



Our Prize Essay.

The first part of our Prize Essay on the Patent Laws, will be found on the last page of this number, and on the similar page of a few succeeding numbers the rest of it will also be published. We hope that every inventor will give the Essay a careful perusal and we shall be happy to receive any remarks from our subscribers, if briefly and fairly written, that may have been suggested by this Essay or by other causes, on what they may deem of benefit to inventors, as an amendment to the present Patent Laws. The Essay has cost us one hundred dollars, and we hope that our patrons will appreciate our humble efforts to protect the inventor and ingenious man in the rightful fruit of his genius and labor. We shall send copies of the Scientific American to every newspaper in the United States, that all those who feel an interest in the advancement of Science and Art, and whose sympathies are with inventors, may make such remarks upon, or publish it as they think best. Every inventor responds with us in calling the attention of the powerful and enlightened Press of our country to this subject. It is an undeniable fact, that those countries which stand highest in the scale of civilization, are the most distinguished for mechanical genius and invention, and surely this fact is strong evidence of mechanical invention being a powerful lever to advance civilization. This being true, inventors should surely be encouraged and fully protected. Our heart is in this work because we know that they have not been encouraged nor protected by law. There is not a single patent in our country that has been fully sustained at law but had to seek the shelter of the all powerful wing of associated wealth and influence. We are convinced that inventors' Conventions are out of the question—utterly ineffectual to do any good. We want *Good Laws* rigidly enforced, and not combinations for Protection, more especially as all such Conventions that have existed, embraced in their membership men who had only selfish objects in view.

We shall issue several thousand extra copies of the Scientific American containing the Essay, and those who desire to furnish their friends with the numbers will be supplied at \$2.75 per hundred. Some clubs may be made up to do this at but little cost to each.

#### New Planing Machine.

Mr. H. Law, of Wilmington, N. C. has just obtained a patent for a new Planing Machine, which is highly recommended. The board is carried forward under a succession of stationary cutters by a rapid succession of blows from a crank and fly wheel—giving to the board a sudden forward motion—like the push of the hand plane, which is quite favorable to smooth planing, and the effect is said to be good. A machine is now in operation in New Haven, and one is now in progress of construction and will be put in operation in this city as soon as built. We shall be able to present our readers with an engraving of the machine in a few weeks. Mr. Law is now at 216 Pearl st. this city. See advertisement.

#### Mechanics Agency.

We would call the attention of our readers to the advertisement of Messrs. Norcross & Co. as being worthy of examination. We are personally acquainted with them and believe their arrangements to be such as will be appreciated by every one, especially those who are in want of any kind of machinery. Our readers may rest assured that they will be well dealt with by them in any business that may be intrusted to them, as we know them to be men of experience. Their office is at No. 60 Nassau st.

An Aberdeen (Scotland,) paper states, that while the prayer book, together with all the clothes of a deceased cholera patient, were carefully burnt, six £1 notes found on his person were religiously preserved.

#### Boiler Explosions.

The following is an extract from an article in the Rhode Island Journal, which seems to corroborate the views of "Evens," in our last week's number.

If so vast a proportion of steam boiler explosions really originate in "low water," as seems to be generally supposed, the public ought to know it, in order to relieve them from dread of fatal accidents from other sources, and that this cause may, in some way, find an effectual remedy. If not the more caution should be employed on other points. As the case now stands, if I am not very much in error, not a solitary report has ever yet been made, either in the United States, or in Europe, in which a committee have gone so far as to say they knew, or had ascertained to a certainty, that the explosion reported on, was occasioned by "low water." After all the investigation of the subject, by eminent scientific men, I believe no one of them has ventured to say that explosions, or any one of them were or was doubtless the result of such a cause. Professors Silliman and Hare, on a committee of investigation in a certain case, did go so far as to say such a thing "might possibly be," and Professor Hare could account for the possibility, only on another supposed possibility, that hydrogen gas, generated from water coming into contact with red hot iron, might ignite and explode. Yet Professor Hare in common with all other scientific chemists, had previously said and written that hydrogen could not be ignited, except in presence of atmospheric air or oxygen gas. If the committee which investigated the case on the Boston and Providence railroad, have arrived at new facts in connexion with this subject, developed any heretofore hidden principles, on which scientifically, they can account for steam boiler explosions, as the result of low water—or, if they can show to a demonstration, from unquestionable facts, that such was the cause of the particular explosion alluded to above, they will fill out an important hiatus in scientific lore, which will confer a great favor on many.

