ENGINEERING INVENTIONS.

Mr. Walter L. Phelps, of Wortendyke, N. J., has patented an improved railroad torpedo. The invention relates to the construction and shape of the plate to which the torpedo is attached, and to the provision which is made for attaching two or more torpedoes on one plate, so as to insure an explosion.

Mr. Arthur G. Leonard, of New York city. has obtained a patent for an improved railroad signal which consists in a novel mechanism by which when a danger signal is set the same mechanism by which the semaphore is raised will deposit a torpedo upon the track. In this way a double safeguard is provided, for in case the engineer from any cause fails to observe the semaphore his attention will be drawn to the signal by the exploding of the torpedo.

A very simple and inexpensive steam whis tle has been patented by Mr. Frank McCabe, of Providence, R. I. The steam is admitted into the steam chamber by depressing an ordinary check valve, and the said chamber is provided with a longitudinal slot for the escape of the steam. By increasing or diminishing the size of this slot different tones may be produced in the whistle, and in order to enable the size of this aperture to be varied the inventor has provided the whistle with a movable lip plate which may be adjusted in the desired position.

Mr. John Houpt, of Springtown, Pa., has patented an improved compound feed pump for steam boilers. In this invention the force pump which sup- Ill., which is an improvement on one for which letters plies the water to the boiler has combined with it an patent No. 188,379 were issued to him and Mr. W. H. which with longitudinal riders are held securely by auxiliary pump, with check valve between them, the auxiliary pump being arranged between the first named | frames carrying the harrow teeth and suspended side pump and the heater, and both pumps working simultaneously in like directions to produce an artificial pul- | vertically. Each frame acts independently of the sation and overcome any undue back pressure in the cylinder and supply pipe. This invention is an improvement upon a patent granted to same inventor in of the entire harrow and of the driver seated upon it. August, 1882, and the especial feature of the improvement consists in using elongated plungers in the pump instead of pistons with valves in them.

--+-MECHANICAL INVENTIONS.

Mr. William Lane Hutson, of St. Lawrence, N. C., has patented a lever wagon brake, the simple mechanism of which keeps the brake applied to the wheel without effort on the part of the driver, and by which the brake is instantly released by a movement of the lever precisely like that which engaged the brake. thus greatly simplifying the operation of the brake.

Mr. Joseph W. Davis, of Port Jefferson, N. Y., has obtained a patent for a very efficient road scraper. This scraper is mounted upon wheels and is so arranged that the scraper may be raised or lowered by means of a windlass, so as to avoid any obstructions that may be in the way, and so that the machine will not do any work while passing from place to place.

Mr. Matthew Newlove, of Grand Island, Neb., has patented an improved chain saw, which is especially adapted for cutting mortises. This invention consists in an endless chain composed of links or sections having teeth or cutters at their outer edge, and united together by pivotal connections, and driven by a sprocket or notched wheel, with which the chain saw engages.

A new lever cotton and hay press is patented by Mr. Thomas G. Holloway, of Boston, Ga., in which two combined levers act, the long ends of the levers being connected and moving through the same arc, the radius of which is greater than that of the shorter, unconnected ends. An immense advantage is thus gained over any toggle lever whose unconnected ends are extended from each other.

An improved grinding attachment for valves has been patented by Mr. A. Wells Case, of South Manchester, Conn. The invention consists in a valve head constructed with a square recess in its face to receive the square end of a rod which slides longitudinally through a stuffing box in a screw plug oppo- for the standard, by which the wear of the holder on site the face of the valve head, thus enabling the engineer to grind the valve heads to their seats without removing them from the valves.

An improved flour and meal bolt has recently been patented by Mr. William Mosher, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y. In this machine the coarse particles are separated first instead of last, as in the ordinary revolving bolt, and in consequence the large flakes which commonly cover the meshes, and prevent the escape of the finer particles will be disposed of at first, whereby the separating will be greatly expedited and facilitated.

An improved evaporator is the subject of letters patent recently issued to Mr. T. L. West, of Palatine, Ill. The improvements consist in the construction and arrangement of the evaporating pan, the means of supplying the sirup to the pan, the means of regulating the application of theheat, and for the management and action of the sirup, and the separating of pan. The inventor claims it is more economical in the applied to an ordinary gate. The inventor of this device use of fuel and is better in its application of heat than is Mr. Bernard Selting, of Dyersville, Ia. the evaporators now in genaral use.

