Scientific American

NEW-YORK, MAY 1, 1852.

Some Reasons why Patents should not be Extended.

The present Patent Laws provide for the granting of patents for fourteen years, and, if a patentee has not been sufficiently remunerated during that time, they also provide for the extension of the patent for seven years longer, making the whole term twenty-one years. Our first Patent Laws made no provision for the extension of patents; they—the patents—became public property at the end of the fourteen years. A patent at the present day is a hundred times more valuable than it was in 1790. When our Patent Laws were first enacted there were only about three millions of inhabitants in the United States, now there are twenty-four millions; if the patent term had originally been twenty-eight years it would have been of less benefit to an inventor than a term of seven years now. The means of spreading information about a useful invention now, and the great number of inhabitants in our country likely to use it, compel us to say that the man who fails to get remunerated for a useful improvement in fourteen years, must manage it badly for his own sake, and that of the public also. Within the past two years, in many places of our country, the people have been so treated by agents of some patentees, that a very general discontent is beginning to be expressed against our system of patent laws. The public, from revelations which have come out from the Patent Office itself, has come to the conclusion that it is not, and has not conducted its affairs at all times according to the rules of open and upright dealing, and it is even asserted by many that our country would be better without the Patent Laws and Patent Office than with them.

If the Patent Laws were abolished, no man would be deprived of any *natural* right; every man could invent, construct, and use any machine without let or hindrance from any person, consequently, if there were no Patent Laws, no inventor would have less *natural rights* than he now has. But Patent Laws are laws of good policy; our country, and all countries which have Patent Laws have prospered under them; they certainly have encouraged improvements in science and art. A patent is the cheapest and best mode of rewarding an inventor for a useful discovery. It gives him the exclusive right to make, use, and sell his invention for fourteen years, after which it becomes public property. A patent is a bargain between the people and inventor; the one says, we will allow no person but yourself and those to whom you grant the privilege, to make, use, or sell your invention for fourteen years; we will protect you against competition during that period, and you may make as much money as you can, but after that its exclusive character must cease. It has been said by some—and men of law too, that inventions should be held like any other property—meaning houses, farms, fruits and merchandise—for ever, by inventors and their heirs; but such men have not studied the subject with assiduous attention. Inventors have a perpetual right to their inventions, and so have their heirs for ever, without any Patent Law at all. The property of a patent is not in its nature like the property of land, fruits, or merchandise; it is property in the abstract, and based on *priority* more than on originality. If patent property were based on the title, *original invention*—the product of an inventor's mind—then every inventor would have a right to use his own invention, even if it were like a previous invention. Our laws forbid this, and grant patents to the first improvers only, hence we find that we have five or six hundred rejections every year in the Patent Office, the applicants having made oath that they were the first inventors, and did so in the honest belief that they were. Patent property is therefore not like other property; it is not based on *original* labor, but is based on a question of *time*—priority of discovery. If a man gets a patent for a machine, that patent gives him the right of property in every machine—even if there were ten thousand of them built like it in the country; and this title he has by law, although those who built them knew nothing about his patent, and although they made them with their own hands, or paid for them with their own money. It is not so with any other kind of property. We have stated this question so clearly, we think, that every one must understand it. Some inventors may think we should have advocated the other side of the question, but it is best for both of us to view the question in the light of truth, not as a sophism.

A patent is an instrument of national polity, and a good one, both for inventors and our country; as the Philadelphia Ledger has truly expressed it, "the Turks and other Mahomedans have no Patent Laws, where is there inventive power?" Patent rights have been abused, and they may be so again, still nothing that we know of at present, can be substituted for our patent laws; to abolish them would be a most unfortunate thing for our country.

Patents which have been extended by Congress, have been used by the agents and assignees of said patents more than all others, to irritate and annoy many worthy and honest men in our country. If in many cases patentees have sold cheap, it is no argument in favor of an extension of a patent; it is unfortunate for a patentee when he does so.

It is the business of statesmen, and also the business of editors, to forsee, in some degree, what may be the state of feeling in the country upon any question, and to use practical sagacity in providing for events, so as to bring forward good measures, and avoid evil ones. Judging from expressions which have come to us from many quarters, and looking strictly at the question of our Patent Laws, as they stand in principle and practice, we believe that it would be better for our inventors and people, if no patent were to be extended beyond the period of fourteen years after 1853. If there were no extension of patents there would be less general sympathy for patent pirates; patent rights would then be more valuable, because they would be more strictly enforced, and more respected by the community.

