

to operate upon and be controlled by the year-wheel of a calendar-movement as and for the purpose set forth.
 Third, Arranging the month-wheel in such a manner that the same, at the end of each month, returns to its original position by the action of a spring, or its equivalent, gathered up or strained by the action of the clock-work, substantially in the manner and for the purpose described.

Wallace Wells, of New York City, for an Improved Construction of Cylinders and Pistons for Pumps and Steam-engines. Patented Oct. 12, 1858; re-issued Oct. 18, 1859.

I claim the combination of the cylinder, open at both ends, with three pistons and their connections, arranged substantially as set forth.

Charles Weston, T. F. Weston and John W. Weston, of Salem, Mass., for an Improvement in Leather-finishing Machines. Patented Sept. 25, 1855; re-issued Oct. 18, 1859.

We claim, first, In machines for finishing leather, the employment of a soft elastic bed, substantially as described.

Second, The combination of an elastic bed and tool, both constructed and operating together to produce the desired effect upon the leather, as set forth.

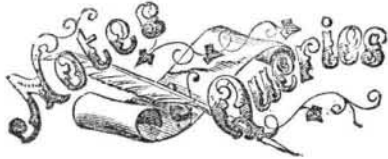
Third, In combination with the soft elastic bed and elastic finishing-tool, the cord, p. secured to the tool-stock, for the purpose of keeping the tool clear of the leather during its retrograde movement over the bed, as set forth.

Aretus A. Wilder, of Detroit, Mich., for an Improved Clapboard Machine. Patented Oct. 30, 1855; re-issued Oct. 18, 1859.

I claim re-sawing and bringing plank to an equal width at the same time.

Second, The flange-rollers, with their springs or equivalents, in combination with the adjustable back-rest, for the purposes described.

ERRATUM.—Last week, in a comment on the claim of H. B. Knowles, for an attachment to the treadles of sewing-machines, the words "slipping on to" were erroneously used for "stopping on."



A. A. of Md.—An Indian dart, 10 inches long, would be of value in a collection of Indian curiosities; but it is doubtful if any considerable sum of money could be obtained for it. In regard to the tooth weighing three and a half pounds, which has been found in the neighborhood of Clear Spring, a comparative anatomist would determine the size, nature and habits of the animal from a thorough examination of the tooth; but, wonderful as are the triumphs of science, none of these things could be decided from the mere weight of the tooth. If you will give us a minute description of the earth in which the tooth was found, and of the geological formation of the district, we can answer with more confidence your question concerning the probability of finding the other bones of the animal in the vicinity.

E. W. S. of Conn.—Electro-magnetic engines of small size are manufactured by all the philosophical instrument-makers in this city. They can be made of any size desired, but those now sold are simply toys.

C. P. G., of Conn.—There is no substance named "alcanet," but alkanet. It is a coloring root, and of no essential use in your liniment for sprains.

J. W. B., of Md.—The way to calculate the power of an engine, is to multiply the area of piston, in square inches, by the average steam-pressure, in pounds, and by the velocity of piston, in feet, per minute; and divide by 33,000. The resultant is the nominal horse-power of the engine.

S. S. S. L., of N. C.—The best method of electro-plating on iron, is to coat the bright iron first with a thin deposit of copper in a battery, then deposit the silver on the top of this from a silver solution with a Smee's battery.

S. C., of N. Y.—A current of hot air driven through a barrel which has become musty desiccates it completely, and removes the smell. The forcing of products of combustion from a charcoal or a wood fire through musty barrels, we believe, will also remove the offensive smell.

F. W. B., of Mass.—We are not acquainted with any elastic varnish that cannot be acted upon by oils.

J. A. F., of Ala.—When steam is worked expansively in a cylinder, a portion of it is condensed, as you state, and gives out its latent heat to superheat the remaining steam. This is now admitted by scientific engineers.

O. H. K., of Minn.—By evaporating your cane-juice in a water-bath, the temperature will never exceed 212° Fah., and the sugar will be prevented from being scorched. The process will be slow, and this is the chief objection to it. Hot air would be a more rapidly concentrating agent than water, but you may find it difficult to regulate the temperature.

