

VIEWS AND INTERVIEWS.

Hits
Both Ways.

"It will be interesting to see what course the lumber journals, which a few short months ago would not join the manufacturers in an effort to head off free lumber, because there was 'a republican president and republican majority in the senate,' will have to say about it now," says the Chicago Northwestern Lumberman. To which the Minneapolis Lumberman adds: "It will be a good deal more interesting to see what the lumber papers which, in double-leaded leaders, said the lumber business would go to the demnation bow-wows if lumber should be put on the free list, will say when it is accomplished by a democratic president and a democratic majority in the senate. It depends altogether on how far a man drops how much he is hurt."

Sawdust Blocks
for Building.

Only as late as last month we gave an account in these columns of experiments being made in manufacturing bricks out of sawdust. The Mechanical News tells of a promising utilization of sawdust in Germany, where blocks for building are made of that material. The accounts given of their quality are extremely favorable as regards their strength, lightness, hardness of exterior and capability of resisting fire. It is, in fact, claimed for them that they are practically noncombustible, but nothing short of the most complete demonstration can justify the use of that term in its full literal significance. The sawdust is mixed with an acid before the blocks are moulded. Their cost as now made is moderate compared with other materials of equal utility, and it is thought that the process may be still further economized.

Business
and Morals.

The science of homiletics is not alone the work of the moralist. Morals have their place in all walks of life. Business and morals—separate them as some will endeavor to do—have a close affinity for one another. The business that is immoral should certainly have no place in the business of a country, and one may well look askance at the business man who decries the application of moral principles to his methods of transacting business. The old saw, "honesty is the best policy," is an acknowledgment of the place that morals occupy in business. The tenets of this adage are perhaps not the highest, but the exercise of its teachings in business gives force to the conclusion that even in business the right way is the best and only safe way. The business man needs not be constantly assuming the role of the preacher. It is hardly business-like for him to do so, at least in an ostentatious manner. Yet the more closely his methods are shaped on these lines, the more healthful, even from a financial point of view, will be the outcome of his business operations. And the business of a community or a country being simply an aggregation of business units, the better will it be for that community or country when the business units, as one man, exercise in private and public transactions the healthful points of the saying, "honesty is the best policy."

Do It
To-Day.

"Do it to-day," says a writer in the Merchant Sentinel. "Meet the day's demands with promptness regardless of their seeming insignificance, for there is no better way to place your name between the lips of undesirable business gossip than by showing this lack of promptness in small matters. This does not alone apply to the strictly financial part of your work. There are thousands of opportunities which present themselves where it is possible for the business man to take advantage of the 'stitch in time saves nine' axiom. The 'stitch' is but an insignificant factor in the make-up of the long, binding seam, but the neglect of the one broken thread, and procrastination's prevention of its prompt repair, is the ruination of the entire garment. So we find men in their business transactions constantly 'putting off' that which should be done to-day until an accumulation of the little neglected details form an aggregation with a crushing weight, when the time comes that circumstances give the mandatory command. It must be done! How often do we hear the merchant who is his own book-keeper lamenting an unpardonable negligence in

himself—in the matter of keeping his accounts entered up to date and his books in a condition of intelligent management. A negligence which he would not tolerate in any one in his employ. So easy is it to thoughtlessly 'put off' that which does not make a peremptory demand upon our time, that we are liable to fall into the habit of being behind the details. Better, by far, be ahead of time than constantly lagging. Do everything as it presents itself, for just as sure as you 'put off' until to-morrow, your time will be fully filled by the duty of the day and you have lost the only opportunity of life open to the neglected work."

Ups and Downs of
Ship-Building.

The ship-building industry has undergone many changes. There was a time when the United States were to the fore in wooden ship-building and it was a goodly day for the lumberman. But England came to the front with her stores of iron and cheap coal; iron superseded wood, and American ship-building declined and our neighbor, with all her enterprise, has never been able to surmount the difficulties of that day. Even in what ship-building is now carried on in the States, in so far as lumber is used, it has been discovered that the woods of Canada are preferred to those of their own country and the United States navy is sending to British Columbia for supplies of Douglas Fir in place of using Oregon pine. Now it is Scotland's turn to suffer reverses in ship-building. A census of the yards between Glasgow and Greenock, which has been taken by the Glasgow Mail, shows that in twenty-seven, with 148 berths, there are only forty-nine vessels in course of construction; and there is no immediate prospect of fresh orders being booked to cope with the stagnation which has set in. Freights are so low and unremunerative that at every port large numbers of vessels are being laid up by their owners. It is estimated that at the present moment there are about 500 steamers and sailing vessels tied up in the harbors of the United Kingdom. The causes of this ebb-tide in our commercial prosperity are manifold and complex. The economist may be able to give a satisfactory account of their origin and to estimate the period of their duration. But whilst he is collating his figures and adjusting his conclusions, the community, and the districts within the ship building area, are face to face with a depression that will work havoc in many homes. The ship-building industry on the Clyde employs, when trade is good, between 50,000 and 60,000 men, and as only about one-third of the building berths are occupied, it follows that fully one-half that number must at present be unemployed. A fair proportion of these have doubtless found work elsewhere, but when a full allowance is made for migration, there must be over 15,000 workmen idle at this moment. Unless provision has been made for a "rainy day," pinching poverty will invade many a household before the winter has well begun.

