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A MARINE TOBOGGAN SLIDE NEAR BRIDGEPORT, CONN.-[See page 5̈3.]

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## HIGH SPEED IN THICK WEATHER.

The steamer Fulda, of the North German Lloyd line, which arrived early last week, was reported by some of her passengers to have cut down a fishing schooner while crossing the Grand Banks in a fog. They said they saw the boat sinking, heard the despairing cries of her crew, and condemned in unmeasured terms the heartlessness of running so fast in a region where so many fishermen are known to congregate. The report of the Fulda's master says that the ship was running only at half speed, that she did not sink the fisherman, but admits carrying away the bowsprit and foremast. Whether or no the Fulda sunk the fisherman, the fact remains that most of the fast steamers, there is reason to believe all of them, of whatever line, are wont to run at reckless speed in thick weather. The testimony of innumerable witnesses vouches for it; the records of the ships themselves confirms it. Indeed, the masters of the best of them have, in a recent publication, fairly admitted over their own signatures that this is the practice, seeking to condone it on the ground of safety to their own ships.
In the present instance, what facts have come to light show that the Fulda was going at such a rate of speed that she could not avoid striking the fisherman. This being the case, it does not matter whether she was running at half or full speed-she was going too fast. The rules of the road at sea do not say, as one might gather from the master's report, that a steamer may run at half speed in a fog regardless of consequences. They distinctly require a steamer to slow up when in the presence of other craft, or where they are likely to be found; indeed, to stop her engines frequently, lie by, and sounding her whistle wait for a response. Clearly, if the master of the Fulda had done this, there was strong chance he would have heard the fog horn of the ill-fated fisherman in time to avoid a meeting, for every one of these keep their fog horns going while lying in the fog.
Over two thousand fishing schooners frequent these banks; they come froin our own coast, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and three little French islands on the southwestern coast of Newfoundland-Miquelon, St. Pierre, and Isle aux Chiens. The boat struck by the Fulda was evidently from one of these latter. Indeed, a dispatch says that the Jeune Edouard was cut down by a steamer on the 14th. Portions of this great fleet are al ways anchored or hove to directly in the path of the transatlantic steamers, and not a season passes that more or less of them are not cut down by the merciless prows of these ocean greyhounds. Rarely it is that anything is ever heard of these catastrophesfor it is at night when they are most frequent; and they will tell you in the fishing towns that a big iron steamer can cut down a fisherman without awakngits passengers. The howling winds and turmoil of waters drown the cries of the men struggling in the water, and the bereaved ones on the Gloucester hills or the Canadian cliffs watch long and vainly for those who will never return.

## POSITION OF THE PLANETS IN AUGUST.

## JUPITER

is evening star. He is in quadrature with the sun on the 20 th at 3 h . A. M., being at that time $90^{\circ}$ east of the sun and most favorably situated for observation. Jupiter in quadrature is on the meridian at sunset, and looks superbly in his elevated position as he travels on his westward path, the largest and most brilliant star among the myriads that stud the sky. He is approaching Beta Scorpii in his eastward progress, as any obing Beta Scorpii in his eastward progress, as any ob-
server may see who marks his path among the bright server may see who marks his path among the bright
stars of Scorpio. Jupiter sets on the 1st at 11 h .40 m . P. M. On the 31st, he sets at 9 h .48 m . P. M. His diameter on the 1 st is $37^{\prime \prime} .8$, and he is in the constellation Libra.

SATURN
is morning star with the exception of a few hours of the 1st, when he still ranks among the evening stars. He is in conjunction with the sun on the 1st at 8 h . P. M., when he rises and sets with the sun, passing to his western side and becoming morning star. He is invisible during the larger part of the month on account of his nearness to the sun. On the 31st, however, he rises two hours before the sun, and sharp-sighted observers may find him $9^{\circ}$ north of the sunrise point. Saturn sets on the 1st at 7 h .14 m. P. M. On the 31 st , he rises at 3 h .13 m. A. M. His diameter on the 1 st is $15^{\prime \prime} .4$, and he is in the constellation Cancer.

NEPTUNE
is morning star. He is in quadrature with the sun on the 24th, at $10 \mathrm{~h} . \mathrm{P}$. M., being $90^{\circ}$ west of him, and rising about midnight. Neptune rises on the 1st at 1 h. 59 m. A. M. On the 31 s t , he rises at 0 h .4 m. A. M. His diameter on the 1 st is $2^{\prime} .6$, and he is in the con3 stellation Taurus.

## MERCURY

is morning star until the 23d, and then evening star. He is in superior conjunction with the sun on the 23d, at $8 \mathrm{~h} . \mathrm{P}$. M. He is in conjunction with Saturn on the 13th, at 11 h P. M., being $39^{\prime}$ north Mercury rises on
the 1 st at $3 \mathrm{~h} .24 \mathrm{~m} . \mathrm{A} . \mathrm{M}$. On the 31 st , he sets at 6 h . 50 m. P. M. His diameter on the 1 st is $6 " .8$, and he is in the constellation Cancer.

## MARS

is evening star. The ruddy planet glows with decreasing luster, as easily visible in the southwest. In the early evening, he recedes from Spica and approaches Jupiter. Mars sets on the 1 st at $10 \mathrm{~h} .30 \mathrm{~m} . \mathrm{P} . \mathrm{M}$. On the 31st, he sets at $9 \mathrm{~h} .21 \mathrm{~m} . \mathrm{P}$. M. The diameter of Mars on the 1 st is $9^{\prime \prime} .0$, and he is in the constellation Virgo.

URANUS
is evening star. He sets on the 1 st at $9 \mathrm{~h} .47 \mathrm{~m} . \mathrm{P} . \mathrm{M}$. On the 31 st , he scts at 7 h. 52 m . P. M. His diameter on the 1st is $3^{\prime \prime} .5$, and he is in the constellation Virgo. venus
is evening star. She is still close to the sun, setting on the 31st only half an hour later than the sun. Venus sets on the 1 st at $7 \mathrm{~h} .33 \mathrm{~m} . \mathrm{P} . \mathrm{M}$. On the 31st, she sets at 7 h .4 m . P. M. Her diameter on the 1 st is $10^{\prime \prime} .0$, and she is in the constellation Cancer.
Mercury, Venus, Uranus, Mars, and Jupiter are evening stars at the close o
Neptune are morning stars.

Care in Selecting the Summer Home.
The importance of examining closely the plumbing, the cellar, the kitchen, and the water supply cannot be overestimated. A reporter on the Mail and Express heard a prominent physician a few days ago deprecating in strong terms the little care which is too often exercised by people in their choice of a summer resort, and, in the course of his conversation, said:
" It seems to me that parents exercise little judgment either for their own good or for that of their children in this matter. In too many instances their selection is so bad that it would be much better for all concerned if they had remained in their city houses. The number of deaths which occur among families during their absence from home in the summer, especially among children, is positively appalling when taken in the aggregate, and in the majority of cases these deaths are due solely to the unhealthfulness of the places which have been chosen.
"It would be advisable, if possible, for one of the members of the family to make a personal examination of the surroundings of the house or locality proposed for a resting place before the time for departure arrives, and this can be readily accomplished when its distance from the city is not great, as in the towns within a radius of forty or fifty miles.
"One of the worst features of the ordinary country hotel or boarding house is its plumbing, for generally there is none at all or next to none, and where the plumbing is bad, there disease is sure to come sooner or later.
"Especial attention should be directed to the water supply, and a careful scrutiny of its source should be made. If it comes from a spring near the house, the presumption is that the water will be clear and pure, but if, on the contrary, it is discovered that it comes but if, on the contrary, it is discovered that it comes
from a running stream, it would be advantageous to inrom a running stream, it would be advantageous to in-
vestigate the course of the stream, to see that the water is not likely to suffer from any impurities upon its banks. The location of the well and cesspools should also be learned, for if these are not separated from each other by a distance of seventy or eighty yards, it is possible for the former to be contaminated by the latter, especially when the soil is light and porous.
"W atch closely for signs of tilthiness in the neighborhood of the house, for if the refuse from the kitchen is carelessly thrown upon the ground to bake and boil in the sun, it is almost certain that disease will be the result.
"In the selection of a summer home, choose one that is not completely enveloped in shade, for it will surely prove to be damp and unhealthy. Do not take a room on the ground floor, if it is possible to avoid it, unless it is certain that the cellar underneath is perfectly dry, and do not stay longer in dark rooms than is necessary." Apropos to the above, the Iowa State Board of Health, in its monthly bulletin for June, has the following :
"Said a father who was returning from a summer resort, where he buried four lovely children, who died of diphtheria, the result of defective drainage and polluted water: 'That hotel keeper is as guilty of murder of my children as if he had shot them with a revolver.' As a matter of justice, the father was right, but in law, probably not. But, adds the health board, the law ought to be such as to hold the keeper of a hotel or public resort responsible for the healthy condition of his premises, and liable for neglect to provide pure air and water for his guests. Patrons of these places should take with them an ounce vial of saturated solution of permanganate of potash, and test the water by putting half a dozen drops of the potash in a tumbler of it. If the water turns dark or brown in an hour, and they find cesspools within one hundred feet of the house and near the wells or water supply, they should take the first train for some other place."

London omnibuses are to be illuminated with electricity, the battery to be under the seat of the driver.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC NOTES.

Photograph of Lightning. - From A. H. Binden Wakefield, Mass., we have received a superb $61 / 2 \times 81 / 2$ photograph of lightning, taken quite recently during a severe thunder storm, between eight and nine o'clock in the evening.
The exquisite detail in the fine branch-like flashes is especially noticeable, while the illumination of the clouds and landscape is also remarkable. As many as four principal bolts are seen in the picture.
Hydroxylamine and Pyro. Developer.-In a paper read before the Photographic Society of Philadelphia, reported in the American Jourral of Photography by Dr. Charles L. Mitchell, the following formula is given

| No. 1. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| Hydroxylamine chloride | 30 grains. |
| Pyrogallol. | 240 - |
| Water. | 16 ounces. |
| No. 2. |  |
| Sodium carbonate (crystals) | .. 11/ Troy ounces. |
| Sodium sulphite | 43/2 |
|  |  |

To develop, take of No. 1 from one to two fluid ounces No. 2 one half fluid ounce, water four ounces; flow over the plate, and if the image does not appear within thirty or forty seconds, add more of No. 2 solution in small portions at a time, until development com mences
I have developed a dozen lantern slides, using the same developer for all, and after the last plate was finished, the developer was but of a moderately light orange color. The mixture of the pyro. and the hy droxylamine chloride seems to possess remarkable keeping qualities. As a general rule, pyro. mixtures should be stored in yellow or amber colored glass bot tles provided with rubber corks, as the amber colo prevents the actinic light from penetrating to the con tents of the bottle. The developer is very superior for negatives, giving clear shadows free from stain. Hy droxylamine, though a somewhat new article in photo graphy, can be had from the largest dealers and manufacturers in photographic materials.
A Safe Reducer.-It frequently happens that nega tives, by prolonged development or by the addition of too much pyro. to the developer, become too dense in the high lights, and thereby obscure detail. Farmer's solution of ferricyanide of potassium and hyposulphite of soda is generally recommended, but unless the plates are carefully washed, a tendenc

In a
In a communication to the photographers' annua convention, held in Minneapolis, Minn., in July, Charles Ehrmann advises the use of potassio-ferric oxalate com bined with a small quantity of hypo. We quote from the Photographic Times the formula and remarks concerning it: "Potassio-ferricoxalate is sensitive to light, and must therefore be kept in the dark. It has a peculiar green color, which oxidizes to a brown if the crystals are exposed much to light. The formula for reducing is simply to take 10 parts of the potassioferric oxalate in weight, previously dissolved in as little water as possible, and add it to 100 parts of ordinary hypo. solution, such as is used in fixing out plates. When an over-intense negative is subjected to this compound, the reduction will take place slowly, but perceptibly, and the process can, therefore, be easily controlled. Unless the hypo. is combined with the green salt, no reduction will occur. Hence it will be apparent that it will not be necessary to wash a negative after fixing, provided it is to be reduced.
Photographers' Convention.-The annual convention of the Photographers' Association of America was held in Minneapolis, Minn., from July 10 to 14, and was largely attended by Western photographers, about four hundred being present.
Several interesting papers pertaining to photographic subjects were read, and there was a large display of photographs. H. McMicheal, of Buffalo, was elected president for the next year, and it was voted to hold the next convention in Boston, Mass.
Eder's Orthochromatic Wet Collodion Process.-Ac cording to H . E. Gunther, whose account of the latest process by Dr. Eder we find reported in the Photographic News, plates sensitized as directed produce most beautiful results. He says: "Though its sensitiveness is about ten to twenty times less than that of collodion emulsion, the exposure required varies between a few minutes and a quarter of an hour in the case of oil paintings. Also, by this process, the various colors are reproduced in their true values without a yellow screen being required. The process is the following : Eosine collodion. In 140 c. c. of alcohol (of $40^{\circ}$ ) 0.6 gramme of eosine (yellow stain), and 12 grammes of cadmium bromide are dissolved and filtered, and $70 \mathrm{c} . \mathrm{c}$. of this solution are mixed with 100 c . c. of 2 per cent plain collodion. The glass plate is coated round the edges with India rubber solution, then the collodion is poured on. After the first coating has settled, another coating of collodion should be applied, this time pouring it on at the opposite corner of the plate. The film having settled, the plate is sensitized in a strong silver bath. The first bath consists
of 100 grammes of silver nitrate, 500 c. c. of water, and

