

Scientific American.

ESTABLISHED 1845.

MUNN & CO., Editors and Proprietors.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT NO. 37 PARK ROW, NEW YORK.

O. D. MUNN. A. E. BEACH.

TERMS FOR THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.

One copy, one year, postage included. \$3 20
One copy, six months, postage included 1 60
Clubs.—One extra copy of THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN will be supplied gratis for every club of five subscribers at \$3.20 each; additional copies at same proportionate rate. Postage prepaid.

The Scientific American Supplement

is a distinct paper from the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. THE SUPPLEMENT is issued weekly. Every number contains 16 octavo pages, with handsome cover, uniform in size with SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. Terms of subscription for SUPPLEMENT, \$5.00 a year, postage paid, to subscribers. Single copies 19 cents. Sold by all news dealers throughout the country.

Combined Rates.—The SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN and SUPPLEMENT will be sent for one year, postage free, on receipt of seven dollars. Both papers to one address or different addresses, as desired.

The safest way to remit is by draft, postal order, or registered letter.

Address MUNN & CO., 37 Park Row, N. Y.

Scientific American Export Edition.

The SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN Export Edition is a large and splendid periodical, issued once a month. Each number contains about one hundred large quarto pages, profusely illustrated, embracing: (1.) Most of the plates and pages of the four preceding weekly issues of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, with its splendid engravings and valuable information; (2.) Commercial, trade, and manufacturing announcements of leading houses. Terms for Export Edition, \$5.00 a year, sent prepaid to any part of the world. Single copies 50 cents. Manufacturers and others who desire to secure foreign trade may have large, and handsomely displayed announcements published in this edition at a very moderate cost.

The SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN Export Edition has a large guaranteed circulation in all commercial places throughout the world. Address MUNN & CO., 37 Park Row, New York.

VOL. XL, No. 21. [NEW SERIES.] Thirty-fifth Year.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1879.

Contents.

(Illustrated articles are marked with an asterisk.)

Academy of Sciences, N. Y. 328
American industries* 319
Anesthetic, new 321
Arsenic, antidote to 321
A word to insurance officers* 326
Bolting cloth inspector, new* 323
Breathing noxious vapors* 326
Bribe, a long 329
Butter, rancid, purifying 321
Cable, Atlantic 321
Chair, a rich* 329
Coal, American, in Switzerland 321
Cotton, prospects of 324
Cows, vegetable 329
Crematory urns, scented 326
Desmognath, the brown* 321
Device, a suggestive 324
Dies for pipes and bolts* 325
Disorder of bank clerks* 320
Education, hand training in 321
Electric light in Cleveland 320
Electric light in N. Y. P. O. 320
Electric light in Paris 320
Ellipsograph, a simple* 324
Fashion, a sensible 320
Flooding the California desert* 324
Floors, asphalt and timber 325
Gary motor, Prof. Morton on 324
Glue, marine 329
Greenhouse, a cheap 325
Homes, interlocking of 325
Industries, American* 319
Inventions, engineering 324
Inventions, miscellaneous 325
Iron, new 325
Iron, preserving and ornamenting 320
Meteoric dust 320
Microphone, the, in mines 321
Microphones, improved* 324
Modern enterprises 320
Moulding and carving machine* 325
Nitric oxide, preparation of 325
Notes and queries 321
Orchis family, the* 327
Patents, American, recent 325
Patents, international 321
Powder blasts, large 329
Presence of mind 320
Rotary engine, new* 326
Satchel desk, new* 325
Screw propulsion 326
Shoehing horses 321
Sore throat, a cause of 320
Substitutes for gold and silver 320
Successful efforts, three 320
Telegraph wires, underground 325
Tow, a large 320
Vermont marble, alleged 325
Weights that timber will sustain 322
Wire, manufacture of 319
World circuit and time puzzle 321

TABLE OF CONTENTS OF THE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT No. 177.

For the Week ending May 24, 1879.