#### Treasury of Moolton.

The treasure discovered in the subterranean chambers of the citadel appear to be altogether of oriental magnificence and Asiatic profusion. Descending into the cavities in which the treasures of the fortress have been accumulated, the inspecting officer is said to have found opium and indigo, and salt, sulphur, and drugs of every description heaped together in endless profusion; enormous hoards of wheat on one hand, on the other almost inexhaustible stores of rice; stacks of ghee vessels brimming with their unctuous contents; bales upon bales of costly shawls and gorgeous silks; chest after chest crammed with scabbards, blazing with gold and jewels; tiers of copper canisters filled to the brim with gold mohurs. "My poor pen," says a correspondent of the Delhi Gazette, "cannot describe the variety of wealth displayed to the inquisitive eye. Tumbrills, under strong guards, have been moving to and fro with gold coin all the day. And in addition to this, three or four crores of specie were still known to be concealed beyond the amount already discovered—one crore of rupees being one millions of pounds sterling!

#### Inventors Convention.

The following advertisement appears in last Tuesday's Tribune:—

Various candidates having been named for the office of Commissioner of Patents, which is expected soon to be vacant; inventors will meet at the hall of the American Institute, 333 Broadway, at 7½ o'clock, on Wednesday evening, 25th inst. to take such order as may be deemed proper on the occasion.

CLINTON ROOSEVELT,  
Sec'y of preliminary meeting.

[It is said that a shark can scent a corpse at a distance of 50 miles.

#### Smart Weed.

Smart weed made into tea, is said to be a good remedy for cholera. When cut and dried in full bloom, it is said to be an excellent preventative for bots in horses, and an excellent physic likewise. About one pound per week should be given

FULTON, (Hamilton Co.) OHIO, March 24. GENTLEMEN.—I came here Dec. 1st, 1848, to work for Messrs. Kock & Davenport. On that day they started a Car Manufactory, and since that we have built about 80 freight cars and 25 passenger cars for different Railroads. We are building several cars for the Vicksburg Railroad. Our shop is 150 feet long, 50 feet wide, 4 stories high. The 1st story is the engine room; 2d story, machine shop; 3d, a passenger car shop, and 4th office, cabinet maker, trimmer and paint shops. The present building not being large enough the proprietors are building another 280 feet long, 50 feet wide, and 2 stories high. There is also a smith shop 80 by 40 feet, with 11 fires.—There are about 40 workmen employed in the establishment, and the business is increasing. Yours, &c. R. S. L.

#### Snow in South Carolina.

MESSRS. MUNN & Co.—This morning being dark and gloomy, the wind coming due north, at 1 o'clock it commenced to snow, and continued until 5 in the afternoon. At 4 o'clock I measured on a scaffold prepared by Col. Hampton for sunning cotton and the snow was 1 3/8 inches deep. The fields and verdant trees assumed a snowy whiteness. I never witnessed the like before.

Yours, &c. THOMAS SHANLY.  
Columbia, S. C. April 15, 1848.

#### Warning to Smokers.

A singular case of asphyxia is related in one of the French journals. A youth of the name of Lemoine paid a visit to an uncle, who is a farm laborer in the neighborhood of Havre. The man occupied a small and ill-ventilated apartment. The nephew, at eight o'clock in the evening went to bed in the room. Soon after the uncle, and two companions entered the room, and all fell to smoking. The youth was asleep. At midnight the visitor withdrew, and the uncle went to bed. Laying his hand upon his nephew, he found him unnaturally cold, and endeavored to awake him but without effect. Help was called; some faint indications of life appeared, and a physician directed operations for the recovery of the patient. A post mortem examination was made, and the physician pronounced that he had died of congestion of the brain, caused by the respiration of tobacco smoke during sleep.

