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IN ADVANCE.

Improved Bolt and Rivet Machine.

Screw bolts and nuts are indispensable in the arts and manufactures, and are in such demand that they always find a market and quick sale. The great object with mechanics and manufacturers, therefore, is to produce them in large quantities, of the best quality and workmanship.

In former times—not so very long since, either—all bolts were forged by hand. That is to say, the rods were cut the right length, collars were turned over and welded on the rods, and finally squared up to form the heads, and, after much swedging, and upsetting, and reheating, and other operations, a five-eighth bolt would at last be turned out. Hundreds—yes, thousands—of bolts are made in this way at the present time. The great wants of the trade, however, are supplied by the aid of machines, one of which we give a sample of in the engravings published herewith. It has often been urged that machine-made bolts and nuts are deficient in strength; that the heads were imperfectly formed, and that the hand-made bolts were far superior. These objections are true of some machine-made bolts, and were prominent defects in the first ones. We have, however, seen samples of the work done by these machines, and it could not be excelled. The heads are perfect, the angles and corners are as sharp and complete as any planed nut, and the material used is, we are informed, the very best.

Machine-made bolts are all upset on the heads—that is to say, the end of the rod is pressed into the die that forms the head, so that it is all one solid piece. Hand-made bolts of any size are made with a head lapped and welded on them, and there is just the same difference between the strength of the two kinds as between a solid-headed pin and one formed of a coil, as they were formerly.

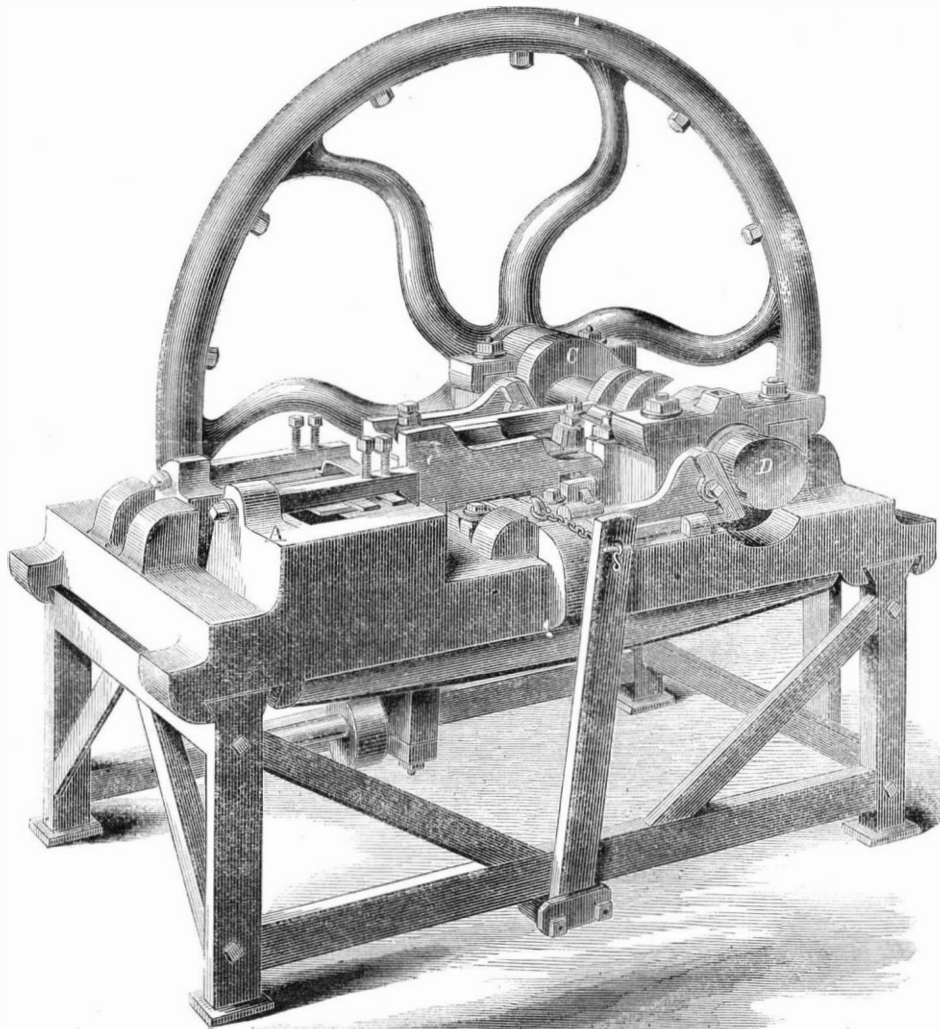
The details of this machine are simple, as will be seen. They consist of a pair of dies and a cam movement to cut off the rod and compress it to form the head. [See next page for plan view of machine.]

The die box is shown at A, in Fig. 1, and also the ram, B, which compresses the rod. The cam, C, gives the power for the purpose. At D is the cam which returns the ram to its position for another stroke. The whole is mounted on a strong cast-iron bed plate, secured to a wooden frame. This machine will make spikes, rivets, and bolts, of any size and shape of head. Its proportions and workmanship are good, and its general arrangement such that it can be easily kept in order.

The aim, says the inventor, has been to produce a machine of a simpler form and cheaper construction than those generally in use. In this he claims to

have succeeded. Bolt makers and practical men all know that, in most cases, when a bolt fails, the weak point is found to be directly under the head, whether the work be done by machinery or by hand. Many machines make a good bolt, but deprive it of all its strength in releasing it from the dies. This objectionable feature, it is claimed, has been entirely avoided in this machine, by so arranging the movements that every bolt made from good iron will be found perfect in all respects.

This machine was patented October 11, 1864.



HARDAWAY'S BOLT AND RIVET MACHINE.

For further information address White & Butterworth, Box 292, Baltimore, Md.

[See advertisement on another page]

New Theory of Iron.

In a paper addressed to the Academy of Sciences, M. de Cazancourt, a proprietor of ironworks, expounds a new theory of iron. Oxides of iron, he observes, have long been considered to be degrees of oxidation of one and the same metal, always appearing under a metallic form with absolutely identical characteristics, whenever chemically pure. Hence all the difference met with in various kinds of iron are exclusively attributed to peculiar chemical composition, and they are universally classed under three heads, viz., cast iron, steel, and wrought iron, according to the quantity of carbon they usually contain. And yet certain kinds of cast iron, identical in their chemical composition, appear so different from each

other, and give such opposite results in working them, that our author thinks it necessary to distinguish them in practice. On the other hand, there are sorts of cast iron presenting the same composition as certain kinds of steel, and there exist also certain sorts of steel that, if analysis is to be trusted, are not distinguishable from certain kinds of iron. Hence, in metallurgy, the chemical composition of various sorts of iron is a matter of mere secondary importance, and the real characteristic to be taken into account, according to the writer, is the degree of oxidation of

the ore from which they have been extracted. Berzelius had, ere this, laid down the theory, that there were two sorts of iron metals, to which he respectively gave the names of *ferricum* and *ferrosum*; M. Cazancourt adopts this division, which represents iron under two allotropic states, just as is the case with sulphur and phosphorus. He, therefore, calls *ferrosum* the metal extracted from the protoxide of iron, and this, he says, has not yet been practically obtained in a state of purity, except in laboratories, through the reducing agency of hydrogen. The nearest practical approach to it is what is called bright iron, possessing great hardness and fragility. The quality of iron derived from the anhydrous peroxide is what our author calls *ferricum*. It yields malleable iron, but when alone is not convertible into steel any more than into bright iron. The common sorts of foundry iron are nothing but *ferricum* losing a part of its carbon, which it had absorbed under the influence of a high temperature.—*Galignani*.

[When we consider the extremely minute quantity of phosphorus that will materially affect the properties of iron, we cannot avoid suspecting that the differences observed are, after all, due to the presence in one case, and absence in the other, of some unobserved substance.—Eds.]

OUR NATIONAL FINANCES.—We have received from the author, who signs himself "A Patriot," a pamphlet of 47 pages, on the national finances, printed by Baker & Godwin, of this city. The author is manifestly ignorant of that rudiment of his subject—the distinction between capital and currency. He imagines that the printing of \$100,000,000 in paper currency will increase the capital of the country to this extent, and will reduce the rate of interest to three per cent per annum!

THE manufacture of silk was more than one thousand years in traveling into England from the shores of the Bosphorus. It had been practiced four hundred years in Italy before it crossed the Alps.

