

May Meetings.

During the first week in May the American Medical Association, the National Board of Health, and the Sanitary Council of the Mississippi Valley, were in session at Atlanta, Ga. Their meetings were largely attended. The epidemic of yellow fever last year, and its possible outbreak during the coming summer, naturally gave great prominence to questions relating to quarantine methods and general sanitation. The Medical Association chose New York as the place of its next meeting in June, 1880. Dr. Lewis A. Sayre, of this city, was elected president. The National Board of Health will meet again in Nashville, Tenn., next October.

The annual session of the American Institute of Mining Engineers was begun in Pittsburg, Pa., May 13. Over one hundred prominent metallurgists were present at the first session. The closing session was set down for Friday, May 16.

The sixth annual convention of the National Millers' Association began in Chicago, May 13, six hundred members present. In his annual address, the president, George Bain, proposed that the association be organized as a corporation on a legal basis for the purpose of carrying on suits regarding patents; that an attorney be appointed to look to the interests of the association as against the encroachments of patentees; that the success attending their efforts against the impositions of the Cochrane patent should encourage them to wage uncompromising warfare against the Denchfield patentees, and that a better system and practice of grading and inspection should be adopted.

The annual meeting of the Silk Association of America was held in this city May 13. The secretary reported that while there had been no great failures in the silk industry during the year, there had been, on the other hand, no instance of remarkable prosperity. The prices of silk have steadily declined during the year from 20 to 30 per cent, and in February fell lower than at any time during 30 years. More silk was consumed in this country last year than in preceding years, the imports being 38 per cent over those of 1877, and there has been a large increase in the receipt of raw silk from Japan and China. European raw silks have been cheaper than the Asiatic product. With the decline in the value of the raw material, manufactured goods have become cheaper. The lowering of prices and the absence of tariff excitements have also enabled manufacturers to make costly experiments and improvements during the year. The general tendency in woven goods has been toward work of the higher grade. The mills have been fully employed, but great expense has been incurred in the improvement and alteration of machinery. A decided advance has been attained in the production of dress silks, and more of them are made, and of a higher class, than ever before. If they are kept up to the standard there is every prospect of their displacing the loaded silks of Europe in our market by supplying a better and cheaper article. Nearly all the weaving mills are producing broad goods. The number of paying members of the association has been doubled during the year, and includes among its members nearly every silk manufacturer in the country. The following officers were chosen for the coming year: President, Frank W. Cheney, Hartford, Conn.; Vice-Presidents, A. B. Strange, New York, William Ryle, New York, Robert Hamil, Paterson, N. J.; Treasurer, S. W. Clapp, New York; Secretary, William C. Wyckoff, New York.

American Mutton.

We must be prepared to hear shortly that American sheep are subject to no end of hideous diseases, and that the use of American mutton is hazardous in the extreme. The exportation of sheep to England increases rapidly, and the profits of English breeders are seriously threatened. Something will have to be done; and we shall not be surprised if an epidemic of tape-worms, or something equally distressing, is soon reported among eaters of American mutton. It is not possible that American sheep can be wholly exempt from the numerous maladies to which all flesh is heir—when exported!

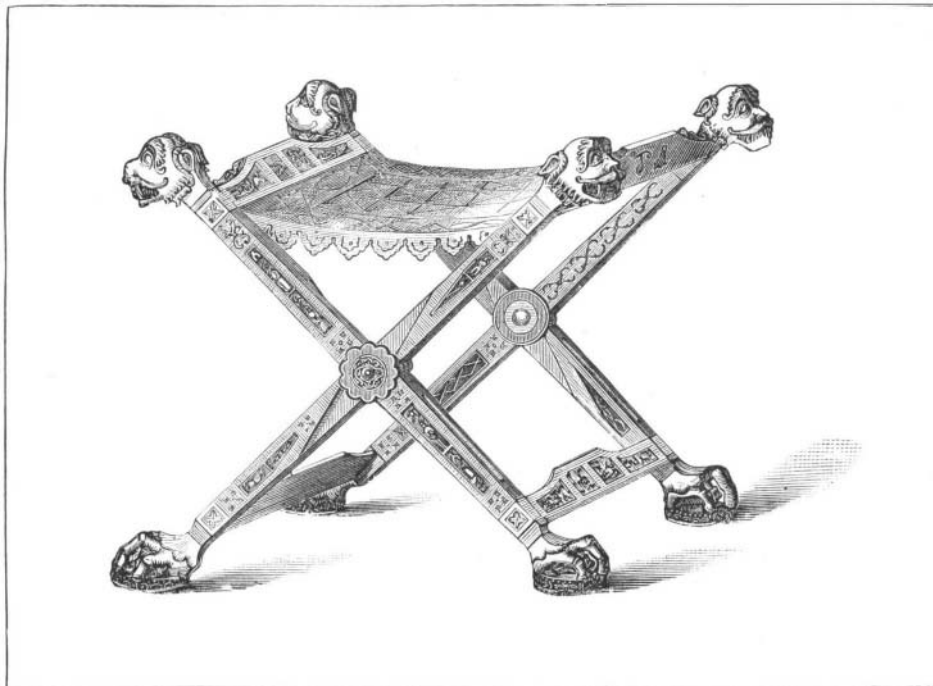
Quick Work with Wool.

