

Scientific American.

MUNN & CO., Editors and Proprietors.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT
NO. 37 PARK ROW, NEW YORK

O. D. MUNN.

A. E. BEACH.

TERMS.

One copy, one year . . . \$3 00
One copy, six months . . . 1 50
CLUB RATES { Ten copies, one year, each \$2 50 . . . 25 00
 { Over ten copies, same rate, each . . . 2 50
TO BE HAD AT ALL THE NEWS DEPOTS.

VOL. XXVII., No. 14. [NEW SERIES.] Twenty-seventh Year.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1872.

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THE LATEST DISCOVERIES IN THE NATURE OF THE SUN.

Frankland has recently made the important discovery that when a flame of hydrogen gas burns in oxygen under high pressure, it becomes very luminous, and gives in the spectroscop a continuous spectrum without lines, the same as is the case with incandescent solid or fluid bodies. This induced Mueller to examine with the spectroscop the electric spark when it passes, not through highly rarefied, but through condensed, gases. He found that the hydrogen spectrum becomes continuous when the gas is highly condensed in the tube, and when it is raised to a very high temperature by means of the spark of a Ruumkorff coil, intensified by the use of a Leyden jar.

If the spark, which this apparatus produces with the Leyden jar, is passed through a tube in which the hydrogen gas is highly rarefied, the three characteristic narrow lines, the red, blue and violet, show themselves well defined; when the rarefaction is diminished so as to obtain a density equivalent to the mercurial pressure of one inch, the blue and violet lines become broader, while the space between D and F becomes feebly luminous. The rest of the spectrum remains, however, like a dark background.

By increasing the pressure of the gas, the two lines mentioned expand more and more, so that at last they appear as a luminous ground; at the same time the red line begins, at a pressure of 14 inches of the mercurial column to appear as a broad red band, which is no longer separated by a dark space from the continuous orange color of the background; but the space between is luminous.

At higher pressures, the luminosity of the continuous spectrum increases everywhere, so that, at a pressure of 40 inches, it is all illuminated between the extreme hydrogen lines, like a spectrum of a white hot solid body; but the light is somewhat differently distributed. At 60 inches mercurial pressure, the whole spectrum becomes indeed dazzling, and then the following curious and interesting phenomenon appears: The inside of the glass tube begins to volatilize and shows the line of the sodium vapor as a beautiful double dark line. It is thus seen that, for the production of the dark lines of Fraunhofer, the light of a glowing solid or liquid body is not indispensable.

In consequence of all this, Zoellner comes to the conclusion that the visible solar surface is formed by that layer of its hydrogen atmosphere in which, by increased pressure, the spectrum has become continuous; and that the glowing fluid surface of the solar globe lays below this bright luminous envelope of hydrogen. If we now consider the sun spots as local, slag-like, cooling products, floating on the glowing liquid surface and the penumbra as condensation clouds which surround the shores of the slag islands to a certain height, then the centers of the sun spots must necessarily appear deeper than the visible solar surface, and the phenomenon so minutely observed and described by Wilson is explained in the most natural manner. The depth of the dark solar spots below the luminous surface has been determined, by different observations, to be on an average about 8 seconds of a degree; as this is nearly the 225th part of the apparent solar diameter of 30 minutes, it is also the 225th part of the 800,000 miles of the actual solar diameter, which gives nearly 2,600 miles for the depth, which thus is about equal to the diameter of our moon.

Among the characteristic forms of the protuberances, there are many which compel the observer to the conclusion that enormous and powerful eruptions of glowing hydrogen are taking place. Zoellner has often seen such protuberances project to a height of 3 minutes of a degree, the tenth part of the solar diameter, 80,000 miles high in the time of 10 min-

utes. The enormous masses of hydrogen thus suddenly let loose into space, originate, according to this observer, in local accumulations, which form under the liquid surface, and which at last, by their increasing tension, break through the latter in the way that volcanic eruptions break through the solid earth's crust.

On the theory of the conservation of forces, Zoellner has calculated the temperature equivalent to the eruption of such a mass (as is observed in the protuberances), with the velocity and the distances measured. Without going into the mathematical details of his calculation, we will only communicate the results. They are that the temperature of the condensed gas under the liquid crust is 80,000° Fah. higher than the temperature of the solar surface above the crust. Further, it is easy to find that the velocity of the masses escaping, in 10 minutes to a height of 80,000 miles, is 133 miles per second, a velocity 20 times greater than that required, on our earth's surface, to be imparted to a body in order to cause it never to return when thrown upward.