Extraordinary Submarine Adventure.

The following has been posted at Lloyds' in reference to the sunken wreck of the *Columbian*, screw steamer, belonging to Liverpool, which unhappily foundered with all hands during the dreadful gales off the coast of France. She has a cargo on board valued at £50,000, and extraordinary efforts, it will be seen, have been made to recover it by means of divers. It forms an interesting illustration of the difficulties encountered in conducting submarine operations.

"On Thursday, the 31st of August, the *Flambeau* sailed from Molene, found the *Columbian*, and anchored over her. The ladder (which I had got made at the dockyard) was lowered, with a pig of iron at each side of its end. The diver went down, stopping at each tenth step to signal that all was going on well. As he descended he found the pressure increasing to a most painful degree. When on the last step he found the ladder was too short, the wreck being 10 or 12 feet deeper than the pilots had reported (they had stated its depth to be 29 fathoms—174 English feet). The ladder was 60 meters—197 feet—long from the top step to the lowermost one, from which the diver let himself down 10 or 12 feet below the pigs of iron. The electric lamp had been let down; but the pressure was so great that, although made of strong copper, with strengthening bars inside, it was bruised quite flat. The diver could distinguish the steps of the ladder, and even the fine line holding the lamp. He walked forward about twenty steps, sinking ankle deep in sand, and was then suddenly seized with a dizziness, and nearly fainted. He made his way back to the ladder, and made the signal to be hauled up. It was not perceived on board, but the people on deck, feeling uneasy at having no signal, hauled him up rapidly. The forcing pump not being sufficiently strong the air could not be sent down regularly, and the air tubes had burst. The pressure at the bottom was so great that none but such a man as this diver, who is built like a Hercules, could have withstood it. The scaphander was torn and bruised; the under garment, of strong caoutchouc cloth, was rent in several places, and its seams imprinted in the diver's flesh. The pressure on his belly was so intense as to force out his water against his will. After three-quarters of an hour's rest, and the forcing pumps and air tubes being repaired, the diver went down again. He had walked only a few steps from the ladder when the same accidents

recurred. In getting back to the ladder his arm got entangled in one of the ropes attached to him. He unscrewed his dagger knife from his side, cut the rope, and was shot up with great velocity, being buoyed up by the air contained in the scaphander. His helmet struck, with a stunning blow, against the hull of the *Flambeau*, close to her keel. He had still strength enough to push himself away from the keel, and was floated to the surface, on reaching which he began to sink. Fortunately a boat was at hand, and he was picked up, brought on deck, and was taken out of the scaphander apparently dead. It was more than half an hour before he came to, after continued frictions of camphorated brandy and ether. He then slept soundly for an hour, and on awaking wanted to re-descend, but neither M. Werderrann, M. Carvalho, nor the lieutenant would allow him. I asked M. Carvalho what were his conclusions after this trial? His answer was to the following effect:—"I am certain that at a depth of 40 meters (131 feet) all salvage may be carried on without any danger. Even at 50 meters (164 feet) it may be done if proper precautions are taken; but beyond that depth the danger is too great. I have therefore made up my mind. My company abandons the salvage of the *Columbian*, and I shall leave this for Paris to-morrow morning. M. Werderrann and the diver called on me separately yesterday evening. Both are still of opinion that the sal-

vage is possible, but with better apparatus and more effective means, all of M. Cabirol's scaphanders and apparatus (which were those used) having been by far too weak. With powerful means, which they themselves would superintend the making, they would not hesitate to dive to the *Columbian*, and feel certain of success."—*London Engineer*.

An English Ship Builder on the Monitors.

Mr. J. Scott Russell says of "the modern American fleet:"—

"It is a creation altogether original, peculiarly American, admirably adapted to the special purpose which gave it birth. Like most American inventions, use has been allowed to dictate terms of construction; and purpose, not prejudice, has been allowed to rule invention.

The American accepts the conditions, removes the sailors from the deck, allows the sea to have its way, and drives his vessel through, not over the sea, to her fighting destination by steam, abandoning sails. The American also cheerfully accepts the small round turret as protection for guns and men; and pivots them on a central turn-table in the middle of his ship, raising his port high enough to be out of the water, and then fighting his gun through an aperture little larger than its muzzle.

"By thus frankly accepting the conditions he could not control, the American did his work and built his fleet. It is beyond doubt that the American monitor class, with two turrets in each ship, and two guns in each turret, is a kind of vessel that can be made fast, shot-proof and sea-proof. It may be uncomfortable, but it can be made secure. The sea may possess its deck, but in the air, above the sea, the American raises a platform on the level of the top of his turrets, which he calls his hurricane deck, whence he can look down with indifference at the waves fruitlessly foaming and breaking themselves on the abandoned deck below. His vessel, too, has the advantage, as he thinks it, of not rolling with the waves; so that he can take his aim steadily and throw his shot surely. Thus, if he abandons much that we value, he secures what he values more.

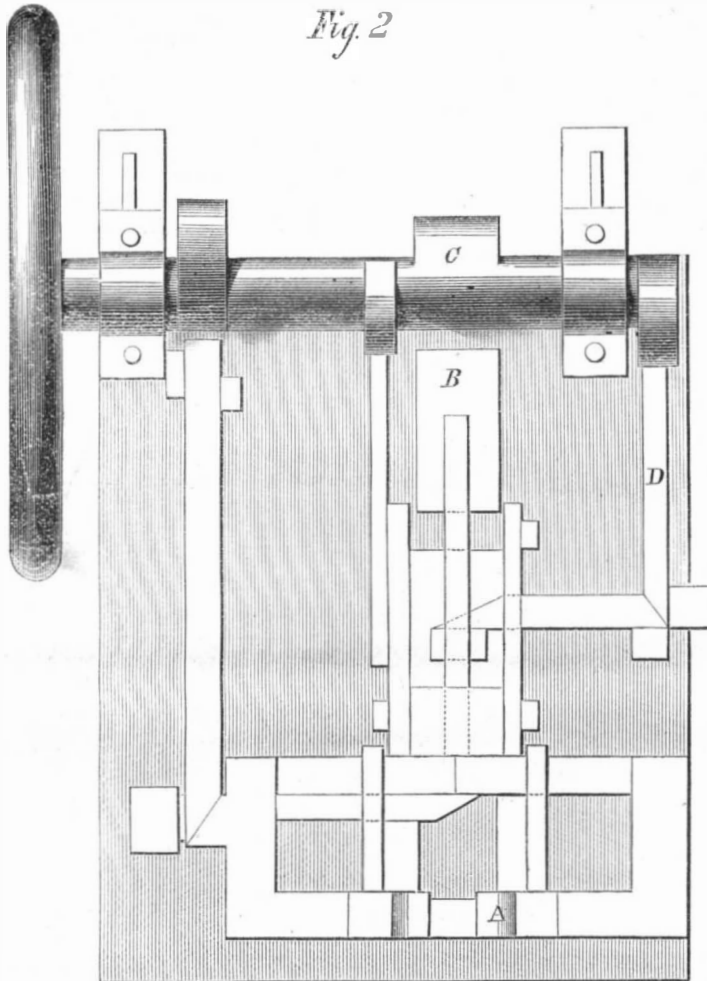
"I think I have reason to know that the American turret ships, of the larger class, with two turrets and four guns, are successful vessels; successful beyond the measure of our English estimate of their success. Like so many American inventions, they are severely subject to the conditions of use, and successful by the rigidity and precision with which they fit the end and fulfill the purpose which was their aim.

It is certain that Captain Ericsson rendered great service to his country by inventing at once, and successfully introducing a class of vessels peculiarly suited to action in their inland waters and shallow navigations; and when we consider the extreme rapidity which attended the execution of the project, we must say that the original *Monitor* was a remarkable success, and that she was a type of an entirely new class of war-ship. It is curious and instructive to observe how differently the system has been developed in America and in England: in the one case the sudden abandonment of all the conventionalities of a ship, and in the other the studious retention of old forms and ways, admitting the innovation with the greatest possible amount of reluctance and seeming aversion. But it is almost always so with the Americans, who love a thing because it is new, even without any other recommendation, and with the English, who begin by hating a novelty, whatever be its merits."

A WOOLEN FACTORY OPERATED BY CHINESE WORKMEN.

