

Artificial Butter.

To the Editor of the Scientific American:

Owing to the receipt of much correspondence concerning my article on artificial butter, which appeared in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, N. Y., Nos. 48 and 49, I wish to state that I own no patent on the process. The only patent held is Mage's, which is owned by the United States Dairy Company, 6 New Churchstreet. All letters, therefore, should be forwarded to that address. The process I described in my article is simply an elaboration of that patented by Mage, and cannot be used without infringing on the United States Dairy Company's patent. HENRY A. MOTT, JR., E. M., PH. D. New York City.

Business and Personal.

The Charge for Insertion under this head is One Dollar a line for each insertion. If the Notice exceeds four lines, One Dollar and a Half per line will be charged.

All the best recipes published in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN for several years back, are in "Wrinkles and Recipes." Price \$1.50, postpaid. Book and SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN for 1877, for \$4.20. H. N. MUNN, Publisher, 37 Park Row.

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Notes & Queries

A. F. will find a recipe for a cement for china on p. 346, vol. 24.—N. T. will find directions for making silicate of soda on p. 225, vol. 23.—F. N. will find directions for getting rid of flesh worms on p. 233, vol. 31.—J. C. will find directions for making laundry bluing on p. 219, vol. 31.—H. T., J. K., B. L., J. H., T. W., J. D., W. R., and others who ask us to recommend books on industrial and scientific subjects, should address the booksellers who advertise in our columns, all of whom are trustworthy firms, for catalogues.

(1) F. W. C. says: I wish to convey hot water 1,000 feet from the heater through an iron pipe. Must the return or circulation pipe be as large as the supply, in order to keep the water hot at the terminus of supply? A. Yes.

1. I notice that in the vacuum chamber of a cold water pump, the water does not fill the chamber. What is it above the water, air or vacuum? A. It is air, and the pump does not draw it off because it is at a higher level. 2. Will the vacuum gauge work as well attached to the bottom? A. The gauge may be placed in any desired position.

(2) F. McL. asks: Is there any instrument by the aid of which a person can see the interior of his own eye? A. We know of none.

(3) C. H. H. asks: In regard to the water wheels at Fairmount Water Works, Philadelphia, does the water, or part of it, after being forced up, run back and act as power to raise more water? A. No.

(4) R. S. says: I have a floor made of alternate strips of black walnut and ash. I have great trouble in keeping it clean; in fact, it never really looks clean except immediately after washing. I have oiled it several times with boiled linseed oil, but it collects and holds the dust too much wherever any one walks. Under pianofortes, etc., it retains its brightness and beauty. What is the best substance or oil for me to use? A. Procure a liquid wax at your house painters; this is often applied for this purpose.

(5) A. says: Given a cast iron tank bolted together watertight, and intended to hold pure water. With what shall the inside be painted or covered, in order to effectually prevent rust? The required preparation must be inexpensive and be applied in liquid form. Nothing that will contaminate the water or dissolve, even slowly, will answer, a perfectly waterproof and innocuous preparation is the desideratum. A. Asbestos paint would probably fill most of the conditions required.

(6) A. M. H. says: The four chimneys of my three story brick dwelling did not draw well. This I attributed to the surrounding trees and houses, both of which are considerably higher than my dwelling, and although I had the chimneys well cleaned out to satisfy myself that there was no obstruction in them, I found a good and sufficient remedy only in placing upon each an iron pipe 8 feet high by 7/8 inches in diameter. I had the pipes made of galvanized sheet iron and strongly fastened with 1/2 inch iron rods. But a little while ago, after a two years' use of the pipes, the whole four pipes were swept away by the wind and broken into pieces as if they were pasteboard. Upon examination the pipes appeared to have been almost entirely rusted or eaten away from the inside, while upon the outside they were but a little discolored with rust. Why did they first go from the inside, and is there not some kind of durable paint or covering, not too brittle, that will prevent this? A. The soot upon the inside of the pipes develops an acid which assists in corroding the iron. The only satisfactory remedy is the extension of the brick chimney itself to the height required, and securing the same with iron braces.

(7) J. H. L. says: I claim that water is elastic and can be compressed. A friend claims that water is not elastic. A. Water is slightly compressible.

(8) N. A. asks: Will a fan, such as is used to make blast for melting iron, make more blast by having eight arms or wings than if there are but four? A. It would not necessarily be more effective with eight arms. It would be quite possible to build a fan of four vanes which was more effective than one having eight, and vice versa, on account of other considerations.

(9) E. L. asks: Can we change our mill, now driven by three wheels with direct gear, by transmitting power from wheels to one main shaft with quarter twist, and from this shaft with quarter twist to spindles? If the wheels will drive steadily, without any reaction, shall we lose any power by the indirect transmission? A. We think there will be no difficulty in making this change. As, however, you will have two belts and shafts to drive, in addition to the other gearing, the useful effect of your engine will be somewhat diminished.