G., of N. Y.—Plaster, in its native rock, before it is calcined, contains about 21 per cent. of water; and if it is heated to 270° this water is all driven off, causing an appearance of boiling. The plaster falls into a white powder, which is called boiled plaster, and which absorbs water very rapidly, solidifying it, the whole mass becoming hard as an ordinary plaster cast. If the plaster is heated above 400°, it is burned, and then requires time to solidify.

Mrs. A. G. B., of — You can get india-rubber gloves of D. Hodgman, 27 Maiden-lane, corner of Nassau-street, this city at 75 cents per pair. The most quiet and efficient way to preserve your piano from impolite meddling will be to keep it locked.

J. H. W., of N. Y.—Aluminum, though it had long been suspected to be the metallic base of alumina or clay, was first separated by Wohler, a German chemist, in 1827. He, however, only succeeded in producing it as a grey metallic powder, and M.

Deville, of Paris, was the first who obtained it, in 1854, in metallic masses so that it could be wrought. Like all the metals, it is a simple substance, and has no "component parts." It has the characteristic property of the precious metals; that is, it is not readily oxidized or rusted, and is more calculated to supersede silver than any other of the metals. Common clay is the ore of aluminum, the metal constituting about one-fourth of the clay. It is also one of the constituents of all the alums.

C. M. W., of Ohio—You cannot now obtain a patent for a device which was patented in 1854 by another party, though you are undoubtedly the prior inventor. Where a party suffers his improvement to be thrown open to the public for more than two years prior to applying for a patent, he cannot obtain a grant therefor. Your invention having been publicly exposed at the Patent Office for more than two years, you are debarred from a patent.

J. S. C., of N. Y.—When a gun is discharged, the solid particles of powder are converted into gas, which is heated, at the same instant, to the temperature of flame, thus increasing the volume enormously, and causing a pressure of some 20,000 pounds to the square inch in every direction. This pressure acts on the breech of the gun as soon as it does on the ball, causing a recoil as soon as the bullet starts, and before it leaves the gun. You must misunderstand Silliman and Olmstead in the second statement which you attribute to them. The velocity of a falling body is continually accelerated. The force of the gravity of the earth which is exerted at its surface causes a body to fall 16 feet in the first second, 32 in the second, 48 in the third, 64 in the fourth, 80 in the fifth, and thus constantly increasing 16 feet in each second.

H. L. G., of La.—Make no apologies for addressing us. We are pleased to come thus in direct intercourse with our readers. You will see, by the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, that the steam plow is attracting much attention, and that Mr. Fawkes has been exhibiting his at various places about the country, and at the fair of the American Institute, in this city.

A. F. O., of N. Y.—To your question, "Suppose an apple, or any other fruit, were confined in a vessel hermetically sealed, from which every particle of air had been excluded, would it ever decay, or would any change whatever take place in it?" we reply, it would depend entirely upon the temperature. If it were kept frozen, it would not change. Remains of elephants are found in the ice of the polar regions, of which the hair, skin and flesh are perfectly preserved; the Esquimaux having fed their dogs on the flesh. These elephants must have lived hundreds of years ago, and, possibly, before the creation of man. If fruit, confined as you describe, were heated red-hot, it would be immediately decomposed into its elements, which are principally oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen and carbon; and at intermediate temperatures the rapidity of the decomposition would be proportioned to the height of the temperature.

J. H. V., of Wis.—From your account, it would be easy to imagine several reasons why the glazing does not adhere to your pottery; but probably the principle one is the presence of vegetable matter in the loam which you use. The glaze of the best English pipe-clay or cream-colored ware is composed of 53 parts of white lead, 16 of decomposed feldspar, 36 of ground flints, and 4 of flint glass, rubbed or ground with water into a thin paste. Probably, ground quartz would answer in the place of the flints.

S. S. M., of S. C.—Your question in regard to heat could be replied to only at considerable length, and we will receive your inquiry as a suggestion to write an article on the subject soon; it has been extensively investigated, and is very interesting. The tails of comets generally point from the sun, so that when they are receding they push their tails before them. Appearances do indicate that the tails are hollow, but this is not probably owing to the comet's shadow, most comets not being sufficiently dense to cast a shadow, even the light of the stars passing through them freely. The tails of comets are very mysterious; they seem to be subject to forces which do not manifest themselves on this earth. The earth, in its revolution around the sun, revolves about the common center of gravity of the earth and the sun, which is a point within the body of the sun near its center. If the earth were annihilated, with all its inhabitants except one man, his body would revolve about the common center of gravity of the sun and the body, which would be a point nearer the center of the sun than that about which the earth revolves. The orbit would be nearly the same as that in which the earth revolves, and would be elliptical. The cause of the ellipticity of the earth's orbit is wholly unknown. It is now growing very slowly less elongated, and will continue to do so for some thousands of years, till it becomes nearly or quite circular, when it will gradually return to its present shape, and will thus continue to oscillate forever.

