For the Scientific American Rumsey the first Steamboat Builder.

Mr. Editor :- The history of Filet and his steambout in No. 17, reminded me of a conversation I had lately with an old gentleman of the name of Dunham, who has been spending, the winter in our place. He said he had seen and that it was built at Shepardstown, Virginia, by Charles Rumsey. During the time Rumsey was building his boat, Dunham was attending school one or two hundred yards from the river and had an opportunity of seeing it every day. This boat resembled a canal boat, and the only part of the machinery visible on the outside was the top of the boiler, which rose above the deck, and some pipes from the top of the boiler which bent down into the inside. The boiler was made of two hollow half globes with a wide flange on each by which they were bolted together, and holding a barrel or more apiece. One half of the boiler was afterwards used at Shepherd's mill to cook hog feed in, and was still there some ten years ago. Dunham did not see the inside works and could not say any thing about them. The boiler and other castings were made at a furnace just below Harper's Ferry.

He told me the names of the persons who worked the boat, but I do not remember them. He remembers distinctly the time the banks of the river to see Rumsey's folly, as it was called. When all was ready to start Rumsey invited all who wished, to get on board, but there were but five who did so, Colonel Morrow, then a member of Congress, Colonel Brake and son, Henry Bedinger, and one other whose name he does not remember. The boat first started down stream but soon turned and went up four or five miles and back at a rate that the people walked up and down stream and kept alongside. A short time after this the riverrose suddenly, and the boat breaking from its fastenings, was carried down stream a short distance and dashed to pieces, where parts of it remained for several years. Shortly after this trial Col. Morrow took Rumsey to Congress with him and endeavored to have an appropriation made for him, but did not succeed. Mr. Dunham thinks this boat was built as early as 1784, but is not certain.

Mr. Rumsey was a tall, spare, dark complectioned man, and very sedate.

Yours respectfully, L. G. M. Bellefentaine, Logan Co., Ohio.

More about Gutta Percha.

The tree from which Gutta Percha is procured, belongs to the natural order sapotaceæ found in abundance in the Island of Singapore, and in some dense forests at the extremity of the Malayan Peninsula. It attains a considerable size, even as large as six feet coke used largely for furnaces. in diameter; is plentiful in Sarawak, and most probably all over the Island of Borneo. The timber is too loose and open for building purposes: but the tree bears a fruit which yields a concrete oil, used for food.

Gutta Percha is contained in the sap and milky juice which quickly coagulates on exposure to the air, from 20 to 30 pounds being about the average produce of one tree. For collecting the sap, the trees used to be felled, barked, and left dry and useless.

This way of getting the sap would soon, from the great demand of the article, have destroyed entirely the source from whence it is procured, but from late accounts the trees are forbid to be felled, and the say is only taken from them like as from the caoutche

The gutta is received in scraps, or in rolls of thin layers. It is first freed from impuri ties by deviling or kneading in hot water, when it is left soft and plastic, and of a whitish gray color.

Whenthus prepared, the Gutta has many curious properties. Below the temperature When softened in hot water, it may easily be cools, to its former rigidity; and it may be tenacity, that a slip one eighth of an inch or two miles of the river. These beds are ter.

broke with a pressure of 56 lbs. When drawn millstone grit, which leads me to think we out, it remains without contracting

Coal Field on James River Virginia.

