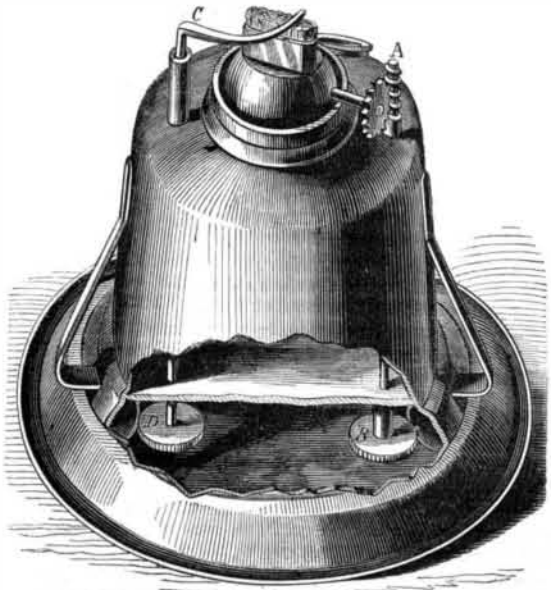


SILVINS & HAIN'S IMPROVEMENT IN LAMPS FOR LANTERNS.

Those who are compelled in their business to frequently use lanterns, as watchmen, farmers, and some railroad employes, understand the annoyance of a dimly burning lantern lamp when its light is most needed on a stormy or windy night. Under such circumstances it is impossible to trim it or to elevate the wick without getting into some shelter for the purpose. But in the engraving we have a device by which these operations can be performed under almost any circumstances, and without removing the lantern from the protection of its glass case.

The engraving represents an ordinary lantern lamp secured to the lantern in the usual way by springs. A portion of the side and bottom projecting flange is broken away to expose the working parts. Through a tube reaching from



top to bottom is passed, on one side, a wire shaft having a worm gear, A, on its top for working the wheel, by which the wick is raised or lowered, as on an ordinary kerosene lamp. By turning the thumb-wheel, B, under the bottom, the elevation of the wick can be governed. On the other side of the lamp is a similar shaft, having on its upper end a curved horizontal arm, C, that can be swept across the wick to remove any crust which may have gathered. This is turned, also, by a similar thumb knob, D. By these simple contrivances it will be seen that, except filling the lamp anew with oil, it can be trimmed in a storm as well as in a calm.

The device was patented through the Scientific American Patent Agency, June 11, 1867, by Jacob Silvins and William T. Hain, who may be addressed at Sunbury, Pa., for further particulars.

A New Cement and Building Material.

In a communication to the French Academy of Sciences, M. Sorel describes a new cement, being a basic hydrated oxychloride of magnesium. It is obtained by slacking magnesia with a solution of chloride of magnesium in a more or less concentrated state. The denser the solution the harder it becomes on drying. This magnesium cement is the whitest and hardest of all those known to this day, and it can be molded like plaster, in which case the cast acquires the hardness of marble. It will take any color, and has been used by the inventor for mosaics, imitations of ivory, billiard balls, etc. The new cement possesses the agglutinative property in the highest degree, so that solid masses may be made with it at a very low cost by mixing it up on a large scale with substances of little value. One part of magnesia may be incorporated with upwards of twenty parts of sand, limestone, and other inert substances, so as to form hard blocks; while lime and other cements will hardly admit of the incorporation of two or three times their weight of extraneous matter.

By means of these artificial blocks, buildings may easily be carried on in places where materials for the purpose are scarce. All that is required is simply to convey a quantity of magnesia and chloride of magnesium to the spot, if there be none to be had there, and then to mix them up with sand, pebbles, or any other matter of the kind close at hand; blocks can be made of any shape, and imitating hewn stone. This magnesian cement may be obtained at a very low cost, especially if the magnesia be extracted from the mother ley of salt works, either by M. Balard's process, whereby magnesia and hydrochloric acid are obtained at the same time, or else by decomposing the ley, which always contains a large proportion of chloride of magnesium, by means of quick lime, which by double decomposition yields magnesia and chloride of lime containing a certain quantity of chloride of magnesium, and which, with the addition of various other cheap substances may be used for whitewashing.

Storage of Petroleum in England.

A select committee of the House of Commons on protection from fire has recommended that no oil produced by distillation from coal, shale, peat, petroleum, rock oil, Rangoon or Burmah oil, or other bituminous substance, and used for illuminating purposes, should be sold for such purposes with an igniting point under one hundred and ten degrees Fahrenheit.

