



NEW YORK, APRIL 14, 1849.

**City Fountains.**

The public works of a city or country, are justly held to be evidences of the taste and refinement of the people. In comparing the public works of our city, with a standard of correct taste viz., nature and association—the sublime and the beautiful, we have to lament the absence of the one and a splendid disregard to the other. In decorative art, our public buildings look as if their projectors and art had always resided in different hemispheres. Our public parks have made some pretence to ornamental embellishment in that line, but the taste displayed, compared with the law of association, is out of joint.

As much taste and as correct a knowledge of the law of harmony, can be displayed in the design of a fountain as in the design of a monument. There is no city in the world that is better adapted to exhibit a number of tasteful public fountains than the city of New York, but our public fountains have displayed a very inferior taste, as compared with the small fountains erected by many of our citizens to adorn the parterres in front of their mansions. We are glad to perceive that the Bowling Green uncouth rocky fountain is torn from its position. It was certainly a paragon upon the character of our city. We hope it will be replaced by something of a tasteful character. It is extreme folly, and shows a great want of correct taste to introduce the rural or romantic into the scenery of a city.

“How sour sweet music sounds, When time is broke and no proportion kept,” is as applicable to decoration as to music.—Water lilies around a fountain—are out of place. They remind you of the fen and the sedge pond. Our city fountains should partake as nearly as possible of the character of life to harmonize with surrounding objects—the world of life around us. Spouting statues, singly in some cases, and in groups in others, would certainly be the most appropriate designs for our City Fountains.

**Balloon Navigation.**

We perceive that some of our contemporaries have wrongly construed our remarks concerning the *Revoloidal Spindle Aëriod*, exhibited in the Tabernacle. We certainly wish the inventors success, but in the present state of balloon science, we are willing to be denounced as *false prophets* if the *revoloidal spindle* is ever propelled 50 miles from this city. It is nothing new for a spheroid of hydrogen gas to float in the atmosphere, nor is it any thing new for a balloon to be propelled by wings, in fact any person who is versed in the progress of inventions knows that it has been proposed to propel carriages on roads against the wind, by kites formed like the *revoloidal spindle*. Let any person examine Hebert on Locomotion, and he will see the drawing of a carriage of this kind.—It is not possible for any person to tell how swift a spiral fan wheel may propel a balloon in a still atmosphere. These things can only be decided by direct experiment. No person is able to tell the amount of resistance to a balloon of a certain form propelled at a certain speed through the atmosphere only by comparative reasoning. For example, if a balloon with all its appurtenances is of the exact bulk of the strata of air in which it floats, it must move with the air at the same rate of motion, hence if a resisting current of air—a wind—moving at the rate of 10 miles per hour meets it, the force to be applied to keep the balloon from being driven back—just to stand still—must be equal to propelling the balloon in an atmosphere at 0, at the rate of 10 miles per hour. The form of the balloon has nothing to do with this antithetical deduction. To propel a balloon by a fan wheel, is just upon the same principle of propulsion, as the boys blow soap bubbles and feathers—the air impinging on the surface of the balloon. No invention is worth a snuff to

the world now, unless it has economic advantages, and if it requires one pound of zinc to make 5 cubic feet of hydrogen gas, it will take \$400 to fill a balloon with a sufficient quantity to float 7 persons, without any baggage whatever. To the scientific world, all new projects must be submitted to the *crucis experimentum*, men must “speak in deeds” now. We deny the possibility of the balloonists propelling their aerial vessels one mile through the air by a steam engine. Let them cure our scepticism by experiment, and then we will own that we were wrong. This is fair. It is no use to say that the inventors of steamboats met with opposition—and the jeers of sceptics. It is indeed wrong to condemn a new invention until it is fairly tried, we never do, but balloons have been tried and re-tried—they are older than the steamboat, and nearly a century older than the locomotive. If some power was discovered, that could in the space of a square foot and of about 100 or 200 weight, exert a propelling force of a 100 horse power, or far less than this, balloons would become fit carriers of news and passengers. This may yet be done, we cannot tell, but certainly we see no hope for aerial navigation in the present state of science, and so we leave this subject.

