

Scientific American.

ESTABLISHED 1845.

MUNN & CO., Editors and Proprietors.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT

No. 361 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.

O. D. MUNN.

A. E. BEACH.

TERMS FOR THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.

One copy, one year, for the U. S. or Canada. \$3 00
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The Scientific American Supplement

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1889.

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(Illustrated articles are marked with an asterisk.)

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Price 10 cents. For sale by all newdealers.

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OPENING OF A NEW DRY DOCK AT NORFOLK, VA.

The great dry dock lately built by the Chesapeake Dry Dock and Construction Company was opened for business on the 24th of April with appropriate festivities. A large company of distinguished personages, engineers, and government officials was present.

The present dock is one of the largest of its kind ever constructed. It is 630 feet long from head to outer sill; 130 feet wide at top and 50 feet at the bottom, and 33 feet deep, with a slope in the bottom of 24 inches to the 560 feet.

The dock is supplied with two centrifugal pumps of a capacity of forty thousand gallons per minute, each of which empties it in one hour and thirty-six minutes.

There is in course of construction a shipbuilding plant alongside of the dry dock which will, when completed, enable the company to do the finest work of construction and repair in the country.

The vessel selected for the first trial of the new dock was the great ironclad war ship Puritan. The dock was lowered and the Puritan was hauled in and placed in position. The gates were closed and the powerful pumps put to work to clear the dock of water.

Mr. Simpson, the inventor, was present and greatly enjoyed the occasion. He is now quite advanced in years, but is still active.

HEAVY QUICK-FIRING BATTERIES.

A new and interesting feature of British naval armament is the substitution of quick-firing guns for the mammoth pieces heretofore considered indispensable in the battery. These new pieces are not of the pepper-box variety, such as the Maxim, Nordenfolt, Gardner, and old-style Hotchkiss guns.

The investigation of the causes which have led, or rather which are leading, to the abandonment of the mammoth gun principle of armament is an engaging and instructive study. It is not so many years ago when the struggle between gun and armor was in progress.

gun, and this with a ponderous iron vessel, especially if there is much of a sea on, is not an easy task. Slowly the heavy gun is trained into position, and then, presto! the ship under it sways away in the sea and the target is gone!

Then came the torpedo boat—a flying target that to attempt to train a heavy gun upon was but a waste of labor. To guard against this danger, secondary or quick-firing batteries were mounted in the tops and set up on the poop and fo'c's'le.

It is not easy to see, however, how in any fair computation the believer in big ships can cry checkmate to the torpedo boats. As long as such elements as darkness and thick weather remain, as long as big guns belch forth clouds of powder smoke to hang upon the waters, it would seem as if these quick-winged terrors might still remain potent.

The Australian Rabbit Pest.

It is stated that M. Pasteur's plan of exterminating the rabbits by inoculation with transmittable virus has proved to be a failure in Australia.

Mr. W. Rodier, of Tambua, Cobar, New South Wales, has forwarded to this society a printed sheet, containing, as it appears to me, by far the best suggestion yet made for the extermination of 'rabbits—a subject to which my attention has been repeatedly called by various correspondents in the Australian colonies.

The results of this mode of operation are that the male rabbits, as soon as they begin to predominate in numbers, persecute the females with their attentions, and prevent them from breeding.

This is all strictly in accordance with what we know takes place under similar circumstances in the case of other animals, so that we can readily believe it to be likely to happen.

The ordinary mode of trapping, as Mr. Rodier points out, is more likely to increase the number of rabbits than to diminish them. For reasons which he clearly explains, more buck rabbits are always killed by the trappers than does.

The plan advocated by Mr. Rodier is so simple and easy that I cannot doubt it will be widely followed when known. No disease that might otherwise cause injury is introduced, no other noxious animal is proposed to be imported.

A Great and Fast Passenger Steamer.

The first trip of the new passenger steamer Puritan, of the Fall River line, from New York to Newport, via Long Island Sound, was made April 24, with much success. She attained a speed of over 20 miles an hour with 65 pounds steam.