Money Received

At the Scientific American Office on account of Patent Office business, for the week ending Saturday, Oct. 22, 1859:—

A. E., of Mich., \$25; F. & L., of Pa., \$10; A. E. B., of N. Y., \$30; G. A. L., of Mich., \$30; J. J. K., of Miss., \$30; L. B. D., of Ohio, \$30; B. M. C., of Mass., \$30; W. F., of N. Y., \$25; L. M., of Ga., \$25; M. & A., of R. I., \$30; A. J. B., of Ky., \$25; J. H., of N. J., \$30; L. P. H., of N. Y., \$30; G. M., of N. Y., \$30; J. A. A., of Ill., \$30; J. C. of Maine, \$30; J. D., of Ill., \$30; W. S. M., of Conn., \$25; W. H. C., of S. C., \$35; J. J. R., of Ill., \$30; G. A. N., of N. Y., \$100; H. W. W., of Cal., \$10; C. G. B., of N. Y., \$30; W. D. B., of Ohio, \$30; O. M. A., of N. Y., \$57; W. T. J., of Ill., \$42; P. N. B., of N. Y., \$30; H. K. S., of Mass., \$35; G. B. M., of Mich., \$30; P. K., of Conn., \$22; E. & K., of Ill., \$30; Mrs. C. A., of N. Y., \$25; K. & R., of Texas, \$55; T. B. & Co., of Va., \$30; A. F., of N. Y., \$30; W. H. B., of Pa., \$25; J. S., of D. C., \$20; H. S., of Pa., \$40; T. C. R., of N. Y., \$55; J. L. B., of S. C., \$25; E. & H., of N. J., \$25; W. & Sons, of Conn., \$57; R. I. R., of Pa., \$30.

Specifications, drawings and models belonging to parties with the following initials have been forwarded to the Patent Office during the week ending Saturday, Oct. 22, 1859:—

A. R. B., of Conn.; W. D., Jr., of Pa.; H. W. B., of Conn.; J. R. & C. H. S., of Conn.; W. H. B., of Pa.; A. J. R., of Ky.; H. S., Jr., of N. Y.; W. & Sons, of Conn.; J. E. S. of Maine; W. S. M., of Conn.; J. D., of Pa.; H. W. W., of Cal.; L. M., of Ga.; J. L. B., of S. C.; L. P. H., of N. Y.; G. M., of N. Y.; Mrs. U. A., of N. Y.; G. & R., of La.; J. J. K., of Miss.; R. T. S., of Ga.; P. D., of R. I.; J. B. T., of Pa.; H. K. S., of Mass.

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BACK NUMBERS.—We shall hereafter commence sending the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN to new subscribers from the time their subscriptions are received, unless otherwise directed; the back numbers can be supplied from the commencement of the volume to those who may order them. It is presumed most persons will desire the back numbers, and such as do will please to so state at the time of sending in their subscriptions; they can, however be supplied at any subsequent period.

INFALLIBLE RULE—It is an established rule of this office to stop sending the paper when the time for which it was prepaid has expired, and the publishers will not deviate from that standing rule in any instance.

INVENTORS SENDING MODELS to our address should always enclose the express receipt, showing that the transit expenses have been prepaid. By observing this rule we are able, in a great majority of cases, to prevent the collection of double charges. Express companies, either through carelessness or design, often neglect to mark their paid packages, and thus, without the receipt to confront them, they mulct their customers at each end of the route. Look out for them.

GIVE INTELLIGIBLE DIRECTIONS—We often receive letters with money inclosed, requesting the paper sent for the amount of the enclosure, but no name of State given, and often with the name of the post-office also omitted. Persons should be careful to write their names plainly when they address publishers, and to name the post-office at which they wish to receive their paper, and the State in which the post-office is located.

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