Scientific 1 hmericm

NEW YORK，JANUARY 19， 1850.

What was to be；What is，and What is not．
It is the fortune，or misfortune，of every age， we cannot tell which，to be the witness of great events that never transpire．On the twenty－ third day of April，1843，this world was cer tain to come to an end，according to the views of some visionaries，but we congratulate our fellow－men thatourglobe stood the test of that earthquake of excitement，and she is still walking round on her path of beauty，fresh as the day when she commencod her celestial course，when all＂the morning stars sang to－ gether for joy．＂It seems，almost always，to follow as a counterbalance to the real，that we should frequently be beguiled by the fallacious． In the field of invention and discovery，we be－ hold the same ups and downs that so often astonish，delude，and gratify，in other depart－ ments of things that belong to life．The great Boyle was always on the point of discovering perpetual motion，and since his day the world has been often astonished with such kind of machines，but they are as if they were not．A few years ago，a plan was got up to convey packages to any distance through air－tight tubes，exhausted by air pumps．This discove－ ry was to revolutionize the carrying express trade－but it is no more．This is a plan， which no one can jeer at，for if it would ope－ rate，its advantages would be immense
In the line of navigating the mrial ocean， above us，how many triumphant lucky in－ ventors，have arisen，some to delude them－ selves，and some to delude others．Were it possible to accomplish the object with security and economy，no one would doubt its impor－ tance，nor would there be a single dispute about its advantages and benefits；butat the present moment，we must say that there is＂no hope．＂
During the past two years，in London espe－ cially，and from there to the ends of the world， nothing was heard of from time to time，but the great＂Electric Light．＂A Frenchman discovered one kind，an Englishman another， and a Scotchman another，all－all，were to make short work of gas companies with their bagatelle of retorts，pipes，fume and expenses． At one time the price of stocks fell considera－ $\mathrm{b}_{\mathrm{l}} \mathrm{y}$ ，and there was no little panic in the gas market．It has turned out after all，that the electric was the lighter gas，and the old kind still maintains its gravity and position，while the jeersofits younger opponents have been con－ verted into an expiring moan for its lost con－ sequence．Thus it is that we are ever on the rounds of the ladder－now up and now down， but for all that，there is a steady advancement to the top of the building．The most shrewd and discerning are often deceived，with the plausibility of some inventions，and neither genius nor acquirements，keep prople from committing blunders．Newton made a blun－ der in his theory of seven distinct colors－ Franklin was in error in explaining the theory of electricity－Davy made many mistakes，and so did Watt．We need not think that we have arrived at perfection in this age，or that we have not our failings as well as those who have lived before us．We look forward in one sense ＂to see the same scenes which our fathers have seen，and to tell the same tales which our fathers have told．＂The wisdom which we can gather from the past，is that of experience －to avoid the errors we have seen others com． mit，and forget not the good which we have seen accomplished．But there are some who only look on the dark background of the pic－ ture and see no beauty in the contrast of light and shade．Some are continually ridiculing new inventions．The steam engine，the steam－ boat，and many other good inventions，had then supreme judges of wiseacres，who wag－ ged their heads in portentous dignity at the folly and credulity of man．When Fulton＇s steamboat stopped for a short time，owing to
some defect in her machinery，there can be no some defect in her machinery，there can be no
doubt，but many shook their heads and said ＂＂just as we said－all folly．＂While this is
projects often brought before the public，wil fully to delude．The deludersfind it very easy to takerefuge behind the names and shadows of departed worth，and many throw out hints of their martyrdom，to false public opinion．－ It is very difficult to give advice respecting new inventions，so far as it relates to a per－
fectly new application．All that can be，done， is the exercise of the judgment coupled with sound knowledge of the subject．In giving advice，or expressing an opinion，we alway are sincere，and we have ever found that truth and sincerity are never far separated．No one should despise a thing because it is new or op－ posed to preconceived notions，and no one should be two ready to jump at conclusions， however plausible they may appear，without a full and careful examination of the subject in allits bearings．

