

RAILROADS

MANY RAILROAD TIES.

Many Will be Used on Extensions Which Are Planned.

Unless the roads which are planning to begin work on extensions during the next year have already secured them or contracted for them, the chances are that they will have to pay stiff prices for their ties and may not be able to get all they want even then.

This has been a very poor winter for the tie industry and the demand is always so great that a season's cut is nearly always disposed of in the fall.

Most ties are sold in the autumn and those which were cut during the winter of 1905 are therefore gone. So few were cut this year that there is apt to be a shortage when the road builders buy their ties in the fall.

From the announcements of extensions that have come lately, it would seem that the next two years would see an enormous amount of road building and that means the use of a great many ties—at the rate of about 3,000 per mile. Will there be enough to go around?

In Minnesota alone, the consumption during this year will be very great. The Soo line is planning to strike across the state to Carrington, N. D., the Duluth, Rainy Lake & Winifred will build to the Canadian border and the Great Northern is threatening to do the same thing.

Besides this, many other roads are planning extensions, some of which will unquestionably be started during the next twelve months. Among these is that of the Lake Superior & Soutaster, which will be built from Ladysmith, Wis., to Superior as soon as possible.

The chances are that the Rainy Lake road, which will go through a timber country, will make its own ties as the road is extended and the Great Northern will do the same thing if its line is extended to the international boundary line—but all the other roads will go into the market and buy their ties.

The tie business is somewhat different from other branches of the lumber industry in that there is no real open market price on them. They are all delivered on contracts and the parties thereto are often loath to make known the terms. But approximately, tamarack ties could be had last fall for 36 cents apiece and cedar ties from 40 to 44 cents each.

They will undoubtedly be higher next fall if for no other reason than that the demand will be greater.

"This has not been a good winter for the cutting of ties," said L. R. Martin one of the leading tie dealers, this morning. "The weather was too soft all along. There was no frost in the ground and that made it hard to work. The pine men did not suffer so much, but cedar and tamarack are found in low ground and the men would step through the snow into mud and water. It was very hard on horses too."

"When the frost came last fall, it was followed by several days of rain, which killed most of it. Then came the big storm which covered the ground with snow but left the soft earth and water underneath. The weather has not been cold enough all winter to harden things enough to make operations easy or profitable. Men have been hard to get. They did not like the idea of working in

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wet swamps and turned to looting and railroad building, for which the weather has been very favorable this year. The cut has not been large and as there is to be much railroad building, the demand will be so that there is some danger of a shortage." Other tie men say the same thing.

TOURIST SLEEPERS TO CHICAGO.

An Innovation in Sleeping Car Service.

The Great Northern Railway company has met the demand for through sleeping car service to and from Chicago.

The Oriental Limited, the new Great Northern train, is now equipped with a new tourist sleeping car, operating between Seattle and Chicago and intermediate points. The rates on these cars are about one-half of the standard sleeping car rates and no change of cars is necessary between points on the main line in North Dakota and Montana and Chicago in either direction.

Ask your local agent for further information, or apply to F. L. Whitney, Passenger Traffic Manager, St. Paul, Minn.

WAGE SCALE FOR ONLY ONE YEAR

Indianapolis, Ind., March 22.—The joint state committees of the joint conference of operators and miners of the Central Competitive Field and Southwest District again went into executive sessions today to continue their contests over the wage scale. The situation before the session was the same as that which confronted the operators and miners when the former joint conference adjourned Feb. 2, following a disagreement. The two sides were apparently no nearer a settlement. It is admitted by both sides that should there be an agreement at this time, the wage scale agreed upon would be in force for one year only as the miners admit the operators will not agree to a longer period.

COUNTRY OF POSSIBILITIES

Business Opportunities Are Numerous, But as Yet Undeveloped, in Guatemala.

Guatemala is a country of great undeveloped possibilities. Twenty years ago the first railroad was opened connecting the capital with the Pacific port of San Jose, a distance of 75 miles. From Escuintla, a favorite watering place, a branch extends to Mazatenango, and there connects with another line to the port of Champerico. On the Gulf side a road, the Guatemala Northern, is built from Puerto Barrios to Rancho San Augustin, a distance of 129 miles. With the completion of the 70 miles intervening between this point and Guatemala City there will be a continuous line between the Gulf and the Pacific.

The latter road was well constructed and opened to traffic ten years ago. However, it is a difficult matter to keep a road in repair in these tropical countries because of excessive rain and the action of the elements and insects upon the ties. In the 129 miles of track there are 230 bridges, and many of them are over streams which, in the rainy season, are raging torrents. In that season many of the streams change their course or widen their beds and wash out the track. One who has never visited tropical countries cannot appreciate the difficulties of railroad construction there. For the past few years the road has been practically abandoned for freight purposes because of washouts and the destruction of a bridge across the Montague river. Now it has been financed again and construction crews are at work all along the line, a draw bridge is being run to carry the mail and any passengers who may want to go. This train requires two days to run the 129 miles. The passengers do not urge greater speed, for in some places there are scarcely two ties to each rail that will hold a spike. This road and all others are narrow gauge. Considerable work has been done in being done on the extension to the capital, and it is hoped to have it all completed within two years.

