# Miscellaneous.

Correspondence of the Scientific American.

WASHINGTON CITY, March 12, 1850.

The Senate Committe on Patents will, in a few days, make a favorable report on the resolution referred to them, providing for such an alteration in the Patent Laws, as shall require public notice to be given before any application for the renewal of a patent shall be entertained in Congress, or by the Commissioner of Patents. Hence, in case of such a regulation, petitions against as well as for renewals, will be received simultaneously, and no unfair advantage over industrious mechanics can be obtained.

The idea in your last number of having an American World's Convention for the exhibition of works of mechanical skill, is highly approved in this section. I called the attention of several members of Congress to it, and they are of opinion that such a movement could not fail of success. It would be a glorious thing for the mechanics of this country, as very few foreign countries have any idea of their American skill. The question is then settled. Shall we make the first movement here, or will you do it in New York?

The statement that Capt. Colby, of New Bedford, Mass., has a bed cord made of whale's sinews, which has been used by the family over 200 years, has, I see, stirred up the faculties of a Virginia planter, who asks with enthusiasm, "why is not that the right kind of stuff for a suspension bridge?"

Our canal having been recently drained, yesterday a large quantity of resinous sediment from the new Gas Works emptied itself through the drain beneath the bank and spread over the surface of the mud. This being accidentally ignited, threw up such an immense volume of black smoke that it alarmed the whole city. It was a grand spectacle.

M. R. Mills, of this city, has been appointed Architect for the Virginia Monument of Washington, and Crawford, the sculptor, is going to Italy to execute a portion of the work.

A few days ago Gov. Seward presented the President with a silver currycomb, sent on by a manufacturer of those articles in your city. Some Yankee will, I presume, soon send on some silver oats for the horse; that is, if there is any chance of said oats being, by the process of digestion, transformed into a good fat office.

From conversation with several Senators, I think there is no doubt but that the act of July 8, 1845, granting a renewal of the Woodworth patent for the planing machine, will be repealed. From the facts stated in the various memorials on the subject, the Committee on Patents feel indignant, and they say that Congress has unwittingly been made the instrument of creating a monopoly and imposing a tax on the industrious mechanic.

Your remarks in relation to the unjust appropriation of the Patent Fund for the erection of buildings not connected with the Patent Office, have caused a strong feeling among the members, who naturally ask why the surplus fund is not expended in publishing a history of all the patents ever granted, so that ingenius men, on coming here with inventions, may no longer be heart-broken at finding they have been anticipated.

Lieut. Davis has been delivering some interesting lectures at the Smithsonian Institute on the "Tides of the Ocean."

J. Johnson, of Saratoga street, Baltimore, offers to erect fire-proof rooms for the Departments at a low rate. He offers to furnish iron floors and pillars to support them at two cents a pound, wrought iron joints at three cents, and wooden sash and frames of the same material, at four cents.

A French sportsman has sent an interesting article to the "Intelligencer," in which he demonstrates that since the introduction of percussion caps it is much safer to carry a gun or pistol at half-cock than according to the present mode of leaving the hammer on the cap.

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### Woodworth Patent.--Important Decision.

U. S. Circuit Court—In Chancerry—Elisha Bloomer vs. Curtius and Rinne.—Complainant applied for an injunction to restrain the defendants from using Woodworth's Planing Machine. The defendants for answer say that they had bought the right under the first extension of the patent, and that therefore they are entitled to the benefit of the second extension, if not in whole, at least until their machines are worn out. The patent was taken out about 1827, and expired in 1842. In 1836 it was extended by Congress till 1849. The extension, however, contained a saving clause in favor of the assignees, which the Supreme Court has construed, gives the purchasers the right to use their machines till worn out. The act of 1845 gives additional extension till 1856 but contains no saving clause. The defendants purchased under the first extension. The Court have decided that the second extension, containing no saving clause in favor of assignees, they have no right to the use of the patent machine. The reasoning of the Supreme Court in the case of Wilson vs. Simpson, which which gave a construction to the saving clause, seems conclusive in this case. There it was held that the insertion of the words secured the right of using the machine till worn out. The absence of those words in the act of 1845, consequently deprives defendants of the right. Injunction allowed.—New Orleans Crescent, 24th ult.

