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GRAND CENTRAL DEPOT SIGNAL SYSTEM.

Three great railroads have their termini in the Grand Central Depot, located on 42d street, in New York city. An illustration and description of this immense structure have already appeared in these columns. With the exception of the interval between 1:10 and 3:40 in the morning, and of fifty minutes at noon, no period of fifteen minutes elapses in which some train does not depart or arrive via the Harlem, the Hudson River, or the New York, Hartford and New Haven road. One hundred and eighteen regular, and from ten to fifteen extra, trains daily pass, in one direction or the other over the tracks on the underground road between 53d street and Harlem bridge, a distance of nearly four and a half miles. Barely two minutes sometimes in-

tervenes between the departure of one train and the incoming of another, and three trains often start at intervals of five minutes apart.

It is obvious that, in order to prevent confusion and accident, the movements of each and every one of these trains, while traveling between the points named, must be governed with absolute certainty. Add to this that crowd after crowd of passen gers must be admitted from the reception room to the outgoing cars at exactly the proper time, and the checking of their baggage must be stopped in time to insure its despatch by the proper trains; and the reader will have formed some faint idea of the perfect system which must exist for the management of the machinery of the great depot and its approaches. To indicate the salient points of this system is the object of the present article; and in the ac companying illustrations are represented such devices pertaining thereto as are interesting, both in respect to ingenuity of design and mechanical novelty

The system as a

whole may be divided into three really distinct though closely interwoven parts: first, the means whereby trains are received and despatched, and also the internal operations of the depot controlled; second, the electro-magnetic way signals; and third, the novel interlocking apparatus for switches and crossings. For the sake of clearness, we shall begin with the first, mentioning merely results, and leaving the explanation of the same to with the other two topics.

Located far up on the north wall of the depot, the view from its broad window extending over the intricate network of rails into which the various tracks diverge, is a small cabin, the interior appearance of which the reader has before him in the largest of the engravings herewith given, Fig. 1. On the wall hang signal indicators and bells, time tables, and a huge clock. On the table before the single occupant are a telegraph instrument, a record book, and three rows of ivory buttons, twenty in all. This is the despatcher's office, and here, by pressing the buttons or manipulating the telegraph key, he controls the movement of every train going or coming, the buttons, through simple electric bells, governing everything near and about the depot, the key transmitting instructions to far-off points. By way of illustration, we suppose that one train is to start at 4:30, and that another will arrive at 4:31 o'clock. It is now just 4:10, the passengers are congregated in the waiting room, the cars are in place; and the engine, with steam up, is standing outside, not other button, the operator restores the danger signal. The

yet attached. The despatcher touches a button, the sound arriving train now rushes in, its passengers disembark, and of a bell is heard, the heavy doors of the waiting room fly open, and the passengers crowd upon the cars. Fifteen minates elapse; the operator presses another button, a gong strikes in the baggage room, and the checking is stopped. Belated individuals who wish to depart by that train must go minus their baggage. Now the operator watches the clock closely; three minutes pass, and then a sharp peal rings out from a bell close beside him. The minute hand points to 4:28, and the incoming train has reached 64th street and is signaling its own approach. The sound continues for half a minute, then stops; the train is at 55th street, and the finger of the despatcher at once presses another button. If we

at the sound of the bell from the despatcher, a locomotive kept for the purpose, couples on and drags the empty cars out of the depot.

We have accounted for twenty-one minutes, during which one train has left and one arrived; the reader may imagine the celerity and certainty of the work when we add that, within the fifteen minutes which we recently spent in the despatcher's cabin, three trains on three different roads were started and three received, all at different times and without the slightest confusion.

The electric bells about the depot being of simple and well known construction, and sounded by the establishing of the were on the arriving locomotive, we should see a green disk current when the buttons are pressed, need no elucidation;

and therefore the points remaining which require explanation are those relative to the movement of the flying switch and danger signals by the despatcher, and also as regards the indicator which announced the passage of the train over the crossing. This brings us to the second branch of our subject.

The electro-magnetic way signals and their operations are represented in Fig. 3. The signal is a disk made of metal, painted red, and inclosing a circle of red glass. This is supported on a shaft, shown upright (it may be horizontal, or in fact in any position), which, by the gearing and weight shown at A, is rotated through the unwinding of the cord wound about the barrel of the larger gear wheel. The disk may be turned to present its full face or only its edge in any direction, in one case showing its full color andsignaling"danger,' in the other being almost invisible and allowing the aperture of the frame or box in which it is placed to appear empty, meaning the reverse, or "clear road." It is obvious that, in order to govern the disk so that it must always appear



CENTRAL DEPOT -TRAIN DESPATCHER'S OFFICE. GRAND

everything is ready for the flying switch just outside the mechanism is required which will allow it to be rotated by depot, by which the engine is to clear itself from the train, the weight exactly one quarter revolution at a time, and no the cars entering the depot by their own momentum. Now it is 4:20; down goes another button; a bell on a post beside the locomotive waiting outside rings for the engineer to back in and couple on. Hardly ten seconds clapse before a sharp projections, B. Also fixed on the shaft and further down "ting" calls the operator's attention to the fact that the is a cam, carrying beneath it two short vertical pins. The pointer arm of the indicator on the wall has swung over from "clear" to "block." The arriving train is on the which will be seen on the circular stage, C, which is located 53d street crossing. The clock says 4:30; again a button is pressed, the doors of the waiting room are slammed shut, there is a few seconds' delay for the tardy ones on the platforms to board the cars, and then the train moves slowly out of the depot. The indicator pointer still shows " block," and if the outgoing train continues its course a disastrous meeting on the crossing may result. The despatcher remains passive, however, for he knows that the signal be tween that train and the crossing is normally at "danger," and that the engineer will certainly come to a stop, and wait until the red disk is turned. The delay is but for a second, for the indicator bell almost instantly sounds again, the arm swings over to "clear," and the proper button is immediately touched. A distant cloud of steam can be seen for a moment, and the outgoing train is off again. Pressing an-

before us, or at night the flash of a green light, meaning that | in one of the two positions—that is, full face or on edge more nor less. This apparatus is found in the simple electromagnetic device shown. Just below the disk, and rigidly secured to the shaft, are four arms having downward end the shaft revolves, just above the frame which carries the electro-magnet, D. The armature, E, of the magnet is hinged at one side, and so placed that, when not attracted by the magnet, and consequently held outward by a suitable spring, the projections, B, strike against it as shown in the engraving, so holding the disk stationary. The construction is such, however, that when the circuit is closed by any means, through one of the springs on the circular stage, C, and the pin on the cam of the disk shaft, then the magnet will become active, the armature be drawn in, and the projection freed, when of course the action of the weight will revolve the disk. But as the latter revolves, the pin on the cam will pass clear of the spring on the stage; the current will then be broken, and the armsture will fly back in time to intercept the next projection, B, preventing further movement of the disk, which (Continued on page 402.)

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Contents.

(Illustrated arricles are	ч ш	intacd with all asteriat.	
Answers to correspondents	409	Liquid meters*	104
Reer, drinking	406	Marking out guide bars*	405
Blacking for patterns (5)	40%	Metal, white (4)	409
Bleaching horsehair (4)	409	Meter, liquid mechanical"	404
Breakwater, the Manora	408	Meter, pulsating*	404
Bromide of camphor (11)	409	Meter, spirit*	404
Business and personal.	409	Meter, the Siemens spirit	101
Cementing leather to Iron, etc. (2)	409	Meter, water	404
Centrifugal force (16)	409	Meter, water*. Mines, coal, light in	400
Corner lots	403	Newton's experiments	403
	409		408
Drilling chilled from (7)	409	Patents, official list of	410
Electric force, the new phase of	401	Phosphorus light (12)	409.
Electricity, another form of	400.	Plant vases for decoration"	407
Engines, two new street	4/71	Polygon, area of a (17)	4029
Filter, a charcoal*	404	Practical mechanism-No. 38*	405
Filters and liquid meters"	404	Quintne, doses of (9)	409
Pilitore domestics	484	Rosin, black (3)	409
Filters, laboratory	404	Shaping machine, double*	403
PHOCES, PENCISIONE	401	Signals, Grand Central depot . 399,	402
Fish flour	406	Silk-spinning machinery*	406
Flouring mill, the largest	405	Skilled labor	403
Galley support, printer's"	402	Stove patterns, waxing (19)	409
Gases, volume and pressure of	403	Strains on a rope (15)	409
	409	Telegraph poles, street	407
Grand Central depot signals 399,	402	Thermometer, mercury in a (1)	409
Greenhouses and hothouses*		Timely suggestions	401
Guns, recoll check for		Vinegar, testing	402
Hydraulic ram, the	4072	Weight on an axle (14)	
Index to volume XXXIII 411,	RAM.	Weights and pulleys (13)	400
ille, the origin of	400	Welding fron and steel (6)	dill'
Lighthouses, illumination for	900	Wheelwright's machine"	950
Lightning rod ignorance, loss from -	00.00	Wood boiled in oil (10)	GLE.

THE END

With this issue, the time for which a large number of our subscribers have prepaid expires. We hope that all will renew their subscriptions, and bring some of their friends and neighbors with them. The safest way to remit is by Postal Order, Express, Bank Check to order of Munn & Co., or Registered Letter. But little risk is incurred in sending bank bills by mail, although the above-named methods are safest Beautiful Chromo Name Lists and Special Pro spectuses and Circulars sent on application. For terms, see page 410 of this paper.

THE ORIGIN OF LIFE.

Whether the line of experimental investigation adopted by Bastian and other students of spontaneous generation will ever lead to a convincing demonstration of the origin of life de noto is very doubtful. However fine the apparatus employed, however exacting the precautions against the slip ping in of germs from without or their escape from destruction within, the ingenuity of the opponents of the theory will always be able to discover a possible broken link in the chain of evidence.

Like many another point of scientific controversy, this, we suspect, will be flanked rather than carried by direct assault. As in the case of magic and witchcraft-belief in which died a natural death in the minds of intelligent people, superseded by more rational views of man and Nature, but never logically demolished-so, we are inclined to think, the mystery of life's beginning will undergo a natural solution.

Those who hold to the dogma of "no life without antece dent life" are compelled to assume, at some point in the his tory of the Universe, the occurrence of nothing less than a miracle-that is to say, a phenomenon unknown to Science and logically unsupposable from a truly scientific point of

not a natural product of material conditions, its beginning must have marked a positive breach in that causal connection of events without which Science would be impossible. The breach of continuity: in other words, against a miraculous origin of life. On the other hand the weight of experience is equally against the assumption of a material condition ab solutely unique in character. If life arose once in consequence of material conditions, Science affords no justification for the assertion that such conditions may not be repeated, possibly in our laboratories.

This is substantially the position taken by Mr. Proctor in the latest expressions of his views, and by Professor Tyndall in his latest discussion of matter and life; and such appears to be the growing conviction of those of the present generation of scientists most pervaded by the spirit of scientific progress. Says Professor Tyndall: "The conclusion of Science which recognizes unbroken casual connection between the past and the present would undoubtedly be that the molten earth contained within it elements of life, which than if the soil is generally dry.

grouped themselves into their present forms as the planet cooled." The context shows that by "elements of life," Professor Tyndall does not mean entities but possibilities of molecular condition by which the phenomena of life were to be evolved in the natural course of events, not by the miraculous addition of a new force but by means of the forces already in play.

"The difficulty and reluctance encountered by this conception," he continues, " arise solely from the fact that the theologic conception obtained a prior footing in the human mind. Did the latter depend upon reasoning alone, it could not hold its ground for an hour against its rival. * * Were not man's origin implicated, we should accept without a murmur the derivation of animal and vegetable life from what we call inorganic nature. The conclusion of pure intellect points this way and no other.'

Admitting the natural origin of life, the question arises When did life begin?

One branch of the evolution school delights to trace the existing forms of life back to some primodial germ: through changing conditions, the tendency of living things to vary from generation to generation, the survival of the fittest etc., the one has become many. But there is from this point of view no satisfactory accounting for the persistence of so many primitive forms, or for the present preponder ance of undeveloped forms. Nor is there any sufficient reason given for assuming that life began once, and once only, in the distant past.

A more logical position is occupied by those who favor the hypothesis that the material conditions; under which life originates are common conditions; consequently that the low forms of life which swarm in the waters of today are low because of their recentness. If they resemble long past fessil forms, they do so from some natural law of evolution, rather than in consequence of direct descent. From this point of view there may be no closer kinship between humanity and existing brutes than arises from a common relationship to Mother Earth. Man may be cousin to the ape; but that does not necessarily follow from the theory of evolution, as the Science of the future will regard it.

HEAVY LOSS FROM LIGHTNING ROD IGNORANCE,

On the 6th of September last the large woolen mill of Robert Fitton, Esq., at Cavendish, Vt., was struck by lightning and consumed, with a loss of \$100,000; 130 persons were thrown out of employment. The mill was 45 feet wide, 106 feet long, 4 stories high. It had a flat, gravelcovered roof, and around the eaves ran a 4 inch iron lightning rod with vertical points every four feet. From the eaves rod six branch rods extended to the ground, five of which terminated at a depth of three feet below the surface, and the other was carried thirty feet underground to the bank of a pond. These particulars have been mostly furnished to us by the proprietor of the mill. The Boston Commercial Bulletin states that the insurance underwriters regarded the mill as particularly well protected against lightning, as there was upon it an unusual array of rods, which had been overhauled and put in good order during the year. Yet the mill was struck, the flames flashing instantaneously through the spinning room. The Bulletin thinks that the loss of this mill shows what value there is in lightning rods. The insurance companies had to pay \$84,000 in settlement.

The principal comment we have to offer is that the burning of the Cavendish mill was a glaring example of the re sults of lightning rod ignorance. It would be difficult to find a more sagacious or enterprising body of business men than are the presidents, directors, secretaries, inspectors, and agents of our fire insurance companies. It would naturally be supposed that, in a matter which so directly affects their pecuniary interests as fire losses from lightning, they would take great pains to acquire knowledge concerning the means of safety, and promulgate the strictest requirements among nsurers. But they appear to be lacking in this respect, al though year after year the records of annual losses of mil lions in property, by fire caused by lightning, are forced upon their attention, and large sums of money in damages are drawn from their coffers. By consulting the naval re cords they may easily satisfy themselves that, while former ly the losses of ships and lives by lightning were enormous the losses immediately ceased when rods were introduced upon vessels: and at the present day we seldom or never hear of a serious injury to or loss of life from lightning, upon a properly rodded ship. The same appliance that pro tects a wooden vessel at sea will protect a wooden building on land, and we will here briefly describe this appliance, published

In general terms, a ship's lightning rod consists of a rope or rod of copper or iron wire, lashed to the rigging and exweight of all experience is against assumption of such a tended from the sky pole down so as to connect at any suitable place with the copper bottom, which is in contact with the sea. The rod thus has for its terminal a very large surface of conducting material, larger in fact than the deck surface of the vessel, and the lightning passes off harm-

> The golden rule of safety for rodded buildings is analogons to the above. The rod must have for its terminal of cory large surface of conducting material, placed underground in contact with the earth. Without such a terminal, no rod can be considered safe.

How large should be the conducting surface of the terminal, and of what materials made? The area of conducting surface necessary to ensure safety varies with the nature of conducting surface for the bottom of the rod will be safer

To meet the contingency of a very dry soil at the driest eason of the year, the electrician, Mr. David Brooks, of Philadelphia, recommends that the rod have for its terminal a conducting surface, placed underground, equal in area to that of the roof of the building; if this rule errs, it is probably on the side of safety.

Applying the Brooks rule to the Cavendish mill, the rods should have had for their terminals, underground, 4,770 square feet of conducting material, in contact with the earth, instead of which they only had the beggarly amount of less than thirteen square feet. No wonder that the building was struck.

Of what material should the terminals of lightning rods be composed? Iron or copper plates or pipes are the best material. In all cases where there are underground water pipes, the rods should connect with them. If these are of any considerable extent, nothing more is required. In cases where metal terminals cannot be provided, then good charcoal may be used in quantity sufficient to furnish the required extent of conducting surface. This substance ranks next to the metals in conductivity. It may be placed in a trench leading away from the building, with the rod extended along the center. Full particulars concerning lightning rods, the electrical laws concerning them, the electrician's tests for safety, and the best methods for their construction have been given, many times over, in our back numbers; but we propose to continue the subject from time to time so long as may be necessary. We are confident that, if the insurance companies were each to spend seven dollars and place the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN and SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLE-MENT on file in their respective offices during the year 1876, they would derive many most valuable suggestions from our pages, not only concerning the means of safety from lightning, but the prevention of fires of every description; suggestions which, if required to be carried into practice by insurers, would save large sums of money to the companies.

LIGHT IN COAL MINES.

Two or three years ago the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN suggested a plan of lighting coal mines from without, so as to do away with miners' lamps, and thereby avoid the explosions of fire damp inseparable from their use. The terrible explosion which occurred on December 6 in a Yorkshire colliery, a colliery said to be worked entirely with safety lamps under very rigid discipline, gives fatal emphasis to the demand for a different mode of illuminating such works.

The experiments described in this paper (page 129, volume XXXI.) amply demonstrate the unsafety of safety lamps in places where blasting is practised, the sound wave generated by a blast driving the flame through the wire mesh of the lamp and firing the explosive air without. However perfect the lamp may be, however carefully managed, the protection it affords is only partial; and explosions are liable to occur so long as they are employed. The safety of the miners demands, therefore, the exclusion of all illuminating flames. wherever fire damp is liable to exist, and the lighting of the mines by luminous radiations incapable of exploding firedamp.

This could be accomplished very easily, we believe, by the generation of the light without the mine (or else at the foot of a ventilating shaft), and its conveyance through tubes to the points requiring illumination. Beams of concentrated light could be sent to any distance through pipes having reflectors suitably placed at bends and angles, or without re flectors, provided the interior of the pipes were smooth and bright. The cost of such lighting would probably be less than the cost of lamps, and the degree of illumination might easily be such as to flood the mine with the brilliancy of daylight.

Another substitute for treacherous safety lamps might be found in electricity, the lanterns being closed so as to make it impossible for explosions to occur. If the insulation of the conducting wires should prove a serious obstacle, it is quite possible that Mr. Edison's "etheric force" would do the work as well without insulation.

THE DISCOVERY OF ANOTHER FORM OF ELECTRICITY.

Several years ago, it was accidentally discovered that, when the contact of an electric current which magnetized a large electro-magnet was broken very near one of the poles of the electro-magnet, the spark was so much increased in intensity as to produce a powerful snap, like that of a small pistol; while the breaking of the contact at a distance from the electro-magnet produced by no means such effect. The iron electro-magnet, or from its armature; but neither of these phenomena led any investigator to search out their origin, or to try to find what further results of the same class could be obtained.

This appears to have been done at last by Mr. Edison, of Newark, well known among electricians for several valuable inventions relating to electric telegraphy. He investigated the nature of the spark which could be obtained from the iron core of the electro-magnet, which, according to his statement, recently published, does not manifest the ordinary properties of electricity. The galvanometer is unmoved, the delicate gold leaf electrometer exhibits no signs of deflection, a Leyden jar is not charged by it, etc. But we consider the conclusion that this manifestation shows the existence of a new force, to be rather hasty.

It is well known that static electricity, which will produce a shock, will not move the galvanometer, and that the curthe soil. If the ground is always moist, a smaller extent of rent of a large element of a voltaic battery will neither move a gold leaf electrometer, charge a Loyden jar, nor produce a shock. Therefore to say that the phenomena observed at

test new "principles, until new buried in the depths of human ignorance," as some of the reporters of the daily papers have done, is, to say the least, rather premature.

We will here call attention to the fact that at present three principal forms of electricity are known, and they vary so much in their nature that formerly some investigators inclined to consider them as separate forces or fluids. First we have the so-called static electricity, possessing great tension it is developed on a small scale by friction, and on a large scale by evaporation and induction, as manifested in thunder storms. For this form of electricity, not only all kinds of metals, but water and the human body are good conduc. tors, even the dry skin of the hands forming no obstacle-Secondly, we have the voltaic or galvanic electricity, originated by chemical action, and developed in our galvanic batteries. For this form of electricity, only some metals are good conductors, others poorer, while water and the human body are bad conductors; its effects on the latter cannot be studied without wetting the skin, as the dry skin is a nonconductor of it. This form of electricity is used for telegraphy, while, as is well known, the static electricity (as obtained by friction) is not so useful for this purpose, its great tension causing it to escape too easily. Thirdly, we have the thermo-electricity, discovered in 1820, by Seebeck in Berlin, which differs as much from the galvanic electricity as the latter does from static electricity. For this thermoelectricity, water or the human body is an absolute non-conductor, and a thin metallic wire is but a poor conductor; so that it can scarcely pass through the whole length of the coil of a common galvanometer, and does not act on this instrument, but is powerfully indicated by one made with very thick and short wire, even if the galvanometer consists of one single, heavy, and uninsulated wire, in a coil of one turn or only half a turn.

Now it appears to us that the form of electricity discovered by Mr. Edison, may be:

1. A fourth kind of electricity, requiring as little or less insulation than the thermo-electricity of Seebeck. It is said to pass over the ordinary gas pipe, and can equally well be drawn from several of the chandeliers in a house, or even in other houses, if one of them is connected with the source of the new electricity.

