

on manufactured goods from England. I have also tried experiments with the points of scratch brush; also the positive end of a battery, with the goods hanging in a cyanide solution. This last gave me the best results, but is evidently not the thing. A "dead luster" is imparted to articles of copper or copper alloy by dipping them for a few minutes in a bath composed of—

- Nitric acid (36°)..... 20 pounds.
Sulphuric acid (66°)..... 10
Salt..... 1/2 pound.
Zinc sulphate..... 1/2

Mix the acids gradually, add the zinc salt, then the salt, a little at a time (out-of-doors to avoid the acid vapors), stir well together, and let it get cold before using; rinse thoroughly, and pass through the cyanide before putting in the plating bath. When such a surface is plated with silver it presents the frosted appearance required. Dead luster gilding is produced by the slow deposition of a considerable quantity of gold, by giving the metallic surface a dead luster before gilding (by means of acids), by first preparing a coating of frosted silver or by depositing the gold upon a heavy copper deposit produced with a weak current in a bath of copper sulphate. See "Electrometallurgy," in SUPPLEMENT, No. 310.

(28) O. P. inquires for a simple method of preserving iron surfaces without paint. A Captain Bourdon has devised simple forms of apparatus for coating iron with Barff's magnetic lacquer. In the course of his experiments he found that the coat of oxide could be formed by the air in the following manner: The serpentine part of a sheet iron reservoir communicates with air which is heated to 248° Fah. The current of hot air, after circulating through the serpentine, reaches the cylinder which contains the articles to be lacquered. The escape spout communicates with a water aspirator regulating the flow of air, which should be very gentle. The internal pressure is little more than one atmosphere, the apparatus being in communication with the open air. The temperature of the air in the cylinders is 536° Fah; the operation lasts five hours, giving a coat of 0.05 of a millimeter thick (0.002 inch), of a beautiful greenish black, resisting the action of fine emery paper and of dilute sulphuric acid. After the articles are taken from the cylinder they are rubbed with a greasy rag, and spots are removed by fine emery paper or scouring grass. Spots may generally be avoided by suspending the pieces, so that they will not touch each other or the walls. If the temperature is raised to about 573° Fah., a thick coat is secured, but it is apt to scale. Articles thus lacquered have been exposed to snow and rain for a month without getting any spots of rust. If the black coating is removed by emery paper, there is a grayish layer on which rust does not take much hold; the spots can easily be removed by a bit of hard wood. Barff has observed the same peculiarity in articles which have been steam-lacquered.

(29) E. M. B. writes: Will you please inform me, under Notes and Queries, of one or two best modern books on steam boilers? A. "Barr on Steam Boilers;" "Catechism of the Locomotive;" Forney; Wm. H. Shock, U. S. Navy, on "Boilers;" "Heat and Heat Engines," by Trowbridge.

(30) N. S. asks: Would it pay to work a mine of pure mica, if in large sheets, with say \$15 or \$20 freight per ton to San Francisco? A. See article on Mica and its Utilization, page 257, current volume.

(31) W. G. R. writes: In the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, dated December 14, 1878, on page 371, you describe a small foot lathe with directions for making the same. If the holes, instead of being babbitted, are bored, and the bars forming the shears are turned, and I should make my own turning and boring, what do you think would be the probable expense of making such a lathe? A. The materials would cost from \$5 to \$6.

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

N. F. W.—It is a silicious clay of fair quality. An analysis such as you require would cost \$5.

[OFFICIAL.]

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AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

[Those marked (r) are reissued patents.]

A printed copy of the specification and drawing of any patent in the annexed list, also of any patent issued since 1866, will be furnished from this office for 25 cents. In ordering please state the number and date of the patent desired and remit to Munn & Co., 37 Park Row, New York city. We also furnish copies of patents granted prior to 1866; but at increased cost, as the specifications not being printed, must be copied by hand.

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