

THE EVENING NEWS.

Monday, Sept. 7, 1874.

Fire Proof Wood.

Some experiments of an interesting nature were made on Saturday at Godstone with the process of rendering wood uninflammable, and also impervious to dry rot and decay, by subjecting it to a "pickling" process in a solution of tungstate of soda, water of the specific gravity of 1.25. It should be stated that tungstate is made by the addition of tungstate of lime to hydrochloric acid and salt, and it produces in the process as much chloride of lime as will pay the working expenses. The invention claims to be superior to all other methods of preserving wood, as they only render it more liable to fire. As instances of the inflammable nature of preserved wood may be mentioned the last stage at Lilac Hill, where a granite tower, and Sir Joseph Gabriel's preserved wood warehouse, which was destroyed by fire. The tungstate of soda from experiments that have been made publicly and privately during the last three years, is proved to render soft woods, such as white and yellow pine, as hard as oak or ash, and will not return to its original condition of durability that has been affected by dry rot. The visitors on Saturday were shown a piece of restored oak taken from the *Lord Clyde*, an ironclad that was built some years ago, of unseasoned timber, and which had been preserved and treated. Having been treated, it is now as hard and durable as ever. The experiments made were three, and the tests were undoubtedly very severe. Two small pyramids of sticks were made out of pieces of the other of unpreserved wood. These were then well saturated with paraffine, and ignited. In the case of the prepared wood the paraffine soon burnt itself out without communicating the flames to the wood, which was only slightly charred. The other heap burnt fiercely, and in half an hour was reduced to ashes. The next experiment was made with two wooden huis, one of which had been prepared while the other, built of ordinary Scotch fir, had not. A strong fire sufficient to ignite the houses was burned in each, and the effect was about the same as in the preceding experiment. The charred portion of the wood had been treated. A government document had been treated by the process, and was taken out sometimes afterwards, charred indeed as to the outside, but practically uninjured in any other part. The inside was still cool, and the paper was still the day after. Perhaps the most important trial was that which took place with gunpowder. A government gunpowder keg which had been rendered fire-proof was used for this experiment. A paper packet containing about two ounces of gunpowder, was put in the bottom of the keg, covered with a sheet of paper, impregnated with the tungstate was pasted over it, and dried. The keg which was open at the top, was turned upside down, and surrounded by shavings, which were lighted. A fire of petroleum and shavings was kept burning on the keg without producing any visible effect on the keg. To make the trial still more complete the keg was reversed again, and lighted shavings were thrown in upon the gunpowder, protected only by a sheet of brown paper. The paper stood the test admirably, and the solution rejected the fire so thoroughly that it did not even show a sign of charing. The gunpowder was then taken out and exploded.—*London Daily News*.



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