I. ENGINEERING AND MECHANICS.—Use of Compressed Air Motors for Street Cars. Continuation of Gen. H. Haupt's report. What grades the pneumatic motor can overcome, and what load it can carry. Effects of air compression. Advantages of pneumatic motors. How to remove ice and snow from the track on steep grades. A motor to supersede horses. Colladon's System of Compressed Air Brakes. 1 illustration. Colladon's claim that four-fifths of the Westinghouse air brakes are embraced in his patents of 1855. French system of Car Heating by Portable Hot Water Heaters. System of the Orleans Railway, 7 figures. New Twin Cylinder Steam Engine. An engine on a novel and peculiar principle, designed by Mr. Joseph Bernays of London. Has no dead center. Cylinders upright. Compact. Full page illustration. The Sharpie Model. By E. A. VAN and F. W. TUTTLE, Oneida, N. Y. How to build and rig a Sharpie sail boat. First illustration, plan for construction, scale 1/2 inch to the foot. 4 figures. Second illustration, elevation of Sharpie sail boat. Racing rig.
II. ASTRONOMY.—The Evening Star. An elaborate study of Venus. By CAMILLE FLAMMARIAN. 1 figure. Showing the four principal phases of the planet. Reasons for believing Venus to be climatically ill-adapted for comfortable habitation. Extreme changes of temperature. Lofty mountains. Dense atmosphere. How earth looks from Venus. On the Minute Measurements of Modern Science. By ALFRED M. MAYER. Article XIX. On the measurements of the lengths of the waves of light, preceded by short accounts of the undulatory theory of the light and the phenomena of diffraction and interference of light. 2 figures. Table of wave-lengths of principal Fraunhofer lines. Rutherford's ruling engine. How diffraction gratings are made.
III. PHYSICS.—A New Theory of Terrestrial Magnetism. By Professors PERRY and AYRTON. This theory makes the earth's magnetism depend solely upon the earth's daily rotation. Siebert's Projectile-velocimeter. Measures the velocity of projectiles thrown by firearms, and also the pressure exerted on the bottom of the gun and the distance traversed during the recoil. 3 illustrations. The same instrument may be used to determine the velocity of engine pistons, drop hammers, etc.
IV. TECHNOLOGY.—The Oxidation of Iron, and the Coating of Metals and other Surfaces with Platinum. By the processes of Mons. DODE. A paper read before the Society of Arts, London, by L. M. STOFFEL, C. E., with discussion by members. A possible substitute for galvanizing, annealing, and nickel plating. Cost about that of three coats of paint, or one-tenth that of nickel plating. Comparison of Barff's process. Slate Quarries of Monson, Maine. An extended account of the most promising slate quarries in the world. The superior quality of American slate and how the quarrying is conducted. Geology of the slate beds, peculiarities, purity, uses of slate. Foreign demand for Monson slates. The Vino-Colorimeter. A new method of testing and comparing the colors of wines, 4 illustrations.
V. AGRICULTURE, FOREST CULTURE, ETC.—France. Cork oak. Sweden and Denmark, Portugal and Spain. Our own forests. "Arbor Day." New Way to Sow Grain, as practiced in California. Aberdeen Cattle Exhibited at Paris. Large illustration of prize cattle. Alligator Perfume. Musk glands and secretions.

THE MENTAL REQUIREMENTS OF MODERN ENTERPRISES.

Formerly the art of war, statecraft, the bar, the pulpit, poetry, and philosophy monopolized the brains of mankind. In these professions and pursuits men of superior mental force found expression for their thoughts; and besides these there were few occupations likely to invite or to develop the higher order of minds. The magnitude, complexity, and scientific character of modern material enterprises—commercial, constructive, manufacturing, agricultural, and the like—have well nigh reversed the old state of things. The learned professions, so-called, no longer offer the only nor even the most inviting fields for intellectual effort; nor do they furnish the most effective means of mental development and culture. As an inevitable result, professional men no longer overtop their fellows in intellectual stature. Indeed it is sometimes asserted that the highest order of minds are now drawn to practical affairs, leaving to the professions only those of inferior rank. Relatively this may be largely true; yet it by no means follows that the leading men of to-day in the purely intellectual callings are in any way inferior to the average of their predecessors. They are tried by a higher standard; they are surrounded by non-professional men of a mental stature impossible in former times; and so, although really great, they seem relatively small. Many a soldier, statesman, jurist, priest, or writer, vastly famous in his day, owes his historic greatness rather to the littleness of his neighbors than to his own intrinsic nobility.