The greatest problem with the railroad, as well as with other enterprises, is labor. The Indians will only work spasmodically. Sometimes the political governors will compel them to work, but this cannot exceed 14 days. Then they draw their pay and leave. The plantation owners overcome this by advancing the Indians a certain amount of money, and then the law compels them to work until the debt is paid. Each plantation has an alcalde, or mayor, who has the power to enforce the laws, and he can put the recreant laborer in the stocks or in jail if he refuses to work; or can summon the soldiers to hunt up and bring him back if he attempts to escape. Another mode is often taken as security for the one employed.

Presbyterian Church Reunion. After a division of 95 years, general committees of the Northern Presbyterian church and the Cumberland Presbyterian church, in joint session at St. Louis, December 28, reached an agreement which, if ratified by the general assemblies of those bodies next May, will result in the organic union of the two. Under the agreement, the Cumberland Presbyterians adopt constitutionally the confession of faith of the Northern, or Presbyterian church in the United States of America, as revised in 1902. Arrangements were made for the meeting of a united assembly in 1907, and for a union of missionary and educational organizations of the two churches.

White Sparrow in Maine. A large flock of sparrows attracted much attention in a mill yard in Gardiner, Me., some time ago. One of their number was perfectly white, not having a dark feather, and appeared perfectly capable of looking out for himself.

Easy Road to Fame. Anyone can become famous easily. Just write a letter to somebody advocating that people be chloroformed for some reason or other.

WOOD WAS JUSTIFIED.

North Dakota Soldiers Find An Excuse For the Moro Massacre.

The experiences of the North Dakota regiment on the island of Luzon with the belligerent natives, upholds General Wood's dispatch to the war department that the great slaughter of women and children, during a recent engagement between the American soldiers and a entrenched war party of Moros, was unavoidable.

Numerous expressions obtained from members of the regiment were as one that General Wood's conduct of the battle was entirely justified by circumstances and precedent. They add that the history of Jolo engagement will be repeated many more times before the island will be safe to settle.

Deputy United States Marshall Andrew F. Quist, an ex-member of the North Dakota regiment was particularly outspoken in his disapproval of the criticism that is being made of the battle. He pointed out that it is unfair to pass judgment on General Wood and his men for the attack they made on the stronghold of the natives until some experience is had with these treacherous people. They are entirely devoid of any sense of gratitude and seemed possessed with a ceaseless desire to wrest the control of the islands from the Americans. Mr. Quist believes that just as long as they are permitted to roam about the island without restraint, trouble and any amount of it may be expected. In his judgment these insurgents should be corralled and watched like the Indians were in the frontier days.

Mr. Quist, in discussing the recent battle on the island of Jolo, said that it is an old trick of the natives to shield themselves by placing women and children between them and danger.

During a number of engagements that the North Dakota regiment participated in on the island of Luzon, native women and children approached the lines exclaiming "Queca" (a friend). They were ordered to the rear and later on firing was heard in the direction they had gone. Investigation proved that these women had concealed themselves behind the lines of the American soldiers then in battle with the natives, and were firing on the regiment. Treachery of this kind and numerous other instances where the women and children were given protection, caused the death of many soldiers who were shot from the rear.

Notes From the Labor World.

The formal installation of the new lord mayor of Dublin (J. P. Nannetti, M. P.) last Saturday was made the occasion of a great demonstration by the trade and labor bodies of the city in recognition of the fact that for the first time in the history of the Irish metropolis a practical trade unionist occupies its civic chair.

The child labor bill just passed in Iowa is one of the most drastic in its provisions of any legislation of its kind enacted in America. It prohibits the employment of children under 18 years in any gainful occupation which would injure their health. The law is also aimed at department stores, prohibiting employment which compels children to remain standing for any length of time.

Italian laborers in Massachusetts are organizing with a view to affiliating with the American Federation of Labor.

M. C. Wallace, a state organizer of the American Federation of Labor and one of the most prominent labor leaders in South Carolina, died last week in Columbia after a brief illness of pneumonia. He was at one time president of the South Carolina state federation of labor.

Thomas I. Kidd, who was secretary of the Amalgamated Woodworkers' International union for fourteen years and an active unionist for a quarter of a century, has retired from active service.

The first general woman organizer of the American Federation of Labor is Miss Gertrude Barnum, daughter of Judge Barnum of Chicago. She is engaged in organizing all branches of industry employing women.

The Coopers' International Union of North America expects a large attendance at its convention in Milwaukee this fall.

