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Improvement in Knitting Machines.

The Lamb Knitting Machine, of which the accompanying engraving is a representation, was patented through the Scientific American Patent Agency in December, 1863. Since then valuable improvements have been added, and at the present time it is claimed to be the best family knitting machine that is manufactured.

The invention relates to that class of knitting machines that employ straight rows of needles, in distinction from the class known as circular knitting machines, but more particularly to the simple and novel method of operating two straight parallel rows of needles in such a manner as to produce a tubular web, to widen and narrow with facility, to form a large or small stocking in the same machine, to knit the heels of stockings, and to produce various styles of ornamental and ribbed work in flat web.

The machine may be described in brief as follows: A needle bed or frame (which can be attached to an ordinary table by means of a thumbscrew), having its two upper sides inclined toward each other, their upper edges being separated far enough to allow the fabric produced to pass down between them. Supported by the needle bed is a carriage, reciprocated by means of a crank. Through the arch that passes over the top of the machine is a horizontal rod upon which moves a slide that carries the guide for delivering the yarn into the hooks of the needles-parallel grooves or channels are cut across the bed in which the needles are placed. In these grooves the needles can be moved their entire length, and can thus be brought into operation for widening, or thrown out of operation for narrowing without removing them from the machine.

Fig. 2.

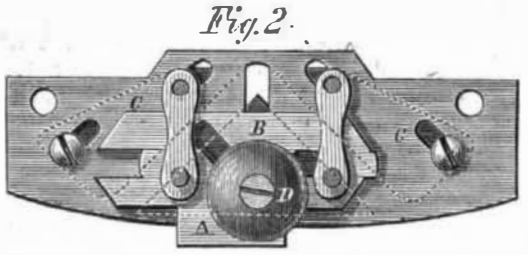

Fig. 1

THE LAMB PATENT KNITTING MACHINE.

The needles employed are self-knitting, being constructed in such a manner that when fed by the yarn and carried an inch forward and back, they form the loops by their own action. The lower ends of the needles have an upright shank, extending above the face of the needle bed, and are operated upon by cams that are attached underneath the center of the carriage in such a manner as to move the needles forward and back. There are two sets of these cams, one for each row of needles.

Fig. 2 is a representation of one of the sets of cams, which consists of the plate, A, the two wing cams, C C, and the V-shaped cam, B, which is held in place by the screws that pass through the washer, D, in the diagonal slot of the plate, A. As the carriage to which these cams are attached is drawn back and forth over the needle bed by the crank, the needles are carried up on one side of the V-shaped cam in the groove or space between that and the wing cams, at the same time the yarn guide delivers the yarn into the hooks of the needles, which are then drawn down by the wing cam on the other side of the V-cam, thus forming the loops.

The slide, A, is made to shift, by its lower projection coming in contact with adjustable cam stops that are placed at the ends of the needle bed. In Fig. 2, when the plate comes in contact with the right-hand cam stop, the screw through the washer, D, is forced up the diagonal slot, and brings up the V-shaped cam, thus closing the space between it and the wing cams. When closed the needles pass below the cam without operating. By the adjustment of the cam stops either or both of the cams may be left open or closed at the same time, so as to operate the two rows of needles separately, alternately, or together: thus forming four entirely distinct webs—the tubular web, wide flat web, double flat web, and the ribbed flat web.

As any number of needles can be moved up at the start or be moved up or down at either end of the rows of needles at any time, so any size of web can be set up and any number of loops can be added to or taken from it at will. By thus knitting the fabric either tubular, or flat, single, double, or ribbed, in any desired shape, it will produce every variety of staple and fancy-knit goods.

The loops are formed on precisely the same principle as in hand knitting, but, being of uniform length, render the fabric more elastic and durable.

The proprietors say that in addition to the great capacity and completeness of this machine, it especially commends itself to families for its extreme simplicity, enabling any one to operate it from printed directions. The ordinary speed of the machine is about 5,000 loops per minute, producing a yard of plain work in ten minutes, and a pair of socks complete in half an hour. Although it has been but a short time before the public it has attained a reputation and sale during that time which evinces that the want of such an invention is universally felt.

As the patents of the Lamb Machine cover the principle of crossing two rows of needles so as to form loops on both sides of the fabric; and as it can be worked with far greater speed than other machines—can knit with any number of needles, and widen and narrow at will on both circular and flat webs, (either single, double, or ribbed)—and is capable of producing anything, from a watch cord, infant's stocking, or glove, to a shawl or blanket—its value must be admitted.