The exploit of the English baronet, Sir Roger Throckmorton, has been bettered by an Austrian clothier. Sir

Roger wagered that between sunrise and sunset a coat could be made for him out of wool from the back of a sheep. Accordingly the sheep was sheared at dawn, the wool was dressed and dyed, woven into cloth, cut and made to fit before nightfall. An Austrian clothier has done all this in eleven hours, so that he really has outstripped the Berkshire baronet, who allowed himself from 4 A.M. to 9 P.M.

STOOL OF INLAID WOOD AND EMBROIDERED CLOTH.

The design shown in the accompanying engraving is by J. Androuet du Cerceau, who lived from 1515 to 1558. It contains grotesque masks and other fanciful decorations.



STOOL AFTER AN ELEVENTH CENTURY PATTERN.

Many choice works of this artist are known, his refined taste having a large share in the art embellishments of the Renaissance period.

BACON, in his instruction, tells us that the scientific student ought not to be as the ant, that gathers merely, nor as the spider, that spins from its own bowels; but rather as the bees, that both gathers and produces.

SPECIMENS OF TURKISH POTTERY.

The specimens of Turkish pottery shown in the engraving are of modern manufacture, but in strict resemblance



TURKISH POTTERY.

to the oldest ware produced at Gallipoli, near Constantinople. It is green and gold, and is almost identical with forms of pottery in common use in Persia and India.

The Oldest Mine Map.

Dr. Gurlt, a German metallurgist, who has devoted much attention to the study of the history of mining and metallurgy, exhibited recently, before a German society, a copy of what appears to be the oldest map of a mine known. It is the plan of an Egyptian gold mine from the time of King Seti I., or about 1,400 B. C. The original, drawn on papyrus, is at the museum of Turin, Italy.

Some Aspects of Labor.

Reports coming in from all parts of the country indicate a greater demand for skilled labor than has existed for several years. And the redistribution of labor during the years of depression threatens in some instances to work no little temporary inconvenience to reviving industries. From New England, for example, there comes the curious report that several cotton mills find it impossible to go on for lack of hands. A large number of the more thrifty and forehanded cotton operatives left the East for the West when work failed in the mills, and now cannot be recalled, having taken up farming on their own lands, or engaged in some other occupation. This readiness of American workmen to leave one calling for another when occasion demands is one of the most encouraging features of our industrial classes, since it prevents any long continued distress among any class of operatives, when their special business fails, and equally prevents any protracted lack of labor in any field when a demand for it arises. The New England cotton mills will not have to wait long for hands if they can offer the average inducements in the way of wages, and if they cannot do that it is evident that there is no urgent demand for their products, in which case the world will not suffer from their suspension.

The demand for unskilled labor, even in this city where the glut of day laborers was supposed to be greatest not long since, is manifestly quite up to the supply. On this score a city daily remarks in a recent issue:

"It is commonly supposed that there are thousands of destitute and unemployed working men in New York who are anxious to get work at any wages which will support them. The steamship companies, it seems, would be glad to find some hundreds of this presumed multitude. They have failed, although they required only unskilled labor and have offered at least the means of daily subsistence in return for it. How much of the apparent and undeniable destitution in this city is a real consequence of a real lack of employment, therefore, and how much proceeds from the habit of promiscuous almsgiving without inquiry and from the growth of a positively vagrant pauper class in this country, are questions worth looking into."

Touching the same general topic a well-informed Philadelphia paper says: "The iron and steel trade was one of the very first to succumb to the pressure of the times, but even that is now exhibiting more activity than at any previous period since 1873; other trades are doing even better, and the number of mills and works which remain shut down for sheer want of remunerative business are exceedingly few. That any should stop, however, for want of hands, is most remarkable, in view of some of the speeches that are occasionally made in Congress and out of it by the self-styled labor reformers. According to the statements of these gentlemen, there are at the present time in the neighborhood of a million industrious skilled workmen vainly seeking employment; but we are afraid that after deducting, say nine tenths of the number (as imaginary?) the other tenth is largely made up of the vicious tramps who vagabondize through the country to the terror of the agricultural population, and who would not work if they were ever so well paid for it. If work is wanted some of them can certainly find it among the mills of New England, which so greatly need operatives as to stop for want of them."

Existing and widely threatened strikes for higher wages still further testify to the increased demand for labor. How far these strikes will retard reviving industry and delay the better times coming for American labor remains to be seen. We are strongly inclined to believe that the good sense of the vast majority of our industrial classes will forbid their making haste thus to kill the industrial goose that is beginning to lay golden eggs, at the dictation of a misguided few who are determined to rule or ruin. Strikes are unprofitable at all times; at this stage of industrial revival they cannot be other than suicidal.

A SYSTEM of pneumatic tubes took the place of telegraph lines in Paris on May 1, for the transmission of messages from one part of the city to another. The charge is 50 centimes, or 10 cents, for open, and 75 centimes for sealed messages.