We believe that a repeal of our patent laws would greatly retard the progress of improvements in the arts; inventors, for their own sakes, would, as far as possible, keep and use their improvements in secret, and would guard them with all that jealously which so distinguished the inventors of old, and which kept back the advance of machinery to an extent which we can scarcely credit. But, at the same time, our people have jealous feelings towards those who have exclusive privileges, although those privileges may have been granted for some good done; it is therefore dangerous to pursue any policy which has irritated or which may irritate the minds of our people by exactions beyond the point of endurance; in such a case the repeal of our Patent Laws would certainly be brought about.

Our inventors will see that we are sincere in advocating a policy, which we believe, by timely concession and reform, will make patents to be more respected and consequently less subject to infringement.

Chinese Antiquities in Ireland.

A paper was recently read before the Belfast Literary Society in Ireland, on Chinese porcelain seals, which have been found in that country. About fifty have been found, some in deep bogs, one in a cave, some in one place, some in another, scattered over the country from Belfast to Cork. How they came there is a query; nobody can tell. They are of great antiquity. They have all inscriptions on them in the ancient Chinese seal language, and Mr. Gutzlaff had translated a number of them. Each seal is a perfect cube, with the figure of a Chinese monkey by way of a handle. It is supposed they may have been brought there by ancient Phœnicians, but it is our opinion that they were brought there by some of the ancient Irish tribes, who no doubt journeyed through and came down from China. No such seals have ever been found in Britain. This may account for the differences in the Scots and Irish Celts. Smith asserts in his treatise on the Human Races, that the Irish are a different mixture from the Northern Celts; but some more light on the subject may clear the mystery up.

International Copyright.

Some of our papers are discussing the propriety of an international copyright for authors. The New York Tribune and Philadelphia Ledger take the position that an international copyright law would be just, proper, and beneficial. The New York Daily Times takes the opposite view of the question, but manages the question with little skill and less learning than we should have expected.

Article 1, Sec. 8, of the Constitution of the United States, says:—

"Congress shall have power, &c., to promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to *authors* and inventors the exclusive right to their *respective writings* and discoveries." The framers of our constitution looked forward to the benefits that would be conferred upon our country by granting to both natives and foreigners, patents and copyrights for their productions, and left the power with Congress to make laws how the principles they declared in the constitution should be carried out. Congress has carried out those principles in respect to foreign inventors, but not in respect to foreign authors, consequently one principle of the constitution is yet in abeyance to such ideas as the following in the New York Times:—

"Suppose the English publisher refuses to sell the copyright of Macaulay's History, or any other book, to an American house. It cannot be re-printed here; and we have, therefore, only to pay the price demanded for the English edition,—including government taxes upon the necessaries of life needed by the workmen, the income taxes, &c., or go without it. The price of the book must of necessity be greater than it is when re-printed here, because its cost is greater. And no matter how large the number sold, the price can never fall below the cost. If English publishers can copyright their books in this country, we must inevitably, in purchasing them, pay our share of the taxes levied on their production by the English Government. The price fixed upon them will be determined upon that basis."

This is very unenlightened reasoning.—The same arguments might be employed against international patents which are now granted in all civilized countries. The international copyright law might contain a clause providing for the author to bring his work into use in the United States within a certain period, or forfeit the copyright. The English patent law has a provision of this kind, and our patent laws have a like provision also. Act 1836, Sec. 15 provides, that if an alien fails for the space of eighteen months from the date of his patent to put and continue on sale his invention to the *public on reasonable terms* he loses the benefit of his patent. We do not discuss the question of international copyright, whether it is politic to adopt it or not, we only wish to show that an international copyright law is not viewed in a proper light, by some able and intelligent men.

Paying for Parker's Water's Wheel.

