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CELEBRATION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF NATURAL GAS IN FINDLAY, O.

Natural gas in its minor manifestations has been known for many years, and has on the smaller scale been used for lighting since a very early period. But its application on the large scale to the arts as a perfect fuel is comparatively new. The honor of this achievement belongs distinctively to America. In its introduction to the glass house and steel works, it is correctly stated that a new era in the progress of the state and nation has been marked.

In its applications of natural gas to the arts, Ohio has made great progress. In that State and in Pennsylvania, industries have been revolutionized, the clouds of smoke from bituminous coal fires have melted away, and a new excellence of product has followed from the introduction of natural gas. The anniversary of its introduction into the city of Findlay being now at hand, the matter has been taken up by the city. With a view to celebrating this important epoch, the people of Findlay, through the Chamber of Commerce, have decided to commemorate the first anniversary of the practical application of natural gas to the mechanical arts in their city. The celebration is to be held on June 8, 9, 10, under the presidency of the Hon. William Vance. The programme is an extensive one. It includes the laying of corner stones of new industrial establishments, driving the silver spike on the Findlay electric railway, competitive drills, processions and fireworks, and other features. Speeches by various distinguished men, a banquet, and ball are also comprised. The anniversary promises to be a notable event in the history of natural gas development.

THE DEFENSE OF THE HARBOR OF NEW YORK.

Some months have passed since we suggested as a subject for thought and work by our readers the defense of the harbor of New York. The problem is, unquestionably, a live issue. The richest city of America is now defenseless and exposed to the attacks of any foreign power. Little or nothing could be done in the regular way to defend it. If the emergency arose, we would have to utilize the passenger and freight vessels which we now possess. With these much could be done. Pneumatic tubes for throwing dynamite torpedoes could be arranged on the ferry boats, as suggested by Lieut. Zalinski. Yet there is room for much thought in studying the application of our present means to defense.

Our weakness is in the want of means. Our navy is now in process of construction, or, at least, its foundations have been laid. In the naval science of the day, we have still much to learn of foreign nations. The science of sailing vessels is distinct from that of steamers. In old times we led the world by the superiority of our ships. But, with the abolition of sails and the introduction of steam, the situation tends to be reversed. Every week brings news from Europe of some triumph, real or imagined, in naval architecture. The day has come when the fighting vessel must have speed. This quality was never so essential as at the present day. The foreign powers show continually a fuller appreciation of the fact.

The recent purchase of the liner America by the Italian government, and the building for Italy and other powers of fast torpedo boats in the private ship yards of England, prove how much stress is laid upon the speed of war vessels. In ordering the building of vessels for our own navy, this point has not been overlooked, as premiums for excess and penalties for deficiency in this quality enter into the contracts. Gratifying as this action is, the question of how America actually stands in the capacity for producing fast ships may be a subject for serious investigation. A reasonable doubt may be entertained in the matter. Five years ago, high speed had a very different meaning from what it now possesses.

The speed of torpedo boats constructed in England has been attaining a higher standard each year. Every few weeks a new speed is chronicled, until recently a velocity of thirty miles an hour over the measured mile is claimed. By the side of a boat capable of such speed, our government launch Stiletto would seem slow.

Experience, and of a very costly kind, is required to arrive at the points necessarily followed in fast steamers. England is supplying the other powers with these vessels, and her builders are acquiring their skill and experience at the expense of foreign governments. But in case of war, their yards will be in the best possible condition to build the same vessels, or better, for their mother country.

The people of the United States have always proved themselves great in their power of rising to emergencies. They are not only inventive, but possess the power of inventing quickly. This power they may yet be called upon to exercise. It would seem better if they were allowed to begin now the attack upon the problem of the construction of fast ships of war.

