

TIMBER.

I notice in your issue of December 11th that Miss Lilian E. Bland, of Belfast, in a most interesting letter on the subject of wood-built gliders, states that ash is better than spruce for spars. Now the experience of all naval architects who have had anything to do with racing yachts is exactly the contrary, as all racing spars, at any rate up to 50 ft. or so, are now made of silver spruce, as being the stiffest and toughest wood for its weight and strength. No doubt ash would be best for runners.

Of course, we always use hollow spars for the smaller craft, and in very small boats *piano-wire rigging* has been in use for years.

It may interest you to learn that a hollow silver-spruce spar, 2 in. diameter in centre, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. at one end and 1 in. at the other end, proved to be about 20 per cent. stiffer than a bamboo of equal length (12 ft.) and diameter. It was also over 10 per cent. lighter.

Strand, W.C.

LINTON HOPE.

[Our correspondent is the well-known naval architect, who is much interested in the comparative problems provided by the racing yacht and the aeroplane.—ED.]