All are familiar with what the sewing machine has done in furnishing profitable employment to thousands of laboring women. May not the knitting machine be welcome as a labor-saver, and a source of livelihood for the poor?

Certain it is that between five and six million dollars worth of knit goods are annually imported to this country, and that our markets abound with the raw material of which these goods are fabricated.

These machines are manufactured by the Lamb Knitting Machine Manufacturing Co., of Chicopee Falls, Mass., who will cheerfully furnish to any address any other information respecting the machines, with samples of work.

New Facts in Acoustics.

M. Regnault, of the Institute of France, has been making use of the new sewers of Paris for the purpose of testing, on a large scale, some of the questions in acoustics concerning which there has been much doubt. By firing a pistol in tubes and sewers of various diameters, he found that the sound was carried to the following distances: 1,282 yards in a passage of 4·2 inches diameter; 4191 yards in a passage of 11·8 inches diameter; 10,494 yards in a passage of 43 inches diameter. The nature of the materials and the construction of such passages exercises great influence on the rapidity with which sound is transmitted. In the large Paris sewers, trumpets are used to convey orders to the workmen, and it is found that in those passages whose sides are cemented, the sound is conveyed to a much longer distance than in others whose sides are left as first constructed, with the rough stones only. It is one of the primary principles laid down in text books, that the velocity of the vibrations of sonorous bodies in the same medium is the same for all sounds, grave or sharp, strong or feeble, and whatever may be their pitch, but the researches of M. Regnault would seem to show that this generally received belief is not correct. He asserts that sounds of different pitch are not propagated with equal rapidity but separate from each other on the way.

Acute sounds, also, travel with less swiftness than grave ones; thus, when a baritone sang in very long sewers and at the entrance of water conduits, the key-notes were heard at a distance before the harmonics which succeeded it and one another, according to the degree of their altitude. The propagation of sound, consequently, disarranges the harmonics of which it is composed; thus an air embracing a certain extent of the gamut, if heard at a long distance would be seriously altered. This decomposition in tubes may be on account of the friction caused by the sides of the tube or passage way, and cannot be noticed in the open air. The facts propounded by M. Regnault will cause the philosophers to renew their investigations with renewed interest.

LOFODEN NORWEGIAN COD LIVER OIL.

The London *Pharmaceutical Journal* has published a very readable, though somewhat exhaustive article, concerning cod fishing on the Lofoden Islands, the mode of manufacture and other particulars respecting the far-famed Norwegian cod liver oil, much of the information never before having been published. The great length of the article forbids our transferring it entire to our columns, but some extracts will prove of interest.

Every year, early in the month of January, the cod fish begin their great migration from the deep sea. Moving in a northeasterly direction, they approach the coast of Norway and concentrate themselves upon the Lofoden Islands, situated near the northern extremity of Norway, about 150 miles within the Arctic Circle. Immediately on the appearance of the immense shoals of cod at Lofoden, a remarkable result ensues,—all other kinds of fish disappear with one consent. The exact cause of this curious phenomenon is not yet understood, but literally it is the fact that the very herrings used as bait can no longer be taken in those waters, but have to be imported from a distance, and are sold to the fishermen as articles of trade. Two important consequences attend this singular circumstance; one, that the fecundated roe, secure from the predatory attacks of many voracious enemies, has a favorable opportunity for development, whereby a large supply of this valuable fish is maintained; the second, that no other fish than cod can be taken in the nets, and consequent-

ly, no other livers than those of the cod can be employed in the preparation of the oil.

As soon as the cod are known to have arrived, the fishing begins without delay. The total number of men assembled by the first of February is estimated at 25,000. The quantities of cod are prodigious, their numbers incalculable; a good or bad season does not depend on the variable supply of fish,—that is apparently always the same, and beyond computation,—but upon the weather, as every rough day prevents the open boats putting out to sea, and occasions a serious loss to the whole fishery.

Three different methods are employed in the capture or the cod; the deep line, the long line, and nets. Every afternoon, at a given signal from the surveillance, those fishermen having nets or long lines, row out one or two sea miles to their fishing grounds, set their tackle, then row back and pass the night on shore. Next morning, the signal being again given, they all row as before, take their catch, and return with it during the afternoon. The fishermen with deep lines remain all day at sea, leaving very early and returning in the evening. The distance these have to row is from four to seven English miles.

