

VIEWS AND INTERVIEWS.

**Sawdust
For Building.**

This is an age when science brings into use what a few years ago would have been considered the most worthless refuse. There is very little that the ragman and bone-picker rescues from the gutters and lanes of our towns and cities that may not be manufactured or used in the manufacture of things useful and serviceable. We learn of an ingenious German who believes he has perfected a means of making a profitable disposition of sawdust by which it is applied to a mechanical use, and has thus far been attended with success. An acid is mixed with the sawdust, and the whole mass moulded into blocks or any other form, resulting in a fine material for building purposes. The blocks assume extreme hardness of surface, and are practically non-combustible. The material in the moulded forms is said to be much stronger than timber in these forms, and much lighter than either iron or steel, and can be prepared cheaply.

**Pennsylvania Timber
Giving Out.**

Not only in Michigan is the supply of timber becoming exhausted, but also in Pennsylvania. W. H. Hyde, an extensive operator in that State, says: "The timber is giving out very rapidly and few mills will be running five years from now. The annual output is falling off at the rate of 20,000,000 feet each year. A. Thompson, of Ridgway, who has been getting out 5,000,000 feet each year for the past eight years, has finished his tract. The Oyster Run Mill, in Elk county, with an annual output of 4,000,000 feet, has given out, and the firm of Gillingham, Garrison & Co., of Philadelphia, which has operated for the past twelve years, is about to wind up its interests. Henry, Bayard & Co., another Philadelphia firm, is still actively at work, and is getting out a possible 20,000,000 feet annually. Their mills are all steam power, and the lumber is sent to the Philadelphia market by rail. J. Powell, another extensive operator, has shipped 3,000,000 feet yearly for the past twelve years."

**Broke
The Record.**

It is rather a difficult matter to get ahead of the nineteenth-century newspaper reporter. One is apt to know it when the "boys," who know their business, find themselves "scooped" on an important piece of news. But in this keenness for news it is the case that sometimes the reporter gets ahead of his own record—at least ahead of the facts. Here is a confession made by a reporter of a New York daily paper, who has managed to run ahead of even the dreaded forest fire. He says he was sent to New Jersey on a certain occasion to write up the forest fires. When he left his train he went to the hotel to "get his bearings." "How about your big forest fires?" he asked of the proprietor. "Forest fires," answered the other, loftily, "we haven't had any at all. What do you want to know about them for?" he added, a little inquisitively. "Oh, I'm reporter for the," of New York. "A reporter, eh? Why, of course. Sit down. Biggest forest fires you ever saw. Magnificent spectacle. We beat the country on forest fires. You can say that I said so. Wait a minute. John, run out and get Smith and Brown and Jones and White, so they can tell the reporter about the fires;" and the proprietor and Smith, Jones, Brown and White, broke the world's record in the next half hour for lying about forest fires.

**More Haste
The Less Speed.**

The man in the biggest hurry is not always the man who accomplishes the most. The age has no room for lazy men, though lazy men there be; the age wants its work done quickly, but it wants it done well. An observing lumberman tells how one foreman, in the keenness to get certain work done, missed the mark. "One of the men," he says, "was squaring up some fence posts upon a circular saw table. The belt on the saw arbor was so slack that the saw would not run six inches in the cut without stopping and waiting for the saw to recover its speed, and at each stop time enough was spent in waiting to make the cut the full length of the post had the belt been of proper tension. While standing by him the foreman came up and he called his attention to the belt. "Never mind, John," said he, "do the best you can; the boss is in an awful hurry for

those posts, and the customer is waiting for them, but as soon as you get through take up the belt." Now here was a clear case of mistaken economy on the part of the foreman, although an excellent man otherwise. Yet if he had reflected a moment he would have plainly seen that if he had ordered the belt taken up at once the boss would have got his posts out much sooner, besides saving considerable damage to the belt by slipping over the pulley; for there is nothing more destructive to a belt running at high speed than constant slipping. The heat generated from the friction is more destructive than the strain, so that in this case there was not only a loss in time, but a loss in the damage sustained by the belt."

**Is it
so?**

The News, of this city, quotes the North Star, of Parry Sound, in its protests against the abolition of the export duty on sawlogs. "The towns along the Georgian Bay," we are told, "are threatened with disaster. Midland has been almost ruined by the closing of her sawmills, and other towns and villages along the bay are being more or less affected by the change." This question has been discussed in these columns so much of late, and from so many various standpoints, that it seems a work of supererogation to add another line to the discussion. No one can regret more than the LUMBERMAN the effects of any policy that is going to permanently injure the lumber trade of this country. There is no questioning the fact that large quantities of logs are being cut by American firms and towed across to the United States to be manufactured there. It is equally true that our mills are doing no small share of cutting, and that the coming season in particular the mills will be kept busy. Our Little Current letter on another page tells of a busy spring ahead in that district, and an interview with a Midland millowner in the E.T. page indicates that this town has not lost all its "go." It must be admitted that it was unfortunate that the Emery Lumber Co. saw fit to close what is familiarly known as the Miscampbell mill, but the circumstances attending this step were exceptional and not general. Not a few of the statements touching this whole question, that have been given currency by the general press of the country, are a long way remote from conditions as they actually exist.

