

being excited concerning it, he learned from Dr. Brewer all facts of interest connected with its production, namely, that it flowed from natural springs on the Watson flats; had been known to the Seneca Indians before the settlement of this region, and had been introduced by them as liniment or medicine to white persons, and sold to the druggists, and latterly had been gathered by Brewer & Watson, and used for lighting the sawmills of the firm and for lubricating purposes.

Drake visited the flats to examine the oil springs, and while there conceived the idea of boring to the sources of the oil. Returning to the East, he presented his view to a number of friends, and the result was that in the following year he came back to the oil region as the agent of an existing oil company at New Haven, who had purchased an oil tract, and Drake had full authority to bore, but very little means for the undertaking.

Drake may have got his idea from having heard that parties, sinking artesian wells for salt down on the Allegheny, were sometimes annoyed by meeting with a flow of oil. At all events, his first step was to visit the salt works near Pittsburgh, and engage experienced hands to go up and sink a well for him. A bargain was made; but it was not kept, the honest drillers for salt concluding, after Drake's departure, that the man must be a fool who thought of drilling for oil. A second trip to Pittsburgh, in a buggy (there was no railroad from Oil Creek then), resulted in another contract, which was broken for similar reasons. Drake then made a third trip; and finding it idle to talk of oil to men who were accustomed to regard it only as a nuisance troubling their salt water veins, he proposed to one of them to go with him and bore for salt. Salt seemed reasonable, and the man accepted his offer; and finally, in June, 1859, ground was broken for the first artesian oil well.

The drillers wished to make a large cribbed opening to the rock, which seems to have been their usual method of starting a well. But Drake said he would drive down an iron tube instead. This plan, which his friends claim was original with him (if so, it is a pity he didn't secure a patent for it, which would have been worth a fortune to him) was adopted, and it has been in use ever since, not only in sinking oil wells but in artesian boring for other purposes. The pipe was driven thirty-two feet, to the first stratum of rock. The workmen then drilled thirty-seven feet and six inches farther, entering what is known as the first sand rock, and making a total depth of sixty-nine and a half feet. They were at this point, when, one day—August 28, 1859—as the tools were lifted out of the bore, a foaming, dingy fluid, resembling somewhat, in appearance, boiling maple sugar, rushed up, and stood within a few inches of the top of the pipe. It was oil. In the meanwhile Drake had great difficulties to overcome, and greater were before him. There was still no railroad in that part of the country, and all his machinery and apparatus had to come in wagons from Erie, a distance of forty miles. He had to send to Erie for everything—once for a pair of common shovels, the store at Titusville being unable to furnish them. He had soon spent the money advanced to him by the company, and it refused to advance him more. He had exhausted his credit, too, and could not get trusted for the value of an oak plank or a center bit. He was thought insane, and people called him "Crazy Drake." His workmen were unpaid and discontented, and his enterprise must have failed when on the very verge of success, had not two gentlemen of Titusville, worthy of mention here—Messrs. R. D. Fletcher and Peter Wilson—having faith in the man and his work, come to his assistance. They indorsed his paper and loaned him money—and with this timely aid he struck oil.

Yet even now, with his well in operation, pumping twenty-five barrels a day, he seemed to be getting deeper and deeper into difficulty. He found, as he afterward said, that he had an elephant on his hands. There had been a demand for oil, at a good price, in small quantities, but there was no demand for it in large quantities. Imitators followed him, other wells were sunk, and the market was flooded. Teamsters charged \$10 for hauling a barrel to Erie, where it could not fetch \$10. The oil could not be generally used as an illuminating agent without being refined, and the coal oil refiners refused to touch a rival production, whose success in the market would be likely to injure their interests. Drake's health, if not his spirits, gave way under these complications, and he returned to the East about the time when petroleum—first refined by James McKeown and Samuel Kier, of Pittsburgh—was coming into general use. The great oil excitement came too late for poor Drake to profit by it. He died recently in a Connecticut poor house.

MALLEABILITY AND DUCTILITY OF METALS.

LECTURE BY JOHN ANDERSON, C. E., AT THE SOCIETY OF ARTS, LONDON.

In order readily to understand the two remarkable properties of malleability and ductility, which are now turned to such good account in almost every branch of the mechanical arts, it will be convenient to think of the malleable or ductile metals, such as lead, tin, copper, wrought iron, and steel, as substances that can be moved about like dough, that can be spread out as with a roller, that can be elongated by drawing out with the hands, that can be squirted through a hole by pressure like macaroni, or even that the dough can be pushed or gathered back again into its original mass of dough—that is, if proper means are employed to perform the operation gently, and this may be done without breaking the continuity of the particles of which the mass is composed. Such a statement may well seem fabulous, but it will be my province now to enumerate many things in connection with metal much more wonderful than what I have said regarding the

dough, and even more strange than the change in dough when overtaken by the biscuit state from the baking process.

