

The Pittsburgh Gazette.

THE LAKE SUPERIOR IRON REGION.

NUMBER THREE.

(Correspondence of the Pittsburgh Gazette.)
In our last we gave some statistics of iron mining, cost of transportation to a foreign market, etc. We now propose to furnish some information regarding the manufacture of pig iron in Marquette county.

The metallurgical traditions and customs of New England seem to predominate; the iron workers have migrated westward, on the line of their own parallel of latitude. Pennsylvania seems to have comparatively few representatives either among those who furnish capital, or those who furnish skill.

The furnaces are mostly charcoal, driven in some cases by water, which is abundant, and in most cases by steam—taking the gas from the furnace for fuel. The blast is driven in at two pounds pressure per inch, and at a temperature of 850 degrees Fahrenheit. The charcoal is made almost entirely in kilns 25 to 30 feet in diameter, and 25 to 30 feet high, shaped like a straw bee-hive, and having a capacity of 30 to 40 barrels, which is reduced to charcoal in about seventeen days. About 25 of these kilns are scattered through the forest, skirting a railroad in the vicinity of the "high timber line." The iron, which is cast in pine are the products well charred, 20 tons, weighing 100 bushels. Charcoal is delivered at the furnaces at about 110 per bushel.

The present average cost of making Lake Superior Charcoal Pig Iron is about \$30 per ton, and is expended nearly as follows:

Charcoal.....\$15.00
Repair, &c.....1.00
Royalty, or stumping.....1.00

total.....\$17.00

From this it will be seen how important an element in the manufacture of Pig Iron fuel is, one-half of the entire cost. The net profits on Lake Superior Pig Iron, from the beginning of the manufacture to the present time, have varied from \$8 to over \$30, and are now about \$15 per ton. Assuming 18 tons per day for 300 days per year, as the average product for one furnace, and we have an annual profit of \$5,500—or, for the fourteen furnaces of the district, annually, a profit of \$19,000.

The following is a list of the furnaces, with their location:

Pioneer, at Marquette.....1
Collinsville, at Collierville.....1
Northern Chocolay.....1
Morgan, at Morgan.....1
Michigan, at Clarsburg.....1
Chapman, at Michigan.....1
Court, at Court.....1
School, at Muskingum.....1
Doverdale, at Doverdale.....1

Total.....14
Estimating one hundred and fifty bushels of charcoal for each ton of pig iron, and forty thousand tons of iron in average yield per annum, we will give an annual consumption of six million bushels of charcoal per annum, or about the product of about one thousand acres of timber, burned up by these furnaces every year.

THE FUEL QUESTION.

We know that scores of furnaces in our own region have gone out of blast, through the wastage of timber suitable for charcoal, and this, too, in a region of hard wood and heavy timber. Charcoal being too bulky for transportation by rail, the time required to stop all these Lake Superior charcoal furnaces can be mathematically demonstrated; it is a question of but a few years, and the iron of the country will be sent to market by steamship, in this distant region, in no small matter. When wood becomes scarce and charcoal advances in price, to say fifteen cents per bushel, what then?

Then we will find Youghiogheny coke taken from Pittsburgh to Escanaba, as a return cargo, by the vessels engaged in the iron ore trade—provided our iron and coal interests are sufficiently interpenetrating to furnish the required fuel. An inland transportation of some three hundred miles by rail will not tend to stimulate this intense change of ore and coal. It costs as much to freight a ton of iron ore from Cleveland to Pittsburgh, as the thousand miles of transportation by lake from Escanaba to Cleveland. We annex the actual cost of transportation, by the different routes of conveyance, as determined by McAlpine:

By River.....2 miles per ton per mile.
By Canal.....3 miles per ton per mile.
By Rail.....2 miles per ton per mile.

