

Spiritual Knocking.

Messrs. Editors—In your paper of the 19th inst., I noticed an article under this heading, wherein it was stated that Professor Loomis accounted for the noises upon scientific principles. Before a man attempts to explain such a phenomenon, he had better make himself at least slightly acquainted with the subject. It would be hard for the sounds of a waterfall to accompany certain individuals wherever they went (and with few exceptions only heard in their presence) to lay a hand sensibly upon a visitor's forehead in such a manner as to disarrange the hair, to lift up a table and move it around, or hold it down in opposition to two men endeavoring to move it; to answer great numbers of questions correctly, and many of them not asked audibly, but written, and not seen or known except by the questioner; to make a great variety of distinct sounds, but regular as the sounds made by different mechanics, or of a vessel laboring in a storm, within a yard of the hearer—which could not be made by ventriloquism. These are some of its manifestations, and are not only heard by a few ignorant persons, but by many of the most intellectual men in the country. And all concede that they cannot account for it by anything short of a spiritual agency. It has been in operation between one and two years, and subjected to the severest scrutiny, which those whom it follows do not shun, but solicit; and still not the slightest deception has been detected that I am aware of; but on the contrary, a conviction of its spiritual nature has followed investigation, and they have departed more moral and spiritually minded.

Such is a very brief view of the subject from which each one can draw their own conclusions; but let him remember that there is a possibility of not being able to account for everything upon material ground, and however comprehensive the present state of science, it is not perfect and therefore may not embrace all things. S. K. FAULKNER.
Le Roy, Genesee Co., N. Y.

REMARKS ON THE ABOVE.

We agree with our correspondent that Prof. Loomis' theory will not account for the noises in Western New York, but we have known far stranger things accounted for on natural principles, such as periodical ringing of bells and a great number of curious noises and curious things. We have not heard nor seen any of the spiritual phenomena in Rochester, but we know some men who have, such as Mr. Wm. Fisher, and Mr. R. McCallum, of Rochester, men of cool, reflective and sagacious minds, yet for all this we are perfect sceptics in any such influences, and all this proceeds from being educated with a belief in ghosts and witches. We have heard people assert that they have seen such and such fairies, and to gratify our eyes with a sight of such things, we have often gone and seen—nothing. We bring everything to the test of common sense. Can a spirit move a table? Can a spirit knock at the door? If it could, it would surely be observable to the physical organ of vision, a thing that is impossible. We would be more apt to believe in those spirits, and those kinds of miracles, if they were sensible spirits, and performed sensible acts, but they do no such things. They prefer more nonsensical acts than McAllister, the magician, and we will stake any amount that he will beat them all hollow in performing wonderful feats, as spiritual-like as theirs. The miracles of Christ had a heavenly object in them—they were acts of benevolence, but surely those spirits that wish to gain notoriety by knocking on the floor, moving tables, and brushing a wonder-struck observer's forehead, must be foolish, trifling spirits indeed. Our experience in that line is somewhat extensive, and with our present convictions, we would believe ourselves mad, as soon as believe that those noises in Western New York are the effect of spiritual agencies. The tricks will yet come out, and it will be found that those noises have been caused by human agencies and those not very respectable. Many of our readers will remember the Witched Girl that was exhibited throughout our cities and villages, in 1834 we think. She was a far greater wonder than the present Western Ghost. Many people have brought

forward scripture to prove the truth of supernatural agencies doing physical acts. We demur to all such use of the Scripture, so far as it relates to foolish objects. When the Bible relates a miracle, it is a sublime one. It is either the death of a host, or the act of benevolence, the raising of the dead, or the restoration of sight to the blind. There is no nonsense in that Book. No whirling of tables, no riding on broomsticks there; and this rule we may consider a good test, to judge of the nature of a miracle. We have thus candidly stated our opinions respecting the noises in Western New York, being induced to do so, for a number of reasons, those principally suggested by receiving a number of communications on the subject. Time will prove whether we are correct or not.—[E.D.]

New Ideas on the Sugar Manufacture.—By J. Scofield.