2. It may consist of a continually reversing current of inductive electricity of a form in quality between the static and galvanic kinds. This appears the more probable as its source is said to be a vibrating armature, in which of course there are continuous interruptions, the induced currents formed by the interruptions running in an opposite direction from those formed at the making of the contacts, as is well known by all electricians. Such continually reversing currents of course cannot act on the galvanometer gold leaf electroscope, or Leyden jar, as their rapid reversion neutralizes all possible charge, the only manifestation being the sparks, of which, however, the rapidity of the succession causes an abundance, little affected by imperfection or even absence of insulation.

At the same time, this would explain why one end of a long wire, bent over the other end connected with the electric generator, will produce a spark. Electricity is present in such abundance that branch currents are easily supplied; while at the same time the two polarities are continually and so perfectly balanced as to exactly counteract one another, so as to be unable to charge any conductor, or to manifest the results of such charge, as in an electroscope, or to establish a polar current and manifest its results, as with a galvanometer. It is undoubtedly a manifestation of electricity and being neither positive nor negative, as is the case with all the forms of electricity thus far known, it might be called nentral electricity.

The sparks investigated by Dr. Reiss, the well known Ge man electrician, and called by him weak sparks, have polarity, being either positive or negative; and although they have certain resemblances to the electricity obtained by the method of Mr. Edison, they appear to be of a different nature, having a very different origin.

The most remarkable feature of this new form of electricity, which proves its perfect neutrality, is that it has no apparent effect on the human body, and none on even that most delicate of all electric tests, the properly prepared frog's leg, unless an exceedingly strong galvanic current is used bround the magnet.

Two New Street Engines.

A new traction engine for street usage has recently been tested in Brussels, Belgium, with satisfactory results. Exteriorly it resembles an ordinary street car, with the exception of the chimney which projects through the roof. The body is placed quite low, and the wheels, which run rails, are concealed to within a short distance from the ground. The boiler is tubular and inexplosible, and is heated by coke. The engine is one of the Brotherhood three-cylinder pattern. The exhaust is condensed in a tubular condenser, and the boiler is fed by a separate steam pump. The machine traveled without smoke or escape of steam, made no more noise than an ordinary horse omnibus, and turned sharp curves very easily. Another engine has been introduced in Paris; but instead of running on a tramway like the a love, it is a kind of omnibus or steam carriage. It ac commodates 12 passengers and weighs about 5 tuns. vertical engine supplies the motive power and occupies a space in the rear of but 30 inches high by 31 inches broad. A Giffard injector forces in the feed water, which is taken from the gutters or any other convenient source. The machine will travel at the rate of 9 miles per hour. About 3 horse power is utilized, requiring 600 quarts of water, and 110 lbs. of coal per bour.

THE NEW PHASE OF ELECTRIC FORCE.

In our number for last week, we called attention to what we at first supposed to be a similarity between the prior experiments of Professor Reiss and those of Mr. Edison. A further examination of the Reiss reports satisfies us that the results obtained by Mr. Edison are novel, and have little or nothing in common with those of Professor Reiss.

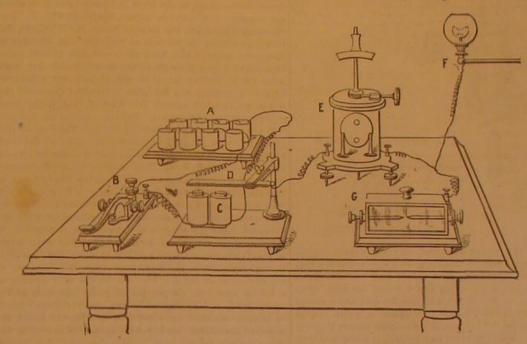
We have had an opportunity of closely examining the apparatus by which Mr. Edison and his assistants obtained the vidences of the supposed new kind of electricity which has lately elicited so much inquiry and speculation, and we preent herewith three diagrams of some of the apparatus used by Mr. Ed son during his experiments.

The first recognition of the distinctive character of the spark occurred on the evening of November 22. Mr. Edison and his assistants, as we have already stated, were experimenting with a vibrator magnet, consisting of a bar of Stubb's steel, fastened at one end and made to vibrate by means of a magnet, when they noticed a spark coming from | Tested in whatever way the experimenters have been able

nection, which would drain the wire of induced electricity, if there were any-bright sparks are visible between the graphite points in response to the motion of the telegraphie

Standing on an insulated stool, the experimenters draw sparks from the following arrangement (Fig. 3), in which x is the end of the vibrator (which, as well as the battery, is insulated): A, a secondary battery; B, a 200 ohm coll or copper wire; C is a block of iron, and D, a condenser, all well insulated except A, which is of glass, and stands on the table.

In another experiment a glass rod, four feet long, with a piece of carbon fixed to one end, was well rubbed with a silk handkerchief over a hot stove, and the carbon point presented to the apparatus, the other end of the rod being held in the hand with the handkerchief: sparks were drawn, yet the galvanometer chemical paper, the sense of shock in the tongue, and a delicate gold leaf electroscope were not in the least affected by the mysterious current.



MR. EDISON'S APPARATUS, EXHIBITING THE NEW PHASE OF ELECTRIC FORCE,-Fig. 2.

the core of the magnet. They had often noticed the same | to devise, the new current refuses to obey any of the estabphenomenon in connection with telegraphic relays, in stock lished laws of electricity further than that it traverses metallic printers when there were iron filings between the armature and the core, and in the new electric pen, and had always supposed it to be due to inductive electricity. On this occasion the spark was so bright that they suspected something more than induction. On testing the apparatus they found that, by touching any portion of the vibrator or magnet with a piece of metal, they got the spark. They then connected a wire to the end of the vibrating rod (the wire leading nowhere), and got a spark by touching the wire with a piece of iron. Still more remarkable, a spark was got on turning the wire back upon itself and touching any part of the wire with its free end. The end of the vibrating rod was then connected by means of the wire to a gas pipe overhead, whereupon a spark could be drawn from any part of the gas pipes in the room, and subsequently it was found that the spark could be drawn from any part of the whole system of city gas pipes. The vibrator and battery were next placed



on insulated stands, and the wire, connected with x, Fig. 1 was carried over to the stove, about 20 feet distant. On rub bing the end of the wire against the stove, splendld sparks were observed. With the wire permanently connected with the stove, sparks could be drawn from any part of the stove with a piece of metal held in the hand. Again, while the vibrator was in action, a block of iron was placed near x, but not touching the bar, nor connected with it in any way except by the wood of the base through the table, and sparks could be drawn from the iron.

These and other experiments which we have had the pleasure of witnessing show conclusively that the new force is not amenable to the laws of voltaic or static electricity.

An experiment made with the apparatus figured in the large engraving (Fig. 2) will satisfy any electrician that the force in action is not induced electricity. All the parts are insuated except the gas fixture. A is the battery; B, a common telegraphic key; C. an electro-magnet; D, a bar of cadmium (or other metal, cadmium being the best) supported by an



insulated stand; E is a mirror galvanometer; F, the gas pipe G, a dark box enclosing pencils with graphite points (commor lead pencils). The unknown current passes from the bar of cadmium through the galvanometer, without causing the slightest deflection, and—notwithstanding the gas pipe con- office. Price \$1.50.

conductors, manifests itself as light, and can be controlled by making and breaking connection. Among its observed peculiarities may be noticed its lack of polarity, indifference to the earth (and consequently its capability of transmission through uninsulated wires), its power of producing action when turned back upon itself, its independence of electric non-conductors, and seeming lack of mechanical and physiclogical effect.

Mr. Edison has proposed the name "etheric force." Since the above was put in type, Mr. Edison has sent us a variety of additional particulars pertaining to his new and interesting discovery, which we shall give to our readers in our next number.

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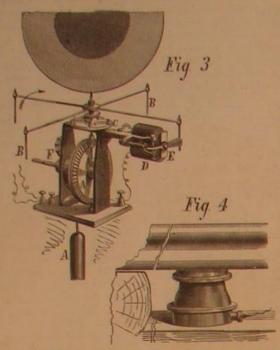
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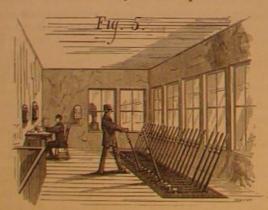
will thus have completed exactly one quarter revolution, changing for a given location from an edge view to full face, or vice versă. The reader has doubtless ere this divined that the despatcher, in raising a danger signal to release the outgoing train, or in setting the flying switch signal, simply pressed a button which established an electric current, and thus charged the disks as was necessary. From the foregoing also it will be obvious how this signal is worked on the block plan from two different points. As soon, for example, as a train passes a given location, an operator there



posted, by the means described, sets the danger signal When the train reaches another point a safe distance away, it may itself, by pressing on a simple and delicate circuit closer, arranged, as shown in Fig. 4, under the rails, again establish the current, which will free the disk arm a second time and turn the disk to safety for following trains. Or, as it is easy to see, by the use of two circuit closers properly disposed, the train might set its own danger signal and then reverse it when a suitable distance has been traversed.

But it is not enough that the signals should be set. The people in charge of them must also be infallibly informed of that fact, as well as of any failure in the working. For this purpose the tell-tale shown in Fig. 2 is used. This is the machine which announced that the incoming train, in one example, was coming over the 53d street crossing; or more properly, it first showed that a block signal had there been set and afterwards reversed; for through that signal it was operated, as we now proceed to show.

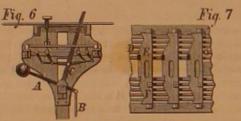
By examining the circular stage, C, in Fig. 3, a pair of springs at the left hand side, placed so as to overlap, will be noticed. There are two pairs of these springs, arranged diametrically opposite to each other on the circle, and hence between the two similarly disposed single springs, through which the circuit, as before explained, is established. The members of each pair of springs overlap without touching, but are brought in contact by one of the pins on the cam on



the disk shaft, during the revolution of the latter. Without entering into further detail, we may state that this contact must necessarily be caused with one or the other pair of springs whenever the disk changes position, and the effect ch contact is to send a current to the electro-magnet in the indicator, Fig. 2. The armature of this magnet is connected with the index clapper, and the general construction is such that, whenever the magnet is excited, the clapper will be thrown over to a position opposite to that in which it happens to be. The relation between indicator and signal is so adjusted that whenever the signal shows "danger," the clapper, which has a weighted extremity to aid its motion and to strike a gong at each end of its course, and so to give warning, swings over to " block;" when the signal is reversed the arm swings back to "clear." During its travel it strikes a suspended ball, and this, vibrating, shows to ano perator, who may have several indicators before him, which one has just become reversed. By this arrangement, it will be evident that when the signal moves the indicator must show it, and vice versa; so that the operator always has accurate knowledge of the state of the sections of line under his charge, no matter how far distant from him, or how widely sepa rated the same may be. There are many ingenious points about the system, which lack of space forbids our describ-

at F, in Fig. 3, which consists of the winding stem for the signal weight, and also other mechanism, which compels the turning of the stem and the consequent winding of the cord, before the door of the case in which the signal is contained can be unlocked to admit of the insertion of the lamp at night. Another ingenious device is that used for draw bridges, which consists of a lock on the crank, which withdraws the locking pin of the bridge. It is impossible to do this until a button is pressed, which sets a danger signal for approaching trains, nor can that signal be reversed or tampered with until the bridge is again securely locked in place.

One of the most important localities where that system is necessary is at the crossing of several tracks, similar to that at 53d street; and here also is used the new switch apparatus, which forms the third and last portion of our subject. Fig. 5 shows the interior of the switch house with the working levers. Each lever is connected to a weighted arm, A, Fig. 6, and also, by suitable interposing connections, through the rod, B, to the locks, the signals, or switches. Attached to the shank of the lever, at C, are jointed rods, which are secured to a series of square shafts, D, Fig. 7. Just above the shafts are the locking plates, E. These are flat iron plates hung in journals at each end. In the edge of each are notches, which hold the levers and prevent them from moving from the ends of the slots in which they work when the latches lay flat, as shown. If, however, a latch be tipped by pressing on a foot piece in front of the lever, the rod of which bears against the point, F, Fig. 7, the lever will be freed from the notch. The interlocking arrangement is found in cams on the square shafts, D. These are so disposed as to be immediately under the edge of the latch plates. When a shaft is so turned that the cam presses on the plate from below up, then, obviously, the plate cannot be tipped by the foot piece, nor the lever disengaged; so that the latter is thus securely locked. It is impossible to set a signal at safety if the switch points are not properly placed and locked, nor can the latter be altered after the signal is set. Any combination of interlocking is possible: in other words, any lever can be made to lock any other lever, so that it becomes a simple problem to adjust the apparatus in conformity with the number of track requirements at any particular situation. The lock for the rails consists of a hollow cast iron sleeper placed under the ends of the switch rails, and having other two crescent-shaped pivoted latches connected by a rod. By moving the latter, the points of the latches are lowered beyond the bottom of the



rails, so that the same can be moved sideways, or raised so as to prevent any similar motion. The construction is such that, unless the rails are properly placed, it is impossible to raise the latch, which thus offers an additional means of safety. Taken as a whole, the ingenuity, simplicity, and utility of this perfect system of communication, and the contrivances invented to accomplish it, are truly wonderful. The mechanical appliances are the joint inventions of Mr. J. M. Toucey, the General Superintendent, and Mr. William Buchanan, Superintendent of Machinery, of the Hudson River Railroad.

The electro-magnetic signals are the invention of Mr. Daniel Rousseau of this city, and are the subjects of several very recent patents. The depot arrangements are the results of the combined skill of Superintendent Toucey and Depot Master Franklin. To all the above named gentlemen we are indebted for much courtesy in facilitating our obtaining the interesting facts here presented.

ACIDEMETRY APPLIED TO THE TESTING OF VINEGAR.

In order to determine the value of a vinegar, it is necessary to discover in what proportion acetic acid is present and to assure oneself that no foreign mineral acids are contained. The chemist executes these various operations with acidimetric liquors, reagents, and apparatus; but there has been for some time needed a simple and practical process available to those who may not have at their command the resources of a laboratory. MM. Reveil and Salleron have recently devised an acidimeter, the use of which is illustrated in the annexed engravings (taken from La Nature), and which can be readily understood and the directions for its manufacture and employment followed.

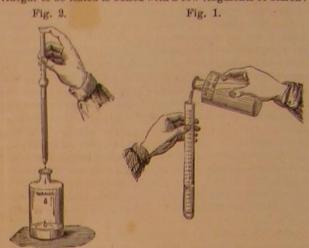
The necessary apparatus consists, first, in a tube of glass closed at one end as shown in Fig. 1; near said extremity, at the zero mark, the word "vinegar" is inscribed to indicate the amount of vinegar to be employed. Above the zero, the tube is divided off, and the divisions are marked 1, 2, 3, etc., so as to show the richness in acid, as will be described below. Second, there is a small sponge attached to a whalebone to be used to clean the tube after each experiment. Third, a pipette (Fig. 2), is marked to show a quantity of 0.25 cubic inch of liquid, so that the amount of vinegar for each test can be accurately measured. Lastly a flask of liquor, used as a standard acidimetric reagent, is

One fourth of an inch of vinegar is taken into the pipette and retained therein by the finger, as shown in Fig. 2. This ing. We may mention, however, the device partially shown becomes red when the tube is agitated by being turned over, at a hight of 38 feet.

the thumb stopping the opening. More of the test liquid is added, the mixture a second time shaken, and so on until the fluid in the tube becomes of the color of the red outer skin of an onion. The graduation on the tube, cor-responding to the level of the liquid, is then read off, and this shows the centesimal proportion of acetic acid contained in the vinegar.

The reaction can easily be followed. The acidimetric liquor, prepared in advance, is a solution of borax and caustic soda. The proportion of these ingredients is calculated to correspond to a certain quantity of crystalizable acetic acid. The liquor is colored blue by litmus, and indicates by its change to violet red the moment when the saturation of the acid by the base is effected.

Vinegars are sometimes adulterated with sulphuric and other mineral acids, which may be detected as follows: The vinegar to be tested is boiled with a few fragments of starch.



It is then cooled, diluted, and a few drops of iodine tincture dropped in. With pure vinegar, the blue color of iodide of starch should show itself; if no coloration ensues, a foreign mineral acid is present. Wine vinegars are frequently falsified with wood vinegars (pyroligneous acid): this last product almost invariably contains small quantities of sulphate of sods, the presence of which may be detected by the addition of chloride of barium, which yields a white precipitate, sulphate of baryta.

KING'S IMPROVED SUPPORT FOR PRINTERS' GALLEYS.

The annexed engraving represents a simple little device designed to support a printer's galley when the same rests upon the case, during the process of making corrections in the type or during the transfer thereinto of type from the stick. Ordinarily the galley is rested against the ledge of the case or else placed diagonally across the latter, thus covering several letter boxes and necessitating its being moved whenever the types contained in such receptacles are required. The present device sustains the galley in such a position that none of the boxes are wholly closed, so that access into any one of them may easily be had.



As shown in the engraving, it consists simply of a meta casting, forming a straight grooved piece between two pa rallel pieces, disposed at the ends and at right angles there-The groove in the central portion and notches in the cross pieces fit over the transverse partitions of the case, and the galley rests against one crosspiece while the other presses against the longitudinal partition or edge. The in vention is a handy convenience for compositors.

Patent now pending through the Scientific American Pa tent Agency. For further particulars address Messrs, Johnson & King, 100 11th street, Brooklyn (E. D.), N. Y.

THE hydraulic ram is especially useful where there is a small stream of water and only a slight fall. A fall of two is allowed to flow into the graduated tube and the acidime- feet, and a flow of 11 cubic feet of water-921 lbs.-per mitric liquid, colored blue, is slowly poured in. The fluid soon nute, will deliver 0.010 of a cubic foot of water per minute

NEW DOUBLE SHAPING MACHINE.

Messrs. R. Fernau & Co., of Vienna, Austria, have recently put in market a double-acting shaping machine, of which the specialty consists in the arrangement of the feed manship which is so prevalent. Scarcely a paper is pubmotion, which will be understood by reference to the perspective sketch and the detail. The boss of the driving pinion is extended, and has a curved slot formed in it, which imparts an oscillating motion to a lever; this motion is transferred to a horizontal shaft, through which it is conveved to the tool holder. On the front end of this shaft is a cast iron cap, which serves as a lever and also as a cover. In a slot in the cover (see Fig. 2) is placed a bolt, which can schools established for the purpose, under practical as well are obliged to draw the window blinds, he takes his seat in

be moved up or down at will, the end of the bolt projecting, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, into a triangular opening in the piece within the cap, so that the oscillating move ment of the cap gives greater or less motion to the piece above mentioned, which carries at the upper end a pawl and ratchet driving a toothed wheel, that in its turn conveys motion to a worm and wheel. The spindle of the latter carries a horizontal pinion gearing into a rack, and gives motion to the wheel.

Skilled Labor.

The richest mines of wealth of a nation are its workshops, its factories, and its farms, filled with men of highly trained and skilled labor, it being a universal law that the world's great prizes go to the best. This is not simply an abstract question, but one affecting us all in our prosperity and

in the year. France, Switzerland, Prussia, and Germany have laid us, and are laying us, every year under contributions of millions of dollars for very superior workmanship, taste, and skill. Their silks, their laces, their cloths, their china and porcelain, their bronzes, their fabrics in metal and wood, and their objects of vertu and art could be largely produced in this country if we had developed and educated our artisans and mechanics up to the same perfection in workmanship that they have in those countries.

Their mode of thorough instruction in their workshops and manufacturing establishments produces men of the highest order of training, ability, and skill. If we take, as an example, the small State of Wurtemburg, in Germany, with a population of 1,778,000, we find that they have fortynine industrial and technical schools for the training of boys and educating them in all the industrial arts. In these manufactures, where there are fifty-one professors and same quantity of land

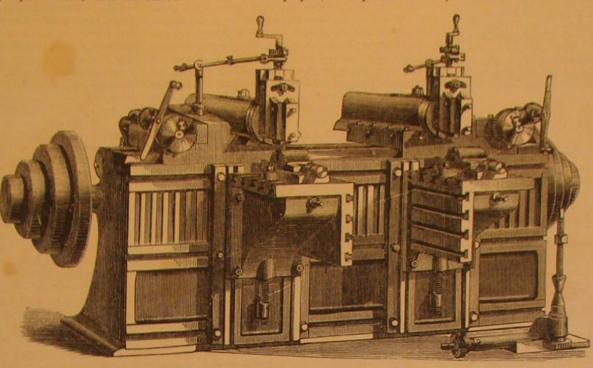
teachers of chemical and physical mineralogy, modeling rooms, mechanical workshops, rooms for drawing, botanical garden, and astronomical observatory. There are other schools for building instruction and tradesmen, where builders are trained for masters and constructors of public works, etc., and plasterers, carpenters, grainers, painters, smiths, etc., are educated for fore men and masters; and the schools are crowded with those for whom they were intended, while the graduates are eagerly sought everywhere on the Continent for their superior excellence.

There are also schools for education in all agricultural pursuits, in which practice is combined with theory, they having under their care four hundred square miles of territory These schools are largely attended, for in one year 12,040 persons, in 523 places, were getting a thorough, complete, and practical agricultural education. Connected with these schools are institutions for practical training in anatomy, physiology, and diseases of animals; and a smithy is attached, in which 4,000 animals were shod per year.