We are informed by a gentleman from San Francisco that there is in that city a large woolen manufactory in which all the laborers employed except the overseers are Chinese. The wages paid average about a dollar a day, the hands boarding themselves, but dwellings being furnished by the employers. They are said to be very apt in learning to attend the machines, and very diligent and faithful in the performance of their labor.

The wool worked is of California growth, all grades being produced in abundance. The goods manufactured are heavy broadcloths and other styles adapted to that market. Some of the blankets are claimed to be equal to any made in the world, being of very fine wool and so heavy and of such quality as to command twenty-five dollars apiece in market. The business is said to be enormously profitable, and the works are being rapidly extended.



HARDAWAY'S BOLT AND RIVET MACHINE.—SEE FIRST PAGE.

"The ruling conditions of construction for the inventors of the American fleet were these: the vessels must be perfectly shot-proof—they must fight in shallow water—they must be able to endure a heavy sea, and pass through it, if not fight in it.

"The American iron-clad navy is a child of these conditions. Minimum draft of water means minimum extent of surface, protected by armor; perfect protection means thickness to resist the heaviest shot, and protection for the whole length of the ship; it also means perfect protection to guns and gunners. Had they added what our legislators exact, that the ports shall lie in the ship's side, nine feet above the water, the problem might at once have become impossible and absurd; but they wanted the work done as it could be done, and allowed the conditions of success to rule the methods of construction.

"The conditions of success in the given circumstances were these: that you should not require the sides of the ship to rise much above the water's edge; that you should not require more protection to the guns than would contain guns and gunners; that you should be content with as many guns as the ship could carry, and no more.

"But the consequences of these conditions are such as we, at least for sea-going ships, would reluctantly accept. The low ship's side will, in a seaway, allow the sea to sweep over the ship, and the waves, not the sailors, will have possession of the

RECENT AMERICAN PATENTS.

The following are some of the most important improvements for which Letters Patent were issued from the United States Patent Office last week; the claims may be found in the official list:—

Curing Goods of India-rubber and Allied Gums.—This invention relates to an apparatus composed of two plates, or heaters, one of which is stationary, and the other suspended from suitable screws, in combination with a jacket, the lower part of which is stationary, whereas the upper part is made to rise and fall, and which surrounds the pressing plates, partially or wholly, in such a manner, that, by admitting steam, or other suitable heating medium, to the jacket, the goods between the plates can be heated to any desired degree without coming in direct contact with the heating medium, and the operation of curing goods of india-rubber or allied gums can be effected with ease and facility. For goods the length of which exceeds that of the pressing plates, said plates are provided with longitudinal grooves, to receive suitable packing strips, which prevent the heating medium from coming in direct contact with the goods to be cured, and at the same time, by means of said packing strips, the thickness of the goods is determined. J. B. Forsyth, of Roxbury, Mass., is the inventor.

Loom for Embroidering.—This invention consists in the arrangement of one or more needle bars, and furnished with a series of needles to carry threads for embroidering, in combination with the batten of a loom, and with one or more pattern wheels, in such a manner, that, by the action of said pattern wheel, or wheels, the position of the needle bar, or bars, is automatically adjusted, and the embroidering threads are introduced in accordance with the pattern represented by the pattern wheel, or wheels. The invention consists, further, in the use of a series of rising and falling pins, in combination with the oscillating batten, and with suitable cams, in such a manner, that, by the action of said pins, the embroidering threads are protected, and the shuttle is prevented from running into them. The invention consists, finally, in a pattern wheel composed of a series of adjustable pins inserted into the periphery of a disk, in combination with oscillating spring arms, to which the needle bar is secured, and with a suitable mechanism for turning the pattern wheel, in such a manner, that, by the action of the pins in the pattern wheel on the spring arms, the required position is given to the needle bar and needles, and, by screwing or pushing the pins in or out, the pattern wheel can be adjusted for different patterns. J. G. Spitzli, of Millville, Mass., is the inventor.

Machine for Cutting Straw, Etc.—This invention relates to certain improvements in that class of machines for cutting straw, tobacco, or other similar products, in which the knives are attached to a rotating wheel, and hung upon pivots in such relation to the throat of the box that a regular shear cut is produced. The knives in this improved machine are hung on pivots, and they are governed by an eccentric disk in such a manner that the cutting edges preserve the most favorable position toward the material to be cut. A compound pressure plate, consisting of a semi-circular, self-adjusting cap and vertically sliding weight, prevents the possibility of choking; and, finally, the material to be cut is straightened out and fed to the knives in the proper direction, by the action of grooved rollers, which send the separate straws, or fibers of the material to be cut, through the mouth of the box, at right angles to the plane in which the knives revolve. Robert Leggett and Robert Gittus, of Mildenhall, Eng., are the inventors.

Let-off and Take-up Motions for Looms.—This invention embraces several particulars, one of which relates to the use of a balanced, adjustable lever, resting against the yarn beam for the purpose of governing the let-off motion; another relates to the manner of actuating the let-off pawl lever by means of a revolving wiper; another relates to the construction of the let-off and take-up pawl levers; another relates to the manner of adjusting those levers so as to determine their extent of motion; another relates to actuating the take-up pawl by means of a shoe on the sword; another relates to the mode of transmitting motion to the cloth beam from the

ratchet wheel, which is driven by the take-up pawl lever. D. Bassett, of Killingly, Conn., is the inventor.

Pots for Corroding White Lead.—The object of this invention is the improvement of pots for corroding white lead, and it consists in forming, at a suitable height within the pot, an uninterrupted circular ledge, whereon the buckles of lead are allowed to rest. This ledge is made by contracting the diameter of the lower part of the pot, or, in other words, increasing the diameter of the part above the part which forms the basin for the acid, so as to make a horizontal circular shelf, which divides the basin reserved for the acid from the space above, which is reserved for the buckles of lead. The pots are, in consequence of this construction, stronger than when made after the form in ordinary use, and they are more easily cleaned. The buckles rest upon the ledge, which furnishes a broad surface for them to rest upon, so that they cannot easily be displaced, or be crushed, and broken down, and forced into the acid. J. H. Chadwick, of Boston, Mass., is the inventor.

Knitting-machine Needles.—This invention consists of an improved form of the parts of a knitting-machine needle, by means whereof compactness, effectiveness, and durability are secured in a profitable degree. One point relates to the manner of attaching a latch or caster to a knitting needle, by which the operation of the caster is simplified. Another relates to the construction of the hook of the needle, and the manner of combining the caster therewith, by which an easy adjustment of the device for operating the caster is permitted. Another relates to the peculiar construction and combination of the parts, by means of which the caster may remain in the same position from the time it closes the hook until the needle has completed its backward movement, and moved forward again far enough to cause the front point of the caster to enter the loop. Isaac Wixom Lamb, of Rochester, N. Y., is the inventor.

Dessicating Eggs.—The object of this invention is to dessicate eggs, tomatoes, and other substances, for preservation, and also for transportation to distant places, and in climates and under conditions which are unfavorable for their preservation in their natural state. It consists in the use of rotating surfaces, heated by hot water or other liquids, or by fluids, on which surfaces the substances are received and dried, and from which they are removed, dessicated, before the revolution of such surfaces is completed; the selection of the heating medium being determined in part by the degree of heat which the substance to be dessicated can bear without injury to its character and quality. Thomas H. Quick, of New York City, is the inventor.

Tanning Apparatus.—This invention relates to a new apparatus by which the time required for tanning leather has been reduced from months to hours; that is to say, a calf's skin may be thoroughly tanned in an hour, and an ox's hide in twenty four hours. And it consists in passing the skins through a series of pairs of rollers placed beneath the surface of the tanning liquor, within the vat; by the action of which rollers the spent liquor is squeezed out of the hides to be replaced by fresh liquor during the automatic passage of the hides to the next pair of rollers, by which, after having imparted its tannin to the hide, it is in turn expelled. By an ingenious and simple arrangement of machinery the inventor is enabled to carry his invention into practical effect in a convenient and satisfactory manner. Prof. H. W. Adams, of Irvington, N. J. is the inventor.

FISH IN ARTESIAN WELLS.—M. Desor, a Swiss naturalist, has investigated and confirmed the statement that small fish have been found in Algerian artesian wells two hundred feet deep. These fish belong to the carp species. They are healthy, and have fine, large, and perfect eyes. Subterranean fish are usually blind, on account of the uselessness of eyes to such creatures.

