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Improvement in Malt and Grain Kilns.

The drying of malt as ordinarily practiced, by spreading it upon the floor of a room, the floor being composed of perforated iron or clay tiles, is an onerous labor and greatly exhausting, because of the excessive heat and the vapors arising from the mass. The workman is exposed to the heat of the furnaces beneath the floor, while his work of turning and mixing the malt is of the most laborious character. All this exposure and most of the manual labor are saved by the use of the machine shown in the engravings, which is essentially self-acting. Fig. 1 is a vertical transverse section, and Fig. 2 also a vertical view of the driving and connecting parts of the device.

The dryer is a rectangular case, the outside walls being of wood or metal, and the inner wall of sheet metal, with a space between the two filled with air or a non-conducting material, to prevent the loss of heat by radiation. The case is fixed on a foundation, A, into which is conducted a hot-air pipe, B, and a sinuous or zigzag flue, C, from a furnace. The flue is of this form to give as large an area of heating surface as possible, and the pipe, B, has one or more longitudinal slots, as seen, for a similar purpose. When the case is heated by the pipe, B, the hot air is forced through it by means of a fan or other equivalent, but when the furnace flue, C, is used, the case is heated simply by the radiation of the heat. The latter is used when only a gentle heat is required, and the former when a greater and more rapid heat is desirable.

Within the casing is a series of endless aprons or carriers, consisting of machine chains, passing at each end over suitable wheels and driven by the train of gears seen in Fig. 2.

They may be driven by power or by hand, as is convenient. Between these chains on each carrier is a series of slats extending across the interior of the casing and traversing on fixed perforated plates, the surfaces of which they sweep; the upper plate of the upper carrier only being solid. The malt or grain is deposited on the upper carrier and is conveyed along on the solid plate of the top carrier and deposited on the perforated plate underneath, from which it is discharged at one end, as seen in Fig. 1, to be again carried across in the direction of the arrows, and so on to the bottom, where it is dropped, at D. The shafts at one end of these carriers are attached to the side of the case by bolts, by which they can be adjusted when the chains or any other parts become loosened by wear. The hot air in passing up in the casing, through the perforated plates and the malt, carries off the moisture through the side tubes, E, represented in both figures; and it will be seen that the malt or grain is subjected gradually to the heat, as the temperature of the kiln increases gradually from its top downward, and the grain must pass over a large area within a small compass.

This is a German invention, patented in this country through the Scientific American Patent Agency, March 10, 1868, by Wm. Einstein, the assignee for this country. It is in use at some of the most extensive breweries of Southern Germany, as that of Anton Dreher's, the Spaten brewery, and the Lion brewery of Munich, and many others. Its advantages are summed up by the patentee as follows: It occupies only one tenth of the ground space of others; one laborer can attend to two kilns; there is no stirring and turning of the malt by manual labor; there is no interruption to the process; the malt is carried gradually to a higher temperature, while it is always in continuous motion; the kiln may be regulated to give the malt any color desired; it requires less fuel than others and yields a superior product.

Further information may be obtained by addressing Wm. Einstein, St. Louis, Mo.

Bromide of Potassium.

Bromide of potassium still continues to attract the attention of the medical faculty. That it is a valuable therapeutic agent there can remain no possible doubt. Its action appears to be dissimilar from all other known remedies, and it cannot be classified upon the general principles adopted by most writers upon the materia medica. It promotes sleep

without narcotism, controls excitement of the sexual organs, and is found in general to be a valuable remedy in functional derangements having their origin in reflex nervous action. Its action in such cases doubtless takes place in some mysterious manner upon the nerve centers. A very interesting and instructive treatise upon the power of bromide of potassium in checking the reflex nausea induced by the administration of anaesthetics, by Alex. J. Stone, M. D., of Boston, has made its appearance, and is a valuable contribution to the literature of medicine. Dr. Stone's method of administering this rem-

length. A is the fast collar on the saw shaft. The indicator, B, is a pipe, or hollow shaft, having secured to its bottom end two forks, C, which, with the V-point of the hollow tube, engage with a score cut in the periphery of the collar, A. This score can be easily cut by a hand tool, if a rest is fitted for it near its circumference, and the saw shaft be made to revolve at a proper speed. This scoring of the fixed collar furnishes a seat for the lower end of the gage or indicator. The upper end of the indicator has a knife edge, which, when set to the point of a tooth, is held by the thumb screw, D. It is evident

that the gage may be used to designate the circumference of the saw simply by turning the saw around, noting the difference in elevation of the points of the teeth. When saws with adjustable teeth are used, it is only necessary to turn the point of the tooth down to expose the shoulder, which may be filed away, as shown at E, with dotted lines, somewhat exaggerated.

Such a device is really valuable to practical sawyers to enable them to adjust their saws without the necessity of grinding off the edge by a fixed stone, and then filing up and swaging to gage. By this simple gage every tooth of a saw can be made to cut alike.

This device was patented on March 31, 1868, by W. P. Miller, Middletown, N. Y. They are manufactured and sold by Henry Seymour & Co., 52 Beekman st., New York city. Either of the above parties may be addressed.

An Alarming Theory.

From the annual recurrence of rains, meteoric showers, and the explosions of steam boilers in various parts of the country, Professor Loomis suggests a very uncomfortable theory in regard to the safety of the earth itself. He thinks it not impossible that sufficient steam might be generated in the burning center of the

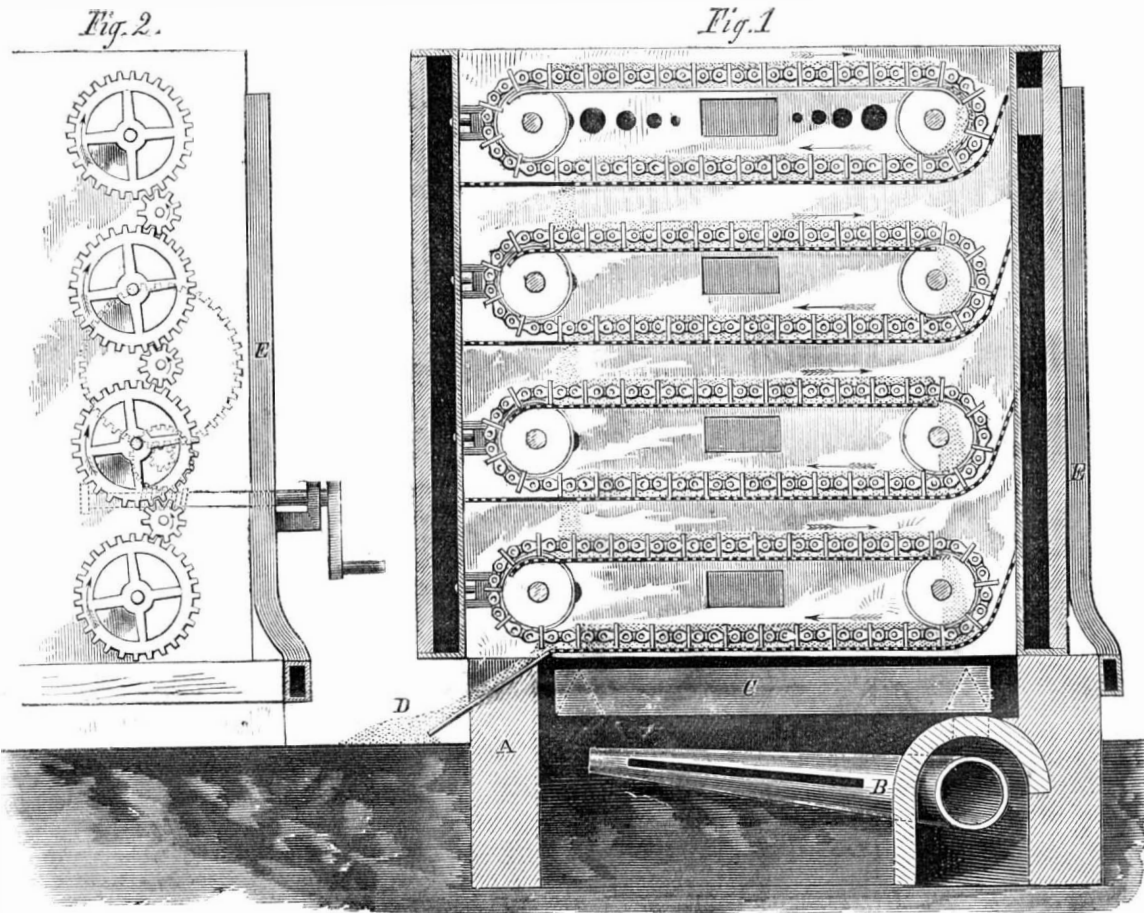
world to blow the whole globe to pieces. A volcanic eruption under the sea or near it, like that of Vesuvius now in progress, may at any moment convert the earth into a huge steam boiler, by letting the water in upon the central fires, to be followed, for aught we know, by an explosion that shall rend it apart, and send the fragments careering through space as small planets or meteors, each bearing off some distracted member or members of the human family, to make, perchance, new discoveries and new acquaintances in other parts of the planetary system now revolving with us. So that the final catastrophe may, after all, be only a boiler explosion on a magnificent scale of grandeur and destruction.—*Eclectic Mag.*

Stub Twist Gun Barrels.

A writer in the London *Quarterly Review*, in an article entitled "The Use of Refuse," gives currency to the old, and we had supposed exploded, idea, that old horseshoe nails derive their superior toughness by hammering upon the stones of the street pavements. He says: "The horseshoe nails are not mixed with the common cast iron, as they are much sought after by gunmakers for the purpose of making stub twist barrels. This is a roundabout way to get tough iron, it is true, and it remains as an instance of an improved product brought about by accident; it is like the Chinese method of discovering roast pig. Perhaps, following out this idea, some quicker and less laborious method of making cohesive gun barrels will be discovered than the banging of horses' feet upon the granite pavement."

There is no apparent scientific reason why the pounding of the ends of the cold horseshoe nails upon the stones of a wagon road, the mass of the metal meanwhile being incased in the elastic hoof tissue, should improve the quality of the metal. We incline to the belief that gun barrels made out of new horseshoe nails, originally of the same quality of iron, would be of just as good quality as though made of old nails, and we further express the belief that if the writers alluded to should investigate the method of manufacture of the stub twist barrels, he would find that the "roast pig" has never been discovered in this instance, and that the majority of such barrels which are offered in market, are not made of iron accidentally refined in the manner indicated.

The noise of cannon has been heard a distance of more than two hundred and fifty miles by applying the ear to the solid earth.

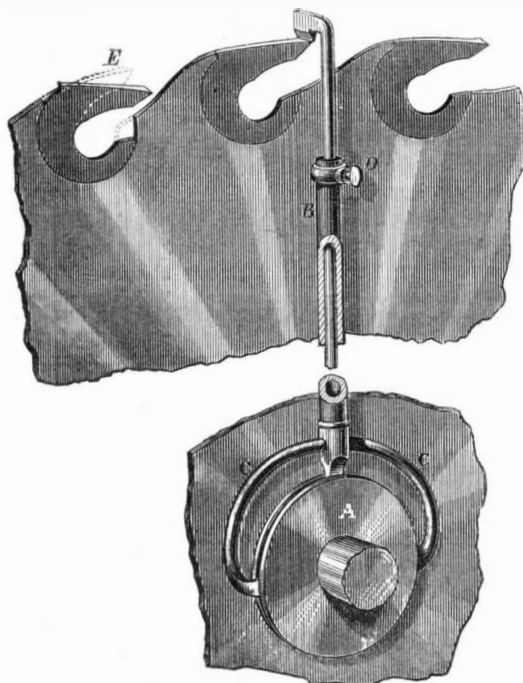


DE BARY'S PATENT GRAIN AND MALT DRYER.

edy in combination with narcotics in cases of delirium, or great nervous excitement, is worthy of notice, and will undoubtedly lead to other methods of prescription.

ADJUSTABLE INDICATOR FOR ROUNDING SAWS.

The engraving illustrates a new device for rounding circular saws, especially those which are run with the points of the teeth spread. By its use the practice of grinding off the



points of the teeth around nearly the whole circumference of the saw, to accommodate one or more teeth that may be a little too short, is avoided; for if it is known to the sawyer, before he begins to spread a tooth with the swage that it is too short, he can raise the point by means of the swage.

The engraving shows a section of Miller's Adjustable Teeth Saws with the indicator applied to a tooth to determine its

THE WATCH—ITS HISTORY AND MANUFACTURE.

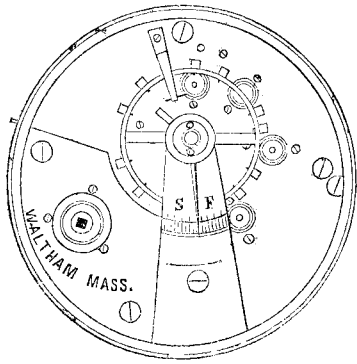
BY H. F. PIAGET.

No. 5.

LIST AND DESCRIPTION OF THE DIFFERENT AMERICAN WATCHES.

The American Watch Company, Waltham, Mass.

Its first quality Nos. 1 and 2 have been much improved lately, not only in the finish, but also in having the reversible



center pinion, whereby the accidental breaking of mainsprings frequently causing bending or breaking of teeth in the wheels or pinions, and even jewels, is avoided, in having ruby jewels, visible pallets, and isochronal hair springs, which regulate with much more nicety than the flat ones.

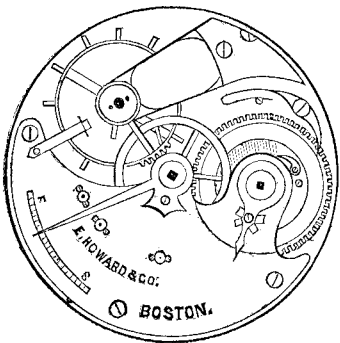
This company is also making some of its

watches with pendant winders. I also notice a great improvement in its watches engraved "Waltham Watch Co." This consists in having stop works to the barrels, chronometer balances, and in having the hair spring fitted to a movable stud, so that they need not be unpinned to clean the watch, and the hair spring being above instead of below the balance, which my experience has taught me is better for regulating more accurately. This company has also introduced a new kind of watch, engraved "Home Watch," a cheap and serviceable article.

For the other kinds of watches made by this company see list of watch manufacturers.

The Howard Watch, Boston.

This watch I consider a good, reliable, and serviceable watch, much improved lately by introducing the patent barrel, which like the reversible pinion is a safeguard against breakage of teeth, etc. This watch is made of different qualities and prices. Its construction renders it quite a convenient thickness for gentlemen.



I understand they intend soon to make some smaller sizes. This it would be advisable to do, and by putting plain gold balances instead of the chronometer ones

made at present, the watch could be made thinner and cheaper.

By present construction of this watch if the spring breaks, in order to replace it, the movement has to be taken entirely to pieces, so that it has frequently to be recleaned. If the workman is not very careful with the plates, etc., the oil spreading sometimes from the holes or pivots over the gilding, etc., occasions a slovenly appearance, and looks bad, particularly in new watches.

Nearly the same fault exists in the "American Co.'s" watch, although not quite to the same extent. In the "American Co.'s" watch the spring is hooked to the barrel, while in the "Howard" it is fastened to the main plate. I think that by altering their caliber this could be avoided. These watches are, I am informed, soon to be greatly improved by the application of quite a new patent regulator, also a new style of pendant winding.

The Tremont Watch, Boston.

This watch is a strong, good, and serviceable watch, it is a little thicker than the "Howard" watch, on account of having the balance in the center instead of the side of the plate. By its construction dirt or dust cannot be easily introduced in the works. The chronometer balances and escapements used by this company are made by American machinery in Europe, under the superintendance of Mr. Dennison, who, with Mr. Howard, many years ago, first originated the American system of watch manufacture. The watches of this company are made of two qualities, the first engraved "Tremont Watch Co.," Boston, and the second "Melrose Watch Co."

The National Watch, Elgin, Ill.

This watch has not been long in the market, but from what I have seen of it, I believe it will prove to be a good, strong, and serviceable watch, as it is thoroughly well finished. The hair spring is fixed in an improved manner, and the pinion is attached to the center wheel in such a way that the breakage of teeth, etc., in the train (from main springs breaking), is avoided. It is also made with full upper plates, like the "Tremont" and "Waltham" watches. The first quality, engraved "B. W. Raymond," with expansion balances, jeweled in every action, and properly adjusted, I think will prove excellent timekeepers.

The Keyless or Wadsworth Watches, Manufactured at Newark, New Jersey.

There is a watch manufactory at the above place, where a very excellent watch is made, with an improved patented pendant winding and hand-setting arrangement. From what I have seen of it, I should say it would not be likely to get out of order. It is very simple in its construction. The movements are full upper plates, chronometer balances, well

jeweled, and very nicely finished. I approve very much the whole getting up of the watch.

I should mention an improved feature in the Tremont, Melrose, National, and the Wadsworth watches, which is, that a new main-spring can be put in without taking the watch to pieces, and merely by unscrewing the bar which holds the barrel, effecting a saving of time in repairing.

I have not inserted engravings of the Tremont, Melrose, National, or Wadsworth watches, as the reader by looking at the one marked Waltham Watch, will see the general appearance of them all. The sizes of all the above named watches are the same, so that they will all fit the cases made for the 18th size Waltham, or Appleton, Tracy & Co.'s full plate watch.

I must here again warn the reader, that there are many imitations of American watches sent here from Europe, where they are manufactured much cheaper. Therefore be particular from whom you purchase, so that you are not deceived.

I would earnestly recommend all manufacturers of American watches, if they desire to make their manufactures permanent and lasting, and as they say "the best in the world," not to relax in the quality of the material and metals used, or in the finish of their movements (according to their prices), for if they do they will assuredly share the fate of the "Yankee Clocks," as the English call them.

Strive to be continually improving your works, and never make a watch without a stop work. Any kind will do, if made to stop at the center, and not at the end of the main-spring. Another suggestion is, to leave both the squares of the half plates, American and Howard watches, a little longer; for having the cases made without the movements, they are frequently below the caps, but if they were longer they would have a much better appearance. Make them as long as possible, for it is much easier to shorten than to lengthen them, the latter only being done by having new ones made; they would also be better for winding, and the squares and keys would last longer.

Let not an imperfect article leave your factories, if it can be avoided, particularly in fine watches, for if you do the English will keep the lead for large watches and chronometers, and the Swiss for the small and complicated ones. The latter people have been improving their work very much of late years, and will continue to do so if they are paid a fair remunerative price for their labor; for remember the Swiss, like the Americans, are a persevering, ingenious, and skillful nation, and if possible will not allow any other to surpass them in watch work.

There are so many in that country depending upon this business for support, that they are stimulated all the time to keep improving and perfecting their watches.

LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL AND MOST CELEBRATED MAKERS OF MOVEMENTS AND WATCHES IN ENGLAND, SWITZERLAND, AND AMERICA.

I think it will greatly benefit the purchasers of movements or watches, not only the storekeepers, but also the wearer, to know the names of the most eminent manufacturers who export watches from England and Switzerland, and those who manufacture in the United States. I have not included in the list many that I knew in London, who do not export for the trade, but sell their watches themselves to the wearers, such as Vulliamy, Arnold, Parkinson, Earnshaw, Barrauds, Brockbanks & Atkins, French, McCabes, Duncan, Dwerrhouse, Carter, Ogston & Bell, etc.; nor those in Paris, many of whom have their watches made in Switzerland, Breguet, Lepine, Le Roy, Oudin, Andemars, Bautre & Moulinie, etc. Some of the above original makers may not be living now, but their fame will last for ages, and persons who have genuine watches of these makers, although they may be old, if they have not been spoiled in repairing, will find them to be still good timekeepers.

