

MAHOGANY IS PEER OF DECORATIVE HARDWOODS.

American Architects and Furniture Manufacturers Draw Heavily Upon the Markets of the World for This Precious Wood.

For refined expression in the manufacture of furniture and all other forms of interior decoration, mahogany is undoubtedly the peer of the hardwoods. No wood is so universally used today for this purpose in every city and country of the world; no wood is so freely and successfully imitated.

America's architects and men of the furniture and cabinet-making industries draw heavily upon the markets of the world in the struggle to supply an ever increasing demand for genuine mahogany. Hundreds of tons of logs annually are imported into this country and worked into beautiful forms to grace fine homes or dignify the interior of public buildings, large hotels or railway cars.

A few years ago mahogany was regarded as a very precious wood, and was employed only in the interior of the finest houses and in the manufacture of the most expensive furniture. During the past few years, however, there has been a wonderful development in mahogany importation and use.

The total quantity of mahogany imported last year was nearly forty-two million board feet. Of this large amount North America supplied 65 per cent and Europe 18 per cent. Though Europe supplied only a little more than one-fourth as much mahogany as there was imported from North America its average value per thousand feet was more than twice as much, due to finer quality. The remainder of the imports came from Africa, South America and Asia.

Mexico furnished 46.2 per cent of the mahogany coming from North America, Nicaragua followed with 19.2 per cent, British Honduras with 15.5 per cent, Cuba with 8 per cent and Honduras with 7.4 per cent. Other Central American countries furnished the small remaining percentage.

Immediately following the war with Spain, lumbermen of the United States exploited the largest and most accessible of the Cuban mahogany forests. For a few years the forests of Cuba contributed more largely to the supply in this country than at the present time, largely owing to the rapidity with which this valuable timber was logged and shipped. An engineer employed by American authorities during the recent intervention in Cuba claims that nearly all of the available supply of mahogany of that island had been exhausted and that what now remains in any considerable quantities is far remote from transportation facilities.

The number of buyers of mahogany in this country's hardwood market is now exceeded only by those of oak, maple, poplar, basswood, ash, birch, chestnut, and cypress. The principal reason for the popularity of mahogany is that the importers of the logs and the manufacturers of lumber have never advanced its prices beyond a modest profit, and it is relatively so low that it now makes little difference in price whether an office building or a home is furnished in mahogany or quartersawn white oak.

Another reason for its popularity is because it improves in tone with age. After much experimentation car builders finish practically all of their cars in ma-

hogany, as it withstands satisfactorily the severe usage and also holds its finish. The chief centers of mahogany importation and manufacture are Boston, New York, Louisville, New Orleans, Chicago and Indianapolis.

The mahogany is the wood of a tree of Swietenia, of the natural family of Cedrelaceae, named by Jaquin in honor of J. Van Swieten. The tree is one of the most majestic and beautiful, with large spreading head and pinnate shining leaves. The trunk is often forty feet in length and six feet in diameter and is divided into many massive arms.

In the London Timber and Trade Journal there appeared recently an interesting historical reference to the mahogany trade in England. According to this writer mahogany wood was first imported by England in 1724, although in 1597 Sir Walter Raleigh demonstrated the great value of this wood which was used in repairing his ships at Trinidad. From 1724 until the discovery of the mahogany forests of Africa by Stanley, England and Continental Europe were heavy purchasers of mahogany from the West Indies, Honduras and Mexico. A great part of the mahogany used in this country in early years came from Europe, it having first reached there from the West Indies, Mexico and Honduras.

LUMBER SHIPPED TO PANAMA.

The Dutch steamship Heemskerk, 1,375 tons, Capt. DeBroot, will load from Jacksonville for Colon, with a cargo of piling and lumber from D. L. Gillespie & Co. for the Panama canal. This steamer sailed from this port in January with a similar cargo, and is again to return here. The Heemskerk will be loaded by the well known forwarding agents and stevedores, W. A. Evans & Co., who will also load the following schooners with lumber for coastwise ports: Collins W. Walton, 381 tons, Capt. McGehee; D. Howard Speer, 489 tons, Capt. Wilson; Theoline, 850 tons, Capt. Cummings; Florence Craddick, 637 tons, Capt. Lank; Charles K. Schull, 827 tons, Capt. Peckworth; William C. Tanner, 879 tons, Capt. Johnson; Kate B. Ogden, 541 tons, Capt. Lampson; Levi S. Andrews, 599 tons, Capt. Murphy.

SALE OF VIRGIN PINE TIMBER IN ALABAMA.

Hattiesburg, Miss., March 1.—The largest timber transaction in recent years was closed in this city this morning, when J. Numa Jordy, of New Orleans, was handed a check for \$650,000 in exchange for a deed to 15,380 acres of virgin pine timber in Washington County, Alabama. It is estimated that the timber on the tract will cut at least 170,000,000 feet of lumber. The purchasers are Glenn-Eddy & Co., of Saginaw, Michigan, and the tract is bought as an investment, in the hope that lumber prices will materially increase within the next two or three years. Mr. Jordy acted as agent for the Sage-Spencer syndicate, which owns immense tracts of yellow pine in Mississippi and Alabama. The particular tract sold today is located 30 miles from Mobile, but it is said that the same concern is figuring on the purchase of several tracts near Hattiesburg. Representatives of the company are here today with Mr. Jordy.

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