As soon as the fisherman has come to shore, he proceeds to cut the head off every fish and takes out the roe and liver, thus distributing his catch into four groups. The roe he usually salts immediately. The livers are disposed of in the following manner: some he throws at once into large wooden vessels, holding from eight to twelve hogsheads, and, by frequent agitation and stirring with wooden beaters, obtains from them, at the ordinary temperature, a fine transparent oil, which floats on the surface. This oil is drawn off and preserved separately. The livers thus partially exhausted are then either secured in barrels for the purpose of oil burning at home, or else, being left in the open wooden vessels, suffer decomposition; the oil produced becomes gradually darker, bubbles multiply, gaseous products are freely disengaged, accompanied with an exceedingly unpleasant, penetrating smell, that may be perceived at a great distance. The best livers and the finest oil are taken from those fish that have just arrived from the deep sea; the cod is then fattest, and in best condition; but by remaining in shallow water, where the function of spawning is accomplished, where feeding is not its object, and where little food is to be obtained, it becomes leaner and leaner, until, on its return to the deep sea, it is quite emaciated.

Cod fishing at Lofoden terminates on the 14th of April, according to ancient custom, even though the fishing may be productive, with a prospect of continuous good results. The reverence that the northern races have for the festival of Easter is the original cause for this usage, together with the ardent desire felt by every individual to pass the holidays following that religious anniversary, preceding as they do the joyful spring time and much longed for summer, in his own home.

On arriving at their several huts and villages, the preparation of the oil is proceeded with, and generally completed by the end of May. While the barrels of liver remain at Lofoden, and still more during the journey afterwards, much of the cellular tissues becomes disintegrated, and the oil flows out; so soon as the barrels are opened, the oil is carefully poured off and kept apart, and this, together with that made at Lofoden in the open wooden vessels, is the light yellow oil. The livers having been partially exhausted are then thrown into iron kettles hung over an open fire, the water contained by the livers being allowed to evaporate; the oil is poured off as fast as it becomes disengaged by the warmth, and is put into barrels. This is brown oil. Increased heat above 212 Fahr. is now applied; the color deepens; as the temperature increases, the oil gradually grows darker, till at last, when what remains of the livers floats about as hard dark lumps in oil that is almost black, the process is considered to be finished, and the remaining product is the dark tanner's oil.

In Sweden, Denmark, and even in Norway itself, as well as in other places, there is a prejudice in favor of the brown oil. It is regarded by many as superior in its remedial properties to the light yellow oil. But as the light yellow is an exudation at a low temperature from the liver at its freshest period, and has certainly less flavor and odor than any other kind, it does not appear that this preference is well founded.

Fully sensible of the great natural advantages possessed by the Lofoden Islands, Mr. Möller, of Christiania, has been for many years desirous of introducing into general use a superior method of preparing the oil. Manufactories following his suggestions are in operation at Lofoden, Söndmöre, Christiansund and Finmark. The process he recommends may be thus described: The livers are to be treated immediately on their arrival on shore, being less than one day old. The selected ones, all of large size, are washed for the purpose of removing blood, membrane, and all other impurities. They are then introduced into a machine which reduces them into a paste. The paste is then transferred to an apparatus heated externally by steam, and the mass cautiously warmed to 100° or 120° Fahr.; at the same time it is diligently stirred and pressed with large wooden spoons, so that the oil may be liberated at the lowest possible temperature consistent with economical results. As fast as the oil separates, it is withdrawn; and the stearine being first thrown down by exposure to a temperature under 40° Fahr., is filtered; after which it is considered perfect, and may be put forthwith into barrels and bottles. The fresher the liver, and the lower the temperature the clearer, lighter, and sweeter in taste will be the oil. Livers more than one day old require a higher degree of heat.

Three barrels of liver will yield one barrel of the finer oils, and a quarter of a barrel of dark oil; but these proportions are only approximative, for the results will always vary according to the temperature employed in the process. It is never originally brown, but is liable by lying long in wooden casks to acquire a little more color.

The annual produce of cod liver oil by the Lofoden fisheries is estimated at 25,000 barrels, each containing from 24 to 28 English gallons, and that of all the other fisheries on the coast of Norway at about 35,000 barrels more, making a total of 60,000 barrels. During the last two years prices have not been sufficiently remunerative to encourage the preparation of the fine oil on a large scale; only two manufacturers at Lofoden have done so, and one of these, according to the chief of the surveillance, made only ten barrels this year.

The information now incidentally given relating to the propagation of the cod, the deposit of its ova, and the security of the young fry is, though limited, an important addition to our knowledge of the natural habits of the fish; should further observations confirm the opinion held by practical men on the spot, then it will appear that Lofoden is the natural nursery for these immense shoals of cod that swarm the northern seas. Of course, cod ova may be deposited and hatched on many coasts, our own included, but nowhere on the same scale and with the same great results as at Lofodon.