In this connection a suggestion of great importance was made at the meeting of the New York Chamber of Commerce on June 2. Mr. Ambrose Snow, the Pilot Commissioner, proposed that the city authorities of

New York and Brooklyn should unite in building a fleet of ten steam rams, to be used in case of necessity for the defense of New York harbor. When built, he proposed that they should be kept in reserve at the Navy Yard, and in case of necessity they could be manned by the crews of tug boats. There was much that is excellent in his suggestions. If the cities could find no authority for expenditures for such a purpose, our merchants, as a matter of insurance, could readily raise the necessary funds. The vessels once provided, the tug boat fleet would provide most competent sailors and engineers. These vessels, in their daily cruises, run many miles out to sea in the most tempestuous weather. For defensive service they supply as good a stock of material and school of seamen as did the whaling ships and bank fishermen in old times. If the patriotic merchants were to unite and build a successful fleet in short time, and if the vessels proved efficient, there is every probability that the United States would be glad to acquire possession of them as members of its new navy.

In the organization of such a scheme, and in designing the vessels, the enterprising business man and the inventor could work hand in hand. In this field the room for invention is unbounded, and the government could do no better service to the people than in encouraging every such movement as the one we have spoken of.

Hints to Swimmers.

"When the bathing season arrives," remarked a natatorium professor the other day, "we'll hear of the usual maximum of drowning cases, and among them, as usual, a fair share of expert swimmers. The chief reason why good swimmers are so often drowned when they are accidentally thrown into the water is because the shock causes them to lose their presence of mind. The loss of presence of mind leads to paralysis of body, or to such wild exertions as accelerate drowning, instead of contributing to preservation. The ability to behave wisely in case of sudden accidents can only be acquired by experience, just as everything else has to be acquired. The theory of the matter can be taught in swimming schools, but the practice must be acquired by experience. Hence, in some of the European swimming schools, says the Hebrew Journal, the pupils are taken out boat riding and purposely upset, as though the upsetting were accidental. They are also suddenly pushed overboard, and subjected to all manner of prepared accidents, so as to accustom them to acting in emergencies. In this way they learn how to behave in case of real accidents, and are protected against the loss of their presence of mind on occasions of danger on the water. They are also taught to have faith in the sustaining power of the water itself. They get to know that the water will sustain them if they will only render it the least help.

A finger laid upon an oar, or the gunwale of an overturned boat, or a board, or almost any floating substance, will sustain the human body in calm water. Persons who have been properly taught, and have acquired the habit of acting with self-possession in the water when they are upset, do not attempt to climb upon the overturned boat, but simply take hold of it and quietly support themselves. A boat half filled with water, or completely overturned, will support as many persons as can get their hands upon the gunwale, if they behave quietly. In a case of accident, a person who understands and acts in accordance with these facts would stand a better chance of being saved, even if he were a poor swimmer, than an expert swimmer would stand who should lose his presence of mind.

Eight Hours a Day.

In his recent very sensible address to workmen in Boston, Edward Atkinson said, respecting the proposed eight hour system: "If you cut down the work in factories, in workshops, and in the building trades, to eight hours, you cut down the product. Then there will be fewer goods, fewer stores, fewer tools, fewer houses, and that means a higher price and higher rent." This is the doctrine that has been steadfastly preached in our columns for years past. The proposition to try to make men richer by reducing the hours of labor, and so reducing the amount of wealth created, is as stupid as would be a scheme for enlarging a water power by cutting down the mill dam.—Textile Record.

Aluminum-Silver Alloy.

Alloyed with a small per cent of silver, aluminum loses much of its malleability, but with 5 per cent of silver it can be worked well, and takes a more beautiful polish than the pure metal. With 3 per cent of silver it is very suitable for philosophical instruments, being harder and whiter than the pure metal, and is not tarnished even by sulphureted hydrogen. With small amounts of silver, it appears very suitable for scale beams, and is now frequently used for this purpose. The alloy containing 5 per cent of silver has often been suggested for coin of small denominations, as it is hard, bright, and retains its luster in handling.