Now, if Pittsburgh ceases to cultivate Marquette county, as a market for her coal and coke, and to obtain a share of the product of these mines, our capital must provide cheaper transportation from the Lakes. Mr. Robert's estimate of the cost of the enlargement of the Erie was \$30,000,000, and one of our most enterprising manufacturers recently, he stated that he would take stock in such an enterprise to the amount of \$20,000, and consider himself the gainer, when the enlargement was completed, even if his stock was then entirely lost, through the economy in his freight. With such a cheap channel of communication as this enlarged canal from Erie to Rochester, and the Ohio slackwater from thence to our Iron City, the cost of iron and coal will be cut down to the North. Without a doubt, such a cheap route, for heavy freight, such as coal, iron, or heavy machinery and castings, our heavy trade will be lost to us. Every manufacturer and merchant can estimate for himself the probable advantages to himself of being able to ship Chicago at about three dollars per ton, and to all Lake ports in proportion.

We are not already building up formidable lines in this direction, for lack of enterprise in this direction? We have, to date, no rival in the same field. We find, however, that 35 furnaces, consuming 241,500 tons of Lake Superior Iron ore, there were but 7 of the number in Pittsburgh, using, with 25 rolling mills, 50,000 tons; while in the Shenango Valley there were 10 furnaces, using 65,000 tons; in the Mahoning Valley 12 furnaces, using 60,000 tons; in Buffalo 4 furnaces, using 28,000 tons, and in Cleveland 8 furnaces, using 7,500 tons. Since that date there has been a large increase in the same direction. At Allentown, Hunlock, Wilkes-Barre, and other points in Ohio, West of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Brazil, Indiana—and at how many other points all through the West, we find, rolling mills "spinning" up. Just now we hear of last discoveries of the best black coal and fine iron ore in Green county, Indiana. So that, save to points which we can reach by river, we are rapidly being cut off from our hitherto chief boast—our iron trade. Let our mining and manufacturing interests combine and estimate what they could do in a few years. And they add to their resources, by taking a copper vein, of say 250 tons per month, which, unless we are greatly mistaken, you will find the figures ample to defray the cost of the improvement; and if so, are not our miners and manufacturers ready to advance their estimated savings on freight for a year or two, to aid in an improvement of such incalculable value to these interests?

Had we any eloquence, we should become eloquent in arguing this subject, as of

vital importance to our city, its place, importance to the entire valley through which it would pass; to our own beautiful port of Erie, where it would debouch upon the great inland seas of the North and West.

The most causal reader of the acts already mentioned, regarding the extent and importance of the Lake Superior Iron industry, and the prospect of its future, will easily perceive that the illuminous coal, will estimate for him the possibilities of the future, when the twin agents of civilization are united by cheap water communication.

"Speaking of these kilns in our first paper, your compiler made us say they were lined with 'five feet brick'; we had written five brick."

WORK FOR WOMAN.

Probably our countrywomen talk more about the right to enter all departments of industry than do their sisters in any other part of the world. In the older countries the complaint, if any, would be, that women are compelled to do more than their share of labor. In Britain, for example, outside of Liverpool and London, the houses are commonly kept by women. A woman is equally at home in the kitchen, as in the drawing room. She goes to the hat shop, attends to the accounts, and takes care of the house. The men are reduced to the positions of porters and waiters. In Britain, and in France and Italy, women are guards along the track of the railroads. On the continent generally, the traveler finds women conducting a large share of the business. In Belgium, France, and Germany, and Northern Italy, the signs over the doors of the houses are usually "to a woman," although the head of the firm is not found attending to the details of money at the office. In Paris, the jewelry stores are commonly managed by women, and many of the smaller manufactory of various articles would be entirely conducted by them. Near the Tuilleries is a sign indicating that a store is run by a woman, "Miss... and the sisters of her mother."

At Cologne, the leading manufacturer of the famous wine is Miss Martin, a nun. At Milan, women compete with men in merchandise and trade on the principal streets, and in the finest apartments of the new arcade. Throughout Switzerland, women maintain their full share of many of the industrial, commercial, and agricultural occupations.

On the following page, we give a sketch of the following of these furnaces, with their location:

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