Immense shoals of cod arriving from the deep sea make their annual appearance on the Norwegian coast early in January and continue there to the end of April, when the last of them return. At Newfoundland, shoals of cod arrive at the end of June and retire in October. By a comparison of these dates, it is apparent that their arrival first on one coast, then on the other, and their departure first from one coast, then from the other, are separated by exact intervals of six months. In both cases they come from and return to the deep sea, that is, the Atlantic Ocean. At Lofoden they arrive, and now alleged, for the purpose of spawning; at Newfoundland, certainly as fish of prey. At Lofoden, all other kinds of fish fly before them, and are suffered to escape; at Newfoundland, they follow in fierce pursuit shoals of capelin, cuttle fish, and herrings. At Lofoden, they arrive in their finest and best condition, leaving thin and emaciated; at Newfoundland, they arrive hungry and ravenous, devouring their prey with the greatest voracity, until at last they become gorged and no longer able to feed; in this state, previous to their departure, they can be seen through the clear water to refuse their favorite food held before them as bait. From the great bank of Newfoundland to Lofoden flows that powerful equalizer of temperatures, that warm river in the sea, the great Gulf Stream. In its course, and about midway between Lofoden and Newloundland, is the island of Iceland; cod leaving Lofoden in March to arrive at Newfoundland in June and July, might be expected between these dates to appear on the fishing grounds of this island; they actually do so, the chief cod fishery in Iceland occurring in the spring and summer. Finally, cod approach Lofoden from the southwest; Newfoundland is due southwest of Lofoden.

Weighing these facts, a very interesting and important inquiry presents itself, whether these multitudes of fish, retiring as they do from one and appearing on the opposite side of a great ocean at definite and exact intervals, may not be composed of the same individuals moving in prodigious numbers and probably in detached shoals, urged by a powerful instinct to pursue systematic and periodical migrations—to the East for the purpose of propagation, and to the West in pursuit of food.

SWEETS, AND THEIR MANUFACTURE.

The last thing a child inquires about is how the sugar plum it snaps up with such avidity, is made. Yet the manufacture of these delicacies—we had almost said necessaries—of the nursery is a thing worth witnessing. A marvellous change has come across the public opinion respecting sugar and sweets of all kinds. They used to be denounced by tender mothers as "trash and messes," and possibly because they were so denounced, they tasted all the sweeter to the little ones. Now there is no attempt to taboo that which delighteth the juvenile palate most. In moderation, there is nothing more wholesome than sugar; and it is, withal, nourishing and warming, in consequence of the large amount of carbon contained in it. Formerly lollypops were not a speciality; there were no large establishments for their production; they were, in fact, one of the miscellaneous items kept in bottles at the pastry cooks. All the higher-class sweets came from France and Italy, where for ages they have been famous for these delicacies. But the introduction of steam into their fabrication has given to England the lead in manufactured sugar articles, which are now made on the largest scale, and are vastly cheapened since the days when we used to spend our halfpence in toffy. The rude style of old is also gone. The eye must now be satisfied as well as the palate, even in the cheapest items. Think of a halfpennyworth of sweets done up in a ruby-colored gelatine packet. There was color, it is true, in some of the more showy sweets of old, but it was metallic color containing the most virulent poison. Doctor Hassall's analysis of this painted confectionery, published in the *Lancet* some years ago, exposed the villanous manner in which this vividly-colored sweetmeat was made attractive to the children by poisonous paint. The brighter the hue the more deadly the sweet. The brilliant green, for instance, with which the toy confectionery was adorned, contained arsenite of copper, as we shall presently show. One can quite understand the bad name sweets acquired when thus made up. There was vermilion in the reds, of course, and gamboge and chromate of lead in the yellows. No doubt many young children were absolutbly killed by plentifully partaking of these artistically poisoned comfits. The analysis of the *Lancet* has delivered us from this cause of infantile trouble. Nothing but harmless vegetable colors are now used, which if not so brilliant as metallic ones, are quite safe. The production of sugar plums on a manufacturing scale has caused swifter methods of fabrication. The small items, such as rings, scissors, shoes and hats, are cast in starch molds, and the delicate sweets containing some essences, such as pine apple essence and pear essence, are made in the same manner. It puzzles older heads than those of the children to know how this drop of delicious liquid gets into the center of the sweet. Like many other puzzling matters, it is very easily explained. The flavoring essence is mixed with the liquid sugar, and when poured into the mold the latter crystallizes immediately over the former. These essences, so nice to the taste, are the most remarkable examples of the power of chemistry to transform very repugnant materials into delicacies. Fusel oil is the base of the pear essence, and pine apple essence is obtained by diluting ether with alcohol. The chemist in his laboratory with great cunning manufactures scores of these essences, which are supposed to be the veritable product of delicate fruits. Some of the pretty forms that are made to take the fancy of the little ones are simply punched out of flat films of sugar rolled; some are cast, as we have before mentioned; some are pressed into shape, when soft, between engraved rollers. The drops and sweets that are quite clear are boiled so long that all the water has evaporated out of them. Such sweets must be immediately bottled up, or preserved from the air, otherwise they absorb water and become semi-liquid. Barley sugar is an example in point. If it is not hermetically sealed down in tins, it deliquesces, and loses all its crispness. It is as well to know that this is the purest of all sweets—being absolutely clarified sugar, and therefore the most wholesome for children. On the other hand, peppermint drops are the most open to sophistication. They should be made of crushed white sugar, mixed into a paste with gum. But the temptation to adulterate is too great for the dishonest trader to resist; consequently, in order to supply the cheap market, one half plaster of Paris is mixed with inferior sugar. One can quite understand the sickness that overtakes children sometimes after sucking these comfits; the wonder is that such a mass of plaster does not interfere more signally with their digestion. Jujubes, those flexible lozenges which stick so in the teeth, contain a large portion of gum. They are poured into tins to cool, stoved for several hours, sliced into sheets, and then cut by scissors into the well-known diamond shapes.