rocks consisting of quartzose grits, sandstones oney. and shales, precisely agree in character with the ordinary coal-measures of Europe. Several rich seams of bituminous coal (the principal one being occasionally from 30 to 40 ft. thick,) occur in the lower division of the straof the basin, where they have a steep dip, while they are horizontal towards the centre. The fossil plants which have been determined by Mr. C. Bunberry, differ specifically, and most of them generically, from those found tossil in the older or paleozoic coal formations of Europe and North America, and resemble the plants of the oolite, of Whitby, in Yorkshire: some few, however, being allithe upright position of the Calamite and Equiseta, it has been interred that the vegetables which produced the coal, grew on the spots boat was first started. There were something where the coal is now found, and that the their wives and their children, but with their strata were formed during the continued subsidence and repeated submergence of this part of Virginia. The shells consist of countless individuals, of a species of Possidonomya, much resembling P. minuta, of the English trias. The fossil fish are nomocercal, and differ from those previously found in the new red sandstone (trias) of the United States. Two of them belong to a new genus, sidered by Prof. Agassiz, and Sir P. Egerton, of the coal made by Dr. Percy, and Mr. Henry, shows that it contains the same elements -carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, in the same proportions as the older bituminous coal, of Europe and North America. Alternating layers of crystalline coal, and oth ers like charcoal, are observed in many places, and in the charcoal Dr. Booker has detected vegetable structure, not of Ferns or Zamites, or any Conifer, but perhaps of Calamites. The coal yields abundance of gas used for lighting the streets of New York and Philadelphia, and some fatal explosions have taken place in the mines, some of which are 900 feet deep. Volcanic rocks, dikes, and beds of intrusive green stone, intersect the coal measures, in several places, hardening the shales, and hardening the associated coal, the latter being in some places turned into a

An Alabama Coal Field.

Near Mr. Camp's bloomery a few miles below Scottsville, the junction of the coal may be seen, the latter being almost vertical while the coal measures are inclined at an angle of 20 degrees. Near this place fragments of coal are imbedded in the sandstone.

My examination of the Cahawba coal field extended as high up as Lacy's ferry, about thirty miles above Centreville. In this distance its greatest breadth is directly west of Montevallo and is about twelve miles. From the little Cahawba which is its southern boundary, to Lacy's ferry, is 20 miles An undulating line drawn from Shultz's creek near Scottsville, and following the ridge east of the limestone to Roup's creek, will mark its western boundary. On the east it extends within one or two miles of Montevello reaches within three miles of the ferry.

of 50 degrees, it is as hard as wood, but it will ling up into fragments of regular form like the spine of the northern latitudes. The ground quantity of hot water and applied hot ordried receive an indentation from the finger nail. latter. The beds are generally more highly on which the well was sunk, is a high rolling in an oven. cut and mould d; and it will harden, as it also much thicker than any I have yet seen country was once covered with water, for be- mail on the 31st ult. softened and lardened any number of times | Cahawba, I have determined the super-posi- 55 feet below the surface, the diggers came | patented in England in 1816 for rolling iron without injury to the material Unlike call tion of at least four beds, varying in thickness upon what appeared to be a new soil, compooutchouc it has no elasticity; but it has such between ten and four feet, and within one sed of dead leaves and decayed vegetable mat- yours and it we cannot tell.

thickness, sustained 42 lbs. weight, and only low in the series—some of them below the have not yet reached the corresponding thick beds on the Warrior.

Between the coal and iron ore I had the This coal field, which is about twenty pleasure to find an excellent fire-stone that the first steamboat ever built (as he supposed) | 12 miles in breadth from east to west, is sit-| then, limestone, iron ore, fire-proof stone, uated 12 miles west of Richmond, in Virgin- coal and water power side by side and withia, in the midst of a granitic region. The in the limits of a few miles. - Professor Tu-

Customs and Things.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, good manners required that persons of different sexes, when invited to parties, should sit down in couples, and each couple should ta, which are arranged in a trough, and are have one plate between them. In families, much disturbed and dislocated on the margin one goblet was deemed sufficient for all; and St. Bertrand was disinherited by his father, who was afflicted with the leprosy, for having wiped the edge of the goblet before he drank.

Beds, now such indispensable pieces of furniture, were to the Greeks and Romans articles of greatluxury. When they exchanged the leaves, and skins of beasts, on which their heroic ancestors reposed, for matresses, and feather birds, the bedsteads were someed, to fossils of the European trias. From times ivory, sometimes of cedar, and sometimes of silver. It would be difficult, now-adays, in the middle ranks of life, to find beds dogs and their friends. An invitation to such a couch was then considered the strongest given.

The first mirrors were made of metal. Cicero carries the origin of them up to Esculapius. Moses, too, makes mention of them. It ror was made of silver at Rome. Pliny menand one to Tetragonolepis, and they are con- tions a brilliant stone, probably talc, thin slices of which being fixed upon a bright metal to indicate the liassic period. The analysis reflected objects with great perfection. The 2,566 lbs. to the square inch. first mirror of glass appeared in Europe in the latter end of the Crusades.

