IRON AND WOOD GEAR-DRESSING MACHINE.

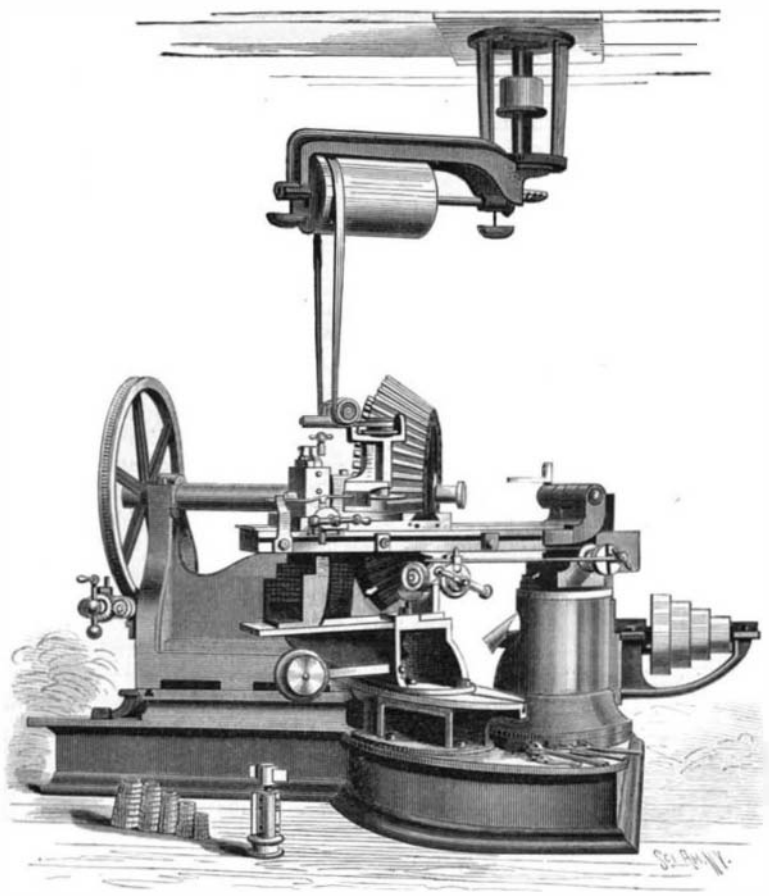
We give herewith an engraving of a novel machine recently patented by Mr. William Gleason, of Rochester, N. Y., for dressing the teeth of iron wheels and for shaping the cogs of wooden gears. The machine may be changed from iron to wood without any delay or change of parts. The gear to be dressed is chucked on the overhanging end of the spindle, the dividing wheel being on the opposite end. The tool holding the slide moves on a bar which may be swung to any required angle for bevels, and power is imparted to the gear-dressing tool by a belt from a drum on an overhead shaft that swings to accommodate the position of the bar that supports the tool slide.

The tool may also be readily adjusted to move parallel with the wheel supporting spindle for dressing spur gears. The bar is jointed both horizontally and vertically, so that it may follow a template or form at or near the outer end of the bar having the shape of the tooth to be dressed. By means of this arrangement the perfect shape of tooth for beveled wheels is secured. For spur gears the form is placed directly under the tool holder.

The movements of the slide carrying the tool are similar to those of a crank planer having a quick return movement. In dressing wooden gears both reciprocating and rotary motions are used, and in place of the ordinary tool, a bracket supporting a spindle and circular saw is carried by the tool holder. A quick rotary motion is communicated to the saw spindle from the overhead shaft by a belt, and the tool holder is reciprocated in the same manner as in dressing iron teeth. The machine does its work perfectly and very rapidly, as the saw cuts on the back stroke as well as on the forward stroke. The face and ends of the teeth may be dressed without rechucking the wheel.

It will be noticed that this machine shapes both wood and iron teeth without the use of expensive rotary cutters, and it has the advantage of making perfect teeth on bevel wheels, a thing impossible with rotary cutters used in the ordinary way.

We understand that this machine is in use in some of the largest shops in the country, giving good satisfaction in every case.