I would, however, here observe that there are many importers and watch dealers in this country, who have their own names engraved on movements or watches that they sell, which are made expressly for them, either in England or Switzerland. In that case the buyer is almost always sure to get a good article, for no respectable dealer or storekeeper would allow his name to be put on an inferior watch, and such watches are made by makers on whom the dealers can depend for the quality of the works as well as the cases. I will therefore name those watches that are the most reliable, to my certain knowledge.

In London, the first quality made by Frodsham or Dent, claim the pre-eminence, but are very expensive, when genuine ones; next grade, the F. B. Adams, Guillaume, E. D. Johnson, Dixon, T. F. Cooper, Stoddard, Hoddell, David Taylor, B. J. Warner, Morris, Tobias, etc.

In Liverpool, Roskells, M. T. Tobias & Co., R. & G. Beesley; their 2d quality have the name of Jas. Blundell on them. Harrison, Sewell, Joseph Johnson, 25 Church street, Liverpool, which was, and I believe is still M. T. Tobias's 2d quality; of these and the Beesley watches there are, perhaps, more bogus ones made than of any other English makers.

There has not been, that I am aware of, for over thirty years, a watch maker of the name of Joseph Johnson at 25 Church street, Liverpool. From all the information I can gather, after his death, the firm of M. T. Tobias & Co. purchased from his heirs the right to put his name on their 2d quality movements. Their 3rd quality have the name of Frederick Spears. I do occasionally have an original Joseph Johnson to repair, yet the imitation is so close (although the quality is very inferior) that it is difficult for an inexperienced hand to detect the difference, unless they are too common; this is also the case with the imitation Beesleys.

American Watches.

The American Watch Company, Waltham, have several

kinds, qualities and sizes, for ladies and gentlemen, some full and some half plates. Those engraved American Watch Co., are their first quality; they are fine articles, but, like the Frodsham, expensive; 2d quality is engraved Appleton, Tracy & Co., 3d, Waltham Watch Co.; 4th, P. S. Bartlett; 5th, Ellery, and 6th, Home Watch.

Howard Watch, Boston. These are made of different grades of quality, and are still improving.

Tremont Watch Co., Boston. Their 2d quality is engraved Melrose Watch Co., Melrose.

National Watch Co., Elgin, Ill., have at present six different qualities. The 1st, engraved, B. W. Raymond; 2nd, Culver; 3rd, H. Z. Culver; 4th, J. T. Ryerson; 5th, G. M. Wheeler. 6th, Mat. Laffin. All have Elgin, Ill., on them. Other styles are in progress of manufacture.

The Keyless Watch, American pendant winders, and other movements, manufactured at Newark, N. J., have the name of Wadsworth engraved on them.

Of Swiss watches their names are legion, but I will only name some of the principal and most reliable makers: Jules Jurgensen, Copenhagen, fine watches, but like the Frodsham, expensive. His 2nd quality have the name of Lavalette, Locle, on them, James Nardin, Locle; H. L. Matile, Locle; Richard, Locle; Favre & Andrie, Locle; Favre, Leuba & Co., Locle; Vacheron & Constantin, Geneva; Breitling, Loederich, Chaux de Fonds, H. Bock, Locle; Borel & Courvoisier, Neufchatel; Perregaux, Locle; Beguelin Houriet, Tramelan; Mathez Freres, Tramelan; Ch. Horrmann & Co., Neufchatel; Lutz Brothers, Locle, etc. There are other good makers both in England and Switzerland, but I trust that I have enumerated a sufficient number to choose from, and these can be depended upon for the quality and the good performance of their works. The make of the above manufacturers varies as to style and quality to suit the most fastidious.

Yet I must here mention that their own names are always engraved on their first quality, unless they manufacture for others: still, if you buy a movement or watch with other names on than the above list mentions, and the person selling it recommends it, I think you need not fear being cheated, for I hope and presume that no respectable dealer or storekeeper would stake his reputation on the value of a watch.

I speak of all these makers from my long practical experience with the quality and make of their works, having had some of each kind through my hands to examine, repair, or clean. Yet I must again impress on the minds of the inexperienced in the trade, as well as the public, wishing to obtain any of the above makers—get them of reputable parties, of those on whom you can depend to get the genuine names and goods, and not imitations or bogus ones, as there are many in the market. Some may have been foisted upon the inexperienced, although honest dealers, by reason of their not being able to detect the difference which it is in many cases difficult to do. I believe that few can detect the difference between the genuine and the counterfeit watch unless he has worked in the factories of England for English, those of Switzerland for Swiss, and those of the United States for American, and are or have been practical workmen themselves.

No matter how much my fellow craftsmen may disagree with me in some of my remarks, they will, I am convinced, acknowledge that in this last I am right.

THE FOLLY OF PUTTING FICTITIOUS NAMES ON WATCHES.

The Swiss made a great mistake many years ago, and I am afraid it is still done occasionally, that is, putting English and fictitious names upon their watches, instead of their own. Had they not done so the really good makers would have been known in America long before this, and they would not have lost so much of their trade, which I am sure they will agree with me in saying that they have done.

I do not mean to say that although these watches bore false names they were not good watches. I will admit that some of them were very good; still it was wrong and a fraud on the public; and according to my ideas of honesty, quite culpable. It deserved not to prosper, and it did not.

By continuing this practice for several years, and to a great extent, their work was condemned, and they were stigmatized as impostors and cheats, so that their watches, at least many of them, were looked upon as disreputable pieces of workmanship, and the Swiss very nearly lost their American trade and the reputation of being an upright nation; although until this quackery was exposed they had enjoyed the people's confidence, but afterwards they became afraid of the Swiss watch. By many it was done innocently, they thinking it was all right so long as they received the orders to execute them, not thinking of the consequences during the time their wares had a good sale. Some, however, of the most respectable manufacturers, both in Switzerland and England, would not receive orders in that way; but if an order was given they would engrave the watch or case, made by — for —, giving name and place where made, leaving it to the honesty of the parties selling it to properly represent it.

I am glad that they have at last awoke to the necessity of having a good name and of maintaining it.

Although I do not claim to be a prophet, yet over thirty years since I said the day would come when the Swiss would repent this to their cost, and I find my words have come true, and they now see the mischief and folly of it.

The plan that I suggested was, that they should put their own names on the watches they knew to be good, and on watches of inferior quality, such as they could not recommend, no name at all, or if they wished to have them engraved, give the proper description, and not "Patent Detached Levers," or "Full Jeweled," on common Lepines, and even Verge watches. But by persisting in this they were encouraging and supporting a system of cheating traffic, which they must have known was absolutely wrong.

I am sorry to say that at the present time the deception is still practiced of engraving false names on their imitations of American watches. But if they were to engrave them in this way: American Caliber or Style—then put their names if they wished, or leave them blank, I believe it would be more honorable, both for the maker and the dealer; and although some may make money by the operation, I do not envy them their gains.

In England this fraud was not carried to such an extent, yet it was and is still done in many instances, by putting the names of good makers on very inferior watches. In both countries the laws against this is very severe: yet the unprincipled find means to evade the law—and throughout the world men are found who value money better than good reputation. The Swiss are now, as the saying goes, "being paid back in their own coin," for many who first induced them to do this wrong are now trying to injure their manufactures, by giving them a bad name; and they will take time to regain what they have lost, but it can and I trust will be done. My Swiss readers must forgive me if I am too severe. But although myself and my descendants are now Americans, yet Switzerland, my native land, with all thy faults I love thee still, and if thou errest I must tell thee, for my idea is, that to prosper in this world, and to have no fear of the next, one must act on the square towards all men, and be willing to be judged by our deeds.

The reader, I think, must allow that although born in Switzerland and educated in England, I speak plainly and impartially, and I always intend to do so when I see a wrong done, but I desire not to offend any one. If any feel themselves aggrieved, to them I say, we had far better appear what we are than pretend to be what we are not.

Watches whose cases open at the back by a spring are not so secure and free from dust as those with a proper snap, which can be made to shut close and open easily; springs are only necessary for wearers whose fingers are particularly soft, or to raise the covers of hunting watches.

Hunting watches have a cover to protect the glass, and it will do so when sufficiently thick and convex, but very flat hunters neither admit of the necessary shape nor thickness; in many that are now made, particularly Swiss watches, the glass is nearly as liable to be broken from pressure as it was when unprotected, and the difficulty of procuring another is much greater. When flatness is necessary, an open-faced watch should be preferred, with a number of spare glasses, which a very little practice will enable any wearer to put properly in their place.

In giving advice with regard to choosing a watch, I have said nothing but what every good watchmaker or importer of good watches will acknowledge to be the facts.

I have divested myself of any prejudice or partiality, and have only related what I have learned by practice, and the experience of forty years, and which I have endeavored to explain plainly, without any technicalities.

I will now endeavor to be more explicit, and give my reasons. For a large thick or a three-quarter plate chronometer, duplex, or lever escapement, properly compensated watch, with a fusee and chain, the English certainly claim the priority, they having been the first to apply, and from the great practice and attention given by them to, compensation.

The American watches being more simple in their construction, and easily repaired in case of accident, claim the next notice.

For a thinner or smaller watch, the Swiss must have the preference, as it is nearly the only kind of watch made there, and other reasons explained in a former part of this article. There is, in Geneva, a celebrated manufactory wherein nothing but good watches are made, and it is well known to most of the best stores in the United States; every part of the watch is made in the same establishment. I have had considerable practice with them, and I have generally found that they are the most perfect that I have had in my hands.

I do not pretend that there are no bad English watches made; quite the reverse. I have always found that a bad English watch was worse and more difficult to put in good order than any other.

For an ordinary or cheap watch, I should prefer a Swiss one, they having the facilities to manufacture cheaper than any other nation. Fine Swiss watches are made as correct and as accurate as it is possible to make them for the size and thickness, but the prices will not be less than for the English ones, although the style will be different. Common and cheap watches will of course always be made to keep pace with competition, and as an article of trade. I do not intend to explain their defects, I only endeavor to point out the merits of a good one.

In my next, I will give such instructions as I can to keep it good, and it may possibly be the means of saving the reader some unnecessary expense, if he will take the trouble to peruse these articles throughout, as well as save us from being often erroneously blamed, however honest and square we may do our work.

ON MUSICAL AND SENSITIVE FLAMES.

Abstract of a Lecture delivered before the Dublin Royal Society, by W. F. Barrett.]

One of the earliest natural facts which arrest the attention of a thoughtful mind is the stability of the wonderful universe in which we live. This permanency is, nevertheless, the product of incessant change; for nothing is absolutely at rest. The secret of the stability of nature, its unresting repose, is found in the fact that the motion is regular—the change is periodic. Atoms, as well as planets, have their period of revolution. Hence, sooner or later, in the physical world at any rate, phenomena repeat themselves. Like a

vast living body the throbbings of the universe announce the accord of its varied parts. This rhythmic flow of nature constitutes most literally the "Music of the Spheres." Not this, but a less ethereal music, I have had the honor of being invited to bring before you this afternoon.

The so-called musical or singing flames were discovered nearly a century ago by a native of this city, Dr. Higgins, who found that, when a flame of hydrogen was burning within a glass tube, the flame emitted a musical note. The experiment was repeated; and it was moreover shown that glass tubes were not necessary, for similar sounds, though of different quality, were produced when metal or pasteboard tubes were employed. Neither was it necessary to use hydrogen, for a small flame of common coal gas gave a musical note when burning within a tube.

The cause of this phenomenon had been investigated by many, but most successfully by an illustrious man who had lately passed from among us—a man who has left behind him a name as good as it was great, and who possessed a mind as simple and child-like as it was sagacious and profound—the late Professor Faraday. This subject had been one of Faraday's early flames. The cause was shown to be due to the fact that the gas, in issuing from the burner, did not burn silently. It rustled in passing through the orifice of the burner, and in burning it made a continuous series of inaudible explosions. This was proved by several experiments, for, by suitable means both these causes could be exalted so as to become sensible. The resonance of the tube placed over the flame renders audible all the sounds of a certain pitch made by the gas. By a series of experiments it was then proved that any noise, if made regularly and with sufficient rapidity, was converted into a musical note. Thus rough and rude taps, and hard and harsh explosions could be chased into perfect melody by mere rapidity of succession.

The condition of the flame when burning within the tube was shown by a moving mirror. It was seen that when the flame was silent, and the mirror moving, a band of light was produced; but when the flame was sounding, this luminous ribbon was broken up into a series of disjointed images of flame. The effect of lengthening the tube in which the flame was burning was next shown, and a series of gas jets burning within glass tubes of varying length gave a corresponding series of musical notes of varying pitch. By placing the finger upon the top of these tubes the sound could be quenched, and thus a novel musical instrument could be constructed. From glass tubes the lecturer passed on to show the effects of flames burning within extremely long tin tubes. Within a tube six feet long, and about one and one-half inches in diameter, the flame of a large gas burner gave a loud unmusical roar. By adding to the end of this tube a glass chimney, it was seen that when the flame was sounding it was broken up into wild confusion. By enclosing a still larger gas flame from a huge Bunsen's burner within a tube 18 feet long and three inches in diameter, a deep roar was obtained intermingled with loud reports similar to the discharge of musketry.

Returning once more to the gentler music of the small glass tubes, two flames, enclosed in their respective tubes, were taken and made to emit notes of the same pitch. This point was gained by shifting to and fro a paper slide, which moved stiffly at the upper extremity of one of the tubes. When the notes were nearly in unison a series of intermittent sounds or beats were obtained, due, as is well known, to the mutual extinction at certain intervals of the two sounds. Corresponding beats were obtained from two organ pipes and two tuning forks nearly in unison. One of these tuning forks, mounted on its resonance case, being silent, the other, unmounted, was now struck, and its prongs brought near to, but not touching those of the first fork; at first no sound could be heard, but by degrees the unmounted fork transferred its motion to the mounted one, and the sound of the latter slowly welled forth. The sound of the voice can thus be transferred to the strings of a pianoforte, and in the same way a flame can be made to accept and resound to a note of the proper pitch. This was illustrated as follows: A singing flame, by adjusting the paper slider, was tuned to the note of a certain fork; the tube was then raised slightly, so that the sound could be quenched by momentarily placing the finger on the top of the tube. On now striking the fork, and holding it over a resonant jar, the flame instantly started into song. The same effect was shown by the siren, and also by the human voice. Retreating to some distance from the flame, the latter could be made to respond at pleasure, by pitching the voice to the proper note, whilst it remained utterly unaffected by any note not in unison with itself. Musicians would find such a flame a faithful monitor in training the voices of their pupils.

In the last experiment we have really a sensitive flame; but this name is now applied to another discovery, which was made in another manner: Two years ago (December, 1865), while engaged in some acoustic experiments, the lecturer had observed that every time a shrill note was produced, a tall tapering gas flame in his vicinity was singularly affected; the flame shrinking every time the note was sounded. That observation led to further experiment and inquiry, the result of which has been the discovery of the conditions of success for obtaining flames sensitive to the slightest sound. Some month after the above observation, Professor Tyndall took up the subject, and having largely added to its interest and importance, offered an explanation of the phenomenon in a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution, in January, 1867. At this lecture the discovery was first published, and the name given to "Sensitive Flames." Subsequently the lecturer had proposed a fuller explanation, and had discovered that not only flames, but all gases could be rendered extremely sensitive to sound, the track of the gas being marked by mixing it

with smoke. This historical notice would be unjust without referring to an observation made ten years ago in America by Professor Leconte. That physicist had noticed that certain sustained sounds in an instrumental concert caused a very susceptible movement of the ordinary gas flames in the room. This observation is really the germ of the more wonderful effects afterwards independently discovered by the lecturer. Though Professor Leconte was the first to publish the fact, in 1838, it appears that, previous to this date, artisans had frequently noticed the phenomenon as resulting from the shrill sounds of their work; and several musicians have informed the lecturer that the same effect has been one they have commonly observed.

Turning now from scientific history to experiment, the lecturer showed various kinds and degrees of sensitive flames. First, a "batswing" flame, which, under the ordinary gas pressure, moved slightly at the sound of a whistle, but thrust out long tongues of fire when the pressure was increased by urging the gas from a holder. The increased pressure was always necessary to obtain the more sensitive flames, for a reason that will be understood directly. A jet of gas, issuing from a V-shaped orifice, was shown to be quite insensible to sound until the flame reached a height of ten or twelve inches, and then, at the sound of certain high notes, the flame shortened and spread out into a fan shape. Whistling to this flame in one key had no effect, while in another the effect was very marked. Playing an air upon a so-called bird-organ, the flame selected the high notes, and promptly shortened at their recurrence.

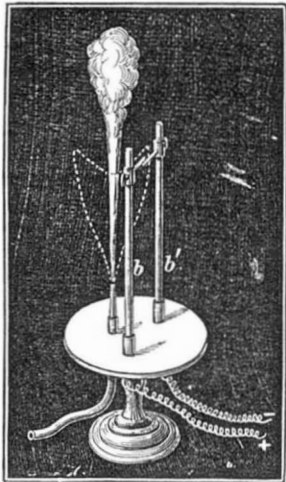
The probable cause of the sensitiveness of these flames was then alluded to. The impact of air evidently had nothing to do with the phenomenon. This was strikingly shown in the following experiment: By tapping a membrane stretched over the mouth of a large tin funnel, a puff of air could be driven with such force from the narrow extremity that a candle was easily extinguished some twelve feet away. Directing this puff of air against the sensitive flame, it was seen that the flame moved violently, but was utterly unaffected when the puff was driven either to the right or left. This should also be the case if in former experiments it were the impact of the air, and not the sound, that produced the effect. But it was at once seen that when the lecturer whistled, at the same time slowly turning round, the flame still continued to shrink, and was almost as powerfully moved when the back was turned to the flame. The effect, then, is solely produced by the wave-like to and fro motion of the sonorous pulses. As first indicated by Professor Leconte, a gas flame, to be sensitive, has to be brought near its point of roaring; it then stands, according to Dr. Tyndall, as it were on the brink of precipice, over which the sound pushes it. Agreeing with this explanation, that a sensitive flame is a body in a state of unstable equilibrium, the lecturer supplemented it by comparing the flame to a resonant jar; the flame, as was proved by a moving mirror, being in a state of rapid isochronous vibration when under the influence of external sound. The actual shrinking of the flame was due to an increase in the velocity of the current of gas, which was possibly brought about by an external sound throwing the pipe that conveys the gas into a state of vibration, which would thus narrow the channel of the gas passage; the change in the aspect of the flame being largely modified by the shape of the burner.

Whatever may be the complete explanation of the phenomenon, there can be no doubt that in a somewhat similar manner other objects besides flames are also sensitive to slight external impulses. Thus, many chemical compounds, as, for example, fulminating powders, are in a state of unstable equilibrium. The so-called "Rupert's Drop," which, when scratched, flew into a thousand fragments, is another instance of this kind; and some of the most eminent physicists are inclined to believe that the surface of our sun is in a somewhat analogous sensitive condition. From inorganic things we may travel on to organic, for we have evidence that there also exists, in organized structures, a more or less sensitive state at certain times. Thus, our wonderfully complex bodies, by disease or nervous derangement, are often thrown into an abnormal state, and when in that condition are sensitive to the slightest stimuli, if of the proper kind. This may possibly be the foundation for whatever truth there is in the science of homeopathy, the body being sensitive to a feeble influence, similar in kind to the disease under which it is suffering.

