

Scientific American.

ESTABLISHED 1845.

MUNN & CO., Editors and Proprietors.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AT

NO. 37 PARK ROW, NEW YORK.

O. D. MUNN.

A. E. BEACH.

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 1881.

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PERPETUAL MOTION DELUSIONS.

We publish in another column sundry paragraphs relating to the zeromotor and other perpetual motions, among them a letter from Professor Gamgee. This communication is of interest, as showing that the Professor considers himself to be a persecuted saint and martyr, chiefly because he has, as he avers, supported himself and his schemes for the past two years.

It is a singular circumstance that such arrant deceptions as the Keely motor and the Gamgee motor should each have had for its godfather a prominent officer of the United States Navy. In the case of the Keely motor it was the former Engineer-in-Chief of the United States Navy, Prof. Charles H. Haswell, who supported the deception, in a report, from which extracts were given in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN of May 2, 1874.

In the case of the Gamgee perpetual motion, its claims to consideration rest mainly upon the report of Chief Engineer Isherwood, U. S. N., date of March 19, 1881, and published in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, date of May 21, 1881. We inferred from this report that the Navy Department had already expended some of its resources on Isherwood's recommendations, in pursuit of the Gamgee delusion.

Another singular feature of these twin deceptions is that they are both based (or were originally) upon the same alleged principle of operation. It was claimed for Keely's motor (see SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, June 10, 1876) that the vapor "does its allotted work upon the engine, is recondensed into its former state, and again becoming vaporized, starts again upon its mission of mighty pressure."

In Gamgee's motor the liquid expands into vapor, which acts against the piston; the vapor then condenses itself, and runs back to act again against the piston, and so on in one perpetual round or "cycle" of duty. All this, too, according to Prof. Gamgee and Chief Engineer Isherwood, "by the working of the machine itself."

An improvement on the Gamgee plan, suggested in the letter of a correspondent, elsewhere published, consists in the use of ammonia cream or jelly.

Another correspondent, whose letter we give, a young man without money or friends, wants help to develop his perpetual motion. Perhaps the Secretary of the Navy will give him the same facilities that he is now bestowing upon enterprises of this nature at the Washington Navy Yard.

We give, from Engineering, a letter from Mr. Kilbourn, in which he explains the frigorific dangers of using motors on the Gamgee principle, namely, liquefaction by expansion. May it not be possible that the last glacial epoch was brought about by a race of men now extinct, through the ill-advised use of too many Gamgee machines, they and their motors having become solidified?

POLARIZATION OF SOUND.

Professor S. W. Robinson has an article in the Journal of the Franklin Institute, the object of which is to show, by theory and experiment, that longitudinal vibrations, such as sound waves, can be polarized; and not only this, but also to show that it is irrational and improbable for vibrations in extended media generally to be primarily otherwise than longitudinal. All this is aimed especially at the "transversal theory" of light.

The phenomena of radiation, refraction, diffraction, diffusion, interference, and polarization are, with the exception of the latter, common to light and sound, and it is for the sake of explaining polarization in light that physicists have set up the theory of transversal vibration. It is, therefore, only necessary to polarize the sound to place all the known effects of luminous waves in common with sound waves, or to make the theory of longitudinal vibrations universal.

The results obtained by Professor Robinson establish the following facts for sound waves or for undulations: (1) A decided reflection occurs at a surface separating two gases of different density, confirming the views of Henry and Tyndall in this regard. (2) In repeated reflection from such surfaces the intensity of the final component varies with the relative

positions of those surfaces, the same following the laws of polarization in light, from which we conclude that longitudinal undulations can be polarized.

With sound polarized, we complete the list of effects for longitudinal undulations which are known to light, viz., radiation, shadows, reflection, refraction, diffusion, diffraction, interference, and polarization; and the laws are common for like conditions.

The conclusions to which the author has been led are summed up as follows: (1) Vibrations in extended media, produced from the action of a remote single center of disturbance, can only be longitudinal, even in light. (2) Vibrations will be to a certain extent transversal when due to two or more centers of disturbance not in the same line, as when two or more independent coexistent systems of undulations combine into one, or when a simple system is modified by such lateral disturbance as a reflection or a refraction. (3) Undulations, to be in a condition called polarized, must consist of vibrations which are transversal, and no necessity exists for assuming vibrations transversal in front of a polarizer.

ELECTRICAL PAPER.

Letter paper, well heated and rubbed briskly by the hand or a brush, acquires, as well known, electrical properties. It adheres to walls or other flat surfaces, and even gives, in contact with the hand, small discharges, which are visible in darkness. The Revue Industrielle points out a method of treating paper so that these electrical properties may be increased to such a degree that the sparks shall be of considerable length.

This paper, when laid upon a piece of oil cloth and rubbed very briskly, will exhibit very energetic properties, and with it, says the Revue, may be perfected nearly all the ordinary experiments in static electricity, such as the production of sparks, shocks, charging of the Leyden jar, etc.

Paper makers, as a general rule, know by practical experience that it is not difficult to get electricity into paper; and some of them would be glad to hear of some simple way to get the fluid—or what-is-it—out of the paper. We recently received a cargo of SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN paper that was so charged with electricity that the sheets would not separate without tearing, and we could not run them through the press. We were compelled to return the entire consignment to the maker, as its use was impracticable.

We believe that printers are more troubled with electricity upon their papers and presses nowadays than formerly. Perhaps it is due in some measure to the more common practice of running the sheets through the press in a dry condition. On the other hand, may not the rapidly increasing local uses of batteries and electric machines for telegraphs, telephones, lights, etc., yield such a superabundance of the mysterious element as to show itself in the press rooms?

The East River Bridge.

The work of laying the floor beams of the East River Bridge is now going forward quite rapidly. The manner of suspending these beams was illustrated in this paper a fortnight ago. There are now thirty-four beams in position on each of the land spans, and on the river span there are thirty-seven in position on both the New York and Brooklyn sides of the river. There are, therefore, one hundred and forty-two floor beams in position, or including the eight in the towers, one hundred and fifty in all.

Engineer Martin reports that three cargoes of creosoted yellow pine for the roadway of the bridge have been received. These beams, which are four and a half inches thick, will be laid directly upon the floor beams, and over them will be laid a covering of oak two and a half inches thick. The paving stones for the roadway are arriving in good numbers, and the work of paving will begin about the middle of June.

Flowers about Railway Stations.

For some years the Pennsylvania Railroad Company has endeavored to relieve the barren dreariness of the ordinary railway station by surrounding their country station houses with flower beds. More attention to this matter is being paid this year than ever before; and recently the company purchased 50,000 plants in this city for the adornment of the stations of the New York and Philadelphia division of the road. The practice is worthy of general imitation.

The Pepsine Treatment of Tapeworms.

The tapeworm is able to live in the stomach because of its ability to resist the digestive action of the fluids normal to the stomach. In a stronger peptic solution the live worm succumbs and is digested like any other flesh. Accordingly a French physician treated with strong doses of pepsine a child who had passed segments of a large tapeworm. About 45 grains of pepsine were administered daily for five days. The child experienced no harm and showed no special symptoms. Then a proper dose of sulphate of pelletierine with castor oil was given, and the discharges showed no signs of the worm. Subsequent experiments with vegetable pepsine—papaïne—which is much more active, are said to have given very promising results. One child passed fragments of tapeworm ten inches in length, softened and partially digested.