We have received a letter from Mr. Goodnow, the same gentleman whose letter we published on page 211, about Parker's Water Wheel, and to which we received an answer from Messrs. Havens and Barron, the agents of Parker, in Vermont, who denied the statements contained in Mr. Goodnow's letter. In the letter now received, there is another enclosed, from S. Frost, of Derby, Vt., a respectable gentleman, who states that *he* had only four days notice given him by the agents of Parker, to settle and pay fifty dollars for the use of the spiral wheel for eight years, or else be sued before the United States Circuit Court; and property was attached to the amount of $5,000 where they could find that amount. The letter also states, "they take out of this county $2000." This gentleman had paid a Mr. Wilson's agent $10 for a patent fee before, and then $50 to Parker's agents, making, as he says, "a pretty costly patent."

From this letter, which is now before us, we judge that Frost bought his wheel, paid for it, and paid a patent fee of $10 to another person (Wilson's agent), and he did not know that he was using a wheel claimed to be an infringement of Parker's Patent. He was honest in all that he did, and has been made to pay dearly for his honest ignorance. By such doings, it is no wonder that we hear such a cry of universal indignation, from almost every quarter, against the claims of some patentees.

The Woodworth Patent in the Senate.

A great number of petitions are presented in the Senate, every week, against the extension of the Woodworth Patent. A Senator said, one day, "I wish the Senate would act on the Woodworth Patent and the French Spoliation Bill, and settle some business." It appears to us that it is a duty incumbent upon the Senate to do this speedily. It has pained us a great deal to hear of so much crimination and recrimination in the present Congress—so much personal matter—so much said and done which should not have been said and done there; and so little said and done which should have been said and done there. Priding ourselves, as we do, in having a respectable Senate and House of Representatives, we, out doors, can see more clearly, perhaps, than those within, what has a respectable and what has a degrading tendency in the actions of the Senate and House of Representatives. In our opinion, it would tell better to the credit of Senators and Representatives, politically, with the people, if they would devote more attention to practical measures than to partizan speech-making. We hope the Senate will soon act upon the Woodworth Patent, and let the people, who are interested in the matter, have their minds set at rest one way or the other.

Law Questions on Patents, Parker's Wheel, &c.

I see it stated that Parker's agents have attached property and person of those whom they claim to have been infringing their patent. I question the legality of that proceeding, and the U. S. Court agent which granted the attachment, I believe, has exceeded his power in this peculiar case. No injunction can (in the true sense of our patent laws), now be granted against any wheel claimed to be an infringement of Parker's patent. The patent has expired—it has no existence as a legal instrument of to-day; how then can an injunction be granted to restrain a person from using a wheel which is claimed to infringe a patent which has no existence. The suits for infringement of Parker's patent that was, can only have a retrospective effect for damages, for the time the wheel was used by a defendant or defendants, during the time the patent was in existence. Suits for infringement of Parker's patent cannot now be entertained in equity. This is my opinion respecting the meaning of the Patent Laws.

JUNIUS REDIVIVUS.

Another Fire Annihilator Experiment.

While they were trying some experiments with the Fire Annihilator at Newark, a few days ago, the flames got the start of the machines, and, no water being handy, the whole building was consumed. Four or five Annihilators were thrown in at the windows, but it was no go—flame was too much for gas. The person who had charge of the experiments was Dr. Colton, who, in a letter, stated he had been successful twice, but the flames got so hot before he applied the last annihilator, he could not get into them. That is it exactly; the annihilator, even in the hands of a doctor, was annihilated. Newark was a first-rate place to try the experiments; nitre paper, and nitre and charcoal, are just about the same thing for putting out fires. Give us the fire-gun in preference to either.

Discussion About our Patent Laws

Some of our daily papers have entered into a controversy about our Patent Laws. The Philadelphia Ledger ably sustains them, the New York Daily Times is opposed to them There is a want, (and there are reasons for it) of correct information displayed on both sides, especially by the "Times," as we will show in the next number of the Scientific American.

Patent Case.

On the 12th April, before Judge Kane, in Philadelphia, Ross Winans obtained a verdict and damages of $5,400 against the New York and Maryland Railroad Company for the infringement of his patent.

Reported Officially for the Scientific American

LIST OF PATENT CLAIMS

Issued from the United States Patent Office

FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 20, 1852

SUBMARINE AUGERS—By Norman Blake, of Ira, N. Y.: I claim forming a pod auger with a hinge joint, in combination with connecting wires, substantially in the manner and for the purpose set forth.