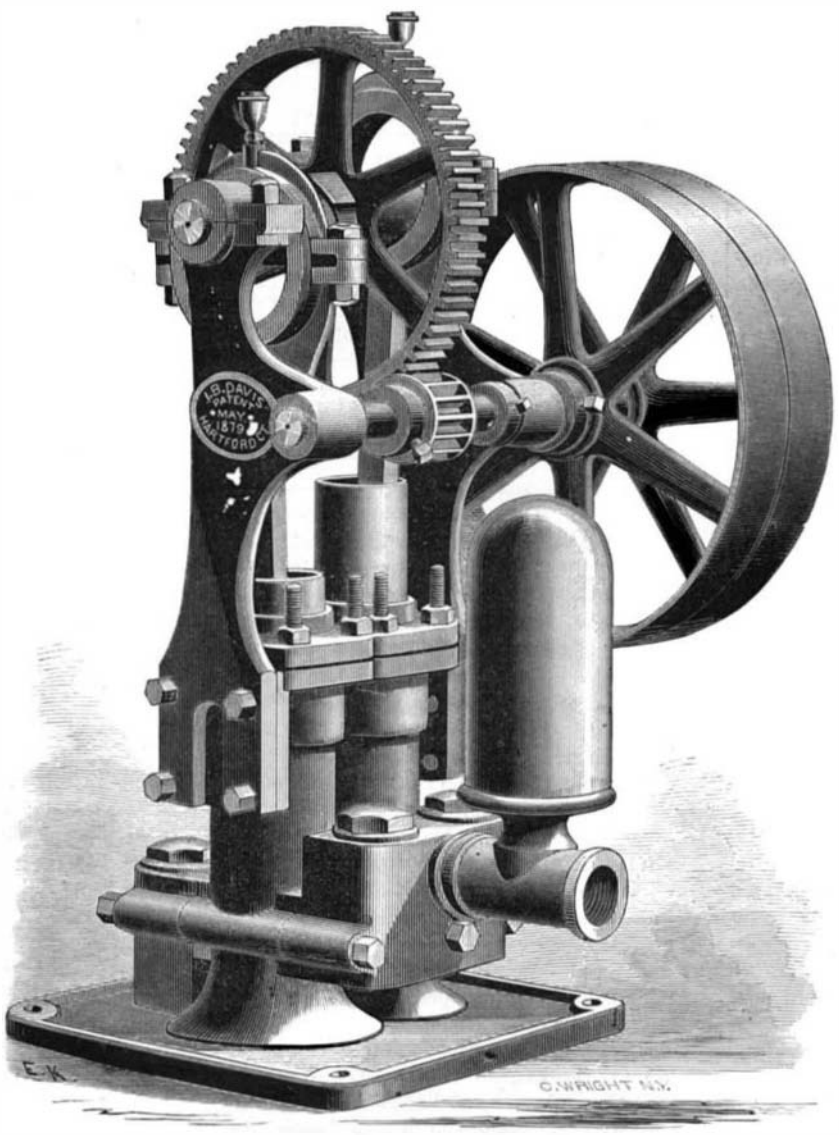


GLEASON'S GEAR DRESSING MACHINE.

IMPROVED BOILER FEED PUMP.

The accompanying cut represents an improved boiler feed pump patented by I. B. Davis, Hartford, Conn., May 29, 1879

It is an established fact that the most economical of all methods of supplying steam boilers with feed water is by the use of a pump driven by a belt, the economy being much greater than is generally supposed. The "Economic" boiler feed pump, as the inventor calls it, is designed to supply a want for a cheap, durable pump, economical in its workings, and not liable to get out of repair. As will be seen by the cut, it is a double pump driven by a single set of gears. All the parts are made very heavy and well finished. The valves, the only part that can wear or get out of order, are made separate and distinct from the pump, and are attached to it by bolts. They can be got at by unscrewing a brass cap, and in case of any accident a duplicate can be put in its place without disturbing any other part of the pump, as they are made interchangeable in all its parts. It is completed ready to run by attaching a water pipe to and from it, and putting on a driving belt. The gear being made from cut iron pattern, and the pump being double acting, make its action much smoother and quieter than other geared pumps. It is especially valuable in sandy water, as the valve can, if worn by the action of the sand, be ground tight in a few minutes by any one. We are informed that its cost is below other pumps of equal capacity. It is made by I. B. Davis, Hartford, Conn., who has offices at 92 and 94 Liberty Street, N. Y., and 43 South 4th street, Philadelphia, managed by H. T. Brewster; and at Boston, 36 and 38 Oliver Street, managed by R. B. Lincoln, Jr.