[On the 5th inst., in the Senate, U. S., numerous petitions were presented as remonstrances against the renewal of the Woodworth Patent. An application being made for that purpose, Mr. Dawson stated in the course of a few remarks, in relation to the said petition, that the Committee of patents had decided against a renewal of the Patent. In the Sci. Am. of the 2nd. (penned at least 8 days before the above statements were made) we made this remark, "from peculiar information in our possession, we believe, the renewal of the Patent will be denied." It is seldom that we are wrong in our conclusions respecting such things.

### Mississippi Wine.

Mr. J. Noyes, residing near Natchez, has manufactured a wine that, on account of its excellence, is begining to attract considerable attention. The editor of the Jackson Southron says:

"Last Saturday, in company with a few others, we participated in tasting some specimens of wine made from grape, cultivated by J. Noyes, at Hollywood, near Natchez, Mississippi, and were gratified that this new and important branch of domestic industry has been brought to such a high state of perfection among us; and that a species of wine, partaking largely of the character of the famous Tokay, may be successfully cultivated within our borders. The greatest difficulty in cultivating in this latitude the Catawba, Isabella and other common grapes of the country, arises from the humidity of the climate, which rots or causes them to die out or degenerate in two or three years. This fatal impediment to success in vine-growing is entirely avoided by planting the Roanoke grape, so successfully tested and improved upon, for a number of years, by Mr. Noyes, and which he has found peculiarly suited to our soil and climate. It is said the Roanoke grape resembles the Scuppernong grape, but we understand from Mr. N. that the analogy goes no further than to their external appearance, being entirely of a different species. The taste and flavor of the wine made at Hollywood are unequalled by any domestic wine produced on the American continent, and surpassed only by two descriptions of European wines.

### Cotton Factory in Albany.

A Company has been formed in Albany, under the general manufacturing law, with a capital of $100,000 for the manufacturing of cotton fabrics. There will be from 80 to 100 looms, which will be worked by steam. This will give employment to some 60 persons, and will be a vast acquisition to that portion of the city. It is the intention of the Company to manufacture only printing and cotton cloths, and not to print.

### Steam Boilers.

The following is the substance of a bill pending before the New York Legislature:

Sec. 1. No person hereafter to be allowed to control any steam engine or boiler, connected with any boat, car, or building unless he shall be a practical engineer, having a certificate as below.

Sec. 2. The Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall nominate a board of five skilful engineers, who have served an apprenticeship at the construction of boilers, who shall be commissioned to examine and certifiy as in the first section named.

Sec. 3. These commissioners to hold their office four years. Engineers acting without certificates to be guilty of a misdemeanor, and fined. The same penalty for such as shall employ uncertified engineers.

It is further urged that the law would be still better by providing that a steam boiler shall in no instance be within the building—that it should be in a house attached, or in a cellar under the street. Then the mischief done will not involve innocent persons, those only through whose carelessness the accident may be attributed to being the sufferers.

### Genius.

Genius is properly the faculty of invention, by means of which a man is qualified for making new discoveries in science, or for producing original works of art. We may ascribe taste, judgement, or knowledge to a man who is capable of invention, but we cannot reckon him a genius. In order to determine how far he merits that character, we must inquire whether he has discovered any new principle in science, or invented any new art, or carried those arts which are already practised to a higher degree of perfection than former masters? Or whether, at least, in matters of science, he has improved on the discoveries of his predecessors, and reduced principles formely known, to a greater degree of simplicity consistence. or traced them through a train of consequences hitherto unknown? Or in the arts designed some new work different to those of his predecessors, though perhaps not excelling them. Whatever falls short of this is servile imitation, or a dull effort of plodding industry, which, as not implying inventions, can be deemed no proof of genius, whatever capacity, skill or diligence it may evidence. But if a man shows invention, no intellectual defects which his performance may betray can forfeit his claims to genius. His invention may be irregular, wild, undisciplined, but still it is regarded as an infallible mark of real natural genius, and the degree of this faculty that we ascribe to him is always in proportion to our estimate of the novelty, the difficulty, or the dignity of his invention.

### A Paper Devourer.

In the Bank of England no less than sixty folio volumes, or ledgers, are daily filled with writing in keeping accounts! To produce these volumes, the paper having been previously manufactured elsewhere, eight men, three steam presses, and two hand presses, are continually kept going within the bank! In the copper-plate printing department 28,000 bank notes are thrown off daily; and so accurately is the number indicated by machinery, that to purloin a single note without detection, is an impossibility.