An immense deposit of black marble, equal to the Belgian, and superior to the Irish, has been found near Williamsport, Pa. It is the only one known in America, and a company has been formed to work it upon an extensive scale.

AN INVENTION WORTH TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS A DAY.

Mr. J. O. Woodruff, of Albany, N. Y., has invented a method of saturating barrels with solutions, to make them retain their contents, which is so effective in its operation, and which so cheapens the cost of barrels, that it has been pronounced by one of the large petroleum dealers of this city worth \$10,000 per day to the county of Venango alone, a county that furnishes 10,000 barrels daily for the petroleum district of Pennsylvania. Mr. Woodruff, being offered a large fortune, cash in hand, for his patents, by a company of shrewd, practical men, could not resist the temptation to accept it, leaving to the company the great revenues which the invention is expected to yield.

It is well known that petroleum has greater facility for passing through capillary pores than any other liquid; if put into an ordinary wooden barrel it quickly runs out through the heads and staves. Many efforts have been made to prevent this waste. The common plan is to line the barrel with a thin coating of glue, or a composition of glue and other substances; but this plan is only partially successful. The leak is still so great that the cars which bring the petroleum are saturated with the oil, and the cellars in which it is stored become filled with vapors, giving rise to fears of explosions and conflagrations.

Mr. Woodruff's method is to heat the barrels in order to expel the sap and open the pores; then, while they are hot, he pours in a sufficient quantity of the saturating liquid, and subjects the interior to the action of compressed air, at the same time revolving the barrel so as to spread the liquid completely over the interior surface. The heat keeps the saturating material very fluid, and the compressed air forces it into the opened pores. As the wood shrinks on cooling it closes upon the hardened material, making the cask not only liquid, but air tight.

The great value of this invention is in reducing the cost of barrels. At present, petroleum and alcohol barrels are made of rived staves only, but extensive trials have shown that when Mr. Woodruff's saturating process is employed, perfectly good barrels can be made with sawed plank. As a barrel made of rived stuff costs \$1 70, while one made of sawed plank costs only 60 cents, the saving in expense is \$1 10 on each barrel—a saving for a single county of more than \$10,000 every day. The patents for this invention were obtained through the Scientific American Patent Agency, and we shall soon publish full illustrations of the apparatus employed.

Pharaoh's Serpents.

Messrs. Olden & Sawyer, of No. 216 Canal street, have sent us a few of the serpents' eggs that they are making. On placing one of the little cones on our safe, and setting fire to it, the snake began to crawl out amid the wonder of the whole office, and it seemed as if the viper would never stop rising. We give the chemistry of these in another column. They are put three in a box, and sold for fifty cents per box.

A FORMIDABLE TITLE.—Our contemporary—the *London Mining Journal*—mentions a fine 6-inch center self-acting screw-cutter foot lathe, with patent double treddle and improved anti-friction external crank and chain rolling motion. Also, a new reversing motion to tail pin, for the purpose of cutting screws left or right, without changing wheels or stopping the lathe. The compound sliderest, moreover, is fitted up with an ingenious contrivance for drawing out the tool quickly, which is a very important advantage in screw cutting.

In casting a large fly-wheel at the Fort Pitt Works, Pittsburgh, the molten iron was conducted from the furnace across one of the streets of the city, a distance of one hundred and sixty-three feet, to the mold. The diameter of the wheel is twenty-five feet, and its weight forty-two tons.

It is said that when the deaths by cholera in Paris were at near a hundred a day, the total bill of mortality was not increased. The reason for this was that people were frightened and took good care of their health, so that ordinary maladies in the system were not developed.

POLYTECHNIC ASSOCIATION OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE.

The Association held its regular weekly meeting at its room at the Cooper Institute, on Thursday evening Nov. 16, 1865, the President, S. D. Tillman, Esq., in the chair.

A PROFITABLE INVENTION.

Mr. Pitkin read a long paper, setting forth the superiority of what is called the factory system of making boots and shoes over the hand system. This system is coming into general use among the shoe manufacturers of New England. The plan formerly practiced was to distribute the work among the farmers' families about the country, who made the shoes mostly by hand, except that portion which could be done by the sewing machine. The invention of a number of machines for fastening on of the soles and heels has led to the adoption of the factory system, by which the hands are brought together in one large building, in which the whole manufacture is conducted. One of the most valuable of these inventions is a machine for sewing the soles; one jaw enters the shoe and the other is on the outside, the thread passing through both insole and outsole, and fastening the two at one operation. The manufacturers pay the inventor the full price for his machine, and then pay him two cents per pair on all shoes sewed by it, for the privilege of using it. One machine will sew 300 pairs of shoes per day; thus yielding a revenue of \$1,800 a year to the inventor for each of his machines in use.

As the necessary skill for attending these machines is acquired by very little training, the work is well adapted for boys, and large numbers of convict children are now employed in the manufacture; the profits are very heavy.

AN INFUSIBLE CRUCIBLE.

Prof. Joy, of Columbia College, exhibited the jet of a compound blow-pipe, as arranged by M. Deville, of Paris, for melting platinum and other refractory substances; a hollow cylinder of copper or platinum, about half an inch in diameter, embraces the jet, and extends about half an inch beyond. M. Deville found that fire clay was melted by the heat of the flame, and he has been trying numerous substances in the attempt to discover one that would make an infusible crucible. The best substance yet tried is quicklime, entirely free from silica and other impurities. The lime is formed into a solid cylinder, by a hydraulic press; the cylinder is sawed in two transversely; the lower part is scooped out to hold the substance to be melted, with a small channel for pouring out the molten mass, and a hole is made in the center of the cover to admit the blow pipe.

A COPPER ALLOY HARDER THAN STEEL.

Prof. Joy also exhibited some pure silicium, and said that he had seen an alloy of this metal and copper, that was harder than steel.

PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.

Finally, Prof. Joy closed his interesting experiments by the wonderful exhibition of the new Parisian toy, called Pharaoh's serpents. In 1821 Prof. Woehler, then a young man at Heidelberg University, discovered that a mass of sulpho-cyanide of mercury, if set on fire, would swell up enormously, enlarging its volume many fold. When Prof. Joy was attending lectures at Heidelberg, he saw the experiment, and has since been in the practice of exhibiting it to his class at Columbia College. Recently, a very ingenious Frenchman has adopted the plan of putting little cones of the substance into boxes, and selling them for a franc apiece. Prof. Joy bought one of these in Paris, and there was a constant stream of people buying them at the same place. The cone, about an inch in height, was placed on a plate and lighted at the top by a match, when it began to burn slowly with a pale flame, and to swell, presenting the appearance of a serpent crawling from out the plate and writhing in painful contortions; this continued for perhaps a minute, when the crooked serpent had reached a length of about a foot, with a diameter of half an inch. In the process, nitrogen is driven off, with a very little sulphide of carbon, and the mass remaining is sulphide of mercury.

ACCORDING to persons of much experience, Brahma fowls are the best for all purposes. They will lay in cold weather when no others will; are fine to eat, and profitable in all respects.

NOTES ON NEW DISCOVERIES AND NEW APPLICATIONS OF SCIENCE.

MAGNESIUM FOR VOLTAIC BATTERIES.

M. Bultinck, of Ostend, has communicated to the Academy of Sciences a note on the use of magnesium instead of zinc as the positive element of voltaic batteries. In order to compare the electromotive force of magnesium with that of zinc, he employed two pairs of wires, one pair consisting of a wire of copper and one of zinc, and the other pair of a wire of silver and one of magnesium. On plunging the first-mentioned pair of wires into distilled water, having first connected them with a multiplying galvanometer, the needle of the galvanometer, at the moment of the immersion of the wires, moved 30°, and after the immersion had lasted five minutes still marked 10°. On similarly treating the silver and magnesium pair of wires, which were of exactly the same dimensions as the copper and zinc pair, at the moment of immersion the needle of the galvanometer deviated 90°, and five minutes after immersion it remained stationary at 28°. Having thus found the electromotive force of a magnesium couple to be three times that of a copper and zinc couple, M. Bultinck became desirous to construct a large battery with magnesium as the positive element, but not being able, for the moment, to obtain magnesium in any other form than that of thin wire, he had to be content with making a "galvanic chain" of the kind associated with the name of M. Pulvermacher. Having constructed such a chain of silver and magnesium, he found that when simply moistened with pure water it would produce all the effects the production of which by an ordinary Pulvermacher's chain requires that the chain be moistened with either a saline or an acid solution. We knew previously that magnesium possesses greater electromotive force than any other known metal capable of being obtained in quantity; the new fact brought to light by M. Bultinck is that a battery in which magnesium was the positive element would not need an acid to excite it, but could be excited by water only.