DAVIS' BOILER FEED PUMP.

The American vs. the British Miller.

A correspondent in the *Miller* (English) berates his countrymen for not being more fully alive to the causes which give the American miller pre eminence over the English miller.

While British millers, he says, are wondering at the ever-increasing importations of American flour, wasting both time and money in discussing various systems, with minds not always open to conviction, Jonathan has discovered a market for his flour under the very nose of the British miller, and has even converted the latter into his salesman.

The writer also refers to our worthy contemporary, the *American Miller*, where, he acknowledges, may be found instructive reading for old-style English millers who will hug their hesitation, deplore foreign competition, and seek for deliverance in every possible way but that of a genuine effort on their part.

"While admitting the serious nature of foreign competition, with strange inconsistency too many British millers cling tenaciously to old methods and machinery, and are wilfully blind to the more improved methods at their command. The equipment of British mills, as a rule, is much inferior to American mills, if we except a few of the largest mills in this country, which are a stride in advance of the latter. The interest in improved machinery here is *superficial* and its adoption *slow*, while the adversary, judging from the paper to which I refer, remodels his mill, improves his flour both in quality and quantity, and no doubt "calculates" on the indecision of the millers here, for some time at least, enabling him to make a small fortune. Ultimately finding us alive to the fact that we have lost ground, and increase our pace, he takes another jump ahead—not so thoughtlessly as may be supposed; on the contrary, his mind is more open to new ideas, and he is ever seeking the way to go ahead, while we pine for a corner in which we can lie down and feel snug. The relative advantages of new over older systems of milling are discussed in a very half-hearted and skeptical spirit by old-style millers; indeed there seems little hope that, without resorting to a surgical operation, some will ever be convinced. Unfortunately there is no recognized system of grading or testing flour, in this country, made under various systems and from certain wheats, both as to quality and quantity. There must, therefore, always be indecision, controversy, and little result, until some test of these systems that can be relied upon is made."

Sawmills Wanted in Brazil.

Mr. Maurice Mauris, the explorer of the Amazon, says that sawmills are much needed in Brazil, and that their establishment could scarcely fail to prove extremely profitable. In many cases, more especially on the Madeira, the current conveys the largest logs of excellent woods, which the sawyer would only have to capture and land. At Serpa, near the mouth of the Madeira, a Portuguese speculator built a sawmill, and the cedar carried down the river supplied his concern in five months with sufficient timber for a whole year's work. So well did his work prosper that this speculator was enabled to retire after a few years independently wealthy, although he had been assisted only by the rudest machinery and unskilled, intractable workmen. Though situated on the confines of a vast forest, Para consumes large quantities of North American timber, only a single sawmill existing in the city. A dozen boards of red cedar (a very common wood) cost about $30 at Santarem.

Useful Hints on Sewerage.

To sewer a town, and then leave house drains to haphazard construction, is simply little better than to waste the ratepayers' money. Comfort and means for health are only to be secured by the best house drainage, and the best house drainage will not be accomplished by builders working under no responsibility. The sewerage of a town or village will consist of waste water and excreta from the houses, and the volume, in round figures, may range from 100 to 250 gallons per day from each house. This volume will probably flow off in about eight hours, so that the sewers must provide for not less than three times this volume, if every drop of roof and surface water can be excluded. As this cannot in all cases be accomplished, the sewers should provide for not less than 1,000 gallons from each house, or, for a town of 1,000 houses (5,500 population), have a delivering capacity of about 1,000,000 gallons. An outlet sewer of two feet diameter, laid with a fall of five feet per mile, will deliver upward of 2,000,000 gallons, flowing a little more than half full; and, as provision should be made for an increase of population, a sewer of two feet diameter may be provided for each 5,500 persons, where no better fall than one in one thousand can be obtained. Lesser diameters will answer where there are no greater falls.