Here some may ask: "Of what good are these speculations, and to what practical end can these experiments be turned?" This observation, permit me to remark, is wholly improper. There is something nobler in life than the accumulation of wealth, and a higher end to experiment than its mere monetary value; for all accession to knowledge must finally benefit the world. This ever intrusive exclamation, *cui bono*, is a serious check to the advancement of knowledge, for it disheartens those who are making nature yield up her secrets, and it damps the ardor of every searcher after truth. Allow me to illustrate my meaning. Imagine that when enchanted by the performance of some well-executed opera or oratorio, a companion by our side were to say: "Well, after all, of what good are these fine sounds; to what practical end can you turn this music?" Should we not instantly condemn a speech so characteristic of a sordid and sensuous mind? And when the student of nature is listening with admiration and even awe to the sweet, though silent, music sung to him by every object of his diligent study—by air and water, by flowers and flowers—he is conscious that he bows before an oratorio as far above that of Handel as the works of the Creator are superior to the composition of the creature.

Still, however, the lecturer was enabled to show a practical application of these sensitive flames. Attention was drawn to the fact, that the flame shortened and spread out laterally

under the influence of a whistle. Advantage was taken of this peculiarity to construct an instrument which may be turned to some practical use. The instrument consists of two sliding brass rods, *b b'* (see diagram), attached at right angles; to the summit of one is a compound metallic ribbon, consisting of thin layers of silver, gold, and platinum, welded together. This arrangement expands unequally by heat, by so doing it swerves aside, and is thus brought into contact with a platinum point projecting from the top of the second brass rod, which is fixed about half an inch from the free extremity of the compound metallic ribbon. Connected with the two brass rods is an electric battery, associated with which is an electric bell, placed in a far distant part of the room. The bell will immediately ring if the electric circle be complete, but at present there is a gap in the circuit between the metallic ribbon and the platinum point. "I now ignite," said the lecturer, "a sensitive flame, which, in its ordinary state, burns at about two inches from the compound metal ribbon. I retreat some thirty feet from the flame, and whistle; the flame at once responds; it shrinks and spreads out sideways. By so doing it comes in contact with the metal ribbon; the latter instantly springs aside at the warm touch of the flame, strikes against the platinum point, completes the electric circuit, and there you hear that distant bell answering me every time I whistle." In the same way, at any hour of the night, the crying of a child in its cot would automatically announce itself in its parent's room. By a somewhat similar arrangement, using, however, a different burner, a burglar filing the iron-cased doors of a jeweller's shop could be made to sound an alarm bell; and it is even possible, by making use of the propagation of sound through water, the reflection of that sound through a trumpet immersed in the water, and its conduction to a sensitive flame, shut out by non-conductors of sound from the noises on board ship, that an arrangement might be constructed by which the approach of a vessel in a fog might be detected by ringing a bell in the captain's cabin. It is not, however, my province to develop such inventions. With diffidence I throw out these suggestions, which may, I trust, by the practical mind be in some way turned to the public good.*



The lecturer had reserved for the conclusion a flame wonderfully sensitive to the slightest noise. The burner which gave this flame was formed of steatite, and consisted of a single circular orifice, through which the gas was forced from a large holder in the lecture room, with greater pressure than could be obtained from the main. The flame was now fully two feet in length, and observe, said the lecturer, how delicate and fragile a thing it appears to be, for at the slightest noise it drops down a foot.† The jingling of this bunch of keys, the crumpling of this paper, the dropping of a small coin, are more than sufficient utterly to break up its height and symmetry. This flame makes no response to the vowels, O, U, nor to the labials, but it energetically responds to the sibilants. Repeating the stanza—

"Roll on, O roll, for ever!
Rest not, lest thy wavelets
Shine as shining silver—
Shrink and sink to darkness."

The flame is unmoved by the first line, but emphatically bobs at the sound "rest" and "lest," and admirably suits its action to the words of the last line, for, when shrinking, the light of the flame almost disappears. So sensitive is this flame, that even a chirp made at the far end of the room brings it down more than a foot. Like a living being, the flame trembles and covers down at a hiss—it crouches and shivers as if in agony at the crisping of this metal foil, though the sound is so faint as scarcely to be heard; it dances in tune to the waltz played by this musical box—and, finally, it beats time to the ticking of my watch. How wonderful are all these facts! And the more we know of them the more wonderful do they appear, for this astonishing change in the aspect of the flame is produced by an infinitesimal portion of those almost inaudible sound waves, already enfeebled by their distance, from the flame. Looking back on these, and innumerable other wonders revealed by physical science, and looking forward on that vast region which remains to be explored, do we not feel ourselves sinking to utter insignificance by contemplating the mysteries by which we are surrounded, while at the same time are we not conscious there is that within us still more wonderful than that without—a consciousness which lifts itself above all phenomena, grand and mysterious though they be?—*London Chemical News.*

* Several of the laws of acoustics may be illustrated to a large audience by means of the sensitive flame next to be described. Placing, for example, a watch in the focus of one concave mirror, and a sensitive flame in the focus of a distant second one, the reflection and convergence of sound is seen by the regular beating of the flame to every tick of the watch. The decay of sound, and the prevention of that decay by tubes, can also be shown in a similar way. Many other illustrations of acoustical phenomena at once suggest themselves. I hope shortly to publish some further applications of this novel *phonoscope*.—W. F. B.

† It is easy to see how a modification of the instrument just described can be, and has been, applied to this flame. The diminution of heat, arising from the falling of the flame can cause the compound ribbon now placed above the flame to recoil upon the other battery connection; or, another arrangement may be employed, an air thermometer having a bent stem, in which are sealed asunder platinum terminals; the circuit being closed by the backward movement of mercury in the tube, owing to the contraction of the air in the bulb.

ARAGO has demonstrated that the duration of a flash of lightning does not exceed the one-millionth part of a second.

Correspondence.

The Editors are not responsible for the opinions expressed by their correspondents.

Do We See the Sun as Soon as it Rises?

MESSRS. EDITORS:—In the number of your paper for May 2d, I notice an article on the theory that, as "it takes light eight minutes to come from the sun to the earth, we do not see the sun until that amount of time after it rises;" or what is the same thing, we always see it eight minutes of time, or two degrees of space, behind its real position in the heavens. The writer denies this theory, leaving out of the problem refraction and other disturbing elements, and invites your readers to its solution.

Now if the sun's motion through the heavens was real this theory, that it is not seen as soon as it rises, would be correct, for, while the ray projected from the sun is traversing the distance between the sun and the earth, the sun continues to move on in its orbit, and, as an object is seen in the direction from which the ray enters the eye, an observer on the earth would see the sun in the position where it was when the ray left, namely, two degrees of space or eight minutes of time behind its real position.

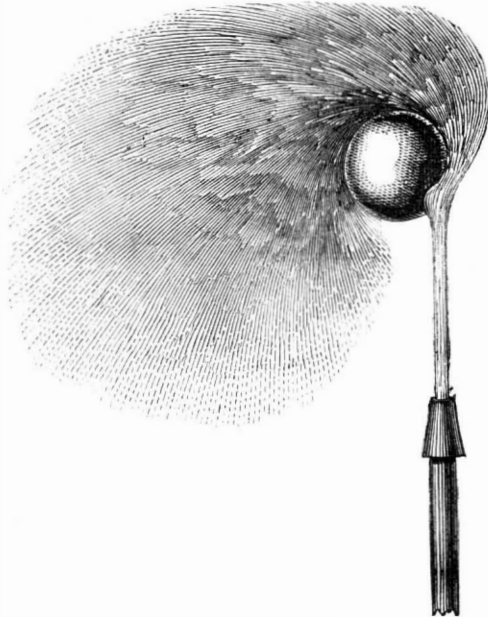
But in attempting the solution of this problem it must be distinctly borne in mind that the motion of the sun through space is only apparent—it is stationary—its apparent motion being caused by the rotation of the earth on its axis. Now, it takes light eight minutes to reach the earth from the sun, and in that time an observer is carried forward by the rotation of the earth two degrees. It is evident, then, that in order for a ray to make an impression on the retina of an observer's eye, it is only necessary for it to be projected from the sun towards a point two degrees in advance of him (just as a sportsman, in order to hit a bird on the wing, must shoot a certain distance in advance of it), and he, glancing along the ray, which has advanced towards him in a straight line, will see the sun in its real position, it having remained stationary.

CHAS. T. PLATT.

Cheyenne, D. T.

The Ball and Jet.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—When a ball is brought in contact with a vertical jet of water, the water will follow upward around



the curvature of the ball, by its adhesion, and be thrown off in tangents on the opposite side. It is a well established principle in hydraulics, that there is always a reactionary force exerted in a direction opposite to that in which the water is discharged. This force has a tendency to carry the ball horizontally, in the direction of the jet. Should it be such as to carry the ball over to the opposite side of the jet, then the direction in which the water will be discharged, with its reactionary force, will be reversed; the obvious tendency being to bring the center of the ball over the center of the jet. That this is the true disposition of the water can be ascertained in a moment by any one, by putting a ball of any kind on the point of a knife, and holding it in varying positions over an ascending jet of water; and I think it explains all the phenomena connected with the ball and jet question.

To show that it is not the rotation of the ball which enables it to maintain its position, take a tube bent in the form of a blow pipe, with which a light ball may be sustained by the breath. By piercing the ball with two minute fibers of wood or bristles, placed at right angles to each other, its movements can be distinctly seen, when it will be found to rotate at different times in a horizontal, in a perpendicular, and in an inclined plane. Sometimes it will rotate rapidly, at other times slowly, and at times it will remain poised on the jet for a considerable time, almost entirely motionless. These facts are incompatible with the rotary theory.

To show that it is not the inward rushing currents of air that sustain the ball, as suggested by your correspondent on page 291, suspend a ball by a thread from the ceiling, and bring the jet gradually toward it, when it will be seen that there will be no perceptible effect till the jet touches the ball. Other similar experiments may be tried which will do away with many of the theories that have been advanced, which only tend to muddle the problem, instead of making it clearer. The accompanying engraving illustrates these remarks.

F. G. FOWLER.

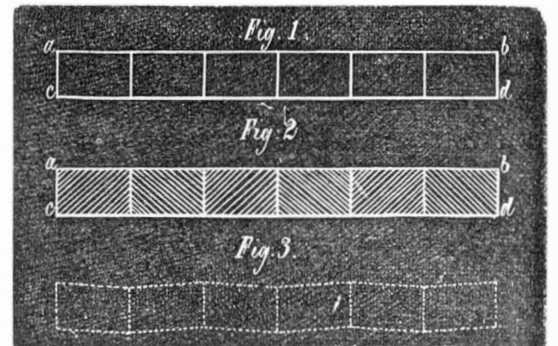
New York city.

Optical Illusions.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—The optical illusion to which you alluded on page 292, current volume, reminds me of another singular illusion, which may be of interest to your readers.

In the accompanying diagrams it will be seen by measurement that the lines, *a b*, and *c d*, are parallel, and the included space is divided into equal rectangles, the lines appearing in Fig. 1, as they really are, straight. But now let the surfaces of each of these rectangles be covered by a system of fine, equidistant lines drawn parallel to the diagonal of each separate rectangle, alternating the direction of each set of lines in the alternate rectangles, as in Fig. 2, and the optical illusion illustrated in Fig. 3 is observable at a glance.

By experiment it will be seen that the flatter, or more nearly horizontal the "hatched lines"—as they are technically termed—the more apparent will be the departure of the lines, *a b*, *c d*, from right lines, and the nearer the hatched lines ap-

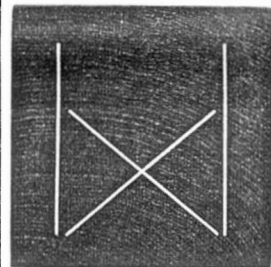


proach the perpendicular the less observable will it be, until finally, reaching the perpendicular, the illusion disappears.

The reason of this is evident. The eye naturally seeks to follow the direction of the hatched lines, rather than that of the including boundary lines, and hence, as their lengths really increase and diminish regularly, and their directions really alternate, the mind unconsciously and involuntarily considers each rectangle separately, and sees in it not a rectangle but a rhomboid, the result of which is to apparently divert the direction of the lines, *a b*, *c d*, producing not straight lines but indented ones, as in Fig. 3. J. A. J.

Newport, R. I.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—In No. 18, of your journal, a correspondent endeavors to explain the optical effect which my diagram previously published was made to indicate. This he does by saying that an additional length is given the perpendicular bar by the horizontal one being laid across its top. It needs a more satisfactory solution than this. For proof, take two bars, equal in length, one black and the other white; or at least, bars of different colors, and place them in rotation to each other as the figure represented, and the seeming disparity will still remain just as discernable as before. The eye, in this case, cannot unconsciously add the thickness of the horizontal bar to the length of the perpendicular.



I present above another diagram, wherein the lines of comparison have no contact with each other. The four lines are exactly equal in length, yet there is a great apparent difference. I doubt whether it is possible for any person to group mere straight lines, or bars, in any other manner, to show such a seeming disparity as appears in this. It is worth trying, merely for pastime, if nothing more. J. HERVA.

Rockford, Ill.

Improvement Needed in Railroad Management.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I beg leave to call the attention of the public, through your popular journal, to a fact which probably is but little known, viz., that nine tenths of all the accidents which happen on railroads, and much of the discomfort which arises from railroad travel, might be avoided if the companies would adopt many of the self-evidently valuable improvements, the work of skilled inventors, which have recently been patented in the United States. For instance, I lately saw in Chicago, on exhibition, an invention whereby a train would be saved from the destruction often caused by a broken rail. It had been submitted to many railroad men, who, while admitting its value, declined to adopt it. Again, the interior arrangements, with reference to seats, warming, etc., have been to a great extent unchanged from what they were twenty years ago, solely, I presume, because railroad companies are jealous lest some inventor should make a few thousands out of them. I am very familiar with a gentleman who has a perfect plan of warming cars, in which there is no danger from upsetting stoves and firing cars, and by the use of which every passenger would have warmth and comfort, but who will not take out a patent therefor lest railroad companies should refuse to adopt it. Has the community no interest in these matters? J. B.

Patent Office Illustrations for 1868.

We learn that the contract for engraving the illustrations to accompany the next Report of the Commissioner of Patents has been awarded, by the joint committee of the two Houses in Congress, to Jewett & Chandler, of Buffalo, N. Y., the same firm who have executed the work for a number of years past. Inventors will be pleased to know that the standard adopted for the execution of the work will not be lowered, but will maintain the same excellence of character as heretofore.

Improvement in the Construction of Bedsteads.

The full advantages of the bedstead shown in the accompanying engraving will not be seen without attention to the description. It seems to combine a number of the excellencies of several which have been proposed or put in actual use. First, the frame—side and end bars—is a whole. Second, the slats do not rest in recesses formed in the side or end bars, which are perfectly smooth, offering no retreat for vermin; and, third, the posts or standards can be removed from the frame simply by slipping them out of the metallic sockets at the corners of the frame.

Inside the rails is a suspended frame, preferably of sheet metal, held to the corner sockets by means of double hooks engaging with V-flanges on the sockets passing through slots in the ends of the bars and projecting inside the bedstead, and also with holes in the frame that supports the slats. At one end or both, if required, a swivel nut engaging with the ends of the slat-supporting frame is used to tighten the side pieces of the frame. On this frame is laid the slats, which are held in place by a cord fastened at each end of the bedstead and passing through slots in their ends, as seen clearly in Fig. 2, which is an end section of one of the slats. This arrangement of cord and slats holds the latter in place while the repeated passing of the cord through the slats permits them to be turned over in either direction for cleaning.

The post sockets may be made circular, square, or octagonal, and this method of construction permits either the employment of artistic taste or the building of the plainest styles of bedsteads. The rails and posts may be made very light, and when the posts are removed two of these bed frames with mattresses may be placed together, with mirrors or other fragile articles between, and secured at the corners, thus making the device valuable for removal in case of fire or from any other cause. It will be seen that the greater weight placed on the bedstead the firmer all the parts are held together. No mortising, screws, or other devices for securing the parts together are required.

Patented through the Scientific American Patent Agency May 21, 1867, by Isaac Pedrick, who will sell the rights for all the States except those of New Jersey and Illinois. He may be addressed at Bridgeton, N. J.

The Astor Library.

A correspondent, a resident of New York, complains of the hours of keeping open the Astor Library, which are from 9 A. M. to 5 P. M. He thinks the intention of the founder of the library was to accommodate all, whether persons of leisure or those whose ordinary duties absorbed the most of the working hours of the day. "If," he says, "it is too great a demand that the librarian or his assistants should be on duty during the day and evening, it might be as much a matter of accommodation all around to open the library only from 1 to 9 P. M." It is certain that a very numerous class of our citizens and those likely to be most benefitted by the library besides strangers, would be better accommodated with such a change of hours, and we hope the Trustees will inaugurate some such improvement.

New Crystallized Cards.

The poisonous composition with which "mother of pearl" visiting cards are made, was made public in these columns some months since. Puscher gives a simple process whereby nearly the same, and certainly as ornamental results are obtained by a mixture of harmless ingredients. He dissolves six parts by weight of sulphate of magnesia, and six parts of dextrine, in six parts of water, adds a small quantity of glycerin, and boils the liquid for a moment. He then strains the solution, and before it becomes quite cool, spreads it with a camel's hair brush upon paper previously covered with a thin solution of glue or gelatin. Variegated crystals may be produced by coloring the solution with aniline colors, and preparing the surface of the paper with a mixture of equal parts of white of egg and water, instead of the gelatin solution. When the crystals are dried, the paper is to be run between smooth rollers, or put under a press, when the surface assumes a glazed appearance.