2 to 3 drops of concentrated nitric acid. The plate is pose. Several blades, with the backs protected by left in this bath for five to seven minutes, when it is a copper coating on Mr. Willis' system, are in course of immediately placed in another sensitizing bath consisting of 10 grains of silver nitrate and $500 \mathrm{c} . \mathrm{c}$. of water, in which the plate is left for one to two minutes. In this way the unclean portions of first sensitizing bath left in the film are washed away, the weak solution preventing, in the case of longer exposures, the silver nitrate from becoming dry and crystallized. The exposure will take about five to eight times longer than is required in the old wet collodio-iodide process. The developer consists of a solution of 10 grammes of
iron sulphate in 100 c . c. of water, to which 2 to 4 drops of concentrated sulphuric acid are added. The picture comes out rapidly, and the development has to be carefully controlled. The negative is fixed with hypo. The picture, appearing somewhat flat at first, afterThe picture, appearing somewhat flat at first, after-
ward becomes clear and brilliant. The reddish ward becomes clear and brilliant. The reddish
color remaining in the film can be eliminated by application of diluted alcohol and rinsing with water. Intensification is effected with the well known mixture of pyro, citric acid, and silver nitrate, reduction by potassium ferricyanide with hypo, or by bichloride of mercury with potasium cyanide."
Toning Gelatino-Chloride Emulsion Prints.-Reported in the same journal by Mr. Gunther is a description of Obernetter's toning process for this improved paper, as follows: The prints must be a little overprinted, still more than albumen prints, because they are considerably reduced in the fixing bath. They are placed with the film side upward in the washing bath, and after having been washed out for five to ten minutes, they are taken out, and put into the toning solution. This consists of

```
gold and sodium chlorid
Distilled water
1 gramme.
Powdered chalk
```



One hour before use the gold solution is shaken then allowed to settle, and then filtered into the dish. It is then ready for use. After it has been employed, it is poured back into the stock solution bottle. In this bath the prints are left until the yellowish color which by transmitted light may be seen in the light parts of the picture has disappeared, and a slightly reddish violet color appears in the half tones. Then the prints are washed out for a short period, placed in the alum bath, washed out once more, and placed for fifteen minutes in the fixing solutions ( $1: 20$ ); in this bath the prints will lose their violet color, and become reddish brown or brownish, according to the previous mode of toning. If the prints are then washed out and dried, that warm photographic tone will appear which, ac-
cording to the duration of the action of the toning bath, will vary from brownish violet to purple and gray. If a fresh, strong, gold solution is used, the toning will be completed within twenty to thirty seconds. In this manner fifty prints of the size of 11 by 15 inches can be toned with only one gramme of gold and sodium chloride without exhausting the gold bath. Comparative experiments have shown that in using the toning bath recommended by Obernetter, almost four times as much gold chloride is required to obtain the same color tones, and that even the toning of albumen prints requires more gold chloride than this process. Prints which have been toned for too short a period, and which, therefore, have retained a brownish color, may be toned further after fixing in the bath itself, if a little red prussiate of potash is added to it until it turns yellow. After one to two minutes the print is taken out, washed out, placed into the alum bath, and then washed out. The alum bath consists of a cold saturated alum solution to which a little citric acid is added. As a rule, the prints will tone the quicker, the shorter they have before been washed out; on the other hand, the toning process can be better controlled if it proceeds slower. Therefore, the mid way will be the best. After a few experiments, it will be very easy to obtain the tone required by this method.

## Copper-Coated Propeller Blades.

At the last meeting of the Institute of Naval Archiects, Mr. W. C. Wallace read a paper on "The Material Best Suited for Propeller Blades." A discussion ensued, in which the great amount of corrosion and pitting in cast steel propeller blades was particularly emphasized. This discussion attracted great attention in the Sheffield district, and several steel manufacturers set to making experiments. At Attercliffe there are teel works known as the "Specialty," which belong to Messrs. John Willis \& Co. Mr. Willis, the principal, was among those whose interest was excited by the discussion. The outcome of his study and experiments s a new method of preserving iron and steel propellers, blades, etc., from corrosion. This invention consists in a coating of copper united to the casting, this being effected by the copper plate properly bent in shape being placed in and forming part of the mould, into which the iron or steel is then poured, with the result that the copper is said to be firmly united by fusion to the iron or steel face. The invention applies to all anti-corrosive metals, several of which are now under-
manufacture in Sheffield.

## Rock Crystal watches.

A new and peculiar class of timepieces has lately been brought out by the Waltham Watch Company which illustrates the steady progress that is being made in the artsof skill and precision. This is a watch of ordinary size, of which the case and plates are made of Brazilian pebble or rock crystal, thus rendering the watch transparent, and exposing to plain view the wheels and all other parts of the interior mechanism. Watches of this kind are now kept in regular stock by the Waltham company, and as timekeepers they possess the usual superior excellence for which all Waltham watches are now celebrated.

The rock crystal watch is, we understand, the result of the especial skill and genius of Mr. Wm. R. Wills, who for the past thirty-one years has had charge of the jeweling department of the Waltham Watch Company. He has discovered a new and rapid mode of cutting crystals and gems of all kinds, by which the lapidary's art is greatly facilitated. Operations heretofore requiring two months' tirue are now reduced to two hours. Mr. Wills seems to have learned how to carve, cut, and bore the hardest stones with as much facility, certainty, and precision as if the materials were so much brass. He will, for example, take a six inch block of pebble, and in a couple of hours cut it into sheets of any desired thickness; or from the same block cut out the center of the casing or solid ring for a watch case. We lately examined one of these new rock crystal watches.
The center of the case is of rock crystal, in one piece. It is bored for the stem and stem winder, which is secured therein by clamping screws. It is also bored for the push pin by which the winding and setting inechanism is operated. The two plates of the watch, between which the wheels rotate, are made of rock crystal. The pivots of the balance bridge, pallet bridge, the center wheel, and third wheel, the fourth wheel, and the escape wheel are set in rubies, and these rubies are set in sapphires, which latter are set in the crystal plates, these settings being secured to the plates by friction. There are in all twelve sapphire settings, each carrying a ruby setting. The pivots of the barrel and crown wheel run in the crystal plates. The plates are held apart by sapphire pillars, through which screws pass. The balance cock and pallet bridge are of rock crystal, the push pin is of chrysolite. For the various screws and settings there are 38 holes drilled in the crystal plates.

The dial is made in the form of a skeleton of gold. Above each hour mark is a diamond, and between the diamonds there is a ruby for each ininute. The diameter of the rock crystal plates is $1 \frac{8}{8}$ inches. The front and back of the case is composed of a crystal plate. Thus constructed, the watch is transparent, and may be used as a slide for a magic lantern. Altogether, it is a unique and attractive article
Another of the watches which we examined had its front plate made of red agate, and presented a very beautiful appearance.

Action of Medicines on the Biliary Secretion. A number of experiments as to the action of medicines on the biliary secretion have been made by Messrs. Prevost and Binet, chiefly upon dogs (Compt. Rend.). They found that bile itself, taken internally, is the most powerful cholagogue. Other substances acting as cholagogues are oil of turpentine and its derivatives terpinol and terpine, chlorate of potassium, benzoate and salicylate of sodium, salol, euonymin, and muscarine in subcutaneous injection. Some other substances which are generally considered to be cholagogues are classed by these experimentalists in a sepa rate group, the action of which is slight, doubtful, or uncertain, as bisarbonate, chloride, and sulphate of sodium, Carlsbad salt, aloes, cathartic acid, rhubarb, boldo, hydrastis, ipecacuanha, propylamine, and antipyrin. The following substances were found by them to cause a diminution of bile, viz., iodide of potassium, calomel, iron, and copper, atropine subcutaneously injected, and strychnine in a toxic dose. The drugs found to be without action on the biliary secretion were phosphate of sodium, bromide of potassium, chloride of lithium, corrosive sublimate, arsenate of sodium, alcohol, ether, glycerine, quinine, caffeine, pilocarpine, kairin, cytisine, senna, and calumba.

## Chinese Cash.

A large number are engaged in moulding, casting, and finishing the " cash" used as coin all over ChinaMexican dollars and Sycee silver being used in large transactions. The cash are made from an alloy of copper and zinc, nearly the same as the well known Muntz metal ; and it takes about 1,000 of them to answer as change for a dollar, so minute and low do prices run in this country, of which I will only give one instance. The fare for crossing the ferry on the Peiho was only The fare for crossing the ferry
two cash, or one-fifth of a cent.

## AN IMPROVED CAR STOVE.

A stove for heating railway cars, provided with appliances for extinguishing the fire in case of accident or of the extraordinary tipping of the car, has been patented by Mr. Williain P. Wheeler, of No. 814 West Madison Street, Louisville, Ky., and is illustrated herewith, Fig. 2 being a sectional view through the two upper annular water reservoirs. Within two annular plates on the base plate is a water reservoir surrounding the fire pot, under which air tubes, A, pass through the car floor, a pipe, $B$, from the reservoir providing for drainage when desirable. Heat-insulating material is placed between the reservoir and its surrounding plates, and the reservoir is divided perpendicularly by perforated partitions and horizontally by perforated shelves. To the top of the stove wall is fitted a ring which supports a second annular water reservoir, and pipes, $D$, extending through it, communicate with the reservoir below, these pipes surrounding long bolts which securely bind together the two reservoirs and the stove. Between the upper part of the lower reservoir and the fire pot, at A, are short tubes, with an automatic valve over the mouth of each, capable of opening by a slight pressure of water and closing by its own gravity, and the pipes, D , also communicate with these tubes. In the second reservoir each pipe, $D$, has a surrounding pipe, the inner and outer pipes forming


## WHEELER'S CAR STOVE.

a siphon adapted to draw water from the reservoir when the stove is unduly inclined to one side, as by an accident or collision, when both reservoirs will be dis charged into the fire potat $A$. When the water is exhausted in these two reservoirs, by evaporation or otherwise, it is replenished from the upper reservoir by opening a valve provided for such purpose. The second reservoir has try-cocks at different heights, and a water gauge to determine the level of the water, and the two upper reservoirs have wave arresters to prevent undue movement of the water when the stove is in its normal condition.
IMPROVED RAILWAY SWITCH STAND AND SIGNAL
An improved switch stand, in which the signal is automatically changed as the switch is moved, has been patented by Mr. Nathaniel W. Boyd, of Steelton, Pa., and is illustrated herewith, as applied to a point or split switch, a different application of the improvement having been illustrated by us in a former number. The principal operative portions are inclosed in a metal case, to exclude dirt, snow, ice, etc., there being spaced ribs in the bottom of the casing, and a


BOYD'S RAILWAY SWITCH STAND AND SIGNAL.
friction roller, upon which slides a rack bar projecting through slots in the casing and connected with the switch bar, which extends under the main rail to the switch points. The stand is mounted directly upon a single tie or sleeper, and may be set up on either side of the track, a half revolution of the lever giving the
signal shaft a quarter turn, whereby the different colored sides of the lantern or wings of the semaphore are displayed.

## an improved spirit level

A level designed to be in condition at all times to in dicate a level or plumb, or any required angle, withou


## hUtTON'S SPIRIT LEVEL.

the manipulation of set screws, etc., and wherein the vial is so set as to be absolutely protected against hard usage, has been patented by Mr. James C. Hutton, and is illustrated herewith, two forms of construction being shown. The ends of the main frame, in which the vials are set, as represented in Fig. 1, are divided into two sections, one of which is detachable, the fixed section having a circular recess, a segment of which is counter sunk for the reception of a bed of plaster of Paris to receive a vial case. The latter is circular, and made in sections, with a segmental depression and central aperture for a pivotal screw, by which the vial case may be revolved when it is placed between the case sections, to bring it in proper position between the plumb and level marks on the top and end edge of the frame, there being degree marks upon the surface between these points. The vial case, as well as the case sections, provide for the thorough and accurate embedding of the vial in plaster of Paris, whereby a strong, durable, and immovable setting is obtained. For greater convenience in some kinds of work, Fig. 2 shows a construction in which the vial is located centrally, and in which the bead may be seen from either side. The vials used may describe a true half circle, or be made more or less of a horseshoe form. In this kind of level, no matter what the inclination or how the instrument is placed, the degrees may be readily observed and the bead seen.
For further information relative to this invention address Mr. James C. Hutton, of Corvallis, Oregon, or Mr. Patrick J. McElroy, of East Cambridge, Mass.

## Spanish and Italian Ships Built by the English

The three new cruisers for the Spanish government are to be built at Bilbao by the Barrow Shipbuilding Company, which has started a branch establishment at that place. The Spanish government insisted upon building the vessels in Spain, and this will now be accomplished; but they will not be built by Spaniards all the same. The Barrow Company is now designated "The Naval Construction and Armament Company, Limited," and will undertake the manufacture of ordnance as well as the construction of war ships. It is worthy of remark that although these cruisers, which are to be very powerful and steam at a high rate of speed, are to be built at Bilbao in Spain, yet the whole of the machinery, boilers, torpedo boats, Whitworth and Nordenfelt guns, are to be supplied from Barrow. The Italian government are adopting a similar course in regard to the construction of steam machinery for their monster armorclads. Having determined to make their engines and boilers at home, their intentions are fulfilled by intrusting the contract to a branch, established at Naples, of the Tyneside firm of Hawthorn, Leslie \& Co., under the name of the "Societa Haw thorn-Guppy." This branch of the Newcastle firm are now making twin screw engines of 23,000 horse power for the armorclad Sardeque; but in this case also, the design and all the principal castings and forgings are being supplied from the parent establishment in this country.-Broad Arrow.