In the process of sugar-refining, the principal object of the refiner is to separate from the raw materials whatever impurities they may contain; but the process in its different stages is modified according to the different views of manufacturers, although the following general principles are attended to in all cases:—First, that process known by the term "blowing up." Secondly, the process of filtration through textile fabrics, and also through deep beds of animal charcoal in a granular state. Thirdly, the process of claying, as technically so called, although clay is not used for the purpose.—Fourthly, the boiling process, which is generally conducted in vacuo. Fifthly, the liquifying; and, lastly, that of drying and storing. The following is a summary of the process of refining, as conducted according to this invention. Having put the requisite quantity of sugar to be operated upon into the blow-up pan, it is to be dissolved in the ordinary manner, but omitting to mix with it the ordinary amount of "spice" (blood), and also the lime-water, and adding the lead material, the proportion of which will be hereafter explained, as also the method of preparing the same. This lead material must, however, be previously rubbed up with a sufficient quantity of hot water or syrup to produce a magna or paste. It will, however, be requisite for the manufacture to have a little experience in adding the lead material, as it will differ in each particular sample of sugar, therefore does not admit of laying down any exact proportion. The proportions that may be used are 40 grains of the lead material to every pound of sugar, and according as the sugar maybe less pure a greater quantity of the material will be required. If the process is conducted in this manner, a good result may be insured, and the experience acquired thereby will be a standard for future operation, and the sugar might be set apart for reference, until the manufacturer is able to appreciate the relation between the characters and requirements of the several descriptions of sugar, so as properly to apportion the amount of material to be used with each for the proper separation of their respective impurities. Having determined the quantity of the lead material to be employed, heat the liquid to a temperature of about 180° Fahrenheit, allowing the sugar sufficient time to dissolve and become well incorporated with the lead material; the heat must be continued at the same degree for the space of five minutes, which will produce the desired result. The vessel with its contents must now repose for about 15 minutes, when on examination, a curdy brown precipitate may be seen gradually sinking to the bottom, leaving the liquid above in a greater or less degree of transparency; we now resort to the process known as "bag filtration," and the liquid, as it comes through the filters, is to be received into copper vessels, and it will be found that it contains a quantity of lead, which is to be separated therefrom by "gasing," which consist in passing through it streams of sulphurous acid gas, which is to be continued until it is ascertained, by testing a portion of the liquid, that no trace of the lead remains.—For accomplishing this purpose, the following plan is laid down:—Supposing the liquid in course of operation to have been the result from a solution of two parts of sugar and one of water, therefore in a viscous or syrup state, as such it is to be agitated while the gas is

being diffused amongst it and after transmitting the gas for about ten minutes to a quarter of an hour, the liquid should be subjected to the test to ascertain whether it contains lead in solution. In order to conduct this operation properly the operator should have in readiness the several articles which he requires, such as two or three filters of filtering paper, each cut to a circle of five inches (that is before their formation into a cone), a bottle of hydrosulphate of ammonia (which is obtained by passing a current of hydro-sulphuric acid gas through an aqueous solution of hydro-sulphuric acid), a solution of sugar-of-lead of 20 grains to the fluid ounce of distilled water, test-glasses, filter-supports, a mixture of two ounces of chalk in seven ounces of water, a Berlin-ware boiling dish and a few clean straws (the straws should never be used twice). Having conducted the previous operations in the manner explained, and requiring to test the produce whether any lead is left in the sugar, we take about a fluid ounce of the liquor, which we allowed to boil over a spirit lamp, add a teaspoonful of the chalk mixture, and boil it again for five minutes, then pour the boiling liquid into a filter previously wetted with water; the liquid will at first come through so thick that to test it would be difficult, it is therefore passed through a second and third filter, but which will not render it very transparent, on account of the density of the liquor: weak liquids do not require so much filtration.

(To be Continued.)

Improved Facilities for Cultivating the Domestic Honey Bee.

Messrs. Editors—As a fond reader of your scientific journal, I perceive that you are not only a friend to inventors, but are also desirous of extending to your numerous patrons, through the columns of your paper, a knowledge of the inventive progress in all arts designed to promote their interest—I therefore have no hesitancy in making a few brief remarks relative to the advancement of a certain kind of enterprize in which I, (and I trust not a few others who peruse the columns of your journal,) am deeply engaged. I allude to the cultivation of the domestic Honey Bee, and the improved facilities afforded for managing them in a recently patented Hive that has come to my notice.