(10) W. A. C. asks: Do you know of any steam boiler in this country built expressly to use salt water, and if so, has it proved a success? A. All marine boilers may properly be classed under this head. Such boilers are successful as long as they are kept reasonably free from scale. For land boilers, those of the cylindrical form have many advantages, when salt water is to be used, as they can be easily and quickly cleaned.

(11) F. G. asks: How much power will it take to force an inch stream of water through iron pipe 75 rods up a gradual rise or 75 feet, and what kind of pump would you recommend? A. Your question is rather indefinite, for almost any amount of power might be required to force water through the pipe, according to the velocity. We never recommend special manufactures in these columns.

(12) R. S. M. says: I want to run a cotton gin and press at a distance of 200 feet from my mill. Which is best, a shaft on ground, or wire rope? A. Either plan will answer very well, and we advise you to employ the one that you can arrange most cheaply.

(13) G. & B. ask: Has the ocean tide ever been used as a motor for driving machinery, otherwise than by water wheels driven by currents, or by the aid of dams and floodgates? A. We have read of propositions to this effect, but do not know of any that have been carried into practice.

(14) J. F. J. asks: How is the level of the sea (I mean the point a surveyor takes in saying that such a place is so far above the level of the sea) obtained? A. Just by taking it. For instance, if the surveyor notes that, at mean low tide, a given reference mark is at a certain elevation above the surface of the water, that becomes fixed, and all elevations can then be referred to mean sea level at any time—without a direct observation—by referring them to the fixed mark, and making the necessary correction.

(15) D. S. says: I am getting a small vertical steam boiler made from No. 20 galvanized sheet iron, I intend to put it on top of a box stove over the pipe hole with a 6 inch flue (that being the size of the pipe). The size of the boiler is 14 x 24 inches, and there will be 4 inches space for water between flue and shell. How much pressure will such a boiler stand? Will the flue stand as much as the shell, or will it collapse? A. The flue is somewhat weaker than the shell. You can carry about 15 lbs. steam. 2. Is there not a way to find the pressure of steam with the safety valve? A. If you buy a safety valve from a reliable maker, you will find it graduated with tolerable accuracy, so that the fall can be adjusted without any calculation. It is not a bad plan, however, to verify the graduation. You will find the manner of doing this fully explained in "Wrinkles and Recipes."

(16) T. M. says: You give Dr. Ferrier's remedy for cold in the head. How often should it be used as snuff? A. If the ailment is really a cold, one application of the preparation will be all that is necessary. It is not advisable to use it constantly for every ache or where neuralgia is suspected.

(17) S. W. asks: Can you tell me how to separate gold from iron when the two are mixed? A. Dissolve the gold in warm aqua regia (1 part nitric to 3 parts hydrochloric acid), evaporate nearly to dryness, redissolve in water, and add an excess of strong aqueous solution of sulphate of iron. Boil the liquid and allow to stand in a warm place for an hour. Then decant the clear liquid, gather the precipitate on a filter, wash with hot water, dry, and fuse in a small black lead crucible with a small quantity of anhydrous carbonate of soda. If the directions are closely followed, this will give you a button of the pure metal.

(18) D. asks: What will give a new appearance to old zinc? A. The structure and properties of zinc do not alter by age. You can remove the superficial coating of oxide by means of a little dilute acid and the scratch brush.

(19) W. T. B. asks: Can you give me a recipe for dissolving gutta serena, which is not combustible, and will not cost more than sulphuret of carbon? A. We do not know of such a solvent.

(20) C. E. A. asks: Are wood ashes a benefit to the growth of currant bushes or trees? A. Yes, if not used in excess.

(21) J. P. H. L. says: I have some fine specimens of copper ore. Is there anything that I can put on them that will not change the colors and will prevent their turning green? A. Varnish them with a little purified shellac in alcohol.

(22) W. P. T. says: In answer to H. G. you say that the change of color in hair is due to the loss of the iron salts which are the basis of the dark color. Can the dark brown hair of a young person be prevented from turning white? A. The only remedy that we can suggest is the reinvigoration of the blood by the proper use of animal nourishment and iron tonics. Avoid alcoholic stimulants and do not deprive yourself of needful sleep.

(23) H. L. G. asks: In electroplating, does a current that vibrates do better work than one which does not? A. No.

(24) C. W. W. asks: Of what size and thickness should a boiler be for an engine of 2 1/2 inches diameter of cylinders, and 4 inches length of stroke? A. Make a vertical one, 20 or 24 inches in diameter, and 3 feet high.

(25) G. A. W. says: I wish to build a propeller launch. I am making an engine 5 x 6 inches; how big a boat will it run at 8 miles an hour? How large should the boiler be, and how large a screw will it require? A. You can have a boat 30 feet long, with a boiler 3 feet in diameter and 4 1/2 feet high. Propeller should be 30 inches in diameter and of 3 1/2 to 4 feet pitch.