## The Radio-Microphone.

Mr. C. Vernon Boys has described before the Royal Society an instrument for measuring very small changes of temperature. "It is an extremely delicate form of thermopile, consisting of a square frame made of one turn of one square centimeter, of which three sides are thin copper wire, and the fourth is a compound bar of antimony and bismuth, each piece being $5 \times 5 \times \frac{1}{6} \mathrm{~mm}$ soldered edge to edge. This frame is supported by a thin rod to which is fastened a mirror, and the whole is hung by a torsion fiber in the field of a powerful magnet. When radiant energy falls on the center of the compound bar, the frame is deflected, and the amount of deflection measures the energy. Adopting suitable dimensions, and using a very strong field, an instrument may be made capable of showing a change of temperature of the junction of one thousandmillionth of a degree."

## AN IMPROVED CAR COUPLING

A car coupling designed especially for use in connection with freight cars, and in which the parts are so arranged that the cars may be coupled or uncoupled from the sides or top, has been patented by Mr. Samuel Byrne, of No. 158 Robert Street, Toronto, Canada, and is illustrated herewith, the small figure showing a central longitudinal section of the coupling. The end of the car is provided with vertical ways, in the grooves of which is mounted a slide having upper and lower guiding lugs, the slide carrying on its lower end an outwardly extending plate, slotted to receive the shank of the coupling pin and transversely grooved to receive the lower ends of levers loosely mounted upon studs at either side. The ways are formed with recesses adap ted to receive the lower guiding lugs of the slide when it is lifted by either of the levers at the side, as shown in the perspective view, to maintain the pin in raised position, the handle of the lever, as it is thrown downward in moving the slide, being also moved outward from the car body. The lower end of the coupling pin is also provided with a gravity catch, engaging a shoulder of the drawhead, to be used in arranging the coupler for coupling cars automatically, the slide being then lowered sufficiently for such purpose, when a link within the drawhead may be pulled out, but an entering link will cause the pin to drop and engage such

byRne's car coupling.
link. A handle extends upward, whereby the slide may be operated from the top of the car, as well as by the levers at the sides.

## AN IMPROVED SHOW CASE.

A show case having a shelf operating in connection with a sliding cover, and designed to be strong, dura ble, and attractive, has been patented by Mr. James J. Kelly, of No. 130 Lark Street, Albany, N. Y., and is illustrated herewith, Fig. 2 representing a central transverse section of the show case and shelf. The body of the case is segmental in contour, having an inner fixed bottom and an outer bottom which may be conveniently attached or detached to facilitate cleaning. The outer bottom is recessed, and has grooved side walls, to receive a shelf with tongued ends sliding in the grooves, while a half cover is rigidly secured in the segmental end pieces of the frame. The end pieces project beyond this cover, and in the extended portion are grooved to receive a sliding half cover, both covers being adapted to hold frames of


## KELLY'S SHOW CASE.

glass. Centrally to the rear of the sliding cover is at tached a cord or chain, which extends downward in a ransverse groove upon the fixed cover, and is secured at the other end to the rear of the sliding shelf, so that when the cover is drawn out the sliding cover is raised, and when the cover is closed the shelf is drawn in.

The Congressional Vacuum Balloon.
The committee of the House of Representatives on acoustics and ventilation has actually reported favorably a bill appropriating $\$ 75,000$ to subsidize a man who thinks he can construct a steel "vacuum" balloon of great power. He is to be allowed to use the facilities of one of the navy yards for the building of his machine, and is to have the money as soon as he has expended $\$ 75,000$ of private capital upon his air ship. One of the mathematical physicists of Washington was asked by a member of Congress whether such a balloon could be successfully floated. He set to work upon the problem, and here are some of his results, which are rather curious: A common balloon is filled with hydrogen gas, which, being lighter than air, causes the balloon to rise and take up a load with it. But, as the pressure of the gas within is equal to the pressure of the atmosphere without, no provision other than a moderately strong silk bag is required to prevent collajsse. The inventor of the proposed steel balloon hopes to gain greater lifting power by using a vacuum instead of gas, the absence of substance of any kind being lighter than even hydrogen gas. But he has to contend with the tendency of the shell to collapse from the enormous pressure of the atmosphere on the outside, which would not be counterbalanced by anything inside of it. The first question which presented itself was, How thick could the metal of the shell be made, so that the buoyancy of the sphere, which would be the most economical and the strongest form in which it could be constructed, would just float it without lifting any load? The computations showed that the thickness of the metal might showed that the thickness of the metal might
be 0.000055 of the radius of the shell. For example: if the spherical shell was 100 feet in diameter, the thickness of the metal composing it could not be more than one-thirtieth of an inch, provided it had no braces. If it was thicker, it would be too heavy to float. Now, if it had no tendency to buckle, which of course it would, the strength of the steel would have to be equivalent to a resistance of more than 130,000 pounds to the square inch to resist absolute crushing from the pressure of the air on a cross section of the metal. Steel of such high crushing strength is not ductile, and cannot be made into such a shell. If the balloon is to be braced inside, as the inventor suggests, just as much metal as would be used in constructing the braces would have to be subtracted from the thickness of that composing the shell. Of course, such a shell would buckle long before the thickness of the metal of which it was composed was reduced to 0.000055 of its radius. In other words, it is mathematically demonstrated that no steel vacuum balloon could be constructed which could raise even its own weight. This is an illustration of how intelligently Congress would be likely to legislate on scientific matters unguided by intelligent scientific ad vice.--Science.

## AN IMPROVED HARMONICA HOLDER

A holder in which a clamp or catch for a harmonica or similar instrument is mounted on a support, with means for attaching it to the body of the musician, is


## MULHOLLAN'S HARMONICA HOLDER.

illustrated herewith, and has been patented by Mr. William E. Mulhollan, of Portland, Oregon. The body of the holder consists of a nearly flat plate, adapted to rest against the person, with a bottom cross strip to which is attached a strap or retaining band for holding the plate against the body. An attached pear-shaped loop, as more fully shown in Fig. 2, is also adapted to be placed around the neck to sustain the plate, which has a projecting socket in front for the reception of a detachable bent shank, carrying on its outer end a catch or clamp for removably holding a harmonica or
other mouth instrument, which is thus supported in convenient position for playing, leaving the hands free for another instrument. In Fig. 3 is shown another form of bent shank adapted to be placed in the socket for holding music in convenient position for reading when performing on a flute or similar instrument.

## an easel with adjustable shelf.

An easel having a detachable and adjustable shelf, adapted to receive colors, pallette, etc., or articles of bric-a-brac or other ornaments when the easel is employed to display a picture, is illustrated herewith, and has been patented by Mr. William H. Van Wart, of Stonington, Conn. The front legs of the easel are provided

Buckthorn in Toothache.
Dr. Gretchinsky has called attention to a practice which obtains among the peasantry in some parts of Southern Russia of treating toothache with a gargle of decoction of buckthorn-Rhamnus catharticus (Lond Medical Recorder, June 20, p. 241). He states that, in order to test the ground of this practice, he made a series of control experiments upon a number of inmates of the local prison who were suffering from toothache. The patients were ordered to gargle their mouths with the cooled decoction every three or five minutes until the pain disappeared, and in every case the suffering ceased in about half an hour, though there still remained a vague aching or kind of itching about the teeth. A prolonged anodyne effect was produced by inserting a cotton wool plug steeped in the decoction in the cavity of a hollow tooth. Dr. Gretchinsky considers his experiments proved decoction of buckthorn to be a reliable means for mitigating such dental pain as depends upon inflammation of the pulp. He recommends the decoction to be made by boiling 100 parts of the bark in water sufficient to yield 200 parts of the strained liquid and adding 10 parts of brandy. Another writer attributes the anodyue action to the powerfully astringent properties of the decoction.

## AN IMPROVED END GATE FOR WAGONS.

An end gate removably pivoted at its lowe edge to a wagon body, and provided with levers, whereby it is moved in and out of position by a person in the wagon, has been patented by Mr. Emil L. Burklund, of Wahoo, Neb., and is illustrated herewith. It is formed with side parts braced by metallic strips, and overlapping the body, and is pivoted at the bottom by means of a rod passing through sleeves or loops on the wagon body, the lower ends of the side parts being curved, and resting upon strips secured to the rear edge of the body, whereby the gate may rock on its lower edge independent of the pivotal connection. The gate is operated and held in closed position by means of handled levers, each pivoted to a strip secured on the wagon body, the outer ends of these levers being each pivoted to one end of a bar, which at its other end is pivoted to a bracket projecting from the side edges of the end gate. The joint between the outer end of the handled lever and the bar is made adjustable, there being different holes in which the pivot pin may be placed, to secure greater range of movement of may be placed, to secure greater range of movement of
the end gate. When it is desired to use the end gate the end gate. When it is desired to use the end gate
for dumping or unloading, the pivotal rod at the bottom is slipped out of the sleeves, when the gate may be thrown out at its lower end, as shown in dotted lines in Fig. 2, or it may be moved entirely out of the way, by means of the levers, and brought down upon the top of the wagon body, in position to serve as a seat, as also shown in the same figure. In Fig. 1 is shown another form of pivotal connection at the bottom of the end gate, for use where the location of the wheels would interfere with the ready removal of the pivotal rod. In the latter case, the end gate has a tubular rod secured by metallic eyes or bent strips to its lower edge, the ends of this rod being held by a catch block on the end of a metallic strip, secured along the

burklund's wagon end gate.
lower edge of the wagon body, there being a handle whereby, with this hinge connection, the lower edge of the end gate may be easily detached or engaged in hinged position.

A man who has tried it says that wooden posts treated as follows, at a cost of two cents apiece, will last so long that the party adopting it will not live to see his posts decay. Take boiled linseed oil, and stir in pulverized charcoal to the consistency of paint, and put a coat over the timber.

Development of Public Lighting in France. At the recent annual congress of the Society. Tech-
nique du Gaz, at Boulogne, M. Ellissen delivered an interesting address, from which we take the following, as given in the Journal of Gas Lighting:
Referring to the growing demand for increased illumination, which is a characteristic of the social life of the present day, M. Ellissen quoted some figures recently laid before the Physical Society by M. Mascart. About a century ago, a grand fete was given in the Salle des Glaces, in the Palace of Versailles-one of the finest rooms in the world-and about 1,800 wax candles were employed in the lighting. In 1873, on the occasion of another fete in the same place, 4,000 wax candles were used, while three years later, 8,000 candles were necessary. So that in 1878 just twice the amount of illumination, for the same superficial area, was required, in comparison with what was regarded as sufficient five years previously, and more than quadruple that employed a century ago.
Turning to public lighting, the president remarked that the setting up of a few electric arc lamps called the attention of municipalities to the necessity for increasing the lighting of the public thoroughfares, and the result has been the employment of high power gas burners.
M. Ellissen thinks we may hope to see in the future the streets and open spaces lighted in such a manner that drivers of vehicles will be able to dispense with lamps for finding their way and avoiding collision, the existing necessity for these lights causing, he considers, the mind to revert to the time when pedestrians carried lanterns with them as they traversed the streets at night.
On this subject he quoted the following interesting particulars as to the origin and development of public lighting in France, as contained in the work of M . Edmond Thery: We have to go back to the year 1558 before the first traces of public lighting in Paris are met with. By a decree of Parliament, made in the month of November in that year, it was ordered that a lighted lantern (une lanterne ardente et allumante) should be placed at the corner of each street from ten o'clock at night till four o'clock in the morning, and where the streets were so long that the lantern was unequal to lighting them from end to end, other lamps were to be placed at suitable intervals. This first attempt at public lighting was attended with but small success, and during the troubles of the League, the decree was disregarded. In 1662-that is, more than a century later-a fresh attempt at lighting the streets was made. By letters patent granted by Louis XIV., and registered by Parliament on August 26,1662 , the privilege of public lighting was accorded to one Laudati Caraffe, who, however, was to enjoy it for a period of five years only. The system proposed by Caraffe was the establishment of stations where the services of lantern and torch bearers could be secured fora few sous, to conduct pedestrians to their destinations. The lantern bearers made use of yellow wax tapers, about $11 / 2$ pounds in weight, marked with the arms of the city, and divided into ten equal parts. Pedestrians who desired to be conducted and lighted paid 5 sous for each part. The lantern men also for every quarter of an hour they were engaged. In order to check the time, each man had suspended from his belt a sand glass (also marked with the city arms), arranged to run 15 minutes, and this he reversed when starting on his journey. The lantern bearers were posted at distances of 800 paces one from another. The central bureau, situated in the Rue St. Honore, was opened to the public on October 14, 1662, but, notwithstanding the originality of the system, the hopes of the inventor for its success were far from being realized, and he ruined himself in the under taking.
The real originator of the public lighting of Paris was the Lieutenant-General of Police, La Reynie. At his suggestion, a royal edict was issued in 1667, prescribing the establishment of lanterns, containing lighted candles, suspended from ropes at the height of the first floors of the houses. This experiment was thoroughly successful, and at the end of the seventeenth century, Paris had 6,500 public lanterns, in which were consumed nightly about 1,625 pounds of candles. The Parisians, as well as the foreigners resident in the city, were enraptured with this method of lighting, which they regarded as a chef d'œuvre. One of the latter, writing on the subject at the time, went so far as to say that the spectacle of the illumination of Paris at night by means of an intinite number of lamps was so beautiful and so complete that "Archimedes himself had he been living, would have been incapable of add ing anything more useful and agreeable.'" The street lamps in which oil was consumed, and which were furnished with reflectors, did not make their appearance
until a century later. They were the invention of Bourgeois de Chateaublanc, who was intrusted for period of twenty years with the lighting of Paris. This was assuredly great progress, and the song writers of the day did not fail to direct their good humored rail-
leries against the poor old candle lanterns. It was
quite seriously believed that the perfection of public lighting had been attained, and M. De Sartines, in the course of a memorial addressed to the King in 1770 on the subject of the police administration in France, said, in reference to the new street lamps, that the large amount of light aforded byief that it would find anythin better. "It is probable," remarked M. Ellissen, al uding to the ridicule cast upon the old candle lamps, 'that our children also will laugh at the methods of lighting by gas, and even by electricity, such as w know them to-day."
In 1787, Aime Argand, a Genevese, invented a lamp with a glass chimney, which was unjustly called Quin quet, after a great lamp seller of the period. This amp was improved upon by a tinsmith and lamp maker of the name of Vivien. It was this lamp that the marvelous invention of Philippe Lebon had so much difficulty in dethroning in France. Lebon was born in Champagne in 1767, the year of the invention of stree lamps, and was discharging his duties as professor of mechanics at the Ecole des Ponts et Chaussees in Paris when he conceived the idea of employing combustible gas, obtained by the distillation of wood, for the lighting of houses and the public thoroughfares. He took out his first patent on September 28, 1799. Since that time, what progress has been made by the invention of Philippe Lebon! It was not, however, until 1820 that the first gas company was constituted in Paris. During the ten years from 1844 to 1853 , the six gas companies then existing distributed 246 million cubic meters being, on an average, 24 million cubic meters per annum. But it is chiefly from the formation of the Paris Gas Company by MM. Emile and Isaac Pereire that dates the real development of gas consumption in Paris. The volume of gas sent out from this company's works in 1856 was about 10 million cubic meters, whereas in 1866 it had reached 122 millions, in 1876 had further ad vanced to 189 millions, and in 1887 was 291 millions.