Active Pursuits the best Cure of Grief.

Grief, of whatever measure it may exist, will always be most obstinate and dangerous in those unengaged in active pursuits, and who have consequently leisure to brood over their troubles. Bodily and mental activity, and more especially, when the result of necessity must, by creating fresh trains of association, and diverting the thoughts into new channels, tend to weaken the poignancy of affliction. Nothing in truth, serves more effectively to lighten the calamities of life, than steady and interesting employment. It is, as we conceive for the reason that temales are generally exempt from the cares and excitements of business, and confined at home to their own relatively tranquil domestic duties, that they so much oftener pine and sicken under wounded affections than our own more active and busy sex. Dr. Good observes that "suicide is frequent in the distress of sieges. in the first alarm of civil commotions, or where they have subsided into a state of calmness, and the mischiefs they induced are well pondered; but it seldom takes place in the activity of a campaign, whatever may be the fatigue, the privations, or the sufferings endured. On the fall of the Roman empire, and throughout the revolution of France, selfdestruction was so common at home, as at last to excite but little attention. It dees not appear, however, to have stained the retreat of the ten thousand under Xenophon, and according to M Falret, was rare in the French army during its flight from Moscow."

Geologicai.

Mr. W. B F from which point it gradually contracts till it bus, Illinois, in digging a well on his premi- Address Lowber & Leroy, No. 261 Water st. ses, at the distance of sixty-two feet below The coal of the Cahawba differs in many the surface came upon two pieces or portions respects from that of the Warrior. It is of a log, of what was once no doubt a large stones can be made of plaster of Paris, ground more lamellar in its structure, seldom break- itree. The bark upon it resembled that of the imarble and soda, mixed together in a suitable inclined, being often vertical, and they are prairie, and it would appear that the whole on the Warrior. On the right bank of the fore coming upon the piece of timber, about

The Clasp Coupling Joint.

This invention of Messrs. West & Thompson, is creating no small excitement among our most eminent engineers and scientific men. The British Attorney General has signed his name to an English Patent, and we miles long from north to south, and from 4 to must one day be of great value. You have, shall soon be able to herald one from our own Patent Office. This would have been done already had Congress granted at an earlier date the necessary increase of force in the Patent Office. This joint has just been experimented with at the navy yard at Washington, and the following testimonials and opinions regarding the qualities, is something of which the inventors may well feel proud. Coming as they do from men who are so justly able to form correct opinions, and who are above uttering anything but unbiassed opinions.

> U. S. NAVY YARD, WASHINGTON. March 28, 1848.

This is to certify that by order of the Hon. Secretary of the Navy I have applied one of West & Thompsons newly invented "Clasp Coupling Joint" on the steam pipe of one of the steam engines of the yard, for the purpose of testing its merits. It gives me pleasure to state that its application has been entirely successful, and also, that it is in my opinion, far superior to any method of connecting pipes that I am acquainted with. Its great superiority consists in the facility of its application and the entire certainty of its efficacy, es well as in the economy of its manufacture. the saving of material in its construction, and of time in its application in any situation proof of affection and confidence that could be where it may be used, compared with any of the old methods.

I would further state that I subjected one of these joints (21-2 inchesdiameter) connecting two pieces of English cap welded tube to was in the time of Pompey that the first mir hydrostatic pressure for the purpose of ascertaining its strength and efficiency, and do also certify that the joint so connected stood a pressure without leaking or giving way, of

> WM. M. Ellis, Chief Eng'r. & Machinist. I agree with the above statement.

C. S. McCAULY, Commandant, Having witnessed the trial of the above named joint when subjected to the pressure named above, I certify to its correctness.

WM. SEWEL, JR., Chief Eng'r. U. S. N.

Sound Visible.