(26) F. D. W. asks: Is the following proposition correct? "It is a principle of mechanics that a force acting at right angles to the direction in which a body is moving, does no work, although it may continually and continuously alter the direction in which the body moves. No power, no energy is required to deflect a bullet from its path, provided the deflecting force acts always at right angles to that path." A. It might be true, if the conditions stated were possible; but it is evident that, when the body is deflected, its motion will not be at right angles to the deflecting force.

(27) N. asks: What is a good pickle or dip for copper-plated zinc work, to be used before gilding? A. Use very dilute oil of vitriol.

(28) J. G. W. asks: If the true meridian may not be obtained from the sun? A. Not unless you have true time, and know how much the sun is slow or fast.

(29) J. J. G. asks: Does a side wheel steam-boat or propeller draw more water when running than when still? A. Frequently when the boat is in motion the bow is elevated and the stern depressed.

(30) F. C. R. asks: 1. What size of boiler will be large enough to furnish steam for an engine 2 x 4 inches? A. One 20 inches in diameter and 3 feet high. 2. How large a boat will such an engine run at 3 or 4

miles an hour? A. One 15 feet long. 3. What size and pitch of screw will be necessary? A. Use one 18 to 20 inches in diameter and of 3 feet pitch.

(31) H. W. says: In a recent issue of your paper I see that S. N. W. asks who first applied steam power to the propulsion of boats, and is the inventor of steam navigation. You reply "that the Marquis de Jouffroy of France built a steamship some years before Fulton." But Dionis Papin (born August 22, 1647) of Paris, being a Protestant, fled from France after the repeal of the Edict of Nantes and went to England, and from there to Germany, where he was professor at the University of Marburg from 1687 to 1707. During this time he made several inventions, of which the most prominent was the steamship which he built and set to work in Hesse Cassel, on the river Fulda. What has become of the ship is not known.

(32) W. B. F. says: 1. I have an engine of 8 inches bore by 3 1/2 inches stroke, and I would like to know what sized three-bladed propeller I should use, and what horse power of boiler will it take to run a boat with a 25 feet keel, and 8 feet beam, drawing 2 feet of water? A. Use a propeller 24 or 26 inches in diameter, and of 3 feet pitch; and a boiler 28 or 30 inches in diameter and 3 1/2 feet high. 2. What speed would be realized? A. Probably 4 or 5 miles an hour in smooth water. 3. Where could I obtain directions for building such a boat? A. See the directions for building various kinds of boats, in back numbers of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT.

(33) G. W. A. says: 1. We are running a 12 x 20 inches engine with a 9 flue boiler 48 inches in diameter by 20 feet long. The flues are 6 inches in diameter, and the stack is 23 inches in diameter and 40 feet high. She seems to have draft enough, but we cannot keep steam on her. We run her at 100 or 120 revolutions per minute, driving two 50-saw gins and two 30-inch burrs. The valve is a common slide valve, set with both ends equal with 1-16 in. lead. What is the matter? A. From your account the boiler should steam well if it is clean. Examine it to see if there is much scale in it, and test the engine to see whether there are any serious leaks. 2. Will a 2 inch shaft 100 feet long run two 50-saw gins and one 80-saw gin? A. It would be better to use a larger shaft. 3. Which runs the lightest, belts or iron cogs for driving burrs? A. More of the power applied is generally utilized by belts than by common gear wheels.

(34) B. S. says: I have made an induction coil (Ruhmkorff's method), 6 inches long and 3 1/2 inches in diameter. I get a spark from the induced current about 1-16 inch in length and a very severe shock. I would like to put on condensers to increase the spark as much as possible. Please tell me the proper number of sheets of tinfoil to use, their shape and size, and also give directions for connecting them in the main circuit from the battery. A. Thirty or forty square feet of foil will be sufficient. The sheets may be of any size and shape. Connect the condenser up so as to bring its opposite sides on each side of the vibrating break, that is, with contact points of break between its two coatings.

(35) J. H. asks: 1. Does nickel-plating cost as much as silver plating? A. Yes. 2. Does it require to be burnished after plating? A. Yes. 3. Does it require a battery as strong as for silver? A. It requires stronger battery power. 4. What is the best work on nickel plating? A. "Electricity; its Theory, Sources, and Applications," gives all the necessary instructions for nickel plating.

(36) J. T. D. says: Three months ago, I could not hold both ends of the wires from a gravity battery of large size (150 cups); now I can hold them for almost any length of time without feeling much current till I have held it for three or four minutes, and then I do not feel enough to make me let them go. The battery was tested with a galvanometer and proved to be as strong as ever. A. Your hands are probably dry and offer very considerable resistance to the current. When the latter has been allowed to flow a short time it starts perspiration and thus reduces the resistance. It is not difficult to take a continuous current from a battery; one can do this easily and retain hold of the terminal, when frequent interruptions of the circuit would be too severe for the majority of persons.