The result of this discipline is shown in the superior skill of the workmen, the excellence of all their works in the arts and sciences, and the harmony existing among them. thorough acquaintance with a particular industry necessitates a wide range through the field of knowledge, and makes a familiarity with all the causes which produces such effects. The brain is the motive power as well as the guide, for it points the way, and all things move as it points. Skilled labor is its own protection. While its progress may be temporarily impeded by the glittering tinsel of some superficial work, yet its final success is conclusive proof that "all is not gold that glitters," for merit in all things must win.

Carelessness and ignorance are the most fruitful sources of loss of life and property. Proportionately, as the mind becomes trained and disciplined, carelessness ceases; greater the pressure the larger the volume, and the greater the care is manifested in the management of all the affairs of pressure the less the volume,

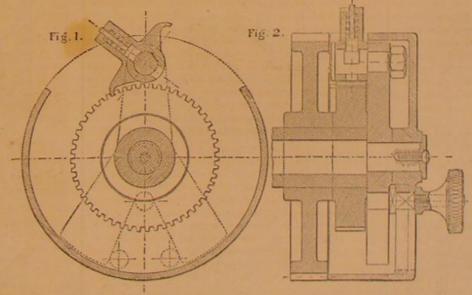
life and the products of our workshops. The great hurry, which has characterized our people, to reach results and to accumulate riches causes that neglect and superficial worklished that does not contain in its columns some startling accident, accompanied by great loss of life, occasioned by defective machinery or ignorance in its management. Railroad collisions nearly all result from these causes. The disastrous errors which frequently occur in many cities among chemists and druggists arise from an ignorance which never would or could exist if a compulsory and skillful training in



DOUBLE SHAPING MACHINE.

success every day and every hour of the day, and every day as theoretical masters of the particular industry sought to be | cular. acquired, had been gone through. We often read of the falling of a floor filled with people. This shows an ignorance of building and of the strength of different materials, a knowledge of which is so indispensable in this important branch of industry. Schools established for a thorough training in mining would not only save life and property, but cause a more profitable development of our mineral

"Knowledge is power." It is the limiting director of the productiveness of all labor. As a knowledge of all the arts, a thorough acquaintance with the laws of nature exists, so Its application to all the industries causes a greater productiveness from the same labor. It has decreased the labor of farming, and increased its producing power. The superseding of the scythe and the cradle by the mowing and reaping schools there is a mercantile and commercial course, and one machines has enabled a much greater number of acres to be for the application of chemistry to the chemical arts and tilled; at the same time a larger value is realized from the



DOUBLE SHAPING MACHINE-SECTIONAL VIEW.

The greater the skill, the greater the wages. Every hour spent in improving the mind is a bid for increased pay. 'The laborer is worthy of his hire," and that worth is enhanced just in proportion as a knowledge of his work is great or small. The foreman of a workshop receives greater compensation than any other workman. Why? Because he possesses greater intelligence on all matters connected with the work. This subject is capable of being drawn to a great length; but enough has been said to show the benefits arising from knowledge and skill in all branches of industry, and that industrial and technical schools should be established everywhere.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

THE volume of a confined mass of gas is inversely proportional to the pressure to which it is exposed; the smaller

Sir Isaac Newton's Experiments.

When Sir Isaac Newton changed his residence, and went to live in Leicester Place, his next door neighbor was a widow lady, who was much puzzled by the little she had observed of the philosopher. One of the Fellows of the Royal Society of London called upon her one day, when, among other domestic news, she mentioned that some one had come to reside in the adjoining house, who, she felt certain, was a poor crazy gentleman, "because," she continued, "he diverts himself in the oddest ways imaginable, Every morning, when the sun shines so brightly that we

front of a tub of soapsuds, and occupies himself for hours blowing soap bubbles through a common clay pipe, and intently watches them till they burst. He is doubtless now at his favorite amusement," she added; "do come and look at him." The gentleman smiled, and then went up stairs, when, after looking through the window into the adjoining yard, he turned round and said: "My dear madam, the person whom you suppose to be a poor lunaticis no other than the great Sir Isaac Newton, studying the refraction of light upon thin plates, a phenomenon which is beautifully exhibited upon the surface of a common soap bubble."

This anecdote serves as an excellent moral not to ridicule what we do not understand, but gently and industriously to gather wisdom from every circumstance around us .- Druggist's Cir-

Corner Lots.

To persons about to build a residence in the city, the following article from the Land Owner, on the most desirable corner to locate on, will be read with interest:

When a lot is on the northwest corner of two streets, it is best, in a sanitary point of view, for its frontage to be on the west side of the street and the depth on the north side. The house thus gets the sun in the front bed rooms in the morning, and on the side of the house, looking south, nearly all day. When a lot is on the northeast corner, it is best that will be the progress in improvement in all the affairs of life. | its frontage should be on the east side and its depth on the north side of the street. The east side of the street looks west, from which quarter our prevailing cold summer winds come. All rooms looking west are very cold at night, especially at the time of year when sudden changes of temperature are common. If the front bed room windows face the east side of the street, they can be kept closed at night and air secured from the sheltered side windows on the north side of

> the street, on which the sun shines nearly all day. If a lot is on the southwest corner, it is better that the frontage be on the south side, and its depth on the west side of the street. The rays of the sun do not strike the south side of the street, while they do strike the west side in the early half of the day-thus getting the sunshine and heat in the front bed rooms at the most desirable hours. When a lot is on the southeast corner, it is best that it should have its frontage on the south side and its depth on the east side, for the reason, before stated, that the sun does not strike the south side of the street, while its rays are poured on the east side from about noon till 5 p.m. The cold winds of night can be kept from the best (the front) bedroom by having the windows closed on the east side and by opening them on the south side. These are important facts to be remembered by those who are sub-dividing large lots for sale, or by those who are erecting houses on large corner lots, where they are in a position to front them either

No one looking for a residence site, who can afford to buy a corner lot, should fail to do so. By having a corner all difficulty about securing abundant sunshine and air in each room is avoided. Of almost equal value with sun and air is the cheerfulness of rooms in a corner house. The effect upon women, who have little exercise or change, is exceedingly beneficial. There is, from a corner house, an outlook that whiles away many an hour which would otherwise be dull to the dweller in the house. The average cost of a corner lot over a middle one in a residence location is 40 per cent, and it is worth more than this difference. A corner house will rent for nearly enough more than a middle one to justify the purchase of the former from an investment point of view alone. Those who wish a sunny, well aired, and really cheerful dwelling should strain every point to secure a corner. Better a corner and poorer house than a fine house hemmed in between other dwellings.

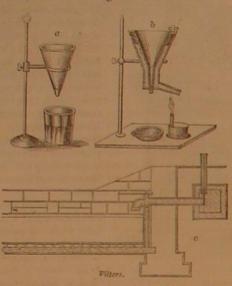
FILTERS AND LIQUID METERS.

In many localities, where the water supply is drawn from rivers adjacent to cities or from sources liable to be contami nated by decaying organic substances, filtration of the fluid, before using it for drinking or cooking, is an important sa nitary precaution. To this end various devices have been invented, all so constructed that the water passes through certain substances which, while arresting the passage of matter mechanically suspended, are sometimes of such a nature as to absorb deleterious gases and effete substances. In the annexed engravings, from Knight's "Mechanical Dictionary", will be found representations of several different inventions in the filter line.

LABORATORY FILTERS,

used by chemists, are of the simplest construction, and are represented at a and b, in Fig. 1. The first is made of a cir cle of bibulous paper, folded and opened into a quadrant and inserted into a funnel of glass or paper. For filtering matters which become viscid on cooling, such as gelatin, tallow,

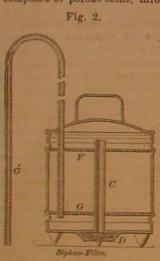




wax, etc., the apparatus shown at b is used, in which the fil ter is placed within a water bath which has a leg heated by an alcohol lamp.

DOMESTIC FILTERS

are frequently made in the form of a submerged jar or box composed of porous stone, through which the water passes



and is withdrawn by an exterior faucet, as represented at c, Fig. 1. In another form the filter is placed within a barrel, and the water passes through a coarse filter, D. Fig. 2, and up a central tube, C, to an upper chamber and thence through filtering material placed between two perforated diaphragms, F G. The water is drawn from the lower annular chamber by a siphon, G', having a stop cock at its lower end. A good domestic filter is easily constructed of a deep wooden tub divided by a tight vertical partition

through the middle, the partition being perforated near the bottom. The tub should be nearly filled on both sides of the partition with granulated charcoal, made from sugar maple and screened through a mesh of one sixteenth of an inch, the fine dust being separated by bolting. The foul water enters the tub on one side, passes down and through the holes in the partition, and rises up on the other side, leaving all its impurities in the charcoal. Fig. 3 is a

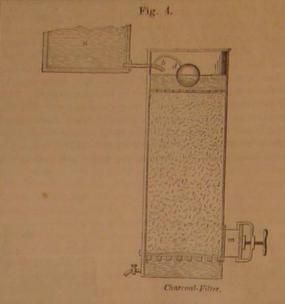
REVERSIBLE FILTER

interposed in a length of pipe. The water flowing from A to the filtering surface, T, has its impurities detained, while the strained water runs off at B. When the filter surface, T, has become foul, the dirt to the delivery side, where it carried off by the current of passing water. A

the shown in Fig. 4, which is used for sugar refining. Upon the bottom of a high cylindrical vessel, which is charged with animal charcoal, C. a filter cloth is spread, and upon this the lower

Fig. 3.

charcoal layer is tightly packed, while the remainder of the filling is left loose. Another cloth and a perforated plate complete the column. The strup to be filtered is let in from the cistern, S, the supply being regulated by the ball cock bd. t is a tube by which air is allowed to escape, and m a manhole for giving access to the interior for cleansing, etc. An arrangement of a filter in connection with a cistern is represented in Fig. 5. The water passes down through the



charcoal or other filtering material in a permanent chamber, on one side of an axial division, and, after passing beneath

Fig. 5.

the latter, rises up and is

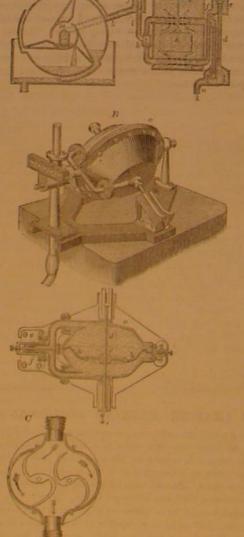
In order to ascertain the quantity of a liquid dis charged or received through an orifice. MECHANICAL LIQUID METERS

of various forms are em ployed, the principal being known as the diaphragm, the balanced(in which compressed air is used), the piston, the propeller, and the flexible tube and roller.

In Fig. 6, at A, is shown THE SIEMENS AND HALSKE SPIRIT METER.

which registers the quantity of spirit discharged and also the amount of absolute alcohol contained therein. The liquid entering at a passes through the pipes, c d, one of which terminates in a chamber, e, whence it is carried by the pipe, f, through the vessel, g. The other conducts it directly to the upper part of g. The parts of the pipes passing through g are perforated so as to make currents in the vessel in order thoroughly to mingle the spirit, and the two pipes meet at h, whence the liquid is led by i into a chamber, j, and thence to the volumeter,





which is a hollow drum, l, having a concentric cylinder, mthe space between the two being divided into three compart ments. Three slits in the central cylinder permit the liquid to flow successively into each compartment, as it in turn occupies the lowest position, and the apparatus remains sta- directs the induction flow from one to the other. The valve

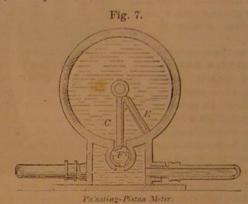
this then begins, while the aperture through which it re ceived its supply is carried, by the rotation, above the liquid In the central chamber. The registering dials are actuated in the usual manner. The amount of pure spirit is determined by a hydrometer, n, in the tank, q, the instrument being filled with alcohol, and rising and falling according to the density of the spirit. Its motions actuate suitable registering devices which give an indication each time the volumeter is emptied, and to an extent showing the quantity of pure spirit contained therein.

DUBOY'S WATER METER

is represented at B. A diaphragm, b, in a casing, a, carries a closely fitting metallic disk, c, held in position by the rod. d. Water enters through either duct, e or f. raises the diaphragm, and forces out the water on the opposite side until the vessel is full, when the diaphragm fits against that side. When the weight rises to the top, that side is given a preponderance, causing the vessel to turn on its pivots until the relative places of the sides are changed. At the same time, the supply opening is closed and that for discharge opened. Payton's meter, C, same figure, contains two S-shaped arms, whose extremities are during rotation in close contact with each other and with the sides of the box. The arrows indicate the direction of the current.

ATWILL'S PULSATING PISTON METER,

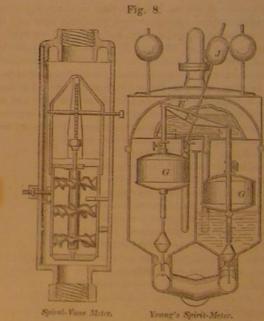
drawn off from the other Fig. 7, has a piston, E, which turns on an axle shaft com



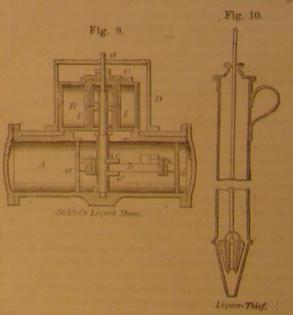
municating motion to the register and carrying an arm which, at the end of each stroke, changes a cylindrical valve. F2, so as to cause the water alternately to enter and discharge from the measuring chamber at opposite sides of the internal partition, C. The spiral vane meter, shown in Fig. 8, is simply a water wheel within a pipe connected to a register to indicate the flow of water. The flow is regulated by a sliding valve. In

YOUNG'S SPIRIT METER,

same figure, a float, G, in the measuring chamber, is at-



tached to each end of a pivoted beam. The alternate downward motion of the floats, as the chambers are discharged,



tionary until the lower chamber is full. The discharge of stems have a limited sliding motion in the floats, so that each

*Published in numbers by Messrs, Hurd & Houghton, New York city

of the latter will rise to a sufficient hight without raising the valve to permit of emptying the chamber. At the point of discharge, the weighted rod, J, is thrown past the verti cal and, closing the valve to one chamber, opens the induction pipe to the other, depressing that float sufficiently to close the escape valve. In

SICKLES' METER,

Fig. 9, the liquid flowing into the chamber, D, is, by means of the valve, C, admitted alternately to each end of the hol low valve, B, which is divided into compartments by the partitions, l l. From these the fluid flows alternately through appropriate ports behind the pistons, a a, on the rod, b, which has tappets that strike the pins, e e, on the upright shaft, d, causing its partial rotation and operating the slide valve, C, which admits the fluid into the compartments of the valve, B.

We add, in Fig. 10, one more device used in connection with liquids, to which the name of

LIQUOR THIEF

has been applied. It is simply a tube which is let down through the bung hole of a cask and then closed, so as to withdraw liquid therefrom. It is closed at the bottom by a plug, actuated by a rod passing through the top, as shown.

PRACTICAL MECHANISM.

BY JOSHUA ROSE.

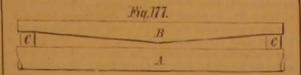
NUMBER XXXVIII.

MARKING OUT ENGINE GUIDE OR MOTION BARS,

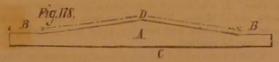
If an engine guide bar is to be made parallel in its breadth and thickness, it may be marked off from the directions already given for marking a scale. Such bars, however, should always be made thicker in the middle than at the ends (as they are always made in English locomotives) for the following reasons: If the strain upon the bars is equal at all parts of the stroke, the middle of the bar will be subject to deflection because of its distance from the blocks or supports at the ends. Again, towards and at the end of the stroke, the connecting rod stands nearly parallel with the center line of the bore of the cylinder, and then the strain upon the guide bars is very slight; but as the stroke proceeds, the angle of the connecting rod increases until (near the center of the stroke) it becomes the greatest, and therefore places the most pressure upon the guide bars. If, then, the latter deflect in consequence of this pressure, the gland and packing ring in the cylinder cover act as a fulcrum, and the piston rod as a lever, forcing the piston against the top and bottom of the bore of the cylinder, tending to wear it oval and also to wear it to a larger bore in the middle than at the ends, because the deflection of the bar is inappreciable at the ends, whatever it may be in the middle. That the deflection of such bars is sufficient to be of practical importance will be perceived from the following

During the years 1864, 1865, and 1866, I fitted up under contract nearly one thousand guide bars (for locomotives) their average size being about 30 inches long, 31 inches broad, and 14 inches thick or deep at the ends, and 3 inch es thick in the middle of their length. They were filed up in the vise, and made practically true to a surface When the first few sets were delivered to an inspector for examination, they were rejected on the ground of being hollow in their length, to a degree plainly perceptible in the surface plate marks, which showed very plainly at the ends of the bar, and graduated away until, in the middle of each bar, they were barely perceptible. This difference was obviously in the wrong direction, since the middle of the bar should, if there be any difference, mark the plainest, because it sustains the most abrasion. I was sent for by the inspec tor, who had a bar placed upon the bench, supported by a block of wood under each end; and by request, I applied the surface plate, and found, to my astonishment, the marks to be as above stated. As a consequence, the whole of the set of eight bars were returned to me to be refitted. Upon replacing them in the vise and applying the surface plate, I found each bar to mark as true and even as could be desired, and hence returned them untouched, perceiving that the bars, stout as they were, deflected from their own weight, the amount of the deflection being doubled by supporting them, in the one case in the middle and in the other by the ends. The inspector claimed that, by testing the bars while supported at their ends, he had tested them in the position in which, and supported them as they would be, when in their working places: but since no provision had been made for holding them (while being filed up) in that position, and since the top bars stand upside down when upon the engine, it ainly impracticable to file them up in such a position. The bars were passed, the controversy having served to demonstrate their appreciable deflection, and also that the bot tom bars should be filed up a little rounding and the top ones level in their respective lengths. To mark off such a bar as is here described, one face must either be first trued up, or the marking-off must be performed at two separate operations. The better plan is for the marker-off to examine the bar as to size, and have one face planed off. If either face appears defective, it should be the first planed. If the bar appears sound all over, the outside edge face of the bar should be the one to be planed off preparatory to marking off; and in setting it to surface it, care should be taken to set it true with the top and bottom faces, if they are parallel to each other; and if not, to divide whatever difference there would be necessary, in marking off the first face, to mark the lines all around the work, which, when planed up, would the marking off table in the position shown in Fig. 177, A serve as a guide whereby to set the work during the success being the marking-off plate, B the guide bar, C C pieces of sive chuckings. wood to lift the bar off the plate. By means of small thin

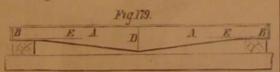
wedges, the planed face," B, of the bar is set at a true right and smay be marked by the compass calipers and compasses, angle to the surface of the plate, and tested by a square. The next operation is to mark off the top or uppermost face, and the question here arises; Shall it be so marked that there will be an equal amount of metal taken off the top and bottom faces, or otherwise? First, then, since the quality



of the metal is the best towards the surface, it is a consider ation to take off as little as possible, so as to leave a hard wearing surface; this may appear a small matter, but it is always right to gain every superiority attainable without cost. Therefore, all other things being equal, we should prefer to take as little metal off the top face as would be sufficient to make it true, and should therefore mark it out with that view. Here, however, another consideration arises which is that the outline of the bottom face is not straight, and cannot therefore be planed lengthways from the center of the bar to the ends; and if such bottom face is to be shaped across its breadth, instead of lengthways, it is a comparatively slow operation, and much time will be saved by so marking off the bar that the bottom will only just true up, so that all the surplus metal will be cut off the top face, which, being done in a larger machine, and lengthways, is a much more rapid operation. There is, however, a method of obtaining both the advantage of taking as little as possible off the top face, and planing the bottom face for the most part lengthways. It is shown in Fig. 178, A being the bar;



the two faces, B B, may be first planed parallel (as required) with the face, C; the back of the bar may then be planed in two operations from the point, D, to the junction with B at each end. Were the method of procedure employed, it would pay to leave the most metal to come off the back of the bar; but there are yet other considerations, which are the facilities in the shop. If the shaping machines are not kept fully occupied, while the planing machines are always in de mand, it will pay (if there are not many bars to be planed) to leave as little as needs be to be taken off the bottom of the bar and the remainder off the top. If, however, many bars are to be planed, the most economical of all methods will be to plane the backs by placing, say, 8 of them at a time across the table of the planer, cutting off the ends at the same chucking. Supposing this plan to be adopted, we set the scriber of the marking block just below the lowest part of the surface of the bar, and draw a line along its planed surface, and then another line along each end, to denote the thickness of the parallel parts at each end, making this line longer than is necessary, as a guide in setting the bar in the shaper (in case the ends are shaped and not planed). We next mark off the length of the bar at the ends, using a square and allowing about an equal amount to be taken off each end; and then, still using the square, we mark a line equidistant between the end lines, to denote the center of the length of the bar, which will then present the appearance shown in Fig. 179, the inside line, A A. being for the top



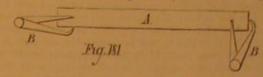
face, the lines, E, for the parallel ends, the lines, B B, for the ends, and the line, D, denoting the middle of the length of the bar. We now turn the bar so that its planed face is uppermost; and setting a pair of compasses to the required thickness of the middle of the bar, we set one point at the lunction of the lines, A and D, mark off with the other point a half circle, and then (turning the bar over) adjust it upon the table, as shown in Fig. 180, A being the table, and B a



