

Correspondence.

TREATMENT OF REFUSE IN TOWNS.

Editor MONETARY TIMES.

Sir,—I have read your article in your last week's number about the production of burning gas from garbage, and I note what you say has been done and is expected. The garbage problem is a very important one for cities, and every experiment upon it ought to be welcomed in the interest of municipal economy and municipal health.

You do not say anything in your article, except in a general way, about the progress already made in other countries in dealing with street refuse so as to make it of use in the civic scheme. I would therefore call your attention to a system which has been installed at Shoreditch, London. There a garbage crematory is combined with an electric light plant, and the city garbage which is there burned gives enough heat to drive engines to supply 4,000 electric lamps to light the city with. As long ago as 1893 an English engineer, Professor George Forbes, said: "From the house refuse of any town I can supply steam enough to generate electric light at the rate of one 16-candle-power lamp per head of population for two hours every night of the year." And efforts were made, in 1895 and 1896, to carry this scheme out. But they did not meet with success in other cities and towns of England, probably because the apparatus was not right. But it seems to have been made right at Shoreditch in using street dust, or at least, they have got results which show that they are on the right track, and may make further economies. This is the plan pursued in treating the street refuse, or dust as it is called: The plan is simple after all:

Shoreditch, which has a population of about 124,000, produces daily from 50 to 60 tons of dust, and the cost of removing this was formerly 3s. 2d. (say 79 cents) a ton. Now the dust is brought to the generating station, dumped into bins by electrically-worked lifts and cars, from which it is shovelled by hand into twelve furnaces or dust-destructor cells, as they are termed, and here the refuse is burned by means of a forced draft. The dust is burned both day and night.

If we can make gas out of our garbage and light the city, I say well and good. But do not let us be behind-hand in using every plan to keep our cities cleanly and healthy by adopting the latest and best plans of using up waste.

J. N. ARROWSMITH.

Hamilton, 28th Sept., 1897.

COMFORT FOR RAILWAY MEN.

The recognition of the right of the working man to the best that can be afforded is gradually being impressed upon the minds of those in control of this class of labor. One of the latest instances is furnished by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad. It has been the custom upon this road in common with all others, when sending out a wrecking crew, to provide only the most crude eating facilities that could be imagined, an old freight car with a rough board table, and equally rough benches being thought sufficient. For this service the company in question has now provided a regular dining car, fitted up with excellent accommodations. The dining-room proper is 30 feet long, and will easily accommodate twenty-four men at the table. The kitchen is supplied with all necessary facilities for properly serving a meal, and there is no doubt but that the extra work done by the crew because of their appreciation of the efforts of the company in their behalf will more than pay the extra expense involved. More than all, will be the effect upon the minds of the men. They will see in this new departure an evidence of that for which they have long been contending, manifested, however, in a way that was

not anticipated; and the recognition by the company of their rights will make them at once more respectful and self-respecting.—*Railroad Review*.

THE CAPITAL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Writing on the subject of the room for civic improvement in a place so blessed by nature as the city of Victoria, B.C., and incidentally on the prominence which British Columbia is now attaining in the minds of British people, the *Province* of that city says: "So much for British Columbia, but what of its capital, Victoria? We have unfortunately still to repeat our query of a year ago, and ask: Is the capital to lead or to follow in the march of civic improvement? So far it has given no sign of a desire to lead, mighty little even of a desire to follow in the implied direction. Yet it must unquestionably do one or the other, if it is to hold its own and retain those advantages which pertain to its position as the capital. Lately it has been visited by a distinguished, we might say a very distinguished, body of visitors in the persons of the members of the British Association. With one accord they sang the praises of its unequalled situation, its unrivalled surroundings, and were never tired of dwelling upon their beauty and attractions. So it must be with every stranger who comes amongst us, and is imbued with a sense of the beautiful.

"For the fiftieth, if not the five hundred and fiftieth time, we would point out that herein lies the source of Victoria's future wealth—not as a commercial or industrial, but as a residential city. As the population and wealth increase, there will be yearly more people to the south and east of us who will be only too glad to come and spend their money here, if only we are in a position to offer them their money's worth, in the shape of good roads, good drains, good accommodation, good lights, good water, etc., etc., etc.

"At present we can offer them none of these things, and as it unfortunately happens that even the most ardent lover of natural beauty cannot live by scenery alone, he speedily tires of the view and hankers after more material comforts than our existing municipal arrangements enable him to enjoy.

"Victoria could and should be made one of the most ideal places of residence in the world. That way lies her future, and a profitable future too, for all whom it may concern."