MATTRESSES—By T. G. Clinton, of Cincinnati, O.: I claim the use of the hair of hides of cattle, treated after the manner of or steeped with the hides of cattle in the lime vats of a tan yard, or other suitable place, as described, with or without other animal or vegetable matter, treated or not treated conjointly therewith, or separately, in the same way; and the use of other animal or vegetable matter, under like treatment and circumstances, as described, whether used conglomerately, conjointly, or separately, or their equivalents, when such animal or vegetable matter is of the kinds used for upholstering or sleeping purposes, in the articles of mattresses, ottomans, cushions, sleeping sofas, sacking bottoms, or analogous articles, whereby a new result is attained, viz., an article obnoxious to bed bugs, without the necessity of any temporary application of poisonous mixtures thereto, thus furnishing the world with a harmless antidote to a great nuisance, and abolishing the necessity for a great peril to human life in the domestic circle.

WINNOWERS—By T. J. Doyle, of Winchester Va.: I claim, first, in combination with the side openings, discharge outlets, or passages, the invention, use, and application of the sliding diaphragm, with double sloping bottom. This diaphragm bottom, as shown and used, has a double slope, or is a double inclined plane, outward, inclining from each side of its elevated longitudinal centre.

Secondly, I claim the use, application, and arrangement of an adjustable or sliding cheat or smut board in combination with a screen, with side apertures or outlets, for the purpose specified.

SASH STOPPER AND FASTENER—By C. C. Felton, of Dedham, Mass.: I do not claim the combination of a rocking or vibrating friction plate, a lever spring and notched plate, as they are arranged in the drawings of the patent granted to B. S. Hadaway; but as I dispense entirely with a lever separate from the rocking friction plate, and make the said plate to operate itself.

I claim my improvement of combining the rocking plate and lever in one single piece, and extending it below the part which rocks on the part of the notch of the catch plate, all essentially in manner as described, whereby I greatly simplify the construction of the window catch, and thereby render it not only cheaper in construction, but less liable to get out of order.

PROTECTING WHEELS AND AXLES OF CARS BY INCASING THEM—By A. L. Finch, of New Britain, Ct.: I claim incasing the axles and wheels of rail cars within a metallic casing, substantially as specified.

KEYS OF PIANOFORTES. ORGANS, etc.—By Wm. F. Furgang, of Albany, N. Y.: I claim the finger keys of organs, pianofortes, or any other musical instrument played in a similar manner, by constructing a part of every key, in such manner that when in position on the key board, such part of every key shall be both level and in range with the similar parts of the other keys, so that the running of a finger over the keys of the whole chromatic scale on the key-board, may be capable of producing similar effects to those that can now be produced by a similar running of a finger over the lower range of keys of pianofortes as now constructed, substantially in the manner and form as set forth.

CAPPING SCREWS—By Chas. T. Grilley, of New Haven, Ct: I do not claim the adaptation, simply, of a cap of sheet metal to the particular configuration of any regular or irregular form, by compression, or in whatever other manner the same may be produced: but I claim the attachment of a brass, copper, or other suitable metallic cap to, and its combination with an iron wood screw, substantially in the manner and by the process described (which I conceive to be the only practicable method in which the same can be usefully effected), whereby and by means of the successive operations of punching or stamping, the nick is first cut through the shell, and then after being adjusted to the groove or slot in the head of the screw, the sides thereof are driven down into, and made to press closely against the sides of the slot, leaving the bottom of the groove or slot uncovered, so that the cap, when closed round the head of the screw, will preserve its hold, without liability to be turned or displaced by the screw driver which works upon the iron surface at the bottom of the slot, and against the covered sides thereof, thereby furnishing to the public, at a comparatively small cost, a wood screw having all the beauty and finish of a brass, copper, or plated screw, in combination with the greatly superior strength of an iron one. The invention is equally applicable to steel screws, which may be capped in a similar way.

MACHINE FOR DRAWING SPIKES—By Daniel Hale, of Hinsdale, N. Y.: I claim the shackle, with the arrangement for clasping the head of a spike, for the purpose of drawing it from the cross-tie of a railroad track, in combination with a clevy and lever, substantially as set forth.

