



NEW YORK, JANUARY 22, 1848

The Patent Office.

The business of the Patent Office is six months behind the age in examinations and five years behind the wants of our people.—After an application is made for a patent, no examination is had upon said application for six months after. The reason is, that there is not a sufficient number of Examiners to investigate the claims of applicants. The delay of examination and decision is most harassing to the minds of inventors. Six months are they kept in suspense relative to a favorable or unfavorable report, and all because there are not a sufficient number of Examiners appointed by Government, while there has been \$200,000 in the Treasury of the Patent Office, the revenue of inventions, the interest of which at 6 per cent would be \$12,000, which should have been paid to four extra Examiners last year, in order that justice might have been done to those who have applied for patents.

We have received communication after communication on this subject. Some inventors have called upon us and expressed themselves most bitterly against the manner in which business was conducted at the Patent Office. It is a rule that we have laid down in the management of our business, founded upon the principles we have laid down as the rule of our lives, never to indulge in a spirit of railing against men or institutions, unless that broad and open facts require broad and open strictures. We therefore will not say any more at present on this subject, than that in justice to inventors Congress should immediately adopt measures to examine the six months accumulated applications for patents at present on file in the Patent Office, and never for the future allow the business of examination to be more than one month behind the period of application; also never to apply for the future any of the revenue derived from mechanical invention to any other purpose than to spread a knowledge of the Mechanic Arts.

Architectural Taste and Design.

The first great works of architecture still exist on the plains of Egypt. These rather astonish by their grandeur than please by their elegance. The earliest ideas of architecture were elevated by devotion, hence arose the magnificent temple as a sublime tribute to display the glory of the Deity. It is not possible now to discover the causes which originated an original and early elegant style of architecture in the Isles of Greece. Grecian civilization is still a wonder. It was there where the art of building early advanced to a degree of perfection which has never since been surpassed by all the united architectural genius of the whole civilized world. The Grecians invented particular styles of architecture which admit of no improvement by alteration. Trifling changes in the capital of a column may have pleased vain artists, but true taste has always been offended. Simple magnificence is the grand secret of the beautiful and sublime in ancient architecture. The Greeks drank in beauty from the most perfect living models in sculpture, and their architects designed and constructed, having a taste for the perfection of form, just proportion and harmony of parts. Profusion of ornament was no part of Grecian taste. What they copied was the most beautiful of nature's works, justly considering that the most perfect works of the Deity were higher than the heavens superior to the most elaborate trickery of showy art. We think that it would be well if some of our architects studied nature more and tawdry art less, for it is very obvious to the most illiterate man who has anything like a fine taste at all, that the prevailing taste especially in *Sacred Architecture*, exhibits neither originality in design, good taste in copying, nor chastity in ornamenting. The Gothic style is all the rage, and it is a noble style

where it is to be found genuine and unmixed. This style is associated with ideas of sublimity and gloomy grandeur. The long drawn aisle, the pointed arch and the fretted roof, inspire us with feelings of awe if from association we call up again to inhabit the Abbey, the monks of the middle ages and the heroes of the days of chivalry. Without them, we confess, all ideas of beauty or sublimity, are lost in the complicated parts of abrupt angles and jutting points. Instead of copying the purest, or designing in the chastest Gothic style, our architects neither adhere to the one nor the other—they wander both from the laws of nature and propriety. The *florid style*, which seeks to cover up a defective taste, is exhibited in gaudy colors on the one hand to contrast with gloomy oak graining on the other. The glaring flashy colors of huge windows, seem to constitute the only idea of grace and beauty in the minds of some architects, even although the stained glass should exhibit only a barbarous contrasting of colors, instead of natural combinations and neat and correct arrangement.