(37) W. T. N. says: I made a battery of three copper plates, 7 x 8 inches, tacked to slats 3/4 inch wide; between these plates were placed two 7 x 8 zincs. The two zincs and the three coppers were then connected with copper slips, and to the combined zincs and the combined coppers were attached the positive and negative wires. The plates were then placed in a common two gallon pail, full of sulphate of copper solution, the slats resting on the edges of the pail. I supposed I had a battery of about 200 inches of zinc surface, and I thought that this ought to produce some signs of magnetization in a bundle of wires (3/4 inch in diameter) in a coil of 180 feet 25 wire, and 600 feet of 35. But it did not, nor would it decompose water. The only sign of electricity was the strong salty-bitter taste on placing the poles on the tongue. What was the trouble? A. One hundred feet of No 16 copper wire will give better results with such a battery than all your wire together. It will take two such batteries to decompose water, and the decomposition would probably stop in 20 or 30 minutes.

(38) A. C. L. says: I want to lay a small lead pipe to bring water into my buildings, from a spring 1,600 feet distant, through hard rock, digging nearly all the way. How can we lay the pipe without going deep as ordinarily, but yet protecting it against any danger of freezing. Our idea is to dig a ditch 2 feet deep, fill it with 6 inches of sawdust then lay the pipe, then fill in over that with 12 inches more of sawdust, and then with the dirt taken from the ditch. Will that answer? How is the best way to construct the well at the spring? A. To give absolute security against freezing in our climate it has been found necessary to lay water pipes five feet below the surface of the ground. In one case the pipes of a good sized city being laid at 3 feet in depth, the water froze and the pipes burst in many places, so that the ground had to be opened again and the pipes relaid at 5 feet in depth. During some winters the frost penetrates the ground very little, but the pipe must be so laid as to be secure in the severest seasons. It is doubtful if the sawdust filling would save it.

(39) C. C. says: My furnace has a chimney 40 feet high; the number of tubes in boiler is 52, their diameter is 1 3/4 inches; the size of chimney is 14 inches square, inside. I can put the exhaust into the chimney or not, as I wish; but I cannot see any difference between the ways. I carry 60 lbs. pressure, but am short of power. The boiler is good all but firebox, and that is very thin in places. Can I carry any more pressure? A. If your firebox is weak, we advise you not to increase the pressure. From the data sent, we cannot help you much about the boiler. It may be that it steams well, and the engine takes too much steam. This could only be settled by experiment.

(40) J. B. asks: What size of screw wheel will an engine of 2 1/2 inches bore by 5 inches stroke drive, and what size of boat would be suitable? A. You can use a wheel from 22 to 24 inches in diameter, and of 3 feet pitch, and a boat 20 feet long, of 4 1/2 feet beam.

(41) P. H. D. asks: How does the method for finding the true meridian, given in No. 9, vol. 35, differ from that given in Davies' and other works on surveying? A. There was a time when they were right. We have examined some of the earlier as well as later works on surveying, and it appears that they have copied from each other. They have not taken into account the retrograde movement of Polaris of twenty seconds a year. At the present time, Alloth, the first star in the handle of the dipper, is about 25 minutes ahead, while Mizar, the second star, is five minutes behind.

(42) J. R. M. asks: Do the government observers at the signal stations report the actual height of the mercury in the barometer, or are corrections applied? A. The readings are reduced to the sea level and also to a temperature of 32° Fah. by Guyot's tables. The first 900 feet makes about 1 inch fall in the mercury, so that if a person is 900 feet above sea level, his barometer will read about 1 inch below the signal reports, for that place.

(43) M. J. C. asks: 1. Is there any difficulty in using an object glass two or three inches in diameter as described on p. 283, vol. 35? A. No. Make the focus of the three inch lens 25 feet. 2. Would the instrument you describe be free from color? A. Not wholly. 3. Would not better results be obtained by using an achromatic objective? A. Yes; but it would be far more expensive.

(44) W. M. says, in reply to J. L. A., who asks how to destroy a human tooth, in or out of the mouth: Take the tooth (after it has been removed) and immerse it in muriatic acid for about 12 hours, when it will be dissolved.

(45) W. M. says, in answer to T. P. H.'s inquiry as to how to harden and polish dental plates: They are first vulcanized at 320° for a shorter or longer period according to the constituents of the rubber. Then dressed down with file, scraper, and sand paper, and then polished with prepared chalk and a brush wheel.