### Ancient Britons.

The remains of ancient British villages have been discovered on the crest of a range of hills at Weybourne, near Holt. They consist of a collection of pits, each 4 feet in depth, and 8 in diameter, extending upwards of a quater of a mile, and sepulchral tumili in the neighborhood, forming the burial place, of the aboriginal tribe. Thus our *great*, forefathers lived in caves and dens of the earth.

### Books.

Subscribers ordering books from us will be particular in stating how they wish them sent, as the law does not allow bound books to pass through the mail. We have now several in the office awaiting proper forwarding directions.

By the last news from California: greater discoveries than ever had been made of gold. One piece weighing 84 lbs. had been discovered and another of 35 lbs.

### Medical Use of Salt.

In many cases of disorded stomach, a teaspoonful of salt is a certain cure. In the violent internal aching, termed cholic, add a teaspoonful of salt to a pint of cold water—drink it, and go to bed; it is one of the speediest remedies known. The same will revive a person who seems almost dead from receiving a very heavy fall, &c.

In an apoplectic fit, no time should be lost in pouring down salt and water, if suffiicient sensibility remain to allow of swallowing; if not, the head must be sponged with cold water until the sense return, when salt will completely restore the patient from the lethargy.

In a fit, the feet should be placed in warm water, with mustard added; and the legs briskly rubbed, all bandages removed from the neck, and a cool apartment procured if possible. In many cases of severe bleeding at the lungs, and when other remedies fail, Dr. Rush found two teaspoonfuls of salt completely stayed the blood.

In cases of bite from a mad dog, wash the part with strong brine for an heur, then bind on some salt with a rag.

In toothache, warm salt and water held to the part, and renewed two or three times, will relieve in most cases. If the gums be affected, wash the mouth with brine; if the teeth be covered with tartar, wash them twice a day with salt and water.

In swelled neck, wash the part with brine, and drink it also twice a day until cured.

Salt will expel worms, if used in the food in a moderate degree, and aids digestion; but salt meat is injurious if used much.

### Keep this in Mind--

That all subscribers to the Scientific American, who commenced taking their paper at the beginning of Volume 5, and remitted but one dollar—that the time for which they have paid is now up, and that this is the last number they will receive unless they remit again.

Keep in mind—That two or more papers sent to one post-office, are folded in one wrapper, and they are, therefore, less liable to miscarriage.

### Works on Science and Art.

DICTIONARY OF MECHANICS, ENGINE WORK AND ENGINEERING. Oliver Byrne, Editor.—Published by D. Appleton & Co.—This number has some excellent views of some foreign Bridges, Railroad Buffing Apparatus, Doughty's Bung Cutter, which appeared in Vol. 4, Sci. Am. Some indifferent views of Button Machinery: (a visit to old Barton's button machinery at Waterford, would have done good.) The Byrnegraph, or *Proportional Compasses*, and many other very good things.

MARINE AND NAVAL ARCHITECTURE. By John W. Griffiths.—Number 3 of this splendid work is just published. It contains three plates of sections of an Ocean Steamer, and explains the peculiarity of American shipbuilding, in constructing from models instead of drawings. It describes Chapman's system for calculating the displacement of floating bodies. This is a most valuable work.

### Townsley's Water-Proof Blacking.

A few weeks since we noticed this article, recommending it as an excellent preventive to wet feet, and also as giving a fine polish to boots. Since the article referred to was penned we have had further opportunity of testing the merits of Mr. Townsley's blacking, and we not only endorse all that was said of it in a former article, but pronounce it the only kind we ever used that would render leather entirely impervious to water. This blacking was invented by Mr. G. R. Townsley, of Springfield Mass., and is an article that may be relied upon by those who wish to discard their clumsy overshoes, and still be found with dry feet and a handsome polished boot.

### Contentment.

Content converts everything near it to the highest perfection it is capable of. It irradiates every metal, and enriches lead with all the properties of gold. It heightens smoke into flame, flame into light, and light into glory: a single ray of it dissipates pain, care and melancholy from the person on whom it falls. In short, its presence naturally changes every place into a kind of heaven.