Propertics of the Cxank．
Few intelligent engineers are aware of the wide－spread and unlearned opinions respecting the properties of the crank．There is searcely a week passes over our heads without some contrivance being presented to us，either in the shape of a rotary engine，or some device＂to save，＂as the inventors say，＂the power lost by the crank．＂We have often been deeply
grieved at the time and money spent by some on such contrivances，and have always endea－ vored to turn inventive minds in the right di－ rection．There are many ingenious men who cannot be turned from their settled opinions， and from the abstract philasophy of the prin－ ciple of the crank，it is easier to produce an ar gument against than for it，to the unscienti－
fic．This is the reason why so many contro－ fic．This is the reason why so many contro－
versies have arisen about its qualities，and such controversies may be expected again．－ The opponents of the crank，never state the question correctly，and this is the case with the author of the articles to which we referred in ourlast．He says that the crank has stood in the way of improvements on the steam en－ gine for fifty years．This is doing great injus－ tice to many ingenious men that we might name，both at home and abroad，who have done much to improve the steam engine．But let us state one authenticated fact．In 1798 the best of Watt＇s Cornwall engines did a du－ ty of $40,000,000$ ；that is，one bushel of coals raised that amount one foot high．In 1840 the Cornwall engines did a duty of $84,000,000$ ． This was a duty of more than double that done by an engine which Watt thought was perfect． Those who speak against the crank，say that there is more than one half of the power of the engine lost by it．They have formed their ideas frors wrong views of its operation and combination．They say，＂the crank is a rigid infiexible lever，firmly fixed and secured to the main shaft，operated upon，through the inter－ vention of an equally rigid and inflexible con－ necting rod，which at one end is attached to
the piston，rod，the latter of which has a rec－ the piston，rod，the latter of which has a rec－
tilineal and reciprocating motion．＂
Now this is not true，for by the above des cription，the crank would not move at all，for the very reason that those mechanical contri vances which connect the crank to the rods，
are not stated．These are joints which enable the connecting levers to work beautifully on centre pins．In the language of M．Arago， there is a certain articulated parallelogram， and at each ascent and descent of the piston its angles open and close with sweetness：I had almost said，with the grace which charms you see in the gestures of a consummate actor． Follow with your eye alternately the progress of its successive changes，and you will find them subject to the most curious geometrica conditions．You will see that of the four an－ gles of the jointed parallelograms，three de－ moves the piston rod，moves nearly in a straight line．The immense utility of this resultstrikes mechanics with less force than the means by which Watt attained it．＂
If mechanics could see the utility of this， they would not wrangle against it，but it－is because they do not look upon the modus ope－ randi of the engine，that so many of them pur－ sue an ignus fatus，in search of substitutes． Nay，the articles to which we refer，bring a
crank，and say，when they give the sequent of the power and effect，to prove that no power is lost，＂oh，that is a mere description of the modus operandi．＂It is for want of looking at the steam engine in a dynamical light，that many make so grave mistakes about it．Some of them treat it，like the author in question，as if it were to be judged in its nature，like the combination of levers in the construction of a bridge，as if it were altogether a question of statistics．They say that a crank four feet long has a leverage of less than two feet，and the way they prove it．is this，＂There are two points in the crank circle where there is admitted to be no leverage，and there are two points in the crank circle where it has full le－ verage，therefore as the half of 4 is 2 ，and the crank 4 feet，the average leverage must be 2．＂So far so good，but by the same system of reasoning，we could prove that all the pow－ er together would be absorbed in the crank． For example，＂There are two negative and two positive points in the crank circle，then as the negative balances the positive，all pow． er exerted by the positive is nullified by the ne－ gative This is as good＂reasoning as the anti－ crankites use．If we do not take the modus operandi of the steam engine ${ }_{n}$ into considera－ tion，we have ne business to go round the cir－ cle described by the crank at all．It is posi－ tively necessary that every proposition should be right，or the working of it will not be cor－ rect．It is well known how bitter the dispute was between the British and German philoso－ phers in the 17 th century，about the forces of moving bodies；Newton and Leibnitz－the greatest philosophers of that day，disputed about a thing in which they were both right， but stated the question differently：so it is with many about leverage．What is a lever？ Nothing at all but a piece of wood or iron， apart from its modus opcrandi．The shepherd＇s crook becomes a lever when he uses it for a spring pole to vault over the roaring torrent， but afterwards it is his simple crook still．A crank without taking the operation of the en－ gine into consideration，is but a crook of iron， and at best is but a peculiar handle on the main shaft．It has been proposed to apply a pulley as a substitute for a crank．In two in－