It is difficult to understand the possibility of the malleable and ductile properties without fully realizing that their particles are fluid, in a certain sense, and that this is due to the molecular arrangement, not so fluid, as water, tar, or bitumen, but still a fluid which will flow in obedience to sufficient pressure, and just as those fluids require time when acted upon by gravity, so the metals require greater time and more force than gravity, the rate of flow being determined by the nature of the metal, the softer metals requiring less pressure and flowing faster than the harder; and in the case of steel the flow is extremely slow, but with pressure, time, and patience, it also may be overcome and made to flow gently into any shape or form while in the solid condition.

For a number of years the flowing property of the softer solid metals, such as lead and tin, has been taken advantage of very extensively, in the squirting of pipes and otherwise; and for thousands of years the malleable and ductile metals have been under treatment by man, and a vast number of facts have thus been accumulated; but it is due to M. Tresca, of Paris, to say, that he has done more, perhaps, than any other man in regard to the investigation of the natural laws by which the flow of solids is governed under varying circumstances, and the most interesting point of all is the great similarity that exists between the flow of solid metal and that of the flow of water—that in the flow of solids from an orifice there are the same converging currents, eddies, and that the quantity of metal issuing is dependent on the same conditions as water when issuing from orifices of different arrangement, and only differs in degree.

From time immemorial man has been familiar with gold as a flowing metal, both as malleable and ductile. It is in consequence of these properties that gold may be beaten into leaves so thin that it takes two hundred and ninety thousand to make one inch in thickness, or it can be drawn into a wire so fine that an ounce weight would extend a distance of fifty miles. The flowing action which takes place in coining a sovereign or other coin is very apparent. This process is not the mere stamping which it is generally considered to be, but the particles of the gold have really to flow in the same manner as a liquid, from one part of the die to another, in order to fill up the deeper recesses of the die from the shallow part of the space, and so form the perfect coin from the rush of gold penetrating everywhere. As, however, gold is not one of the most common metals of applied mechanics, its presence in the workshop is less seldom met with than some of the others which have been already enumerated.

The metals lead and tin are both malleable and ductile, but their malleability, or spreading-out property, is much greater than their ductility, or drawing property; and both being soft, and having the flowing property in a pre-eminent degree, they can thus be squirted or rolled to any extent, or into any form of pipe or sheet, so that the want of ductility is scarcely felt.

The diagram (Fig. 1) will explain the nature of apparatus which is employed to squirt these metals when in the solid state. It is a powerful syringe filled with solid metal, with pressure on the piston varying according to the dimensions; in some the force required is two thousand tons. In the earlier machines the arrangement was exactly the same as in an ordinary syringe, as shown in Fig. 1, but it was found that the fluid pressure of the metal within the syringe created such an inordinate amount of friction upon the inner surface as to rapidly wear out the several parts; but by a slight modification, more in accordance with sound principles, the defect has been obviated.

In the arrangement shown in Fig. 2, the piston contains the orifice, and in pressing against the upper surface of the metal, causes it to remain in a state of rest within the containing vessel; but as fluid pressure is equal in every direction, the solid finds the orifice as a point of less resistance, hence it flows outward in a continuous stream, thereby avoiding the friction of the solid lead within the cylinder. It will thus be observed that a rod of lead or tin can be squirted of any form or dimensions, depending on the die or orifice. In the Royal Arsenal may be seen lead thus squirted into continuous rod, and then wound upon reels like yarn. To be again unwound and made into bullets by self-acting compressing machinery; but the whole of the several processes are entirely due to the flowing property. Man's mechanism is very subordinate, and may be varied to any extent as circumstances may require.

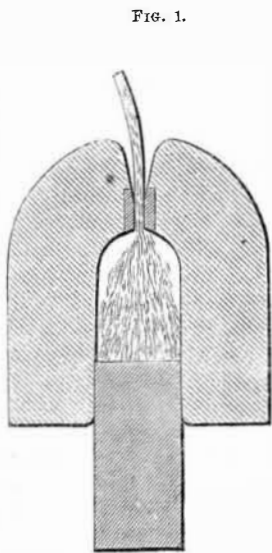


FIG. 1.

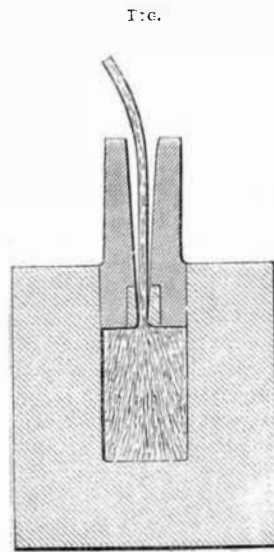


FIG. 2.