Mr. John Spengler, of Clarion, Iowa, is the patentee of a car mover adapted to move railroad cars by means of a lever power applied to the railway track at one end, and to a frame beam of the car at the other end. The lower end of the implement grasps the head of the rail by means of jaws and a chisel edgedlever, and the upper end is attached to the floor beam of a car. A horizontal lever with connecting bars is used to to regulate the rapidity of the descent. work the device, and it may be used attached to the middle of a car instead of at the end, as the operator stands outside of the track.

An improved annealing furnace has been patented by Mr. Daniel G. Barnard, of Winslow, N. J. In this furnace the machinery is very simple and is designed to reduce to a minimum the breakage of the glass while it is being carried through the tunnel. The glass rests upon a series of parallel bars while a secondary set are so arranged that they may be raised between the stationary set, and thus will carry the glass

once more upon the stationary set, and then are moved as before. The invention consists in the improved ar- through. The gate is further arranged so that it may rangement of the mechanism.

AGRICULTURAL INVENTIONS.

Mr. G. W. Hunt, of Muscatine, Iowa, has patented an improved wheel plow by which the driver can instantly adjust the depth of the plowshare without leaving his seat, and without interfering with the management of the team. The plow beam holding the share may be raised and lowered, and will be held rigidly in any position by a very simple device that is self-locking, and that may be disengaged by the movement of a simple lever.

Messrs. Louis C. Rummel and Emil J. Fiedler, of Ledbetter, Texas, have invented a new and structed in two sections, only one of which is swung useful improvement in self-packing cotton presses, the open under ordinary circumstances, but the whole beobject of which is to facilitate the baling of cotton as it ing so arranged that in case the opening is too parrow comes from the gin. The invention consists in a cotton press constructed with a pivoted double baling box, a pair of rolls and their driving mechanism for packing over which pass ropes arranged conveniently, so that a the cotton into the baling box automatically, and a person riding or driving in a wagon can open the gate screw driven follow block for compressing the $\ensuremath{\mathsf{cotton}}$ into bales.

A combined harrow and clod crusher has Kuhn. The machine consists of a series of independent by side from a common rod or bar on which they swing others, thus adapting the harrow to unevenness of surface, and clods are broken up by the combined weight

MISCELLANEOUS INVENTIONS.

sinks has recently been patented by Mr. C. R. Turner, of Brooklyn, N. Y. It consists of a suitable brush or scraper for collecting the refuse in the sink, combined with a shovel for scooping it up.

Mr. Elijah Tolman, of Taunton, Mass., has invented an improved form of spoons and forks intended to retard the wear at the convex portions of the articles. Instead of more heavily plating these portions or of forming projections at their points, he flattens the portions slightly, so as to give greater area of wearing surface, without disfiguring the spoons or forks.

When wash tubs are packed for transportation there is often some difficulty in getting them in compact shape, owing to the awkward shape of their handles. Mr. W. H. Parrish, of Richmond, Va., has avoided this objection by an improved metallic handle made of such a shape that the sections of the tub may be packed with the greatest facility,

Mr. J. W. Page, of Rollin, Mich., has patented a wire lock which relates to locks for worm rail fences, in which wire is drawn around the rails to prevent the fence from being blown down or from being pushed down by animars; also provision is made for A SUMMARY OF THE LAW OF PATENTS FOR tightening the lock from time to time, as shrinkage or wears may render necessary.

A patent has recently been issued to Mr. F. S. Gulick, of Bolivar, N. Y., for an improved stove pipe holder, which consists of an extensible hanger and an extensible hoop, contrived in a simple arrangement for suspending stove pipes from the ceiling in a better way than by the wire suspenders commonly employed.

An improvement in table casters for holding condiment bottles is the subject of a patent by Mr. Orin F. Bacon, of Taunton, Mass., which provides an anti-friction bushing, or collar, for the holder, or the pintle and the consequent rattling of the caster FINLAND: ITS FORESTS AND FOREST MANwhen turned are obviated, and the durability of the AGEMENT. By John Croumbie Brown, caster is greatly extended.

A fire escape has been patented by Mr. Richard E. Andrew, of Shepherdstown, West Va., which is intended to lower, by weights, one or more ladders from the eaves of a building to the ground. The entire mechanism, and the ladders themselves (which are flexible, being made of jointed rods or plates), are located in the attic of the house, and the ladders pass out through openings under the eaves, the openings being closed automatically when the ladders are wound up.