(46) R. E. H. says: 1. I have a Rhumkorff coil, with an 8 inch bobbin. It is fitted with a tin foil condenser, which is connected with the pillar by one wire and the vibratory hammer by the other. The coil will not work while this condenser is attached; but gives a brilliant spark at the contact breaker (using two small Bunsens) when the condenser is removed. Can you suggest a remedy? A. The condenser has evidently become defective; substitute a new one or have the old one repaired. 2. Though a brilliant spark is got at the contact breaker, but a very small one can be got by joining the terminals of the secondary circuit, and I cannot succeed in lighting up some small Geissler's tubes. These terminals will induce a spark from a thin insulated wire or from the knuckles, so that the tension seems considerable. A. An eight inch bobbin will not give a very long spark, but should be sufficient, with a good condenser, to illuminate small Geissler tubes. 3. Should I connect the ends of the secondary coil with thick or thin wire? A. It is not material, either will answer for ordinary purposes.

(47) J. M. asks: 1. By what means does working high steam expansively effect a saving in fuel? A. If the steam is used without expansion, when it is discharged from the cylinder it is capable of doing more work. If now we employ some of this energy, before exhausting, by allowing the steam to expand, it is evident that more work will be obtained by the consumption of a given amount of fuel. 2. Would the supply of a greater quantity of atmospheric air to the furnace of a locomotive be a desideratum? A. No.

(48) C. S. A. asks: Has a noiseless steam ever been invented? A. Many well built steam engines run noiselessly.

Does it make any difference if lightning rods are badly rust eaten in the ground, provided they go deep enough to strike the damp earth? A. No.

How is gas pipe made? A. From flat plates of iron, heated red hot, and drawn through plates till the curvature and lap are made. Then the lap is welded.

In your explanation of the Bessemer steel process, you do not say where the blast comes from. Is it from a stone coal or charcoal fire? A. From a coal fire.

Can there be such a thing as two lines approaching each other and never meeting? A. Yes. See p. 138, vol. 31.

Is the work of tunnelling the North river progressing? A. No.

(49) H. Z. asks: How can I prepare a lithographic stone for Indian ink drawings? A. Rub it with sand, wash well, and then rub with powdered pumice-stone. Then wash again, and polish with a fine piece of pumice-stone. The finish thus imparted is unfit for chalk work.

(50) D. S. asks: How is a fine oil finish put on furniture? A. Take boiled linseed oil 1 pint, yellow wax 4 ozs. Melt together, and color with alkanet root to impart a reddish tinge.

(51) J. F. M. asks: Please give me a recipe for a liquid dressing for shoes? A. Take gum arabic 4 ozs., molasses 1 1/2 ozs., good black ink 1/4 pint, strong vinegar 2 ozs., spirit of wine 1 oz., sweet oil 1 oz. Dissolve the gum in the ink, add the oil, rub them in a

mortar until thoroughly united; then add the vinegar, lastly the spirit.

(52) J. C. B. asks: How can I fasten a thin strip of hard rubber to a similar strip of steel or other metal? A. Make a thin solution of glue, and gradually add pulverized wood ashes till you have a stiff varnish. Use this cement hot.

(53) J. F. G. asks: 1. What proposition in Euclid is known by the name of *pons asinorum*? Some maintain that it was the 5th of book I, namely: The angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal, etc., others say that it is the 47th of the same book. "The square on the hypotenuse of a right angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides." A. The *pons asinorum* is proposition 5, book I; and the name is given to it by schoolboys, and is supposed to be an allusion to its being the first difficult proposition which the beginner encounters. Proposition 47, book I, is called the Pythagorean theorem, it, having been demonstrated by Pythagoras.

(54) F. R. asks: How can I calculate the weight of iron and brass castings from the weight of the wooden patterns? A. Brass castings weigh 17 to 19 times the weight of a pine wood pattern. Iron castings weigh 16 times the same.

(55) A. E. B. asks: How many lbs. to the cubic foot is the maximum that water can float? A. About 62 1/2.

(56) J. B. H. asks: Is there a clock made that winds itself while running? A. No. Such a machine would be a perpetual motion, which is impossible.

(57) I. R. & Co. ask: What is the process for making crocus or composition for polishing, used in nickel plating? A. Crocus is made by putting tin, as pure as possible into a glass vessel, and pour in sufficient nitric acid to cover it. Great heat is evolved, and care must be taken not to inhale the fumes, as they are poisonous. When there is nothing left but a white powder, it should be heated by a Hessian crucible, to drive off the nitric acid.

(58) M. G. A. asks: Where does rattan grow? A. The rattan (*ratan*, Webster) is a sprout from the sugar cane after the cane has been cut.

1. What is the length of the Suez canal? A. About 100 miles. 2. How long was it being built? A. About 10 years. 3. How many locks has it? A. None. The fresh water canal, made for supplying water to the laborers, etc., has locks; we do not know how many.

(59) A. J. asks: Can you give me a recipe for making a black composition in imitation of jet? A. The usual substitute for jet is ebonite or vulcanite, a patented preparation of India rubber.

