and vaporized all the fluids within the pores. The pressure is then removed, even the atmospheric pressure, when the creosote is injected and forced into the wood by raising the pressure as before. The object of every rational treatment is to harden the albumen contained in the fluids within the pores of the wood, and nothing short of a complete change, making a different solution entirely, will ever arrest fermentation and *destroy all the germs of* animal and vegetable life and prepare the woods to resist the effects of weather.—*Boston Journal of Commerce.*

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