The Commercial Aspect of Electric Lighting.
.The record of litigation in connection with important patents relating to electric lighting has been, so far as this country is concerned, a singularly disastrous one for their owners. The attempt of Siemens to obtain a patent, which, if successful, would virtually have controlled the manufacture of the modern type of dynamo machines, was frustrated by his delay in making application until one of the machines had been two years in use in the United States. The Gramme syndicate were defeated in their efforts to place themselves in a similar position, by reason of the expiration of a prior foreign patent for the invention. The Brush company brought a suit to enforce its patent on the arc lamp, and after a protracted and expensive legal contest, was defeated by the production of evidence of an actual, though limited, prior public use. And now the Edison incandescent lamp patents appear to be doomed share the fate of their unfortunate predecessors.
As a result of this state of affairs, the public has enjoyed what has been practically an era of unrestricted competition in both arc and incandescent lighting, for some ten years. But contrary to the general opinion, indications are by no means wanting that the present condition of things is likely to undergo a material change at no distant day. A combination or consolidation of ${ }_{4}$ electric lighting interests has often been discussed, and sundry attempts have been made in the past to realize it. But the combined resistance of the innumerable personal interests which would be affected by such a move has been far too great to permit much real progress in the desired direction to be made. Meantime the stockholders of the electric light companies, as well as the public, have gradually become more and more disgusted with the present outlook. Only a very small proportion of the vast sums of money embarked in electric lighting enterprises has yielded any return whatever, and it is becoming painfully evident that the bulk of the investment must coner or later be charged to the account of "profit and loss." On the other hand, the public is badly served; many plants are becoming dilapidated, and the catalogue of disasters to life and property is engthening with ominous rapidity. There exists, in fact, an exact reproduction of the state of affairs which existed in the telegraphic service thirty years ago, and as surely as history repeats itself, so surely the same remedy will be applied-consolidation or union of interests. Such a consolidation will not come voluntarily. It can only be brought about, like the welding of metal, by the combined effects of internal heat and external pressure. Many considerations, some of which are of a commercial and others of a legal nature, indicate that the beginning of the end is not far distant However well founded the public antipathy to mon opolies may be, it must at least be affirmed of an electric light monopoly that it is so closely hemmed in by its reat rival, gas, that no fear of extortionate charges need agitate the mind of the prospective consumer. But the history of the consolidation of the telegraph interests clearly shows that the real source of future profit lies in the reduction of expenditure and in the
money received in the electric lighting business to-day ould yield a very large profit, if all unnecessary expenses were abolished. That the force of circumstances must ultimately bring about the result we have pointed out, in spite of all opposition on the part of persons inerested in preventing it, seems to us as certain as any future event can be.-Electrical Engineer.

## Fire Discipline with the Magazine Rifie.

At the Royal United Service Institution, recently, Major-General E. H. Clive, Commandant of Sandhurst Staff College, presiding, Captain Walter H. James, late Royal Engineers, gave a lecture on "Fire Discipline and the Supply of Ammunition in the Field as Provided for by Foreign Powers." The lecture was re garded as supplementary to one by Captain James two years ago on magazine rifles. The lecturer commenced by quoting the oft-repeated remark that modern war was less deadly than ancient-that the loss of life which a nation suffered in the fighting of to-day was more moderate than that which occurred in olden times. This might be true, he said, as regarded the general result; but certainly the improvements in modern arms had rendered the losses at the points where collision actually took place far more deadly than they were with the old weapons.
He proceeded to describe the Prussian, French, and Austrian regulations in regard to fire discipline, and showed, in regard to the Prussian, that the magazine fire, as a rule, was only used at close ranges; but that a rapid fire was employed at artillery at over 900 yards, three fires being recognized, " volley," "independent," and "magazine," and the signaling of orders was by whistle. The firing in the French and Austrian ser vices was much the same. The Prussian and Austrian soldiers carried each 100 rounds, and provision was made to add 98 by wagon to each Prussian soldier's supply, and 83 to the Austrian, while the French soldiers carried 78, and his supply by wagon was made up to 177. The lecturer gave other details of regulations in these armies, and pointed out the stress which was laid by these nations on the preparation of the men for the difficult role of modern fighting. Italy and Belgium both had systems directed to the same end-the contro over the fighting line by its division into units capable of being influenced by one man. All the work meant careful training, and, in conclusion, he drew attention to the increased ammunition supply which both Prussia and Austria had already given to their men. These supplies would be considerably augmented when the new small-bore rifles were introduced. But the new de parture should present nothing difficult to the British army if it would but remain true to the old guiding lines. It was superiority of fire which gained the reputation of English bowmen, it was superiority of fire by which Wellington beat the French at the beginning of this century.
If the natural aptitude for shooting was carefully trained, we could hold our own under any conditions. But it must be trained, and training was not to be got on the barrack square, but by careful practicing in peace the tasks that fell to the soldier in war, under life the actual realities of modern fighting.

## Narrow Escape of a Physician from Poisoning

Dr. Vincent Richards, of Calcutta, an enthusiastic investigator in many different lines of medical research, had a narrow escape recently from poisoning by a cobra bite. He was holding a vigorous cobra in his right hand for the purpose of obtaining its venom. In pointing with his left forefinger to where some watch glasses lay, he brought the part close to the animal's head. The snake made a sudden dart, and fastened its fangs just below the second joint. Retaining his presence of mind, Dr. Richards tore the reptile away and killed it. A tight ligature was at once placed on the proximal aspect of the wounds, which were sucked, enlarged by knife, allowed to bleed freely, and thoroughly mopped with a five per cent solution of permanganate of potash; an India rubber cord was bound around the wrist. A medical friend subsequently further enlarged the wounds, and applied strong nitric acid to them. The ligatures were cautiously removed after a time. No symptom of poisoning resulted except a slight tightness of breathing.

## Absinthe.

It appears from recent researches made by Mr. G. Varenne that absinthe is of itself not by any means so poisonous as it is usually supposed to be. This investigator finds that its toxicity is due to the use in its manufacture of the tailing of the spirit stills, $i$. $e$., the residua which contain all the impurities of the alcohol. It is said that absinthe made with pure rectified spirit produces none of the effects ordinarily known as absinthism. The amount of oil of absinthe used in making the drink is very small, and the temptation to use the worst kinds of alcohol in its manufacture is of course large, because the bad flavors are easily disguised in so aromatic a drink.-Dr. Bulletin.

## A MARINE TOBOGGAN SLIDE.

by н. с. ноvey.
Tobogganing has become such a favorite winter pastime that the idea occurred, some time ago, to Mr. C. J. Belknap, of Bridgeport, Conn., that it might be
adapted to the summer months also. He drew his adapted to the summer months also. He drew his till 1887, when he built the marine toboggan slide now described. It is an adjunct of the large bathing establishment at Seaside Park. The artificial slope rises from high water mark to the height of thirty-two feet above it, where there is a suitable platform that is reached by a flight of steps. The chute itself is but twenty inches wide, and contains 725 wheels for the sleds to run on. It is the inventor's intention this season to replace these wheels by a series of brass rollers each sixteen inches long. Almost any common toboggan will answer the purpose; but the patented "star oval board" will encounter less friction than a flat surface, and will meet with less resistance on striking the water. The slide is open to all at certain stages of the tide; but at high water none are admitted but good swimmers. The chute is 178 feet long. The toboggans start at the signal given by a bell, only one being allowed to go at a time; and on being projected from the lower end, they ricochet across the waters of the Sound for a distance varying from 75 to 175 feet, skipping along like a flat pebble, till the force acquired in the descent is lost, after which the bather swims ashore, pulling his sled after him. The facial expression of novices taking their first adventurous slide is quite remarkable, and the sensations felt are correspondingly novel and peculiar. The popularity of this new form of summer sport is proved by the fact that, during the month of August last, 11,000 slides were paid for at two cents a slide. Crowds of spectators were daily assembled to witness the exciting scene. The illustrations accompanying this account are from instantaneous photographs.

## Improving Country Roads.

A writer in the Wagon Maker, on the above subject, concludes that it is a work too little thought of, too negligently done, and often so misapplied as to make roads worse rather than better. To see the black, mucky soil on the sides of roadways plowed up and scraped into the center, there to remain an impassable ridge during the summer, finally degenerating into an unfathomable slough of mud the next winter or spring, is enough to discourage the man who knows how roads should be made, and even force him to regard laziness in working out the road tax one of the excusable sins, if not actually a positive virtue.
In our climate, deep freezing combined with too much water is the bane of roadways. We cannot altogether prevent deep freezing, but if there be ample underground drainage, it will not effect great damage. The first object, then, of the road maker should be to secure good drainage. Without this, ridging the road only makes the mud deeper, and even stone or gravel do little good. It is often forgotten that the chief advantage from using an abundance of stone and gravel in road making is the incidental drainage which these afford, even when piled in the roads with no idea of this use. If the center of the road is underlaid with stone, and then ridged up with earth or gravel, it does for years form a good drain to keep the roadbed dry. But sooner or later frost will penetrate to these stones and upheave them. Then the last condition of the improved roadway will be worse than the first.
The fact is often forgotten that in a dry, compacted road, well ridged up, the soil freezes deeper than it does in the fields. This is especially so where the road is exposed to winds and swept bare of snow. The drain under the roadbed should be not less than three feet deep, and, if possible, four feet would be still better. Whether made with tile or stone, it should be laid as carefully and the joints covered as closely as if it were laid in the fields. Then, with good outlets and side drains to conduct the water from the center in all the low places, and with comparatively little ridging up with stone or gravel, the roadbed will be kept in good condition for years.

It is not the amount or sharpness of the ridge in the center that makes a roadway good, but the character of the surface and its uniform slope to either side. Ruts spoil roads quicker than anything else. They are the reservoirs for water, which, mixed by heavily loaded wheels, grinding it into the soil and making mud, renders it impossible for water to break its way through. Over the drain should be a foot or more of subsoil to keep the frost out, then followed by stone to a depth of six or eight inches, pounded fine on top and covered with gravel. There will always be an outlet under the stone to the drain below, and if its outlet is kept open in low places, the surface of the roadbed will al ways be dry. Such a road cannot become muddy except for an inch or so on the surface.
It costs something to thoroughly underdrain a roadway and improve it after this manner, but, once done, it will last practically forever if the drain outlets are
kept open. Doing a little piece each year, the people
will need only trifiling attention to keep in repairs. It is far better than the wasteful way of trying to improve long sections of roadway every year, and doing gener-
ally quite as much harm as good. The difference beally quite as much harm as good. The difference between having good and bad roads to market does prac-
tically affect the valve of their land more than most farmers think. If they appreciated this as they should, thousands of them would take a greater interest in the way their road tax is worked out than they have ever done before.