The grandest temple in which we could worship Divinity, would be under the trees of the eternal forest, with the wild winds echoing responsive to the pastor's voice. There indeed the gloom of the forest shade, "the place, the scene," would conspire to lead the mind "from Nature up to Nature's God."—Such scenes undoubtedly gave rise to the Gothic style, but it is certainly a violation of the law of nature to rear structures when from a passing cloud, artificial light is required to illumine the long drawn aisle. The glaring yellow light too, so prominent, in some of our new churches, by being so grievously painful upon the optic nerves, we think should at once teach our architects, that although they dazzle by glittering show, it is at the expense of violating nature's law.

Historical decoration has a good effect in architectural design, but the representations of historic events must all be truthful, or the reverse of pleasure is experienced in beholding them. Designs intended to chime sweetly with the laws of association must convey by the organs of vision to the mind, the stirring memory of bygone years. When we look upon the large stained windows of Trinity church, we are apt to exclaim, "Were there only six apostles?" The most elevated architectural design is that which strikes and pleases the most uncultivated minds. "Like the fabric of the universe it derives much of its grandeur from its simplicity." It is our opinion, that our most wealthy and recently erected churches, exhibit more gaud and gilding than grace or beauty. The only redeeming feature in connection with them (and for which we forgive many faults,) is comfort and convenience, without which the most perfect architectural design is not perfect.

Modern Science.

How astonishing are the results of modern mechanical science. The commerce across the deserts of Arabia, once so great and extensive, has been destroyed by the Mariner's Compass and Tyre and Sidon have fallen from their ancient commercial greatness. The steam engine has struck down the trade of the Caravan and the steamboat rides bravely on the waters of the Nile proclaiming to the inhabitants of the Delta the powers and genius of a people belonging to a country which was unknown to Hero. Our leviathans of the new world, proclaim to the inhabitants of the old, the power and civilization of the fabled Atalanta, and Asia, the cradle of the human race, is now receiving lessons of freedom and knowledge from the land of the setting sun. American citizens are highly honored in the city of Constantinople and are selected by the Sultan as teachers of science. There is a bright path laid out for our country, that of carrying freedom, science and knowledge to the ends of the earth. May we not neglect to tread in this path of true glory. The eyes of the whole world are now fixed intensely on America, and according as we act, right or wrong, so do we exert an influence upon other nations for good or evil. Nations should be as exemplary in their characters, as individuals, and we hold it to be the greatest glory of any nation to be great in knowledge and virtue.

For the Scientific American. Mechanical College and Experimental Workshop.

While the numerous papers of our country are teeming with agricultural information and our General and State governments have singularly and laudably encouraged this most important science, it is to be regretted that so little attention has been paid to the encouragement of mechanical skill or improvement in the Mechanic Arts. This great State has its Geological Museum and Agricultural Department at Albany, all kept up at no little expense. This is right, but why has our mechanics been neglected? Why not have a Depository of the Mechanic Arts in our capital? Is the genius which linked the Erie with the Atlantic, only of so much worth as to deserve neglect? Is the genius which has made a highway for the iron horse to gallop on the lightning's wing from end to end of our country, been of so little notice as not to deserve a single word of State encouragement or a single act expressive of gratitude for all the benefits and honors conferred by American Mechanical genius? The above queries are answered in the affirmative by a stolid neglect of giving the least encouragement to, or making any appropriation for American mechanical genius. It is a shame for us as citizens of the State of New York, that although we have been distinguished for mechanical skill and ingenuity, we have no National Depository which proclaims a national interest taken in mechanical inventions. The mechanic and farmer are twin brothers, their trades go hand in hand—the one cannot do without the other. We would therefore desire to call attention to this subject and request an equal share of attention and encouragement for the one as well as the other.—Why not institute a Mechanical Workshop.—We believe that such an Institute would be of great advantage to our people and country.

Yours, &c. J. L.

We commend the above suggestions to the American Institute. Considering the large revenue derived by the Institute from exhibitions of machinery, we trust that the members and officers will at least remember that if they establish an Agricultural College and Experimental Farm, they ought also not forget that the Institute was established with the primary object in view, solely of encouraging American manufactures.—Ed.