The next big labor convention will be that of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Plate Workers, which is to assemble in Cincinnati early in May.

UNSINKABLE SHIPS.

NEW AND INGENUOUS CONTRIVANCES ON IRONCLADS.

Electrical Automatic Doors Kept Compartments Water-Tight—Naval Problems Being Solved.

What happens to a battleship when its hull is punctured? It usually sinks. When H. M. S. Camperdown plunged into the Victoria ten years ago, the latter went down and 600 lives were lost.

How to prevent such disasters has been a problem ever before admiralty departments, states the New Orleans Times-Democrat. That naval architects hadn't solved it was made clear in the recent war between Russia and Japan. When either a Russian or a Japanese vessel was struck below the water line, to the bottom it went.

Constructors of the United States navy believe Uncle Sam has now solved this problem. The bureau of construction and repair has been working away at it for a long time, but tests just completed by the bureau indicate that the two new ships Montana and North Carolina, now being built at Newport News, will come nearer to being unsinkable to any vessel ever before launched.

The solution of the problem is in the perfection of a system of automatic bulkhead doors operating by electricity, and permitting of closure in time of emergency by a single officer on the bridge of the ship. The device has been named the "long-arm" system, because the long arm of the

electric wires reach out to save the ship.

A ship is divided into watertight compartments with bulkhead doors permitting intercourse between them. If the ship's hull is punctured, water rushes in. If the doors are shut, only the compartment nearest the puncture will be flooded. The vessel will still float. When the Victoria was struck her doors were open. The men were too excited to close them. If the doors of a ship are automatically closed in time of need, the vessel is unsinkable. That's what the new plan comes about as near to securing as human ingenuity allows.

Hydraulic and pneumatic doors were tried by our navy department, but they proved dangerous and impracticable. Then Rear Admiral and Naval Constructor Bowles, now president of the Fore River shipyards, conceived the idea of operating the doors by electricity. An electric system was then developed and has been installed on 16 of the newest ships. But still there were defects. The doors were too delicate and intricate, many naval officers thought. The scheme must be made simple, and, if possible, lighter. The bureau of construction and repair imposed most severe tests for any new system of automatic doors.

The tests of the new plan have just been completed, and it is believed that the two new vessels will, accordingly, be the safest warships afloat.

This is but one of the numerous improvements which will go on the new ships. Safety, safety of the ship and of the men in her, is a primary requirement. Besides, the "long-arm" bulkhead doors, always under perfect control by means of electricity, greater safety is the inspiration of dozens of improvements that are going into our new warships. One of these improvements is a sprinkling device for the magazines; another is an electrical device for controlling the firing of the boilers.

Quite the most ingenious of minor improvements is the portable steering apparatus lately patented, especially for use aboard warships. Cripple the steering apparatus and the ship is at the mercy of the elements or human enemies. This portable steering apparatus, it is claimed, will make it possible to direct the ship from any one of half a dozen stations by means of electrical connections there located, and all communicating with the steering room, the most carefully protected part of a warship. The new future is likely to see the warship with armored smokestacks and better protection than the counting tower now affords for the commander of war vessels in action.

At the moment the never-ending competition between shell and armor is slightly in favor of the shell, a fact due to the new explosive, dunnite, the secret of which has been obtained by our government from the inventor. Turbines probably will mark the next step in warship propulsion.

These are only the most striking of new appliances and devices and improvements aboard the twentieth century warship. There are others, such as more perfect range finders, better arrangements for handling ammunition and improved accommodations for the comfort of the blue jacket in peace, and his care when injured in war. Safer and more numerous hospital stations are provided for in the new ships now being planned. Veritably, there is no end to the demands made upon the naval designer.

Danger Signal.

Red is the signal for danger everywhere. Even in the far-away Society Islands, the natives are bound to rush to the rescue when the red signal light is seen. These islanders produce the light by burning a dried seaweed, which gives forth a bright cherry red.

"Blessing of the River."

A curious Roumanian Christmas custom is the "blessing of the river." A service is held on the bank of the Danube, and a small wooden cross thrown in through a hole in the ice. A frantic scramble follows to recover the relic.

When Tact Is Needed.

"That politician takes great credit to himself for keeping his promises." "I don't see why he should," answered Senator Sorghum. "Anybody can keep a promise, but it sometimes requires an artist to break one."—Washington Star.

Improvement.

"There is some doubt about Wiggins capacity." "He has improved, if that is the case," answered Mr. Harrenslug. "When I knew him there was no doubt whatever about his incapacity."—Washington Star.

Dubious.

"Did you have a good time during the social season last winter?" "Well," answered Mr. Cumrox, "I ate a lot of things I don't like, met a lot of people I didn't know, and bought a lot of things I don't need. So I guess I must have had a good time."—Washington Star.



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