## The Metric System.

Ten mills make one cent, ten cents make one dime, ten dimes make one dollar, ten dollars make one eagle. This is the metric or decimal system. It is easily understood by everybody, has been in use, in respect to our coinage, ever since the foundation of the government. How desirable it is that it should be substituted for the old system in all our expressions of weights and measures.
An estimate, worthy of confidence, of the saving in the teaching of arithmetic in schools was published in the "Proceedings of the American Metrological Society," vol. ii., p. 193, in these words :
"A schoolmaster who has had experience both in New England and in the West, and has taught the metric system, has made a careful detailed estimate. He puts the length of the arithmetical course at 162 weeks, and thinks it could be reduced to 88 weeks by substituting the metric system for our old weights and measures. The saving of 74 weeks, or 46 per cent of the course of study in arithmetic, pursued simultaneously with other branches, would probably amount to nearly a half year solid of school life."
Assuming the whole length of school life even at so extravagant a figure as ten years, the saving for more useful purposes would thus be five per cent of the child's education, which is an important item. According to the report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1884-5, the expenditures for public schools in all the States and Territories of the Union in that year amounted to upward of $\$ 110,000,000$, of which nearly $\$ 66,000,000$ was paid for the salaries of teachers. A saving of 5 per cent per annum on $\$ 110,000,000$ is $\$ 5,500,000$. Capitalized even at the excessive rate of 10 per cent, this gives $\$ 55,000,000$ as the amount which it would on this basis appear that the United States
could afford to pay out now, if it could by so doing get could afford to pay out now, if it could by so doing get
rid immediately of the perpetual annual expense hereafter of teaching ancient weights and measures in public schools. Private schools would have to be added to this to get a complete estimate even of school instruction. The number of children enrolled in the public child is the rate of the above $\$ 55,000,000$ estimate ; the number of "teachers and scientific persons" in the United States, according to the census of 1880, was nearly 228,000 , while upward of $17,000,000$ of other persons were classed as having occupations. How much would the introduction of the metric system save these other $17,000,000$ citizens? Evidently the waste of effort by the use of bad weights and measures after they were once familiar would be a less proportion than the waste of effort to learn them at first; but if, instead of 5 per cent, it were 1 per cent, or 1-10 of 1 per cent, on the industry of the $17,000,000$ persons having occupations in the United States, and 1 per cent, or $1-10$ of 1 per cent, on every citizen's income, it is a matter that we cannot afford to ignore.
That a valuable proportion of the labor that is expended upon business calculations could be saved by the substitution of the metric for the old weights and measures, cannot be doubted by any one who compares few tables, such as have been in use for reference, with the corresponding ones appropriate to the metric
system; although the contrast of calculations, if the system; although the contrast of calculations, if the
tables were once made, and were known to be correct, and were always at hand when wanted, would obviously be less than that of the tables themselves.

## To Avoid Noxious Gases in Houses.

The best way of securing the house against danger from its pipes during times when it is not occupied is a matter upon which plumbers are by no means agreed. The danger to be guarded against when the house is shut up and the people are gone away on vacation is the emptying of traps by evaporation or siphonage.
Some plumbers go so far as to say there is no safety Some plumbers go so far as to say there is no safety
hort of disconnecting the fixtures and securely closing the ends of the pipes. Others recommend shutting the water off and filling the closet with oil. Some suggest simply shutting the water off, while others would do his and also ventilate the closet. Filling the closets and traps with raw oil or glycerine after shutting off
the water is a favorite recommendation. Some the water is a favorite recommendation. Some
plumbers favor an adjustment of the valves so there will be a continual dripping of water. The American Artisan wisely suggests that, where a house is to remain closed for some time, the best plan is to arrange with some person to go into the house once a week or so, let the water circulate throughout the house, and

Central Park Trees.
The trees in the Central Park, in this city, have not looked as well as they do just now for a number of years. The cool, late spring, the abundant rains of May, and the heat of the early summér have all been favorable to a vigorous and healthy tree growth. Most of the trees, with the exception of the half dead Norway spruces, which are covered with red spiders, are unusually free of insect pests. The American elms have made a remarkable growth, and when planted under favorable conditions, are now objects of great beauty. The American and European lindens are very fine, too, and several species are now covered with their fragrant flowers. The two silver lindens (Tilia argentea and $T$. petiolaris) are striking and attractive in habit and in the pleasing color of their foliage. No foreign trees are better entitled to a place in our plantations than these two European lindens, of which many fine specimens exist in the park. The six thousand trees which have been removed from the park during the past year are not missed. The work, as far as it goes, seems to have been judiciously planned and executed. No one would now suspect that a single tree had been cut ; and the park plantations and the general appearance of the park would be immensely improved if thirty or forty thousand trees were- removed during the present year. They would no more be missed than those already cut are missed. Dying conifers still disfigure the park in all directions; everywhere fine trees are in danger of being ruined from overcrowding, while the removal here and there from the plantations of inharmonious elements, as where, for example, trees with light and feathery habit are too closely associated with round-headed, compact trees, would add immensely to their natural and harnonious appearance. There are cases, too, where trees of peculiar rarity or interest should be freed from encroaching neighbors, that their full development and long life may be insured. This is the case with the Asiatic elm (Ulmus parviflora) which stands near the Seventy-second Street entrance from Fifth Avenue. This is without doubt the largest and finest specimen of this rare tree in the United States. It is a specimen not only of extraordinary interest, but of great and peculiar beauty. It now forms one of an inharmonious group of three trees. On one side it is being pushed out of shape by a common tupelo or sour gum tree, while its branches on the other side are stunted by a common European maple. It is hard to imagine a more incongruous or less pleasing combination of trees; and it is clearly for the interest of the park and of the public that the maple and the tupelo should be cut away and that every opportunity should be given to the elm to spread its branches out freely in all directions. There are hundreds of just such cases all over the park where interesting and valuable trees are being ruined in this way; but in the particular case to which we venture to call the attention of the park authorities, the prominent position of this beautiful tree and the great interest which it excites among all persons who know it, seem to warrant us in urging prompt action to insure it from further disfigurement.-Garden and Forest.

## slipping.

The statement that engines slip continually while running at full speed is often made, but almost invariably by persons of no practical experience, who appear to be unaware that any slip of the drivers can be instantly detected by an engine runner. Any one who has run a fast train knows that on entering a damp tunnel slipping occasionally occurs, but the vibration imparted to the engine is so peculiar that no one who has once felt it is likely to fail to recognize it again. Messrs. Abbey and Baldwin, when making some observations on the running of a Jersey Central express passenger engine on the Bound Brook route,* found that the slip at high speed was practically nil. The wheels, as calculated from their diameter, should give 298.98 revolutions per mile. A counter showed that 298.62 revolutions per mile had been actually made, the difference being negative and only $1 / 3$ of a
revolution per mile, or within the limits of errors of revolution per mile, or within the limits of errors of
observation. As these engines are run very hard and made to do their utmost, it might reasonably be expected that they would show slip, if any existed at high speed. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that any continuous slipping at high speed is non-existent. The continuous slipping theory is supported by so
very little evidence, either practical or theoretical, that it must take its place among the numerous other pseudo-scientific delusions.-Railroad Gazette.

## A Remarkable Meteor.

A dispatch from Appleton, Wis., says: "At 2:30 in the afternoon of July 2 a tremendous meteor was observed to pass across the southern sky from east to west. It rivaled the sun in brightness and left a long train of sparks in its wake. The meteor moved slowly and was evidently at a very great height. It was visible for half a minute, and finally faded away without noise."

## IMPROVED ROCK DRILLING MACHINE

We illustrate below a carriage designed by Mr. Richard Schram, London, to carry four of his drilling machines, and which is intended for use in driving a tunnel $21 / 2$ miles long on the Khivaja-Amran branch of the Quetta Railway. The carriage carries two stretcher bars, each of which supports two drilling machines, the arrangement of the carriage and bars being such that trucks for the removal of debris, etc., can be run right through it, so that it is unnecessary to provide any sidings in which to run the carriage when the removal of spoil becomes necessary. This arrangement has the further advantage that the drilling machinery can be brought up to the working face before all the debris has been removed, thereby economizing time. In cases where timbering is necessary, and the stretcher bars have to be lowered to clean up, arrangement is made whereby these, with their machines, can be turned back down on to the carriage.
The small receiver shown on top of the carriage is for the distribution of air, and it has two inlets and four outlets, corresponding to the number of drills. The tanks shown on each side are the water injectors, the injection being effected by admitting air under pressure above the surface of the water. The tunnel for which the machines are designed will be driven not
building four of the houses on the streets extra deep so as to accommodate 144 additional persons. For the sake of obtaining light and plenty of fresh air, an un usual arrangement of the buildings has been decided upon. Those on the avenues will be $25 \times 65$, with the exception of the corner ones, which are 71 feet deep Between these houses and the side walls of the buildings on the streets an open space 29 feet at the narrow est part and 35 feet at the broadest will be left, so that a passer-by turning off from either of the avenues on to the streets would find, where the corner building terminates, an open space (usually occupied by a structure) between it and the first of the houses on the street. The capital necessary for the undertaking will be furnished by the Equitable Life Assurance Company, and we hope to be able to present illustrations and further description of this gigantic building enterprise in a future issue of the Architects and Builders Edition of the Scientific American.

## Reclaiming an Arid Region.

Late in March an act of Congress was signed by the President requiring the Geological Survey to study the practicability of building storage reservoirs for water in the arid portion of the country for the purpose of re
vert the water from the Missouri itself would imply great hydraulic works-an expense that would be considerably lessened by gathering the waters at their sources.
The scheme appears to include the idea of building great dams across the canons through which pour the melted snows and heavy rains from the mountains. These dams are to be large and strong enough to hold back the waters, which may then be let down as they are needed for the benefit of the reclaimed lands. The cost of these irrigation works will be very great, but it will be only a small fraction of the value of the land reclaimed. It is believed that by wisely utilizing the surplus waters in the drainage area between the one hundredth meridian and the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, an unproductive region equal to at least four times the area of New York State may be restored to fertility. The decided success of irrigation works in California, Utah, and Colorado indicates the methods by which we are still further to reduce the profitless area which we formerly designated as the Great American Desert; and the entire country cannot fail to feel the benefits of improvements of such magnitude as to add many millions of acres to our area of fertility and free the Mississippi lowlands south of Cairo from the great hinderance in the way of their prosperity.


IMPROVED ROCK DRILLING MACHINERY.
only from each end, but by sinking a shaft midway two additional working faces will be provided, making a total of four points of attack. The four sets of tunneling plant required have all been supplied by Messrs. Schram, and amount in toto to eight locomotive type boilers, four air compressors, with their receivers, four carriages of the type just described, and thirty-two rock boring machines, with all the accessories necessary for opening out the tunnel, the whole of the machinery being carried out under the inspection of Sir Alexander M. Rendel.

We understand that Messrs. Schram are also supplying a complete installation for the driving of a tunnel one mile long in connection with the Perigar project for the Madras public works. In this, however, a turbine will be used in supplying the power to the com-pressors.-Engineering.

## A Small City on a Block.

Work has been commenced on what may very well be called a sinall city, to be built on the block bounded by 10 th and 11th Avenues and 66th and 67 th Streets, New Aork. John Ruck intends erecting there 64 tenements, 48 being without and 16 with stores. The former will accommodate 10 families in each building, and counting 6 persons to the family, the total would be 2,890 . The latter will accommodate 8 families in each building, or a total of 768, making a grand total for the block of 3,648 ; or putting the matter in another way, the density of population at that spot of the city will be 912 to the acre. The Real Estate Record thinks will be 912 to the acre. The Real Estate Record thinks
it is possible that these figures may be increased by

This question has already received much attention from the director of Survey and from other competent authorities, and no further inquiry is needed to convince Dr. Powell of the feasibility of using the waters of the upper Missouri and of its tributaries to impart fertility to an enormous region. The work now before the Survey is to locate and explore the various drainage areas and to reach an approximate idea of the cost of the proposed irrigation works, obtaining exact information with regard to facts already known in a general way.
When Dr. Powell gave his testimony before the joint commission of the Senate and House in 1886, he asserted that the greatest engineering problems in America are the protection of the flood plain of the lower Mississippi from overflow and the reclamation of the great Western plains from their desert condition. These problems, he believed, were practically one, for the engineering process which should spread the surplus waters of the rivers over the arid area would relieve the burdens of the lower Mississippi. He was also of the opinion that for every acre redeemed from overtlow in the South two or more acres could be restored to fertility on the great plains.
The problem, then, is to retain in the regions where they originate the great floods of the upper Missouri that now pass uselessly into the Gulf of Mexico, inflicting great damage on their way upon the fertile lands of the lower valley. It is Dr. Powell's opinion that the cost of utilizing all this surplus water for irrigation will be greatly reduced by diverting each of the little streams that contribute to the upper Missouri. To di-

It is said that two years will be required for the necessary surveys and the preparation of the plans, and it is hoped that funds for the preliminary investigations will be included in this year's appropriation for carrying on the work of the Geological Survey.-N. Y. Sun.

Distillation of Mercury at Ordinary Temperatures. W. Hallock, in a note to Science, says: In the physical laboratory of the United States Geological Survey, Washington, a normal barometer hangs in a window jamb about 35 centimeters from the glass of the window. As the window faces east, it has the sun until noon. The barometer tube at and above the upper surface is 25 millimeters in diameter, and extends 6 centimeters above the mean position of that meniscus. It was observed that during the summer sinall globules of mercury covered the inner wall of the tube above the column, on the side farthest from the window. In the winter they collected upon the side nearest to the window. An inspection showed that the radiation from the tube was greatest toward the cool room in the summer and toward the window and out of doors in the winter, thus keeping the side of greatest radiation slightly cooler than the mass of the reservoir, and condensing upon it some of the vapor of mercury of the Torricelli vacuum. In this way several grammes were condensed and fell back in a single month-a fact which seemed quite interesting when it is remembered that the vapor tension of mercury at even $30^{\circ} \mathrm{C}$. $\left(86^{\circ} \mathrm{F}\right.$.) is only 0.06 of a millimeter. Of course, by bending the top of the tube over and downward toward the cooler side, the distillate could be collected and measured.