APPARATUS FOR RAISING WATER—By N. H. Leby, of Charleston, S. C.: I claim constructing the wheel, or turbine, with exterior ribs, of any suitable number, size, or shape, the said ribs operating in combination with a cover, or its equivalent, in the manner and for the purpose set forth.

REFRIGERATORS—By Andrew Marsh, of Cincinnati, Ohio: I am aware that ice safes have been made with hollow shelves for water; but these are practically objectionable on account of their costliness, cumbersomeness, difficulty of cleaning, and liability to bursting, either from the congelation of the water, in the event of the discharge becoming choked, or from the hydrostatic pressure. I claim the application, as described, to an ice safe or refrigerator, of a crimped, convoluted, or corrugated form to the shelves, in order (in addition to combining strength with lightness of construction) to capacitate them for the collection, retention, and discharge of the water which results both from the ice and the atmospheric moisture within the case.

BRICK MACHINES—By Jesse Samuels, of Allentown, Pa.: I claim the manner of feeding the clay to the moulds, by means of the cut-off in the hopper case, with the scraper for heaping the clay under the plunger, in connection with the plunger, operated as described, for partially condensing the clay into the moulds, preparatory to pressing, substantially as described.

I also claim the "carrier" for clamping and removing the brick from the moulds, consisting of the clamp and back plate for clamping the brick, and the spring and tumbler shaft and trigger or their equivalents, arranged substantially as described and operated upon by three stationary pins, as set forth.

ROTARY PUMPS—By H. C. Spalding & Gage Stickney, of Hartford, Ct.: We claim the spiral flanch working within a circular case, said flanch being constructed as described, in combination with the sliding valve, the spiral flanch and valve operating in the manner and for the purpose substantially as specified.

BALANCE GATES—By William C. VanHoesen, of Leeds, N. Y.: I claim the method of opening and closing the gate, substantially as described, viz., by means of the ropes or cords passing over the semi or half pulley, and attached to the small upright, said pulley being attached to one of the side pieces of the gate, the gate being hung upon pivots and balanced by the weight or counterpoise, the several parts being operated as set forth.

TAILORS' MEASURES—By Wm. T. Wells, of Shelbyville, Tenn: I claim the graduated straps in connection with the several centres about which they respectively turn, and with the graduated arcs—the said centres being arranged substantially as set forth and for the purposes specified, using for that purpose the aforesaid instrument, or any other substantially the same, and which will produce the intended effect; but I disclaim having invented the tape measure, or the elastic square designated as No. 3 underneath the main instrument.

HAME TUGS—By R. B. Whipple, of Cleveland, O.: I claim the formation of the hame tug, by means of the two metallic plates, fitted together so as to embrace the buckle, loop, and cleft, substantially in the manner set forth.

REFLECTING SPIRIT LEVEL AND SQUARE—By F. Wilbar, of Roxbury, Mass.: I deem the cubical block, with its two mirrors and two spirit levels, arranged as shown, and it is this instrument or combination of block or frame, two mirrors, and two spirit levels, or, what is equivalent to the two levels, a spherical surface level, I claim as my invention.

DEVICES FOR CASTING CIRCLE PLATES, ROSES, ETC., WITH DOVETAILED GROOVES—By Nathan Matthews (assignor to R. Edwards, D. A. Morris & Nathan Matthews), of Pittsburgh, Pa.: I claim forming the dovetails in circle plates, by dovetail pieces, which are withdrawn lengthwise from the recesses, the said withdrawing being performed by attaching the dovetail pieces to levers within the cylinder or body of the mould, the said levers being moved by a rod passing through the side of the cylinder, or body of the mould, substantially as set forth.

RAILROAD CAR BRAKES—By Benj. Kraft, of Reading, Pa.: I do not claim the mere application of friction rollers, as such are not new, nor yet do I claim, independent of the means and manner shewn, the employment of a stop, to prevent the advance rubber from being raised by the wheel, or exclusively of itself, the adoption of a spring to reduce the shock.

I claim the combination and arrangement of the sliding bar, E, made as described, with the rollers and suspended frame attached to a hanger by a centre pin, on which is adjusted the spiral spring, said frame being made, arranged, and operated in the manner and for the purpose set forth.

DESIGN.