A gate has recently been patented which is provided with a long arm, so arranged that by raising this arm the gate itself will be raised in the post rails upon which it is hung. This enables the gate to demerits of the practice as now pursued in France. be swung out readily in snowy weather, and the invention recommends itself on account of its simplicity ministration, protection, exploitation, and the kinds of ministration, protection, exploitation and the kinds of ministration and ministration

Mr. P. T. Forsyth, of Memphis, Tenn., has patented a portable fire escape which consists of a helt. held to the end of a rope passing over a pulley, and through a sleeve of pliable material provided with a flap. The flap is passed around the strands of the rope when a person is using the fire escape, which sleeve aud flap are pressed more or less firmly against the strands of the rope, to increase or decrease the friction, so as

Mrs. Augusta Netzner, of New York city, has patented a very strong suspender end. This suspender end is provided with a cord between the two strands of each strap, which cord has its lower end secured at the lower end of the strap, and its upper end secured to the upper part of the strap. This cord is thus made to bear the greater part of the strain and the ends thus rendered exceedingly durable.

Mr. William Gosshorn, of Waterloo, Pa., has obtained a patent for a very convenient gate for use all the rules laid down are illustrated by examples where pedestrians and horses and carriages are likely worked out in plain arithmetic. The language is well forward a certain distance when they deposit the glass to pass. This gate is hinged at one end and at the end, chosen, simple, and direct.

apposite the point where it is hinged is provided with back again to the position they were in at first, and a sliding section, so that foot passengers will not be then the glass will again be raised and carried forward compelled to open the whole gate in order to pass be raised at its hinges in order that it may be swung out readily even if the ground be covered with snow.

> Mr. Emil C Eyl, of Jefferson City, Montana Territory, has patented a combined folding fire escape and ladder, the platform or fire escape being a net work frame of iron or steel, hinged against the house in such a position that when lowered it forms a platform just helow the window sill, a chain ladder at the same time unfolding from it to the ground. When not in use the ladder is folded into the frame and the frame is turned up against the wall of the house and secured to the window sill.

> An improved gate has been patented by Mr. J. L. James, of Forsyth, Ill. This gate is conthe two gates may be swung open as one. Further, a long crossbeam is provided carrying pulleys at the ends without being compelled to alight.

Mr. Lorenzo D. Cather. of White Pigeon. Mich., has patented an improved "stake and rider" been patented by Mr. Samuel Miller, of Moweaqua, fence for farms, the supports of which are two braces crossing each other, with a vertical binding stake wires, forming a fence so rigid that it may be moved bodily without falling apart. It has no stakes or posts inserted in the ground, but the leaning stakes may rest upon blocks or stones. It may be put up by unskilled labor and may be made close enough to keep out sheep, dogs, and other small animals.

Mr. Edward A. Hemphill, of Elizabeth, N. J., has invented a new and improved memorandum book, having its covers stitched to each other a short distance from the back, forming a pencil pocket along A simple and efficient device for cleaning the back of the book. Preferably both covers are made in one piece, and the pocket is formed by stitches a short distance from the back, and the book is then pasted to the covers. The pencil in the pocket stiffens the book and prevents it from being doubled over or bent, and does not interfere with using the book and turning the leaves, and is entirely out of the way when

> Mr. Walter S. Bishop, of New Haven, Conn., has obtained a patent for some improvements relating to polishing wheels. The object of this invention is to construct polishing wheels in such a manner that they will not become changed in shape from dampness, and will be strong and durable, and Mr. Bishop accomplishes this by providing the emery wheel with a metallic rim and with a Web of peculiar form, and in covering the rim of the wheel with a leather band and covering this band with a second band cemented thereto, and sewed together at the ends. A wheel thus constructed will not be changed by swelling or warping.

NEW BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS.

Useful Inventions, with Forms. By William Edgar Simonds, Hartfort, Conn. New York: L. K. Strouse & Company, 95 Nassau Street.

This is an enlargement of a volume issued by the author as a manual in 1874, which combined the laws relating to the issuing of letters patent, and the compilation of rulings under the law as it then existed. The present volume may be considered a compendium of patent law and patent law practice, being intended, not only as a guide to patentees, but as a help to patentees' attorneys. The volume, which is neatly bound in sheepskin, is provided with a copious index which enables it to be used as a ready reference book.

AGEMENT. By John Croumbie Brown, LL.D. Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh; Simpkin, Marshall & Company, and William Rider & Son, London; Dawson Brothers, Montreal.

The first fifty pages of the book are taken up by descriptions of the lakes and rivers of the country, but a serious mistake was made by omitting an examination into the relations they bear to the climate. This branch of the subject was treated very cursorily. The old practice of clearing the land by burning the forests, the custom being known in Finland as Svedjande, is described at length, together with the methods pursued in other countries, and a discussion of the evils following the practice in India and an account of the merits and trees. Avaluable account is given of the school of forestry, its management, method of instruction, and work it accomplishes; and also of ship and house building, and industries in which wood is made use of. The last part of the volume treats of the physical geography of Finland and its flora, fauna, and climate. The author has contributed a valuable book to the literature of forestry, and his work clearly shows much study and an intimate acquaintance with the labor of those who have preceded him in similar paths.