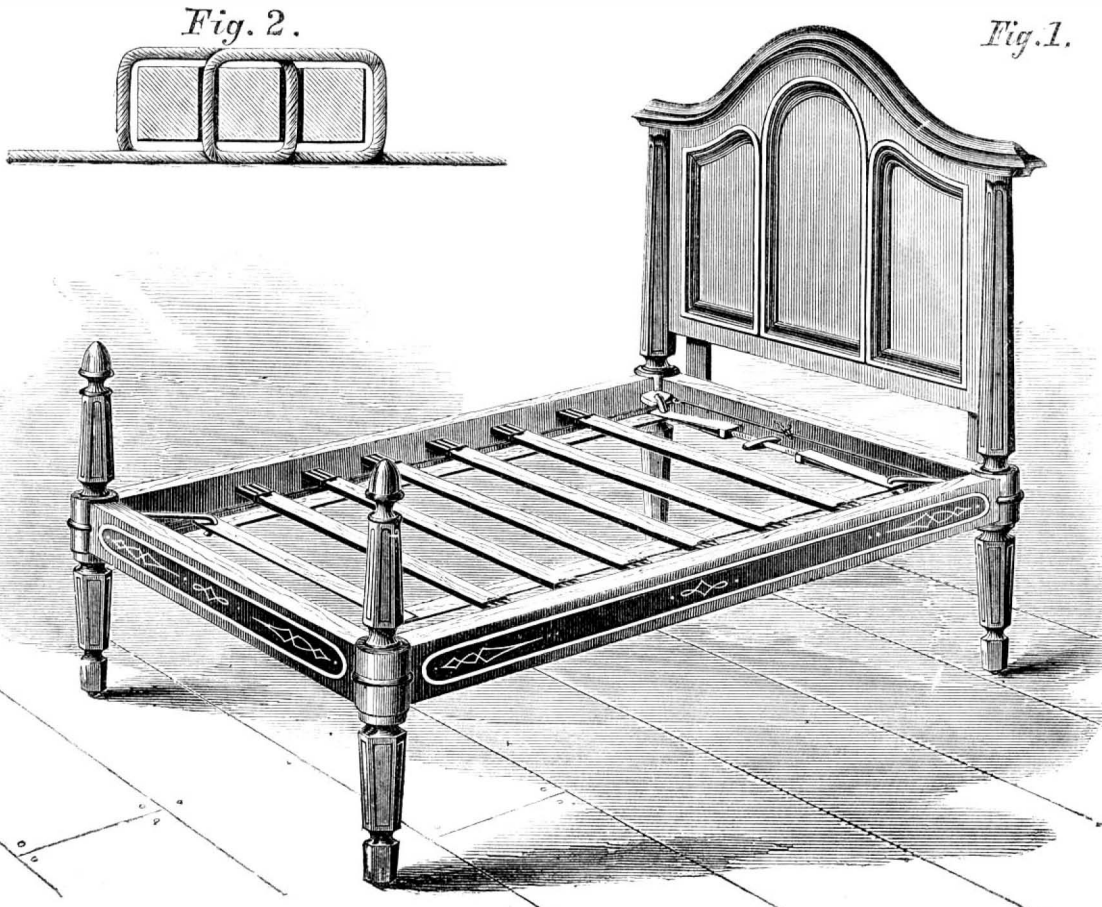
The process thus described, as our readers will notice, is but a slight modification of the discovery of M. Auguste Bertsch, which we described in No. 18, current volume, but the application in ornamenting paper, envelopes, visiting and playing cards, is new. The author has recommended a still more useful application in preparing bank notes. A solution prepared with one third the quantity of gum before mentioned, and with no glycerin may be applied to a lithographic stone, and a copy of the crystallization be transferred to three or four working stones, from which thousands of impressions may be obtained. A back ground for bank bills may thus be prepared, and as no two crystallizations can be

exactly similar, forgery of these notes is impossible. By using yellow paper, photography cannot be employed in copying them.

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SPECIFIC GRAVITY AND PRESSURE OF GAS.

The *Gas Light Journal* gives place in its columns to a statement taken from "Orr's Circle of the Sciences," upon the relation of the specific gravity of gas to the pressure it sustains, and to the time which is consumed in burning equal quantities with the same burner. The language in which the statement is made would lead to the inference that Dr. Fyfe, who is said to have observed these relations, had made a new discovery. The relations to which attention is called, and the table of consumption per hour, with corresponding specific gravities, are as follows:

First, The consumption of gas in a given time, is as the



PEDRICK'S PATENT BEDSTEAD.

square root of the pressure, and consequently the time required for the consumption of equal volumes, is inversely as the square root of the pressures. Second, The specific gravity of the gas is also inversely as the square root of the pressures. So that, if we determine by experiment what time it takes for a given volume of gas, of known specific gravity, to burn from a jet of the given size, with a flame of the given height, we are then in a condition to tell the specific gravity, or rate of consumption, of any other gas, provided it be burnt under the same circumstances, and we observe the pressure. This will be manifest from the following table:

Pressure in inches of water.	Consumption per hour.	Specific gravity.
0.6	0.67	.841
0.7	0.72	.770
0.8	0.77	.729
0.9	0.81	.687
1.0	0.86	.652
1.1	0.90	.622
1.2	0.94	.595
1.3	0.98	.572
1.4	1.02	.551
1.5	1.05	.532
1.6	1.09	.515
1.7	1.12	.500
1.8	1.15	.486
1.9	1.18	.472
2.0	1.21	.461

We do not recollect seeing these relations expressed before in tabular form, but as to the principles enunciated there is nothing that has not been long familiar to gas engineers and meter manufacturers. The specific gravity of illuminating gas, if uniformly manufactured, would be an index of its quality; but it is not, as the statement to which we refer asserts, by any means synonymous with the "goodness" of gas, under usual circumstances, or even when "carbonic acid and atmospheric air" are not mixed with it. As gas is usually made, it contains many other impurities besides carbonic acid, and the test of specific gravity, though it might determine the time a certain amount would consume in flowing through a burner of specified size, would be very far from determining the illuminating power of the same amount of other gas of the same specific gravity.

The table is constructed for a burner having an aperture one fortieth of an inch in diameter with the tap so turned as to permit the flame to burn constantly at the height of five inches. Nothing is said of the form of the section of the aperture, or the form of the burner, and the only other condition specified is that the pressure gage should be on the jet side of the tap. The results given seem to have been based upon such imperfect experiments as to render them unreliable, and the suggestion of Dr. Fyfe, that by operating in a similar manner meters and photometers may be dispensed with, seems to us in the highest degree impracticable.

A Most Important Patent—Great Lawsuits Ahead.

One of the most important pieces of apparatus employed in the operations of the magnetic telegraph in this country, called the automatic circuit breaker, was invented by Charles G. Page, recently one of the examiners in the Patent Office, but who departed this life on the 5th May. From his official position he was not permitted to take out a patent for the invention, and it has been used by all our American telegraphers, for many years without compensation. Shortly before his death, however, Congress, by a special act, removed the disability under which he labored, and granted to him the requisite patent, which is now vested in his heirs for fourteen years to come. Henceforth, no company or individual can use the circuit breaker without paying these heirs for the privilege; and thus the reward of Prof. Page's ingenuity, denied to him in person, seems likely to be reaped by those he leaves behind him.

To the general reader, unacquainted with the practical details of telegraphy, it is impossible to fully describe the nature of the invention, which we refer to, and the extent to which it applies to the business of our telegraph companies. We can only quote the admission of the *Journal of the Telegraph*, which is the organ of the Western Union Telegraph Company, to the effect that the bill granting the patent to Prof. Page practically puts American telegraphy into the hands of his heirs. It says: "All automatic closers, repeaters, local circuits, registers, printing machines, etc., are covered by this sweeping patent. Circuit breakers in actual use, or manufactured April 15, are exempt from its operation; but no machinery after that date can be employed without the consent of the patentees." So that these patentees can dictate their own terms, and make our American telegraph companies pay them almost any price they choose to ask for permission to make use of the invention.

It is not likely that so immense a claim will be conceded without resistance. When Ross Winans undertook to enforce his sixteen-wheel car patent, all the railroad companies in the country banded together to contest it, and succeeded in showing that it was invalid for want of entire novelty. So it may yet possibly be proved that Prof. Page was not the first man to devise the automatic circuit breaker, but that the idea was already known before it occurred to him. We may, therefore, expect some interesting litigation on the subject, and a rummaging among old telegraphic literature, which has not taken place since the suits brought by Samuel F. B. Morse, and in which he was defeated, upon his patent for the general application of wires and magnetism to telegraphic purposes.—*N. Y. Sun.*

The Induction Coil Patent of Prof. Charles G. Page.

Some excitement has been created in telegraph circles by the statement that the heirs of the late Prof. Charles Grafton Page claim that the special patent granted to him, by Act of Congress, covers all known forms of telegraphy, except the simple closing of a circuit by the key and hand, practically putting American telegraphing in the hands of his heirs.

We apprehend that there must be some misunderstanding in regard to this matter. We have carefully examined the claims on which Prof. Page's patent was granted (and which have already been published in our columns), and the only clauses on which such an assumption can possibly be founded are the fourteenth and fifteenth, and these could not, in our opinion, be sustained against any of the numerous telegraph instruments invented and in use at this time. We have not room this week to go into a discussion of this subject, and must content ourselves with a few general observations.

The object of Prof. Page in obtaining the special Act of Congress referred to, was doubtless merely to obtain honorable recognition of the fact that he was (as has been demonstrated), the original inventor of the so-called Rhumkorff coil, and a vindication of his right and title to that invention. It is not probable that the idea of gain, or of making the telegraphic interests of the country tributary to him, actuated him in seeking this recognition and vindication; it was the desire to establish his reputation as a scientific man, and expose the pretensions of Rhumkorff and others, who had acquired great and honorable reputation at his expense. And even if the patent could be construed to cover all that is understood to be claimed by the heirs of Prof. Page, we doubt whether it could be maintained in a court of law and equity. Congress has no right to legislate away the vested rights of the public or of private individuals. Such legislation is doubtless unconstitutional, and would be so declared by the Supreme Court.

Prof. Page, in his position as Examiner of Patents, has passed on and approved hundreds of patents for electrical and telegraphic improvements and inventions, which now, it is claimed, are tributary to his heirs.

When Prof. Page's application was before Congress, it was distinctly stated that it applied to induction coil apparatus, and its passage was urged as a just recognition of the scientific attainments of a distinguished American citizen, unjustly defrauded of his rights and credit in that particular branch of electrical science. Had it been intimated that the patent applied for covered telegraph inventions in use for a score of years, and which, by expiration of the original patents, had become public property, it would not have received ten votes in either branch of Congress.

Should the design attributed to the heirs of Prof. Page be persisted in, we shall have something more to say on this subject.—*Telegrapher.*

[We coincide with the views above expressed. If the claims of the Congressional patent to Page were to be interpreted according to their broad wording, there would be good reason for the indignation and alarm that prevail in telegraphic circles. But we think the claims will be held within narrow bounds.]

The grant of special monopolies to private parties, by Congress, is repugnant to the spirit of our institutions, and should never be tolerated except under extraordinary circumstances, when the welfare of the whole country clearly demands it. Monopolies are burdens upon the people, and had their origin in oppression. To call them patents, or to issue them under pretense of rewarding inventors, does not alter their real character. They are still the same old legalized forms of enriching the few at the expense of the many. The people already have burdens enough to carry without being tormented by hordes of private tax collectors, armed with the special Acts of Congress. Some of the hugest patent swindles have been passed by the present Congress, and others are in a forward state for passage. Indeed, the Capitol has become a second Patent Office, and is doing a large and flourishing business, but not creditable, or beneficial to the country.—*Eds.*

A New Electrical Engine.

The philosophical lecture room of the College of the City of New York, on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 19th ult., was filled by an attentive audience to witness a practical demonstration of the working and power of a new electro-magnetic motor invented by Mr. Laban C. Stuart. Previous to explaining the principle and construction of the new apparatus, Prof. Doremus gave a short lecture on magneto-electricity, introducing a number of pleasing experiments, and giving a short history of the many attempts which have been made for utilizing this agency in furnishing motive power. Stuart's machine, as exhibited by Prof. Doremus, consists essentially of a horizontal central axis about three feet in length, armed with a series of electro-magnets, and having opposed to them a set of stationary magnets. With a Bunsen's battery of forty cells, the axis revolves 500 times per minute. When connection was made with a pump, a simple calculation showed the working power of the apparatus to be $\frac{1}{10}$ of a horse-power.

According to the report of the sub-director of the *écoles impériales d'arts et métiers*, the most efficient electrical engine in France, where great attention has been bestowed upon the perfecting of these motors, is the apparatus of M. Dubos, which, with a battery of seventy cups, gives a working power of two kilogrammeters, or $\frac{2}{3}$ of a horse-power. The same authority pronounces the next best engine to be that of Loiseau. This machine, with twelve Bunsen's cells, gives only the $\frac{1}{17}$ of one horse-power. An electrical motor exhibited by an Englishman attracted considerable attention at the Paris Exposition. It was worked by a battery of fifty cells, and was warranted of one horse-power. When, however, subjected to an actual test, it was found to be but the $\frac{1}{23}$ of one horse-power.

Mr. Stuart's engine is evidently ahead of either of these machines. The principle of its construction has been so highly commended that he is going on to construct larger ones. In its present incipient state, the apparatus may be employed to advantage in pumping, running sewing machines or turning lathes, or other light work. The inventor feels confident that larger engines can be built, with not a proportionate, but a far greater increase of power; founding his belief on a fact which Prof. Doremus demonstrated by showing that doubling the size of the battery much more than doubled its efficiency. The immunity from danger by fire or explosion is a great recommendation which this motor enjoys in common with others of its class. The claims for superiority peculiar to this machine are, the arrangement of the magnets, so that a steady and uniform electrical current is kept up, and so that they are only magnetized twice in each revolution, instead of many times, as in most other motors, obtaining greater power than is possible with any electrical engine hitherto invented.

As we shall soon present to our readers an engraving and description of this machine, we reserve further description till then.

Improvement in the Manufacture of Zinc

Patented by A. G. Hunter, of Flint, Wales. The zinc ores, after having been subjected to the usual preliminary treatment, are intimately mixed with the usual quantity of carbonaceous matter, and placed on the hearth of a reverberatory furnace, in which the mixture is acted on directly by the heat and flame from the fire. In order to effect the reduction of the zinc from its ore, care must be taken to prevent the presence of any free oxygen in the flame, or heated gases passing over the zinc ore mixture. This may be accomplished either by keeping a thick mass of burning fuel in the fireplace, or by introducing carbonic oxide, carburets of hydrogen, or hydrogen gas, or other deoxidizing agent, at the fire bridge,

so as to be mixed with the flame from the fire before it reaches the zinc-ore mixture, care being taken to prevent the admission of air at any other part of the furnace except through the grate bars of the fireplace, which must be well filled with fuel while the zinc-ore mixture is under treatment. By the reducing action of the heated gases and flame, and of the carbonaceous matter mixed with the ore, the zinc the ore contains is liberated in a metallic state, and distills off as a vapor, mixed with the heated gases and flame from the fire. The zinc vapor is condensed to metal by causing the heated gases, flame, and zinc vapor, previous to their reaching the chimney, to pass through a pipe or condenser surrounded with water, which cools the gases sufficiently to allow the zinc to deposit. In this pipe or condenser, suitable recesses or cesspools are provided to receive the melted zinc as deposited, from which it may be run off into molds; also suitable openings, through which the pipe may be cleaned out. Either a stationary or a revolving reverberatory furnace may be used to heat the zinc ores in, and the condenser may be either vertical or horizontal, or both alternately, and the sizes of the furnace and condenser may be varied, to suit the amount of work required to be done. The inventor has found a furnace hearth eight feet square, and a condenser twenty inches diameter and sixty feet long, a convenient size; but these proportions may be varied.

MANUFACTURING, MINING, AND RAILROAD ITEMS.

The manufacture of wall paper has not as yet been entirely superseded by the wood veneer hangings, although the latter, we are informed, are making steady progress in the public estimation. There is a factory in this city where 1,700 tons of paper were last year converted into finished paper hangings. The facilities are such that blank paper, as it comes from the mill, can be converted in half an hour into printed wall paper, reeled and ready for market. Cylinder machines are so arranged that a dozen colors are printed at one operation. The finer grades of hanging are printed by hand.

A good move has lately been inaugurated by the New Jersey railroad company, which we hope soon to see adopted by roads generally throughout the country. Passengers for Philadelphia, on purchasing tickets at the office, are at the same time furnished with coupons specifying the number of the car, and the seat they are to occupy, and depot ushers are in attendance to show them to their places. This system of securing seats is eminently just, guarantees a seat to all passengers, and, at the same time prevents those of an avaricious turn from appropriating to their own use more than by right they are entitled to.

It is rather a humiliating fact, that all the mechanical power exerted by a man during his lifetime is more than equalled by the power stored up in one cart load of coal. The annual coal produce of Great Britain is equal to the power exerted by 530,000,000 horses, working eight hours per day, for one year. Taking this as a standard, the world's supply of this fuel equals the work of 924,000,000 horses, working as before.

Our mining intelligence from the tin discoveries of Missouri has not been very startling; certainly the deposits have not as yet proved themselves sources of fabulous wealth. The most favorable indication regarding their professed richness that has come under our notice, is the fact that one of the largest and best known metal firms in this city have just purchased an extensive tract of land in Madison county, which is reputed to contain one of the richest tin lodes in the State. A railroad will soon be in working order to within a few miles of the region. The local papers enthusiastically announce that recent discoveries reveal the fact that not only tin is to be obtained there, but that the mountain regions abound in iron, lead, silver, and gold, awaiting only the expenditure of capital and labor to speedily make the territory the rival of the far famed mineral territory on the Pacific coast.

The immense cost in the construction of English railroads is mainly derived from the extravagant prices which have to be paid at the outset for the land. The average of this item for all the lines has been rated at \$43,000 per mile, or more than the entire average cost for each mile on our American roads. The parliamentary charges incurred in procuring a charter are also enormous, many roads having cost over \$10,000 per mile. The corresponding charges in our own country are not so accurately nor so publicly estimated, as it depends entirely upon the price of each legislator.

Two public works belonging to the highest grade of modern civilization are being undertaken in Greece, the center of ancient civilization,—a telegraph line from Athens to Kephisia, and a railway to the Piræus, whence the people of the capital draw every article of consumption. The entire length of railway is but six miles, and the company can easily complete the line before the end of August, the time fixed by contract for opening the road.

A German traveler of repute, named Manch, reports to the geographical society of Gotha his discovery of two gold mines in the interior of Africa. The geological character of the section, which is located about 900 miles from Natal in a northwest direction, indicates an extraordinary amount of auriferous wealth. The existence of small pits, about three yards deep, throughout the region, would seem to indicate, as Dr. Livingstone has already said, that in former times the Kaffirs were acquainted with the art of extracting the precious metal.

Three sumptuous "drawing-room" cars have been built in Troy, N. Y., for the Hudson River railroad. Each car is sixty-four feet long, contains eight small compartments, capable of accommodating four persons each, and four other rooms suitable for an entire family. One of the large rooms is set apart for the common use of all the occupants of the car. Each compartment is fitted up with chairs, table, mirror, and other conveniences, heated from hot-air registers, well ventilated, and finished with the most elegant carpets and curtains. The cars cost \$15,000 each.

Recent American and Foreign Patents.

Under this heading we shall publish weekly notes of some of the more prominent home and foreign patents.

BLAST FURNACE.—Charles Mellinger, Cornwall, Pa.—This invention relates to improvements in the method of manufacturing pig iron, but having more particular reference to preparing or desulphurizing the ore before it is introduced into the blast furnace.

MOP.—Andrew J. Davis, Hartford, Mich.—This invention relates to a new and improved method of constructing mop frames, whereby facilities are afforded for wringing the mop, and it consists in attaching the mop to a sliding frame by a holder, which is revolved by gearing and crank, for twisting or wringing the mop.

CHURN.—Geo. W. Goodwyn, Petersburg, Va.—This invention relates to an improved means for operating the churn, whereby the work of churning can be performed much more easily than by any of the old methods.

DEVICE FOR PROPELLING PLEASURE BOATS.—J. O. Belknap, Mobile, Ala.—This invention is a neat and ornamental apparatus for moving pleasure boats in a circle around a central standard, by means of horse power.

STEAM-PIPE CONNECTION FOR RAILROAD CARS.—Henry R. Robbins, Baltimore, Md.—This invention is an improved flexible and self-adjustable joint for connecting the ends of the steam pipes in a train of cars so as to admit of the heating of the ears by steam or hot air from the locomotive or from a boiler or furnace in any part of the train.

RAFTING DOG.—Charles C. Comstock, Grand Rapids, Mich.—Patented May 12, 1868.—The object of this invention is to provide a simple and cheap device for the purpose of attaching logs together to form a raft, and operating in

such a manner that with it the logs can be more expeditiously as well as securely fastened together than by the means now commonly employed.