CURIOUS FACTS IN DISTILLATION.

In the course of some researches with respect to the phenomena presented during the evaporation of mixed liquids, Berthelot has lately observed some very remarkable facts, of a kind scarcely to have been anticipated. He has found, for example, that if a mixture of two liquids of different degrees of volatility, containing a preponderating proportion of the less volatile liquid, be exposed to the action of heat, it will by no means always happen that the more volatile of the mixed liquids will fly off first. Thus, if one part of alcohol be added to eleven parts of water, and the mixture be heated, the alcohol will not evaporate any more rapidly than the water, although it is much the more volatile liquid of the two. Stop the evaporation at any stage, and the residue will always contain exactly the same percentage of alcohol that was contained in the mixture before the evaporation commenced. In some cases it even happens that the less volatile constituent of a mixture of two liquids flies off first. If, for instance, a small quantity of alcohol be added to a much larger quantity of that exceedingly volatile compound, bisulphide of carbon, and the mixture submitted to distillation, in the vapors which first pass over there will be a far larger proportion of alcohol than in the mixed liquids as originally placed in the retort, and after a little while there will be left in the retort bisulphide of carbon only, the whole of the alcohol having distilled away, notwithstanding that alcohol by itself is less volatile than bisulphide of carbon, in even greater proportion than that in which water is less volatile than alcohol. Similarly, Mr. Carey Lea has found that when a mixture of ethylamine, diethylamine, and triethylamine is distilled, the last mentioned body, although, when by itself, by far the least volatile body of the three, passes over much more rapidly than either of the others. These facts are very curious, and may prove to have practical bearings of much importance, but in the present state of knowledge they are quite inexplicable.

MECHANICAL POWER FROM THE INTERNAL HEAT OF THE EARTH.

At the last meeting of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, Mr. George Greaves read a paper embodying the suggestion that the "internal heat of the earth," which he supposes will ren-

der it impossible for us to raise coal from below a depth of four thousand feet, should itself be employed in place of the fuel of which he thinks it will one day cut off our supply. He considers that the heat of the fiery ocean which he believes lies under our feet might supply us with all the mechanical power we want, and that one method of causing it to do this "might be by the direct production of steam power by bringing a supply of water from the surface in contact with sufficiently heated strata, by means of artesian borings or otherwise." He has yet to explain, however, how, supposing his "sufficiently heated strata" to really exist, we could make "artesian borings" deep enough to reach them, or how, even if we could make the borings, we could utilize at the surface the force of steam generated at such a depth below it as that at which even Mr. Greaves must suppose the "sufficiently heated strata" to lie buried.

ARTIFICIAL IVORY.

Both on the continent and in this country the manufacture of "artificial ivory" is conducted on a scale of some magnitude. The process by which the most successful imitation of natural ivory is obtained appears to consist in dissolving either india-rubber or gutta-percha in chloroform, passing chlorine through the solution until it has acquired a light yellow tint, next washing well with alcohol, and adding in a fine powder, either sulphate of baryta, sulphate of lime, sulphate of lead, alumina, or chalk, in quantity proportioned to the desired density and tint, kneading well, and finally subjecting to heavy pressure. A very tough product, capable of taking a very high polish, is obtainable in this way.—*Mechanics' Magazine.*

THE STEAMER "SAXON" AND HER SUBMARINE APPARATUS.

We have just returned from a visit to the steamer *Saxon*, now lying at the foot of Essex street, in Jersey City, with her powerful air pumps, engines, and submarine apparatus, prepared to engage in her work of raising sunken treasures from the bottom of the sea. This apparatus is protected by patents obtained through the Scientific American Patent Agency; it is so simple and practical in its character, and is to be tried on a scale so large, and under circumstances so favorable, as to give the best promise for success.

The submarine armor heretofore used consists of a complete suit of india-rubber, made in one piece for the body, limbs, and hands, and after this is put on it is secured by a water-tight joint to a metallic helmet, so as to inclose the diver in a water-tight case; glass plates are inserted in the helmet in front of the eyes, and the air for breathing is supplied by an india-rubber hose, reaching above the surface of the water. The improvement in the armor secured by one of these patents is the substitution for the hose of a metallic case containing compressed air and attached to the body of the diver, thus giving him far greater freedom of motion, and allowing him to go into parts of a wreck where he could not go if he was attached to a hose leading to the surface. The air is controlled by a valve, and the diver allows it to flow at will into his lungs, and, on being expired, it makes its exit through a valve in the helmet, passing but once through the lungs.

The other patent is for a peculiar buoy for raising sunken ships. This is simply a bag, made of india-rubber canvas, and covered with a rope netting, to be fastened securely to the wreck, and then inflated with air forced into it, by a hose leading from the surface, a sufficient number of the bags being attached to lift the wreck. These bags are made fifteen feet in length, and the netting is made of Italian hemp rope one-fourth of an inch in diameter. Each bag will lift 15 tons.

A company, called the New York Submarine Co., has been formed for working under these patents, with a capital of \$300,000. They have procured a steamer of 450 tons burden, have fitted her out with air pumps and an abundant supply of the apparatus, and have placed her under the command of Captain Samuel H. Holbrook, a man who has devoted his life to raising sunken vessels, having a particular fancy for that work. Capt. Holbrook says that it is impossible to raise vessels from a greater depth than 100 or 120 feet; below that the pressure of the water

causes such a flow of blood to the head of the divers that it is intolerable.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

The President—Pardon-seekers—Condition of the Patent Office—The New Appointment—The New Commissioner—Changes in the Law, Etc.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23, 1865.

This city has experienced a miraculous change since my last visit. The shoulder-strap gentry, soldiers, flying artillery, the long trains of army wagons, mules, contrabands, and other adjuncts of sanguinary war, have mainly disappeared, and "the city of hacks and magnificent distances" is now restored to the custody of its citizens and office-holders, attended by the usual crowd of hungry office-seekers, and bidders for contracts. Great activity prevails throughout all the departments in anticipation of the early assembling of Congress, at which time, and to which body, the various officials will have to render an account of their stewardship. The man most envied, and most to be pitied, is Andrew Johnson, President of these United States. Though possessed of an iron constitution, capable of great endurance, he has not that elastic element in his nature, which afforded so much relief to his lamented predecessor, who, like William, Prince of Orange, bore the sorrows of a nation upon his shoulders with a smile upon his face. On three different occasions I went to the old White House to see the President for a few minutes upon some important business connected with the Patent Office. Each time I found the halls and ante-rooms, adjoining his private office, thronged with anxious men and women, who either wished to look at, or to get an interview with, His Excellency. By the exercise of a little extra patience and perseverance, on my third visit I succeeded in reaching him. At these interviews, as a matter of courtesy, the women have precedence of the men. Standing near to the person of the President I had a good opportunity, in open court, to learn the nature of several interviews which were accorded to the fair sex. The first one who had the honor of an audience, was a very plainly dressed, elderly woman, attended by a charming creature, who acted as spokeswoman. She interceded with the President in soft, mellifluous tones, for the release of a son of her elder companion, who was pining in durance vile in some government fortress. The President seemed to be moved by the appeal, but replied that in the absence of sufficient knowledge of the case he could not extend Executive clemency. "Surely," said the fair advocate, "you will not refuse me this pardon?" to which the President promptly replied, "I had rather grant twenty pardons than to refuse one," at the same time referring the parties to the Attorney-General. Next in order came a nicely dressed miss, with face closely veiled, carrying in her hand a small package of papers. She seemed not to wish any one but the President to understand the nature of her errand, but from some remarks that fell from his lips, I soon learned that she was seeking pardon for a somewhat aged West Pointer, who had, in some unexplained way, aided the rebellion. The President inquired of her who had examined the case? She replied that Gen. Grant had looked at the papers. The President instantly directed one of his clerks to see what the illustrious man of war had said about it, whereupon the paper was produced, which bore the indorsement of Gen. Grant to the effect that "the case was one of a numerous class well understood by the President." His Excellency then inquired of the young advocate what reason *she* had for urging the pardon. She replied that the party was anxious to go into some business, and, moreover, that he was deaf. At once the President assured her, that the lack of pardon did not prevent him from going into business, and to grant one would not restore his hearing, at the same time referring her case to the Attorney-General. There were at least twenty women and one hundred men waiting for audience. The President, though affable to all, seemed firm in his purpose not to extend clemency without a clear knowledge of such facts as would warrant its exercise. It is said to be a favorite scheme with many, who are excluded by the terms of the amnesty proclamation, to employ the services of women to present

their cases to the President. These applicants evidently think that mercy

"Becomes the monarch better than his crown."