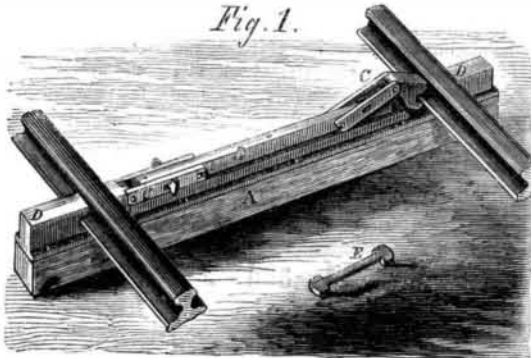
"The committee point out that stringent measures have

been adopted in America as to the sale of petroleum, and add that there is reason to fear that much of that oil, with a low igniting point, will be imported into England. They suggest that it would be well to have all mineral oils imported tested as to their igniting point and marked before being stored, and to place careful restrictions on the mode of storing. The classification of goods in storing is also recommended for consideration."

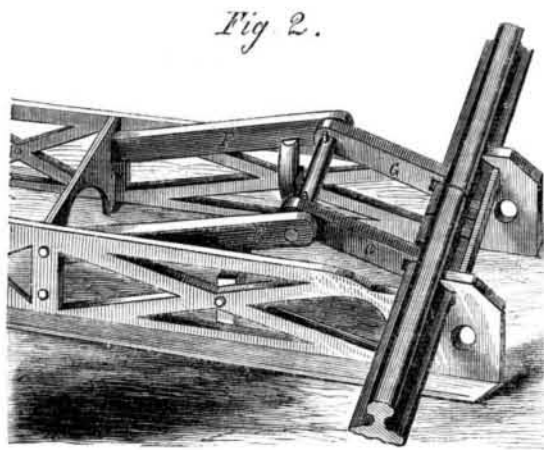
A Manchester paper, commenting upon this report, says:—"Petroleum has already been the object of legislation. By an act passed a year or two since it is directed that not more than forty gallons shall be kept within fifty yards of a dwelling house, or of a building in which goods are stored, without a special license. But this act goes on the assumption that the igniting point of the oil is one hundred degrees Fahrenheit. The great source of mischief, however, is the use of petroleum which ignites at a point below that limit. Some of the petroleum which is sold is capable of ignition at a point as low as sixty-eight degrees. Moreover, it has been shown that in some cases, after a mineral oil lamp has been burning for twenty minutes, the temperature of the brass ranges from one hundred to one hundred and ten degrees, so that even when the flame is blown out the heat of the brass part of the apparatus is more than sufficient to explode the vapor which is given off. In the United States a law has been passed imposing heavy penalties on any one selling petroleum oil for illuminating purposes which is inflammable at a less temperature than one hundred and ten degrees Fahrenheit; and as far as we are concerned, the effect of this and other restrictions has been to stimulate the export of the forbidden oils to this country."

HOLLAND'S PERMANENT WAY.

In England great attention is being paid to improving the condition of the railroads by the construction of a permanent way not liable to decay, displacement, or breakage. The sub-



ject is also very properly assuming some importance in this country. In time, it is confidently believed, our present system of cheaply laid and rapidly decaying roads will be super-



sed by others of an enduring character. The engraving represents an attempt of this sort, which was patented July 16, 1867 by Robert M. Holland of Philadelphia.

Fig. 1 presents a view of a sleeper with the iron attachment for securing the rails in place, and Fig. 2 a girder to be used at cuts, culverts, etc. The sleeper, A, may be of wood, as usual, having the casting secured to the top, or it may be wholly of iron with a broad base. A central rib, B, rises from the plate between the rails, having, at a proper distance from each rail, a pivot projecting from each side with which engage links, C, on either side of the rib. These links are pivoted to blocks formed with upper and lower flanges, and shaped so as to accurately fit the side of the rail. The ends of the plate are similarly formed, as at D. It will be seen that when the links are pressed down into position the rail, or the ends of two rails, will be held with great steadiness. To give perfect security a key is passed through a slot in the links and the rib and turned partially around, so the heads may stand across the slot. The key is seen removed at E. It is not believed, however, that this key is absolutely necessary to retain the block and links in position. At one end of the sleeper, Fig. 1, the links are seen raised so that the rail can be removed or seated, and at the other end they are locked.

Fig. 2 is a frame or girder of cast iron showing the rails in place. The links and blocks, F and G, are shown quite distinctly. It is evident that with these devices no spikes are necessary to fasten the rails, nor are any chains required to hold their ends. The labor of laying and repairing tracks will thus be materially reduced.

Further information may be obtained by addressing Leonard Repsher, Camden, N. J.