stances this was attempted years ago，as de－ scribed in the Engineer＇s Journal．As might be expected they wero poor substitutes．In turning an axle by hand，that is to convert re－ ciprecating into circular motion in a natural way，we never think of applying the power by a rope to the periphery of the shaft．No，we
put a crank on it ；and when we use a wheel we put the handle on it inside of its rim，and make it a crank．Does any person suppose that there is a loss of power here？Not one． If we wanted to change a rotary motion into a reciprocating one，such as to use a water wheel，to pump a mine，would any person of common observation，suppose that power was lost by putting a crank on the wheel shaft， and attaching it to the pump rod，by a con－ necting rod？Not one．Thisis the most sim－ ple and best way to do it．
Mr．J．Frost，of Brooklyn，has constructed a neat machine to demonstrate by practical ex． periment that no power is lost by the crank． It consists of three pulleys，the middle one fixed on a concentric spindle，and the other two placed eccentrically opposite one another on spindles attached to the middle one．On the periphery of the middle one，at one side，is suspended，by a cord，a weight of two pounds， and on the peripheries of the eccentric pulleys， by cords；on the one side opposite the weight of the middle pulley，is a pound weight on each；now it makes no matter how much the pulleys may be revolved，in whatever position the eccentric pulley（crank）may be to the con－ centric one，the two single pound weights，in－ dependent of position，balance the two pound weight．
Mr．E．Chaffee，of New Brunswick，in a let－ ter，solves the problem in favor of the crank， in as simple，but in a different manner，and we have a letter from an Engineer in Brook－ lyn，（we wish we could publish it，and would only we have had so many articles lately on abstract subjects）which，viewing the steam
engine in a dynamical light，the true way，
the crank to stand on．His letter is mathe matically sure and demonstrative．We have another letter from Mr．C．Grinnel，of Marion， Ala．，which we will publish next week，and thus end this controversy，for a long time at least．In it he compares the crank and rod to the human arm，and this is the light in which we view it，and we must not talk of it as a combination of rigid levers．The operation of the crank is not to be viewed like the impact of balls upon a billiard table．It is very erre－ neous to suppose that oblique action，inde－ pendent of friction，destroys power in a ma－ chine．If this were true，we might，if there were no friction，make a machine generate The a thing impossible．
The average leverage of a crank four feet long，is $306-11$ inches，with an excess of velo－ city over the piston of 17 5－11 inches，which makes 4 feet，thus harmonizing all the equiva－ ents．By the law of virtual velocities，one pound moving through a space of 10 inches， will lift a weight of 10 pounds through a space of one inch，therefore in estimating the value of power in the crank，we must take the pow． er and velocity into our calculations．A crank of 4 feet is the radius of a circle of 251.7 feet and during the time the piston moves 16 feet the crank moves through a space of $251-7$ feet，more than one－third greater velocity．－ Now，instead of having an excess of velocity， the anti－crankites should have transfixed it at the dead power points．The formula for find－ ing the average leverage of the crank，is to take the proportional parts of the space moved over by the piston，and its excess during one revolution out of the crank；therefore 4 feet piston moved 16 feet，excess of motion $91-7$ feet， 16 feet is $112-7$ ，and $91-7$ is $64-7$ ，crank is 48 inches，therefore divide 48 inches into two parts，proportioned to $112-7$ and $64-7$ ， and we have $306-11$ for the 16 feet and $175-11$ for the $91-7$ feet，thus harmonizing the veloci－ ty and power in a most simple manner，with－ out the flaw of a fraction；and we have beau－ tiful collateral proof of the correctness of this formula，forif we calculate the circle descri－ bed by a crank of $306-11$ inches，it will be found to be 16 feet exactly－＂the centre of power．＂The excess of velocity in the crank over the piston，is so happy a contrivance to regulatemotion，that we cannot compare it to anything better than a compensation pen－ dulum．If we take a cylinder 8 feet long，and try to make it describe a circle with a full stroke up and down，we will make it describe $251-7$ feet，the same as the crank．To do this， transfix it with a pin and make it perform one revolution，and what have we but the circle of the crank．With the velocity of the crank， we cannot have the full leverage，for if that were the case，we would gain more than one－ third of the power every revolution，but in the way we have examined it，all harmonizes ac－ cording to the laws of Mechanical Eicience．
The writer in the Tribune to which we re－ ferred，makes the loss by the crank， 62 per cent．This shows us how very far abstract fallacy leads people from direct truth，for in Wales，where the power of the engines，are re． istered by Dynometers，they give out 90 per ent．，and no difference is perceived between the crank engines and those which have no crank．Could these engines give out that power，if there was a loss by the crank？No． It has always puzzled us to find out the pock－ t or hamper，where the crank stowed away the power communicated to it，by the theory of the pulleyites．It must be a curious place． We know of no mechanical contrivance so mathematically beautiful in every respect，to convert the reciprocatory motion of the piston into circular motion，as the simple crank．Its invention was a divine thought．The geome－ trical engineer can detect its properties at a glance，and this was the reason why the great Watt laid aside his beautiful Sun and Planet motion，for something more beautiful still－ the＂Incomparable Crank．＂