(60) E. J. F. asks: How is the pattern produced on marbled paper? A. Use finely ground pigments, mixed with water to the consistence of paste. Make a square box about 2 inches deep, large enough to hold an open sheet of your paper. Fill it within 1/2 inch of the top with a solution of 1/2 lb. gum tragacanth to 6 quarts water. Strain the solution. Take a long water color brush, and put stripes of the desired pigments on the surface of the gum solution; pass a metal comb through the stripes in a zigzag direction, according to taste. Dampen the paper, and take 1 sheet of it by two opposite corners, and lay it evenly on the colors, flatten it gently with the hand, lift carefully off, and hang up to dry. When thoroughly dry, polish with a smooth piece of flint.

(61) G. F. E. asks: How can I impart a crystal-looking finish to brass? A. By using a steel scraper or a stick of wood covered with emery paper over the surface. Work it in a circular direction. A slip of Arkansas oilstone, dipped in oil, gives a good effect.

(62) F. D. asks: How can I strip bark from willow twigs, and how can I split the same for making baskets? A. Osier or willow twigs are peeled by soaking them in water till the bark becomes loose, and then stripping them. We believe they are split with a common knife.

(63) N. S., of St. Petersburg, Russia, asks: 1. How is the rudder of the non-heeling boat represented on p. 287, vol. 35, fixed, so that the after part of the frame does not interfere with it? A. The rudder is fixed to the stern post in the ordinary way. 2. On what theory is the Ocean Queen, shown in the same illustration, built? A. All the information we have on this subject is in the article and illustration.

(64) J. W. S. asks: Is tragacanth mucilage used for any purpose other than by shoemakers and druggists for pasting on labels? A. Yes. It is employed by water color artists, ink manufacturers, manufacturing chemists, and pharmacists, and is used extensively in the preparation of mucilage.

1. Can you give me the specific gravities of wax, paraffin, lard, and tallow, at their melting points? A. No, but they are all considerably less than that of water. 2. How can I cast paraffin in a metal mold? A. Coat the mold with a film of olive oil and the paraffin may be readily removed without heating. We think you will experience no difficulty in removing the cast from the mold as you suggest, but in this case the outlines may possibly not be quite so sharp as when removed, after cooling, from the oiled mold.

(65) A. B. T. says: Please inform me how to prepare picture canvas, so that it shall be pliable? A. The canvas cannot be well prepared by amateurs. The materials employed are whitening and glue size.

(66) H. J. asks: In your issue of December 2 is a recipe for hot waterproof cement, in which soluble acid and chromate of lime is to be used. I have been to several drug stores for the chromate of lime, but no one seems to know what it is. Is there any mistake? A. The chromate of lime is a by-product from the manufacture of the chromates of potassa, lead, etc. It may be formed by dissolving one part of lime (caustic) and four parts of chromic acid (by weight) in the smallest possible quantity of pure hot water, decanting the solution and allowing to cool slowly. Under these circumstances the pure salt will crystallize out; or boil the lime with 5 parts of bichromate of potassa dissolved in water, de-

cant the liquid, and dissolve the residue in two parts of chromic acid in water as before. You can obtain this salt by writing to one of the large dealers in laboratory chemicals and utensils in this, or other large cities. There is no mistake in the recipe.

(67) M. D. asks: Why must a smoothing iron be hot to iron clothes? A. To expel the moisture from the starch and convert it into a stiff glaze.

(68) A. A. M. asks: In what solution can I put a beef tongue for a short time, to peel the skin without cooking, and which is not injurious to the meat or the health? A. This cannot be accomplished.

(69) J. D. says: I have some glass curtain pins or knobs in my room; they are hollow, and coated with mercury in the inside. One of them was exposed to the sun and it has lost its brilliancy and reflective power. Was it the heat of the sun that destroyed it? If so, at what degree of heat did it do it? A. If the air in contact with the amalgam was at all contaminated by the products of combustion, which contain sulphurous acid or the exhalations from drain pipes or sewers, the continued heating of the mercury by the direct sunlight might easily determine the gradual formation of the gray film of suboxide or sulphide as the case might be. 2. If a mirror is placed in the sun will the heat destroy it? A. In pure air, sunlight or heat below 600° Fah. has no effect on pure mercury.

(70) H. Y., Jr., asks: Does chewing tobacco have any effect in reducing the flesh and weight of the human body, or does it otherwise make a man thin and soft? A. Yes, especially if he is of a nervous temperament. Its tendency is to injure the human system in various ways. Their injury is developed differently in different individuals.

