

RAISING OAK TREES.

During the last few years large quantities of acorns have been taken from this country for the purpose of planting. White oak acorns are preferred, and they have been chiefly obtained in the State of Missouri. They are generally planted on sandy or broken land that is intended for pasturing sheep. In Great Britain sheep are accustomed to eat acorns, and it is considered profitable to raise them for sheep food. No variety of oak has received much attention at the hands of the planters of fruit trees. They state that the trees make a very slow growth, and for this reason they prefer to plant trees that grow rapidly and furnish timber and fuel in a short time. A foreign writer suggests that oaks may be raised to excellent advantage in connection with other varieties of trees that grow rapidly. He admits that oaks grow slowly while they are young, but states that they increase in size rapidly when they are 15 to 20 years old. He, therefore, recommends planting a row of oaks between rows of quick growing trees. The latter will be large enough to use for various purposes when they are from 15 to 20 years old. If care is exercised they may be cut down so as not to injure the young oaks. These trees being removed, the young oaks will grow rapidly and completely occupy the ground. Oaks are easy to propagate, as the acorns can be obtained at small cost and are almost certain to germinate. Acorns are much easier to manage than large nuts like those on the pecan or hickory. They can be planted where it is desired to have them grow or in nursery rows, from which the small trees may be taken up when they are at a suitable size to be transplanted. The wood is excellent for fuel, timber and post.—[Ex.]

POINTED OPINIONS.

A New York lumber dealer, who has often expressed—sometimes very forcibly, too—his opinion that there is "no inspection," no authorized inspection of lumber in the New York market, said to us yesterday: "Isn't it a strange state of things here when the inspection in hardwood lumber of one man only—Patrick Moore—will be accepted? What we want is uniform inspection under the control of a lumber exchange, and the sooner we have both the better for the New York lumber trade. If we had a lumber exchange in the metropolis, with authorized licensed inspectors, Chicago, Boston and other lumber centres would no doubt join in one uniform system of inspection that everybody would recognize, and which would obviate much of the present annoyance."

"A lumber dealer in Cincinnati wrote me the other day asking me what I could get for firsts and seconds in walnut in New York. I couldn't answer him for the reason that I had no idea more than the man in the moon what I could get. Firsts and seconds out west might mean 20 per cent. first and 80 per cent. seconds, or vice versa."

"Now, if there was a universal, recognized inspection and standard of prices for grades of lumber, a man in Cincinnati would know what the prices of a certain kind of lumber would be in New York. What we ought to have at once is a lumber exchange to regulate grading, inspection and prices."—New York Lumberman.

LIABILITIES OF HOT AIR AND STEAM.

The subject of the spontaneous combustion of wood has been discussed at various times by the French Academy of Sciences. Among the most interesting statements made on these occasions is that by M. Cosson, describing an accident which occurred in his laboratory, it appearing that, while he was working in his laboratory, a portion of the boarding of the floor spontaneously took fire; the boards were in the vicinity of an air hole, fed with warm air from a stove about thirteen feet away on the floor below. A similar accident had occurred two years previously, and, in consequence, M. Cosson had the boards adjoining the airhole replaced by a slab of marble. The boards which subsequently ignited adjoined the marble, and though the heat to which the boards were subjected was very moderate, being only that of air at 77° F., still the boards slowly

carbonized, and, being thus rendered extremely porous, a rapid absorption of the oxygen of the atmosphere had resulted, and sufficient heat was thus produced to originate combustion. A similar instance of spontaneous fire is said to have occurred at Passy, a few days before, due to the action of the warmth from the airhole of a stove upon the woodwork, thus showing the danger liable to arise from this source, and the necessity of attention to the same on the part of builders.

DRUM MAKING.