COOKING STOVES—By A. J. Gallagher & J. J. Baker, of Philadelphia, Pa. Ante-dated January 17, 1852.

[Five of the patents in the above list of claims were obtained through the Agency of the Scientific American. The claim of Mr. Lebby, of Charlestor, S. C., for Water Raising Apparatus, is for the Wheel, which has been so successfully applied in the Rice Fields of South Carolina.—ED.]

Bill for Reforming the Patent Laws.

The Bill of Senator Norris, which we noticed two weeks ago, has had two readings, and according to present appearances it will become a law with all its objectionable features. We would again call the attention of the Senate to the 8th and 12th sections; the Bill, if it becomes a law with these sections in it, will, we are positive, lead to the most unfortunate results. The 8th section is, perhaps, one of the greatest oversights introduced into a bill.

We have now before us a most able article, published in the Philadelphia Argus, of the 21st inst., from the pen of Wm. W. Hubbell, attorney, and one who has a profound knowledge of patent principles and laws, and he takes the same view of the question that we do, and he shows conclusively that section 8, if carried out, will contravene our commercial laws, and may, in many cases, do great injustice to every class of our citizens. His views of the said section shows us, also, the benefit of a multitude of counsellors, for he takes one view of the question which we overlooked. He asserts that the section is unconstitutional. It is, and we particularly direct the attention of Senator Norris to this point. A ection of the Constitution says: "Congress shall have power to secure to inventors for limited times the exclusive right to their *discoveries*," now, as the new section in the Bill grants to inventors the exclusive right in that which they have *not* discovered, it must be unconstitutional. It would therefore be wise and prudent to strike out this section, rather than it should become a law to be declared unconstitutional if carried to the United States Supreme Court, to the humiliation of our Senate.

Unless there had been a great deal of lobbying at Washington, such a clause would never have been introduced; we appeal to Senators themselves, if this be not true. It is a great pity that outside legislation, should have led to the introduction of this principle in any Bill relating to a reform of our Patent Laws

Petition for Extension of a Patent.

On the petition of Ezra L'Hommedieu, of Chester, Conn., praying for the extension of a patent granted to him, for an improvement in machinery for manufacturing double twist screw augers, for seven years from the expiration of said patent, which takes place on the twenty-fourth day of July, eighteen hundred and fifty-two, (24th July, 1852.)

It is ordered that the said petition be heard at the Patent Office on Monday the 5th of July, 1852 at 12 o'clock M.; and all persons are notified to appear and show cause, if any they have, why said petition ought not to be granted.

Persons opposing the extensions are required to file in the Patent Office their objections, specifically set forth in writing, at least twenty days before the day of hearing; all testimony filed by either party to be used at the said hearing, must be taken and transmitted in accordance with the rules of the office, which will be furnished on application.

THOS. EWBANK, Com. of Patents.

Washington, April 19th, 1852.

Recent Foreign Inventions.

DELINEATING OBJECTS.—James Palmer, of Paddington, Eng., has patented the following method of delineating objects:—

The purpose of this invention is to furnish the means of producing drawings of all descriptions of objects in a much simpler and more perfect manner than is effected by the camera lucida, camera obscura, graphic telescope, and other instruments hitherto proposed for that purpose.

A plate of glass is mounted in a frame or easel, which is furnished with suitable adjustments, for supporting the glass in a vertical position at any convenient height. On one side of the plate of glass, and at a distance of several inches from it, is fixed the frame of a pair of spectacles, which is also capable of adjustment in position. One of the apertures of the spectacle frame is closed by a plate or shutter. The operator applies his face to the spectacle frame, and looks with one eye through the glass at the object which he wishes to delineate, and he then traces over the outline of the objects on the glass, with a pencil formed of a mixture of wax, soap, shellac, and lamp-black, which is capable of marking very distinctly on the smooth surface of the glass. In this way, an exact drawing of the object, in true perspective, is obtained with great facility. The spectacle frame preserves the position of the eye without interfering with freedom of vision. The instrument is very convenient, and its use is readily acquired, which can scarcely be affirmed of any of the instruments hitherto proposed for the purpose, as is shown by the very slight use which is made of such instruments.

The drawing on the glass is transferred to paper by tracing it, or by pressing a moistened sheet of paper upon it.