## SIMPLE EXPERIMENTS IN PHYSICS.

 by geo. m. нopilins.The experiments in the diffusion of gases described in the last article may be tried on a large scale by employing a porous Turkish water cooler instead of the porous cell, and using a larger and longer glass tube. A large bell glass or glass shade may serve as the gas-co taining vessel. The action may be made more distinctly visible by coloring the water.
A convenient and inexpensive way of showing the same phenomena on a small scale is illustrated by Fig. 1. An ordinary clay tobacco pipe answers for the porous vessel. A short, centrally apertured cork is fitted to the bowl of the pipe, a glass tube, of about one-eighth inch internal diameter, is fitted to the bore of the cork, and the cork is carefully sealed. By connecting the stem of the pipe with a gas jet or hydrogen generator, by means of a flexible tube, and inserting the glass tube a short distance into water, the gas will bubble up through the water. After shutting off the gas at the burner, or by doubling or pinching the rubber tube, the water will immediately rise in the glass tube-showing that in the exchange of gas and air through the pores of the clay, the outward movement of the gas has been much more rapid than the inward movement of the air, thereby producing a partial vacuum, which causes the water to rise.
By breaking off the stem of the pipe near the bowl, the pipe and glass tube may be plunged in a deep glass jar, when the experiment may be proceeded with as follows: A little water, say onehalf inch in depth, is poured into the jar, after which the jar is filled with carbonic acid gas. Illuminating gas, or hydrogen, is allowed to flow through the pipe while it is removed from the jar, so as to drive out all the air and fill the pipe with gas. The gas is now shut off and the pipe is immediately placed in the jar with the glass tube plunged in the water. The effect is the same as in the case of the air and gas, $i$. e., the carbonic acid gas goes in and the hydrogen gas goes out; and when equilibrium is established, the pipe will contain some carbonic acid. This may be proved by removing the pipe from the jar and plunging the glass tube into some clear lime water, then allowing the gas to flow only long enough to force out the contents of the pipe. The presence of the carbonic acid is indicated by the milky appearance of the lime water, which is due to the formation of carbonate of lime.

There is sufficient carbonic acid in the exhalations of the lungs to show an action which is the verse of that observed in connection with illuminating gas. When the pipe is blown through, and the end of the stem is quickly and completely stopped, one or two bubbles will escape from the glass tube, showing that the inward movement of the air through the pores of the clay is more energetic than the outward movement of the carbonic acid.
The diffusion of gases may be shown by the well known experiments illustrated by Figs. 2 and 3. A medium sized fish globe, a very small fish globe which will pass into the larger one, and a piece of bladder, are the requisites for this experiment.

The small globe is filled with carbonic acid gas, and the bladder, previously moistened, is placed loosely over the mouth of the jar and tied so as to render the connection between the bladder and the globe airtight.
more rapidly than the carbonic acid passes outward, the membrane is distended outwardly. It requires a little time to produce a visible effect. When the small globe is filled with hydrogen, and the large one with carbonic acid, the membrane will be distended inward as shown in Fig. 3. In this latter case the experiment $\mid$ may be performed with the least trouble by placing $\mid$


## THE COBRA DE CAPELLO.

the large globe with its mouth upward, and closing it by means of a plate of glass.
Endosmose proceeds from the rarer toward the denser gas. The law governing the diffusion of gases, according to Graham, is that the force of diffusion is inversely as the square roots of the densities of the gases.
When two miscible liquids are separated by a porous partition, they diffuse one into the other. A simple endosmometer for showing this action is shown in Fig 4. It consists of a small funnel having its mouth closed by a piece of bladder held in place by a wide rubber band stretched around the rim of the funnel. The funnel thus prepared is immersed in water, for example, and is filled to the level of the water with sirup of sugar. The water passes through the bladder into the funnel and the sirup passes out. The rise of the liquid in the funnel indicates that the water enters more rapidly than the sirup escapes. The presence of the sirup in the water may be detected by taste. That the water passes through the membrane into the funnel may be proved by adding to the water a small quantity of sulphate of iron, and after the experiment has proceeded for a time, adding some tannin to the contents

## THE SPECTACLED VIPER.

The menagerie of reptiles of the Paris museum is at present in possession of three specimens of the serpent called the cobra or spectacled viper (Naia tripudians, Merrem). One of these was brought from Ceylon several years ago by Mr. Errington, while the two thers, which are of remarkable size, have been obtained very recently, and came from Calcutta.
The cobra has attracted attention in all ages not only on account of the peculiarity of its markings, whence it derives one of its names, but especially from the singular attitude that it as sumes when excited, and from the number of victims that it annually makes. It is related to the Elaps (harlequin snake), and, like it, belongs to the colubriform group of venomous reptiles.
It has an elongated, rounded body, slightly in flated in the middle, and the head is of the same size as the neck, so that, when at rest, the animal has the aspect externally of an adder. As with the latter, the top of the head is covered with large scales arranged in a similar manner. When excited, it immediately raises the fore part of its body, while at the same time it dilates its neck into a broad membraneous disk, convex on the dorsal side, at the extremity of which is situated the horizontally directed head. The dilatability of the neck, which has given the serpent the name of Cobra de capello (hooded snake), is due to the great length and slight curvature of the cervical ribs. These, directed backward and applied to the sides of the vertebral column during repose, take, at the moment the animal is excited, a trans verse direction, through the action of muscles under the control of its will. The skin in the region of the neck is thus distended into a broad, elongated disk, which the posterior extremity of the head joins in front and upon which the scales, separated from one another through the effect of the distension, and having light colored intervals between them, present the aspect of a network of which they occupy the meshes. When the excite ment ceases, other muscles draw the ribs back to their first position, and the neck resumes its ordinary form.
The mouth is very wide, and the upper jaw, on each side, is provided in front with an immovable venomous fang, followed by one or two small, smooth teeth. In most cases, the general color is a uniform dark brown and almost black, sometimes marked at the sides with transverse white striæ. In a state of distension, the neck exhibits two white blotches above, which are roundish and symmetrical and have a black center, and are connected on the posterior side by a white, black bordered arch, the convexity of which is turned backward. The whole arrangement offers the aspect of a pair of spectacles, and has obtained for the animal one of the names that it bears. The anterior portion of the ventral surface is whitish and marked with one or more transverse black bands.
Two of the museum specimens are colored in this way. In one of them, however, the fundamental color is not so dark, and in the third it is of a very pale brown. The characteristic cervical blotches are fre quently more or less effaced or modified in form, or even entirely absent.
The spectacled adder attains considerable size. The largest of our specimens has a length that may be estimated approximately at five feet; but, among the natural products exhibited by the Cingalese at the Garden of Acclimation, two years ago, there was a cobra's skin whose length beyond a doubt exceeded six feet.
The serpent is oviparous, that is to say, the devel-
pment of the embryo is effected wholly within the


Fig. 4.-ENDOSMOMETER.

Fig. 1.-SIMPLE WAY OF SHOWING THE DIFFUSION OF GASES.

Fig. 2.-PRESSURE BY ENDOSMOSE.


A good way to insure a tight joint is to stretch a wide
rubber band around the neck of the globe before aprubber band around the neck of the globe before ap plying the membrane. The large fish globe is filled with hydrogen or illuminating gas, and the small globe is placed under it, as shown in Fig. 2. As the hydrogen passes inward through the membrane mu
of the funnel. If sulphate of iron is present in the fun-|body of the mother, and the egg is not laid until nel, the sirup will turn dark upon the addition of the that is finished. The covering of the egg is then a tannin.
If the neck of the funnel proves to be too short, a glass tube may be connected with it by means of a short piece of rubber tubing.
that is finished. The covering of the egg is then a promplly, weak mermediately after the egr leaves the mother's body
The cobra inhabits the Indies, Bengal, Siam, Cam-
bodia, Cochin China, Tonkin, Annam, China, Malabar, Ceylon, and the principal islands of the Indian Archipelago, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and the Philippines. Up to the present; it has not been found in the Celebes or the Moluccas. In the eastern parts of Asia, in Afghanistan and in Persia, it is replaced by the Naia haje, which likewise inhabits the greater part of Africa, and especially Egypt, where, under the name of asp, it has played a role no less celebrated than it congener in the Indies
The cobra keeps itself habitually in the trunks of old trees, in ruined walls, in piles of stones, and in bamboo brush. It seems to seek the vicinity of man, where it perhaps more easily finds the small rodents that form its principal food. It is especially at sunset or during the night that it emerges from its retreat to seek food. It seizes not only small mammals and birds, but also lizards, frogs, toads, and fishes. The batrachians just named, along with rats and mice, constitute the exclusive food of the museum specimens. The cobra willingly climbs up roofs with the hope of surprising some animal there. It has sometimes been observed on the top of cocoanut trees hunting for birds. It is a good swimmer and frequents watercourses, and it has even been met with at sea at a great distance from the coast. It attacks its prey in the manner that adders do, by seizing, and at once swallowing it, without encircling it with its coils in order to crush it, as boas do, and without waiting for it to die after injecting its poison into it.
It is extremely irascible, and, provided that it is excited, it dilates its neck, turns its head to the left and right to see where the danger is, and then pounces upon its enemy with the rapidity of an arrow, and at the same time emits a sound analogous to that made by blowing into a narrow tube, whence the name of spitting serpents, given to the Naias in general. This appellation, due to the notion that the Naias first project their saliva or even their venom upon the enemies that they attack, is but partially justified by facts. Observation of specimens kept in captivity shows that, in the conditions that we have just supposed, the respiration is quickened, the inspirations are deep, and the body alieernately expands and contracts. An abrupt expiration coincides with the animal's attacking motion, and causes the noise mentioned above. The expelled air is evidently capable of carrying along a little saliva (although we have never verined this), but this is a thing not peculiar to the Naias.
The cobra is the most widely distributed of vehomous serpents in the countries that it inhabits, and, as its poison is very active, it annually causes, especially in the Indies, a large number of deaths. So it is justly dreaded by the natives. Its nocturnal habits and its tendency to approach dwellings still further increase the danger, by rendering its vicinage more immediate. It is even said to introduce itself under the floors of houses. Cases are relatively rare in which persons who are bitten become cured outside of any treatment. The Hindoos, and particularly the snake charmers, possess various empiric remedies, whose secret they keep, and which, according to the accounts of travelers, are not always devoid of efficacy.
The curious, graceful, and haughty attitude assumed by the cobra when irritated, and the subtle and so often mortal venom that it sacretes, have very naturally exerted a profound impression upon the mind of the poorly enlightened nations among which Nature has confined it. They have regarded it as a mysterious being favored by Buddha himself for having protected him against the rays of the sun when he descended to earth, its malevolent power being designed to avenge the injuries done to the divinity. Governed by a superstitious fear, they have spared its existence, and surrounded it with a respect carried to veneration. Volumes might be filled with the legends and stories, more or less veracious, to which it has given rise.
In the Indies, all the mountebanks are provided with cobras, which they exhibit to the public for pay, and it appears that the industry is quite lucrative. The charmers are capable of rendering the animal harmless, at least for a certain length of time, by breaking off its fangs by means of a bit of cloth that they hold out to
it and then pull back suddenly after it has seized it. it and then pull back suddenly after it has seized it.
Well authenticated cases are cited in which the serWents used by jugglers had their venomous fangs intact. After a more or less prolonged training, the charmer ends by exerting upon his subject a genuine and very curious power. The people consider such
power as magical and supernatural, and the Brahmins power as wagical and supernatural
carefully keep them in this belief.
The cobra seems to be completely subjugated, fascinated, and submitted to the will of the charmer. Under the influence of the monotonous and slowly drawn tones of a sinall flute, the snake performs cadenced motions. Certain touches suffice to throw it into a state of lethargy, and at certain orders it becomes as stiff and inflexible as a rod, while a few signs cause it to resume
all its flexibility. These facts, affirmed by authors all its flexibility. These facts, affirined by authors by science. In the meanwhile, let us remark that the by science. In the meanwhile, let us remark that the
processes employed by the charmers much resemble processes employed by the charmers much resemble
those used by physicians to produce hypnotism, and
that the phenomena observed have much analogy with those seen in the hypnotized, and that perhaps they are of the same nature.--La Nature.