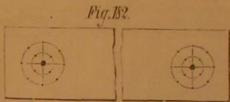
scribing block be applied along the table, the needle or pose A, in Fig. 184, to represent a piece of metal requiring at D and the mark, C, at the end of the taper part of the bar, A (the mark, C, showing the required distance from the end of the bar). Having made the adjustment, we draw the line, E, thus completing the marking of that half of the We next remove the block of wood and wedge to the other end of the bar, and repeat the last operation, when the marking of the bar will be, so far as its outline is concerned complete. It will be observed that we have drawn the line in each case on the one planed surface of the bar only, and not all around the work. The reason for this is that the planed face is a guide, whereby to chuck the work and ensure its being set true. In the absence of one true face, it

After the faces and ends are planed up, the holes in the out 1,000 barrels of flour per day.

is shown in Fig. 181, A being the bar, and B B the compass



calipers set to the required distance. At the junction of the marks thus made, we make a light centerpunch mark, and mark off the circles for the holes, first marking a circle of the requisite size and defining its outline by other light centerpunch marks. We next draw from the same center a circle smaller in diameter, and define its outline also by small centerpunch marks; after which we take a large centerpunch, and make a deep indentation in the center of the circle, which will appear as shown in Fig. 182. The philosophy of



marking the holes in this manner is as follows: If the outside circle alone is marked, there is nothing to guide the eye during the operation of drilling the holes (in determining whether the drill is cutting the holes true to the marks or not) until the drill has cut a recess nearly approaching the size of the circle marked; if the drill is not cutting true to the marks, and the drawing chisel is employed, it will often happen that, after the first operation of drawing, the drill may not yet cut quite true to the marks; and it having entered the metal to its full diameter, there is no longer any guide to determine if the hole is being made true to the circle or not. By introducing the inside circle, however, we are enabled to use the drawing chisel, and therefore to adjust the position of the hole during the earlier part of the operation; so that the hole being cut is made nearly if not quite true before the cutting approaches the outer circle, which shows the full size of the hole. If, on nearly attaining its full diameter, the outer circle shows it to be a little out of truth, the correction is easily made. It is furthermore much more easy to draw the drill when it has only entered the metal to, say, half its diameter than when it has entered to nearly its full

The object of making a large centerpunch mark in the center is to guide the center of the drill, and to enable the operator to readily perceive if the work is so set that the point of the drill stands directly over the centerpunch mark. This is of great importance in holes of any size whatever, but more especially in those of small diameter, say, for instance, inch, because it is impracticable to describe circles of so small a diameter whereby to adjust the drilling; and in these cases, if the drill runs out at all, there is but little practical remedy. The centerpunch marks for such holes should therefore be made quite deep, so that the point of the drill will be well guided and steadled from the moment it comes into contact with the metal, in which case it is not likely to run to one side at all. If a motion or guide bar requires to have one corner rounded off, as it should have to prevent its leaving a square corner on the guide block, which would weaken the flange of the latter, the corner cannot be marked off, but a gage should be made as shown in Fig. 183, A in the left hand

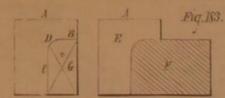
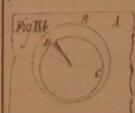


figure being a piece of sheet iron, say $\frac{1}{32}$ inch thick, with the lines, B and C, and the quarter circle, D, marked upon its surface. The metal, G, is then cut away, and the edges carefully filed to the lines, thus forming the gage, A, which is shown upon the bar, F, in the position in which it is applied when in use. It is obvious that such a gage will scarcely suffice to get up a very true round corner; this, however, is accomplished by leaving the corner of the work a little full to the gage and then filing it up to the piece of work fitting against it.

Reference having been made to drawing the position of the recess formed by a drill before it has entered the metal to block of wood and wedge to adjust the bar so that, if the its full diameter, we may as well explain that process. Sup-



to have a hole of the size of the circle, D, drilled in it, and that the recess cut by the drill is out of true, as shown by the circle, C. A round-nosed chisel is then employed to cut, at D, the groove there shown, running from the outside to the center of the recess, and which will have the effect, when the

drill is again introduced, to draw the recess toward that side, thus causing the recess to be true with the marks.

THE largest flouring mill in America, it is said, is owned by Hon. C. C. Washburn, of Minneapolis, Minn. It is seven stories high, and crowded with machinery from top to bottom. Its cost was \$300,000, has 40 run of burrs, and turns

AMERICAN SILK-SPINNING MACHINERY.

It is estimated that 6,000 persons are employed and over

\$10,000,000 capital invested in the extensive silk factories

of Paterson, N. J. The process of silk making begins with

the assortment of the skeins of raw silk, which are imported

from Japan, Italy, China, and France; then follows washing

in soap and water to get rid of the gummy material left by

the worm, and then drying in an ingenious apparatus which

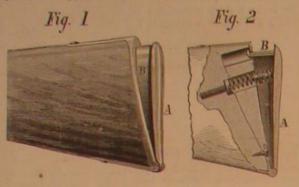
throws out the water by centrifugal force. Winding next

follows, when the silk is wound off from the skeins upon

MILLER'S RECOIL CHECK FOR GUNS,

We illustrate a novel invention which is quite sure to be appreciated by soldiers, sportsmen, and all who handle firearms to any extent. Regulation rifles frequently kick with tremendous vigor, and there are few of our hunting readers who will not be able to recal lame shoulders and perhaps a few bad bruises, produced by the unexpectedly forcible recoils of their guns, especially in duck and pigeon shooting. The present device is intended to check this backward blow by neutralizing the same through the medium of a spring, and thus to admit of the use of much heavier charges in the piece and to insure steadiness of aim.

The exterior of the invention is shown in Fig. 1. From the section, Fig. 2, it will be seen that the hinged check plate, A, is applied to the lower part of the stationary butt



plate, and is guided by the portion, B, entering a suitable recess in the stock. Its outward movement is regulated by the flanged edge of said portion, B, which catches on the butt plate, as shown. C is a center pin on the check plate, which is surrounded by a coiled spring. The latter holds the device out from the butt, and also yields before the shock, thus breaking the force of the same, and rendering its effect upon the shoulder a mere push instead of a sharp blow. By means of the screw which holds the spring, the tension of the same may be regulated at will.

The invention is readily constructed, and may be applied to any gun. Patented through the Scientific American Patent Agency, November 2, 1875. For further information address the inventor, Mr. W. D. Miller, care of J. H. Johnston, Great Western Gunworks, Pittsburgh, Pa. A working model is on exhibition at the gun store at 943 Broadway, New York city.

IMPROVED UNIVERSAL WHEELWRIGHT'S MACHINE.

We illustrate herewith a new universal wheelwright's machine, which is designed for planing the rims of vehicle wheels on three sides after said rims are driven on the spokes. | of the wheel tenoner is much greater. The wheel tenoner

When the rim consists of short sections, it is necessary that each section shall conform to a circle greater than the circle of the wheel, so as to give a rise at the joints, which the tire will bind down, thus strong ly arching and bridging these weak points. In order to produce this rise, the fellies are generally shaped out to the desired circle be fore they are driven on the spokes. They always, however, need redressing by hand, as the aforesaid work cannot be performed with sufficient accuracy to insure the meeting of the joints either on the periphery, the face, or the rear sides. It

is also necessary the foregoing, has also heretofore been accomplished by hand. With the present machine the whole is quickly done in a single operation.

In construction the apparatus resembles a "two-sided sticker," having a horizontal and vertical mandrel with selffeeding arrangements. It has also a buzz planer table over the horizontal cutter head. Extending out from the front side of the machine is an arm, upon which suitable devices are mounted for carrying a self-centering chuck, in which the wheel is held by the point of the hub during the planing of the rim. To this chuck, a cam-shaped disk is attached, which has as many faces as there are joints or sections in the wheel rim. The wheel is fastened in the chuck, so that the joints in the rim correspond with the high points of the cam. The wheel now being elevated to the proper hight by means of a screw, friction gears, and lever, it is

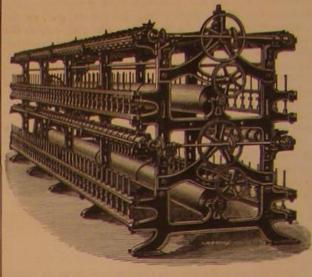
surface. The wheel and chuck are then moved back to allow the rim to clear the buzz planer, when they are both lowered until the rim rests on three stops. The operator now pushes the wheel toward the machine, the rim sliding under the horizontal cutter head and feed roller, and the pe riphery coming in contact with the vertical cutter, which is composed of bevel saws. The nut on which the chuck is mounted rests against a stop, preventing the movement of the wheel toward the machine. The feed roll then rotates the wheel, the horizontal cutter planes the rim to thickness and the required bevel, and the vertical head dresses the

The cam-shaped disk resting against a stop gives the wheel a vibrating motion to and from the vertical cutter head, by which the rise at the joints is produced. The wheel is so placed in relation to the line of the feed roll shaft that the latter is inclined to draw the wheel toward the machine, always keeping the cam against the stop, causing a uniform vibration. Bent rims are dressed to a true circle by remo ving the stop, so that no vibration whatever is imparted.

It is stated that with this machine the wheels are made with certain uniformity, that all ordinary material can be planed straight out of wind and square on the buzz planer table, and to thickness on the sticker table. A saw board or table, can be substituted for the buzz planer table, and a saw for the cutter head, when all kinds of straight sawing can be done. If it be desired to perform a still greater range of work, one of Messrs. Bentel, Margedant, & Co.'s universal wood-worker tables, with back top, bevel rest, gaining frame, etc., may be attached.

On the reverse side of the machine, a spoke-sawing wheel and a tenoning and boring apparatus is arranged, the whole of simple construction. The hollow auger is secured to the mandrel and carries a dished saw which, at one rotation of the wheel, saws off the spokes and bores the tenons. Wheels from 30 inches to 6 feet in hight may, we are in formed, thus be tenoned as desired. The change from a wheel tenoner to a boring or routing machine may be quickly made without the use of a wrench, and all kinds of boring may then be done. Two men may operate, on opposite sides of the machine, on different work at the same time. A horizontal shaper may be made of the rim planer which will shape, round, and corner all ordinary work. The capacity of the rim planer is 35 to 50 sets of wheels in ten hours; that

moved toward the machine, the chuck, to this end, being mounted on a collar, loosely fitted on a sleeve and having about ten inches to-and-fro play. The face of the wheel rim then resting over the horizontal cutter, the buzz planer table is lowered to give the required depth of cut, and the wheel is rotated and planed to a true face. The table is raised so as to taper out the cut gradually, leaving a true



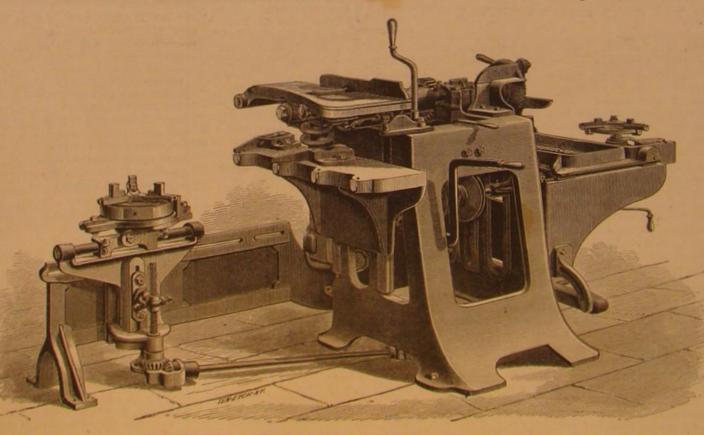
bobbins, after which the bobbins are taken to the doubling rooms, and there the silk from two, three, or four spools is wound together upon one. Finally the silk is spun, and this is done upon spinning frames of two or three stories and containing hundreds of spindles which revolve at a very high velocity.

The manufacture of these frames has recently been begun by the Danforth Locomotive and Machine Company, of Paterson, N. J., and numerous improvements have been added. We give herewith an engraving oft he two story frame, which is adapted to either tram or organzine, and is made of any desired length and to contain any required number of spindles. The latter are adjusted with nicety, and are capable we are informed, of running at a speed of from 7,000 to 8,000 revolutions per minute without perceptible wear. The machine also has a longer drag than is usual, which gives the thread a better opportunity to become properly twisted, and thus free from the kinks or curls so annoying to silk manufacturers.

Silk making in Paterson, in Hartford, Conn., and in some

localities in this city is an industry of which the growth has been more rapid than is generally realized throughout the country.

The exhibition of silk machinery of American production, which, it is promised, will be made at the Centennial, will, we believe, attract the attention of manufacturers the world over, and perhaps serve to emphasize the fact that already excellent silks of American make are found on the counters of the dry goods warehouses, in close and in some cases successful competition with those from celebrated foreign looms. It is very much to be regretted that a



BUFFINGTON AND FORNEY'S WHEELWRIGHT'S MACHINE

to form the rim, when finished, thicker where it rests upon is, if desired, made separate, and without the boring recent conflagration in Paterson has destroyed a large the spokes than under the tire. This labor, in common with attachment. The varied capabilities of the machine apparently fully justify its title of universal. In point of econo mizing room and in combining the functions of several usually distinct machines, the invention will prove one of much utility to wheelwrights and wood workers generally. Manufactured by Messrs. Bentel, Margedant, & Co., Hamilton, Ohio. For further information, address the patentees, Messrs, Buffington & Forney, Burlington, Iowa.

> An article called fish flour has been brought forward in the last few years. The flour is prepared from dried fish, thoroughly desiccated, and then ground in a mill.

fault of his countrymen. They do not get drunk, but drink till their blood becomes sluggish and their brains stupid,

amount of very fine silk machinery, including two large looms especially constructed for exhibition at the Centennial.

New Mode of Illumination for Lighthouses.

Professor Batestrieri, of Naples, proposes for this purpose an apparatus composed of several disks of polished silver or copper, so arranged as to transmit successively the light received, so that all the rays falling upon the disks are concentrated into one powerful beam. The invention resembles the system of Fresnel, but the latter utilizes only about one third the light received, while M. Balestrieri's device, it is said, utilizes the greater portion. With an oil lamp having a burner 2.7 inches in diameter, at a test of the above de-Vox Bulow, the planist, says beer drinking is the great scribed apparatus, a beam of light was transmitted which enabled a newspaper printed in ordinary type to be read at the distance of 0 6 of a mile.

GREENHOUSES AND HOTHOUSES.

The long winter of our Northern and Middle States tries the patience of our gardeners, and renders doubly acceptable any hints and directions for the construction of greenhouses, wherein plants can be nurtured till the advent of

Where the horticultural operations are extensive, the plan shown in our Fig. 1 is perhaps the best that could be adopted. The buildings can be constructed of any required size, and the heat is well confined to the back of the house by the brick wall. Flues are built in the wall with furnaces at the ends; or steam or hot water pipes are used for heating. Grape vines are usually trained under the sloping roof, and thus enjoy the maximum of light and sunshine. The

wall is very handy in a fruit garden, even when not covered | deep-toned greenness forms a pleasing contrast to the cha- | most serious trouble. with glass. Fruit on trees trained against a brick wall (as racter of the stand itself. Heaths and similar hard wooded shown on the left of Fig. 1) ripens much earlier; indeed, in England peaches and nectarines will hardly ripen at all in ordinary seasons unless the trees enjoy the reflected heat from a wall, which, by the way, should be painted black.

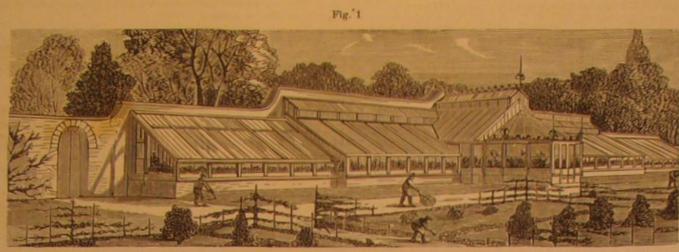
Gardeners who devote much time to the cultivation of the practice of the telegraph companies in placing their poles in lines are situated. Now, these telegraph wires are placed

a bronze tazza, ornamented with well known decorative plants. The margin is fringed with isolopis gracilis, used ex-

large supply of plants, both for flowers and fruit, may be furnishing bold and graceful foliage, contrast well with the placed underground or in water are affected 50 times as much ready for planting out as soon as the frost leaves the ground. horizontal lines of the tazza below, while their cool and as those which pass through the air, the amount of the

streets and placed above the buildings, as in some cities, and we hope the time is not far distant when this desirable pressly to tone down the harshness of the metal work. Two change will be made. As to underground wires, they cannot or three plants of the palm-like curculigo, says a correspon- be easily worked, even when carefully insulated, on account dent of the English Garden, from the pages of which we of the interference of static induction. All telegraph wires, spring; and where propagation can be carried on, so that a select the engraving, are placed in the center; and these, by without regard to their position, are thus affected, but wires

> wires being inversely proportional to the distance of the wires from the earth. The amount of the static charge in all telegraph wires, whether they are stretched through the air or buried under the ground, is proportional, also, to the length of the wire; and consequently an underground wire of balf a mile to a mile in length may be worked without any inconvenience from the presence of the static charge, while one of greater length may give rise to the



RECENTLY CONSTRUCTED HOTHOUSES.

plants are added, and with good effect.

Take the Poles out of the Streets.

Complaints are frequently made against the objectionable Post Office, where the headquarters of the English telegraph

In London, all the railroads have stations centrally situat-

Fig. 3.

GRAPE VINE AND HOTBED FRAMES.

grape will find the glass frames, shown in our Fig. 2, eco. | the streets of cities; and the popular belief is that the wires on poles and follow the lines of the railroads into the stasmall in quantity, and the glass is well placed to ripen the fruit. Air is readily admitted to the vines by raising the glass frames, the hight of which can be adjusted by the attachment shown in the engraving, which displays the construction so clearly that no further explanation is necessary.

Another convenient form of glass frame is shown in Fig. 3; it is especially suitable for use on hotbeds. Being of little depth, the sun's heat is concentrated by the glass on the rich earth of the well manured bed; and the frames, which are well suited to cucumbers, melons, and early tomatoes, are so constructed as to slide open for purposes of ventilation.

Winter is the time when people are most apt to feel the need of a greenhouse; and if they do not construct one then, they usually get their plans perfected, and begin building in the early spring. We have published illustrations of more elaborate and expensive greenhouses than the one represented herewith; but we have seen none in which the arrangement is better, and the cost of construction less, than the one shown in Fig. 1. While Fig. 2 and 3 present no special novelty, they are each well adapted for the different purposes for which they are intended, and can be built cheaply.

PLANT VASES FOR INDOOR DECORATION

ing their attention indoors, and inquiries as to proper and tasteful modes of parlor and dinner table decoration are beginning to reach us. The usual way of keeping plants in houses is to place them in vases or tazzas, of wood or pottery, although some are now made in bronze or iron, of very handsome designs; terra cotta is also employed, and, although cheaper than metal, is capable of equally effective ornamentation. Filled with a light earth, and covered with the moss called sphagnum, hardy and half hardy plants will thrive well in these vases; care must, however, be taken not to water them too profusely, as (there being no way of escape through the bottom of the vase for superfluous water) too much moisture will rot the roots.

The accompanying illustration represents

nomical and efficient. The timber used in making them is ought to be put underground. It is true that the main tions, where they first pass under ground, running as subterstreets of New York are sadly disfigured by the clumsy wooden poles, and probably no improvement can be expected telegraph station. Hence, the quantity of underground wire until we have a better city government. But the idea that it in London is comparatively small. In addition, it may be would be easily practicable to work the wires underground stated that in all parts of the city there are certain large disis a mistake. They could, however, be taken out of the tributing telegraph offices which are connected or wires



ORNAMENTAL PLANT STAND

ranean lines only from the railroad termini to the central

ed, most of the roads coming into the heart of the city. The

South-Eastern Railway, for instance, has a station at Cannon

street, which is only one third of a mile from the General

with all the sub-stations in the city-of which there are 400 to 500-and every wire from each of these distributing offices to the several hundred sub stations is carried over the house tops; where there are several wires running to the same station, they are insulated on poles which are fastened to the tops of houses. In addition to those that have been mentioned, there are in London 800 private lines, running to all parts of the city. They use what are known as the Wheatstone dial instruments. There is not a single rod of wire working all these instruments that is under ground, the wires all being carried over the house tops. Frequently 40 to 50 insulated wires are made into a single cable, which is suspended on fixtures attached to the roofs of

In 1854 a telegraph company was organized in England which constructed an underground line between London and Liverpool, 210 miles, the cable containing 10 wires. But in less than two years after the line was built, its insulation became so much impaired that the company was ble portion of the cable. One wire after another still continued to fail, until there were only five of the ten that would work at all. After this, as others failed, sections of the underground line were abandoned, and wires placed on poles were substituted, until, finally, so much of the underground system had failed that the company decided to place the whole line on poles. The copper and gutta percha which constituted the valuable portion of the underground cable were taken up and sold for enough to replace the whole system with a good overland line. All similar lines that were ever constructed in England have been abandoned, except one of thirty miles, constructed by the government nearly three years ago as an experiment, which is the only line outside of the cities.