THE DRINK RATE AND THE DEATH RATE.

A prominent member of the United Kingdom Alliance, Mr. James Whyte, has been holding up Canada as a model to other nations in the temperate habits of her people. He writes to the *London Times*, comparing the Dominion with Sweden and Norway in this respect. He proceeds: "Canada, has, I believe, the lightest drink rate, and also the lightest death rate of any nation in Christendom. For the ten years ended 1890, her death rate was only 14.01 per 1,000 of population living, and her drink rate was the equivalent in absolute alcohol of 1,149 gallons of proof spirits per head per annum. For England, for the same ten years, the drink rate was equal to 3,890 gallons of proof spirits yearly per head, or treble that of Canada, and the death rate to 20.08 per annum per 1,000 of the population; for France both the drink rate and the death rate during the period in question were considerably higher. The death rate was 21.99. It may be taken that the Canadian death rate was, in proportion to population, equal to about two-thirds of the average death rate of the principal European nations, and her drink rate to about one-third of their drink rate. It is possible that the age distribution of the population of Canada may account to some extent for the abnormal smallness of their rate of mortality. No doubt it does, but not to any great extent. I am convinced that

the smallness of the drink rate is the main factor. In this connection it is important to note that Quebec, the province of Canada in which the temperance movement has made the least progress, has by much the highest rate of mortality. For the ten years in question it averaged 18.91 per 1,000 per annum, or 4.90 per 1,000 more than Canada as a whole. Its drink rate yearly was the equivalent in absolute alcohol of 1,436 gallons of proof spirits. Of course, as Quebec drank so much more than the average, the rest of Canada must have consumed considerably less than the average."

DEALS AND HARDWOOD IN ENGLAND.

In the opinion of the *Timber Trades' Journal*, of London, England, the high freights and insurances are having a beneficial effect on the deal market by removing the fears of a heavy import which the summer business was leading up to. "The inrush of wood goods all around the coast, it is now understood will gradually subside with a healthy result on prices. Baltic rates are reported a trifle easier, but it is too late in the season for any substantial decline, and the anticipations of over-wintering stock are likely to be borne out. Prices of Baltic and other woods at the public auction kept steady, and though best goods were slighted, this was caused by the high values lately realized exceeding the limits of dealers. There is no immediate change in the mahogany market; a fairly good amount of business is being done at about former sale rates. At the public sales dealers have operated freely, showing there is a good trade passing, and giving strong evidence of their confidence in the future. At the auction sale on the 7th instant, there was a spare attendance, but the buying power was strong, and nearly all the large parcels of African mahogany were cleared at from 2d. to 13½d., average 3-3-8d.; cedar 3½d. and 3½d., average 3½d. There were no fancy wood buyers present, and consequently none sold. There is a decided improvement in the demand for mahogany.

—The premises of the celebrated Hachette Publishing Company in Paris were destroyed by fire last Saturday. Loss 1,000,000 francs.

—The secretary of the Cleveland Retail Grocers' Association, will propose at the next meeting of directors, that the association issue every sixty days, regularly hereafter, a bulletin containing the names of those people who do not pay their grocery bills.

—A decidedly unusual calling for a woman is practised by Mrs. Ida Lachmund, of Clinton, Iowa, who spends her summers in towing rafts and sawlogs on the Mississippi River. She manages a steamer which tows a raft of a million feet of logs five hundred miles down stream, and it is rarely she loses a stick.

—Dr. Smillie, of Gaspe Basin, tells an Ottawa paper that he is satisfied that the English oil company known as the Petroleum Oil Trust, operating in Gaspe peninsula, has, after years of discouragement, at last struck a good thing. The new well, nineteen miles from Gaspe, gives an average of 150 barrels a day. The company is sinking seven new wells in the vicinity.

—It is reported in *Science* that the recent French motor-car race from Paris to Dieppe showed an advance, in that the carriages were not entered by the makers but by the owners. Fifty-nine carriages started, the winner traversing the distance of ninety-three and three-fourth miles in scarcely more than four hours. There was only one steam-carriage and none with electric motor, oil being used in fifty-eight of the fifty-nine carriages.

—An American paper of repute says that Tennessee's Centennial Exposition at Nashville is said to be surpassing all records in exposition finances. If the attendance continues as large as heretofore it will pay back to the stockholders dollar for dollar and possibly a small dividend in addition. It was an ambitious project to launch in the depth of a business depression, and this success shows that the times have not been half as hard as the talk.