## Microscopy.

One of the most comical things that we have seen in a long time, says the National Druggist, was a United States internal revenue agent, who came into the office of the editor a few days ago, armed with the new microscope which the department has dealt out to the agents charged with enforcing the law in regard to butter and lard adulterations. The official, a polished and educated gentleman, was in a heap of trouble. He had that morning received the instrument and the book of instructions accompanying it, and several hours of wrestling with both had thrown him into a state of mental and physical anguish, from which he sought relief. He had brought the apparatus along and wanted to know how to use it. The microscope, a new fashioned cheap affair, fitted with French or German triplets, looked more like an old time candlestick than anything else, the slide being inserted in the base and illumination obtained by directing the instrument bodily toward the source of light. It was accompanied by a polarizing apparatus, which was to be inserted in the base after the manner of the slide. After this had been done the instrument would no longer stand upright, and when laid on its side, after the fashion of such things, it would persist in rolling off the table. As dents in it showed, this must have happened several
times during the few brief hours in which it had been times during the few brief hours in which it had been in use. We know it happened three or four times
within the hour or so that the gentleman was wrestling with it while in our office.
The "book of directions" informed the official that he was to pull out one tube "about five-eighths of an inch " and another "about three-quarters of an inch," and then he was to smear a little of the grease under examination on a slip, cover it with a cover glass, and insert the slip in the instrument, turn the polarizer, and if he saw nothing the specimen was lard or butter (we forget which), but if he saw something it was not lard or butter. These are not the words, but convey the sense which the agent was able to extract outof them. After some examination of the apparatus, and the exercise of a little patience, we were enabled to show the official how the thing was intended to work. Whether he will ever be able to make any use of the apparatus and the information thus gained is quite another thing. The idea of sending out men entirely ignorant of microscopy, and armed with contract toy microscopes, to determine questions which are even now matters of controversy among experts, is one which would be su-
premely ridiculous were it not such an outrageous premely ridiculous were it not such an outrageous
travesty upon science and common sense. It is, however, an illustration of the prevalence of the idea that all that is necessary to make a microscopist is to own a microscope.

## Removal of Filaria from a Horse's Eye.

A Baltimore letter to the Atlanta Constitution says : Recently Dr. Thomas W. Spranklin, assisted by Veterinary Surgeon John S. Colton, successfully removed a living worm or "snake" from the eye of an Neck, Md. The animal, a dark bay, about fifteen and a half hands high, has been in the stables of Rice \& Marshall, on North Frederick Street, for several days, and has attracted a good deal of attention from the curious. The parasite, technically known as filaria oculi equinus, was three inches long and had the general appearance of a piece of gray silk thread. It had its abiding place in the aqueous humor of the mare's left eye, and was in a state of incessant motion, wriggling about after the manner of the animalcules seen in a drop of water under a microscope.
It was first noticed in the mare's eye about six months ago, when it was so small as to be barely discernible. It grew steadily until it attained its present size. It was never still a moment, but kept up its activity without pause day or night. The poor old mare was kept in a state of perpetual nervous excitement by it, and wasted away till her ribs protruded through her rusty coat, and her flanks were as thin as it was possible for anything of flesh to be. Many showmen visited her and offered to buy her for exhibiting purposes, but her owner would not sell.
Dr. Spranklin began his operation by securely binding the old mare so that she could not move, and eye was treated with a solution made of ninety-three parts of rosewater and seven parts of cocaine. Small quantities of this solution were dropped into the eye, at intervals of five miuutes, seven or eight times, until partial anæsthesia was obtained and it could be touched by the finger without pain to the animal.
Then an incision was made in the eye from the outer canthus or corner, between the cornea or eyecision was made at about right angles with the eyelid, and so that it would be almost wholly covered by it when in its normal position. The instrument was kept

Then it was still retained in position, and used as a guide for a pair of very delicate spring forceps, whose blades were inserted into the opening.
The lance was then removed, and Dr. Spranklin, placing the index finger of his left hand upon the opposite side of the cornea, gently but firmly pushed the parasite toward the blades of the forceps. It was so very active that four or five times it wriggled away from their grasp. At last he was able to get a tight hold upon it and draw it out. It was very lively and lived for several minutes, in fact, until it was placed for preservation in a small vial of alcohol. The lips of the incision were drawn together and closed in a flap, the aqueous humor again flowed into and filled the cornea, and in less than three-quarters of an hour the old mare was back in her stall eating as calmly as though such a thing as a delicate surgical operation was beyond her ken.

Dr. Spranklin is firmly of the opinion that unless inflammation should ensue from want of proper nursing of the eye, it will soon be as well as it ever was, both in appearance and strength of sight. As to how the worm got into the animal's eye, he inclines to the idea thatits germ was taken into the mare's system through water which she drank.

## Curious Doings of Lightning.

A telegram from Crescoville, Pa., says: During the thunder storm that visited this region July 9, a maple tree in front of Miner Cresco's residence was struck by lightning. The only damage done to the tree was the splintering of a piece out of the trunk, midway between the ground and the lower branches. After the storm was over, Mr. Cresco went out to look at the tree. On the ground at the foot of it lay an immense black snake dead, and holding in its mouth a young robin. There was a robin's nest in the tree, and it was known to have had three young ones in it. As the tree had been struck by lightning, it was supposed that they had been killed. A boy went up the tree and found two young robins in the nest, alive and lively. It is supposed that the black snake had climbed the tree and robbed the nest of one of the newly hatched birds, and was descending the trunk as it was struck by lightning and killed with its prey in its mouth. The lightning thus avenged the robin.
A dispatch from El Paso, Texas, says : On the night of the 4 th of July, this city and vicinity was visited by a thunder storm which, in the amount of electricity discharged, was unprecedented in this section. One of the peculiar manifestations of the lightning was in the striking of a tree under which a flock of goats had taken shelter. Fifty-two of the animals were killed, but only a slight trace of the lightning could be noticed on the tree.

## Increase of Russian Home Industries.

The British Consul-General at Warsaw, Russia, states that the increases which are constantly being made in the Russian duties are having a serious influence in preventing imports into Russia, and German trade has suffered severely in consequence. The consul, reporting on the trade of last year, also points out that business with Great Britain has also decreased, there being a noticeable falling off in fancy cloths, Manchester cotton velvet, jute, felt carpets, cocoanut mattings, Nottingham curtains, leather and cotton beltings, Birmingham goods, Sheffield cutlery and tools, agricultural machinery and implements, leather for bookbinders, earthenware, and glass. There is also a decrease in cotton yarns and twist, knittings, Irish linen, chemicals, and aniline dyes. The only articles which seem to have held their own are power looms and spinning machinery. The consul further states that in consequence of the diminished importation of foreign manufactured goods, many small manufacturers in Warsaw have lately taken to producing articles which were formerly obtained from abroad, such as pins and needles, leather goods, umbrellas, cravats, silk ribbons, stays, etc., also silk, cotton, woolen, and kid gloves, felt and straw hats, small iron wares, tin goods, buttons, ready made clothes, knitted goods, musical instruments, toys and dolls, basket goods and carpets. Warsaw is, in consequence, rapidly becoming an industrial center.

## New Naval observatory at Washington.

The contract for the erection of the new Naval Observatory buildings, on Georgetown Heights, near Washington, has been awarded by the Secretary of the Navy for $\$ 307,811$. This contract does not cover the piers or the domes, which are to be built by experts under the direct supervision of the observatory officers.
There are to be nine buildings in all, including the There are to be nine buildings in all, including the
main building-the great equatorial building, where the great telescope will be mounted; the clock room, where the observatory clock.will be set up and the naval chronometers kept and corrected; two buildings for observers' rooms ; the east and west transit buildings; and a boiler house. The material used will be Tuckahoe marble. Work is to be begun immediately, and the buildings are to be completed within eighteen
months. months.

## THE SWINGING OF CLUBS.

 The oldest weapons of man are clubs, that is, strong thick cudgels, such as are still used by savages. Clubs played an important part in the heroic legends of ancient times, for their bearers accomplished wonders with them. The Greek hero Hercules, who was endowed with supernatural power, was called the " club bearer," and tradition also tells us that Theseus swung the club rooms for the purpose of bringing the different mem to other and more destructive means of defens Lately more destructive means of defense. wely clubs have found favor here in Germany, not as weapons, but as a means of exercising. Wooden1223) provided his body guard with clubs. With the use them, and for this reason clubs having a diameter progress of culture the use of the club as a weapon of from 3 inches to 6 inches, and a length of from 15 has disappeared among civilized nations, giving way inches to 30 inches, are recommended as best. To ascertain the right weight, one should take the club by the neck and raise it in front of him or at his side. When raising it in front of him, the outstretched arm should be raised as high as his shoulder, and when raising it at his side it should be lifted sidewise as high as his shoulder. If a club can be held in either of

the Philistines, and the Egyptians, as well as the in- thus strengthening the body. The club is not a simhabitants of N rthern Europe and Britain, were spe- ple weight, the form of which is immaterial in obtain cially renowned for their use of the club, which was ing these motions, but should be of a peculiar shape also used as a weapon by the Germans. At the time which is adapted to the end in view, that is, a form of the Crusades the inhabitants of Asia knew how to suitable for swinging is of more importance than use this weapon effectively. In the battle of Askalon, weight. Therefore, one does not speak of practicing August 14, 1099, 5,000 Ethiopians armed with iron clubs offered a desperate resistance to the victorious chect it is necessary Christians. Later the club was much used by the that their length, diameter, and weight should be
these positions for 30 seconds without strain, it is of about the right weight. For beginners, clubs weigh ing from 2 to 3 pounds are the best, and they can be made heavier after continuous practice, by pouring in ead.
All club swinging is based upon the hand circle and the arm circle. Before beginning to exercise regularly with clubs, lifting, thrusting, and swinging (Figs. 1, 2, and 3) should be practiced. This should be followed by the arm. circle with either one ortwo clubs.(Figs. 4, 5,

6, and 7). The hand circle (Figs. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) pre6, and 7). The hand circle (Figs. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) pre-
sents greater difficulties. The combination of the hand and arm circles completes the course.
The best wood for clubs is white beech or elm; oak is inclined to be brittle and is apt to crack, it is also expensive. Polish is not necessary, but a coating of varnish is recommended. When swinging clubs, such clothing should be worn as will allow a free movement of the limbs, and when exercising in a room care should be taken to admit plenty of good, fresh air. The best be taken to admit plenty of good, fresh air. The hest
time for exercising is before dinner, and after swingtime for exercising is before dinner, and after swing
ing the clubs the muscles should rest for at least a quarter of an hour, as the excitement of the muscles would be a hinderance to the digestion of the meal to be taken. If violent exercise causes palpitation of the heart or rapid breathing, the clubs should be laid aside. The swinging of clubs cannot be too highly recommended to those who lead a sedentary life, and men mended to those who lead a sedentary life, and men
whose time and occupation do not permit of their atwhose time and occupation do not permit of their at-
tending a gymnasium-for instance, teachers, civil officers, merchants, etc.-should have a room in their dwellings where they can practice with clubs.-Illustrirte Zeitung.

The Use of water at and before Meals.
Opinions differ as to the effect of the free ingestion of water at meal times, but the view generally received is probably that it dilutes the gastric juice, and so retards digestion. Apart from the fact that a moderate delay in the process is by no means a disadvantage, as Sir William Roberts has shown in his explanation of the popularity of tea and coffee, it is more than doubtful whether any such effect is in reality produced. When ingested during meals, water may do good by washing out the digested food and by exposing the undigested part more thoroughly to the action of the digestive ferments. Pepsin is a catalyptic body, and a given quantity will work almost indefinitely, provided the peptones are removed as they are formed. The good effects of water, drunk freely before meals, have, however, another beneficial result-it washes away the mucus which is secreted by the mucous membrane during the intervals of repose and favors peristalsis of the whole alimentary tract. The membrane thus cleansed
is in a much better condition to receive food and convert is in a much better condition to receive food and convert
it into soluble compounds. The accumulation of mucus it into soluble compounds. The accumulation of mucus
is specially marked in the morning, when the gastric walls are covered with a thick, tenacious layer. Food, entering the stomach at this time, will become covered with this tenacious coating, which, for a time, protects it from the action of the gastric ferments, and so retards digestion. The viscid contents, a normal conditards digestion. The viscid contents, a normal condi-
tion in the morning before breakfast, is not suitable to receive food. Exercise before partaking of a meal stimulates the circulation of the blood and facilitates the flow of blood through the vessels. A glass of water washes out the mucus, partially distends the stomach, wakes up peristalsis, and prepares the alimentary canal for the morning meal. Observation has shown that non-irritating liquids pass directly through the non-irritating liquids pass directly through the
"tubular" stomach, and even if food be present, they "tubular" stomach, and even if food be present, they cal Journal.