In like manner, says Mr. G. B. Prescott, 20,000 miles of underground lines in Eu-gland, France, and Germany have been abandoned. In the city of New York there are over 5,000 miles of telegraph wires in operation, four fifths of which are used for local communications, stock-reporting instruments, and private lines.

Opened here and there, and one block was over from the top course on the harbor side. Slight damage also occurred to the shore end in the sea angle. The nature of the settlement was described, also a curious rocking action, and the cleaing up of the cross joints under the action of the sea. The restruments, and private lines.

If a law should be passed compelling the companies to place their wires underground, the whole system of communication would have to be changed. But, even were it practicable to work our system upon the underground lines, it would be impossible to place all the wires in the city of New York lone underground in less than four or five years.

The Manora Breakwater.

At a recent meeting of the Institution of Civil Engineers, the paper read was on "The Manora Breakwater, Kurrachee" (the design for which was illustrated on page 99 of volume XXVII. of the Scientific American), by Mr. William Henry Price.

It was stated that the Manora Breakwater was the most important feature of the Kurrachee Harbor Works, which were commenced in 1860, from the design of the late Mr. James Wälker, assisted by Mr. William Parkes. Besides the breakwater the chief works were: In the lower harbor, a stone groyne 8,900 feet long, dredging and removal of rock; and in the upper harbor, an increase of one fourth to the area of the backwater, involving a new tidal channel 24 miles long, crossed by a screw pile bridge 1,200 feet long, and an embankment 2,780 feet long, to close the old channel, also of a jetty 1,400 feet long, with quays. All these works were now nearly completed, and had already produced great benefit, the entrance having been made direct instead of circuitous, deepened 6 feet and sheltered, the anchorage space enlarged, and the internal accommodation improved. The trade of the port was \$17,500,000 per annum, and railway communication with the Punjaub would further develope About \$2,250,000 had been expended on the whole of the harbor improvements.

The Breakwater projected from Manora Point for a length of 1,503 feet, into a depth of 5 fathoms of water, in order to shelter the entrance from the southwest monsoon seas, and to prevent their tearing up sand from the bottom and depositing it as a bar. The characteristics of the sea, wind, and tides, as bearing on the design, were alluded to, and it was stated that the bottom was irregular near the shore. The struc ture consisted of a base of rubble stone, leveled off generally to 15 feet under low water; and on this concrete blocks, each weighing 27 tuns, were set on edge, leaning back at a slope of 3 inches to 1 foot, and without bond, two blocks forming the width and three the hight, and together making a square of 24 feet in cross sections, the top being about the level of high water. The rubble base was deposited from native boats, and was leveled for the superstructure by helmet divers. Two European mason divers were employed, and six native divers trained on the work, the latter chiefly for shifting the rubble. No accident occurred, and the party generally did not suffer in health. After mentioning circumstances which determined the use of concrete blocks and of Portland cement, particulars were given of the composition of a 37-tun block, the materials being cement, river sand, shingle, and quarry lumps, with salt water. The ratio of the bulk of the cement to that of the finished block was nearly 1. About 3,500 tuns of cement were used. The mixing station, block ground, and molding of the nineteen hundred and seventy-two blocks, including three hundred and twenty-five of special smaller sizes, were then described; and it was remarked that the Messent mixers had been found very efficient. The blocks were sometimes used one month after being made, and once, as an experiment, a 27-tun block was safely lifted in seven days. When the work was fairly established, the blocks cost for current expenses \$3.75 per cubic yard, though the average total rate was raised beyond this by extra expenses in the earlier stages.

The blocks were lifted on to the trucks by a steam hydraulic traveling crane of 50 feet span; each truck carried one block, and was taken separately by a tank locomotive to the breakwater. The blocks were set by a steam traveling crane, called the Titan, which ran on rails laid on the finlahed work, and overhung the end, so as to carry the blocks of three tiers in advance to their places, thus dispensing with staging. The framing of this crane supported a traveler and crab, worked by an 8-horse power engine on the top, which also drove the traveling gear of the entire machine. The cost of the Titan, delivered and erected at Kurrachee, was \$14,395. The rate of setting was limited by the progress of the foundation and by the supply of blocks, but during the last season ten 27-tun blocks were set daily on an average, while on one occasion six blocks were laid in one hour and forty minutes without special pressure.

The base was commenced on the 17th of March, 1869; and later in that year the shore end stump, 45 feet long, to make a starting place for the Titan, with other preparatory works, was completed, after some unavoidable delays, and the first block was set on the 1st of November, 1870. The delays of the foundation were merely feit in the first season's work, but a length of 225 feet was built in four months, taking the breakwater out to 270 feet from the shore. During the second season, 1871-72, after a few days spent in repair of monsoon damages, a length of 523 feet was built in about four months, making a total of 793 feet. During the third season, after the repair of monsoon damages, a length of 710 feet was built, completing the breakwater on the 22nd of Fobruary, 1873, to its full length of 1,503 feet, which had thus been barely twelve months in actual building.

The action and effect of the monsoon sea, and the repair of damages, were then detailed. In 1871 the center joint

course on the harbor side. Slight damage also occurred to the shore end in the sea angle. The nature of the settlement was described, also a curious rocking action, and the closing up of the cross joints under the action of the sea. The repairs of the damage, in the first season, cost \$925. During the second monsoon, 1872, twenty-five blocks were washed out from the top course on the harbor side, eighteen of these block being, in one length, 86 feet. The damage was again traceable to inequality of settlement. The sea side did not suffer, nor did the shore end, though both showed evidence of the force of the sea. The damage was repaired in a few days at a cost of \$2,560. The monsoon of 1873, the first after the completion of the breakwater, did trifling damage, and was confined to the shore half length, still pointing clearly to weakness of foundation. The repairs cost \$995. In the monsoon of 1874, the outer end and scar, which had not then been in any way specially secured, lost five blocks during unusual weather, though no other part of the outer half length suffered, but the shoreward half opened here and there. The repairs of this season cost \$2,090, and included the re-erection of an iron beacon on the outer end. The nature and extent of the subsidence (which in some parts amounted to 3 feet, but without dislocation), were then no ticed, also the action of a mollusk, the pholas, on the concrete blocks, and the effect of the sea on the rubble base, which did not, however, affect the stability of the superstructure.

The cost of the breakwater had been \$467,825, or \$311.25 per lineal foot, but this amount included preliminary charges, the current expenses during the last season being only \$170 per foot. This sum included the repair of damages during the progress of the work, and during the two monsoons since its completion, but not the expense of engineering and office establishment. The work had been carried on in the Bombay Public Works Department by the author and his assistants, advised by Mr. William Parkes, as consulting engineer, and without employment of any general contractor. The completion of the work was favorably noticed by all the government authorities concerned.

Becent American and foreign Latents.

NEW CHEMICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS INVENTIONS.

IMPROVED HORSE-HITCHING DEVICE.

John Schoonmaker, New York city.—This consists in attaching to the reins rings which are caught upon hooks on the forward part of the wagon body, so that, should the horse attempt to run away, the whole weight of the wagon will come upon his mouth and hold him back.

IMPROVED STILL.

Henry Deymann and Edward Melchers, Toledo, Ohio.—This inventor proposes an improved column for refining stills, in place of the so-called French column, so that a finer spirit, with less steam pressure, is produced by means of simpler construction, which prevents leakage, decreases the trouble and expense connected with the repairs of the French column, and which may be put in the space of one story, with a considerable saving in copper plate. The essential features consist in arranging the chambers of the columns, on opposite sides thereof, with alternating horizontal and vertical partition plates and connecting overflow pipes and draining stop cocks. The intercommunicating arrangement of the chambers virtually produces two columns in one, so as to require about half the hight and material only, and offers the advantage of having all the overflow pipes at the outside.

IMPROVED INKSTAND.

Herman Schirmer, Wheeling, W. Va.—This is an ink vessel with an inverted conical tube extending nearly to the bottom of the vessel, and having an orifice at the lower end in connection with an air regulating device by which the hight of the ink in the tube is regulated.

IMPROVED PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATE HOLDER,

Frank A. Howson and William S. Howson, Brooklyn, N. Y.—This is an improved combination holder for the ground glass and plate for photographic cameras, by which, in every case, the exact image that was focused on the ground glass is obtained with perfect certainty on the sensitized plate. By its use the ground glass door of the camera may be dispensed with. The device is provided with lower grooved glass holders, glass buttons or studs at the top, and a side support, on which the ground glass and plate are insulated, and securely fastened by a spring top plate.

IMPROVED MONUMENT.

John N. Wallis, Fleming, and Theodore Wallis, Scipio, assignors to themselves and James A. Moore, Auburn, N. Y.—This inventor proposes gravestones of a more tasteful form than those commonly used. He suggests making the monuments of stone and glass, having inclosed chambers for the preservation of flowers and other objects.

NEW HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES.

IMPROVED CURTAIN FIXTURE

William H. Maine, Abington, Mass.—This is a spring curtain roller provided with a device for preventing the unwinding of the spring when the roller is removed from the brackets. A spiral roller spring acts on a spindle, revolves the same, and throws a pin instantly out of its seat against a cam of a sleeve, so as to retain the spindle and prevent the unwinding of the spring. The roller thus remains in locked position as long as it is out of the brackets, and is instantly available for use when replaced in the brackets.

IMPROVED COMPOSITION FOR SOAP

William F. Darnoby, Nashville, Tenn., assignor to himself and Edward B. Stahlman, of same place.—This compound, the inventor states, is an excellent article both for laundry and tollet, and is very cheap. It is made of Kirk's double extract, Colgate's soda soap, sal soda, water, spirits of ammonia, ether, and oil of sassafras.

NEW AGRICULTURAL INVENTIONS.

IMPROVED CHECK-ROW ATTACHMENT FOR CORN PLANTERS, George C. Flagg, Columbus, Ill.—This includes several new and ingenious devices, so constructed that wheels mark the rows in one direction and marker arms mark it in the other direction. The machine is so guided that the ends of the inner markers may meet, or nearly meet, the ends of the marks made by the outer markers upon the previous crossing, so that the ground is marked in accuate check row by the machine crossing the field in one direction.

NEW MECHANICAL AND ENGINEERING INVENTIONS.

IMPROVED CAR COUPLING

Oscar E. Ford. Meridian, Miss., assignor to himself and Min or B. Clinton, Dallas, Tex.—This coupling consists of drawheads with forward-projecting parts, which are recessed at their inner sides, and provided with laterally sliding spring-acting jaws that interlock by the entering of the projecting parts of the drawheads into the space formed by the shorter part. The drawheads are thus firmly connected without chance of getting detached, while the jaws have play in vertical direction by the widening of the recesses at the rear part, which allows the coupling of cars of different blocks.

IMPROVED CRANK STOP.

William H. Phillips, Bridgeton, N. J.—The cranks of windlass and other shafts have been heretofore disconnected by the backward rotation of said shafts, but the shafts required to rotate several times in order to effect such result. This inventor effects the disconnection at the first backward rotation of the shaft, and to this end provides a pivoted catch, which engages a sliding piece that locks the crank to the shaft.

IMPROVED SPARK CONVEYER.

Charles K. Cullers, Bunceton, Mo.—This device is principally a kind of ball-and-socket joint for connecting the sections of pipe for conducting the smoke for the locomotive back along the top of the train to the rear end, the said joint being free to oscillate to any required extent, and allowing the necessary contraction and extension of the pipe, and at the same time keeping tight.

IMPROVED SADIRON SHOE.

Victor C. Thebaud, Buffalo, N. Y.—A large number of inventions are in existence for getting rid of the unnecessary weight of metal in flat irons, most of which accomplish their object by abolishing the fixed handle and substituting an adjustable one which will serve for several bodies. The present inventor suggests a very different plan, and proposes a shoe for the iron, which is easily attached and replaced at will, so that an effective ironing surface is always obtainable. The device is made with external flange, having curved side extensions at the front and a fastening screw at the rear part to be readily applied to the iron.

IMPROVED TREADLE FOR MACHINERY.

Andrew N. Hagerty, West Alexander, Pa.—This is an auxiliary treadle and connecting rod, in combination with the main treadle and connecting rod, to work a pawl for starting the machine by a ratchet wheel. The object is to insure the turning of the machine in the right direction, and to avoid the necessity of starting the balance wheel by hand, thus leaving both hands free for managing the work.

IMPROVED RAIL JOINT.

George A. Mead, Salem Center, N. Y.—In this device, the tongue or tenon of one rail enters a slot in the other. The slotted part is boited together by a couple of bolts, arranged the same as in fishplate joints. The object is to make an er dless joint, and to dispense with the fishplates commonly used.

IMPROVED WATER REGULATOR AND INDICATOR FOR STEAM BOILERS.

Dexter Cook, Elmira, Ohio.—This is a cylindrical tank traveling in vertical guides and supported by a spring. It is connected at top and bottom with the steam and water spaces of the boiler. When the water in the boiler falls below a certain level, the tank, becoming lighter, is raised by the spring, and the fact is indicated by a graduated scale and pointer and by a whistle allowed to sound by mechanism connected with the tank. The latter is also connected with a feed valve, so as to open the same, and thus allow water to enter the boiler when a deficiency is indicated, and closes the valve when the level is reached.

IMPROVED FEATHERING PADDLE WHEEL

Peter Gregerson, Wauzeka, Wis., assignor to himself and Phillip Miller, same place.—The paddles are hung by pivots above their centers, and are held to their work by stops. The latter are controlled by sliding rods which, acted upon by a cam on the wheel shaft, push said stops beyond the outer edge of the paddles, and then retract them by springs. There are other devices which allow the cam to shift right or left, as the wheel is turned in either direction, and an ingenious mechanism is provided for purposes of adjustment.

IMPROVED GATE.

Robert Samuel Rinker, Mount Jackson, Va.—The object of this invention is to provide an improved automatic or self-opening gate; and it consists in an arrangement of elbow levers and catch hooks, controlled by a cord or wire, with a weighted lever, upon one end of which lever the wheels of the vehicle pass to raise the weight and set the gate, so that it can be readily opened from either side by the person in the vehicle by pulling a tripping cord, arranged upon both sides of the gate, within convenient reach, upon a post, each vehicle serving to raise the weight and set the gate for the next succeeding one.

IMPROVED BRICK KILN.

Holland B. Evans and Earnest G. Kemper, St. Charles, Mo.—The invention relates to a new construction and arrangement of the several compartments of the kiln and their flues, which cannot be made plain without the aid of drawings. In general the flues are so made that their heat can easily be controlled, and by using the invention it appears that as many more bricks as are contained in the compartments can be burned with the same or less amount of fuel than with a kiln of the same dimensions constructed in the old way

NEW WOODWORKING AND HOUSE AND CARRIAGE BUILDING INVENTIONS.

IMPROVED RECORDING AND SIGNAL PARE BOX.

Edward Henry Schnell, South Norwalk, Conn.—Another machine for enforcing honesty in car conductors is a recording and alarm fare box, in which the record is made by punctures or slits formed in a piece of paper at the same time that the signal is sounded. There is also a separate compartment in the case of the instrument for depositing tickets as they are collected by the conductor, with a door which only opens when the signal and recording devices are actuated. So that in order that the tickets shall agree with the record the conductor is obliged to collect and deposit all the tickets.

IMPROVED BARREL.

Leslie E. Sunderland, Williamsburg, Va.—The object of this invention is to provide a barrel for the shipment of produce, which shall be capable of transformation after the said produce is delivered, so as to occupy a comparatively small space, and be returned to the sender at the rates of solid freight and at a comparatively trifling cost. It consists in a series of staves, connected by hoops which have peculiar fastenings, which adapt the staves to be disposed flat for return transportation, or rolled up and fastened to form a barrel. The sides of the barrel are straight, and the beads are held in place by lugs alternating, when the barrel is set up upon opposite sides of the head. The heads are thus of less diameter than the inside of the barrel, so that the barrel, when returned, may be packed full of heads, and the rest of the barrel sides packed flatly together.

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fireproof artificial stone on p. 113, vol. 24, -M. H. can fasten emery to wood by the method for emery and iron, described on p. 363, vol. 31.—H. J. will find directions for making nitro-glycerin, dualin, dynamite, etc., on p. 212, vol. 33.—H. F. S. can brown his gun barrels by using the recipe given on p. 11, vol. 32.—F. F. will find a recipe for stove blacking on p. 57, vol. 25.—T. should French pollsh his pianoforte work. See p. 11, vol. 22.—M. H. K. will find a recipe for white fusible metal on p. 374, vol. 32. The process of repairing desilvered mirrors is described on p. 346, vol. 25.—S. N. will find directions for staining glass on p. 390, vol. 30; for etching glass, on p. 379, vol. 33.—H. A. S. will find directions for making clarified cider on p. 204, vol. 33; for preserving cider, on p. 139, vol. 33.—S. & R. will find on p. 130, vol. 32, directions for making paste that will probably answer their purpose. As to State laws regulating the sale of patents, see S. & R. will find on p. 139, vol. 32, directions for making paste that will probably answer their purpose. As to State laws regulating the sale of patents, see p. 187, vol. 33.—8. T. S. can mold rubber by following the directions on p. 233, vol. 23.—W. T. can cloan shells by the method described on p. 122, vol. 27.—H. D. M. will find a recipe for Babbitt metal on p. 26, vol. 33.—C. B. will find directions for silvering glass on p. 349, vol. 33. Full directions for nickel plating have frequently been published in these columns. See pp. 155, 235, vol. 33. This also answers E. J. C.—R. R. M. can make a mold, for use on type, of plaster of Paris. The metal that is lightest in water is the lightest out of water.—B. H. C. will find full directions for putting a white enamel on iron on p. 362, vol. 32. This also answers A. F.—C. S. F. will find an account of the oleomargarin process on p. 23, vol. 32.—P. D. R. can fasten rubber to iron by the method given on p. 42, vol. 28, for leather. A good recipe for paste that will keep is published on p. 219, vol. 30.—D. G. F. will find a description of the phosphorus lamp on p. 10, vol. 27.—V. can read the inscriptions on coins by following the directions on p. 246, vol. imp on p. 10, vol. 27.—v. can read the inscriptions on coins by following the directions on p. 246, vol. 26.—H. G. W. will find directions for making spongy platinum on p. 330, vol. 25.—H. N. M. can coment glass to brass by the method described on

(1) N. S. asks: How can I unite the mer cury in a thermometer which has become separa-ted by agitation? A. Fasten a string 3 or 4 feet long to the instrument, and swing it round your head. The centrifugal force will cause the mer-cury to unite.

(2) R. F. L. asks: How can I stick leather (2) R. P. L. asks. How can I store leather on the face of iron and wood pulleys? A. Giue the leather to the wooden pulley. Paint the iron pulley with a good coat of white lead in oil, and let it dry; then glue the leather on.

(3) L. B. asks: What is black rosin, and is it known by any other name? A. Black rosin is also called colophony, and is the residue left after the distillation of turpentine.

the distillation of turpentine.

(4) H. J. M. asks: How can I get a white metal that will flow perfectly into an iron or brass mold, and which, when turned out, will stay bright? A. Melt together 4½ ibs. of tin, ½ ib. hismuth, ½ ib. antimony, and ½ ib. lead. This alloy fuses at a low temperature and does not tarnish. Can the color be taken out of horsehair, so as to make it white? A. Wash in weak lye, and fuminate with the yangr of burping sulphur/antohic.

gate with the vapor of burning sulphur (sulphu

(5) G. G. B. asks: What do pattern kers use to blacken their patterns with? A. Lamp black mixed with copal varnish and alcohol.

(6) J. N. J. asks: Why do iron and steel weld with less heat with than without bornx? A. The use of borax is as a flux, to make the steel beat evenly, and to prevent the corners or edges from burning before the rest of the metal is of

(7) M. D. F. asks: How can chilled iron be drilled? A. By hardening the drill in mercury instead of water.

(8) C. R. asks: What pressure per square s to form one clear homogeneous mass? A ult Professor Tyndall on "Forms of Water.

(9) J. H. asks: In what quantity, and as edy for chills and fever? A. In many cases two ach meal, whenever an attack of chills is antici

(10) E. C. & Co. ask: Would it be bene netal to soft maple lumber, for building a large friction pulley, to boil it in olive oil? A. Yes. 2. Would it harden the timber, and make it less liable to split? A. Yes. 3. Would the gear slip more after such treatment? A. Yes.

(11) H. A. S. asks: How is bromide of camphor made? A. Triturate the camphor first with a drop or two of dilute spirits of wine, and then digest with bromine water. The bromine unites with the camphor to form an unstable bromide of camphor, which is crystalline, and is decomposed by best in the camphor to the second by heat, by contact with air, and by action of am-

(12) D. C. G. aska; Is there any preparation of phosphorus, either fluid or dry, that is luminous in the dark when hermetically scaled? A. A full description of the phosphorus lamp will be found on p. 250, vol. 33. It consists of a strong solution of phosphorus in olive oil. The solution is kept in a small, glass, stoppered bottle, and when required for use the cork is removed and the solution. quired for use the cork is removed and the solu

(13) W. J. H. asks: What would be the dif (13) W. J. H. asks: What would be the dif-ference between suspending a weight (that works such machinery as clockwork) direct, and hang-ing the same weight around a pulley attached to weight? Would there be any difference in ef-fect upon the train of wheels, providing the amount of pressure on drum (not the weights) were same in both cases? A. Neglecting friction and rigidity of cordage, if the weight required in the second arrangement were 100 lbs., that in the first need only be 50 lbs.

