

**BURNT CLAY FOR HIGHWAYS.**

The United States Congress some time ago established an office of public roads, which is instructed to conduct experiments and device methods for improving the roads of the United States. The office has done a great deal to arouse interest throughout the country in the necessity of good roads and has originated several means of making good roads economically. The latest discovery is that of burning clay roads in Mississippi.

In large areas in the south, particularly in the valleys of the Mississippi tributaries, sedimentary clays are found very generally. In these areas there is little or no sand and the clays are of a particular plastic and sticky variety. These sticky clays are locally known as "gumbo" and "buckshot." In such localities traffic is absolutely impossible during the wet season, as the wheels of heavy vehicles will sink to the hub.

The clay is black, owing to the high percentage of organic or vegetable matter it contains. It is particularly sticky in its nature and is all most wholly free from sand and grit. After it has been burned, however, the plasticity is destroyed and a light clinker formed, which though not particularly hard, when pulverized, forms a smooth surface and seems to wear well.

**CONCRETE IS FREE FROM INSECTS**

Sudden and permanent conversions to the use of concrete are being made by men who have much to do with pile-driving in salt water, particularly on the western coast of America. It is estimated in California that a stick of timber, rough sawed, will

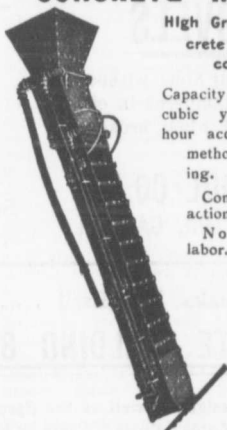
endure about eight months; a pile that is peeled has a year's lease of life; with the bark on, this period is increased to eighteen months, and creosoting gives wood a life of from fifteen to as many years.

Even creosote is not potent to resist the attacks of the teredo, or "borer," and the limnoria. These organisms play havoc with any wood placed in salt water and frequently cause the utter destruction of the fibres. They seem at times to thrive on creosote, which speaks well for the strength of their degestions. There is a great uncertainty about then attack, as of two piles standing comparatively near together one may be riddled, while the other escapes. These considerations are another reason for using

concrete piles when there is underpinning to be done, on land or sea.

Mr. A. E. Killam, Inspector of Bridges and Building I.C.R. Moncton, N. B., was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Association of Railway Superintendents of Bridges and Buildings, at the annual convention recently held at Salt Lake City, Utah.

Young Wife—"The landlord says he'll paper the bedroom, but will have to put it on over the old paper and not scrape the walls." Husband—"Well that's all right." Young Wife—"But think, that room is much too small already."—American Spectator.

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