PRESS FOR CONCRETE BLOCKS.—L. S. Warner, Chicago, Ill.—Patented May 12, 1868. This invention relates to the pressing of concrete blocks, so called, which are used for building purposes, and which are lower than common brick, differing, also, therefrom in character; and it consists of molds or boxes which are filled with the concrete material, together with compound toggle or knee-joint levers for actuating the follow bottoms of the molds upward to press the concrete material into a dense building block.

SPINNING FRAME.—Frederick Haythorn, Philadelphia, Pa.—This invention relates to an improvement in spinning frames, and it consists in providing a series of guards between the spindles, to prevent the yarn of each bobbin or cop from coming into contact with that of the adjacent bobbins or cops, on either side, during the act of being spun.

CRIBBING PREVENTER.—Michael H. Sullivan, Providence, R. I.—This invention consists of a curved plate provided with a buckle to attach it to a horse's head near the throat, and provided with a pricking point which is actuated by the flexing of the animal's head to present the point and thus deter him from the act of cribbing.

SUPPLY GAGE FOR BOILERS.—H. P. Stafford and J. A. La Farge, Decatur, Ill.—This invention relates to an improvement for regulating the supply of water in steam boilers, and which acts automatically in maintaining the proper water level within the same, and regulates the supply of water.

HORSE HAY FORK.—John Milholland, New Concord, Ohio.—This invention relates to an improved horse hay fork, and consists of an adjustment of the trip cord by means of a trigger and of the handle, whereby the handle is protected by the side of the eye when the fork is loaded, and the point kept straight when the fork is to be returned.

LINIMENT.—A. J. Creel, Hopkinton, Iowa.—The object of this invention is to provide a liniment for healing wounds on man and beast, and for curing inflammatory diseases and for various other aches and ails to which mankind as well as the brute creation are subject.

MODE OF TREATING MINERAL PHOSPHATES IN THE MANUFACTURE OF FERTILIZERS.—John Commins, Charleston, S. C.—This invention relates to a new and improved method of treating phosphatic minerals and earths after such minerals or earths have been treated with a solution of chloride of sodium.

RAILROAD SWITCH PLATE.—Adolph Philipp, Elizabethport, N. J.—This invention relates to a new switch plate, which is so made that the rails have an elastic bearing, and that they can be removed and replaced at will, without removing the switch plate.

WATER CONDUCTOR FASTENING.—G. A. Helm, Watertown, Pa.—The object of this invention is to provide a fastening for the water conductors of buildings, which, while it presents a neat and workmanlike appearance and is durable and not likely to get out of order, shall allow the conductor to be attached to or removed from the same without removing the fastening.

FABRIC.—R. D. Hine, Mattewan, N. Y.—This invention relates to a new manner of preparing fur hat bodies, and other fabrics having a fur surface, and consists in the application of a layer of wool, the surface of which is covered with fur, and is felted together with the same, so as to form a solid fabric. The fur here referred to is that kind which is mostly used in hat bodies, and from which the skin has been removed.

SAFE-DOOR LOCK.—John G. Kriebbaum, Youngstown, Ohio.—This invention relates to a new safe lock, which is so arranged that it cannot be opened even with the correct key, unless the required movements are well known. The bolts are arranged in pairs, moving in opposite directions, one bolt moving out while the other is thrown in by the key, so that there will always be one bolt out, which locks the door, unless one bolt is, at the proper time and by the proper motion, thrown out of gear. In the door no hole for the insertion of the key is to be seen when the door is locked, and the key hole cannot be opened unless a certain plate is moved on the under side of the safe.

TAG FOR STRAPS.—Edward Wadhams, Yorkville, N. Y.—This invention relates to a metallic tag or tip for straps, such, for instance, as skate straps, harness straps, and the like, which are frequently buckled and unbuckled, and are very liable to have their ends turned or coiled up and frayed out, so as to render it difficult to insert them through the loops of the straps. It consists in encasing the end of the strap within a thin strip of sheet metal, whereby the end of the strap is preserved and rendered capable of always being readily passed through the loop and retained in proper shape.

WASHING MACHINE.—John C. Crawford, St. Charles, Ill.—This invention relates to an improvement in the construction of a washing machine and clothes presser, and consists in forming a long box, or trough, with a corrugated bottom, and provided with two large heavy rollers, connected with a lever, by which the rollers are moved over the corrugated bottom of the box to wash the clothes by rubbing with their combined and reciprocating motion.

HARNESS.—S. L. Gray, Chillicothe, Ohio.—This invention relates to a new and improved harness for controlling vicious horses, the parts being constructed arranged and applied to the horse in such a manner that the latter will be entirely within the power of the driver or rider.

EVENNER.—Freeman N. Corbin, Champlain, N. Y.—This invention relates to a new and improved application of a double tree to the draft pole of a wheel vehicle, whereby the clevises to which the whiffletrees are attached will be shifted laterally, one being brought nearer the draft pole as the other is moved outward from it, so that the most ambitious or the strongest pulling horse, whenever he exerts himself more than the other, will have his average power on the double tree decreased, while at the same time the average power of the other horse will be proportionably increased. By this arrangement a team will soon be made to pull evenly, without any special care or attention on the part of the driver.

WOOD POLISHING MACHINE.—H. O. Hooper, Diamond Springs, Cal.—This invention relates to a new and improved machine for polishing and smoothing ing doors, and other articles constructed of wood and having plane surfaces. It consists of one or more pieces of rotary polishing plates, operating in vertical planes, in combination with one or more pairs of reciprocating polish-plates, and a feed mechanism.

CORN PLANTER.—J. M. Allison, Cranberry, Pa.—This invention has for its object to furnish a simple, convenient, and effective machine, by means of which corn may be dropped accurately and rapidly by hand power.

TRACE HOLDER FOR HARNESSES.—Stephen Stout, Tremont, Ill.—This invention has for its object to furnish a neat, simple, and convenient device for attachment to the harness, upon which the traces may be hooked when detached from the whiffletree, so as to hold them securely and prevent their dropping down and being stepped upon by the horses, or being injured by tying them.

CARRIAGE WHEEL.—Anselmo B. Smith, Plattsmouth, Nebraska.—This invention consists in a novel and improved manner of securing the spokes of wheels in a metallic hub, and in a peculiar construction of the hub, whereby a very strong and durable wheel is obtained, and one which may have its spokes adjusted to compensate for any shrinking thereof, so as to avoid the lowering of the tire and the necessary shrinking of the same, which is now required in wheels as ordinarily constructed.

HORSE COLLAR AND HAMES.—Alexander Dunbar, New York City.—This invention relates to a new horse collar, of that class which is known as the "folding collar," that can be opened on top, so as to put around the horse's neck without having to be slipped over the head of the same. It consists in the use of a metal lock, which serves to fasten the upper ends of the hames together, and which is adjustable in notches cut into the hames, so as to adapt the device to various sized horses.

POCKET FAN.—H. B. Smith, Essex Conn.—This invention relates to a new lady's fan, which is so arranged that the handle can be folded out of the way when the fan is folded together, whereby the handle will be protected, and will not be liable to break off.

ORNAMENTING FABRICS.—Wm. Swan, New York City.—This invention relates to a new process of ornamenting fabrics of all descriptions, such as gauze, silk, and others, and consists in securing a series of small beads or drops, made of gum arabic, to the fabric; said beads being translucent, so

that they appear to be drops of water, or like pieces of crystal or glass on the fabric, and serve in a large degree to increase the beauty and appearance of said fabric.

VEGETABLE MASHER.—E. Brown, Burlington, Vt.—This invention relates to a device for mashing boiled potatoes, or other vegetables, and consists in the arrangement of a perforated inclined frame, and of a smooth presser sliding and swinging thereon, all being so arranged; that the mashed body or pulp of the potato or other article will be forced through the meshes or perforations of the frame, while the peels will not pass through the same, but will fall into a dish or pan placed for their reception.

RECTIFIER.—E. A. Müller and Theodor Stock, Chicago, Ill.—The object of this invention is to so construct a rectifier or doubler, that the process of distillation may be quickly carried on, that, directly from the mash, pure spirits may be produced, and that the different grades of liquor may be well separated from each other.

BIT STOCK.—Isaac C. Tate, New London, Conn.—This invention relates to a new manner of arranging a bit stock, which will not only be adapted to hold any sized shank, but which is also adapted to grope both the square shank and the round body of a bit, whatever their relative thicknesses may be.

ARTIFICIAL LIMBS.—B. Briorday, Detroit, Mich.—The nature of this invention relates to improvements in artificial legs and feet, to be used in substitution of the human leg below the knee joint. It consists principally in the construction of the ankle and toe joints.

MOLE TRAP.—Clark Polley, Sinking Spring, Ohio.—This invention consists of a trap for the destruction of moles. It consists of a mechanism for acting a fork or spear into the ground, the said mechanism being attached to two pointed stakes, so that the trap may be set over a mole path. The trap is sprung by the action of the mole in returning through his path, and in so doing it presses against a trigger board resting across the path, and thus liberates the spear, which transfixes the animal.

PENCIL HOLDER.—Edwin J. Toof, Fort Madison, Iowa.—The object of this invention is to provide a pencil holder which bears an erasing pad suitably located in the exterior case of the holder, near the point of the pencil, whereby in the operation of marking or writing the erasing pad will be presented in a convenient manner for expunging marks made by the pencil.

DEVICE FOR PULLING HOP POLES.—Isaac W. Legg, Long Eddy, N. Y.—This invention relates to a new and useful device for pulling hop poles, and it consists of two hand levers connected by a pin and arranged similarly to a tonks, and provided with a fulcrum block, all being constructed and arranged in such a manner that the device may be adjusted in a proper relative position with a hop pole, and the latter pulled up out of the ground with the greatest facility.

BEEHIVE.—Peter Compton, Sullivanville, N. Y.—The nature of this invention relates to improvements in beehives, having for their object a ready means of protecting the bees from the attacks of insects or other colonies of bees; also a means of transferring them from one hive to another, more perfect ventilation, an arrangement of boxes whereby the box honey may be readily taken out in cakes as required for use, and a means of shutting off the communication between the main hive and the upper portion where the glass boxes are placed.

GAGE FRAME FOR SLITTING RAW HIDES.—James Hoffman, Belvidere, N. J.—This invention has for its object to furnish an improved machine by the use of which raw hides may be slit or halved much more conveniently and accurately, and with much more rapidity than is possible when the work is done in the ordinary manner.

WATER CLOSET.—William Sprague, Lynn, Mass.—This invention relates to a new and improved method of constructing water closets, whereby they are more simple in construction and the escape of offensive fumes into the room is prevented.

BOBBIN FOR SEWING MACHINE SHUTTLES.—D. M. Church, Birmingham, Conn.—The object of this invention is to obviate the necessity of the operator winding the thread on the bobbins, and have that work performed by the thread manufacturers, who do it by machinery and in a perfect manner.

LANTERN.—P. J. Clark, West Meriden, Conn.—This invention relates to a new and improved application of guards to a lantern, whereby several advantages are obtained over ordinary lanterns.

MACHINE FOR WASHING BRISTLES, HAIR, ETC.—Louis F. Lannay, Indianapolis, Ind.—This invention has for its object to furnish a simple, convenient, and effective machine for washing and grinding bristles, hair, and other similar substances.

MODE OF SETTING CORNICES.—C. C. Hare, Louisville, Ky.—The present invention consists in using a cast-iron inside bracket or look out, whereby the cornice is rendered fire-proof, the cornice being secured to the said bracket or lookout with screws passing through lugs at suitable points of the same, with the screw heads countersunk so as to be embedded in the sheet metal, leaving a smooth outside surface with no wood near it.

PIPE WRENCH AND CUTTER.—James L. Brierly, Auburn, Mass.—This invention relates to a new device for clamping and cutting pipe, and consists in the arrangement and combination with each other of a screw rod, nut, head cutter and clamp. The rod is screwed into the nut, to which the head is pivoted, the head being bent like a hook. To the end of the screw rod, which is between the nut and the hook, can be fastened either the clamp or the cutter.

DRAFT ATTACHMENT OR EVENER.—W. P. Brooks, Bloomington, Ill.—This invention relates to a new and improved draft attachment or evener for vehicles and implements which are drawn by horses, and it consists in a peculiar construction of the device, whereby the draft may be equally divided between the two or three horses which may be applied to it, or an advantage (ease of draft), allowed either horse if necessary to do so.

PRODUCING IODINE FROM MUSSELS.—Jules Fougeret, New York city.—This invention relates to a new manner of extracting iodine from mussels or their shells.

HORSE HAY RAKE.—Watson A. Heath, Apalachin, N. Y.—This invention has for its object to improve the construction of revolving hay rakes so as to make them more convenient and effective in operation.

HELIOMETEER.—Conrad Friedrich L. Risch, Huntingburgh, Ind.—This invention relates to a new apparatus which is a perfect sun dial for all latitudes, and by which the time of the day can be ascertained with exactness by minutes and seconds, also the degree of latitude above which the sun stands perpendicular during any one day. Also the date and length of day, as well as the time of sunrise and sunset. By its use the reason for the variation in the length of days is made perfectly clear. The difference in the time of day between any two places on the globe can also be accurately ascertained, as well as the position of the earth's axis in relation to the surface of the water and the size of the angle formed by the axis on the water line; also the angle formed by the rays of the sun at noon of each day upon the water line or level.

EXTENSION NOTICES.

Joshua Gibbs, of Canton, Ohio, having petitioned for the extension of a patent granted to him the 15th day of August, 1854, for an improvement in plows, for seven years from the expiration of said patent, which takes place on the 15th day of August, 1868, it is ordered that the said petition be heard at the Patent Office on Monday, the 27th day of July next.

Wm. D. Andrews, of New York city, having petitioned for the extension of a patent granted to him the 23d day of August, 1854, for an improvement in centrifugal pumps, for seven years from the expiration of said patent, which takes place on the 23d day of August, 1868, it is ordered that the said petition be heard at the Patent Office on Monday, the 27th day of July next.

Horatio N. Gambrell, of Baltimore, Md., and Thomas D. Bond, of Washington, D. C., administrators of the estate of Singleton F. Burgee, deceased, having petitioned for the extension of a patent granted to the said Singleton F. Burgee the 27th day of February, 1855, antedated the 22d day of August, 1854, and reissued the 17th day of November, 1857, for an improvement in carding machines, for seven years from the expiration of said patent,

which takes place on the 22d day of August, 1868, it is ordered that the said petition be heard at the Patent Office on Monday the 3d day of August next.

Solomon S. Gray, of Boston, Mass., having petitioned for the extension of a patent granted to him the 22d day of August, 1854, for an improvement in machines for planing lumber "out of wind," for seven years from the expiration of said patent, which takes place on the 22d day of August, 1868, it is ordered that the said petition be heard at the Patent Office on Monday the 3d day of August next.

Joseph H. Tuck, of Brooklyn, N. Y., having petitioned for the extension of a patent granted to him the 26th day of June, 1855, and also granted in England the 25th day of August, 1854, for an improvement in packing for stuffing boxes, etc., for seven years from the expiration of said patent, which takes place on the 25th day of August, 1868, it is ordered that the said petition be heard at the Patent Office on Monday, the 10th day of August next.

Sarah W. Flanders, of Newburyport, Mass., administratrix of the estate of Joseph F. Flanders, deceased, and Jeremiah A. Marden, of Boston, Mass., having petitioned for the extension of a patent granted to the said Joseph F. Flanders and Jeremiah A. Marden the 29th day of August 1854, for an improvement in leather-splitting machines, for seven years from the expiration of said patent, which takes place on the 29th day of August, 1868, it is ordered that the said petition be heard at the Patent Office on Monday, the 10th day of August next.

Answers to Correspondents.

CORRESPONDENTS who expect to receive answers to their letters must, in all cases, sign their names. We have a right to know those who seek information from us; besides, as sometimes happens, we may prefer to address the correspondent by mail.

SPECIAL NOTE.—This column is designed for the general interest and instruction of our readers, not for gratuitous replies to questions of a purely business or personal nature. We will publish such inquiries, however, when paid for as advertisements at \$1 00 a line, under the head of "Business and Personal."

All reference to back numbers should be by volume and page.

P. B., of Kansas.—Smiths frequently restore burnt steel by heating it to a low red, and plunging it in water at the ordinary temperature. Experiments made in Berlin, Prussia, seem to prove that boiling water is preferable.

J. J. N., of Pa.—"Which of two spiral springs, one of quarter inch round steel and the other of quarter inch square steel, tempered alike, would be the most powerful?" Reason would seem to indicate the one of square steel, as its cross section contains within its square the cross section of the round steel, and is therefore the heavier.

J. G. S., of Pa., will find the important points of his article on steam boiler ruptures on pp. 325 and 326 current volume.

C. A. A., of Mass.—The tinning on the inside of old copper vessels may be removed by immersing the vessels in a solution of blue vitriol; the tin is dissolved and the copper left bright. Old copper is more valuable and brings a higher price when deprived of its tin.

G. W. A., of Ga.—The submarine torpedoes used in the late war were, in all essential respects, similar to those invented and used by Robert Fulton. His description is "a copper case two feet long, twelve inches in diameter, containing one hundred pounds of powder, having a lock similar to a gun lock to contain a musket charge of powder; the box, with the lock cocked and barrel charged screwed to the copper case. The lever at top has a communication to the lock inside the box, and holds the lock cocked and ready to fire, a weight holding the torpedo down to any given depth under water, and a small anchor preventing the tide from moving it from position." Of course, the movement of a ship, should she strike the lever, would make the explosion certain and instantaneous. By these means Fulton in 1805 blew up a brig of 200 tons in Walmer Roads, and in 1807 he blew up another in the harbor of New York under the direction of our Government.

W. W. B.—The sale of your American patent does not prevent you from obtaining patents elsewhere.

M. J. P., of N. Y.—Musk is an animal secretion, procured from the musk deer, and sent from China—Tonquin—Siberia, and Thibet. It is too scarce and costly to be expected here in a pure state. Other animals secrete a substance similar to the true musk, as the muskrat known well as an inhabitant of our northern streams and ponds, but we believe no successful effort has been made to procure a commercial article from this source.

D. J., of Mass.—Prussian blue is simply a preparation of an oxide of iron. It is wholly a mineral, although blood, hair, horn, etc., are used in its manufacture.

S. J. K., of Fla.—Elliptical gears are not at all uncommon. They are used extensively in slotting and shaping machines where the stroke one way should be slow and the other rapid. Even square gears, or those with the four sides slightly concave, are in use.

D. F. J., of Ill.—Musket and rifle barrels are made either of steel or iron. If of the former they are usually made from a solid bar and drilled, the barrel being placed vertically and revolving, while the drill is stationary. Steel barrels are, however, sometimes rolled, as iron barrels generally are. In this case the barrels are hollow. They are formed from "skelps," which resemble in form roofing shingles, although somewhat smaller. These skelps are placed in a furnace, heated to a nearly white heat, and passed between rollers which bring the two longitudinal edges nearly into contact. Repeated heatings, some of them being of a welding temperature, and repeated passings through the rolls, complete the forging of the barrels. The scores in the rollers through which the barrels pass are of regularly varying diameter from the point that forms the muzzle of the barrel to that which makes the enlarged breech end. A mandrel is passed through the tube or barrel at each successive rolling, from which the rollers draw the barrel. After straightening, the grinding the outside and drilling the caliber produces the barrel ready for rifling, and polishing, fitting the breech pin, etc., prepares it for stocking.