(14) T. D. W. If two persons are in a top wagon, about 500 lbs. weight rests upon the two axles, which are as stiff as they are usually made. Now if the axles can be made 2½ times as stiff, how many lbs. will the change take away from the load drawn by the horse? A. The question is rather indefinite, but we do not imagine that there would be much difference in the two cases.

(15) C. P. asks: How many lbs. strain will there be on a rope which has a horse at each end, pulling in opposite directions, supposing each horse to be pulling 1,000 lbs.? A. One thousand lbs. This question is anything but new. See p. 186,

(16) M. R. asks: Is centrifugal force of a wheel in motion a radial or a targential one? A. Radial, as we understand your question, that is, in the direction of a radius.

(17) J. G. says, in answer to N. K. query as to the area of a polygon: If A be the area of the circle and P the perimeter of the reg ular polygon, the area of the latter is

 $2\sqrt{\frac{\Lambda}{3.1416} - \frac{P}{4n^2}}$ n being the number of sides which must be given. If these be given, A and P, as be-fore, and B, the area of the regular polygon, the

number of sides=-2V 3:1416 P2

(18) S. says, in reply to W. J. E., who is troubled with dreams: If you abstain from sleep-ing on your back you will not dream. It is very rare that a person who is not laying on his back

(19) L. C. Jr. says, in reply to H. J. E. who asked how to apply wax to stove patterns: As the stove plates of to-day are more or less or-namented with designs, having well defined de namented with designs, having well defined de-pressions or elevations, the casting must be heated till it is hot enough to melt the beeswax and not burn it. Then apply the wax by rubbing it here and there over the surface of the plate; a small quantity only is required. After which, and while the wax is in a liquid form, give the casting a thorough brushing with a new shoe brush; this will spread the wax uniformly over the entire sur-face and at the same time remove all the surplus wax. Then allow the casting to cool, and, with a second shoe brush, give it a thorough brushing, and you will have a surface to your pattern that will give you a mold with as sharp corners as your

(20) W. J. R. says, in answer to T. D.'s inquiries as to compound gears: I judge from T.D.'s list of gears and pitch of lead screw that he has got a Pratt & Whitney lathe, which, unlike most other lathes, has, on the inside gear on the stud, double the number of teeth that the cone gear has. Therefore, with gears on stud and screws having the same number, the revolutions of cone and screw will be as 2 to 1, and the pitch of lead screw is made practically 16 instead of 8. The SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN'S rule will work by counting the screw as 16. The following index is useful for T. D.'s lathe:

Thread.	Stud.	Screw.	Thread.	Stud.	Screw.
27		and and the	4	112	28
ni Ca	nnot be	cut with	5	44	35
			8	44	42
the list	of goal	re.	7	44	49
- 8	44	56	0	11.	63
10	- 10	70	11	46	77
10	94	84	13	44	91
14	14	58.	15	++	105
16	44.	112	18	56	68
200	56	70	22	56	84
26	58	77	28	56	188
32	766	112	36	28	63
40	28	20	44	28	22
48	28	34	50	28	91
56	28	98	60	28	105
64	228	112			

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

The Editor of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN RCknowledges, with much pleasure, the receipt of original papers and contributions upon the follow-

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HINTS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correspondents whose inquiries fall to appear should repeat them. If not then published, they may conclude that, for good reasons, the Editor declines them. The address of the writer should

declines them. The address of the writer should always be given.

Enquiries relating to patents, or to the patentability of inventions, assignments, etc., will not be published here. All such questions, when initials only are given, are thrown into the waste basket, as it would fill half of our paper to print them all; but we generally take pleasure in answering briefly by mail, if the writer's address is given.

Hundreds of inquiries analogous to the following are sent: "Who sells alligator leather? Who makes an engine run by burning crude oil in the cylinder? Who makes the best gas meter? Whose is the best process for preserving shingles? Who sells papier mache cornices and centerpieces for ceilings? Who makes reflecting drawing boards and other drawing apparatus? Who sells phosphorcellings? Who makes reflecting grawing bosnors and other drawing apparatus? Who sells phosphorbronze? Who sells haircioth for pressing cider?" All such personal inquiries are printed, as will be observed, in the column of "Business and Personal," served, in the column of Business and Fersonal, which is specially set apart for that purpose, subject to the charge mentioned at the head of that column. Almost any desired information can in this way be expeditiously obtained.

[OFFICIAL.]

INDEX OF INVENTIONS

FOR WHICH

Letters Patent of the United States were Granted in the Week Ending

November 16, 1875. AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

Those marked (r) are reissued patents.

Alarin, door, Spoor & Searle.

Alarin etc., low water, T. Hass.

Amalgamator, Bancroft & walker.

Ashes, sifting coal, J. Waldron.

Auger handle, J. Swan

Bagasse, saturator for, A. W. J. Mason.

Bale band stretcher, J. Z. Stocker.

Barrel, Flye & Watson.

Bed stone, oscillating, E. Armitage.

Bedstead, sofa, W. R. Hamilton

Bedstead, sofa, J. Schoen.

Bee hive, O. Colvin. heater, safety, C. A. West..... lifter, railroad, J. D. Imboden eats, lock for, E.S. Scoffeld. ar starter, A. Dabler. ar starter, G. S. Knapp. ars, wind wheel, A. W. Woodward. Cars, wind wheel, A. W. Woodward.... Cars, ventilating, E. E. Hargreaves Carboy, A. H. Farringer. Carbureter, feed, etc., J. Austin. Card, playing, R. R. Landis... Carpet raglooper. W. H. H. Wyckoff... Parriage curtain, H. C. Moody... Carriage top, shifting, Gillespie & True. On Screw Cutting Gears. By R. H. B.
On the New Force. By H. M. P.
On Solar Heat. By W. L. S.
On the Contraction Policy. By F. A. L.
On Reissues of Patents. By G. E. B.
On the Hydro-Pneumatic Puzzle. By M. P., by
G. M., and by N. R. J.
On Spiritualism. By E. P. M., and by F. G. F.
On the Orbit of the Sun. By J. S.
On Making Rifes. By H. S. W.
On Carbonic Acid Gas. By C. W. S.
On Oceanic Currents. By T. L.
On Electric Whistles. By L. S. W.
On Chemical Action. By E. V.
On a Dioptric Light. By C. G., and by W. C. G.

410	
Datament, J. W. Munger	70,153
Dans will aliding H. H. Elwell.	70,357
	20,213 8
Dyeing fabrics, A. Schultz	70,307 S
Elevator, B. T. Babbitt 1	70,827 70,248
Pastes estary W Haven	70,363
Engine bucket, rotary, B. T. Babbitt	70,149
Envelope opener, La Blanc & St. Pierre	70,232 S
Fabrics for skirts, etc., A. Komp	6,767 S 70,880 S
Fence, J D & F Hyberger I	70,315 S
Pence fron R Rogers 1	8 158,00
	00,166 S 00,167 S
Fire escape, T. Jingras	0,270
Fire kindler, C. F. Cusning 17	20,138
Flabing rod case C. Perry	00,198 5
Venit lav E & Hunt	10,172 S
Furnace hydrocarbon H. M. Smith 17	0,198 T
Furnaces, feeding air to, W. C. Ford	0,163 T
Furnaces, retort for, H. M. Smith	0,197 T
	0,156 T
Gas conduits, naphthaline from, J. C. Tiffany 17	0.414 T
	0,221 T
Generator, steam, H. M. Smith	U. 2003
Glassware, making, T. B. Atterbury	0,218 T
Grate, J. Schroeffel, Jr	0,506 T
Hames, J. Thornton	T 000 0
Hame top, E. G. Latta	0.176 V
Harness tug, B. S. Leonard	0,229 W
Harvester, L. J. McCormick	
Harvester carriage attachment, J. O. Brown 17 Harvesting machine, J. O. Brown	0,230 W
Hay loader, Perry and Manley	0,189 7
Hinge, F. Toedt	0,314 W
Horse detacher, D. E. Owen	0,389
Horse power, G. W. G. rden	0,386 W
Horseshoe, A. Dunbar	0,245 W
Hose coupling, W. A. Caswell	0,155 W
Hose pipe nozzle, S. Reid 17 Hydrant, J. O. Connor 17	0,897
Indicator, speed, M. A. Wier. 176 Iron into steel, cast, C. L. Jeffords. 177	0,218
Iron, refining cast, A. Warner 17	0,420
Jack, hydraulic, M. J. Walsh 17 Kiin, brick, H. W. Adams, Jr 17	0,148
Kilh, brick, W. N. Weidner	0,421 8,5
Lamp chimneys, finishing. J. Lowery	0,283 8,0
Lamps, wick raiser for, A. Albertson. 176 Latch, locking, J. Drucklieb. 176	0 000 000
Latch, reversible, H. S. Pomeroy. 17 Leather, vat for tanning, O. W. Bean. 17	7,793
Lightning rod, I. Johnson 17 Limb receiver, H. B. Allen 17),877
Loom shuttle, etc., J. Wolfenden 176	0,214 On
Loom weft stop, Isherwood and Nuttall (r) (Lounges, attaching frames to, W. Seng	0,761 On
Lubricators, C. H. Parshall	,368 Or
Mail bag fastening, H. M. Smith 178 Mattress, wire, A. Z. Boda 179	0,195 Oc
Mattresses, frame for wire, W. J. Bods	0,333 Or
Meat mangie, C. C. Kerr. 176 Mechanical movement, E. Leslie. 177	new Or
Mill, I. A. Bedges 17	0,357
	0,275
Mitten, A. P. Smith (r)	1300.0
Motion, converting, M. Crossman. 17 Motor, volute spring, W. S. Shoemaker. 17	0.310
Music sheet, electric, W. F. and H. Schmoel, Jr. 17 Needle threader, P. E. Lambert	0.978
Ore, classifying, R. M. Wengler	0.422
Paper fastener, Pack and Vanhorn	0.294
Paper weight E Drengler	IN INDIANA
Parchment, vegetable, A. G. Fell 17 Peat cutter, Newton and Zoliner	0,184
randometer, r. stunzinger. 12	0.292
Pile, coating, A. F. W. and W. F. A. Neynaber, 17	0.105
Pipe foint, J. Byde	100.0
Pipe trap, waste, T. Hudson	0.000
Planter, corn, G. W. Brown (r)6,755, 6,756,	0,412 6,757
Plows, furrow gage for R B Hawas	0,262
Printing press, J. L. Firm (r)	0,179
Pump, etc., beer, D. S. Whitman	to the same of the same of
Fump bucket, chain, Van Duzer et al.	0,226
Punch, conductor's alarm, Hill & Ruger. 17	THE RESERVE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON NAMED IN COLUMN TWO
Railroad rail chair, J. Gogerty	0,351 Se
Register, T. B. Doolittle	0,884 In
Ruler, parallel, J. D. Hall	0,200 m
Eaw, butcher's, W. Millsmanch	0,240
Beaffold, D. C. Place	0.001

ä	Screw cutting machine, G. Emig 170,162	
0	Seaming machine, W. C. Sharp 170,309	
9	Separating substances, A. B. Stanberrie	ш
ä	Separator, grain, W. W. Johnston 170,376	н
3	Sewing machine, F. Chase	ш
7	Sewing machine, J. W. & R. H. Lufkin 170,281	ш
8	I Sewing machine, oversuten, w. A. Polinateville and any	4
ă	Sewing machine table, H. R. Tracy 170,416	ш
3	Sewing machine tuck marker, A. Johnston 170,875	ш
9	Ship's births, swinging, E. P. S. Andrews, 170,221	411
6	Shirt front, W. J. & M. A. Duke	ш
3	Shoe and stocking, rubber, J. M. Bibbins 170,822	4
7	Shutter fastener, S. C. Tuckerman 170,710	88
0	Shutter worker, H. A. House	
S	Sizing composition, S. B. Dorlan	ш
8	Skate, E. Murray (r) 6,763	37
2	Slate-cleaning block, A. H. Bryant 170.340	12
ĕ	Sofa and table, convertible, C. C. Harris 130,260	
5	Solvents, etc., recovery of vaporized, Whiting et al. 170,424	ш
ij	Spike machine, W. Haddock 170,255	
	Spikes, machine for making split, A. Whittemore, 170,322	98
3	Spinning, adjusting spindles, F. A. Sterry (r) 6,705	
S		
9	Spirits, P. Griffin	
3	S cam whistle, King & McKiernan 170,274	
ä	Steel, manufacturing, F. Berchtold 170,150	
3	Stove, cooking, R. Thomss 170,306	
3	Syringe, W. Molesworth 170,182	
3	Table, extension, G. Heyl	
3	Table, ironing, J. S. Hays	
3	Tailor's coat measure, J. S. Charch 170,157	88.
	Telegraph, facstmile, J. C. Ludwig. 170,385	16
	Tenonic g machine, E. H. Rees 170,896	ш
	Tide and current wheel, J. J. Hell	
1	Tires, clip for broken, J. W. Hoddinott 170,871	Ю
	Tollet case and towel roller, D. Miller 170,788	
	Trap, fly, H. B. Earing	
ı	Truss, H. A. Kimball	10
	Tubes, bending metallic, J. M. Reid 170,300	ш
	Tuck marker, R. G. Bush 170,154	1183
3	Tweer, H. J. Chandler	1
g	Tweer, P. H. Standish	ш
i		
3	Type-setting machine, J. Hooker 170,372 Type-writing machine, W. H. Case	1
1	Type-writing macaine, w H. Case	1
	Type-writing machine, L. S. Crandall	
1	Valve seats, refitting, C. F. Hall	t
ş	Ventilating churches, etc., W. Kingham 170,174	
9	Vise, E. Caswell 170,344	8
ş	Wagon body, C. A. Dewolf	1
۱	Wagon brake, A. L. Bartlett	t
۱	Washing machine, F. Gittere 170,362	1
į	Washing machine, J. D. Lawlor 170,279	13
i	Washing machine, J. I. Shotwell 170,311	Б
٩	Watch case spring, A. S. Buckelew 170,341 Water ejector, H. Coll (r) 6,739	1
9	Water ejector, H. Coll (r)	П
ğ	Water meters, register dial for, J. C. Kelley 170,272	1,
ł	Water wheel, S. C. Lyons 170,285	
ŧ	Water wheel, S. C. Lyons 170,285 Well curb, C. M. Minor 170,290	2
	Whistle, steam, King & McKlernan 170,374	
	Wind power, J. M. Armour 170,336	10
	Windlass, friction, A. D. Stout	16
	Window sash bead fastener, J. W. Tripp 170.417	ì
	Window shade roller, A. Roelofs	10
	Wood-boring gage, G. S. Hudson, 170,287	1
	Wrench plpe, D. P. Stanton	
1		
1	DESIGNS PATENTEL.	0
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ILLUSTRATIONS.	Piorakin or lesser bustard, the
	Flower pots. Freezing apparatus, Carró's Freezing apparatus, Carró's Friction dutuch pulley, Bean's. Friction meter, Napier's Fuel economiser, Twibil's. Furnace, asphaltum.
A	Furnace, asphaltum
Accumulator 280 Acidimetry, Reveil and Salleron's	Gages, tide and river
Accumulator 280 Acidimetry, Reveil and Salleron's method 402 Air reservoir, Gailbert's 68 Altiscope, Stevens 290 Anchor tripper 290 Anchor tripper 101 Anteiope, the brown Indian 341 Annarium and warding case-	Gages, tide and river
Antester, the scaly 133 Antester, the brown Indian 343	Clarty's
bined 103	Gradients, steep, working by in
	system Grapes, preserving Grinder, universal, Sanford's. Gunboat, the Bermejo Gun, moster field, Krupp's. Gun, the Statu, boring the true nion coll. Gun, toy, Markin's.
A CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PARTY OF	Gunboat, the Bermejo Gun, monster field, Krupp's
Awi, Smith's 50 Awnings 561	Gun, the st tun, boring the trus ulon coll. Gun, toy, Martin's.
Aurora, an experimental 197 Awi, Smith's. 70 Awaings 50 Axe tester 351 Axie machinery 511 Axielesa, hardy 100	H ·
and the same of th	Hay rake, horse, Mcllinger's Health lift, Knight's
Balance, alloy. 361 Bale tie, Smith's. 115	Hay rake, horse, Mellinger's Health lift, Knight's Heater, steam, De Kafer & Lacy Heater, ventilating, unreh's Rell Gate submarine operation
Ballasting and stone-breaking ma- chine, Marsden's 367	Dorner mentanting Laurian
Battery cells, joining up. 115 Battery, charcoal, Biair's 68	method
Bearing feeler, Alley's 20 Beer cooler, Bohart's 180 Bell the Independence 190	Hothouses, recently constructed Hughes, Edward David Hydro-pneumatic puzzle, the
Squire's Holbrook's 255	
Baggage checks	Ice cream carrier, Wyman's Ice-making machine, Siddeley Mackay's
Boller, rag, Donkin's 86 Roller, small steam, Blunt's 229	induction coll, Brush's
Bollers, setting Reyes' method. 1 Bollers, the heating surface of 152	lris, the great spotted
Hollers, small steam, Blunt's 25 Bollers, setting 38 Bollers, setting, Keyes' method. 1 Bollers, the heating surface of., 152 Bolling pot, Hennaman & Shaw's 246 Boring bits 165 Boring machine, vertical, Furness	J
Boring machine, vertical, Furness & Co. 2. Bow socket, tubular, Topilif's 374 Brake, wagon, Howell's 310 Brick machine and transporting apparatus, Gard's 11 Bridge at St. Louis, Mo.—The western abutment 114 Bridge over the Hudson at Troy,	Joint, frictionless, Talibott's
apparatus, Gard's	Manualda Calamanta
Bridge over the Hudson at Troy, N. Y. 351	Kite, the crested black Knapsacks Knebworth House and Garden
N. Y. 351 Bridge over the Waltaki, New Zealand. 211 Bridge, suspension, at Kiev, Rus-	EnglandL
Broom-sewing machine 328	Lamp and oil can, Roberts' Lathe, duplex wheel, New's Lathe, hand and slide, Law as Duff's Lever power, Halo's. Life saving apparatus, Rogers Light, dioperic, Melgs' Lighthouse, the Trinity shoals Liquid mixer, Meyers Liquor thief. Locomotive, a modern. Locomotive, Stroudley's.
Builets, projectiles, and cariridges 24 Burgiar alarm, Powell's. 355 Burner, Bunsen, solld dame 238 Burner, non-retreating Bunsen. 387	Duff's. Lever power, Hale's
Burner, non-retreating Bunsen., 387	Light, dioptric, Meigs' Lighthouse, the Trinity shoals
Caladium culture 247 Calipers 338	Liquor thief. Locomotive, a modern.
Cap, reversible, Fox's 198	Lubricating device, Sawyer's
Carbonic acid, fiquid, flask for 323 Carbonic acid, making liquid 243 Carling machine, Gillett & Bland's 210	M.
Car starter and replacer	Magnetism, experiments in Magnet, Jamin's
Carbonic acid from roots. Carbonic acid, highd, flask for., 223 Carbonic acid, making liquid., 243 Carlino machine, Siliett & Bland's 210 Car seat, Sheldon's., 336 Car starter and replacer., 326 Carving machine, wood, Black- man 's., 536 Car-washing machine, Lord Cathiness', 536 Carter and Cathiness', 536 Cathine	Macroramia plumosa, the
Charles and a boundary beautiful or 150	Meion cucumber, a minimum
Chromatrope, a new	Meter, spirit, Slemens & Halski Meter, spirit, Young's
Cockatoo, she great black 250	Meter, water, Duroy s. Microscope, a home-made co- pound
Center gages. 325 Caromatrope, a new 325 Chronometer, solar, Fiechet's 15 Cigar wrapper knife, srechbiel's 8 Cochitostema Jacobiatum 167 Cockatoo, the great black 25 Cooling of plants, the artificial 31 Color vision, Hicco's experiments on 150	Maria and the Control of the section of the
On 180 Column, metallic, Leldy's 246 Compass, circular, Duchemin's 147 Conservatory at Hampton Court. England 375	Mines, the Montreal hematite, F gland. Molding machine, Grosvenor's Mortising and boring machin Fay's.
England 371 Cooking chamber, Smedley's 166	Fay's
England. Cooking chamber, Smedley's 166 Cottage, an ornamental. 100 Counter and tell-tale, engine. 255 Cow tall holder. Pedden's 564 'rane, an eighty tun 567 Crane, steam, Taylor's 257 Cullinary apparatus, Randall's 557 Cupressos nutkaonis. 247 Curiam fixture, Pospisil's 500	Moths, currant and raspberry. Moth, the cobweb apple Motor, col i air Motor, high pressure Mower, Burgess and Key's
Crane, steam, Taylor's	
	Nail extractor, Converse's Napper and brusher, Tompkins Nares, Captain G. S. New York post office, the New York United States Cou
Dashboard, Schwaner's 2	New York United States Cou
Dashboard, Schwaner's. Deodortzing excavator, Johnson & Nettleton's. Diving bell and grapner. 29	
K	Onager, the
Earth pits	
Electric phenomenon, remarka-	Petroleum, furnace for burning Photographs, printing by
Electrical speed recorder, Grove's is Electric tight, the	Pipes, bending, Orum's device
York post office 15 Elevator, water, Hale's 25 Elevator, water, Hale's 25	Flants, carnivorous Plants, the animalism of Plant vascs for indoor necoration
Engine, blooming mill, J. E. Thomson steel works 1 Engineering structures 31	Plate shearing machine.
Engineering structures. Engine, portable, Clayton & Shut-	Press, drawing, Stiles & Parke
Engraving machin, Lotz' 3	Printing press, Cottrell & list cock's. Propeller, new, Becker's. Propeller, serew, Grimith's. Propeller, serew, Stevens & M. (er's. Payebo mystery, the
Feed water heater and purifier, 12	Propeller, screw, Stevens & A
Feed water heater and purifier, Berryman's 12 Feed water heater, locomotive, Magoon's 18 Fence, Iron, Robertson's 88 Fence, Iron, Robertson's 88	Propelier, screw, Paycho mystery, the Pulley block, Moore's Pump, donkey, Hayward & Co. Pump, actary, McFarland's, Pump, steam jec, Körting's,
Fence, fron, Robertson's 38	Pomp, steam Jes, Korting's