Towns situated on land rising considerably will best be sewered in zones; that is, by intercepting lines of sewers contouring the site, as such sewers will prevent gorging the low-level districts, and also prevent the rush of sewage down steep gradients at high velocities, which, in times of heavy rain, may burst the low-level sewers at the steep gradient junctions. Sewers with steep gradients, if the flow of sewage is unbroken, get up a velocity in the sewage, which is liable to be very injurious in its wearing action on the sewers. Sewage should not be allowed (except when flushing is in operation) to acquire a greater velocity at any state or time of more than six feet per second, as any higher velocity will take grit or other solids along the sewer invert with a cutting and disintegrating action rapidly destructive to the material of the sewer.—*Rawlinson's Suggestions.*

THE largest tree in the Southern States, a tulip bearing poplar tree near Augusta, Ga., is 155 feet high and 9 feet in diameter, its lowest branches being 55 feet from the ground.

The Missouri Tornado of April 14, 1879.

Dr. J. L. R. Wadsworth and Francis E. Nipher, Secretary of the St. Louis Academy of Science, have made and published a careful study of the tornado which wrecked a portion of Collinsville, Mo., last April. The storm reached St. Louis at 2 P. M. From this point it pursued an even course with the same velocity, reaching Collinsville, 10½ miles east, at 2:35; Lebanon, 21 miles east, at 3; and Highland, 29 miles east, at 3:30 (St. Louis time). It would seem that the necessary elementary conditions for the development of the tornado were found over the American Bottom, and that this development was purely local and did not extend much over ten miles, and had no apparent influence upon the general storm that was passing at a higher altitude to the eastward. The tornado consisted of a principal vortex, of very considerable power, accompanied by six collateral vortices, of much less power, that seemed to possess more than an incidental relationship to the principal; and a second principal vortex apparently independent in time and direction. The direction of the principal vortex was 15° north of east, and, while there was a probable swaying to the one side or the other, the paths of the vortices were in straight lines. The first four collateral vortices were *convergent* upon the path of the principal vortex, and the two last were *divergent*. The principal vortex was in contact with the surface while it was receiving the first four, and had left the surface before it gave off the last two collateral vortices. The height of the principal vortex was about 500 feet; the heights of the collaterals were comparatively small. The rotary spiral motion was in the direction opposed to the movement of the hands of a watch and of great velocity. The progressive motion was about one mile a minute. It had also a vertical or lifting motion, which was often quite abrupt. The path was narrow on the approach to Collinsville—about 100 feet, gradually widening—the vortex at the same time exhibiting less force. At the zinc works it was 600 feet wide. Its lifting power was sufficient to carry large roofs at least 600 feet high; this, with a power equal to the momentum of a body moving sixty miles an hour, would carry heavy *débris* some distance. The effect of these motions was to break up every object the whirl carried up with it; even lumber, taken up free from all contact with anything else, would come down, in many instances, in kindling wood.

In about half an hour after the vortex passed there was a return current from the north, accompanied with severe rain and hail and terrific electrical discharges. There was no thunder and lightning with the vortex, and very little if any rain.

The difficulty in obtaining exact and comprehensive information, from eyewitnesses, of what goes on in a storm of this nature is aptly illustrated by the following incident: A clear-headed and observant citizen of Collinsville, perceiving the approach of the storm, although some blocks distant, ran from a very dangerous position, and found himself only across the street, holding on to a loose stump, when the tornado passed over him. Afterward, while detailing the predicament he was found in, a bystander called attention to a large tree which had just escaped falling upon him. Looking at it for a moment, he quaintly remarked, "I never knew that tree fell there."

A New Weather Theory.

The Rev. Henry Roe, F.R.A.S. (Eng.), sends to the London *Times* a new theory of the weather. He claims to have determined by careful observations, covering nearly thirty years, that dry and wet periods succeed one another in alternate waves of nearly equal length. Not that this equality of duration is quite absolute, or that the wave of one period is exactly the same *facsimile* of that of a corresponding period at an earlier or a later time; but there is enough of regularity and uniformity about the waves to make the family likeness clearly discernible to any eye that looks for it.