(71) L. O. asks: 1. How shall I make nitrate of iron? A. Place in a suitable vessel a large quantity of clean iron in small scraps, and just cover it with dilute nitric acid (one of the acid to two of water). Heat nearly to boiling, and maintain at this temperature until there is no further evolution of gaseous nitric oxide. This gas should be conducted into a large chimney filled with fragments of brick moistened constantly with water. If the gas be kept from contact with the air it remains colorless and insoluble in water. It should therefore be mixed with a sufficient quantity of air before it is permitted to enter the condenser. When the evolution of gas has ceased, add a quantity of pure water equal to the volume of the dilute acid originally introduced, heat nearly to boiling and siphon off into suitable evaporating vessels, and concentrate the solution by slow evaporation. When the nitrate of iron begins to separate it should be removed from the solution as fast as formed, placed upon a suitable drain (a large covered funnel will answer very well)—and the superfluous fluid allowed to run off. The solution in the evaporating dish should have fresh portions of the strong iron solution added to it from time to time; the solution should never be allowed to approach dryness. The nitrate of iron may be purified by recrystallization from an aqueous solution, draining and drying. In order to avoid a loss of materials in the first operation, the iron scrap should be in large excess of the acid, and these conditions should be maintained during the process of solution. 2. How shall I make nitric acid? A. Introduce into a large glass or porcelain retort, the neck (beak) of which should fit snugly into the end of a glass condenser, equal weights of strong oil of vitriol and niter (nitrate of potassa) or nitrate of soda. The retort is seated upon a sand bath beneath which heat is applied gradually when the salt-peter is decomposed by the sulphuric acid, with the formation of nitric acid which distills over and sulphate of potassa or soda as the salt may be, which remains behind in the retort. We would advise you before beginning the manufacture of this acid to consult some good work on technical chemistry.

(72) W. H. H. says: 1. I want to construct a telegraph line, 1/4 or 1/2 mile in length. For insulators, can I use rubber loops to hang the wire in? A. Rubber loops will answer if a return wire is used, but the ordinary insulators are preferable. 2. Which is strongest, 6 half gallon Callaud batteries or 3 one gallon? A. The 6 small jars will answer your purpose best. 3. If I order a sander to be made for a 1/4 mile line, will it work equally well on a 250 feet or a 1 mile line, if number of batteries are changed? A. If changed so as to give the same strength of current, yes. 4. On how long a line can I use a simple sander without relay? A. That will depend on the resistance of the circuit. An ordinary sander will not work well with the usual battery power if the circuit exceeds 10 or 15 ohms resistance.

(73) S. A. H. asks: 1. How should I set a two flue boiler so as to make steam as fast as possible? A. You will find good methods explained on p. 339, vol. 33. 2. Should the grates be at the center or end of the boiler? A. Grates at the end will be sufficient.

(74) R. S. F. says: I have a magneto-electric machine, but the current is not strong enough. How can I increase it? A. If increased battery power does no good, the coil may be defective. It is difficult to give definite advice without seeing the coil.

(75) H. C. N. asks: Is there any chemical that may be mixed with plaster of Paris before setting (or any dip in which it may be immersed after setting) to cause it to stand heat almost to redness without cracking, warping, or crumbling? Are there any cements (for stone brick) that will stand this test? A. If the plaster be pure it will stand heating to full redness without cracking, provided this is done slowly and uniformly so as to first expel all the water. After once rendering anhydrous by the above treatment, it will withstand a bright red heat. This precaution must, however, be heeded: don't treat the substance suddenly. It is better to mix the plaster with a little lime (1 to 3) and fine sand before baking.

MINERALS, ETC.—Specimens have been received from the following correspondents, and examined, with the result stated:

W. L. M.—They are small quartz crystals, the angles of which have been only partially destroyed by corrosion.—C. K.—Your samples are all iron pyrites—sulphide of iron.—O. P. (of Worcester, Mass.) should send us a large piece of his mineral.—T. K. & Co.—It is braunite,

or sesquioxide of manganese.—R. W. Co.—It is an argillaceous and calcareous sediment, containing much organic matters.—C. A. McO.—It is galena-sulphide of lead.—J. W. B.—No. 1 is an impure limestone colored by sesquioxide of chromium and iron. No. 2 is a feldspathic rock. No. 3 contains amorphous and crystalline carbonate of lime, elate-slate, and iron pyrites.—R. E. M.—It is asphalt (bitumen), of some value if in large quantities. Its solutions in naphtha or turpentine are largely employed as a protecting varnish for exposed metal and woodwork, particularly the hulls of vessels. Large quantities of it are consumed in the preparation of asphaltum pavements and roofs.—T. K. & Co. (H. J. M.)—It is braunite or sesquioxide of manganese.—The specimens numbered 1, 2, and 3 in large tin box (painted blue) are sulphide of nickel and iron. Valuable if in large quantities. There was no name or address on the package, and the postage stamps were 24 cents short.—H. H.—It is what is known as "spongio-piline," a kind of felted made from sponge. It is used to some extent by medical men.—J. A. S.—It is arsenical iron pyrites. If in large quantity, it may be worked as a source of arsenic.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

The Editor of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN acknowledges, with much pleasure, the receipt of original papers and contributions upon the following subjects:

On Emigration to New South Wales. By A. E. B.
On the Lumber Trade of Pennsylvania. By W. T. L.
On Subjects for Discussion. By J. H. A.
Also inquiries and answers from the following:
R. R.—C. W. T.—J. S. A.—W. G.—J. H. R.—W. H. N.
—J. R. Q.—W. T. H.—E. P.—J. K.

