



VIEW OF N. A. COLLEGE OF HEALTH, N. W. CORNER OF FIFTH AND RACE STREETS, PHILADELPHIA

Behind the iron railing and trees represented - stands St. John's Church,
under Pastorship of Rev. Dr. Phillips & Mayers -

THE LAST OF THE WOOD-SAWYERS.—The race of wood-sawyers is nearly extinct. Coal has done for them what the going out of hair powder did for the powder makers, and what the coming in of shoe ribbons and pantaloons did for the manufacturers of buckles. Those who remember the Drawbridge Wharf in its palmy days, before the Reading Railroad and its trains of coal cars were thought of, and when the Schuylkill Navigation Company was only thought of; those who remember Spruce street wharf in those days will bear in mind the acres of ground covered with piles of oak, hickory and gum, affording many a snug nook for the once far-famed race of Drawbridge loafers to snooze in—those worthies of whom it was sung in an ancient ditty,

"Oh, give me but a loaf of rye,
And a whiskey bottle bright,
And to the Drawbridge I will hie,
And there I'll pass the night!"

The wood-piles made convenient places for depositing the clothes of the boys who paddled in the "Horse-dock" in summer, or boldly plunged into the river in deep water, oblivious to city ordinances against bathing in front of the town, and in blissful ignorance of prowling men in glazed top hats and brazen stars.

The wood-sawyers had many a cozy place there where they could lay wait for customers, and by pointing out prime hickory, seasoned oak, and well dried pine, secure for themselves the privilege of accompanying the carters who took home the ligneous purchase. It was a pleasant thing then to see this now almost extinct race plodding along beside the carts which the scientific skill of old Benny Duncan, the corder, had ascertained to contain just half a cord each. Each sawyer, with his "buck" and saw placed skilfully on his shoulders, with the cross-beam of the buck swathed around with layers of woollen and leather, the use of which will shortly be made manifest.

The load had been "shot" into the street, the sawyer deliberately planted his "buck" where it would rest firmly upon the ground and be convenient for the operations of its owner. The woollen and leather aforesaid had come into requisition, the first was carefully wrapped around the left leg, below the knee, as a pad, and the leather, usually the upper portion of an old boot, covered the whole and protected the limb from rough contact with the cord-wood while holding the latter firm in its place upon the "buck." A little grease was obtained from the eek, the shining blade of the saw was anointed with it, the remainder of the fat was laid upon a chip and snugly placed upon the shady side of the cellar-door jamb, the operator spat upon his hands and he stood confessed a well-appointed and undeniable wood-sawyer! 'Twas pleasant too to see a skilful cutter ply his vocation, to witness the skill with which he avoided the knots, to behold how steadily he bent to his work when there was a big log to be severed, and to admire how he would "ease up" at each passage of his flashing blade through the sticks in a "buck full" of "small stuff."

In those happy days getting in wood was generally the occasion of a grand frolic, and no boy with the genuine feelings of a boy but would revel among a disordered heap of cut sticks in the cellar and toil diligently to pile them up with mathematical precision. The sawyer, when aware of a piler being employed below ground, must needs be careful or heavy sticks would occasionally be brought in rude contact with unprotected craniums. Hear the prudent man then, as he was about to "dump" an armful of cut wood down the cellar way, sound his note of warning and cry aloud—

"Away piler! take c-a-r-e!"

Wood chopping, wood sawing, wood piling and wood burning, particularly when the latter is done in open fireplaces—are rather poetical ideas, but your utilitarianism is a terrible foe to poetry. Anthracite is smuggled in at vault holes or through cellar windows by dirty mean looking men, with dirty baskets, who haven't a bit of poetry about them. No decent boy would touch the dirty stuff, and nobody ever heard of making a frolic of getting in the winter's coal. The mineral fuel is burned in furnaces, cut of sight, as though it was ashamed to be seen, and what imagination could ever grow warm while seated by a "register" or an "air-tight." There are in these hidden fires no blazing sticks, or crumbling, glowing coals to stir up strange fancies and bring the poetry out of a man. There are no huge back-logs suggestive of the grand old woods, with sturdy choppers and rustic teams, and the ground covered with snow, like the December scenes found pictured in old almanacs.

It must be admitted, however much we regret it, that stone-coal is a necessary evil, one of those kinds of things, in fact, that cannot be dispensed with, and we, like Mr. Gradgrind and the rest of the world, must grow "eminently practical." We must count the saving, and make the best of what cannot be avoided. The days of "ten-plates" and Franklin stoves have passed by, the glory of back-logs have departed, wood-corders are seen no more, "log-lighted ingles" and hickory ashes are obsolete ideas, wood piles have almost entirely disappeared from the Drawbridge wharf, and even its name is scarcely known to the rising generation: the ancient order of loafers, that erst haunted this spot, is scattered, but their numbers have since waxed great; wood-saws are rusting out in inglorious ease, and the wood-sawyer's "occupation's gone!" A few superannuated old sawyers still totter about to do the bidding of certain "slow" citizens, who refuse to be reconciled to Lehigh or Schuylkill, but as this class of worthies die off, the few surviving operators upon cord-wood will imitate their example, and the last wood-sawyer will soon follow to the grave the grim relics of his tribe. The age of wood has passed by, and the era of coal has usurped its place.

In a picture see p. 149 -

Real Estate Sale.—The following properties were disposed of last evening, at the Philadelphia Exchange, by Messrs. M. Thomas & Sons:—

50 shares Keystone Insurance Co.,	\$10 per share.
1 do Arch street Theatre,	\$335.
1 do Philadelphia Library,	\$23-50.
1 do Mercantile Library,	\$8-25.
1 do Academy of Fine Arts,	\$17-50.
Lease of store, No. 22 south Fourth street, 13 years from 1st January, 1851,	\$4200 00
House and lot, Pine above Second street, 20 by 142 feet—Ground rent \$250,	\$5333 34
House and lot, No. 356 Spruce street 29½ by 165 feet,	\$17,800-00
House and lot, N. W. corner Front and Poplar streets, 38½ by 104 feet, with two frames and two brick dwellings adjoining. Ground rent \$100.	\$2500
House and lot, Fifth below Carpenter street, 17 by 87½ feet, with three brick dwellings on the rear. Ground rent \$98.	\$2200
Lot of Ground, corner Duke and Division streets, 95½ by 111½ feet,	\$1150-00
House and Lot, with wharf, &c., fronting on the River, Green Bank, Wood and Pearl streets, Burlington, N. J., 83 by 201 feet,	\$19,700 00
Country Seat at Bristol, Pennsylvania, 151½ by 151½ feet,	\$7700 00
House and lot, Federal above Eleventh street, 16½x62 feet, ground rent \$60,	\$525
Building lot, Girard Avenue above Seventh, 20x 93½ feet, ground rent \$100,	\$800