How Machine and Watch oll is Secured. At the recent opening of the Horologica! School at La Porte, Ind., on February 2, 1888, Mr. Wm. F Nye, of New Bedford, gave an interesting lecture, from which we abstract the following :
All wheels need greasing, and the little wheels of the watch are no exception; the proper oil is just as essen-
tial to them as the sperm oil to the great Corliss engine that kept in motion the acres of machinery at our late Centennial Exposition, and is now the great motor assisting in working out a great nation's destiny in the thriving city of Pullman, near Chicago.
I have been asked to tell you something that my $t$ wenty years' experience may have taught me about greasing these wheels; where and how down on the Atlantic coast we get and prepare the proper oils for watch and clock use. I will not attempt this on any technical or scientific basis, for science yet despairs of defining the varied properties of oil from the different species of fish. When the scientists can tell us where the rose and the lilac gather in spring time their beautiful colors and grateful perfume, they may be able to tell us more than we now know about oils. It is yet as puzzling as the well known fact among horologists that a watch will not keep the same time with two persons. Electric conditions, varying temperature of body, and difference in motion affect the watch and so it is with the properties of oils from the inhabitants of the vast oceans, stretching from the ice-fettered poles and across the torrid belts, conditions as widely
vary with them. vary with them.
In all my observation of food of fishes, and study of the same during passages I have made over the three pute me if I call it else than theory) that the species of fish that take their food in the sunlight on the surface of the ocean generate a very superior oil, and in most species hold it in reservoirs about the head, and afford
us an oil of finer texture for lubricating purposes,
while those that root out the bivalves from the grand banks of Newfoundland or the shifting sands along our coast, and delve into the dark cave of ocean for kelp and mollusk, as their food, furnish but an indifferent oil, fit only for the currier's use or the miner's lamp.
Doubtless the tender Mother Carey's chicken and tireless albatross, ever upon the wing over the southern oceans, become food for many, while others forage amid the immense schools of sardines and herring that annually migrate past the maelstrom of Norway, while yet others, like the sperm whale and its smaller cousins, the black fish and por poise, sport and tumble in warmer seas on both sides of equator, skimming the animalcules, the sun fish, jelly fish, and squid that a tropical sun awakens to life.
Down on the coast, "down East," as you would say, the term "happy as a clam at high water" is familiar. The clam loves a deep sea over his sand bank home, but like our friends in Dakota, he is often disturbed by blizzards and gales, and the heavy sea rolls them in windrows from their snug beds, when the swarming schools of cod, hake, and haddock do not wait for an invite to the feast, and our fishermen declare that in a few days after a gale they become remarkably fat, and these are furnished by your grocer as the codfish par excellence to roll with your potato into the very relishable fish ball. Not so with our fishes of fine watch oil fame, the black fish and porpoise. They bask and sport in the sunbeams, where the myriads of small fish seek their life. Like the locusts that we have learned visit our forests once in seventeen years, there come to our New England shores, at long intervals, vast schools of a little fish called the squid, though the latter make us two visits to the locust's one, coming at intervals of nine years, so that our hardy fishermen of Cape Cod and Cape Ann very safely reckon the time for "another haul," as they term it, of black fish, that are sure to follow the squid. In the last school that came to us, in November, 1884, which proved the largest ever known in the history of sea fishing, 2,200 were taken, and, in all probability, but few of that school that entered Cape Cod Bay escaped, as it is computed fully 600 boats "lent a hand" in the pursuit and capture. The presence of the little squid, that swim either end foremost, first attracts the attention of the fishermen, who
are out in their boats from every inlet along the coast are out in their boats from every inlet along the coast
when the watchword is given, "Black fish are coming !" and ere long they "break water" in the outer bay. Boats are now manned with extra crews, armed with harpoons, knives, and hooks. General Grant tactics of "flanking them" are adopted. They get outside and around the unwary fish, so eager for their prey, and slowly "shoo" them into shallow water, bayou and creek; and when a few, touching the shore, begin to fluke, others will follow, presumably to see what is the matter, when overboard go the men from the advance boats, and the slaughter commences. Only a portion of the school are obtained at this time.
A separate portion are driven in other inlets, where they are held till the tide recedes, when they are butchered, and by a strong hook and line drawn by a gang of men to where the "whale cast Jonah." Many days elapsed before this school of 1884 , of which I speak, were all taken, and divisions of it were secured from Provincetown to Barnstable, a distance of fifty miles.
We were early upon the scene to share in this "streak of fisherman's luck," for we were at the time amenting our very short supply of the particularly fine oil yielded only by the jaws and heads of these
fish, to enable us to maintain the reputation of Nye's watch and clock oils; and the first train took us along these sandy shores, where the pilgrim fathers had traveled and braved a stormy winter, just 264 years before. The scene was, well, not to say beautiful, at such slaughter of an ocean tribe, but it was not a little picturesque and exciting. Everybody "took a hand" and "came in for a share." Our time had come. We bargained and arranged for the heads of these fish, the
greater part of which it was our good fortune to secure, and proceeded at once to cut the "jaws" and so-called melon," which is much in the shape of a half melon on either side of the head, and from which the name is derived. It was not only the largest, but in every way he finest, lot of watch and clock oil stock ever secured. It seemed to have come, too, at a time when the immense production of watches and clocks the world over
demanded a better and more abundant supply of reliable oil adapted to their requirements. An important peculiarity of this oil, and in which it differs from all others, is that it improves by age, a phenomenon proved by long experience in preparing it for use and accounted for by alternate gathering and emission of counted for by alternate gathering and emission of
moisture upon exposure to changes of temperature, as moisture upon exposure to changes of temperature, as
by this and after treatment it does in time become permanently clear and brilliant, and in consequence of which we seldom use it in the same year obtained.
Amid our processes of preparing this oil, especially for the watch and clock trade, we find that filtering at very low temperature is the one thing most essential, and as, in the latitude of New Bedford, where our
factory is situated, we are seldom favored with temperature below zero, we have established a plant on perature below zero, we have established a plant on
the borders of Canada, at St. Albans, Vt., where we
"chill it down" and render it brilliant at an average temperature of 25 degrees below zero. Last year we
were able to filter at 37 degreesbelow. By this process we discover that with reduction of temperature the specific gravity or density of the oil increases and finer grain and texture are secured, giving increased resistance to the effects of both heat and cold, and especially to the changing conditions of the body upon watches carried in the pocket, and assuring in an eminent degree the non-drying properties so essential to a lubricator for accurate timers.
At no time in the preparation of these oils do we use acids or alkalies, but retain them in their native purity to the fullest extent. Extreme care is used in cutting out the "jaw melon," that no blood may come in contact with the parts, for blood engenders an acid that soon permeates the oil; neither is any of the outer black skin of the fish allowed to go into the kettles in the process of rendering, as it imparts a discoloration that can only be extracted by caustic and sun bleach ing, which unfits the oil for use upon the delicate parts of fine watches. As I have said, our improved proree them perfectly blacken the pivots of a watch, and cause them to be entirely unaffected by heat and cold.
In regard to oils prepared for watch and clock use rom vegetable or animal oils, every attempt has proved a failure. I very thoroughly investigated this during my trip over Europe last year, where every oil I met with, save our American oils, was more or less prepared from the olive or joints of animals, and our importers of French and German timers are now protestng against the further use of European oils upon goods sent them. They quickly evaporate, and corrode or gum upon the watch.

## The Diet of Different Peoples.

The vagaries of the appetite are far beyond the explanatory science of physiology. What we call tolerance in medicine is in itself a mystery. We cannot tell why this thing agrees with this individual and at the same time utterly destroys his brother. The trite old saying that one man's meat is another man's poison must be accepted empirically. Still less can we account for the variations of taste. Why one man's gustatory nerve should respond agreeably to salt, while another's repels it with violence, we cannot understand. Doubt less, education has most to do with it, and yet the man ner in which education operates continues a mystery. The preference of the Chinese forfood that seems to our appetites absolutely disgusting is well known. In Canton, rats sell for fifty cents a dozen, and dogs' hind quarters command a higher price than lamb or mut ton. Fancy, eating birds' nests worth $\$ 30$ a pound This is what a mandarin revels in. The French have beguiled us into eating frogs' legs, which were once tabooed in this country, and we have even come to es teem diseased goose liver in the form of pate de foie gras.
The writer has met Brazilians who rave over boa constrictor steaks, and count monkeys and parrots a very good meal. In the West Indies, baked snake is a common dish, as the reptiles abound, and it is a good way of getting rid of them. But when it comes to frying palm worms in fat, one would think the stomach would rebel. It is not so, however, though, by a strange inconsistency, stewed rabbit is looked upon with disgust. On the Pacific coast the Digger Indians eat dried locusts, and in the Argentine Republic skunk flesh is a dainty. Our own favorite bivalve, the oyster, is very disgusting to a Turk, while the devil fish, eaten in Corsica, is equally so to us. We cannot understand, either, how the inhabitants of the West Indies and the Pacific coast can eat lizards' eggs with a relish; still less, how the eggs of the turtle and alligator can become a favorite article of diet. The Brazilians eat ants, probably to get rid of them, for they literally infest the country, and are of an enormous size. It is easy to pick up a handful of ants almost anywhere, though the wary do not go about it in this way, as the pestiferous insect bites in a most vicious manner. A curry of ants' eggs is a great delicacy in Siam, and the Cingalese eat the bees whose honey they have stolen. The Chinese, who seem to have stomachs like the ostrich, eat the chrysalis of the silkworm after unwinding the cocoon. Spiders are used in New Caledonia as a kind of dessert, while caterpillars are also relished by the African Bushmen.-Philadelphia Medical Register.


To clear a room of mosquitoes, take a small piece of gum camphor in a tin vessel and evaporate it over a in camphorated spirits and made fast to the top of the bedstead will be found serviceable in the sleeping room. Decoction of pennyroyal, applied to the exposed parts, will effectually keep off these troublesome insects.will effectually keep o
American Pharmacist.

## ENGINEERING INVENTION.

A system and apparatus for heating and lighting cars has been patented by Mr. George Smith, of Rochester, N. Y. A compressed air reservoi
is connected with a naphtha tank, a pipe from which leads to the heater and lamps for supplying carbureted leads to the heater and lamps for supplying carbureted supply of gas is cut off to prevent danger from fire in case of accident.

## agricultural inventions.

A corn harvesting and husking machine has been patented by Mr. John A. Hilbert, of
Carroll, Iowa. This invention covers an improvement arroil, owa. This invention covers an improvement on a former patented invention of the same inventor,
the machine cutting the stalks, separating the ears and husking them, and delivering them to a wagon travel ing with the machine, while the stalks are placed in ow or a ple on the ground.
A mower has been patented by Messrs. Robley D. Hoke and Isaac A. Harris, of Wessington and an adjusting mechanism designed to drive the and an adjusting mechanism designed to drive the
sickle bar with a sufficient number of strokes to secure perfect cut of the grain in proportion to the advance of the machine, the machine also having a simple and practical means of adjusting the shoe of the sickle bar

## MISCELLANEOUS INVENTIONS.

A button has been patented by Mr. Charles A. Peirce, of Dover, N. J. It is a collar button having attached means for securing and engaging the
necktie, and consists in a hinged pointed pin combined with a collar button.
A shoe fastening has been patented by of a sheet metal strip, be band closed for attachmen to a shoe or other article of wear to make an eye-like fastening, adapted to receive a lacing cord or sho tring freely through it
A cement has been patented by Mr. Isaac C. Hatch, of Santa Cruz, Cal. It is made of
stated proportions of lime, sand, coralline, and sugar, stated proportions of lime, sand, coralline, and sugar,
finely ground and thoroughly mixed, and is said to be particularly well adapted for building heavy walis of ither brick or stone.
A stove has been patented by Mr. Hans Lindas, of Stoughton, Wis. This invention relates to parlor stoves adapted for heating separate rooms, and wherein provision is made for cooking or
baking, and is designed to afford an improved construc tion in which the smoke is utilized as a heating factor

A commode has been patented by Mr. William R. Wythe, of Santa Barbara, Cal. This inven tion covers a novel construction, combination, and ar charged of its contents, not liable to become offensive, charged of its contents, not liable to be
and which is protected against freezing.
A coffee pot has been patented by Mr. William Racer, of Harrison, Ark. A funnel with cylindrical lower end and strainer in its bottom is sup. ported inside the pot, in combination with an interio ing a pot specially designed for making coffee by perolation.
An ore jigger has been patented by Messrs. William B. Hodgson and Truman C. Safford of Lyon Mountain, N. Y. This invention covers an im proved screen to facilitate the sizing of wet and dry
ores, the screen being convex or conical, and supported directly over the upper end of a hopper by a vertical shaft revolving in the casing
A rowing apparatus has been patented by Mr. Robert Masay, of Nashville, Tenn. Combined which oars are held, the frame having a sliding bar to means for locking the parts in position, with othe novel features, whereby boats may be propelled and steered without directly handling the oars.
A cut-out for electric light circuits has been patented by Mr. Charles D. Wright, of Peters burg, Ill. It is designed to throw a suitable amount of resistance into the circuit when the current therein becomes abnormal, and before the regulating devices connected with the dynamo can act, thereby avoiding the burning out of the armature of the machine.
A composition for roadways has been patented by Mr. Louis N. Beauchemin, of Hancock, Mich. It is intended for use as a top layer or facing specified proportions of black pitch, coal tar, resin copper moulding, stamp sand, and other materials, ompounded and applied as described.
A combined school seat and desk has been patented by Mr. Albert Landon, of Rutland, Vt The seat is located in front of the desk, which forms a back for the seat, the seat being adapted to fold up easily adjustable in and out of position to afford a passageway between rows of desks.
A hand punch has been patented by Mr. William Yates, of New York City. It is for can way tickets, etc., and the invention covers novel features of construction and arrangement of parts, whereby a great variety of combinations for marking and punching may be effected.
A combined freight bucket and truck has been patented by Mr. Louis A. De Mayo, of Jersey tion whereby freight may be conveniently carried from one portion of a warehouse to another, wheeled alon readily dumped from from floor to floor, etc., or may be tilting the truck
A tool post ring has been patented
by Mr. William S. Cobb, of Philadelphia, Pa. The in-
vention consists in a series of three incliued face rings or plates fitted around the tool post and on to the tool ive the required set of the tool, making an attachment to tool posts or holders of lathes or shaping machines. A nail cutter has been patented by Mr. Terence F. Curley, of Brooklyn, N. Y. It consists of a handled plate having unsharpened edges, one or both of which are provided with a V-shaped notch, the plate being sharpened at the sides of the notch to adapt it for cutting the ends of the nails, and so the na
be trimmed without danger of cutting the flesh.

A lemon juice extractor has been pa anted by Mr. John L. Easley, of New York City. It has a rotary frame with vertical curved arms or ribs beween which a lemon may be wedged, with openings y which the skin may be dislodged, and other novel he oil of the skin, and the pulp and seeds will be caught without impeding the flow of the juice.

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