Basing his speculation on the mechanical theory of heat, Zoellner finds the mean temperature of the solar surface to be 40,000° Fah., which is so high that iron must exist in the solar atmosphere as gas, and all chemical affinities between different substances must be totally suspended, which, in modern science, is called the condition of dissociation.

The temperature of the inner mass of the sun is therefore about 120,000° Fah.

Zoellner further calculates that, as the pressure on those places where the hydrogen spectrum begins to be continuous is about one quarter of the atmospheric pressure, the pressure of the solar atmosphere on the whole area of its liquid surface must be 134,000 terrestrial atmospheres. But on the inner space whence the protuberances escape, the pressure is 4,070,000 atmospheres; which is so enormous a pressure that, notwithstanding the high temperature prevalent there, the permanent gases, even hydrogen, can exist in a fluid condition alone.

This view of the solar constitution is the only one which agrees with the actual density or specific gravity of the mass of the sun, as determined by astronomy.

A WORKING MAN'S CITY.

An English paper states that on August 3, the first stone of a workman's city was laid with appropriate ceremonies at Wandsworth, England. This city, laid out in lots for 1,200 dwellings, is situated on the Shaftesbury Park estate, and is to be built by the Artisans', Laborers', and General Dwellings Company, established in 1867. The object of the association is particularly to enable workmen to become owners of their dwellings in the course of a stated number of years, by the payment of a small additional rent. The Shaftesbury Park estate contains about forty acres, and is situated near London, on the line of the railroad to Dover, by which road facilities for traveling to and from the metropolis will be afforded. The houses are to be thoroughly drained, and economically but substantially built. Ample school accommodations are to be provided, and a hall for lectures and public meetings is to be built. A coöperative store is to be established, and public houses are to be prohibited. The well known philanthropist, the Earl of Shaftesbury, has taken a great interest in this enterprise, and laid the first stone of the buildings.

We regard the above as an excellent movement, and we wish that something of the kind, on a still larger scale, might be inaugurated here, for the benefit of the poorer class of working men in this city. Their domestic situation is indeed deplorable. Living daily from hand to mouth, their earnings are absorbed by the payment of high prices for poor food, bad clothing and wretched apartments. The very first requisite for their improvement is the provision of good homes,—which they will never provide for themselves. Somebody must do it for them.

The good and the charitable, those who are blessed with a superabundance of this world's luxuries, others who have time to spare and willing hearts to help, might, we think, unite under one effective organization, having for its especial object the erection of suburban cottages, for the purpose here indicated.

It would be practicable for such a society to obtain charitable contributions for the purchase of lands on some of the steamboat or railway lines, accessible to New York, to grade, drain, and erect hundreds of cottages, to be let to working people, under proper sanitary regulations, at rentals merely equivalent to the cost of repairs or maintenance. School houses, reading rooms, and other needful appliances would of course be included in the plan. The operations of such a society might even be extended to the supply of the tenants with food, clothing and fuel at wholesale prices.

NEW CANAL THROUGH FLORIDA.

By authority of the Assembly of the State of Florida, a corporation has been formed with a capital of nine hundred dollars, to be increased to twenty millions of dollars if necessary, for the purpose of constructing a canal and improving the navigation of certain rivers, thus forming a new route for the shipment of goods, by water, from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico. The canal will extend from the St. John's river, through Lake Kerr and the Ocklawaha river to Silver Spring, which is the summit, and where an abundant supply of water exists, thence westerly twenty-four miles to Blue Spring, thence nine miles to Fort Clinch on the Withlacoochee, and down this river, nine miles, to the Gulf. Total, fifty-two miles. It is stated that any required depth of water can be obtained, the lockage will be small, and the expense of construction very moderate. Silver Spring and

Blue Spring are the outlets of two subterranean rivers and their supply of water is very constant. Silver Spring is stated to yield a flow of 638,320 cubic feet per minute, which is more than sufficient to supply a canal large enough to accommodate ocean steamers of the largest size.

SCIENCE IN COURT.