In this age of wonders, what will the world think when we assure it that a method has been discovered and matured by which sound will be made visible to the human eye, its various forms and ways demonstrated to sight and the power to discriminate between the tones of one musical instrument and another be as complete as to observe the action of water when disturbed by any material cause? The experiments, we believe, are likely to be, ere long, repeated in the Royal Society. The exhibition of effects on fine sand has probably led to this astonishing issue.—Literary

[Wonders will indeed, never cease, and truths can never be forgotten, and verily the fact of sound becoming visible reminds us of "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"M. C. of Lebannon."-We have not been able to get what you desired, or we should have been happy to do so. We may be able at some other time, but then it may be too late for your purpose.

"S. K. of Mass."-For the relative strength of pillars see Tredgold and Hodgkisson's work, and make out the calculations for yourself .-The experiments of Hodgkisson are valuable.

"S. W. of N. Y."-The tinned lead pipe n be had for the same as the other kind New York.

"R. S. W. of S. C."-The cement for Mill

"A R. of N. H."-You were answered by

"J. M. of Mass."-There was a machine pipes. What difference there may be between

" E. A. D. of N. Y."-Your plan for saw-

ing curves by patterns is both ingenious and feasible to all appearance. An operative model would, however, as in all such cases afford ground for pruning all that is extraneous.

E. F. S. of Geo."-We have received yours, have obeyed your orders and are much yours, have obeyed your orders and are much obliged for your kindness. You will see an engraving of Mr. Winder's pump in No. 1 of this vol. Scientific American. We do not know the price and they cannot be had in this Harlford, Ct., know the price and they cannot be had in this

"S. L. of N. Y."-We shall be able to inform you in four weeks, not before.

" R. J. of Ohio."-Your plan is not novel. Gutta Percha bands have already been used for the same purpose.

"C. D. of Vermont."-We will give your communication due attention.

" M. McN. of Va."-Look at the water wheel of Messrs: Teller & Dillenback in another part of this paper. We think that would suit you exactly.

"S. J. G. of Ky."-Seven dollars would get a good cut, and the cut yours. This is the best thing you can do.

Ranlett's Architect.

No. 2 Volume 2, of this splendid work is just published and like its predecessors, it is worth, of being truly called a "national work on architecture." This number contains perspective and sectional views of a splendid Italian Villa, and not only the views of the Villa, but the manner of laying out the ornamental grounds around the building, with full specifications. For sale at this office, price 50 cents.

Universal History.

No. 2 of this valuable work has just come to hand fresh from the press and fresh with interesting events of the days of yore. It treats mostly upon the times when the earth was young and those gigantic kingdoms of oriental grandeur, Babylon, and Ninevah, and Thebes existed. The price is 25 cents, and published by Graham of the Tribune Build-

American Railroad Journal.

We receive this Journal regularly, and the publishers would hear from us it we did not. It is filled with sound information especially relative to Railroads. It is published in Philadelphia, No. 105 Chessnut straet, price \$5 per annum.

American Phrenological Journal.

This Magazine for April is very interesting as all the numbers are. There is a cut in it of F. Hunt, Editor of the Merchant's Magazine, and a phrenological description of his character, which must be interesting to all who have a taste for this Science.

The Minstrel Pilgrim.

A neat little book of poems bearing the above title, has just been published by Clark and Austin, 205 Broadway.

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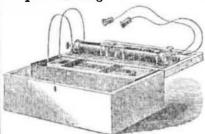
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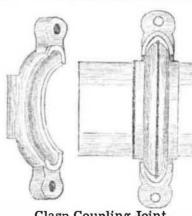
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ty to any part of the country.



Clasp Coupling Joint.

Clasp Coupling Joint.

MESSRS. WEST & THOMPSON would respectfully call the attention of Engineers, Owners, or Agents of Steamboats, proprietors of Factories and others, to their new and improved method of jointing steam and other pipes together, by which means any person is enabled to connect them. For simplicity and perfection they are not equalled, and the price of their Clasp Joints will be found cheaper than the others, as they do not require any flanges, braized or soldered on the pipe, no holes to drill, or grummets to make, nor white or red lead used to make them tight; and their weight is not one halfthat of the old Flange Joint. They may be seen and obtained at the office of the Patentee, 29 Centre street, near the City Hall, where all orders left will be punctually attended to.

ally attended to.
This is to certify that I have examined what is called West & Thompson's Clasp Coupling Joint, for pipes to conduct steam and other fluids, and consider it to be a new and most invaluable improvement. m25 ROBERT L. STEVENS.