J. D. H., of N. Y.—Inlaying of metals is, so far as we know, purely hand labor. It requires much experience and skill and not a little of true artistic taste. Much of it is done on pistols and rifles, mainly by foreign-born and foreign-educated workmen. The substance of the steel and iron is recessed according to the design, by means of chisels, the sides of the cut being beveled under. The gold or silver, in the form of wire, square or round, is then hammered in and is secured by the bevel of the channels.

T. G. B., of Pa.—Air impregnated with carbonic acid will not become purified when passing it over vegetable or animal charcoal; the best agents for this purpose are caustic potassa, soda, or quicklime.

J. S., of Ohio.—The easiest and cheapest way to make a small quantity of oxygen gas without galvanic battery is to heat a mixture of chlorate of potassa with one quarter of its weight of pounded glass, sand, or black oxide of manganese; half an ounce of the chlorate of potassa will produce a little over a gallon of gas.

W. D. M., of N. Y.—Gasolin is the first product in the distillation of petroleum; it is nothing but a very light benzine. It can also be made from this article by re-distillation, and may be obtained from almost any petroleum distiller. Paraffine oil is the last product of the same distillation; it is a mixture of oil and paraffine; they are separated by cold and pressure in the same way as lard and lard oil, or spermaceti and sperm oil. Pipe clay is not manufactured, but found in the natural state in many localities; its chemical name is silicate of alumina, and it is found to consist of about 60 parts of silica and 40 of alumina.

G. R., of N. Y.—The termination *a* has already been proposed by some chemists for all the oxides, not only of the alkalis but of all the metals of which the termination is *um*; so they write not only alumina calcia but also cadmia, platina, etc. However, in all cases where the substances have English names, it is not probable that this innovation

will soon be introduced, and we will continue writing lime for calcia, oxide of iron for ferris, oxide of gold for auris, etc.

J. L. C., of N. Y.—The value of graphite or plumbago depends entirely on the quality. It is found in the United States in different localities but in many places so impure as to be almost worthless, at least as long as the pure article can be had at the same primary cost of simple quarrying. The only way to find out the practical value of a graphite mine is to bring a quantity of it to a manufacturer of lead pencils, stove black, crucibles, etc., who then soon can decide if it is worth the quarrying. We have lately seen some fine specimens of graphite from this State and from Canada; if these were not picked out specimens, but average samples of large deposits, the mines are doubtless valuable.

A. R. W., of Mass.—When india-rubber remains sticky after working it, it is a proof that the temperature was too high, or that too much turpentine was used in the solutions or varnishes; the turpentine rubber varnish has naturally a tendency never to dry; benzole is better. Vulcanizing with sulphur is the usual remedy against the stickiness of the pure rubber. We refer back to former correspondence on this subject found on page 327.

A. C. C., of Montana Ter., complains that his city is so infested with "chintz" or "bed bugs," and that every crack of the houses is filled with them, that coal oil and turpentine is too dear out there, and he proposes to smother them with carbonic acid gas. This would be of little benefit; perhaps the cheapest remedy is bichloride of mercury, usually called corrosive sublimate, dissolved in water and applied to the cracks like turpentine, of which the effect ceases as soon as it is evaporated. It is used here in most public institutions for exterminating this vermin in when rooms, cabins, or bedsteads are contaminated with it.

W. W. G., of Colorado Ter.—Alum is one of the best remedies to make whitewash of lime which will not rub off. When powdered chalk is used glue water is also good, but would not do for outside work exposed to much rain. Nothing is easier than to give it any desired color by small quantities of lampblack, brown sienna, ochre, or other coloring material.

J. B. T., of Mass.—Mica is a transparent mineral found distributed as small scales in granite. Occasionally it occurs in larger pieces. It is exceedingly laminated and therefore easily split up in very thin plates, its principal constituents being silica and alumina and therefore being incombustible is used in doors of stoves, and not being fragile is also used in lanterns, and even lamp chimneys have been made of it. It is a comparatively cheap article, and may be obtained from several stove manufacturers in New York. It is not adapted for spectacle glasses, except for the simple protection of the eyes, as it cannot possibly be ground to lenses like glass.

C. H. R., of Mass.—"What kind of plunger is the best for pumping hot and cold water to supply a high pressure steam boiler?" The ordinary solid plunger is the best known for either hot or cold water. There is always difficulty in pumping hot water from the fact that steam or vapor will accumulate in the barrel of the pump, and being elastic it prevents the water from entering. To remedy this the supply should be kept sufficiently above the pump to lift the valves by the force of gravity. A cold water pipe may be introduced to the barrel of the pump to cool it and condense the steam when the pump refuses to work.

E. F. S., of Pa.—"Has a steam engine of ten inches bore of cylinder and thirty inches stroke more or less power than one of the same bore but with only fifteen inches stroke, if the pistons be run at the same rate?" Very likely our correspondent means by "same rate" the same number of strokes. If so, the longer stroke engine would be the most powerful. But if the pistons of the two engines travel the same number of feet per minute, other things being equal, the power will be practically the same.

Business and Personal.

The charge for insertion under this head is one dollar a line.

See Wheeler & Wilson's buttonhole attachment, making one hundred buttonholes an hour. The desideratum for families, dressmakers, and manufacturers. No. 625 Broadway, New York.

For sale—Road or State rights to make and use Blythe & Hayes' patent machine for turning off locomotive crank pins in the wheel. Address W. Blythe and N. Hayes, Alexandria, Va.

The surest detective of low and high water, and high steam in boilers yet invented. Springer, Hess & Co., Philadelphia, Pa.

Mill-stone dressing diamond machine, simple, effective, and durable. Also, Glaziers' diamonds, and all for mechanical purposes. Send stamp for circular. John Dickinson, 64 Nassau st., New York.

Funston's electric toy.—See advertisement.

For Sale—Eight new portable steam engines, thirty horsepower each, of superior construction. Address Poole & Hunt, Baltimore.

Wanted—the address of plow makers everywhere. Address J. E. Jenkins, Milton, Fla.

Broughton's patent standard oilers are undoubtedly the best, and are the cheapest in the long run.

Responsible or influential parties where new jails or prisons are being built or proposed, or where they are insecure, may address, to their advantage, Walter Wells, actuary Hill's Air Alarm Co., Portland, Me.

Wanted—the address of the manufacturers of the most approved cooperage machinery. Address A. B. Seger, New Orleans.

A second-hand, good turbine water wheel that will give ten or twelve-horse power, with twenty feet head, is wanted by W. R. Norris, Fort Ann, N. Y.

Steam gages, whistles, and valves—for a good article address Bailey, Farrell & Co., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Broughton's graduating lubricators for valves and cylinders are the best. Address your orders to Broughton & Moore, New York.

Part interest, or whole of a patent for a valuable advertising medium for sale. Address H. Pearson, Washington, D. C.

Read Howard & Co.'s advertisement of Waltham watches on last page and note the low prices.

Winans' Boiler Powder (11 Wall st., N. Y.) A positively un-injurious remedy for incrustations, 12 years' references. Beware of frauds.

For the greatest improvements in harvesters, address F. C. & W. Cappaige, Terre Haute, Ind., inclosing stamp.

Gage cocks—the only really first-class are Broughton's. Address 41 Center st.

Linton's patent carriage-seat riser—descriptive circulars free. J. R. & O. E. Linton, New Bedford, Mass.

Two sets superior iron-frame cards, 48-in. breakers, 40-in. finishers, one 30-in. double-cylinder roll card, one 24-in. do., one 200-spindle Jack. For sale cheap. Apply at Union Iron Works, Rhinebeck, N. Y.

Wanted—the address of every canvasser in the United States. Send two stamps to P. & K., Box 2359, Cincinnati, Ohio.

I desire to buy a popular patent for the State of New York. Address A. Roberts, Box 2431, Buffalo, N. Y.

Improvement in Machines for Punching Sheet Metals.

The machine seen in the engravings accompanying this article appears to be in several respects a valuable improvement on those in general use. With it no measurements or markings are required, and there is no sticking of the sheet to the punch. The die is reciprocating, while the punch itself is stationary but adjustable. It is perfectly simple in construction, not, in this respect, differing materially from others, and is easy and handy in operation. In form, size, and gearing, it may be adapted to the work to be done. The machine shown in Fig. 1 is one without gearing. The die, A, is actuated by means of an eccentric, B, through the medium of a pitman, C, and slide. The block, D, in which the die, A, is secured, has a passage, E, through which the punchings of the metal are discharged. The cam, F, actuates a forked lifter, G, having a convex upper surface, by means of the bar, H. The forks of this lifter stand one on each side the punch holder, I. The lifter is raised as soon as the hole is punched, and falls back instantly, giving ample time for the workman to adjust the sheet before the die returns to the punch. The punch is adjusted to height by means of a screw, J, seated in the bottom of the punch holder. Gages, one seen at K, Fig. 1, and others secured by clamps, L, to the sheet, are used to guide the punch. The holes in these gages are made larger than those intended to be punched in the sheets, and the punch is made with a convex shoulder, as seen in M, Fig. 2, to readily adjust the gage and sheet. This form of punch and gage allows the punching of any shaped hole desired without special gages. Fig. 2 shows how easily raised impressions may be formed to any required height by the adjustment of the punch.

By means of a set of gages all descriptions of work may be performed without the necessity of laying out and marking for the holes. The adjustment of the punch is an excellent feature, which will commend the press to mechanics. It appears to be a very simple, effective, and practical machine. This improvement was patented through the Scientific American Patent Agency, Nov. 12, 1867, by Morris Seiferth, who may be addressed at Morristown, N. J.

PLIABLE GLASS.

About three months ago we called attention to a new material, which had been introduced in Paris by M. A. Marion under the above name, possessing valuable qualities for many photographic purposes. We have just received from Messrs. Marion & Co., of Soho Square, some sheets of the new material for experiment, and a brief description will doubtless interest our readers.

The "caoutchouc pellicle" is in sheets the size of photographic paper, about 22 by 18 inches. It is thin, colorless, transparent, exceedingly pliant, possesses a fine surface, and is waterproof, or nearly so, not being affected by fluids until after long treatment, and then only slightly. It is exceedingly tough, bearing considerable strain without tearing, and is slightly elastic, stretching a little when pulled.

The multiplicity of purposes to which a material having most of the properties of glass without its frangibility, and which might be called flexible glass, may be applied in photography will occur to most readers.

At present we have only had opportunity for experiment in two directions with the sheets sent to us. We have employed it as a protective surface to small pictures, in a manner similar to that in which sheets of collodion and gelatin have been used, and also as a substitute for glass in taking negatives. For the first purpose its application is simple and easy. A sheet of the material, having been cut to the required size, is immersed for a few minutes in clean water, or dilute alcohol and water would be better still. The picture to be protected is then wetted, either by holding under a tap, or immersing in a dish of water. The wet, vitreous sheet is then brought into contact with the wet surface of the print, which till then is kept in a horizontal position; the two being then raised into a vertical position, and drained, the surfaces come into close contact, the water running out from between them driving away all air bubbles. A sheet of paper is placed over the surface, and the whole rubbed well down to secure firm contact. The protected print is then dried under pressure. The appearance of the finished print is very similar to that of a print "enamelled" with gelatin and colodion.

In our attempts to use the vitrified sheet as a support in producing negatives, we proceeded as follows:—A piece of

the sheet is cut about a quarter of an inch less than a plate of glass of any suitable size. The vitrified sheet is moistened at the back, and placed on the plate of glass, to which the moisture causes it readily to adhere. It is then coated with collodion, which, flowing over the edge of the sheet and up to the edge of the glass, protects it from displacement in the nitrate bath. This done, the manipulations are conducted in the usual way until the negative is finished, when it is easily removed from the glass by running a penknife round the edge and lifting away the negative on its limp transparent support. There are certain precautions necessary in these manipulations. It is important to see that the pellicle is quite flat on the glass without wrinkles, and that the edges do not curl up so as to permit the collodion to flow under be-

transparent fabric in sheets ready for use, which will have a variety of applications. Whatever the precise nature of material employed, the skill with which it is prepared, and the beautiful transparent, tough, and flexible pellicle produced, confer a boon on photographers generally.—*Photographic News.*

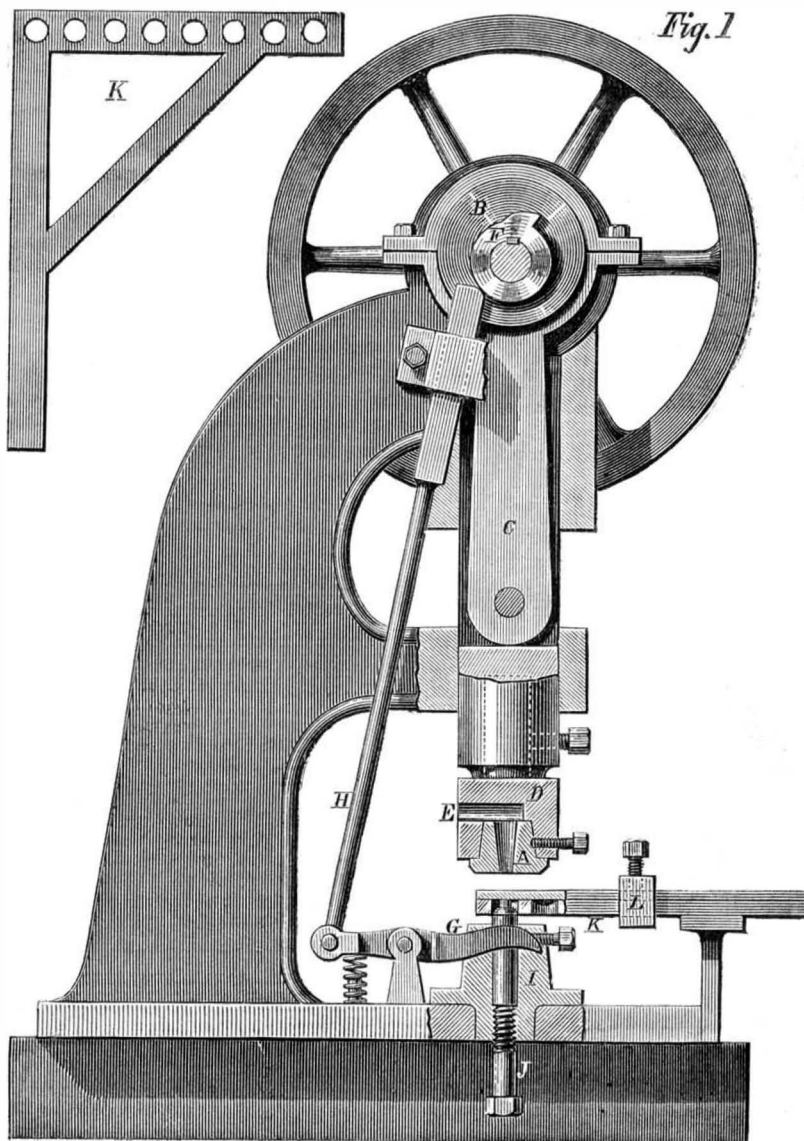
LECTURES ON THE ANIMAL KINGDOM.

On Monday evening, May 18th, Mr. Hawkins delivered the fifth and concluding lecture of his course, in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn. It would be impossible to convey to those of our readers who have not heard this gentleman any adequate idea of the value of his lectures, or of the peculiarities of his style of delivery, on the latter of which much of the former depends. His perfect mastery of the subject is shown in every illustration he makes and every word he utters. Appealing to two senses at once, those of seeing and hearing, he does not confuse, but the appeal to one sense serves to illustrate and intensify the appeal to the other.

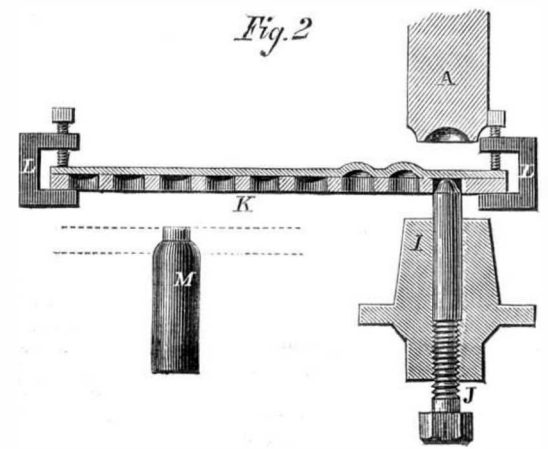
Mr. Hawkins converses with his audience rather than lectures to them. Although the conversation is audibly carried on only by him, yet he so readily anticipates questions and objections that the illusion is complete. And while thus talking in a rapid, familiar, terse, and amusing style, he is as rapidly eliminating and illustrating on the blackboard the theses and propositions of his subject, by a series of the most masterly drawings; not mere crude outlines, but finished and perfectly artistic representations. It is doubtful if he has an equal in his specialty. We were glad to be informed by him that it is probable he will be enabled to repeat his lectures, as he is to remain here for some time, having been engaged by the Park Commissioners to arrange a zoological garden at Central Park.

Mr. Hawkins must be heard to be appreciated, as his lectures, when written, are shorn of the peculiar charm and interest imparted to them by his inimitable manner. We present below a crude outline of the three last lectures of the course, being the continuation of the report begun on page 329, this volume.

The "Age of Dragons" was the very attractive title of the



SEIFERTH'S GAGE PUNCHING MACHINE.



tween the vitrified sheet and the glass. The inconvenience and imperfection which would arise if care were not taken in this respect will be readily understood.

The most curious difficulty we met in using the new material as a substitute for glass in taking negatives is one which we hope is exceptional, or in any case we are disposed to believe it is avoidable. It is this,—the exposure required is much longer.

We may here mention an ingenious application which Mr. Woodbury has for some time contemplated making of such a material as this. He proposes to sensitize a long strip of it by some trustworthy dry process; and, providing a camera with a couple of rollers, wind off from the supply roller sufficient for a negative. After exposure this would be wound on to the other roller, and a fresh supply at the same moment brought opposite the lens for further use. The compactness and convenience of such an arrangement will be readily understood. The working out of such an arrangement is a matter of detail which we need not discuss here.

The exact nature of the material and its mode of preparation are, of course, M. Marion's secret; but as photographers rarely like to work with materials of the constitution of which they know nothing, we may state at once that there is very little doubt that the basis of this fabric is collodion; and although it is named vitrified india rubber, it is very doubtful whether india rubber enters at all into its composition. The strong and peculiarly characteristic smell of castor oil is one of the first characteristics which came under our attention in examining the pellicle. On treating it with benzoline it remains unaltered. It is at once penetrated by ether, and softened, but, like collodion films under such circumstances, not readily dissolved. It burns in the rapid explosive manner of pyroxyline, leaving a little sticky residue like burnt oil. Dr. Vogel described in our pages about a year and a half ago the "leather collodion" of Herr Grune, made from plain collodion containing four per cent of soluble cotton and three per cent of castor oil, and this appears to be a substance of a similar constitution. Dr. Vogel proposed to supplement a film of the leather collodion with a layer of india rubber in certain cases, and he describes the films so prepared as very solid and a little elastic. The object for which the preparation was then proposed was the transfer of negatives. It appears probable that to M. Marion has occurred the happy thought of expanding this idea, and forming a

third lecture. The text, as it were, for the evening's entertainment, was a quotation from a British author, who some thirty years ago affirmed that, "Of Fancy's Monsters, the winged, fiery, scaly Dragon has been the most accepted fable in existence, and is found everywhere except in Nature."