## Notice．

Subscribers writing us for Patent Claims must give the dates of the same，as we can－ not afford the time to look our list all through． We cannot pay attention to such letters unless to say，there are many evidently worthles
$\qquad$ railing accusation against the advocates of the


## LIST OF Patents Claims

## ssued from the united states patent

 office，For the week ending January S， 1850. To John Bell，of Harlem，in the City and County of New York，N．Y．，for improvement in Printer＇s Type $=$
I confinemy claim to grooving the bottoms of type cases for the reception of the lower edges of the partitions and securing these in them by glue，in the manner herein seth forth and of modes substantially the same．
To James Black，of Philadelphia，Pa．，for improve ments in Engines operated by Stoam and Water．
I claim the manner of combining steam and
air for the purpose of giving motive power to the wheel，consisting in a jet of the former be－ ing thrown from the nozzle of the pipe into the pipe，simultaneously introducing therein a quantity of the latter，which together are dis－ charged through the lower orifice of said pipe， into the buckets of the wheel，and displacing the water therein，causing said wheel to re－ volve，in combination with the pipe through which the hot air is drawn from the top of the box or reservoir into the pipe and re－introduced with the steam into the boxat its bottom，thus using it repeatedly over again．The appara－ tus，by means of which the above is accom－ plished，is constructed and arranged substan－ tially in the manner described in the foregoing specification．
To William Bullock，of Philadelphia，Pa．，for impro
1849.
I claim，first，the rollers which serve to clear the teeth from rubbish and govern the depthof the teeth．

Second，the spring in combination with the sheaves and teeth by which arrangement the whole or a part of the teeth can be held by a spring of the same power and range of move－ ment that it would require for a single tooth． Third，the moveable bar to which the team is attached，in combination with the mode of banging the teeth by means of sheaves or oth－ er similar device，by which arrangement the teeth will pass over obstructions in which the action of the tearn in hauling the Drill or Cul－ tivator will liring the teeth forward to their proper places as soon as they pass over the ob－ structions．