Of a total of 200,000 drums made in the United States last year, it is said that 178,000 were manufactured in Granville, Mass. The old fashioned drum with wooden barrel, which was formerly the only kind in the market, is being rapidly supplanted by the neater and lighter model with a tin barrel. For the manufacture of the latter tin of various colors is employed, blue and red predominating, though the larger quantity of tin drums are made of a brass imitation. This tin comes in sheets of two sizes, 14x20 inches and 20x28, the sheets being packed in cases holding 112. For wooden drums the barrels are generally bass or white wood, occasionally oak. The stay hoops are of oak or beech. Before the strip of wood can be used, it needs to undergo many processes, among others bending, planing and sweating. The first drums made used to be boiled in open tanks, and the limit that could thus be prepared daily was less than 50. The introduction of machinery and more perfect methods has increased the daily production, so that 2,000 drum pieces is considered nothing more than one man's fair day's work. The log, usually cut to three feet in length, is placed between the teeth of a huge machine, and the slicing begins. The knife receives it, and, as the log revolves, the piece sliced is received on a cylinder and then rolled up. Seventy-five thicknesses make one inch of the log. If then the log is three feet through, no revolution will yield a piece nine feet long, and the total length sliced from the log would extend over a mile. Cutting machines further reduces this huge sheet to the desired lengths. A core of six inches thickness is left, which is taken out of the jaws and split into drumsticks and tenpins. The veneers are heated, then bent, and are ready to be shaped as a drum. There are also planing and sandpapering machines, all run by water power. The strips are put through the bender, from three to six at a time. The sticks are smoothed by rolling in revolving barrels, the process being continued for three or four hours.—Exchange.

A NORTHERN MARKET FOR SOUTHERN LUMBER.

There is a growing opinion among the yard dealers in this city that more attention must, in the near future, be devoted to the cultivation of a trade in southern lumber. It is a recognized probability that the pine trade will be more and more cut into, until competition will become so sharp that old time profits will be impossible. While the pine trade of this city, both local and shipping, will make this the leading market for that kind of lumber as long as the supply holds out, the increasing use of other woods and the diversification of the lumber business generally suggest that it is unwise for dealers to shut their eyes to the growing demand for southern lumber, to the degree of letting St. Louis, Kansas City and other markets "get away" with the lion's share of the business. Men with a vision beyond the bounds of their pine yards see that southern pine, cypress and poplar are bound to come into use in this city and surrounding towns in an increasing degree, and that somebody will reap such advantage of handling these woods as there may be in the operation. The demand will increase, and it will be met. Will the pine dealers ignore the innovation, or will they endeavor to seize it and make it redound to their advantage? Some of the dealers are answering the latter part of the query in the affirmative. They hold that, as this is a railway centre of greater magnitude than any other in the country, as well as the most important lake port in the northwest, and has acquired the prestige of the greatest lumber

market in the world, it is a natural conclusion that Chicago should become an important distributing point for southern lumber. In taking this view, it is not considered that the far western demand is to be supplied from this point. But the local, suburban and near-by trade—say within a radius of 150 miles—can be furnished from this market at a profit.

The common objection to a shipping trade in southern lumber at this point has been that surrounding towns can be supplied directly from the mills. It is claimed that country yard dealers can get rates from the south as low as the wholesale handlers in this city can. This may be so, and yet there is more to the consideration than this simple fact. It takes money, facilities and experience to handle lumber. It also requires missionary work to induce dealers and consumers to take hold of a kind of lumber to which they are not accustomed. The manufacturers at the south sometimes need laboring with, also. Now the lumbermen of this city have the requisite capital to buy up and handle all the lumber produced in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, if they could see profit in the undertaking. If they could find a field for distributing a large amount of southern lumber they would go into the business without delay. Or, if they could buy lumber at the south in large quantity—by the entire mill cut—at prices low enough to admit of a handling bill and a profit besides, some of them would venture to undertake it. But there must be a partial cessation of the peddling business now practiced by the southern manufacturers before the wholesale dealers of this city will be able to take hold of yellow pine, cypress and poplar on a large scale.

If a system could be perfected whereby the dealers of this city could control the cut of numerous southern mills, a large amount of lumber could thus be profitably handled through this market. Were owners of mills at the south to be guaranteed the sale of their product for the entire season, knowing that it was going into competent hands, and that there would be no backset or failure in payment, they would sell lumber at rates that would give the northern buyer something of a monopoly of the business. The owners of mills at the south are not generally so rich that they would prefer to peddle out lumber by the car load, to retail dealers and consumers all over the country, when they could dispose of an entire season's cut at a fair log run figure.

This proposition it seems to men who have seriously thought of the subject, is the basis on which a southern lumber market can be built up in this city. Carried out, it would involve a more careful and specific manufacture, that would satisfy the northern demand. It would be necessary to conduct the business so that a full supply of southern lumber could be carried in stock.

As the white pine supply diminishes, and gets more and more into strong hands, the use of southern woods will increase. Already they cut a large figure in eastern seaboard markets. Time will come when the east will be largely supplied over interior railroads.—Northwestern Lumberman.



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