State Prisons and Employments.

There are now three State Prisons in this State—one at Sing Sing, one at Auburn, and the other in Clinton county. In these Prisons a great number of mechanical trades are carried on by companies contracting with the overseers for the labor of the prisoners at certain valuations for their labor per day. A great deal of good mechanical work is finished in these prisons and sold in our cities for less than our mechanics can make them. This has long been a cause of complaint to our mechanics. The Clinton County prison was instituted to prevent the learning of mechanical trades in prisons and for the purpose principally of mining a valuable seam of iron ore and making the metal into blooms. Under the superintendence of Ransom Cook, Esq. a good practical mechanic and scientific man, this prison will be an honor to his energy, skill and urbanity. We have frequently heard men, well acquainted with the whole scheme, state it as their deliberate opinion, that Mr. Cook of all other men in this State could make that institution successful.

Pennsylvania Coal.

The value of the coal mined in Pennsylvania is not much less than that of her iron. It is the only district in the world where Iron Ore and Anthracite Coal are found together, and in an abundance which is literally inexhaustible. In the western part of the state. Bituminous Coal abounds to an unlimited extent. It is often sold as low as \$1.50 per ton, at Pittsburg, near which place it is found in great quantities very near the surface of the ground.

From all these facts it is manifest that Pennsylvania is far more richly endowed with natural treasures than any other section of the Union. Her Iron and Coal deposits are many times greater than those of Great Britain and France combined. The lapse of cen-

turies will scarcely be able to make any perceptible impression upon them. It used to be a favorite and a true saying of Professor Silliman, that the "sun and the coal mines of Pennsylvania, would burn out together."

Whole Meal and Fine Flour.

We believe that it is quite possible for great men to make great mistakes, and we have been led to form this opinion respecting Professor Johnston's investigations on Bread making, which have been published somewhat extensively in this country, copied from Blackwood's Magazine.

The Professor says that in 1000 pounds of whole grain there are of fat 28 lbs. and in a thousand of fine flour 20, while in 1000 lbs. of bran there are no less than 60 lbs. of fat. Of muscular matter he says, that in 1000 lbs. of whole grain, there are 156 lbs. while there are only 130 lbs. in 1000 lbs. of fine flour. Of bone material and saline matter he says that "a thousand pounds of bran, whole meal and fine flour contain, respectively:—

Bran	:	:	:	700 lbs.
Whole meal	:	:	:	170 lbs.
Fine flour	:	:	:	60 lbs.

"So that in regard to this important part of compound necessary to all living animals but especially the young who are growing and to the mother who is giving milk, the whole meal is three times more nourishing than the fine flour.

Upon the same principle of reasoning as the learned Professor's we know a farmer, who fed a young horse with oat straw to give it a *good foundation*, as he said in our presence. "True, Mr. Hichcock," remarked a shrewd friend of ours, "you are in a fair way of getting your animal into a *permanent condition*." That horse was dead in three weeks after we heard the above remark, and if bran is superior to fine flour, we think that it must be excellent as an article of diet, but it is a pity the Professor overlooked the claims of straw

Growth of the West.

Ten years ago at the mouth of a little river in Wisconsin, on the border of Lake Michigan, a solitary cabin stood amid the wide-spread forests, the residence of an individual who united in his person the character of farmer and hunter. For ten miles on every side no trace of another civilized human being could be found—and the Indian traced the deer through the woods, unmolested by the white man, and unobstructed by fences and grain-fields. At the present day, the occupant of that cabin, who was also the owner of at least a square mile of land, is the Mayor of a city which has grown up in the short space of ten years on the limits of what was once his own property,—a city containing over 13,000 inhabitants with a commerce which promises to make it one of the most flourishing Lake ports of the West, and the seat of wealth, intelligence and industry. That city is Milwaukee.

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