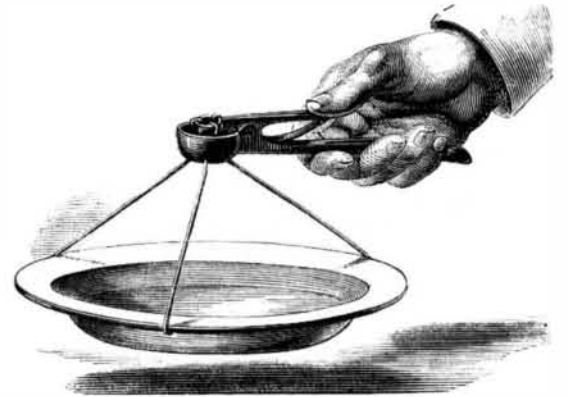
Trial of McCormick's Reaper at Chalons.

Mr. McCormick having accepted an invitation from the Emperor Napoleon to give a private exhibition of the working of his reaping machine, a trial was made a short time since on the Imperial farm near Chalons, at which the Emperor was present, accompanied by Marshal Neil, General Le Beuf and Tisseraud, Director General of the Imperial Agricultural Estates. The trial was a complete success, and gave so much satisfaction to the Emperor that he immediately gave orders for the purchase of three of the machines for use on his private farms, and earnestly expressed the intention of encouraging the adoption of the invention throughout France, on account of its great labor-saving properties, and said that he would set the example by putting it in operation on all imperial farms. Such distinguished attention as this has been shown to no other foreign exhibitor, and it is considered certain that to Mr. McCormick will be awarded the highest honors of the Exhibition.

WILLET'S PLATE LIFTER.

The engraving presents a view of one of those handy household implements for which American inventors have become famous.

It is a light handle of cast metal having a cup-shaped receptacle, at the end, and just behind that cars for the reception of a thumb lever which is there pivoted. The short end of this lever projects into the cup and has secured to it three wires which pass through holes in the bottom of the cup and



are bent into hooks at their outer ends. The long end of the lever is kept up by a curved spring except when depressed by the thumb. The engraving shows plainly the manner of using. The wires are placed over the rim of a plate—being spread to their full extent by the spring—when the thumb presses the lever down contracting the hooks toward the center and holding the plate firmly.

One obvious advantage of this over those which grasp the utensil at one point only, is that it is not likely to drop the plate and can be carried steadily without spilling the contents of the vessel. It is made of such materials, also, and is so simply constructed as not to break or get out of order. Patented June 4, 1867. State and county rights and samples can be procured by addressing the patentee, John B. Willett, West Meriden, Conn.

The Silver Mint of Japan.

At the silver mint at Yeddo the following processes are continually going on:—A lump of silver of the necessary fineness, obtained either from the government mines or by melting down Mexican dollars, is placed in an iron ladle and reduced to a molten state by means of a charcoal fire and a pair of blacksmith's bellows. It is then poured into a mold, from which it is taken out in the shape of thin rectangular bars, which are immediately thrown into a tub of cold water. On being taken out a man seated on the ground shears off with a pair of large fixed scissors all jagged pieces adhering to the angles. They are now handed to another man who weighs them one by one, and a piece is cut off, if necessary, to reduce the bar to its proper weight. The next process is that of dividing the bar by a fixed pair of shears into eight equal portions, of the size of ichibus; this is done by a workman cutting it as accurately as his practised eye will enable him, and his work is tested by weighing—light pieces being rejected, and the heavy ones reduced to their proper weight by the scissors. The pieces are now heated white hot in a charcoal fire, plunged into water, boiled and washed in a kind of brine, from which they come out with a moderately bright surface. They are next very slightly milled on the two sides, and more deeply on the edges, by means of a milled hammer. They are now ready for stamping. A man places one of the pieces on a stationary die, and lays on the top the other die; a second man, armed with a huge hammer, gives one blow on the upper die, and the coin is struck. The blows are dealt in rapid succession, and the whole scene reminds one of a blacksmith's shop. Boys now punch small stars on the edges by means of chisels and hammers. The coins are weighed one by one for the last time, and the light ones rejected. The imperial stamp is added by means of another stamped chisel and mallet, and the coins are complete. They are rolled up in paper packets of one hundred; each packet is weighed and with a seal, which serves as a guarantee of its contents, and gives it currency as one hundred ichibus. While every operation is performed in this primitive manner, perfect order prevails in the establishment; every man goes through his portion of the work in silence and with the regularity of clockwork, and many evince considerable skill. There are about three hundred hands employed in the building. When the men enter in the morning they are made to divest themselves of their own clothes, and put on others belonging to the mint. At the end of the day's work a gong sounds, when the somewhat curious spectacle is presented of three hundred