Utilizing the
Waste.

A recent article in the North American Review, under the heading of "Waste Products Made Useful," is full of interest as indicating the utilitarian spirit of the age, which aims to find a useful place for all its products, good, bad and indifferent. The writer is the Right Hon. Lord Playfair, and he has gathered together a mass of information on the lines suggested by the title of his paper. He shows from what material ammonia is produced, and to what a variety of uses old rags are turned. Some of the choicest perfumes come from the ill-smelling fusil oil; and coal gas is made into beautiful dyes. A lumber contemporary, commenting on Mr. Playfair's contribution, asks, "May not a way be devised to turn to use the material about the modern saw mill now going to waste? True, we are adopting methods which limit the amount of material which goes into sawdust and cut down the amount of stuff for the slab pile and the furnaces, but which are still fed so generously that it is apparently more a question of getting rid of the fuel afforded in the present natural processes of manufacture than to merely supply them with food. But even this does not suffice. The burner attached to most mills is kept busy, and in large cities the fuel dealers pay a beggarly sum and cart away fuel in almost unlimited quantities, while all sorts of ingenious methods are

adopted to make ground with what is unmarketable. Half the ground which is made, too, be it said, is not of value, but the worse for having been made a dumping-place. In the salt region the saw-mill men use their refuse to operate salt blocks, and then sell their salt for little or nothing. Despite all of these expedients the problem of getting rid of the refuse of the saw mills is still a considerable one." Some more recent attempts have been made in economizing mill refuse in pulp and paper making, and in other ingenious ways. The Rathbun Company, of Deseronto, Ont., have made, perhaps, as perfect application of this utilitarian doctrine as any concern in the country. Almost nothing in their large wood-working establishment is allowed, it is said, to go to waste; a block of wood the size of a visiting card is turned to account. Sawdust is distilled, producing alcohol for industrial purposes, or combined with clay and converted into terra cotta building material. Even the smoke from the furnaces is subjected to "creative" processes, and valuable commercial products are the result. Yet there is much progress to be made in utilizing the waste of the saw mill, and the men who are giving thought to this question are doing a good work for the lumber industry.

MECHANICAL HINTS.

WE often see engineers when they are about to pack a valve or piston rod, and their packing is a little large, hammer the packing flat, so that it will go into the gland. This is a bad practice, for it breaks the strands of the packing, cuts them in fact, and does not improve it in any way. Instead of this, just take it to the vise and press or squeeze it out as flat as you wish. It will be more even, will pack better and will not have ruined the properties of the packing. Try it once and see how much better it is than hammering. If the jaws of the vice are too short for your work, you can easily arrange some false jaws for this work, either of hard wood or soft metal.

Don't go working around a shafting with anything that can possibly catch in the belts, pulleys or couplings. If you wear an apron, take it off when at this business, as it is a trap, for if the material does not give way you are liable to go sailing around the shaft, not a very pleasant journey to contemplate. Don't wear a jacket or shirt with ragged sleeves, or, in fact, any projections that could tempt the revolving set screws or key way. Of course, no such things should be around a shaft, the day for that is past, but do not be careless even if there are no such traps around the shop. In these days of wooden split pulleys that require no set screws to hold them on the shaft, there is little excuse for key-ways or set-screws that lie in wait for victims. When it is necessary to use set-screws, as in collars, etc., let them be countersunk, so as to present no projecting heads, let key-ways be filled with wooden strips outside of the pulley, and, in fact, take every reasonable precaution for the safety of the men whose duty calls them around the machinery, and on whom depends the successful running of the plant.

There is much unnecessary carelessness in a good many establishments, and much more danger than is necessary to the running of the plant. In one place that the writer knows of they have left the covers off the shaft couplings, leaving the bare bolt heads and nuts exposed to catch any one who comes near. The cover came with the coupling, but was left off from pure neglect; probably because they did not need it for a driving pulley. It must not be thought that all the blame lies with the foreman or proprietor, for such is not the case, and we often find the men leaving, from pure neglect, things undone, which leave a danger for their companions.

For instance, the scaffold may not be put up strongly because the man who put it up thinks it doesn't need any more nails, or his nail box may be empty and he forgets to go up there again and put in more; then somebody falls and the verdict is, "Unavoidable accident; but there is some one to blame nearly every time. Don't let it be you."

T. W. Kerr, Ladner's Landing, B.C. "Enclosed find one dollar, another year's subscription to your valuable paper. I am always pleased to meet it."