The situation is certainly far from being an agreeable one to either party.

The President, though appearing quite well, nevertheless exhibits a care-worn and anxious expression. His labors are excessive, and, from motives of mere curiosity, visitors ought not to force their attentions upon him, and just now especially, while he has so many burdens to bear; besides, the White House is a dirty old place, and is not fit for his residence.

I made a somewhat careful examination into the
CONDITION OF THE PATENT OFFICE.

It is the noblest building, architecturally speaking, in Washington. It was originally founded exclusively for a Patent Office, but, upon the creation of the Department of the Interior, its offices were located in the Patent Office building, and the affairs of the office were subordinated to the Interior Department.

The SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN earnestly protested against this arrangement, and the wisdom of this protest is now made as clear as a sunbeam, to all who have taken note of the wonderful progress which has marked the history of invention during the past ten years.

The Patent Office is now finished according to the original plans. Over \$400,000 of the patent fund have been absorbed in its construction, while the office itself has paid all its legitimate expenses out of its receipts. If the business of the office continues for ten years at the same ratio of increase as in the past five years, every available foot of this immense structure will be required for its purposes; and it is to be hoped, in view of this patent fact, that before the close of the next Congress a bill will be passed to establish the Patent Office on an independent basis, and that a proper building for the Interior Department will be authorized. Fifty thousand patents have already been granted, to say nothing of the large number of rejected cases. Models are now rapidly accumulating, and, much sooner than many suppose, the cases now fitted for their reception will be filled. Either the exaction of models must be soon dispensed with or more room will have to be appropriated for their proper care.

Considerable surprise has been expressed that the President should have so long neglected to appoint a suitable person to fill the vacancy in the Board of Appeals, considering the great accumulation of cases before that Board.

Mr. Theaker, formerly a member of the Board, is now Commissioner of Patents. Mr. Coombs resigned some months ago, and has resumed the practice of law in Washington, Mr. Hodges of the old Board alone remained. Judge Foote, a most excellent and competent man, has just entered upon the duties of the Board, and will do good service. Four chief examiners in the Patent Office—Dr. Page, Mr. Blanchard, Mr. Peale, and Dr. Doane—were applicants for this position, and were each strongly recommended by their friends, but I understand that the President has at last found the right man for the right place, in the person of Mr. Fessenden of Maine, brother of Senator Fessenden, to fill the vacancy.

Respecting the new incumbent, I have been unable to learn anything definite as to his qualifications. He belongs to a family distinguished for ability and practical good sense. The Board has plenty of legal ability, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Fessenden will bring to its aid the mind of a well-instructed and experienced mechanic.

THE NEW COMMISSIONER.

Commissioner Theaker possesses a full and thorough knowledge of his duties. He well deserves the confidence and cheerful support of the whole clerical force of the office. No man who has ever filled that important chair brings to its duties a higher purpose to discharge its trust more faithfully and earnestly; and now that the vacancy in the Board of Appeals is filled, I trust that he will reclassify the whole business of the office, so that the labors may be more equitably distributed.

Some of the examiners are overworked, for want of proper assistants, while others have not enough to do; hence, while in some classes the work is well up, in others there is an unusual accumulation of

cases. If there are any drones in the hive they ought to be expelled, and it would be an act of well-merited justice to promote some of the assistant examiners who have so long and faithfully discharged the duties of principals.

I trust that the Commissioner will resolutely use his influence to promote these much needed reforms and changes. The duties of chief clerk are now ably performed by Thomas Harland, Esq., of Norwich, Conn.

I understand that Mr. Jenckes, who was Chairman of the House Committee on Patents during the last Congress, and who is quite likely to occupy the same position in the next Congress, is now engaged in preparing a bill designed to establish the Patent Office as an independent bureau, and also to secure some other changes in the law of patents.

I do not know what Mr. Jenckes contemplates in the way of changes in the law, but trust he will act in such matters in consultation with the Commissioner. This would insure inventors against radical changes in the present admirable system of granting patents.

The business of the office was never so large as now. During the month of October 628 patents were issued, and upward of 500 will probably issue during the month of November. I think the records will show that fully one-third of the whole were clients of the Scientific American Patent Agency—the balance being divided between hundreds of local agencies in the various cities of the Union. ***

New Chain Machine.

A novel and ingenious invention has been brought out in England by which the production of chains is greatly facilitated, at the same time that the strength of the article is increased, and the price reduced. The process may be described as follows:—The end of the bar of iron, as it comes hot from the rolls, is placed in the machine, which coils it upon a mandrel, having the shape of the inside of the link required. A sliding rest, moved by a screw, distributes the bar of iron upon the mandrel, forming what is technically called a helical coil, having a 3-inch pitch. By a simple arrangement the coil is then pushed off the mandrel on to the bar connected with the shears, where a peculiar form of steeling allows the coil to be cut obliquely, so as to form a scarfed joint, and the link, when cut, to fall off, or to be moved. The link is then taken to the welding press, where it is closed, welded, finished, and the stud put in by pressure in metal dies. The violent exertion of welding with heavy sledge hammers, producing an intermittent and uncertain concussion so injurious to the fiber of the iron, is done away with, and an instantaneous pressure over the whole surface of the joint is substituted. The superiority of this system of manufacture seems to be palpable; the saving effected in labor is from 50 to 75 per cent. The inventor is Mr. George Homfray, of Hales Owen.—*The Ironmonger.*

Important to Southern Inventors.

Secretary Harlan has issued the following instructions to the Hon. Thomas C. Theaker, Commissioner of Patents:—

"The subject of granting patents to the citizens of States recently in rebellion has been submitted to the President, and I am instructed by him to direct that no patent be granted to any resident of a district declared by the President to be in a state of rebellion without satisfactory proof of loyalty is furnished, embracing the original or an authenticated copy of the amnesty oath as taken by said resident; and if parties making application for patents belong to the excluded class, evidence of their special pardons by the President should be furnished.

JAS. HARLAN, Sec'y of Interior Department."

An extensive coal field has just been discovered at the foot of Mount Olympus. The coal is said to be well adapted to steam purposes, and is so abundant that it can be sold for \$2 per tun. It is intended to establish a depot of the coal at Suez for the supply of the steamers.

By the spectrum analysis Bunsen was able to detect the 70,000,000th part of a grain of lithium in a compound; while of sodium the 180,000,000th part of a grain could be made perceptible.

Queries

R. M., of N. Y.—Your idea that the Indian Summer is caused by the latent heat given off in the freezing of the great lakes we do not believe is sound. The temperature of the air must be below the freezing point in order to absorb the heat and freeze the water.

C. P. R., of Mass.—A new stove burns better than an old one, because it is clean. There are many places where the soft joints, which retard the draft, for air passes more easily over smooth than rough surfaces.

J. W., of Conn.—Substances loosely compressed are not so good conductors of heat as the same material tightly packed, for the reason that the continuity is diminished, and the air imprisoned in the interstices.

T. M. F., of Minn.—It is a well-known law that liquids transmit force equally in all directions, and with the same intensity.

W. W. S., of Conn.—It is perfectly practicable to heat water to very near the boiling point by the exhaust steam, but the heater must be properly made, otherwise it will cause back pressure, or, in other words, choke the exhaust. Steam from a steam hammer could be used as well as any other.

B. L., of N. J.—We do not know which is the best place for wages in this country. We are told that in California wages are about the same that they are in New York. In Oberstein, Rhenish Bavaria, they hire workmen for \$1.50 per week. Avoid Oberstein.

W. B., of Ind.—You must decide for yourself whether it will pay or not to take out a patent. Yes; a thing that will run by wind, and make its own wind at the same time, is a veritable perpetual motion.

M. C., of Me., asks:—"Has the purchaser of part interest in a patent the right to manufacture and sell without the consent of the other owners, and appropriate the profits wholly to his own use?" Answer—Yes.