Mr. Hawkins professed his readiness to show that the Dragon was not a myth, nor a creation of man's imagination, but that its representative could actually be found in nature.

That the traditions of the oldest nations all recognized the existence of these creatures, and represented the form with a great degree of similarity, is evidence in itself that the dragon once lived. These various forms all indicated a reptile, or cold-blooded animal having a reptilian nature. After delineating on the blackboard the various groups of this family, showing how the characteristics of each found a counterpart in the ideal representation, he described the fossil flying saurian or pterodactyl which he pronounced to be the original dragon. In this animal, by the excessive elongation of the little finger of the fore feet, support was afforded to a membrane which extended to the tail and made a wing for flying. The remaining fingers were short and furnished with claws. They had the wings and habits of bats, but may be considered as adaptations of the reptilian type to the air. The fiery qualifications attributed to the ancient dragons may be explained by the fact that, feeding on fish, the decomposed particles remained in the teeth of the creature, and being highly phosphorescent may have given enough light to have originated the notion of breathing forth fire and flame.

The fourth lecture of the course was on "Ancient and Recent Birds." The process and various stages of development, from the embryo in the egg, to the full-grown bird were beautifully illustrated. Several species of the feathered tribes belonging to past geological epochs, and others of more modern but no extinct races, were also pictured and described.

The concluding lecture was devoted mainly to a comparison or contrast between man and the higher orders of quadrupeds, as the gorilla, chimpanzee, etc. He insisted that these animals cannot be classed with men, as it was impossible for them to use one pair of their hands for locomotion while employing the other pair for other purposes, and the general structure of the skull and the upper limbs was such as to make a marked distinction between these animals and man.

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Contents:

(Illustrated articles are marked with an asterisk.)

*Improvement in Malt and Grain Kilns.....	358	A New Electrical Engine.....	358
Bromide of Potassium.....	358	Improvement in the Manufacture of Zinc.....	358
*Adjustable Indicator for Round-ing Saws.....	358	Manufacturing, Mining, and Rail-road Items.....	358
An Alarming Theory.....	358	Recent American and Foreign Patents.....	358
Stub Twist Gun Barrels.....	358	Extension Notices.....	359
*The Watch—Its History and Man-ufacture.....	354	Answers to Correspondents.....	359
On Musical and Sensitive Flames.....	354	*Improvement in Machines for Punching Sheet Metals.....	360
Do We See the Sun as Soon as it Rises?.....	356	Pliable Glass.....	360
*The Ball and Jet.....	356	Lectures on the Animal Kingdom.....	360
*Optical Illusions.....	356	Importance of Balancing the Parts of Machinery.....	361
Improvement Needed in Railroad Management.....	356	Machine Shop Surgery.....	361
Patent Office Illustrations for 1868.....	355	Oxygen Gas from Manganese and Soda.....	361
*Improvement in the Construc-tion of Bedsteads.....	357	The Polytechnic Association—Its Usefulness and Abuse.....	361
The Astor Library.....	357	"The Wheel".....	361
New Crystallized Cards.....	357	Technical Education.....	361
The Relation between the Specific Gravity and Pressure of Gas.....	357	Editorial Summary.....	362
A Most Important Patent—Gas Lawsuits Ahead.....	357	Electrical Separation of Gold and Other Metals.....	363
The Induction Coil Patent of Prof. Charles G. Page.....	357	Patent Claims.....	363, 364, 365, 366
		New Publications.....	366

IMPORTANCE OF BALANCING THE PARTS OF MACHINERY.

This heading does not refer to the proper proportions of the parts of a machine one to the other, but to the balancing of pulleys, cams, fly-wheels, etc., which receive a rotative movement, whether rapid or slow. There can be no doubt but that much power, otherwise valuable and useful, is absorbed and wasted by the unequal gyrations of the rotat-ing parts of machinery that might be saved and utilized by some care and attention. Even a sprung or crooked shaft, although its circumference comprises its points of support, will not only rapidly wear out the journal boxes in which it runs, but also require more power to drive it than one which is perfectly true. The pulleys which it supports multiply, in a geometrical ratio, the untrueness of the shaft, and cause the belts leading to or from them to flap continually, each alternate upward and downward movement of the belt alternately releasing and engaging with the pulley face, or alternately diminishing and increasing friction; so that in effect, the belt becomes a hammer or an alternating load, now light and now heavy.

Tests have lately been made to ascertain the amount of actual loss occasioned by an improper balancing of revolving machinery, but they have not so far progressed as to enable us to give the figures; yet we are satisfied that want of attention to this matter occasions a shameful waste of power, which is, under all circumstances, valuable and generally costly. When a machinist finishes a head for a tonguing and grooving machine, he balances it after the cutters are placed; the makers of circular saws balance them; the knife cylinders of planing machines are similarly balanced. All these run at high rates of speed, and many of our mechanics seem to think that only under these circumstances is there any need of paying attention to the balancing of the rotary portions of a machine.

We think this to be a mistaken notion. Unless revolving very slowly, a pulley, gear, fly-wheel, or grindstone ought to present the same resistance to the power at one point of its revolution as at another; in other words, it should be bal-anced. Why the driving wheels of locomotives should receive a counterbalance to the crank pin and its dependencies, while no such device is attached to stationary or marine engines, always seemed to us singular. We account for it only that it is a *cosa de España*, or a "custom of the country," rather than that the velocity of motion alone is considered; for some stationary and marine engines approach, in the velocity of their revolution, very nearly the railroad engine.

It would be a matter of little cost and little additional labor to balance each pulley intended to run on an overhead shaft or on a machine, by testing it before it was taken from the lathe where it had been bored and turned, and insuring, by devices well known to mechanics, a perfect evenness of rotation. If this plan were followed as a general thing, the cost of useful power would be reduced and also the cost of re-pairs to belts, adjustment of boxes, etc.

MACHINE SHOP SURGERY.

Few, except those who have been practical machinists, or iron workers in other departments, know the risks run by those employed, or the means used by workmen to remedy the bad effects of accidents. It is not too much to say that many a "greasy mechanic" understands better what to do in case of accident than the surgeon who can boast his diplo-ma, and has attended course after course of anatomical lec-tures.

Frequently a workman receives a particle of iron or steel

in the eye, while turning or chipping, and the "doctor" of the shop is called upon for his services. (We never yet saw a shop that did not possess its doctor for these emergencies.) Wiping his greasy hands on his overalls, the doctor ruthlessly turns back the upper or lower lid of the eye and makes an examination. If the particle of metal has merely lodged on the eye, a whittled stick in his skillful hands serves to remove it; but not unfrequently the particle has come with such force that it has imbedded itself in the substance of the eye. Then the magnet is brought to bear, one of its poles being brought in close proximity to the eye. Often this method of treat-ment is sufficient, and the offending mote is coaxed from its place. But sometimes it is so imbedded in the cornea that it is necessary to cut it out, as a splinter is removed from the skin of any part of the body. This is done with a sharp pen-knife blade, and, of course, requires great skill and steadiness of nerve in the operator. Such an operation appears to be quite risky, and possibly some educated medical practitioners would object to the use of such apparently brutal means; but there are many men to be found in our shops who do not hesi-tate to undertake these critical cases, and generally with suc-cess. We have known instances where a particle of steel im-bedded itself so deeply in the eye that when fairly cut out it left quite a scar in the substance of the organ, which was closed only by gradual healing, as would be a wound on the finger.

OXYGEN GAS FROM MANGANESE AND SODA.

In No. 12, current volume of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, page 185, we published a description of a process of extract-ing oxygen from alkaline manganates discovered by two French chemists, MM. Tessié du Môtay and Maréchal, by which they proposed greatly to intensify the light obtained from ordinary illuminating gas, and, at the same time, re-duce its cost. The process was quite fully described in the article alluded to, but having had an opportunity a few days ago of witnessing an exhibition of the quality of this new gas for illumination, compared with that furnished by the gas companies of this city, it may be well to briefly re-state the process.

Manganese, or rather its oxide as known in commerce, together with soda or another alkali, is placed in a retort, subjected to a heat of about 850° Fah., and decomposed by a jet of steam, which liberates the oxygen and deposits it in a suitable vessel. The steam is condensed and a current of atmospheric air directed against the manganates, which are thus regenerated and may be used indefinitely without sensible loss.

Manganese when exposed to a red heat yields half an equivalent of oxygen, and this gas can be more cheaply evolved from it than from any other substance. It is well known that hydrogen gas alone is not an illuminator; it needs oxygen and carbon; but hydro-carbons give out also a very great degree of heat, so that the gas jets in a room increase the temperature so rapidly that it is easily perceptible. But in the experiment alluded to it was manifest that the heat evolved from the oxygenated street gas was much less than that from that gas as ordinarily used. This is a point quite favorable to the new process. The quality of the light, also, was very clearly shown by comparison. Side by side a light furnished by ordinary gas showed a yellow color while that from the oxygenated gas was of a brilliant white, casting as distinct shadows as sunlight and having no more effect on colors. It is claimed that this light is sixteen times more powerful than that from the ordinary gas.

Still, it seems that there are some objections to the use of this improved gas, as the oxygen should be conducted by mains or service pipes to the point of consumption in a pipe separate from that conveying the hydrocarbon, as the com-mingling of the two gases before ignition is more or less dangerous. Again, the two gases are led to the burner itself by two separate pipes which, of course, involves a complica-tion of parts of the gas fixtures which is always to be avoided; and the use of magnesium tubes which are ignited by the flame. They are made by being powerfully com-pressed. These are objections, but they may be overcome by possible improvements in the details of the apparatus.

The American agents for this improvement are Sterns, Stevens & French, 22 Nassau street, this city, where the process may be witnessed.

THE POLYTECHNIC ASSOCIATION—ITS USEFULNESS AND ABUSE.

We have heard some complaints expressed in regard to the motives which led us to criticise the exercises at the Poly-technic Club of the American Institute [see pages 297 and 309 current volume]. The criticism in question was simply suggested by a perusal of the notes of a reporter, whom we had employed to be present at the meetings and who was often there during the last season, although no use was made of his notes until now. Our only aim was improvement, which is always the result of fair, sound, and honest criticism; we wished to reform, if possible, at least to influence the transactions of the Association in a direction which would be as gratifying as now sometimes it has been deplorable. It should be kept in view that the Polytechnic Club of the American Institute should be a leading beacon in the metro-polis of the Western Continent, where conceited, visionary, or ignorant persons never should perform a prominent part. We do not wish that the free discussion there should be stopped, or that no other voice should be heard than that of regularly appointed lecturers, or the exclusive reading of papers, which sometimes is very tedious any where; we do not mean to say that the exercises should be like the religious exercises in a church on Sunday, where only one person has the exclusive right of speaking; on the contrary, in science, we are strong-

ly in favor of the system of free discussion as established in the Polytechnic Club, where every person has the privilege of propounding questions or giving his opinion; we wish only that the administration should do the utmost to prevent the leading part to be performed by the arrogant, visionary ignorant, or self-conceited persons whose performances we criticised in the articles already referred to.

Nor do we object to the exhibition of new inventions before the members of the Club; no doubt they like to be posted on those subjects. But then it should be seen to that the inven-tions exhibited always possess the merit of usefulness, inge-nuity, or novelty, in order to deserve the distinction of occu-pying the time of the audience; and also that a competent person be present to explain properly all details, and answer questions in regard to them. As it is, sometimes insignificant or old objects have been allowed to be brought before the Club, and occasionally the person in charge was entirely ig-norant of the essential parts of an interesting object he brought on exhibition, and could not answer proper questions in regard to it.

We are happy to state that our criticism has a salutary ef-fect, that it stimulates the truly scientific, practical, and com-mon-sense men (of whom there are scores in our metropolis) to come forward and give to the public assembled at the Club meetings the fruits of their study, the results of their experi-ence, and the conclusions of their judgment. The principle aimed at by the Polytechnic Club is an elevated, a noble prin-ciple: it is to diffuse learning and information, to make super-ior knowledge free to all—free as the air we breathe; and as knowledge is power, thus to increase the power of the nation. Let, then, the administrations of the American Institute go on as they did lately, and give to the men who possess the knowledge and the will to communicate the results of their research, study, or experience, to others, all possible encour-agement, and assist them in all possible ways in their endea-vors. Let the good things which formerly turned up only occasionally, and lately became more numerous, increase; let inferior things go down, let the Institute raise its standard to a higher level, one worthy of the name it bears.

During the last few meetings a few interesting and useful lectures were given; one by Dr. Van der Weyde on Mineral Magnetism; one by Mr. Raymond, on the necessity of a National School of Mining, and by Mr. Waterhouse Haw-kins on Comparative Zoology. One of the best features of the exercises are the scientific notes on new discoveries, read by the talented chairman of these meetings, Prof. Till-man, which often draw out the expression of opinion from members distinguished for their extensive knowledge and versatility, or from others whose opinions are invaluable from their thorough understanding of subjects the study of which they have made a specialty.

"THE WHEEL."

The printing of this novel publication, like many new en-terprises, has been a little delayed, but it is expected to be finished and on sale at the news offices by the time this paper is before our readers. THE WHEEL is elegantly printed with large open type, in magazine style, and its contents are really valuable and good. The recent lectures of Professor Tyndall upon Heat, the great prime mover of all forms of physical phenomena, will be found deeply interesting. Every person who desires to be posted in the leading facts and latest developments of scientific truth should be familiar with these lectures. They are presented in popular style, free from technicalities, and abundantly illustrated with en-gravings. THE WHEEL also contains a variety of letters upon the wheel question, with illustrations, all new. A number of novel problems in science, mechanical, mathematical, chem-ical, philosophical, and financial, are also presented, together with fresh miscellaneous scientific matter. The price of THE WHEEL is 25 cents. Sent by mail to all parts of the country. Address MUNN & Co., 37 Park Row. Also to be had at the news offices.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Foreign periodicals, more especially English journals, are discussing the subject of Technical Education with great ear-nestness. Scott Russell, in *McMillan's Magazine*, viewing it from an English standpoint, and Prof. Huxley, through the same medium, are dealing powerful blows at the current systems, and are no doubt assisting greatly to inaugurate reform. *Once a Week*, in an article entitled the "Parisian Workman," compares the British workman with the French workman, and shows that there is a notable difference between them, and attributes it all to the superior advantages which the French workman enjoys from the earliest period of life for the cultivation of taste. To illustrate the tone of the entire article we transcribe the following passage:—

"A great art institution started among such a race, albeit, less urgently needful than in a country like ours, where the proletarian mind is not warmed, or brightened, or refined with the art sense, was certain to get a rapid and wide circulation. Few who know the French public will be surprised to learn the rapid and brilliant progress which has been effected by the *Union Centrale des Beaux Arts appliqués à l'Industrie*, since it was originated in humble quarters in the famous old Place Royale, early in the year 1864. The Union was the crea-tion of a number of eminent art manufacturers, as M. Gui-chard (the president), Barye, Carrier Belleuse, Theodore Deck, Gonelle Brothers, Klagmann, Piat, Sauvrezey, etc. It is an in-dependent art institution, that took its rise out of the famous Exhibition of Art Applied to Industry, which was held in the Palais de l'Industrie in 1863. The president, closing the Ex-hibition, said it should remind the exhibitors of those glorious tropical trees which glow at once with their weight of fruit

and their wealth of flowers. Four years have not yet elapsed and the Union is already quite an institution, and is putting forth a most notable art educational plan that promises to keep Paris against all comers, the art mistress of the world.

"A college for the cultivation of the beautiful in the useful is an idea that is actually in course of realization. The land is ready, well placed between the Marais and the Quartier St. Antoine, and within stroll of the ruralities of Vincennes. A council of imposing authority is formed, and soon the builders will be at work. The very scaffolding will be a sight worth seeing. What would the Paris carpenter say, if he were brought to contemplate the clumsy array of poles, and planks, and ropes, which the English builder uses? I have under my eye a photograph of the scaffolding that was raised to complete the Louvre. It is as neat and light and regular as our Crystal Palace girders."

Scott Russell speaks of technical education as a "National Want," and quotes at considerable length from the opinions given by many eminent scientists in response to a request for information by the School's Inquiry Commission, of 2d July, 1867, relative to Technical Education.

The following gentlemen were consulted:—Dr. Lyon Playfair, F.R.S.; Prof. Tyndall, F.R.S.; Dr. David S. Price; J. E. McConnell, C.E.; James Young, chemical manufacturer; J. Scott Russell, F.R.S.; Capt. Beaumont, R.E.; Robert Mallet, C.E.; Rev. Canon Norris, M.A.; Prof. Frankland, F.R.S.; John Fowler, C.E.; Warrington W. Smyth, F.R.S.; E. Huth; Peter Graham; A. J. Mundella; and W. Spotten.

Many of these gentlemen were jurors at the Paris Universal Exhibition, and it was in consequence of the fact, that their reports attributed certain cases of inferiority to the deficient technical education of the British people, that the inquiries were instituted by the Commissioners.

The nature of the opinions given by these gentlemen, is sufficiently shown by the following quotation from that rendered by Dr. Lyon Playfair:—"A singular accordance of opinion prevailed that our country had shown little inventiveness and made little progress in the peaceful arts of industry, since 1862. Out of ninety classes there are scarcely a dozen in which a preëminence is unhesitatingly awarded to us. The one cause upon which there was most unanimity of conviction is that France, Prussia, Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland possess good systems of industrial education for the masters and managers of manufactories, and workshops, and that England possesses none."

Professor Tyndall includes the arts of war in his opinion, as will be seen from the following passage from his report to the Commissioners:—"I have long entertained the opinion that in virtue of the better education provided by Continental nations, England must one day, and that no distant one, find herself outstripped by those nations, both in the arts of peace and war."

Mr. Mundella, while claiming that "Englishmen possess more energy, enterprise, and inventiveness than any other European nation," adds, "The contrast betwixt the work people of Saxony and England engaged in the same trade is most humiliating. I have had statistics taken of various workshops and rooms in factories in this district, and the frightful ignorance they reveal is disheartening and appalling." He regards the system of primary and industrial education of Saxony as being much in advance of the French, and says that in the branch of manufacture in which he is largely interested the Saxons are the most formidable rivals of the English.

From the opinions cited and facts which we have here stated, it is evident that England is becoming thoroughly aroused to the necessity of educational reform; and the kind of education which will characterize the new era is sufficiently indicated.

In this race for national art supremacy, we are not content that our own land should be even second, and it is somewhat humiliating to think, that in all the discussions and opinions to which the subject has given rise abroad, that so little allusion to American institutions is to be found. We have no doubt that there is good reason for this, and that our boasted popular education is not so efficient as we are sometimes disposed to believe. That it certainly would not be likely to be selected as a model of excellence by men who are competent to decide in what true excellence in education consists, is to us quite evident. We do not now allude to our primary school system, though we believe it sadly deficient in many important particulars, nor to the higher institutions of learning, in which no definite conclusions seem to have been reached as to how far the system of classical education should give place to instruction in modern languages, and the sciences, but to the general facilities for the cultivation of scientific and artistic tastes; libraries comprising the choicest of scientific works, free of access to working men, and open at such times as will accommodate their leisure; public and free art exhibitions, and free lectures on both science and art. Such public libraries as we have, with a few worthy exceptions, are sadly deficient in scientific literature. On a recent visit to a public library, we could find but two scientific periodicals in the reading room, and those were too abstract and profound in their general character to be adapted to popular reading.