And fourth，the feeding band，substantially in the manner and for the purpose set forth． To AshleyCrafts and Ebenezer Weeks，of Auburn， Ohio，for improvement in Cultivators．
We do not claim to be the original inventors of any of the individual parts of this wheeled rotary cylindrical Cultivator，but what we do claim is the combination of the levers，roller and driving wheel，in the manner and for the purpose set forth．
To John Du Bois，of Greensboro＇，Ala，for improve－ ment in Cotton Gins．
I claim the bac
I claim the back ribs in combination with the front ribs，they（the ribs）being constructed with a horn or projection on each，behind which they curve downwards，to allow the saws to pass twice between the ribs，to remove the motes and other impurities，in the manner substantially as described．－［See Engraving in substantially as
No．51，Vol．4．］
To G．W．Eddy，of Watorford，N．Y．，for improve ment in Car Wheels．
I claim the combination of the rods which connect the hub and rim with the plate or plates are protected against fracture from any sudden jar，and the hub prevented from being separated from the rmm should the plate or plates break，as herein described．
To J．G．Goshon，of Shirleysburg，Pa．，for improve
ment in Smut Machines． ment，in Smut Machines．
What I claim is constructing the shoe［hav－ ing the perforated plate for separating large ex traneous matter from the grain］with a screw for separating the cockle and cheat from the $\square$ grain，and an imperforated plate and spout $\mathrm{fo}_{\mathrm{r}}$ conducting the same to the outside of the ma－ chine as described．

To Thos．Hoyt，of New York，N．Y．，for improve To Thos．Hoyt，of New York
ment in Curing Tobacco stems．
What I claim is the process of curing stem or other parts of tobacco with charcoal by com－ bining or mixing the two together，substantial－ ly in the manner and for the purpose herein set forth．
To W．M．Hughes，of Howard Co．，Mo．，for impro－ red Ore Washer．
What I claim is separating substances dif－ fering in specific gravity or washing metallic ores by means of oblique currents of water and a horizontal one passing over the same in a re－ verse direction，substantially in the manner herein described．The oblique currents being produced by inclined surfaces or their equiva－ lents．
To Wm．Maguire，of Cincinnati，Ohio，for method of What I claim is counterbalancing the sash （and consequently enabling it to be suspended at any desired point）by means of metallic racks within the window frame，these racks be－ ing operated by pinions rotating on fixed shafts within the window frame and these pinions be－ ing driven by other racks attached to the sides of the sashes throughout their entire length， he whole being constructed and arranged in the manner and for the purpose set forth．
To L．W．Miller，of Mesopotamia，Ohio，for im provemont in connecting cutters to shafts of boring What I cl
What I claim is the fastening，by which the knives are aflixed to the mandrel，being a bey－ ed ring to sustain the shank of the knives firm－ ly，in adjusting slots in the mandrel，substan－ tially as above described．
To E．G．Pormeroy，of St．Louis，Mo．，for improve int in coating iron with copper or its alloy．
What I claim，is，first，the before described process of coating and impregnating iron in all useful shapes and forms with copper or any alloy of which copper forms a part，the said process consisting of cleansing with sulphuric acid，defending the cleansed surface with a coating of clay or other alumineus earth－dry－ ing the same，and then plunging the article thus coated into a melted copper，or some al loy of that metal
Second，I also claim the use of the clay paste to protect the metal from oxidating $d u$ ring the process of alloying or coating the me－ tal plates，or pieces of iron，as herein set forth． To Z．C．Rebbins，of St．Louis，Mo．，for improve ment in Churns．