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Girandoles—Gilt, silvered and bronzed, various pats.

Candelabras do do do China Vases and Bohemian Glass Vases do Hall Lanterns, a large assortment, plain and cut. do with stained and Bohemian Glass

Lights.

Lamp Wicks, Chimneys and Shades of all kinds.

Paper Shades, a large assortment of new patterns and styles.

OILS—Sperm, Whale and Lard, of the best quality Superior Camphene and Burning Fluid.

November 29. 1847.

Gutta Percha Bands.

THE undersigned have been appointed Agents by the American Gutta Fercha Company, and are now in readiness to furnish Bands and Belting of any size or length, at the following

SCALE OF PRICES.

Inches.	Cents.	Inches. Cents.	Inches. Cnts.
2 :	14	5 : 38	9 : 71
2 1-2	17	5 1-2 40	9 1- 2 73
23.4	19	6 : 45	10 80
3 :	20	6 1-2 49	10 1-2 85
3 1-2	26	7 : 57	11 : 90
3 3-4	28	7 1-2 58	11 1-2 95
4 :	29	8 : 63	12 : 100
4 1-2	35	8 1-2 67	

All Bands of extra thickness willbe made by special agreement. Light Bands for Cotton Mills furnished at short notice.

MINN & CO. New York. m18

Lap welded WroughtIron Tubes FOR TUBULAR BOILERS,

From 1 1-4 to 6 inches diameter, and any length, not exceeding 17 feet.

THESE Tubesare of the same quality and manufacture as those extensively used in England, Scotland, France and Germany, for Locomotive, Marine and other Steam Engine Boilers.

THOMAS PROSSER, Patentee, d26

28 Platt street, New York

Johnson's Improved Shingle Machine.

IW achine.

The Subscriber having received Latte Patent for an improvement in the Shingle Machine, is now ready to furnish them at short notice, and he would request all those who want a goo! I machine for sawing shingles, to call on him and a famine the improvements he has made, as one eight a more shingles can be sawed in the same give. I time than by any other machine now in use. any other machine now in use.
Augusta, Maine, Oct. 1, 1847. J- G. JOHNSON.

WOODENGRAVE ON THE PARTY OF TH

37—The above is prepared to execute all ordersat the shortest notice and on the most reasonable terms.

ENGRAVING ON WOOD, DESIGNING
AND DRA WING.

THE Subscriber would respectfully inform the public that he is prepared to furnish Engravings on Wood, in every style of the art, upon the most reasonable terms; also designs and drawings of machinery, for specifications, at the shortest motice and with the most undeviating punctuality.

Views of Manufactories and Country Stores engraved on Wood from Daguerreotype plate with correctness.

All work executed by the subscriber reservance.

rectness.

All work executed by the subscriber warranted to give satisfaction. References can be given to some of the best mechanics in the country as regard ability, &c.

bility, &c.
A. R. HAIGHT, 128 Fulton street, N. Y.
Room No. 1, Sun Buildings. j15 3m*

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REMOVED.

THE SUBSCRIBER has removed his Patent Agen cy from 12 Platt to 189 Water street.

The object of this Agency is to enable Inventors to realize something for their inventions, either by the sale of Patent Goods or Patent Rights.

Charges moderate, and no charge will be made un tilthe inventor realizes something from his invention. Letters Patent will be secured upon moderate terms. Applications can be made to the undersign ed, personally or by letter post paid.

SAMUEL C. HILLS, Patent Agent.

Machinists Tools.

Steam Boilers

BENTLEY'S Fatent Tubular and other Boilers of any size, shape or power, made to order, by SAMUEL C. HILLS, f8 159 Water et.

Premium Slide Lathes.

THE subscriber is constantly building his improved Lathes of all sizes, from 7 to 30 feet long, and can execute orders at short notice.

JAMES T. PERKINS,

Hudson Machine Shop and Iron Works, Hudson, N. Y.