W. H. S., of N. J.—The address of the inventor of the plan for seasoning lumber about which you inquire, is H. G. Bulkley, Cleveland, Ohio.

G. T., of N. Y.—A rifle ball fired vertically upward would fall with the same velocity that it rose, in a vacuum but it will not in the air. The resistance of the atmosphere prevents the ball from rising so high as it would in a vacuum then further checks its velocity during its descent.

J. W. F., of Mo.—The inventive ingenuity of the country has been directed for many years to plans for warming air for dwellings, and we should suppose that some of these would be suited to your purpose. Bones are softened for agricultural purposes and made more soluble by immersing them in dilute sulphuric acid; but if the acid has been neutralized by lime, forming sulphate of lime, it will not act on the bone.

An Old Subscriber, of N. Y.—The reason why the St. John boiler explosion was less disastrous than is usual with Western boiler explosions, is, that the St. John was run with low pressure steam, while the Western steamboats are generally run with steam of very high pressure. The notion that some great mystery is involved in boiler explosions is incorrect; they always result from imperfect workmanship or careless management. In the case of the St. John, the sheet that gave way had been cut partly through, right along the line of fracture, by the chisel used in chipping off the overlapping sheet.

J. C., of N. Y.—To make toilet soap of common soap, mix with it vanilla or any other perfume that you prefer.

G. R. S., of N. Y.—The harder steel is, the more brittle it is, and as the temper is drawn it grows tougher. When very cold it is more brittle than when warm.

A. S., of Mass.—Round valves and hollow valve rods are not new.

J. A. S., of N. J.—Probably you can obtain a patent.

S. Z. A., of Pa.—"The Clock and Watchmaker's Manual" can be had of John Wiley, bookseller, New York.

A. J., of Wis.—The grant of a patent does not relieve a patentee from the payment of the local license fees or taxes in any city, county or State. Patentees must comply with local laws, the same as other citizens.

P. T., of Pa.—Run your circular saw 1,500 revolutions per minute. Your pulley should be 18 inches in diameter to get 800 revolutions.

C. H. M., of Ill.—For discussion of your questions we must refer you to Nystrom's work on screw propulsion—though no definite answers can be given to most of them.

W. M., of Mass.—Any person can obtain a patent in this country without declaring intention of citizenship. Natives of Nova Scotia must pay \$500 fee for patent. New Brunswickers the same as American citizens.

W. W., of N. H.—Scrap tin crowded into rat holes is said to be effectual in driving them away.

TO OUR ADVERTISING PATRONS.

Advertisers are referred to the new list of rates at the head of the advertising page. Those who have paid in advance for a certain number of insertions will have their advertisements continued at the old rates till the time paid for is up. All new advertisements will be charged 40 cents a line each insertion.

Advertisers will accommodate us, and save expense to themselves, by making their advertisements as short as possible.

Correspondence

Index for Change Wheels in Screw Cutting.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Believing that the following method of forming a table of change wheels for screw cutting lathes is entirely new, and that it will be interesting and useful to a large class of your numerous readers, I offer it for publication:—

5	6	7	8	9
20 25	20 30	20 35	20 40	20 45
21 30	22 33	24 42	21 42	24 54
23 35	24 36	28 49	22 44	28 63
32 40	26 39	32 56	23 46	32 72
33 45	28 42	36 63	24 48	36 81
40 50	30 45	40 70	25 50	40 90
44 55	32 48	44 77	26 52	44 99
48 60	34 51	48 84	27 54	48 108

The numbers 5, 6, 7, etc., at the head of the table, represent the number of threads to the inch it is desired to cut. The two columns of numbers under the number 5 represent the different sets of wheels—each wheel being designated by its number of teeth—which may be used to cut five threads to the inch, four being the number of threads to the inch on the leading screw; the left-hand column representing the wheels on the stud, and the right-hand column the wheels on the leading screw. Thus, 20 and 25 form the first set, 24 and 30 the second set, and so on. The two columns under the number 6 represent the different sets of wheels which may be used to cut six threads to the inch, and so with the columns under the numbers 7, 8, etc.

Considering the first sets of the different columns, it will be seen that, while the wheel on the stud remains unchanged, the numbers representing the different wheels on the leading screw will form an arithmetical progression, whose common difference is equal to the quotient obtained by dividing the number of teeth on the stud wheel by the number of threads to the inch on the leading screw. This method of finding the common difference is a general one for any progression which may be formed of the numbers at the top of the right-hand columns. All the columns are also in arithmetical progression. The common differences of the first two columns are respectively 4 and 5; of the second two, 2 and 3; of the third two, 4 and 7; and of the fourth two, 1 and 4.

It will be seen that these common differences are the least two whole numbers having the same ratio as the number of threads to the inch on the leading screw and the number of threads to the inch it is desired to cut. Having found the first set—namely, 20 and 25—by one of the various rules which have been published in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, we can then form the table almost as rapidly as we can write the numbers down, and to any desirable extent.

The table may be extended to the left so as to include the numbers 1, 2, and 3, if it is desired

JOSEPH SPOR.

Philadelphia, Pa., Nov. 14, 1865.

The Philosophy of a Top.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Can you tell us why a boy's top will assume and maintain an erect position while spinning?

A. S. C.

Suspension Bridge, Nov. 4, 1865.

[The same explanation that we gave, some time since, of the gyroscope, applies to a top. If you tie a stone to the end of a string and swing it about your finger, then while it is whirling, if a sheet of thin paper be held so that the stone will strike it at a sharp angle in a way to turn the stone from the plane of its revolution, the stone will resist this effort to turn it from its course, and will pass through the paper. If a sufficient number of stones are united to form a complete wheel, and the wheel is put in rotation, each one of the stones will resist any effort to change the plane of its revolution, and thus the whole wheel will resist any effort to change the plane of its rotation. When a top is rotating in an upright position, it cannot lean toward any side without changing the plane of rotation of all its parts; consequently, so long as it is rapidly rotating it stands upright.

When the axis of the top is inclined, the force of gravitation tends to draw it downward, and thus to change the planes of rotation of all its parts. If

you will take a wheel and incline its axis, you will see that the struggle to resist this change will move the wheel forward, and will thus give to it a revolution around an imaginary vertical axis. Even in this revolution the planes of rotation are constantly changed, but the change is the less the more nearly the axis of the top coincides with the imaginary vertical axis about which it is revolving; hence it is subjected to a constant tendency to assume an upright position, and the more rapidly its rotation, the stronger is this tendency.

The resistance offered by a rotating wheel or disk to any change in the plane of its rotation is worthy of consideration in many applications of mechanism. This resistance tends to make a fly wheel run true, and, consequently, to so wear its bearings as to correct any slight error in its original hanging. It increases the resistance of locomotive and car wheels to the change in the direction of their motion in passing round a curve. It precludes the employment of Avery's engine for driving locomotives, and suggests that, if his engine should be used for this purpose, it should run on a vertical, instead of horizontal, axis.—Eds.

A Question of Boiler Feed.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—Having been a constant reader of your paper for a number of years allow me to ask you a few questions. We have an upright boiler for hot water, and connected to the boiler is about 1,500 feet of pipe, for the purpose of heating a building. The boiler is in the cellar, and is fed through a three-quarter pipe from a tank forty-five feet in height, the water in the tank four feet deep, the pipe at the bottom of the tank, and about twenty pounds pressure of water. Attached to the boiler is a thermometer to tell the temperature of the water. Now the question is, can the water be heated more than 212° without backing up into the tank. Some think it is the same as an open boiler, boiling in the open air, and the water cannot be heated more than 212°; that if the thermometer indicates more than 212° it is not correct. I am of a different opinion. I think the water can be heated more than 212°—enough more to overcome the pressure from the tank; how much more I cannot say. It is a fact that the water has been 230° without heating the water in the tank. But I have not tried to see how much higher temperature I can get it without heating the water in the tank. Please let us know your opinion about it.

G. S. KINGSBURY.

Somerville, Mass., Nov. 4, 1865.

[It is plain that the pressure of steam must be greater than the weight of water in the pipe in order to force this water back into the tank. As the water is heated in the lower end of the pipe, it will expand, and will be forced upward by the colder water of greater density sinking down and displacing it; this circulation will convey heat from the boiler to the tank, and will tend to equalize the temperature of the two. The rapidity of the circulation, and, consequently, the rapidity with which the heat will be transferred, will depend mainly on the size of the pipe. The circulation will be obstructed by bending the lower end of the pipe upward, in the form of a U.—Eds.]