PRACTICAL CALCULATOR. By D. B. Dixon. D. Van Nostrand, New York City. Price, \$2.00.

The author, recognizing the need of a rudimentary manual for the use of machinists and steam engineers. has succeeded in producing a book admirably filling the want. The ground is very thoroughly covered, and yet no useless subject is admitted. Algebraic formulas and technical phrases are entirely avoided, and

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Straight Line Engine Co., Syracuse, N. Y. See p. 220. Lightning Screw Plates, Labor-saving Tools, p. 220.



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Persons desiring special information which is purely of a personal character, and not of general interest, as we cannot be expected to spend time and labor to paper which may be kept for use without curling, and obtain such information without remuneration.

Any numbers of the Scientific American Supple MENT referred to in these columns may be had at the office. Price 10 cents each

Correspondents sending samples of minerals, etc. for examination, should be careful to distinctly mark a label their specimens so as to avoid error in their ident fication.

- (1) H. W. writes: I have some gutta percha chips: how cau I soften them and then make them hard again, like gutta percha buttons? A. Soak the fragments in hot water. It will quickly soften them, and they will become hard on cooling.
- (2) J. R. H.—The ordinary solid bluing consists of indigo and starch, or of artificial ultramarine. To make liquid bluing the following is a good receipt: Powder one ounce Prussian blue very fine. add it to one quart of very pure water, to which add one-fourth of an ounce of oxalic acid. This is very powerful. The oxalic scid is poison.
- (3) O. T. asks: Can you give me a formula or two for brilliant, quick drying furniture polish? A. The following will dry in a moderate time: 4 ounces shellac is dissolved in 2 pints strong alcohol; to this is added pints linseed oil and 1 pint spirits of turpentine. When mixed, add 4 ounces common ether and 8 ounces ammonia water. Apply with a sponge. For French polishing, shellac varnishes are often used. The followeach 1 ounce, copal varnish 12 ounces. Alcohol 1 galand do not filter. This is for use in French polishing, which involves rubbing in with a rubber.
- (4) W. L. T. asks for a receipt for gilding and silvering on wood. A. The wood must be coated with size. To make this boil half a pound parchment shavings with three quarts of water, constantly stirring. This gives a clear solntion of gelatine, which must be passed through a sieve. Paint over the wood with this, and while it is still moist apply gold or silver leaf or Dutch metal. Much manual skill is necessary, and you should see the exact details practiced by a gilder. You copal varnish and painting it with the mixture. Finalgold paint may be bought all ready for use and this will probably give you the most satisfaction.
- (5) E. G. H.—To prevent the rotting of seines, we would suggest the use of raw linseed oil, applied to the seine while it was perfectly dry.
- (6) A. R. J. writes: How can I remove pressed in one-sixteenth of an inch? Can the indentation to renew the muslin or leather covers of old books? or porcelain surface. This must then be revarnished. Also can the stains of dampness, mould, or other discolorations be removed from the cover and leaves? A. The impressions on the outside of the book cannot
- (7) D. J. P. asks: 1. Is there any solvent It depends on what kind of ink the bottles held. of coal tar other than heat or "dead oil"? A. Turpentine, naphtha, kerosene, benzine, and many other siming pastel pictures durable, or will they fade after a lar liquids will dissolve coal tar. 2. How may the odor of coal tar be destroyed or disguised? A. It is extremely hard to remove or disguise its odor, as we have found by experience.
- (8) T. F. asks (1) what two colorless or nearly colorless liquids when mixed will become black. A. Mix a dilute solution of copperas with an infusion of nut galls. 2. What colorless or nearly colorless vegetable or mineral solution will become dark by contact with a metallic solid, and what metal will effect the change? A. Mix a dilute solution of nickel sulphate with a very little hydrochloric acid and add sulphide of ammonium. A piece of metallic zinc will neutralize the acid and cause a black precipitate of sulphide of nickel which will color the solution before settling out
- (9) E. C. S. writes: 1. I have a lot of surgeon's isinglass adhesive plaster which is not very proof against water or moisture. What should I apply

to the silk side to render it entirely waterproof, so won't wash off when slightly wet? A. After applyin it give it a coat of shellac dissolved in alcohol, or coa it and the skin surrounding it with collodion. 2. Wha is the liquid used on muslin drilling, or cotton duck t make it waterproof, and fit for coats, horse and wago covers, etc.? It gives the material a slightly yellowis tint. A. Linseed oil.