**Dr. Locke's Electro Chronograph and Mr. Bond's Magnetic Clock.**

A writer in the Tribune N. Y. of last Friday thus describes the difference between Prof Bond's and Dr. Locke's Electro Magnetic Clocks.

Mr. Bond's invention as defined as “a sideral clock which shall make its beats audible in New York, Washington, Cincinnati, &c., by insulating certain parts of the machinery and making the escapement itself the break-circuit key of the Telegraphic wires.”

This arrangement does not propose to subdivide the second of time, and requires the astronomical observer to record his observations as usual by seeing and hearing a clock.

Prof. Locke's invention as defined by Mr. Walker is “a clock put in connection with telegraphic wires and with the Morse register, and which prints the hours, minutes and seconds on the fillet of paper; and by an observer's striking a telegraphic key at the instant of an occurrence, the date of it is recorded on the same paper to the hundredth of a second.”

The clock, the Morse register, with its fillet of paper, and the observer with his key, may be any where in the circuit, separated thousands of miles. The observer neither sees nor hears a clock; he only sees the event and touches a key, when a permanent and unerring record of the observation is made. All this has been reduced to practice by Dr. Locke through circuits of a thousand miles of single distance and two thousand of conducting circuit.

Both Mr. Bond's suggestion and Dr. Locke's invention were reported to Congress by Dr. Bache and by Coast-Survey Assistant Sears C. Walker, communicated by Hon. Secretary R. J. Walker, and published in Document 21 of the last session. Congress preferred Dr. Locke's invention, and appropriated the means of carrying it into effect. It has been adopted by the Coast Survey, and National Observatory.—Mr. Bond may be disappointed, but has he any reason to complain? Dr. Locke's is new *in modo* and *in effecto*, while Mr. Bond's is new only *in modo*.

This puts a new face on the controversy, and points out the difference between the two inventions.

**Planing Machines.**

The article that appeared in the Scientific American, March 17, headed, “Improved Planing Machine,” appears to be in a measure incorrect, not, however a fault of ours—and in conformity with the wishes of Mr. Allen, and also Mr. Joseph P. Woodbury, of Boston, we correct it, by saying that the work examined by us was accomplished by Mr. Woodbury's planing machine. We were led to suppose (as Mr. Allen exhibited the specimens of work to us,) that they were accomplished by his machine, and as it is our highest aim to do justice to all, we make this explanation.

Mr. Woodbury received a patent for his machine two weeks ago, and since his name appeared in our list of patents we have had a

number of inquiries respecting its merits, its nature, and the principle wherein it differs from that of Mr. Woodworth. We have had information respecting its capacity from an eye witness, and we may be able to present an engraving of it in a few weeks, when we shall present all the facts of the case before our readers.

**Advantages of the West for Manufacturing.**

A series of articles has appeared in that able Magazine, the Western Journal, published at St. Louis, on the advantages of Bon Harbor on the Ohio River, for manufacturing purposes. Bon Harbor is situated on the banks of the lower Ohio, in Kentucky, and is owned by Messrs. Triplett and Barrett, the former a gentleman with whom we are acquainted, and who called on us last week on his way to Europe. The company own a tract of 2000 acres of land binding two miles of the Ohio, the upper part having a rock bound shore against which the current sweeps round in the bend of the river, Bon Harbor lying on the convex side. The rock forms a fine natural wharf, with water below it to float a ship of the line. Bon Harbor has a mine of gold in a vein five feet thick of the finest bituminous coal under it. It has also a cotton factory designed to accommodate 7000 spindles and 100 looms. The factory is well built, heated by steam and the machinery is driven by cheap steam power, for the coal costs but little. The factory is well arranged and well provided with every appurtenance and convenience. The company offer great inducements to people to settle in the neighborhood, and no lots are sold except to actual settlers, mechanics and workmen who purchase and build. The location is stated to be very healthy, above floods, and the country around it is very fertile—yielding an abundance of all the good things of this life. In looking over the map of the United States, we are struck with the position of Bon Harbor, considering all things, for manufacturing purposes—all kinds of manufacture. At the present moment, the manufacturers of Britain find it a losing business from the fluctuations in trade, and the great competition among their capitalists. A man with a small capital in England would sacrifice the whole of it were he to enter into manufacturing operations now—there is no opportunity there for men, but those of immense capital. Were her business men possessing a fair capital to consult their own interests, they would look to the land of the setting sun, pack up their duds and make this their home. There is one good object which our Western manufacturers are keeping in view, viz. the comfort and independence of their operatives. Unless this was so, we should say little about them but to find fault, but to provide comfortable houses, and to encourage the operatives to get houses and lots for themselves, is a point in civilization which no country but America knows any thing about. We cannot pay too much attention to these things, for it is an undoubted fact, that the skill of our people must increase with their intelligence and general independence. The West is yet to be (and is fast becoming,) the grand centre of the United States in Agriculture and the Arts.