Iron Making.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—I have before me your description of the Bessemer steel, and I have no doubt it must strike your readers that it reveals such radical defects in our present iron making as should awaken the inventive genius of chemistry. First, we waste coal and spoil the iron by supercarbonation. Next, we consume more coal to drive out the carbon to make the iron ductile. Finally, we bake it again in carbon, to restore some of the carbon it had at first and which we spent so much to drive out of it: and this makes it steel. From this it is to be inferred that a certain diminished portion of carbon imparted in the furnace would probably give us cast steel, and from this we could make wrought iron, with again less expense of carbon and labor. Malleable cast iron professes to be made by extracting carbon from pig-metal superficially, and, as steel men aver, so do malleable cast-iron men, that some nitrogen is necessary. Malleable cast iron has very extended uses, which would be trebled if it could be obtained of uniform quality. It is very unreliable in this respect; and the same is said of Bessemer steel. The fact that

VAN DE WATER'S CELEBRATED WATER WHEEL, at Eagle Iron Works, Buffalo, N. Y.

GLUE FACTORY FOR SALE.—TERMS FAVORABLE.—Capacity 1,500 bbls. Locality unsurpassed.

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SHAPERS, SLIDE AND HAND LATHES, AND OTHER Machinist Tools. All kinds of Machinery made to order.

WANTED.—I WISH TO PURCHASE A FIRST-class Planing Machine. Address T. PRINCE, care of M. R. Evans & Co., Mobile, Ala.

PORTABLE STEAM ENGINES.—THESE WORKS have lately increased their facilities for the manufacture of their so popular engines.

STATIONARY AND PROPELLER ENGINES, with Boilers of the best design, made to order. The Stationary Engines have Variable Cut-off works.

THE AMERICAN PUZZLE.—THE BEST INSTRUCTIVE and amusing contrivance for old and young; 100 problems and solutions in elegant box.

THE WASHINGTON IRON WORKS HAVE ON HAND for sale their Improved Portable Steam Engines, Portable Circular Saw-mills, Gang Saw-mills, Flour and Corn Mills.

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Scientific American office, No. 37 Park Row, New York.

The Action of Light upon Sulphide of Lead.

A paper, "On the Action of Light upon Sulphide of Lead, and its bearing upon the Preservation of Paintings in Picture Galleries," was read by Dr. D. S. Price at the meeting of the British Association. The author's attention was directed to this subject by observing that, in the cases in the South Kensington Museum which are painted with white lead, substances which emitted sulphurous vapors did not cause a darkening of the surface of the case, excepting where it was protected from the direct influence of light. A number of experiments was then tried as to the action of light upon sulphide of lead produced by the action sulphureted hydrogen upon lead paint. A board of painted white with white lead was exposed for several hours to the action of sulphureted hydrogen, until the surface had acquired a uniform brown color. Plates of glass of different colors were then placed upon the painted surface, one portion being at the same time covered with an opaque medium, and another left entirely exposed. The board was then placed facing the light. The glasses employed were red, blue, yellow (silver), violet, and smoke-color glass. The results exhibited were, after an exposure of eight days, and showed that the parts of the board directly exposed to light were bleached; those protected by an opaque medium were not acted upon; while with the glasses of different colors intermediate effects were produced—those of the violet glass being most decided. Drying oils in conjunction with light rapidly bleach sulphide of lead, and boiled oil effects the bleaching still more rapidly. When water color is used bleaching takes place, but much more slowly than in the case of oil. After quoting authorities, stating that generally light was advantageous to the preservation of pictures, Dr. Price showed a striking illustration of this fact. He had a picture painted, and then exposed it to the action of sulphureted hydrogen, until it became sadly discolored, and, to all appearance, destroyed. Some strips of paper were laid across the picture, so as to cover some parts. The picture, thus partially covered, was exposed to light for a long time. The result, as shown at the meeting, was very curious indeed, the parts of the picture exposed being perfectly restored, while those protected by the paper remained still discolored. From his experiments he came to the conclusion that it was advantageous to have picture galleries well lighted, especially where, as in towns, the atmosphere was charged with sulphur compounds, and that it was quite a mistake to have curtains placed in front of pictures, with a view to their protection. In the course of his communication Dr. Price referred to the use of zinc paint for houses, and considered it likely to be acted upon, as the paint was rendered soluble by the acids contained in the atmosphere of towns.

Correction of Ship's Compasses at Sea.

M. Faye suggests to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, a method of determining at any time the error of the compass aboard a ship. This is done by attaching to the ship's log, which is suitably modified as to incline and form, a compass so arranged that at any moment it may be stopped, and its direction thus registered. The log is towed in the wake of the ship, and at a sufficient distance to be out of reach of its magnetic influence, and when it has taken the true direction of the ship, which, if of proper shape, it will soon do, the compass is registered, hauled aboard, and read. The proposition assumes importance from the perpetual variation of the magnetic constants of iron vessels and sea, and the resulting impossibility of perfect correction of compasses.

In the course of his communication, M. Faye records a curious experiment, which is worthy of repetition and study: Dissolve in an acid, soft iron devoid of any magnetic coercive force, and then deposit it, by a galvano-plastic process, in a thin film upon a surface of a plate of copper, as is done in coating copper plates with iron, to give them greater endurance. This thin coating of iron, chemically pure, will possess so strong a coercive power that I have heated a plate thus prepared to the melting point of copper without destroying the magnetism which I had before given it.

The Compasses of the "Monadnock."

At the last meeting of the Franklin Institute, the Vice President announced that the two-turreted iron-

clad *Monadnock* would leave the Navy Yard in a few days for San Francisco, by the straits of Magellan. She will be part of the squadron under the command of Commodore John Rodgers.

As she will go from north to extreme south magnetic latitude, and through a difference of longitude in which the declination of the needle will vary greatly, the opportunity of making observations connected with the permanent and variable magnetism of the ship and the action of her compasses will be an uncommonly good one.

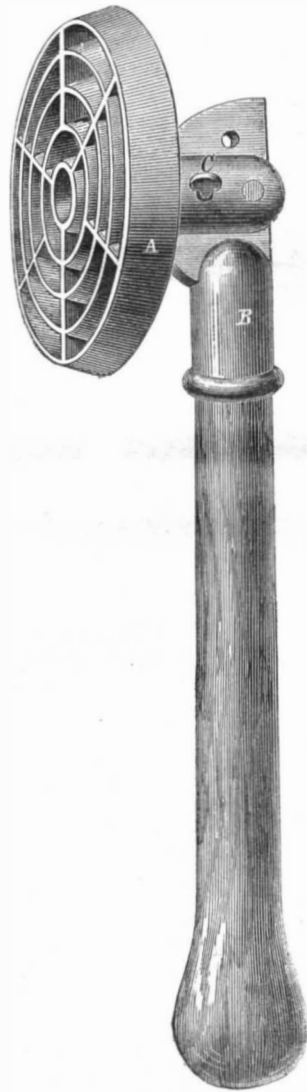
Prof. Harkness, of the Navy, late of the Naval Observatory, will go out in her, expressly for the purpose of making observations, which he may find necessary or possible.

The vessel will probably be swung at thirteen or more ports on the way, and careful shore observations will be made at the same points.

Altogether, results may be expected which will materially extend our knowledge of the magnetic behavior of these new iron vessels.

M'NEIL'S BEEFSTEAK POUNDER.

The engraving published herewith represents a utensil which housekeepers will appreciate. It is



designed to pound beefsteaks with, in order to crush such as may be refractory, and so tough as to defy the sharpest fangs. The instrument is made of cast iron, and consists of a circular grating, A, attached to a socket, B, the whole being secured to a wooden handle. The circular grating is fastened to the socket in a peculiar manner, and so that it may set either at right angles with the handle or turn up vertically, like a churn dasher. In this latter position it is convenient to mash vegetables, such as potatoes, turnips, squash, and the like. The manner of securing the head in either position is by a pin, C, as shown. This pounder does not mar the appearance of the steak, as many do, and no one could tell after the process that the steak had been beaten.

It was patented through the Scientific American Patent Agency, Oct. 31, 1865. For further information address John A. McNeil, Grand Rapids, Mich.

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