These periods extend over three whole years for each, and the following simple rules will enable any one to work out the several cycles of years for himself:

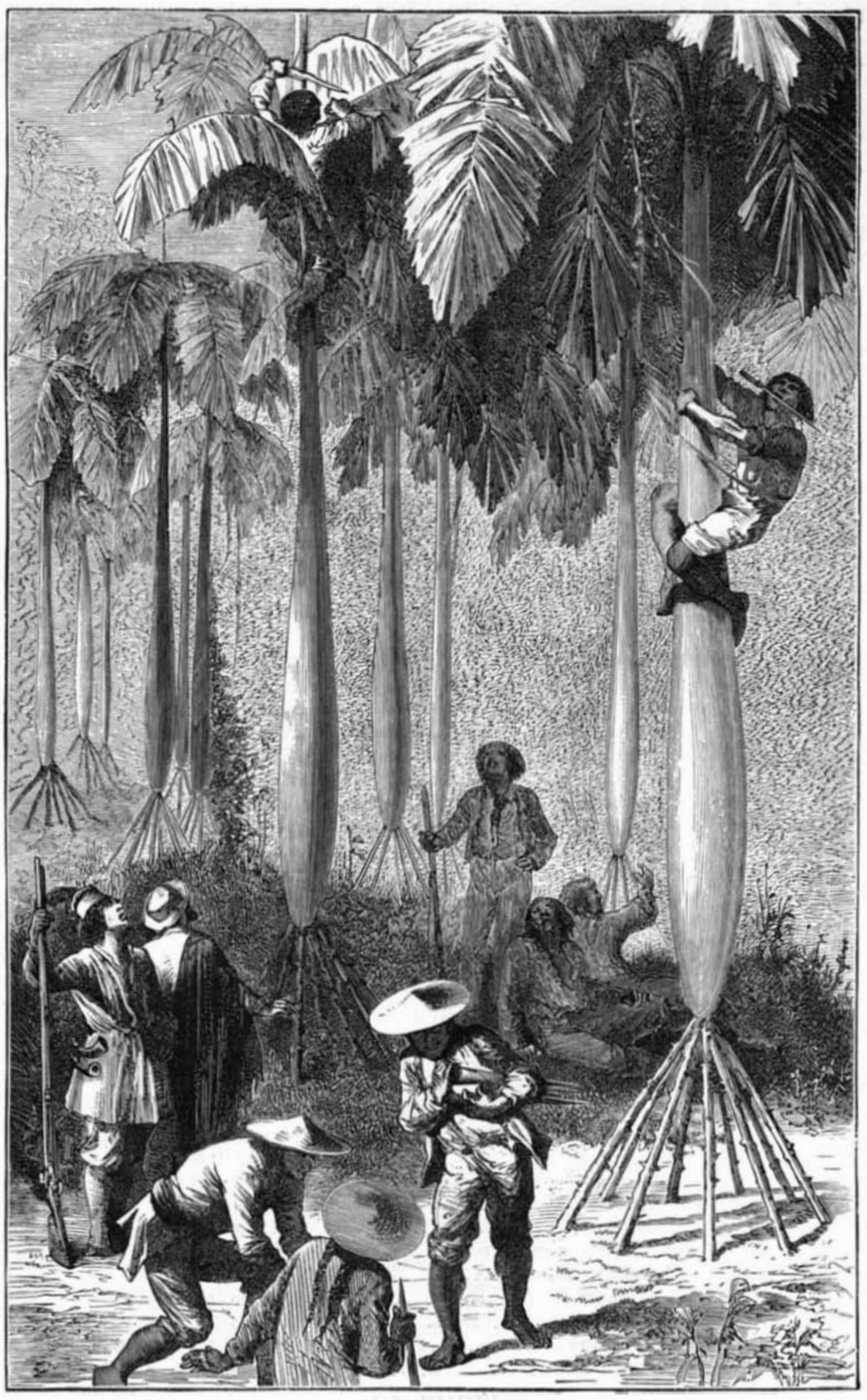
1. When the number representing any given year is even and exactly divisible by three, that year is the middle one of three cold and wet summers.

2. When the number representing the year is odd and divisible by three, then that year is the middle one of a triad of dry and hot summers.

After testing by these rules the successive seasons of the past twenty-seven years, and finding fact to conform to theory, Mr. Roe predicts that 1881 will be the middle one in a triad of hot and dry summers. What relations these dry and wet periods have (if any) to the recognized cycles of sun spots he has not made out; nor does an examination of recent seasons confirm the alleged harmony of theory with fact.

THE SWELLED TRUNK PALM.

The lower part of the trunk of this peculiar palm tree is swelled and supported from seven to nine feet above the ground by a number of radiating and inclined roots. These roots shoot out from the tree during the rainy season, and support it without aid from the main root, which finally disappears. The leaves are from 10 to 14 feet long. This tree is found on the banks of the Amazon. The illustration is copied from *La Vie Végétale*.