Speaking of the requirements of modern transportation, Prof. David Swing remarks that men are giving to railways now a mind which travel and carriage could never have thus diverted from learned pursuits when men journeyed on horseback or carried goods in pack saddles. In those days only a few boys who could feed horses, and a few drivers who could flourish a whip, were absorbed by the carrying business. The railway, with the pomp and circumstance of its engines and palace cars, its vast machinery and money power, now attracts and employs men who would have been Pascals and Newtons, and Wesleys and Washingtons a hundred years ago. The external management of the railway has created, he says, the "railway king" of to-day, who had and could have had no counterpart in the days of the pack-horse; and as a consequence we must admit that "the steam car diverts great brains, and places upon the railway throne men who would once have been princes in statesmanship, or literature, or religion."

"Of course," remarks Professor Swing, "to this statement the objection is ready that perhaps the railway is making men of large brains out of those who would have been only teamsters in the mountains or sleepy drivers along a canal. This objection is indeed valid; but after you have estimated it at its full worth, the feeling will yet remain that many of the modern material pursuits are so immense and attractive, that they are actually drawing away a brain power which in other circumstances might have found its way into the field of high statesmanship, or high thought, or into a broad and powerful pulpit."

The underlying sentiment of this complaint seems to be a vague and unreasonable fear that just so far as practical affairs call for and develop mental force and a high quality of thinking, statesmanship and philosophy and religion, and all the other purely intellectual pursuits, will be robbed of their supply of superior men. If the mental force of the race were a fixed quantity, and every great mind employed upon invention or transportation or other material pursuit must of necessity be diverted from statecraft, philosophy, or literature, there might be some ground for complaint—provided it were certain that invention and productive industry were less beneficial to the race than a correspondingly high order of closet thinking. But the mental force of a people is not a fixed quantity; and instead of diminishing the supply for any particular calling, every new calling which invites or develops a higher order of intellectual power or executive capacity practically increases the mental force available for all pursuits, ultimately if not immediately.

The circumstance that our preachers and politicians do not tower above the rest of men as they used to is no evidence that they are intellectually inferior, but rather that the common intellectual average of men of affairs is higher than it used to be. To manage properly a great railway, steamship line, manufactory, or to devise and develop a novel and useful industry, often calls for a wider range of knowledge, a higher grade of intellectual and moral force, than is needed to rule a state, command an army, compose a book of philosophy, or fill the loftiest pulpit.

THREE SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS.

Three notable feats of human effort and endurance have just been brought to successful issue. The first was of questionable utility in spite of the possible advantage of knowing the maximum capacity of the human frame for long-continued and severe exertion. In the six days' walking and running match, in London, ending April 26, the winner's score was 542 miles, beating by 21 miles the best previous record in a similar contest. During the first three days the winner, Brown, made 300 miles, a feat never before achieved. It is said that he left the track at the close in excellent physical condition.

The second achievement was also of doubtful utility. As a means of advertising his already sufficiently advertised swimming suit, designed for life saving in case of disaster at sea, Capt. Paul Boyton undertook last winter the terrible task of floating and paddling from Pittsburg to New

Orleans. The Ohio was full of ice when he started, and the venturesome swimmer was often in imminent peril from being crushed in the ice floes as well as frozen by the intense cold. The voyage of 2,342 miles was completed in 80 days, the voyager being reduced almost to a skeleton by the severity of his self-imposed task.