**Recovery of the Jewels Stolen from the Patent Office.**

The Jewels stolen out of the Patent Office have been recovered. They were found by officer A. M. C. Smith in the house of a man named Henry B. Jones, No. 11 Pike st., this city. They were found last Thursday the 5th inst. As recovered there were of various sizes, 143 Pearls, together with three pounds of gold in bars, found buried in the cellar. One large bottle of Otto of Rose, containing nearly a quart, was also found. The original bottle had been substituted by the one found.—The scabbard of the sword which had been presented to Commodore Biddle by the Emperor of Russia, and a gold snuff box presented by the Emperor of Morocco, had been melted down into bars. The settings of the diamonds and pearls had been removed and deposited in a tin box. What a mutilation the rascals have been guilty of.

Four newspapers at Syracuse have declined “taking further news by telegraph,” on account of the high prices charged, and the meagre accounts furnished.

**California Houses.**

In No. 112 Broadway this city may be seen a house standing in the inside of another, and all taken in at the door. This is not done upon the old mountebank principle of squeezing an egg into a vinegar bottle, but is a fair house and one too that is bound for the gold regions to shield the adventurous wealth seeker, from the night dews and rains of California's climate. The place mentioned above is a grand depot for all things of a California nature. There may be seen a hammock that can protect a man who buys it, although he may be like “the wonderful animal that can't live on the land and dies in the water.” It is a bed and life preserver. There too may be seen a whole regiment of gold washers—but not in uniform—they are all in fatigue dress and each wears a different facing. We took an observation of the premises last week, and we must say that comment upon the merits of the different inventions, is out of the question. Some are good and others perhaps worthless. They were some more evidence to us (although none have better opportunities of judging otherwise) that the mechanical genius of our people is of the most varied, and energetic and original character.

A number of sheet iron houses have been constructed by Mr. Naylor of this city, and sent away to California. The sheets of iron are made with flanges, and with tongues and grooves to lap over and unite together firmly. The way in which they are put together makes them perfectly water tight. A right idea of their construction could not be conveyed in mere words, but they are not expensive—one almost 60 feet long and good width, costing only \$200. The iron is all galvanized, so that it is perfectly weather proof. A number of wooden houses are exhibited here every day, but which is best or worst, is something beyond the ken of the present, and will only be best known hereafter to those who may use them.

**More Coal on the Pacific Ocean.**

A letter from a Bostonian at Acapulco, dated Feb. 5, states that an inexhaustible mine of coal has been discovered only a mile and a half from Acapulco. Thus, it seems that this important mineral, so essential in steam navigation, is found in abundance on the extended line of travel which has recently been opened by the acquisition and occupation of the Pacific coast by our people. Within a short time deposits of coal have been discovered at Cape Horn, and they are also known to exist at various points in Chili, and as far north as Vancouver's Island. With such resources on the Pacific coast of America, there is nothing to prevent the employment of steamers in our domestic commerce from ocean to ocean, which must ultimately bring into requisition and profitable employ, the largest steam marine in the world.

**Steamboat Explosions.**

Our Western waters are beginning to open the spring campaign, with their usual amount of steamboat murders. The Wheeling Gazette of the 31st ult. gives an account of the explosion of the steamer Virginia near that place, by which 10 were reported to be killed and 17 wounded. On the 25th ult. the steamer Defiance on her first trip below New Orleans exploded her boiler killing Mr. Macfarlane the first engineer, and three others, and wounding a number of the hands.

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