Having for many years entertained a deep interest for the promotion of bee culture, I have been induced to watch closely the progress of Bee Hive improvement, and from time to time have used not less than a dozen different planned hives, several of which were my own invention. It is my purpose here, however, to mention or point out the prominent advantages only of the one above alluded to, termed the Eclectic Hive. This constructed strictly on scientific principles, and affords a temperature in the hive, at all seasons of the year, peculiarly adapted to the prosperity of the bees. Its capacity is conveniently arranged and regulated to suit the size of any and all colonies, and encourage and promote their welfare. Ingress and egress is appropriately formed on opposite sides of the hive, graduated or closed at pleasure. Ventilation is suitably offered and easily regulated, as required. The surplus honey is conveniently removed at all times and markets. Honey, free from any impurities, may readily be obtained in small drawers, when desired. All parts of the hive allow of being removed and successively changed for renovating the comb, thereby promoting the health, activity, economy and profit of the bees. Colonies deficient of honey to winter upon, are also easily supplied with the required amount in the same condition as when removed from the hive, having it to spare. Large colonies may likewise be readily divided and thereby multiplied, by making two from one, or small swarms, at the approach of winter, united together if required; and the danger of wintering separately thus obviated.—Perfect communication and convenience for the bees through the hive, and a complete descent of all extraneous matter collected therein to the bottom board, from whence it is working off, is also offered. The moth miller, whose depredations bees have so much cause to dread, is furthermore suitably and properly guarded

against, and with a little care from the Apiarian, may be effectually excluded from the hive. Again, the robber bee is suitably and appropriately guarded against—hence the hive, being simply constructed, will, with its other qualities combined, embrace all of the advantages requisite for managing bees with ease and profit.

Now, with due respect to the inventor and the anxiety entertained for the advancement of bee culture, I will only add, that the Eclectic Hive meets my highest approval, and I would here cordially invite all scientific Apiarians, or such as are engaged in bee culture, to improve the earliest opportunity to investigate the merits of said hive, and impartially judge and determine for themselves.

Clark Wheeler, of Little Valley, Cataragus Co., N. Y., is the proprietor of the above hive, to whom letters concerning further explanation of its merits, or purchase of right, (if p. p.) I presume will be immediately attended to. APIARIAN.

Ellicottville, Jan. 10, 1850.

The New British House of Commons.

The ceiling is divided into 18 compartments by moulded ribs, each space being again subdivided into panels. Over the Speaker's chair is the reporter's gallery, formed like the other fittings throughout, of oak, and left of its natural color. There is a metal railing above the front of the gallery. The traceried openings seen above the Speaker's chair will be filled in with open metal-work, to screen a gallery to which ladies will be admitted. At the bar end is a much larger gallery for strangers. The floor of the House is of iron, perforated for the purpose of ventilation. The windows will be filled with stained glass; but there are no colored decorations. The length of the chamber is 62 feet, the width 45 feet; nearly one-third less in length, therefore, than the House of Lords, which has the same width and height, and is a double cube. The Commons' lobby, south of the bar, has a similarly formed ceiling, in nine main divisions. The connexion of the House of Parliament with Westminster-hall by means of an enormous archway nearly the whole height of the hall, is formed, although the steps are not yet constructed, and justifies our anticipations of its fine effect. This communicates with St. Stephen's gallery, the stonework of which is being cleaned down. The iron vaulted roof of this gallery is a fine piece of work. The restoration of the Cloisters is being proceeded with; the beauty of the old work there, is marvellous. From 300 to 400 men, in the whole, are at present engaged on the building.

How to Put Out Fires in the Holds of Ships.

The following letter from the London Times contains information which will be of great interest to captains of vessels and others:—"The owners of the Caleb Grimshaw demand a means for extinguishing fire in the hold of a ship. The materials required are nothing more than a cask of common chalk in the bottom of the hold, connected with the deck by a small pipe, and a two gallon bottle of sulphuric acid, which, on the alarm of fire, being poured down the pipe will generate a sufficient quantity of dense smoke (gas in which flame cannot exist) to extinguish any fire however large. I enclose my card, in accordance with your rule, but any chemist knows flame cannot exist in carbonic acid gas, which is generated by the action of the sulphuric acid on the chalk."

[The above information published more than a year ago in the Scientific American. But the question lies in this, how can the carbonic acid gas get at the fire? The whole under hold of the ship might be laid with a strata of it, and holes bored with tubes to communicate with any part of the vessel. There is no other way but this.]

Niagara Falls Suspension Bridge Co.

The Hamilton Gazette states that another quarterly dividend of three per cent. per share has been declared for the quarter ending first January last, payable on the first February. The Company appears to be in a most flourishing condition, and is one of the most prosperous in the country. The stock is steadily increasing in value, and is much looked for.