

DECAY IN TIMBER.

Discussing the causes of decay in timber and their remedy, Indian Engineering states that those organisms which actually cause the decay of timber directly—whether in the living tree or after it is felled—are funguses of one kind or another. The fungus has its roots, the hyphae—slender threads which penetrate and spread throughout whatever it is feeding on—but these themselves secrete a solvent or digestive substance which both enables them to penetrate the hardest wood and to abstract from it what portion forms their food. Some air, some moisture and some warmth are necessary to the growth of fungus. Free ventilation keeping dry prevents all rot—immersed in water always and thus kept from air, wood will not rot in any ordinary way, and with attention to these facts much can be done towards preserving timber. But in the great majority of cases some dampness in confined positions

must exist and naturally we seek for specifics which can render wood unpalatable to the enemy.

Untainted timber treated on the outside is protected greatly, and undoubtedly the best antiseptic we know is common creosote oil. This is very cheap—it is absorbed with great avidity by dry wood especially does the sapwood drink it greedily—and sapwood most requires protection. Moreover creosote can be used alike either for a thorough impregnation under pressure or cheaply as a surface painting, and also it protects from weathering as well as does a coat of common tar—though not as tar and pitch combined. It can be used, too, where tar cannot; because it simply stains the wood a pleasing brown.

The carving on the Liverpool Exchange building, burned a few days ago, was done under the direction of Mr. Thos. Mowbray, now of Toronto, and occupied a period of seven years.

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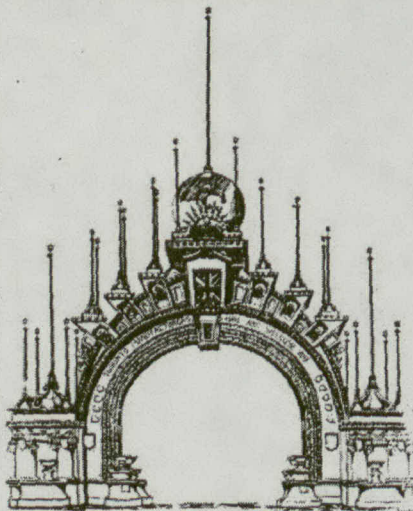
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