HINTS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Correspondents whose inquiries fail to appear should repeat them. If not then published, they may conclude that, for good reasons, the Editor declines them. The address of the writer should always be given.

Inquiries relating to patents, or to the patentability of inventions, assignments, etc., will not be published here. All such questions, when initials only are given, are thrown into the waste basket, as it would fill half of our paper to print them all; but we generally take pleasure in answering briefly by mail, if the writer's address is given.

Hundreds of inquiries analogous to the following are sent: "Who sells prisms, fit for use in a camera lucida? Who sells a small steam engine, suitable for driving one sewing machine? Who sells parts for working models of locomotive engines? Whose is the best surveyor's levelling instrument? Where can phosphor bronze be bought? Who sells mineral specimens for the cabinets of collectors? Whose is the best microscope for scientific investigation? All such personal inquiries are printed, as will be observed, in the column of "Business and Personal," which is specially set apart for that purpose, subject to the charge mentioned at the head of that column. Almost any desired information can in this way be expeditiously obtained.

[OFFICIAL.]

INDEX OF INVENTIONS

FOR WHICH

Letters Patent of the United States were Granted in the week ending

November 28, 1876.

AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

[Those marked (r) are reissued patents.]

A complete copy of any patent in the annexed list, including both the specifications and drawings, will be furnished from this office for one dollar. In ordering, please state the number and date of the patent desired, and remit to Munn & Co., 37 Park Row, New York city.

Acetic acid, making, E. R. Squibb.....	185,141
Animal trap, C. Koons.....	185,110
Baling manure, P. C. Ingersoll.....	185,106
Bandsawing machine, G. B. Phillips.....	185,045
Barrel cover, McClellan & McBride.....	184,976
Beer, utilizing waste of, J. J. Suckert.....	184,934
Belt shifter, F. B. Miles.....	185,120
Belt-shipping mechanism, G. E. Taft.....	184,969
Bilge water ejector, R. S. Little.....	185,115
Bill file, E. J. Beck.....	185,063
Blowing toy, H. J. Green.....	185,025
Book sewing machine, G. W. Glazier.....	184,961
Book sewing machine, J. C. Smyth.....	184,989
Brick and peat machine, D. Woodbury.....	185,067
Brick kiln, E. W. Bingham.....	185,068
Burglar alarm, J. B. Underwood.....	185,148
Calendar clock, A. Phelps.....	185,128
Car berth supporter, T. Grant.....	185,098
Car coupling, E. M. Parrott.....	185,126
Car coupling wedge, W. B. Dunning.....	185,087
Car door, G. B. Kiteley.....	184,971
Car door hanging device, E. E. Pratt.....	184,983
Car spring, J. S. Lash.....	184,973
Car starter, A. Whittemore.....	185,006
Car truck, prismoidal, E. B. Dorsey.....	185,019
Carving fork, E. Cady.....	185,074
Case for toilet papers, E. W. Dennison.....	185,082
Caster bottle, Weber & Wilhelm.....	185,002
Charbon roux, making, G. L. Harrison, Jr.....	184,963
Check rower, J. W. Fawkes.....	185,092
Cheese press, T. A. Murphy.....	185,124
Churn dasher, Duval & Merton.....	185,088
Clamp for holding rail pieces, C. Lamb.....	185,111
Clamp for quilting frames, I. W. Doez.....	184,967
Clamp for wire rope, H. R. Taylor.....	184,995
Clock movement, F. Kroeber.....	184,972
Clothes drier, J. R. Rusby.....	184,985
Compensating pendulum, E. M. Gorwin.....	185,016
Compound engine, R. Bogardus.....	184,961
Compound tool, S. B. Mayfield.....	185,088
Corn husking machine, J. Lund.....	185,036
Corn planter, A. M. Southard.....	185,140
Corset, M. P. Bray.....	185,071
Cotton bale tightener, C. E. Boardman.....	185,070
Cotton sweep, H. C. Buhoup.....	185,073
Counting almaraparatus, F. L. Burns.....	184,954
Culinary utensil, Kellogg & Lintner.....	185,109
Cultivating plow, McAllister & McDonald.....	186,039
Cultivator coupling, H. Feltman.....	184,969
Cup and ball toy, G. Schoen.....	185,049
Card mill, J. P. Bellinger.....	185,012
Curtain fixture, E. J. Pospisil.....	184,982
Cutting stone, I. W. Bradbury.....	185,072
Dental plugger, R. B. Donaldson.....	185,086