R

CONTRACTOR OF THE PARTY OF THE	
78000	秀
oster, the cataleptie	Atmo Atmo
8	Luge
diron, Hasenritter's fety valve, mercurial, Colls'. 198 fety valve, mercurial, Colls'. 198 mbur at bay, the wing and grooving machine, lagge'. 258 w sharpener, Crook's ale, rafter, and bevei gage, Spayth's. 134	AWI L
mbur at bay, the 313 wing and grooving machine, 103 mags. 303	Axie Axie Azale
w sharpener, Crook's 255 ale, rafter, and bevel gage, Spayth's 154 issors and ripping knife, John son's 274	
rew cutting die and holder, Wi-	Sabbi Sacte
aping machine, double, Fernau & Co's gnals and switches, Bousseau's	Balls Balls
Ik-aninatas machinery Dan-	Ballo Baron
immia fragrans	Baro Baro Bary Batro
Ide valve calculator, Caldwell's 87 sunding apparatus, deep sea, White's 211	Batte
ark spectra, apparatus for, Runsen's 229	Batte
amp, rotary hand Baldwin's. 19 team cultivator, Fowler's. 586	Batte
press for pressing, hydraum 179 teel ingots, casting, Hackney's method of 275 teel ingots for ordnance, casting 200	Batte Batte
seel ingots for ordnance, casting 20 seel, molds for casting 99	Bear Bed Beef
seel ingots for ordnance, casting 200 ceel, modisfor casting	Beer
arveying instrument, Jahn's 226 wans	Bell,
T	Belti Belti Belti
es kettle, Gray's	Belts
ire-upsetting machine, Schon's 246 cols, driving portable, Smith's method of	Belt Belt Bird
ortolses, land, in the Zoological Gardens, London	Bird Bird Bitte
method	Blac Blac
alve, stop, Whitton's 147	Blas Blas Blea
alve, stop, Whitton's 147 alve, test, Wood's 214 entilation and cleansing drain pipes, Morrell's system 235 ilia, a model 218 ilia, design for a model 23 ineyard, the Garston, England, 377 ise, Penfeld's 193 'ise, sudden grip, Hall's 118	Blea Blea Blea
'ilia, design for a model 23 'ineyard, the Garston, England, 327 'ise, Penfield's. 194	Blea Blea Blin
ise, sudden grip, Hali's 118	Blin
Vater closet, odorless, Smith's 326 Vater closet, to put up a	Boll Boll
Nater pressure engine, Wyss & Studers' 195 Water, salt, changing to fresh 214	Boll Boll
ditch's method	Boll Boll
Webb, Captain Matthew 227	Boll
Well-boring implements	Boll Boll
Y Cucca stricts, the	Boll Boll
	Boll Boll Boll
	Boil Bon
MISCELLANY.	Bon Bon Bor
Figures preceded by a star (*) refer to illustrated articles.	Bor Bor
_	Bor
A commulator +280	Bra Bra
Adhesion surface	Bra Bra Bra
Ethrioscope the 249 African explorations, new 281 Agates, cutting 542 Air, compressed, antiseptic pro-	Bra Bra Bre
Air, compressed, antiseptic pro- perties of	Bre Bric
Air, compressed, antiseptic properties of 185 Air cushion for pipes. 238 Air for smelting from (48) 286 Air in nouses, etc. 229 Air reservoir, improved 66 Air, temperature of, and compressal to of (14) 123 Air chal denderizing (6) 235	Bric
air, temperature of and the pressal in of the pressal in or the pr	Brio
Of	Bric
Alloy, balance	Bric Bric Bric
Altiscope American competition 241 American grape vines in France 261 American Institute fair, opening	Brit
American Institute fair, opening of the	liro Bro
of the 200 American Institute fair, the 70, 201 American Institute fair, the 70, 207 207 207 207 207 207 207 207 207 207	Bro
tive	Buc Buc
Amusements, outdoor, 265 Analysis, a human 125 Anglor tripper 280	But
Anchor tripper Anemometer	flul
Anemometer Angle Johns Anglie Johns Aniline black by electricity	Bur Bur
Antiseptic, another new	Bur Bur
Apparitions 55 Apparediation 201 Aquarium, portable, and wardian 201 case. 275	Bur Bus Bus
case 108 A quometer, the 270 Arched roofs 312 Arcograph, the 280	But
Arctic expedition, the British 130 Arctic expedition, the British 130 Arctic explorations, recent 226 Arctic explorations, work for 32	100

The same of the sa	
Atmospheric hammer, '548' Atmospheric machinery '248' Atmospheric whiatle '448' Atoms, the dimensions of '(71) 258' Augers '133' Aurora, an experimental '197' Awi handles '561' Awi, Improved '561'	Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca Ca
Atoms, the dimensions of. (27) 228 Augers 128 Aurora, an experimental 197 Awi handles 286 Awi, improved 70 Awnings 561 Axo tester 861 Axa tester 961 Axaleas, hardy 103	CHECK
В	COCCOCC
Babbiti metal (15) 26 Bacteria and vibrios (15) 28 Bacteria and vibrios (15) Balg fasteuers (15) Balastic (15) Ballasting and stone-breaking machine (15) Ballooning at night (15)	Carcaron
nalisating and stone-breaking machine 557 Baroniter a cheap 27 26 Barometer, a cheap 27 26 Barometer, to make a 59 321 Barometrograph, the 381 Baryta green. Bartrachia and reptills in North	01000
larometrograph, the 9811 Baryta green 202 Batrachia and reptilis in North America 153 Battery, a charcoal 683 Battery, a chioride of silver 200 Battery, a simple (54) 284 Battery cell, a new form of Lecanche's 272 Battery cells, joining up 115 Battery, electromotive force of a (20) 172	0 0000
Battery cells, joining up. 115 Battery electromotive force of a (30) 172 Battery for spark spectra 229 Battery poles in a (10) 171 Battery, the Hill. (16) 228	000000
Hearing feeler 70	000000
Bee culture	00000
Belt couplings 164, 229 Beiting, leather, American 254 Beiting vs. frictional gearing 257 Beiting vs. gearing 257 Beiting vs. gearing 257 Beits, death 6 Beits, slip of 255 Belts, strain on 340 Belt tightener and countershaft hanger 150	0000
Belt tightener and countershaft hanger	000000
Birds and the insect pests 56	00000
Bleaching cotton yarn 312 Bleaching fuld, instantaneous 23 Reaching gums (49) 204 Bleaching sheliac (4) 171 Bleaching sheliac (4) 171	00000
Hilling hinge. Siming slat holder. Nilling stop, improved. Howers, fan, action of. Blowers, fan, action of. Blowpipe, a new gas. Doller, and itting slrv weam. (8) 155 Boller, and feed water heater. Siming slrv weam.	000000
Boiler bolts and castings. 239 Boiler brickwork. 239 Boller explosion. 135, 185	000000
Boller explosions, experimental, 113 lioller explosions, mysterious, 86 Boller furnaces, bot draft for. 1 Boller incrustations 1 Boller inspection, a years' experience in 27 Holler phenomena, steam 190, 344 264	0000
Boiler, rag, rotary	00 00
Holier phenomena, steam, 176, 242 264 Holier rag, rotary	200000
Bone black (2) 33 Bones 163 Bones 163 Bones 163 Bornes 164 Bornes 167 Bornes 167 Bornes 168 Boring bars and tools 212 Borling bars and tools 252 Borling bars and tools 252 Borling tools 252 Borling tools for lathe work 245 Bornes 252 Bornes 253 Bornes 254 Bornes 255 Bornes	1000000
Boring bars and tools: 212 Boring bits. :65 Boring machinery, wood 367 Boring tools. (25) 238 Boring tools for lathe work 245	200000
Bow socket, tubular	00000
Brass to resemble gold	200000
Bricks, damp-proof. S57 Bricks, Lapanese in America. 163 Bricks, transporting, during man- ufacture. 331 Bridge at Troy N. Y 351 Bridge hetween New York and	200000
Bridge building, a new system of 116 Bridge in Philadelphia, burnt 372	000000
Zealand. 2.1 Bridges, mistern suspension. 2.1 Bridges, railway, from in off Bridge, the East River. 2.6 Bridge, the St. Louis. 114 British Association notes. 2.16 Bromite of camphor. (11) 49 Bromate 124 Bromate 2.8	000000
igritish Association notes. [1] and ignomitie of camphor. [1] and ignorate of camphor. [1] and ignorate, bluish green. St. Bronze, brown, for Iron. [85] tronze on brass, green. St. Bronzing cast from. [1] It liftoom heads. [1] It liftoom heads. [2]	-
Broom heads. Rroom-sewing machine. 288 Buckles 28 Buckskin gjoves, etc., cleaning. Buffalo skins, to prepare. (21) 347 Buildings and railway cars, exit From: 280 Buildings projectiles, and cars	200
ridges 34	HAMMA
Burjair alarms Burjair alarms Burjair alarms Burjai buce, pyramidal 50 Burjai budt, building a (20) 816 Burner, Bunsen solid flame 238 Burner, Improved flames 387 Burner, Improved flames 387 Burner, and financiering 387 Business stagnation in 4 Butter, Philadelphia, the secrets Buttons, white shirt. (20) 204	-
Business, stagnation in 4 Butter, Philadelphia, the secrets of Buttons, white shirt (22) 284	Spinster .
Caisson, movable fron 312 Caisson, Triger's 213 Caladium culture 347	No.

*948 *248 *348 (97) 236 *130 *197 *361 *361 *361 *361 *361 *361	Calorimeter BES Canai boats, propeiling BES Canai boats, propeiling BES Canai, Prench irrigation BES Canai, Softering machine BES Capping machine BES Capping machine BES Capping machine BES Capping machine	D
(27) 236	Can-soldering machine	DDDD
197	Capping machine	D
961		000
103	Carbonic acid gas as a motor 166, 243 Carbonic acid motor, the	D
	Carbonic acid, fasks for liquid. 222 Carbonic acid from roots 255 Carbonic acid gas as a motor 166, 213 Carbonic acid gas as a motor 166, 213 Carbonic acid motor, the 310 Carbonic oxide, test for 210 Carbonic plants 256 Catterpiliars, to testroy (145) Catterpiliars, to exterminate 121 Catter, queer 112 Celle, artificial, Traube's 161 Cellicid — what is 157 Cellicid 356 Cellicid — what is 157 Cellicid 356	D
(13) 26	Carillon machine	
(C)	Cars two-story railway 242	E
115 king	Car-washing machine 51 Catarrh, cure for (46) 20s Caternillars, to testroy (18) 27	×
. 196 . (2) 96	Cattle, queer	200
(9) 394	Cells, artificial, Traube's,	MAN
orth 153	Celiuloid—what is it? 25 Cement. a new 50 Cement, squarium (54) 21 Cement, coating, for brickwork (14) 26 Cement for many districts (15) 26	E
68 390	Cement, coating, for brickwork (14) 26	EKE
(34) 284 Le-	Cement for emery and leather 125 Cement for filling burratones 222 Cement for glass	E
115 of a	Cement for glass letters	E
(39) 172	Cement for leaky roofs	E
.(10) 171 .(16) 258	Cement for steam pipes 1	E
.(16) 298 70 (1) 11 .89, 186	Cement for metals and glass 15 Cement for steam pipes 155 Cement for teets 225 Cementing emery to from (9) 363 Cementing from in wood 23 Cement non-dry to 25	E
1.50	Cement, non-drying 24 Cement, Portland 49	ì
ence 235	Centennial buildings, from in the. 1 Uentennial buildings, the. * .29, 199	þ
54	Cement, non-drying. 24 Cement, Portland. 49 Centennial buildings, fron in the 1 Centennial buildings, fron in the 1 Centennial buildings, so 3 Centennial clergyman a. 3 Centennial machine builders at the . 124	2
354 357 375	space at the	ŀ
385	Centernial notes 40, 136, 147, 276 Centennial, progress of the 99 Centennial, Russia and the 369	Ì
shaft *150	Certain and their chemical value.	k
56	Cesspool, a new	1
257	Chemistry's gift to the world 184 Chemist's narrow escape, an am-	
(5) 409 (82) 236	Chientst's narrow escape, an amateur 261 Chimneys 250 Chimneys dimensions of 270	ž
303	Chimneys, dimensions of(22) 11 Chimneys, sooty, cure for 21 Chinch bugs, to destroy 127	ı
312 013 329	Chloral drinking, dangers of 65	ě
(19(49) 204 (4) 171 (1) 26	Chloral hydrate in neuralgia ?1 Chlorine, preparing	E
(1) 20	Chrometrope, a new	k
355 70 134 (81) 220 19	ateur 581 Chimneys, dimensions of (22) 11 Chimneys, sooty, cure for 22) Chimneys, sooty, cure for 21 Chimneys, sooty, cure for 21 Chinch bugs, to destroy, 127 Chioral as an annesthetic, 169 Chioral drinking, dangers of 65 Chioral hydrate in neuralgia 71 Chlorine, preparing 77 Chlorions as preservative 180 Chromatrope, a new 344 Chromometer, a solar 159, 228 Cider, clarifying (48) 304 Cider, purifying (58) 190 Cider, purifying 58 Cigar wrapper kuite 56 Cincinnati exposition, the 788 Citty, a, 15000 years old 64	Ł
m. (8) 155	Cincinnati exposition, the	Æ
r	Cieansing cloths and yarns 340	Į
	Clouds, angular velocity of 330	ŧ
ental, 113	of	ŧ
expe-	Clover, fecundation of(62) 139	ł
20000		ě
0, 244 264 86 254	Coal tar colors, practical deter- minution 261 Cosi, the components of 306	ŧ
in #6	mination 261 Cosi, the components of 266 Cosi, the origin of 266 Cosi, the origin of 267 Cosi, we get a substitution of 270 Cosi, we get a substitution 270 Cosi, and cosi a substitution 270 Coffee plague in Ceyton 119 Coffins wicker 250 Cose, anthracite 260 Cose, anthracite 260 Cosi, anthracite 270 Colleges and the hard times 270 College, Smith 183 Colledion 197	ł
*339	Cochiostema Jacobianum 167	ŧ
of 152 346 (2) 33	Coffee plague in Ceylon	Į
(2) '35	Coxe, anthracite	ŀ
167	College and the nary times	ı
*181 212	Collodion polarizer, a	1
(25) 335	Color vision, metallic	E
*245	Compass, a new circular	
342	Concrete for walks, etc	1
(1) 298	Conservatism vs progress. 241 Cookery, cheap. 49	
(47) 395 358 409	Conservatism vs progress 241 Cookery, cheap 27 Cooking chamber 166 Cooperation in building 72 Copper alloy of, adherent to glass 160 Copper, mass, of Lake superior. 22 Copper saits, colorless (12) 138 Copper, test for 182 Cobving cenetis 168	1
an. 311 efty. 308	Copper mass, of Lake Superior. 200 Copper saits, colorless (12) 138	ł
169	Copper, test for 163 Copying pencils 168 Corals, the growth of 20	I
man- 351 k and 86	Copper, tess for. 182 Copying penells 188 Corals, the growth of 20 Cordials, American. 273 Core leather, a new fabrio. 286 Corner tots. 333 Cornhusking uppenent. 20 Cottage architectore. 161	U
	Corner lots. 408 Corn-husking unplement. 70	ı
em of 116 nt . 372 New	Corn-massing uppended. 0 Cottage architectore 10s Cottou mathematics 101 225 Counter and tell tale, engine 238 Corane, a powerful 28, 257 Crape 300 Cremation in the household 2 Crime the result of automatism, 5 Crematics a new me for 288	Ę
n*2.1 69	Cow tail holder* 355 Crane, a powerful* 38, * 287	ł
309	Cremation in the bousehold 2	H
(11) 409	Criminals, a new use for 208 Crocodile, the hea	ı
184 85	Cryptococcus cerevisle 154 Crystalling fruit(31) 284	1
SI	Culinary apparatus, Centennial. 288 Cupressus nutkaensis. 247	1
(11) 11	Curtain fixture	1
228 238 238		
(24) 59	D	1
100	Darning muchine 411	1
*335	Dashboard, Improved	1
1256 50 125) 1466 1258	Detonating compound(12) 304 Diamonds again, veneered 305	1
PHAT	Diamonds, the formation of (55) 139	
	Diphtheria	
ecrets 72	Discoveries, three curious 386	1

Drawing, mechanical
Earth pits 296 Earth's interior, theories of the, 168
Earth's surface, instability of the
Ebonize wood, to. 38, (20) 126 Eccentric graving. (20) 347 Eccentric graving. (20) 347 Economy in use and manufacture Aus Education for eniture or use, is. 178 Elegystian manuscript, an. 326 Electrical manuscript, an. 326 Electrical copying machine. 341 Electrical cribitorion in Paris. 377 Electrical Esh bais, an. 279 Electrical Saws, the. 31 Electrical phenomena, remarka-
Electrical speed recorder 182 Electrical spread-eagleism. 223
Electrical conductors, metals as (29) 107 Electric conductor, wood as an., 257 Electric engine, new 233 Electric fail machines 117 Electric force and magnetlem, the 292
Plactels for a and molassics ma-
Ricctric force, the new phase of . 401 Electric force, what is no 158, 228 Electricity and chemical combi- sation
Electricity in hair. Electricity, origin of atmospheric 28 Electricity, twisting from by 1 Electric light and beat, the 556 Electric light as a signal 281
Electric light for locomotives 55 Electric might, the
Electro-magnetic clock
Electro-plating silver bath (27) 220
Eigh marbles, the lost 22 Eighent, a new 331 Eicphants, a plea for the wild. 357 Eicphants, mortality among 375 Eicyator, a new grain. 353 Elevator, Körting's 352 Elevator, Körting's 353 Elevator, New York post office 178 Eilipsograph 350 Emery grinder, new 34 Employer and employed, rights to inventions 3
Engineer, education of the me-
Chanical 76, 312 Engineering, amateer 224 Engineering, ancient 199 Engineering, progress of 199 Engineering structures 212 Engineer's education, am. (26) Engine of blooming mill use 15 Engine of 1000ming mill use 15 Engine of 1000ming mill use 15
Engine for blooming mill use. 18 Engine, of . 25 Engine, putting up an . (3) 25 Engine, putting up an . (3) 25 Engines and pumps . 271 Engines are driving at American
Institute fair. 329 Engines, portable 322 Engine, the Little Ghant. 371 Engines, the power of small. 33 Engraving machine 34
Engine for blooming mill use. 18 Engine, off. 255 Engines and pumps. 251 Engines and pumps. 271 Engines and pumps. 271 Engines and pumps. 271 Engines, driving, at American Institute fair. 202 Engine, portable 252 Engine, the Little Ghan. 271 Engine, the Entitle Ghan. 271 Engine, the power of small 211 Engine, the power of small 212 Engine the Little Ghan. 271 Engi
Ether, the, and ponderable mar- ter The proper and steel. But the proper a
Evolution, the goal of. 288 Evolution, the theory of. 153 Excavating apparatus, decodoriz- ing. 223 Excuses, making. 384
Excavaling apparatus, decoloriz- ing making 54 Exhibition of selectific apparatus 746 Expansion and contraction op- moisture. 221 Expansion, force of 581 Explosion at the Pullman Car Works. 228 Explosion, remarkable. 228 Explosion, singular 58 Explosion in gunpowder mills by electricity 121
Works. 205 Explosion, remarkable. 205 Explosion, singular. 50 Explosion in gunpowder mills by electricity 177 Explosions, powder mill 20
electricity 177 Explosions, powder mill 278 Explosives, nurreglycerin 279 Explosives, trials of 279 Exposition, the great interna-
Fair, the oldest in the world 231
Feathers, cleaning
Fermentation from inorganic sub- stances
Ficaria, the Ti Fried instrument, universal 125 File a new patent 65 Filter, chemical 65 Filters, etc. 65 Filth as a source of preventible
Ficaria, the
Fire engines, noming 185 Fire escape, a new 256 Fire escapes wanted 5, 101 Fire fly, the chemical 121 Fireproof houses, plastering in 48 Fireproof houses, plastering in 48 Fireproof houses, plastering in 48
TOTA 914
Flies, what they do
Flouring mill, the largest 405 Flower pots 706 Flying machine, another 104 Flying machiner, progress of 121 Foll, variegated Japanese 108 Food fermentation of 71 Food to work, the relation of 73
Food, fermentation of