That such facilities would be eagerly embraced by the masses, is shown by the success of the Cooper Institute, and other kindred institutions in our own metropolis. The evening schools have proved a priceless boon to such as could avail themselves of their advantages. We hear of local schools of design springing up in inland cities, thronged with eager applicants. Notwithstanding these indications of the great demand for technical education, the general government remains inactive, and leaves to the private beneficence of such men as Cooper, Cornell, and Peabody, or to such limited action as lies in the power of local Commissions and

Boards of Public Instruction, the burden of its supply. A consideration of the future, as well as the present needs of the country in this respect ought not to be longer deferred, if our nation is to fulfill the destiny that its founders hoped and predicted for it, and to which the native intelligence of its people and the extent of its natural resources entitle it.

Editorial Summary.

SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE.—The Legislature of Massachusetts have under consideration the subject of making an appropriation from the commonwealth to Prof. Agassiz' Museum of Comparative Anatomy, at Cambridge, in order that the institution may be made a grand instrument of popular education. While advocating his claims before a committee appointed to visit and examine the collection, Prof. Agassiz stated that the British museum had expended \$250,000 for new specimens not nearly so valuable as those obtained by the Cambridge society at the moderate cost of \$15,000. The rarest specimens he had obtained at no expense but that of exchange. Merchant ships have carried his alcohol cans all over the world and brought back, without cost, very valuable specimens. Fishermen and sea captains have for years worked gratuitously for the museum, enriching it with the most valuable contributions. The sympathy with and interest in the pursuits of science which here, pervade all ranks of society, have no existence in Europe.

NEW USE FOR THE INJECTOR.—In Paris, proprietors are by law obliged to clean or renew the fronts of their houses at least once in ten years, and the process is quite a business in itself, giving profitable employment to a small army of workmen. But the introduction by M. Nivert of a plan for making use of the Giffard injector for the purpose, bids fair to work a revolution in the trade. By throwing streams of hot or cold water through hose furnished with fire-engine nozzles, the work is done economically, perfectly, and with dispatch; a five-story building, sixty feet long, being thoroughly cleaned, even to all its architectural details, in a day. Such is the efficiency of the apparatus, as employed for this purpose, that an English company, the "Patent Steam Renovation Company," propose giving to the property owners of smoke-begrimed London the opportunity of having their buildings submitted to a like salutary ablation.

DESPOILING THE "BIG SHIP."—The long series of trials and tribulations which the much-to-be-commiserated owners of the Great Eastern have been called upon to bear, have been duly recounted in these columns. But the misfortunes of the "big ship," it would seem, are to end only in its final annihilation. Our latest foreign exchanges have an account of the disposal by auction of all the steamer's furniture and fittings, under a bill of sale held by a leading firm in Liverpool and a heavy creditor of the company. As to the future destiny of the Great Eastern, it is not difficult to foretell. At present she lies nearly high and dry in the Sloyne, a useless hulk fit only for barnacles. Her owners are without funds to fit her for sea, her value as a gift is on a par with that of the celebrated "white elephant," and her inevitable fate must be her speedy demolition, for her materials and engines.

SINGULAR OSCILLATION OF TEMPERATURE.—Just before the outbreak of Vesuvius in September of last year, a most sudden depression of temperature occurred, which was noted by Prof. G. A. Pasquale. During the month the thermometer had stood remarkably high, equaling the heat of the preceding July and August, the maximum noted during several days being no less than 32° Cent., when on the 26th and 27th, with a deluge of rain and a tempestuous wind from N. N. E., the atmospheric temperature suddenly fell 22° Cent., the thermometer standing at 10° Cent.

A REMARKABLE BOOK.—Under the title, "Stenography and Phonography, or to Write as you Run," a pamphlet has appeared in England, written by the philologist, Dr. K. P. Ter Reehorst. This author attempts to show how the same principles of short-hand reporting may be applied to the 3,065 languages extant, and proposes to teach the student how to record the utterances of a speaker regardless of the language he may be using. Although the attentive pupil, following the direction of the doctor, may learn how to write as he runs, our informant fails to say whether or no "he that runs may read," certainly a very desirable object, and one not so easily attainable, as every novice in the mysterious art of tachygraphy can testify.

THE SOLAR ECLIPSE, on the 18th of August next, is already attracting great attention abroad. The phenomenon of a total obscuration is of rare occurrence, and as it can be observed to advantage in India, the astronomers will not allow this opportunity for making several interesting and valuable observations to pass disregarded. The Indian Government has made great preparations for obtaining a photographic record of the phenomena presented during the eclipse, and the time of its duration—over six minutes—will be long enough to take a large number of negatives, so that much information respecting the physical constitution of the sun may be obtained.

METEOROLOGICAL registers conclusively show that contrary to the belief that the appearance of the aurora borealis portends a storm, the appearance of this phenomenon is as often followed by fair weather as by foul.

THE daily amount of water raised by evaporation from the sea has been computed to be no less than 164 cubic miles, or about 60,000 cubic miles annually.

SOLAR HEAT AS A MOTOR.—An English engineer proposes employing solar heat in generating steam. By using a lens of small diameter, the sun's rays have been concentrated in a vessel containing water, to such a degree that enough steam has been generated to drive a small engine. Increasing the size of the lens will, he contends, have the effect of still further intensifying the solar heat, and the power that may be obtained is only to be limited by the dimensions of apparatus employed. Should the plan of this engineer be generally adopted, the old proverbial injunction for promptness will take a mechanical turn, "make steam while the sun shines," instead of its original agricultural significance.

LUBRICANTS.—Mechanics have always supposed that animal oils were the best, if not the only proper lubricants for machinery. We have used crude olive or Gallipoli oil with good results, except that the acid generated by it acted on the brass; yet we are told by a prominent mechanic that castor oil, although vegetable, has been tested and found to be efficient, and superior to any other oil where the test was rigid and exacting, as on bearings not constructed properly to meet the demands of weight and velocity. Under such circumstances, our informant says that this vegetable oil, at ordinary temperatures viscid and heavy, became sufficiently limpid, and also held to the journals when other oils ran like water.

MUSIC FROM NOISE.—A curious instrument has been exhibited before the Academy of Sciences, which is called by its inventor, M. Daguin, an "analyzing cornet." What we describe as noise is of course made up of an infinite number of musical notes, and these the cornet is designed to analyze, just as a prism separates a ray of white light into its colored components. In appearance the instrument is described as resembling a trumpet, having a nozzle to fit into the ear instead of a mouth piece, and furnished with holes like a clarinet. Provided with one of those instruments, the roaring of a cataract or the howling of the winter's blast, may be resolved by the listener, skilled in the necessary fingering, into the softest melody, which is heard only by himself, certainly a delightful but selfish species of enjoyment.

THE FERMENT IN SALERATUS has been made a subject of investigation by M. Le Ricque de Mouchy. In a published note he asserts that in all unfiltered, concentrated solution of the commercial bicarbonate of soda which he has yet examined, the microscope has revealed very small moving corpuscles, commonly designated molecular granulations. These vegetable cells can only come from the atmosphere, where they were in suspension, since it is not reasonable to believe that any organized matter could withstand the high temperature to which soda is subjected during its manufacture. These corpuscles are the ferments, their action varying with the surrounding matter; in certain cases they are producers of alcohol.

AN ENTOMOLOGICAL MENAGERIE—We see it stated that an exhibition of living insects is about being established in the new public garden which is being formed at Montsouris, in the outskirts of Paris, and M. Hamet, professor of agriculture at Luxembourg, is directed to draw up a report on the subject for the municipal council. There can certainly be no loss for subjects for such a collection, as entomologists have recognized about 80,000 species. Out of this number must be excluded the microscopical creatures and the parasites, which could not be exhibited alive.

THE LARGEST CHILLED ROLL IN THE WORLD.—Pittsburgh, Pa., has certainly taken the lead of all other cities in the United States, in the matter of manufactures. At the present writing we have to record the casting of the largest known chilled roll, by Messrs. Bollman, Boyd & Bagaley, of that place, its diameter being 28 inches. This is by far the largest chilled roll yet made. We understand it was purchased by Alex. C. Durben, Esq., for the North River Iron Works, Jersey City, and is to be used in rolling copper.

THE quickest passage ever made by a sailing vessel between America and France has just been accomplished by the ship *Mercury*. She left New York on the evening of April 9th, and arrived at Havre on the morning of the 22d. The voyage thus occupied some hours over twelve days. Sixteen days has been hitherto considered remarkably quick time.

IF we expect good workmen we must have educated apprentices. In every business but that of mechanics a proper preparation is expected and exacted. Let our mechanical apprentices be compelled to pass a suitable examination after a suitable training and we shall have good workmen.

BELTS should be kept clean as well as oiled. The continual stretching and contraction of the leather as it runs, admits and retains particles of dust which cut and disintegrate the substance of the belt. Keep your belts well brushed or swept.

IT is a common mistake with machinists to suppose that a cold chisel or center punch will stand better if the edge is "stunt" than if it is thin. Much depends upon the temper of the steel, but more on the using of the tool.

MERCURY conducts heat more slowly than any other metal. If the heat-conducting power of silver is at 100, that of mercury is only 3.54, or about twenty-eight times less than silver.

IF the air of a crowded apartment is conducted through water, so much animal matter is collected in the water as to occasion a speedy putrefactive fermentation, with a disgusting odor.

Electrical Separation of Gold and Other Metals.

John Corson, of Washington city, has lately patented the following:—

He uses two machines, auxiliary to each other, in order to complete the process of crystallization and amalgamation of the metals found in the ores. Both machines must be insulated from earth currents by glass pillars or globes, or other poor conducting substance. The crystallizer consists of a tub or pan, of wood or iron, of suitable size (say eight or ten feet in diameter and two or three feet high); the pan, if of wood, having a false bottom of glass, one and a half or two inches thick, or of well burned and glazed tiles. A glass shaft is used to propel the mixing wheels, or any other means as effectual, to insulate the pan from earth currents, and four or eight arms, attached to and driven by the shaft, carry the mixing wheels through the pulp. The latter are made of wood, twenty-four to thirty inches diameter, and two to three inches thick, fastened to the arms by any suitable device. The face of the wheels is covered with a metal tire, one half the number with one kind of metal, as copper, and the other half with a different metal tire (zinc), so that when arranged in the pan they will be in pairs.

The tires of different metals are connected by a metallic rod, having at each end a small friction roller, of same metal, resting on the tire of the wheels, thus forming a metallic connection between the upper side of each pair of wheels. When a proper conducting fluid, as salt, or very dilute acid, is placed in the pan, the battery is ready for operation.

To put this pan in use as a crystallizer: First, the raw ore, reduced to an impalpable powder, is put into the pan, and to it is added a proper amount of salt or dilute acid, rendering it a semi-fluid pulp. As soon as any one pair of wheels are wet with this fluid compound, electricity is generated, and currents are established between each pair of wheels, causing crystallization immediately to commence. A slow motion is now given to the wheels, by means of suitable gears or belts, and continued until the operation is completed. The time occupied in each operation will vary with the various kinds of ore, but from six to eight hours will be found sufficient.

After crystallization has been completed in the pan, the whole mass is drawn off and put into the amalgamator, made of a wooden or iron cylinder, or barrel, of suitable size, running on a hollow shaft. The pulp being introduced into the barrel through a suitable opening, with the proper quantity of mercury. The amalgator is closed perfectly tight, and is rotated by very slow motion, by belt or otherwise, for from four to six hours.

After the amalgamation is completed, the amalgam is separated from the pulp by the introduction of a stream of water. The pulp being run into cisterns running lengthwise, east and west, a plate of suitable metal is put in each end, and these plates connected by a wire outside the cistern. Here it is to remain as long as convenient, or as long as any remaining metals crystallize. The mass may then again be subjected to the action of mercury in the amalgamator.

Caveats.—A Caveat gives a limited but immediate protection, and is particularly useful where the invention is not fully completed, or the model is not ready, or further time is wanted for experiment or study. After a Caveat has been filed, the Patent Office will not issue a patent for the same invention to any other person, without giving notice to the Caveator, who is then allowed three months time to file an application for a patent. A Caveat, to be of any value, should contain a clear and concise description of the invention, so far as it has been completed, illustrated by drawings when the object admits. In order to file a Caveat the inventor needs only to send us a letter containing a sketch of the invention, with a description in his own words. Address MUNN & CO., 37 Park Row, New York.

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PATENTS AND CLAIMS**

Issued by the United States Patent Office.

FOR THE WEEK ENDING MAY 19, 1868.

Reported Officially for the Scientific American.

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Pamphlets containing the Patent Laws and full particulars of the mode of applying for Letters Patent, specifying size of model required, and much other information useful to Inventors, may be had gratis by addressing MUNN & CO., Publishers of the Scientific American, New York.

77,945.—HORSE POWER.—Hiram Aldridge, Goshen, Ind., and Willis Bedford, Chicago, Ill., assignors to Hiram Aldridge. We claim, 1st, In combination with a stationary or mounted horse power, a vertically adjustable shaft, E, which is provided with two or more pinion spur wheels, for the purposes and substantially in the manner described.

77,946.—STRAP FASTENER.—J. B. Armstrong, Corunna, Mich. I claim, 1st, The cam, E, provided with the angular edge, F, and stem, J, with the spring, I, operating substantially as described, for the purposes set forth.

77,947.—TRUSS.—Samuel Ayres, New York city. I claim, 1st, Connecting the pap of a truss with the band or strap by a loop, F, through which the belt slides loosely, substantially as described.

77,948.—GOVERNOR FOR STEAM ENGINES.—Chas. H. Bacon (assignor to himself and William Read, Jr.), Boston, Mass. I claim the combination of the propeller and shaft, a, b, working within the cylinder, A, constructed with one or more chambers, B, C, with the link, E, crank, c, and rod, d, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

77,949.—DITCHING MACHINE.—Emory Barnes, Chelsea, Mich. I claim the combination of the sills, Y, the posts, B, the crossbar, C, the beam, B, the braces, A2, the vertical shaft, D, pulleys, E, G, the chain or rope, R, winchlass, V, lever, W, block, F, crane, I, bolt, 2, lever, J, scoop, K, platform, U, capstan, V, lines, P, S, N, T and Q, crossbar, M, blocks, O, and rope, X, when arranged, constructed, and operating substantially as and for the purposes herein set forth and shown.

77,950.—FURNACE FOR ROASTING ORES.—Nathan Bartlett, Centerville, N. J., assignor to himself and Franklin Osgood, Richmond county, N. Y. I claim, 1st, The sectional arrangement of the oven, and the breaks or openings by which the sections are coupled or united together, constructed and operating substantially as described.

77,951.—MACHINE FOR CUTTING ECCENTRIC TAPS.—Benj. F. Bee, Harwich, Mass., assignor to the New York Tap and Die Company, New York city. I claim, 1st, The combination in one machine of the following instrumentalities, viz., the rotative mandrel to support the blank, vibrating rotary cutter, inclined cutter arbor, feed screw, and regulating cam, formed and constructed to adapt them to the purpose (to be accomplished, and all combined and operating in the machine substantially as before set forth.

77,952.—VULCANIZING INDIA RUBBER CAR SPRINGS AND OTHER ARTICLES.—Henry W. Beins, Mount Vernon, N. Y. I claim the molds, b, secured in the heads or plates, a, of the heater, and having their ends extending beyond such heads or plates, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

77,953.—HERMETICALLY CLOSED AND KEYLESS PADLOCK.—S. Bickersaff, Cincinnati, Ohio. I claim a self-sealing or keyless padlock, consisting of two pieces only, the body and the shackle, and constructed without rivets, bolts, screws, or opening of any kind, except for the reception of the shackle, substantially as shown and described.

77,954.—PACKING FOR JOINTS OF STEAM AND WATER PIPES.—Hypolyte Brocard, Paris, France. I claim the employment, as means of making the joints of metal pipes and other metal articles tight, of washers or packings of lead, rolled, substantially in the manner hereinbefore described.

77,955.—BUCKLE.—S. P. Burdick, New York city. I claim, 1st, The lip, e, turned up from the lower face of the shell, A, to hold the lever, b, when the cam, a', is fully locked and operating in combination with said cam, shell, and lever and the lip, c, as herein described.

77,956.—GATE.—John P. Butz and Abner McFarland, Enterprise, Ind. We claim, 1st, The lever, D, with the brace, C, and the slats, a, a', used as and for the purposes set forth.

77,957.—TUBE WELL.—O. D. Chapman, Chicago, Ill. I claim the combination of the bands, d, wire cloth, E, spiral wire, F, and perforated plate, G, with tube, A, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

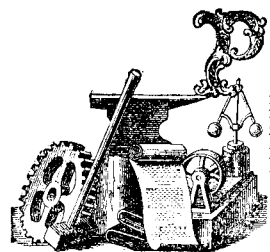
77,958.—BOOKBINDERS' BEVELING MACHINE.—Wm. P. Chase, Boston, Mass., assignor to R. Hoe & Co., New York city. I claim, 1st, The reciprocating plane, provided with an oblique cutter, in combination with the oblique groove, to guide the plane in its travel, whereby I am enabled to obtain a smooth shear cut of the material, as set forth and specified.

77,959.—LUBRICATING OIL.—Robert A. Chesebrough, New York city. I claim the product or article called by me Filtrine, as a new article of manufacture.

77,960.—HEEL CORK.—Geo. F. Clemons, Springfield, Mass. Antedated May 15, 1868. I claim, 1st, A heel cork adapted to be self-securing to the boot by means of spring clamping surfaces, substantially as described.

77,961.—RAFT DOG.—C. C. Comstock, Grand Rapids, Mich. I claim the combination of the two wedges, A, A, the link, C, and the rope, B, when employed together in the manner as and for the purpose set forth.

77,962.—COAL STOVE.—Thos. Crane, Fort Atkinson, Wis. I claim, 1st, A single-cylinder drum stove, provided with an annular fire jacket, H, surrounding its upper portion, and communicating with the fire chamber, by means substantially as described.



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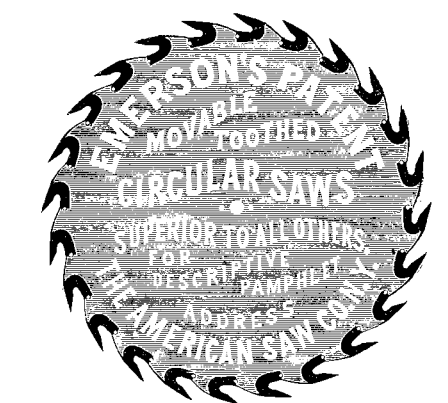
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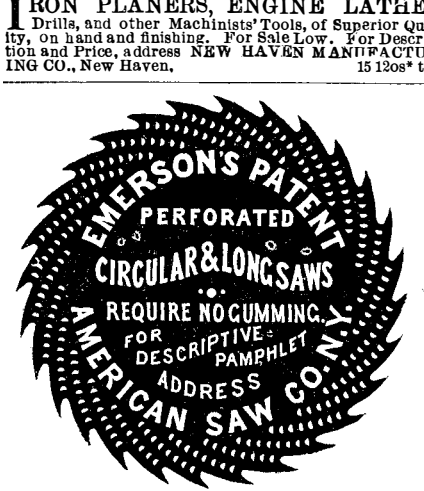
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