Of a very different nature was the splendid feat of the Sugar Notch coal miners, who, to rescue seven comrades—six men and a boy—buried in a mine, accomplished the great work of driving and timbering a passage way of 1,200 feet through rock and coal, mostly rock, in the brief space of four days and nights. The imprisoned miners were found alive and well, notwithstanding their confinement of five and a half days. The party had been shut in by the falling of some acres of mine roof, caused, it is said, by a reckless stripping of the supporting pillars of coal; and luckily the door boy, who had gone in to warn the miners of their danger when the roof began to give way, rode a mule, which the men killed and ate after they found they could not get out. There was plenty of pure water in the mine, and, though gas accumulated somewhat in places, a spot was found where the air was fairly good and it was safe to build a small fire for cooking their mule meat.

It must not be forgotten that the noble band of rescuers toiled with slender hope of finding their buried comrades alive. If the latter had not been crushed by the falling roof or drowned by water, there was a strong probability that they had perished by the fire which broke out in the mine when the roof fell, or had been smothered by the liberated gases of the coal. Yet the bare possibility of saving life urged the generous toilers on, and happily their efforts were rewarded by the highest success.

The men who planned and cut the relief drift were not surrounded in their labors by admiring crowds, like the contestants for pedestrian honors; they had not the almost daily "grand receptions," "ovations," and the like which gave the river swimmer an abundance of noisy notoriety and substantial encouragement. They were probably unconscious of doing anything specially commendable; anything more than any miner would do for a comrade in distress. Yet who will say that the achievements of Brown or Boyton, however plucky or enduring, were not trivial in comparison?

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT IN PARIS.

The application of the General Electric Light Company for a three years' concession of the lighting of a number of public ways in Paris was rejected by the Municipal Council, January 28; and it was decided, at the same time, that the city should no longer contribute pecuniarily or otherwise to the experiments of the company. The reasons for this decision are, in brief, the practical failure of the electric light to meet the wants of public lighting steadily, efficiently, and economically. In their report the Council express the conviction that electric lighting is still in a period of trials and tentative processes, especially as to the regularity of its working. The frequent number of extinctions and their duration require the maintenance of gas apparatus concurrently with the electric apparatus, thus complicating matters and increasing expense. Finally, the high cost of electric lighting does not allow of its adoption for public uses.

Very naturally the City Gas Company is much elated at the failure of what threatened to be a serious rival. In the annual report of the Council of Administration of the company, presented March 27, it is asserted that the electric light was unequal in intensity and color; in foggy weather its brilliancy diminished with distance much more rapidly than gaslight; and its sudden and frequent extinction made it incompatible with the requirements of a service so important as public lighting. This everybody knew; but not so many were aware that in the Avenue de l'Opera a steam engine of twenty horse power was necessary to supply the electric centers extending along 360 meters, and that the application of electric lighting to the 1,800 kilometers of the streets of Paris, at present lit by gas, would require a motive force of 100,000 horses, more than double the power employed in all the industries of the departments of the Seine and Seine-et-Oise united; and the street lighting represents only the ninth part of the gas lighting in Paris.

How far a report by the electric company would modify these assertions we do not pretend to say. Obviously, however, up to this stage of the contest the victory rests with gas. At any rate the officers of the gas company are confident that the gas industry has nothing to fear from electric experiments thus far conducted.

NEW PROCESS FOR PRESERVING AND ORNAMENTING IRON.

We recently published an account of the Barff process of preserving iron by forming upon its surface an enamel of iron oxide by means of superheated steam and a high temperature.

We have now to describe another process, discovered by M. Dodé, by which iron is not only preserved from rust, but its surface may be ornamented, so as to resemble gold or silver, all at a comparatively small expense.

In the Dodé process the iron article, cast or wrought, is first dried, and then dipped in or painted with a composition of borate of lead, oxide of copper, and spirits of turpentine, which soon dries on the surface of the article. The objects are then passed through a furnace and heated to cherry red, the highest temperature being from 500° to 700° F. At this heat the metallic pigment fuses, enters the pores of the iron,