The veritable sugar plum, or almond drop, is made in a very interesting manner. A number of almonds, after being coated with a little gum to catch the white sugar, are thrown into a deep pan surrounded with steam. This pan revolves sideways at an angle of forty-five degrees. As it revolves the almonds, of course, tumble over one another, and while they are doing so, the workman pours over them from time to time liquid white sugar, allowing sufficient time to elapse between each supply for the sugar to harden upon the comfit. In this way it grows by the imposition of layer upon layer, until it is the proper size. By this simple motion, the sugar is deposited in the smoothest and most regular manner. Girls are largely employed in the sugar plum trade; they are quick, and stick well to their work; but they have a sweet tooth, and help themselves to the lozenges pretty liberally. As it is impossible to stop petty pilfering, they are given liberty to eat as much as they like, and the establishment we went over annually debited itself with a sum of two hundred pounds for the sweets consumed by the children. They certainly did not look any the worse for their unlimited consumption of lollypops, and gave a sufficient answer in their ruddy faces to the old charge against the deleterious nature of sugar plums.

The manufacture of the surprise nuts is done with the utmost speed by these little workwomen. The nut is first opened by means of a rose cutter; the kernel is then cleared out with a penknife, the hollow is filled with seedsweets, and the hole by which they have been introduced is sealed with chocolate. It is great fun, of course, when you have cracked a nut to find your mouth full of these small sugar seeds, whether you expected the surprise or not. In one part of the establishment we came upon the little artists coloring the small articles cast in sugar. It was all vegetable color, of course, and quite harmless. There is no great artistic talent required in the coloring operations they have to perform, and it is too cheaply paid to be very carefully done; but however poor they may be as works of art they are not unwholesome, which, as we have before said, was far from being the case a few years ago, before Doctor Hassall turned detective officer for the good of our little ones. Here, for instance, is the report of some mixed sugar ornaments, just such as we have described the children coloring:

"Purchased in Middle Row, Holborn. The confectionery in this parcel is made up into a variety of forms and devices, as hats, jugs, baskets, and dishes of fruits and vegetables. One of the hats is colored yellow with chromate of lead, and has a green hat band round it colored with arsenite of copper; a second hat is white, with a blue hatband, this pigment being Prussian blue. The baskets are colored yellow with chromate of lead. Into the coloring of the pears and peaches the usual non-metallic pigment enters, together with chromate of lead and middle Brunswick green. This is one of the worst of all the samples of colored sugar confectionery submitted to analysis, as it contains no less than four deadly poisons." That the fashionable West was guilty of selling sweets equally adulterated with those of the Drury Lane and Holborn shopkeepers, we give in proof one more analysis of a fish purchased in Shepherd's Market, May Fair: "The top of the nose and the gills of the fish are colored with the usual pink, while the back and sides are highly painted with that virulent poison, arsenite of copper." We might describe scores of specimens purchased in every quarter of the town