412		2 KIKIKIKA	B. m. v. v. v. v.	William William	Telegraphing, cable. 276
Force, reducing	Ink, red-black(22) 394 Inks, colored (9) 315	HIGHER OF CHECKSON STATES OF THE PARTY OF TH	Petroleum, distilling	Salicylic sold for preservation 197 Salicylic acid, Increasing solubility of 86, 147 Salicylic acid, snow white 20	Telegraph poles, new style of 118 Telegraph poles, new style of 118 Telegraph poles, take them out of
Foreman, the	inks, colored. 00 315 Inks, gold and silver. 103, (3) 334 Inks, marking, colored. (42) 108 Ink, to prevent files cating. (3) 158 Ink, to brevent files cating. (3) 158	Molding machine, ornamental*166 Monads	Phonometer, the	Salicylic and benzoic actua	the streets. 407 Telegraph poles, wood, preserv-
Franklin, Lady	Ink, white (31) 268 In memoriam 89 Insect commission, a proposed. 153	Money, hard, what is	Phosphorus oil. (16) 219 Phosphorus poisoning, antidote for. 113	Sair water to fresh, changing 211	Telegraph printers, the duplex 55 Telegraphs, private, in France 511
Friction, a curious fact. 5 Friction clutch pulley. 275	Insects, excommunicated 165 Insects, the strength of 64	Mortar, hair in	Photo engraving 178 Photographic diagnosis, a 225 Photographic printing, bichro-	Sambur, the	Telegraph wires in tubes. 275 Telegraphy
Prictionless Joint, a	Inventions do, what	Mosquito bar, a	Photographs by machinery, print-	Saw, filing a	Telegraphy, progress of American 273 Telegraphy, progress of One
Frost, subterraneau. S7 Fruit, preserving 169 Fuel, economy in use of. 163 Fuel, new source of, and its utili-	Inventions patented in England 78, 89, 105, 202, 250, 265, 296, 314, 330, 345	Moths from bee hives, to keep(0) 11 Moths, the current and raspberry*115	Ing. 130 Photography, bichromate and gelatin (42) 130 Photography of children 148	Sawing machine, treadle, teat in 369	Telegraphy, quadruplex, in India 289 Telescope at Paris, the large 289 Telescope lenses
Furnace working with petroleum* 182	Inventions, useful and curious, 280 Inventions wanted 101 Inventor, a juvenile. 306	Moth, the cobweb apple. 1335 Motlon, cosmical, a mechanical theory of 133	Photography, spirit, under a cloud	Saw sharpener. (5) 11 Saws, straightening (5) 11 Sciatica. American Association Science. American Association	Telescope, the million dollar, W7 Tellurium in Chill
Furniture of a sick room 202 Furniture, combination 256	Inventor's paradise, the	Motor, cold air, No. 2. 101 Motor, hydraule 233 Motors, novelty in 233	Photo sensitive paper, preserv- log 210 Phylloxera remedy, new 48	Science on the Pacific slope, pros-	Temperature of a sick room, 212 Temperature, underground. 216
G	Iron, bending heavy. 1 Iron ceiling, enameled 151 Ironclads, collision of 215	Mountain gaps, how formed 280 Mountains, the origin of 280	Physiological problem, 8	Science paguacious	Tempering tooth chisels
Gages, glass, on bollers	Ironclad vessels	Mouth, the human, plants and animals in the 184 Mucilage, a new 274	Pieric acid, prontable source of 167 Pigeon post, a transatiantic 295	bers of	Testing eggs 249 Testing goin arable (1) 251 Textile industries 199
Calcanized from snow-flake fin-	Iron goods, polish on. 38 Iron horse, the 52, 100	Museum of natural history, Mrs. Maxwell's	Pin. a new Pipes, bending, new method of . *150 Planer war, the Woodbury	MENT, the AMERICAN SUPPLE-	Textile industry, a new
ish on. (34) 268 Galvanizing iron. (15) 315 Gas, a new lighting and heating. 131 Gases the vapors of liquids. 321	fron mold, to remove	Nail extractor *150	Planetary atmospheres, the	Scientific and practical informa-	Therpylene, synthesis of
Gases the vapors of liquids	Iron, the Berlin. 331 Irresolution. 360 Irrigation works in India, the. 128	Napper and brusher, combined. *6 Nares, Captain G. 8	Plants, carnivorous 153	tion 3, 21, 49, 72, 113, 145, 161, 197, 225, 211, 281, 289, 305, 321, 69, 8cientific courtship. 244	Time check, watchman's
Gas from cork	3	Nebule, a new theory of the 372 New books and publications, 73, 153, 202, 249, 366, 314, 330, 345.	Plants, insect-cating 192 Plants, insect fertilization of 153 Plants, pot, management of 71	Scientist, a model. 200 Scissors and ripping knife, com- bined. 274	Tin and lead foil 82 Tin for tinuing 885 Tin, labels on 98
Gas from night soil, etc. 200 Gas from petroleum 258 Gas furnaces natural 205	Japanning small machine work.	Newspaper circulation and adver- tising	Plants, the animalism of	Scouring liquid	Tin small castings, to 279 Tire-upsetting machine 246 Toads, do not kill the 129
Gas fuel, natural	Javelle water	New York dock department, the. 65	Plastering, new system of 2521 Plaster rubbish, u-ilization of 373 Plaster, to make. (21) 26 Plated goods, tarnished. (3) 251	Screw threads in holes	Tobacco, removing aroma from (12) 378 Tools, driving portable
Gas wells of Pennsylvania 20 Gearing, angular 20	Joints in carpentry	Nickel-plating iron	Pacumatic tubes, 80 miles an	See, what do we 144	Too much of a good thing
Gelatin molds	K Valuarita a mall an	Nitro-glycerin and water, differ- ence between	Podometer, the, or walking dis-	Senses, the trustworthiness of the 16 Sewer gas dangers. 27	Tortojses, land 265 Trade in England 189 Trade marks, centennial 81
Germination of seeds, action of silts on 279 Germination of seeds, the 358	Kalsomine a wall, to 40 Kansas City industrial fair 145 Keely, another rival for 358	Nitro-glycerin preparations 212 Noon, determining	tance Indicator	Sewing machine monopolists, the 258 Sewing machines in Scotland 329 Sewing machines, sale of 264	Trademarks, rise and progress of 2.5 Tradesmen's Industrial Institute,
Gliding, process of	Keely, another rival for 358 Keely gas the 165, 244 Keely motor deception, the .2, 16, 20, 23, 48, 80, 129, 273 Keely motor Jeny from the 12, 16, 20, 20, 20, 20, 20, 20, 20, 20, 20, 20	Norway, frem	Poisoning by arsenical wall paper 325 rolsons, general antidote for 21 Poison stories, curious. 353	Shaft, a 15 inch, mending at sea *240 Shafting accidents, preventive for 69 Shaping machine, double 4in	Transferring pictures to painted surfaces. 169 Transits of Venus behind the sun 181
Glass for lighthouses, French 325	Keely motor, the *20, 36, 265	11, 26, 42, 59, 75, 91, 107, 128, 188, 155, 171, 187, 385, 219, 235, 251, 267, 283, 293, 215, 331, 346, 363, 378, 394, 409	Pole, the search for the 2 Pollshing moldings 28 Pollsh, oil, on doors, etc. (14) 219	Sheil, the water	Tree for the Centennial, California 151 Tree protection, national
Glass manufacture, recent Improvements in 17 Glass, metal 166 Glass, metal 167 options work 148	Keys, reverse	0	Polygon, area of a	Ships and other bodies in water, new theory of resistance, 217	Trees, great, in California
Glass, soluble, for outdoor work 148 Glass, the Bastle 20 Glass, to render opaque. 251 Glasings enloyed	Kite, a war. 326 Kite, the crested black 2281 Knapsacks 280	Oak stain for wood	Popost, Admiral 55, Population, the center of 151 Port wine, adulteration of 237	Sick room, common sense in the 232	Tubes and water pipes, enameled 233 Tube Works Company's trophy, the 73 Tunnel at Rio de Jar efro 358
Glazings, colored. 325 Glue, fireproof. 69 Glue, liquid. 24	Knebworth Park, England* 39	Blackford, John	Postal and telegraph service . 391 Postal laws, the—Amendments	Sidewalks, India rubber. 22 Siege of Paris, the 374 Sight from science. 249	Tunnel in Algiers, Roman 165 Tunnel railway, under the English
Glue, to prevent from cracking, 389 Glycerin, distilling	Labor, skilled	Henwood, W. F. 200 Logan, Sir William E. 80	needed. 240 Postal law, that obnoxious. 385 Post office, the new, New York	Sight, the education of	Tunnel, railway, under the Lon-
Gold, chloride of	Lamb and oil can. 118 Lamb and oil can. 198 Lamp shades, poisonous 389 Lard for market, to prepare 261	Por d, L. W	city "175 Potato beetle, the Colorado 52 Potato bugs poisonous, are 153 Potato bug, the best extermina-	Signals and switches, Rousseau's system. *259, 402 Silk harvest of the world. 117 Silk-spinnion machinery. 406	Tunnels, railway, ventilating, Dixon's system
Gold, new reagent for	Lard, purifying. (37) 230 Lathe chucks 21 Lathe, combined hand and slide. 342			Silks, weighted 23, 148 Silver bath from ditch water 24 Silver, cleaning (14) 331	Tunnel, the St. Gothard
Gold-plating solution. (28) 252 Gold, testing. (12) 283 Gophers, killing	Lathe, duplex wheel	Wheatstone, Sir Charles, 289, 311 Wilson, Henry	tor of the	Silver from alloys, extracting, 24 Silver from crucibles, recovering 372	U
Gorilia, a captive	Leather, morocco, dressing. 18 Leaves, utilizing pine 256 Lenses, arranging and testing (2) 75	Ocean level, constancy of the 113 Oldium albicans or white plant 184 Oll car, new 241	Power of waterfalls	Silvering glass	United States court, New York city*178
Graham flour, counterfeit. 329 Grand Central Depot—The signal	Leptonitus 185 Leptothrix buccalis 184 Lever power 7374	Oil diagometer, the 242	Practical mechanism: 21*, 58*, 84*, 117*, 148*, 180*, 212*, 245*, 277*, 309*, 341*, 373*, 405*	Sink in the ocean, how far will bodies. 208 Skilled labor. 403	Y
system	Life after death, physical	Oil for slate paint	Press, drawing	Skimmias, the "111 Skin, the season and the 355 Slates, securing 227	Vacuum, obtaining(5) 267 Valve, safety, mercurial
Grasshopper parasite, a	Life raft, new '134 Life-saving apparatus '194, 260 Life-saving devices. 288, 372	Oil, sperm, to purify	Prism, liquid, substitute for . 325 Prizes for designs for a vilia 388	Sledge, new arctic. 51 Slide valve calculator. 67 Slotting machine tools. 277	Valve, test, square inch
Grasshoppers in the West	Life, the origin of 400 Lifting match, a. 589 Light, a brillant 136	Oil tree, the Chinese 3 2 Oleaginous seed, new 197	Prizes for metallurgical improve- imenta. 297 Proctor, Professor. 178	Smoke condenser, new 294 Smokers, a mouthful for 3 Smokers, hygiene for 390	Vanguard, sinking of the 225 Vanith from wood pulp 143 Varnish for guns, etc(23) 12
Grasshoppers, utilizing the	Light, dioptric	Onions from maggot, to preserve 146 Opera house, the new Paris	Propeller, a new. 222 Propeller, Griffith's. 242 Propeller, recent improvements in the screw. 286	Snake within a snake, a 277 Snuff for insects 108 Soda lakes in Wyoming 281	Varnish from mica
Grinder, universal	Lighthouse, the Trinity Shoals*u91 Lightnug rod Ignorance, heavy loss from	Orange crop, Californian 225 Ordnance, American 120	Propeller, the Hercules screw*134 Propeller, the screw, defects in	Solar engine, a	Varnish, Japan
Garbage, new use for	Lightning rods 177, 209 Light, reflection and refraction of (30) 378	Orton. Profe sor James	Protosulphide of carbon	Solder for silver	Ventilating by machinery 333 Ventilation, common sense 265 Ventilation of a sick room 272
Gunnow Russian 177 Gunnowder, power of 319 Huns and armor, cost of 23	Lights, intensity of different col- ored	P	Public Health Association, the 355 Putting machine, a	Sounding by planoforie wire*211 Sounding in the Gulf of Mexico 166 Southern States agricultural ex-	Ventilation, window. 22 Vensels, vertical motion of 276
Guns, recoil check for	Light, the motive power of 9 Lime for oxyhydrogen light . (27) 315 Lime in the blast furnace 261	Paint, a cheap	Pulleys, sizes of	position, the 325 Space, what fills the interstellar, 394 Sparks, weak	Vinegar, detecting sulphurie acid
Gun, the eighty tun	Lining out work	Painting a wall	Pump, three-cylinder	Specific gravity and dimensions of molecules	Vinegar, testing
Gun. 1,20 pounder 331 Gutta percha and india rubber. 9 Gutta percha, the supply of. 229	Lithofracteur 212 Locomotive, a model 230 Locomotive engineers, brother-	Paint primes as	Putty, the best 388 Pyrometer, new 50	Spectrum, cold bands in the	Vise, improved
Gymnislum, a pocket	hood of	Paint, to dry	Quartz crystals	Spirit of wine(9) 11 Spirit rifle practice	Volcano revelations, some new., 160 Volcano, the youngest 28
Hair teader	Locomotives of 1825 and 1825, the 307 Locomotive steam saver. 273 Locomotive, the 372	Paper on drawing boards, to ax. 321 Paper plants. 119 Paramecia. 185	R	Sportsmen and hunters	w
Hampton Court Palsee and gar- dens 315 Happiness, the race for 372	Locomotive, the Weston. 289	Parasites of the house fly 241 Patella, fracture of, cure of 56 Patent bill, the English 128	Rabbits, exterminating(21) 285 Races, boat, horse, and human 115	Square, laying out a*235,*372 Stains, removing with magnesia, 373 Stairs, aid in going up	Wagner Free Institute, the 340 Walls, stucco for brick(22) 25 War engines, ancient
Harness blacking	Lubricating device for sewing machines, etc	PATENT DECISIONS OF THE COURTS: Hale tie	Races, collegiate. 65 Haft, a living. 9 Hafter scale and bevel gage. *131	Stamp, rotary hand	War material destroyed
Hay rake, horse	м	Bottle fastener	Railroading in Switzerland 18 Rails, fron and steel. 012 Rails, long. 325	Steam as a fire extinguisher	Water, a motor
Heater for dwellings, steam	Magnetic carves, the 18 Magnetic pole (12) 155	Coliar, paper 5 Design patents	Hall, the law of the. 285 Hallway carriages, Giffard's. 275 Hallway joints, fish plates for. 284	Steam cuitivation	water closet, odorices
Hell Gate excavations, completion of the 192 Hell Gate improvements 111	Magnetism	Gas machine	Railway liability for freight. 18 Hallway, new elevated . 291 Hallway rall, improved . 19	Steam horse, another 11 Steamships, trials of screw 216 Steam street car construction 104	Water, diefetic effects of 211 Water elevator, duplex
Hen houses, purification of 165 Hens, corn-fed	Magnetism of iron filings	Hotel register 34 Patent assignees 28 Planer 28	Hailway rall, street Railways, comparative safety of, 199 Railway, Southern Pacific 207	Steam, the song of	Water, fresh, rudimentary exist- ence in"
Cial 857 Hops, preservation of 869 Horse disease, the 851	Magnetization of gas spectra 100 Magnetization of limenite, the 280 Magnetization, velocity of 43	Press. 21 Pump 200 Ruober pencil heads 12	Railway station, Great Eastern, London	steel, compressed	Water pressure engine
Horses, device for protecting* 66 Horses, drogging 193	Magneto-electric engine, a new. ** Magneto-electric light, the Magneto-electric machine, a (19) 29	Shade fixture	Hailway track, Improved, *28 Hailway traveling, Hocky Moun-	Steel in one-tub ingots, casting. 999 steel manufactures, the Shemeld. 2281	Water testing (2) 187, 281 Water, testing the color of 87
Horse, shall we est the	Magnet, the Jamin. 321 Man as an automaton. 321 Manatee or cow fish, the 328	Patented in America, a lost art. 34 Patent law discussion, E-gilsh 8 Patent laws, international 21	Rains, the cause of profuse	Sicel, polishing (29) 284 Sicel, vessels of (27) 207 Sicel works, new 214	Water, the purification of
Hospital construction, recent 270 Hospital construction, recent 270 Hotel, the Palace	Mancanese, black oxide of, for destroying noxious gases. 261 Manners, cultivate good. 72	Patent laws, proposed change in the English S Patent one-tailed shirt, the K	Hamberry v negar	Stevens Institute commencement, the 18 Stove blacking 169	Water wheel bearings
Hothouses, recently constructed * 407 Hot Springs, Ark 30 House, how to locate a 40	Marking out guide bars*31 Marking out work*31 Mathematics, importance of 10	Patent rights of employer and employed Patents, American and foreign:	Hats, remedy for	Strike, the Fall River. 240 Strong room for valuables. 249 Stryennin, death by 148	Wave motion (29) 171 Wave motion, measuring (29)
Houses, occupation of new. 28 Hoghes, El Baron de. 15 Human remains in Texas. 22	Mats, Makaroff's	10, 25, 40, 57, 74, 90, 10°, 121, 137, 154, 160, 186, 202, 211, 254, 230, 266, 282, 291, 314, 336, 345, 362, 264, 264, 265, 267, 314, 336, 345, 362, 264, 265, 265, 265, 265, 265, 265, 265, 265	Resping and mowing machinery "119 Recipes, useful: 21, 58, 69, 85, 130, 148, 169, 183,	Subterranean festivities	Wave mation propelling ships by 216 Waxing stove patterns (19) 601 Wealth, uncertainty of
Hydraulic ram, the	Mechanical age, the	Patents, foreign - Beduction of	18rd, poppy, die for flowers 280 Red, staining wood	Sugar, American refined	Weather glass, the
Hydrometers	Mechanics, a word to young Medical notes	Patents, foreign—Splenard oppor- timities for Americans 30 Patents, French 34	llefrigerating macoine, the Tel-	Sugar machinery 257 Suicidal epidemic, a 278	Weiding Iron, Belgian contpound (19) 138 Weil boring tools
Hygiene, hints in	Medical work, the oldest. 22 Metanosis. 5 Meton cuclumbers 13	Parents have done for us, what, ratents, official list of: 1 12, 28, 44, 60, 76, 92, 108, 124, 140, 175, 177, 189, 201, 199, 200, 200, 200, 200, 200, 200, 200, 2		Sulphureited hydrogen(5) 42 Sulphuric acid, action of, on lead, etc	Weils, artesian
ment	Mesembranthemums	379, 391, 40	Hest, laborious		Wheelwright's machine universal 408 Whistling, national differences as 10. 310 White finish on glass
Icebosts sailing faster than the wind(30) 233, (21)* ni Ice-making machine * 21	Metal industries, Russian	3 Patents, official list of Canadian:	Hiding, fast	San spots and atmospheric forces 216 Sanstroke, death by(14) 138	
les remarkable shower of 21	Melegrite of February 12, 1872, the to	p Patents, our debt to 5	6 Hiveting by hydraulic power*25 6 Hiveting cold metal	Hospended animation as a preserv-	Wood-carving machine 25
Ideas, stray	Microscope, a home-made *2:	ons industries, 281, 32 5 Patents, resignation of the Com- missioner. 115, 17 2 Patents, the new Commissioner	Hope socket	swinding across the English Channel. Swimming apparatus, automatic. 200	Wood pulp. (3) 26 Wood sorrel in epithelioma
Ignama freely, the 2 represente to needed 11 lecthoriou, temperature of (27) 1	Microscopical soirée, a	Noticed evidence of our	Hoses, growing(3) 251, (42) 25 1 Roses, growing	Swimming apparatus, automatic, an swimming feat, Captain Webb's, 221	Worms, current and gooscherry, 128
Incubation, temperature of(27) 1 Incubater, a new	Wilk, solidated	Patterns for scroll saw worss	Rubber hoots, cracking(46) 371 3 Hust from steel, to remove	swimming apparatus, automatic, he swimming feat, Captain Webb's, 227 swimming, remarkable. 214 swindles, the natural history of 12 swordlish exploits. 45	Wrinkles and recipes
Infortion or electrostatic coll. * 1	Mills, improved grinding. "F	Penell, adding*21	ing	T	A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR
		Pepper, bird	Nadiron, improved.	Tenia and raw meat	Yacht, steam, the Hermione
Ink, purple black	Mississippi river, improving the	Perspiration	Safe, kitchen	Testotaliers, a new argument for an Telegraph cable, the direct 16	Zinc, cleaning (17) 11
				and to reader	Zinc, cleaning water, etc(45) 139

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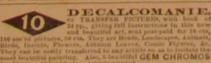
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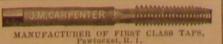
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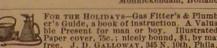
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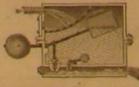
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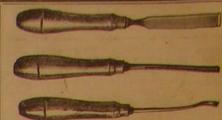


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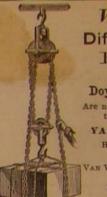
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