What we claim is the placing the inne surfaces of the series of outer blades，in posi tions tangential，or nearly so，to their circle of rotation，when they are combined with the in－ clined inner series of blades，substantially in the manner and for the purpose as herein set forth．Not intending，however，to limit my－ self to the exact number，proportions，posi－ tions，and arrangement of the dasher blades， as herein described and represented，but shal vary them to suit the different sizes of churns required for operating upon cream，whilst I at tain the same results by means substantially the same as those herein particularly se forth．
To F．Slaughter \＆Perry，of Fredericksburgh， Va．，for improvement in machinery for making Co ton Cordage．
What we
What we claim is the constructing the nip－ per springs of parallel bars，（one or both o which may be made elastic，）having series of holes（or slots）formed in them for the recep－ tion of the connecting and adjusting screw bolts，for the purpose of enabling us to cause the several nippers to press with the same amount of power and elasticity upon the sli vers during their passage through the nipper heads；and also to vary the elasticity of the springs as circumstances may require，substan tially as herein set forth．
To James Spratt，of Cincinnati，Ohio，for
ment in alloys for points of lightning rods．
What I claim is the formation of an alloy， composed of English block tin，oxide of tin， antimony，bismuth，refined silver，platinum， and silex．In proportions as shown in the specifications，and for thepurpose of being ma－ nufactured into lightning rod points．
To A．Weich and R．Walker，of Bennington，Ind， for improvement in Machinery for Dressing Shin－
What we claim is the combination of two planes guided and moved to and fro in tha
straight converging grooves with the spring－ plates in front of the plane＿irons for holding the slab，and those behind the plane－irons for discharging the finished shingle from the ma－ chine，the whole being arranged and operating as herein set forth．
To Wm．Wood，of Westport，Conn．，for improve ment in machines for cutting shingles．
What I claim is the mode of moving the carriage sideways，and forcing the same to－ ward the knife，alternately，by means of the cams moving over the grooved shaft，by means of the bar and groove operating on the curved bars，cams，inclined bars，and bolts，arranged in the tubes，and pressed against the notches of the slotted bars by the spiral and other springs，the whole arranged and operated substantially in the manner and for the purpose herein set forth．
To O．Wright，of Rochester，N．Y．，for improvement
a Mills for sawing irregular forms．
I claim the mode of raising and lowering the table or platform on the segmental plates or bars for adapting the same to any thick－ ness of timber to be cut，and keeping the mid－ dle of the timber，between its top and bottom always in a line with the centre of which the segmental plates or bars form arcs of circles， through which（the centre）the saw passes，to prevent it from bending in the timber when sawing a curvilinearsurface，by means of the ribs having slots near their ends，through which the screws which enter the segmental plates or bars，pass in the manner herein de－ scribed．－［See Engraving in No．3，Vol．5，Sci． Am．］
designs．
To H．L．Shepherd，of Dayton，©hio，for Dessgn for Stoves．
renewal．
To A．Morse，Jr．，of Boston，Mass．，for improve ent in Capstans．Patented March 12， 1846.
The invention here claimed is the improve－ ment of the ships or vessels＇capstans，so that
increased power may be obtained at pleasure as above made known，with the arrangement， application and adaptation of the several parts as described．

Singular Electrical Phenomenon． Messas．Editors－In the fore part of the month of December last my attention was
called by my wifeto a piece of brown new silk called by my wife to a piece of brown new silk folded up in a bureau drawer．On approach ing it with a lighted candle，it being night， particles or atoms of various colors，some gol－ den hue，others green，and some the colors of brilliant stars．When a hand was gently rub－ bed or drawn over its surface these sparkles vanished with a crepitating noise，and when another fold was opened the same phenomenon occurred．I wondered at the time whether these could be electrical atoms，but knowing hat silk was a good retainer of electricity，and its fibres being brilliant，I was inclined to an opinion that the sparkling atoms were silk fibres．
On the 8th of the present month my atten－ tion was again called to this same piece of silk，which had bcen deposited in the same place．This time，it was in he day time，be－ tween 11 and 12 o＇clock．I ordered it to be brought；down stairs into my room，as gently as possible．Here I laid it in the light of a win－ dow，and I observed the shining atoms van－ shing from its surface－much like the disap－ pearance of fine dew drops．I raised another fold of the silk and passed my hand close to its surface，when the particles discharged with crepitating reports in the character of a feu de joie．As the folds were epened，these particles would vanish without the proximity of con－ ducting substances，and peculiarly fast in the light．It appears to me that what I have only heretofore known to exist，I have now seen to exist．And I believethese particles were elec－ trical matter．What think you of it，gentle－ men？
Lancaster，Pa．，Jan．1．0， 1950.
N．E．－The other silk about the house did not exhibit the same phenomenon．
［These particles were，without doubt，electri－ cal sparks．There are some colors more elec－ trical than others；although we cannot say hat they conttain more electricity，but in certain conditions give it out Thus，if rat of
yellow silk is dried at a temperature of $300^{\circ}$ and taken immediately out of an apartment of that heat，long sparks of electricity will be given out by drawing the hand over it．＇We have often seen this phenomenon．Cotton yarn impregnated with alum，and dried at $300^{\circ}$ Fahr．，exhibits the same phenomenon．When either the silk or cotton becomes cold，the elec－ trical phenomenon disappears．Brown silk is prepared with alum as a basis for the color， and both yellow and red dye are employed in the coloring of it．We have never seen a no－ tice of the facts we state in any work on elec－ tricity，nor do we know if philosophers gener－ ally are aware of the same．－［EDs．