THE SWELLED TRUNK PALM.—*Iriartea Ventricosa Mart.*

An Explosion of Starch.

Nearly two years ago a violent explosion occurred in a candy factory in this city, causing the death of thirteen persons. The cause of the explosion was never clearly known, though the evidence pointed strongly to the starch room as the source of the disaster. A similar, but fortunately less fatal, accident occurred in another candy factory in Elm street, August 7, under conditions which leave no doubt that starch dust was the explosive material.

The explosion took place in a drying room on the second floor, where the temperature ranges from 140° to 180°. The drying rooms are 5 feet by 6 and 6 feet by 8 respectively, and are 12 feet high. In each is a furnace kept constantly red hot. The walls are built strongly of brick incased in wood. In the rooms are arranged slides for starch boxes, in which the candies enveloped in powdered starch are placed to dry. The small room has slides for 2,000 boxes, and the large room slides for 3,000. Four men were at work in the drying room taking the candies from the racks. One was on a step-ladder to hand down the trays to the others, who stood around the furnace. He had five trays in his hands, and was about to hand them down when his foot slipped on the step-ladder, the trays fell, and in falling turned over so that a heavy cloud of heated starch dust was thrown against the red hot furnace. The sharp explosion that followed shook the building and filled the room with a sudden flame. The intensely dried woodwork of the drying room caught fire instantly, and the apartment was swept by flames which threatened the entire building. The hands of the factory, however, attacked the flames and extinguished them before any serious damage had been done. The four workmen were severely but not fatally burned.

MECHANICAL INVENTIONS.

An improvement on what is known as the "slow" or bark tanning process has been patented by Mr. George King, of Washington, D. C. Its chief feature consists in alternately subjecting the skins or hides to the action of fresh tanning liquor, then raising them out of it and allowing the liquor to drip or drain off, and, lastly, conducting that portion of the drained liquor which was last in contact with the hides back into the leach to be again passed through the bark, and thus strengthened by taking up an additional quantity of the astringent principle or tanning agent. The apparatus consists of a rotating drum, in whose several compartments the hides are placed, and into which the tanning liquor is constantly fed, and from which it is being constantly withdrawn when its strength has become partly exhausted.

Mr. William H. Watson, of Cheshire, Ohio, has patented an improvement in hay presses which embodies several novel features that cannot be clearly described without an engraving.

Mr. James A. Webster, of South Boston, Va., has patented improved attachments for sawing machines, for converting a sawing machine into a planing machine at a small expense, so that the timber may be sawed or resawed and dressed upon the same machine.

An improvement in the class of wooden axle-skeins provided with a tapering extension for receiving the ends of the axle, has been patented by Mr. Philip Neder, of Stockton, Utah Ter. The improvement consists in hooks, by which the skein is secured to the axle, so as to prevent its endwise movement thereon.

Mr. Joseph V. Morton, of Winchester, Ky., has patented a door fastener that is adjustable to doors of different thicknesses. The invention consists of two handles pivoted to a common connection that extends through the door and connected at the top with a wedge piece that operates the latch. The handle on one side of the door is pushed to open the door; the handle on the other side is pulled.

An improved device for feeding paper to ruling machines has been patented by Mr. John S. Young, of Philadelphia, Pa. It is simple and reliable, and is capable of feeding the paper to the machines one sheet at a time or continuously. It may readily be adjusted to feed thicker or thinner paper, as may be required.

An improved machine for forming dovetailed veneer boxes, so constructed as to form the boxes out of seasoned veneer, has been patented by Mr. David F. Noyes, of Lewiston, Me. The machine, although very simple, cannot be explained without an engraving.

Mr. Harvey Smoot, of Maurertown, Va., has patented a washing machine that is an improvement upon the washing machine constituting the subject of letters patent No. 127,075. In that machine a reciprocating dasher or plunger alternately exerts mechanical pressure on the clothes, and changes their position by the force of the reactive flow of water. The improvement pertains to a trough-like support, receptacle, or holder for the clothes while being soaped, and after having been washed.

Improvements in the buckets of turbine water wheels and the devices for operating the gate ring and governing its movement, have been patented by Mr. Isaac Mallery, of Dryden, N. Y. The object of the invention is to increase the power and durability of the wheel and simplify its construction.