#### Anecdote for Factors and Consignors.

The West Tennessee Whig tells a yarn about a farmer in that part of the State, who, to make a speculation, put a large stone in one of his hogsheads of tobacco, and forwarded it to his commission merchant at New Orleans, directed the merchant to send him a barrel of sugar. By accident or otherwise, the stone was discovered. The merchant took the stone from the tobacco and put it in the barrel of sugar before he weighed it. put on the head and sent it back to the tobacco man in course of time, and did not say a word about the stone. But he found it before he had used up more than half of the sugar. He got four cents and bought it back at eight, without daring to exercise the poor privilege of grumbling at the one hundred per cent advance price on the re-purchase. Dishonesty is not always "the best policy."

#### Importation of Oil.

It is estimated by the Nantucket Enquirer, that, during the next two or three months the importations of oil into the different whaling ports of this country will reach to 50,000 barrels sperm, and 160,000 barrels of whale. After that period, however, the supply will be so small, that it will about balance the large quantity we have mentioned, and the total import of the year about sufficient to meet the demand.

#### Watch Gilding.

There is an establishment of Richard Rotherham & Sons, at Coventry, England, for making watches, where all the internal coating is done by the Electrotype. They dip for a moment only on the wire those parts which they wish coated in a solution of the cyanide gold with a portion of pure nitric acid in it.—into this solution a piece of plate gold is kept continually suspended during the operation. This is to keep up the strength of the solution.

#### The Connecticut Copper Mines.

The New Haven Journal says: The Copper Mines of Bristol, in this State, are more extensive and valuable than people generally imagine, and at the present time are exciting considerable interest among capitalists and scientific men. Within a short time, a large body of operatives have been added to the mines, and we are informed that now more than 300 hands are constantly engaged, and the yield of ore is increasing in quantity and value. These mines are considered by many, capable of judging, to be equal in point of profit to any other in the country, and the opinion has been expressed by Prof. Silliman who has made extensive researches in these regions, that the veins of ore extend in a southerly direction from Bristol to Hamden, a distance of some 30 or more miles, and if thoroughly worked, would be sufficient to give constant employment to thousands of miners. Large quantities of the ore are daily sent over the Canal Railroad, and in time, we have no doubt, the mines will prove a source of income and profit to the road, as well as to those who are engaged in its operation.

#### Great Explosion.

On the 10th inst. a great explosion took place at Windham, N. H., which from its peculiar nature should be a warning to all people against indulging a revengeful spirit. Two Irishmen had been discharged during the day from the employment of the company, and in the evening determined to revenge themselves by blowing up a large quantity of powder, which was stored in a building, to be used in blasting rocks. There were forty-six kegs in all, and the Irishmen in some way or other applied the match, supposing they could do so with perfect safety to themselves. The explosion was terrific, having been felt like the sound of an earthquake, in the neighbouring towns. One of the Irishmen, probably the one who applied the match, was blown sky high and to atoms. The other, farther from the scene of operations, escaped without much injury.

#### Barry's Tricopherous.

This excellent preparation has obtained a just celebrity for its peculiar qualities in strengthening and beautifying the hair, removing the dandruff and preventing premature baldness.

We have used this article for nearly two years with satisfaction, and take pleasure in recommending it to the attention of both Ladies and Gentlemen.

The numerous testimonials that have appeared in the different journals have been unsolicited by Prof. Barry, and may be regarded as evidence that his Tricopherous possesses all that has or can be said in its favor.

#### Literature Fund.

The Literature Fund of this State is mostly invested in State stocks, and amounts to \$265,806 78, besides 10,880 acres of land; and the revenue estimated from it the present year, will amount to \$42,051 15. This includes an appropriation of \$25,000 from the income of the U. States Deposit Fund. From this sum the dividends to the academies will be, this year, \$40,000.

#### Naval Regulation.

The Secretary of the Navy has issued an order directing that the Boatswains, Gunners, Carpenters and Sailmakers of the Navy, wear on each side of the coat collar a large navy button, on the back part of a blind button-hole, three inches long, worked with black twist. The above named officers will also wear round their caps a band of navy goldlace, one inch and a quarter wide.

In the United States there are now 118 colleges, containing about 10,000 under graduates; and connected with them, either in professional departments or in preparatory departments, it is supposed there are at the present time 12 or 15,000 more.

According to a census published in the Geneva Gazette, this thriving village on the first of January, 1849, contained 5,586 inhabitants, being an increase of 341 in four years. The excess of the females or males between the age of 16 and 30, is 129.