Pipes are made with the same facility as rods, by the mere insertion of a steel pin, the size of the required bore, placed in the bottom of the cylinder, and exactly in the center of the orifice, thus forming an annular space through which the metal flows outward as a continuous pipe; or, by making this pipe of sufficiently large diameter, and then cutting it open by a stationary knife as it leaves the machine the pipe becomes a sheet of lead, which, by means of suitable rollers, may be wound on a reel as a long web of sheet lead, or the sheet lead may be rolled out by rollers. In both ways the same mechanical work has to be done; the respective friction is a disputed point.

A very singular result was obtained by an attempt to squirt brass pipes, which are extensively used as steam boiler tubes and for gasfitting purposes. This brass consisted of 60 parts of copper and 40 parts of zinc, and of various other proportions, but, singular to relate, the pipes so squirted were zinc rather than brass; the most of the copper remained in the vessel and refused to flow. We are not to infer from this that the copper would not flow, but rather that the union between the zinc and the copper was less than the pressure necessary to make the copper flow: the mixture may have been more mechanical than chemical, or the temperature may have been such as to have had the zinc too near its melting point. Whatever is the explanation, the subject is well worth further experiment. In any such operation, the nearer the lead or other metal is to the liquid state, the easier it is accomplished; but it must be solid.

Lead or tin may be rolled out to any extent, either singly or both combined, or with a thin coating of tin or other metal upon one or both sides of the lead, so as to have a leaden substance, but yet covered with a tin surface, perhaps not thicker, if so thick, as the leaf called tinfoil, thus combining economy, with scarcely any disadvantage, for many purposes.

A beautiful illustration of the flowing property of tin is shown in the manufacture of the German capsule, in which the paint for artists is made up for sale and use. A button of tin, as in Fig. 3, is laid in the recess of a die in a fly press; a corresponding punch or die, a little smaller, is then brought down upon it with a smart blow, thus leaving, from the difference of dimensions, an annular space between them, when the metal at once squirts upward like water, but at a velocity much faster than the eye can follow, thus converting it into a perfect capsule. The form of the punch and die depends upon the article to be made, but in all provision has to be made for the admission of the atmosphere on the removal from the dies.

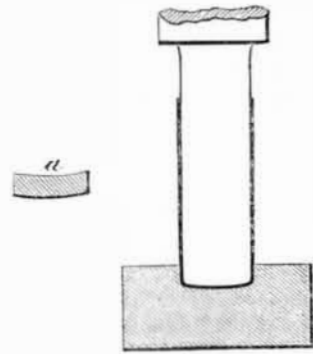


FIG. 3.

From these remarks it will be seen that, by understanding a few of the natural properties of these metals, how completely they are under man's control, and, by knowing the simple laws, he can modify the apparatus in thousands of different ways, in order to produce whatever may be required.

Correspondence.

The Editors are not responsible for the Opinions expressed by their Correspondents.

Speculative Moonology.

Messrs. Editors:—The idea that the full moon is hot seems to me so unscientific, that, though advanced or advocated by all the Herschels and backed by the Rosse reflector to boot, I take the liberty of offering a reason or two which may go to prove it untenable.

The convexity of the moon's surface is so much greater than that of the earth, that the moon must be effected by the sun's heat less than the earth is by a proportion considerably less than the ratio of size or diameter between the earth and moon would seem to indicate—nearly all the heat being deflected or reflected into space and dissipated. (And this convexity is possibly the cause of so little heat being reflected directly earthward.) The sun's rays can have but a small spot—small, as compared with the earth in this respect—on which they can at any time be said to fall vertically; a much less distance being required there than on the earth to reduce them to rays falling through all degrees of obliquity down to horizontal. So the vertical and nearly vertical rays may move around the moon quite slowly, and yet heat but at most a tropical belt, while there would be temperate and frigid zones as on the earth. But it would be doubtful whether that belt could by any possibility reach a temperature of 492° as claimed by modern astronomers.

All this, supposing the moon has all the conditions and requirements which the earth possesses for rendering sensible the solar heat; but the first and principal one of these is an atmosphere and astronomers tell us the moon has none at all; and without the atmospheric lens to contract the sun's rays together and squeeze out the heat, how, and from whence is free caloric to be obtained? On the earth it is known that at a certain height, where (and because) the air has but little density, snow never melts, even under the tropics; whence we may infer that at greater elevations and with air still more rarefied, ice and snow would remain unmelted even if exposed to the rays of an equatorial sun for a century—and with no atmosphere at all it would be still colder than with a little.

It is stated that the addition of a small per centum of a denser gas (carbonic acid) to our atmosphere or increased