**Asphalt or
Wood?**

In this country we have laid at the door of wooden pavements not a few of the ills that flesh is heir to. Medical men, from a sanitary view, condemn the ordinary cedar block. As we have pointed out in these pages before, there is another side to this question, and the fault is not always with the material, but more frequently with the manner in which the material is handled. Who has not heard of, if they have not experienced, something of the dense fogs of the greater London? A writer in an English lumber exchange is disposed to make these an additional charge upon wooden pavements. His deductions are from observation, and he says: "I have observed that as the area of wood pavement has increased at the West End, so has the frequency of fogs, the streets so paved being a species of canal giving out moisture during the autumn and winter months. In the same way as the area of asphalt has increased in the city, so has the frequency of fogs decreased. It is an impossibility for moisture to arise from asphalt as it does from wood pavement. I give my experience of the 23rd ult. On leaving the city at four o'clock, all around the Bank and as far as asphalt extended down Queen Victoria street the atmosphere was comparatively clear, but directly the wood pavement commenced and down to Blackfriars bridge the fog was dense. From the bridge to Northumberland avenue, along the embankment, which is macadam, the fog was less dense, being, however, as bad as ever on the wood at Charing Cross, and all up Regent and Oxford streets. I have known many such instances of late years."

**What's Life
Worth?**

Is human life worth anything? The individual "I" thinks so; the aggregate "I" often acts as though there was little value there. Not a day passes, probably, without some one's life being sacrificed to the carelessness of another. We may in the keenness of the race for the almighty dollar try to laugh the matter down,

but better draw up sharp sometimes and treat the case with rather more seriousness. Take boiler explosions. The daily press are seldom without an item chronicling the death, or worse still, almost, the permanent mangle of one or more men from this cause. Where is the fault? A writer in a contemporary has been discussing the subject and his showing of it indicates that even the individual "I" may perhaps be wickedly indifferent of the same "I." Here is the way the case is put: "It is not often that a boiler goes to pieces in a first-class mill, for the reason that good boilers are placed in them, and competent men employed to take care of them. Boiler insurance also does much to reduce the risk of explosions. It is the 'Jim Crow' mill that is dangerous; the little mill that finds a 'set' first here and then there. Because a man has a desire to manufacture and sell lumber for a living it does not follow that he is a mechanic, or that he is even possessed with common sense when it comes to operating a sawmill. He has but little money maybe, and he wants that little to go as far as possible. He visits some second-hand dealer in whose stock there is an old boiler which should be labelled, 'Short route to eternity;' it is offered to him cheap, and he buys it. Such a boiler is about as dangerous as dynamite, and sooner or later performs its deadly work. In other lines there is cheap machinery which will do fairly good work, and which does not hazard the lives of the men employed around it. For a comparatively small amount of money it is possible to buy a planer or a sawmill which will answer the needs of the mill man whose ambition is to bore with a small augur, but any man is either criminally ignorant or negligent who will put in a low grade boiler. There ought to be some way to protect these men against themselves, but there is not. Human life is very cheap, and if an old rotten or poorly made boiler blows a half-dozen men to kingdom come, that ends it. In the great majority of cases not even an investigation is made, and if the proprietor comes out of it alive he is at perfect liberty to reset the death trap."

**Quality,
Not Quantity.**

Prof. Drummond, in one of those clever little hand-books which have found such a large constituency of readers, tells us that it is quality, not quantity, that this world most needs. His application is to things moral rather than material, but how true is this in the work of the workman in any of the callings of life. An employer of labor has illustrated the case in this way, and what he has said is, at least, true in spots: "I have had a great many men in my employ, but I have never had one yet that amounted to anything who was not independent. No employe can be independent unless he is conscious of his honesty. He may not report for duty till ten o'clock in the morning, but he works for business, while the man who commences promptly at seven and quits at the stroke of six may not be worth his bread and butter. We cannot measure the value of any man's services by the time he puts in. The poor man may work fourteen hours a day and earn much less than the good man earns in eight hours. It is the ability to accomplish results, not the time employed, that counts nowadays." In other words, it is quality that tells. Quality may be made to have reference to the machine as well as the man. Take this with its practical application to the lumber trade from a mechanical exchange: "The best way to make the manufacture of lumber profitable is to economize in every department, from the stump to delivery. The price of lumber is no higher now than it was twenty years ago, but the cost of manufacturing hardwoods has been reduced within ten years fully one-half. This has been effected mainly by the improvements made in machinery and by greater skill on the part of all hands employed in the business, from the mill-owner down. There is no economy in using poor machinery. True enough, there are many men making a living out of veritable "rattletraps" of sawmills, but it is not a 'greasy' living, and in many instances the employes are relatives and dependents, and the market a local, an isolated one. To compete successfully in the general market requires the best of machinery and skilled employes. A sawyer and filer who can make a mill cut 30,000 feet per day of perfect lumber are worth four times as much as those who can make the same mill and hands cut only 20,000 feet."