The same apparatus is used in a similar manner for drawing with an etching needle on a sheet of gelatine supported by the glass, or on a sheet of glass coated with gelatine. The drawings thus made may be printed from the gelatine as from a copper plate. To enable the gelatine to be used for printing on moistened paper without adhering to it, it is rendered insoluble by immersing it in a solution of alum, borax, and acetate of lead. Gelatine thus prepared does not adhere to the paper, and may be immersed in cold or warm water without injury. The prints from the gelatine may be transferred to the stone or zinc, and printed in the ordinary manner of lithographic printing. The invention is applicable to making drawings and engravings of buildings, machinery, landscapes, flowers, or any other stationary objects. For taking portraits, a rest is provided to keep the head of the person in a stationary position.

These drawings or delineations are necessarily smaller than the real objects, and their size may be varied by varying the relative distances of the glass, and the object from the eye of the spectator. When it is required to increase the size of the drawings, a drawing on glass or gelatine is placed in an instrument somewhat similar to a magic lantern, by which a magnified image is thrown on a disc of glass ground on both sides. A sheet of gelatine is fixed on the back of the glass disc, and the magnified image traced upon it with the etching needle, or with the pencils above mentioned.—[London Mechanics' Magazine.

PRESERVING ANIMAL SUBSTANCES AND CURING CERTAIN DISEASES.—Armand Lecomte De Fontainemoreau, of France, has recently taken out a patent in England for the employment of metallic salts, but principally of sulphate of zinc in aqueous solution, for the preservation of corpses, and anatomical parts, and animal substances generally, and to the cure of wounds and external diseases.

For the preparation of the sulphate of zinc, any salt of that metal may be employed; but the patentee prefers to employ metallic zinc in a granulated state. This he dissolves in such a proportion of dilute sulphuric acid as to produce a solution of a strength of about 30° to 40° Baume. After allowing the solution to stand for a time sufficient to cause the deposition of the foreign matters held in suspension, he decants the clear, and employs it in the preservation of corpses by injecting through an artery. If the subject is to be exposed to the air, or kept in a naked state, the patentee recommends that a third part by weight of spirits of turpentine should be mixed with the solution; he employs also other essences when odors of any particular kind are required, and colors the fluid red.

When animal substances are to be preserved by immersion, the solution is made in the same way as above mentioned, only that it is employed at a strength of 20° to 25° Baume. If the solution is to be employed for purifying rooms from the taint of decomposing organic matters, it is used of a strength of about 10° Baume.

For the cure of wounds, the solution is prepared in a highly concentrated state, and reduced to 3° to 4° Baume, by the mixture therewith of decoctions of linseed, marsh-mallow, and other emolient herbs. In this state it is used by saturating lint, and applying it to the wound. The solution may also be reduced to 2° or 3° Baume, and used as a wash for the hands.

Hindoo Letters.

In external appearance and construction of expressions, a Hindoo letter is worthy of notice. It is written on a palm leaf, with an iron stile, four to six inches long, sharp pointed at the end. In writing, neither chair nor table is needed, the leaf being supported on the middle finger of the left hand, and kept steady with the thumb and forefinger. The right hand does not, as with us, move along the surface, but after finishing a few words, the writer fixes the point of the iron in the last letter and pushes the leaf from right to left so that he may finish his line. This becomes so easy by long practice, that one often sees a Hindoo writing as he walks the street. As this species of penmanship is but a kind o faint engraving, the strokes of which are indistinct, they make the character legible by besmearing the leaf with an ink-like fluid. A letter is generally finished on a single leaf, which is then enveloped in a second, whereon is written the address. In communicating the decease of a relative, the custom is to singe the point of the leaf upon which the afflicting news is written. When a superior writes to an inferior, he puts his own name before that of a person to whom he writes, and the reverse when he writes to a superior.

Another Dreadful Explosion.

On the 9th inst., the steamboat Saluda exploded her boilers at Lexington, Mo., and it is supposed that about 100 persons were killed; they were Mormon passengers bound for Salt Lake. The Mormons were from England and Wales. The negligence of the engineer, it is said, was the cause of the disaster. When shall we have an end of these murderous scenes, and yet our Congress sits deliberating in debate, old about who shall have the spoils next year.