

SUPERIORITY OF WIRE ROPE.

WIRE rope making is a comparatively recent industry, at least its production upon a commercial scale has been limited to the last half century. Its manufacture in England during recent years has been growing rapidly, says the Machinery Market, and this may be largely accounted for by the many advantages derived from the substitution of flexible or rigid material, which has naturally widened the field of its application. Early attempts at wire rope making from either charcoal or B. B. iron were soon improved upon when steel was substituted, and now iron ropes are seldom used at all, whether for haulage or collieries or for the rigging of ships.

The principal objection urged against the use of wire rope in the earlier days was its stiffness; but, as we have already said, recent developments have removed this drawback. The flexibility of any rope can, of course, be largely increased by the multiplication of the number of wires of which it is made, and by the method of uniting them. The number of wires of which a rope is made in England generally falls between thirty-six and four hundred. The fewer the number of strands the easier to make the rope, of course, and vice versa, great skill being called into requisition in the arrangement of the wires when a large number are employed.

The superiority of steel wire rope is generally admitted. As an instance of this may be mentioned the towing of the armor-clad Caledonia from Liverpool to Plymouth by a 4-inch steel wire hawser, weighing 12 cwt.; a 13½-inch hemp hawser, weighing 45 cwt., and a 1½-inch stream chain, weighing 130 cwt., having broken in the endeavor to do the same work.

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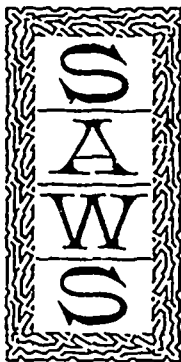
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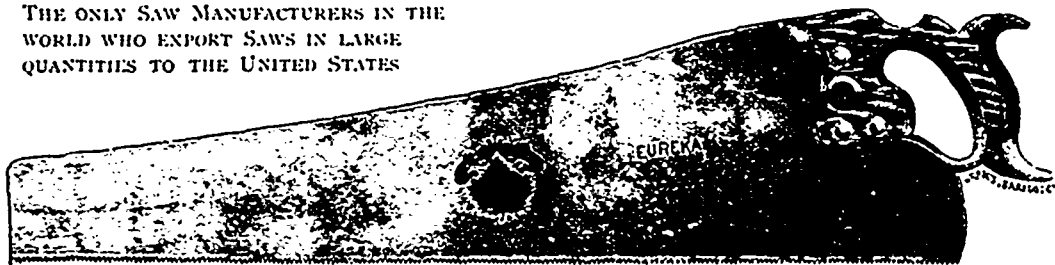
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