## Great Meeting of Gas Consum <br> Grant＇s Light．

A very large meeting of gas consumers，was held in this city on last Wednesday，and a committee appointed to draft resolutions re－ questing the Legislature to investigate the af－ fairs of the Gas Cos．of the city．It seems that while these Companies furnish light to the inhabitants，their affairs are kept greatly in the dark．
Professor Grant explained a plan by which the City could be lighted at a five thousandth part of the expense now incurred．The light is of his own discovery，and the principal in－ gredient is nitrate of soda，which can be had in inexhaustible quantities in South America． the residum of the soda after being used， would be more valuable than the article in its crude state．One of those lights placed in Broadway corner of Canal－st．on the top of a house，would enable a person to read through． out the whole of that street and neigh borhood． He has one of them in use on the locomotive ＂Rough and Ready，＂on the Philadelphia Railroad line．By it the engineer can see hree－quarters of a mile ahead，and is enabled to observe the switch－pole for half a mile． The expense of that light for four nights was only 25 cents．
A committee of three were appointed to ex－ ami e this new discovesy and report upon it．

The Importance of Conversation．
Daniel Webster said in the course of a speech at Dedham，Massachusetts，before the Nor－ folk County Agricultural Society，that＂Eve－ ry man obtained a great part of whatever nnowledge he might possess by conversation and communication with others．Books in－ deed might do something in this respect，but nothing in comparison with free communica－ tion．If we should deduct from the aggregate of each man＇s knowledge，whatever he had learned by communication and conversation with his fellow－man，very little would be left and that little not worth much at best．It was intercourse with each other that made men sharp，and active，and enterprising．＂
Daniel Websteris right in his estimate of tho value of conversation，but were there no books to read there would be very little conversation worth listening to，in our estimate of things． Books are the things that furnish texts for con－ versation，and we never knew any man whose conversation was very gifted，who was not a reader；every one knows this to be true．

## British India．

It contains $100,000,000$ of people ：is provi－ ded with an army of 300,000 men，who sup－ port costs $\$ 70,000,000$ per annum，the whole public revenue of India being only twice $\$ 70$ ，－ 000,000 ．There are thousands of military of－ ficers broughtfrom Europe，whose appointments are a source of patronage in the hands of in－ fluential men．In 1846，the public debt of In dia（apart from that of England）was $\$ 187$, 000,000 ，the annual interest on which was nearly $\$ 9,000,000$ ．
The Ocean Steam Navigation Company． The proprietors of the $\mathbf{N}_{\text {ew }}$ York，Southamp ton and Bremen line of steamships，have deci ded to resume the monthly communication be－ tween this city and Bremen，on the 20th prox－ imo，instead of waiting until March as before announced．The Washington will sail first and the Hermarn on the succeeding month．
A piece of Lead Ore，weighing 1，500 pounds was recently received at New Orleans from $\mathrm{Ar}^{-}$ kansas．The ore is said to yield 120 oun－ $\mathrm{c}^{\text {es of silver to the ton．}}$