- (10) H. C. W. writes: 1. Please give us i "Notes and Queries" the formula for a good liquid shoe dressing; one that will not injure the leather an C. B. Rogers & Co., Norwich, Conn., Wood Working which will give a luster without rubbing, and which will also answer for harness? A. Many receipts are given We give the following, as it contains no oil of vitriol, and can be tried cheaply. Ivory black, 1 pound; molasses 34 pound; sweet oil, 2 ounces. Mix well and rub to gether, then add beer, 1 pint, vinegar, 1 pint. Also se SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, Vol. 48, No. 10. 2, Can you als give the formula for Day's liquid blacking, an Englis preparation? A. The formula for Day & Martin' English blacking is thus given: Fine hone black is mix ed with sperm oil until a thorough mixture is effected Sugar and motasses is mixed with a little vinegar, and added to the mass. Oil of vitriol is next added, and when effervescence has ceased vinegar is poured in un not given; they probably run about as follows: Bon black, 1 pound; sperm oil, 1/4 pound, or enough to mix molasses, 1 pound; oil of vitriol, 1 pound; vinega enough to secure proper consistency.
 - (11) C. F. S. asks: Is there any way we can keep glue from getting thick after reducing down very thin? What can we put in it to destroy the offensive odor while cooking? A. Add acetic acid to the glue This will keep it liquid and tend to overcome the odor Try also muriatic acid or acetate of lead; both ar
- (12) E. Bros. ask if this is intended to should remit from \$1 to \$5, according to the subject, make a first class mucilage for gumming large sheets of stick well on glass or other substances when wet, viz. paste or glue for paper labels:

Starch	2 drachms.
White sugar	1 ounce.
Gum arabic	2 drachms.
Water	q.s.

Dissolve the gum, add the sugar, and boil until the starch is cooked. A. This seems to be a good paste Try the following, said to be that used on postage stamps: Gum dextrine, 2 parts; acetic acid, 1 part Water, 5 parts. Dissolve in a water bath and add alco hol, 1 part.

- (13) J. W. R. asks how to make green japan for tin, such as is used on toy cups, bird cages, etc Say what ingredients to use, and how to mix? A. Color the japan green by adding a mixture of King's yellow (or other good yellow) and Prussian blue: also try ani line greens.
- (14) F. W. writes: 1. Will you please answer the following questions, and oblige: At what de gree of heat will platinum melt.? A. 4,5910 Fahr. 2. Has it a clear ring like silver? A. It is not nearly se sonorous as silver. 3. What is it worth per pound? A
- (15) L. R. G. writes: I forward you with this a sample of white quartz sand from a deposit in this State. Would you inform me whether the sample is of a kind suitable for fine glass manufacture, and also is good: Shellac 2 pounds, mastic and sandarach, of if it is likely that the sand would find a market as a commercial article if suitably prepared? Would you lon. Make in the cold in a stoppered can or demijohn, also acquaint me through the Scientific American what are the requirements of manufacturers in their choice of sand for different classes of articles, and wherethe most suitable are found in this country? A. The value of sand for manufacturers in general consists especially in its freedom from iron. The sample you send seems very pure and well adapted for glassmaking. Correspond with some of the large glass factories, and send them samples if they ask for them.
- (16) G. W. H. writes: Will you please inform me in your answers to correspondents how steel plate engravings can be transferred to vases and other may also gild wood by mixing bronze powder with articles for ornament. Some method by which the ink can be softened and transferred to any kind of hare surface? A. Varnish the surface to which the engraving is to be transferred with copal or dammar varnish. After it has dried for six hours and is still sticky, wet or soak (if necessary) the engraving, using soft water for the purpose. Then press the engraving well npon the varnished surface, carefully avoiding the formation of bubbles. Let the whole dry perfectly (which will the gold gilt and name from the cover of a book that is take a day more). Then with a wet sponge and the fingers and soft rubber wash off the paper in pieces, tion be entirely taken out? Also, is there any prepara- and the lines of the engraving will be left upon the glass
- (17) A. A. R. asks: Can you give a process whereby empty ink bottles can be sufficiently cleaned, A. The impressions on the outside of the outside of the outside of the removed. It would also be very difficult or impossible to remove the discolorations you speak of.

 So that they may be about all the bottling and preserving catsup, table sauce, etc.? A Muriatic acid followed by water will answer we think,
 - (18) A. G. asks: Are the colors used in maktime? A. Most of the colors are very permanent.

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AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE. [See note at end of list about copies of these patents.]

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