A trial for murder has lately been concluded at Carlisle, Pa., during which some very remarkable incidents, connected with the scientific attainments of the witnesses, were developed. The prisoner, Paul Schoeppe, M.D., an intelligent, highly educated physician, thirty years of age, a graduate of the university of Berlin, had, in 1868, established himself in practice at Carlisle, where his father had previously settled, and was there the clergyman of the Lutheran Church.

Dr. Schoeppe soon acquired the confidence and esteem of the community, and among others made the acquaintance of a maiden lady, Miss Steinecke, seventy years of age. Mutual admiration resulted in an engagement of marriage; the lady made a will, bequeathing her fortune of fifty thousand dollars to the doctor. They were shortly to be married, intending to leave at once for Europe to avoid the annoyance of the gossips. But their plans were frustrated by the sudden death of the lady, who was taken ill and died within twenty-four hours, attended by Schoeppe and another physician named Herman. No suspicion of death from any other than natural causes appears to have been harbored by anybody until some time afterward, when the relatives of the deceased filed, for probate, an old will by which the property of the deceased was to come to them. Dr. Schoeppe now presented a more recent will, made in his favor by Miss Steinecke, and demanded the property. The relatives thereupon raised the cry of murder by poison against him. The newspapers hounded them on, his neighbors were filled with suspicion, and the unfortunate man was arrested, indicted, tried, found guilty and sentenced to be hung. This was in December, 1869. On this trial two experts, Dr. J. S. Conrad and Professor Wm. E. A. Aiken, both of the Baltimore Infirmary, were the chief witnesses against the Doctor, and they testified that they had made careful medical and chemical *post mortem* examinations of the body of the deceased, and found prussic acid present in the stomach, and were satisfied that death had resulted from the administration of that poison. Dr. Herman also testified that, in his opinion, the symptoms shown during the illness of the lady were those resulting from poison.

The criminating evidence, though satisfactory enough to the judge and jury, was considered worthless by intelligent scientific men, the Doctor protested his innocence, and the strongest efforts were made for his reprieve. But his townsmen were firmly prejudiced against him, and there was a popular clamor for his execution. Two days before the appointed time for the execution, however, the Doctor's friends succeeded in obtaining a reprieve from the Governor, and subsequently a new trial was ordered, which has just taken place, resulting in the triumphant acquittal of the prisoner. On this second trial the three original witnesses, Conrad, Aiken, and Herman, were again brought forward, but this time they were subjected to a straightforward cross examination, during which they were compelled to give to the Court the most particular details of their alleged *post mortem* examinations, and were closely questioned as to the state of their actual knowledge in regard to the nature and action of poisons upon the human system, the symptoms of its presence and the proper methods of its detection. It clearly appeared from these questionings that the three witnesses were, confessedly, a trio of ignoramuses, not posted in the sciences pertaining to their own professions, and unqualified to give to a jury any reliable information in regard to the subjects they were so solemnly called upon to testify.

For example, Dr. Conrad testified that he had made a careful *post mortem* examination of all the important organs of the body of the deceased, such as the brain, heart, liver, and stomach, which he pronounced healthy. But, on cross examination, he said that he had not examined any of these organs under the microscope.

He stated that he found the heart healthy, but he had not examined it under the microscope, and was not apparently aware of the important fact, testified to by Professor Wood for the defence, that it is impossible for the best pathologist to decide that the walls of the heart are healthy unless a microscopic examination is made. Granular degeneration has been found by means of the microscope to exist, when to the unassisted eye, the heart looked perfectly healthy. Professor Wood also showed that some of the most common causes of sudden death are to be found in the kidneys and spinal cord; but these organs Dr. Conrad had failed to examine.

In regard to the brain, Dr. Conrad had also failed to make any careful examination, because he did not notice how much blood ran out of it when it was opened, and therefore could not tell whether there had been any congestion.

It was shown for the defence, on the highest medical authorities, that almost any disease of the brain substance may be hidden, without causing any notable symptoms, and the subject be suddenly stricken down with stupor and unconsciousness, without convulsions, gradually deepening into death—which were the symptoms of the deceased. It was also shown that softening of the brain or change in the small vessels can only be ascertained with absolute certainty by microscopic examination, which had been wholly neglected by the witnesses for the prosecution.

The testimony of Professor Aiken for the prosecution, in reference to the finding of prussic acid in the stomach of the deceased, was a lamentable confession of his chemical ignorance and careless manipulation. On his direct examina-