

RECENTLY PATENTED INVENTIONS.

Railway Appliances.

FISH PLATE.—Thomas A. Davies, New York City. The object of this invention is to provide a frictionless and rigidly attached plate, in which all the wear will be sustained by keys interposing the plate and flange of the rail, which keys may be readily detached and replaced, the plate being capable of expeditious and convenient attachment to or detachment from a rail. The same inventor has likewise obtained another patent on fish plates, in which the construction is simple and economical, the plates being combined with an inserted table and wedge, whereby they will be effectually held in essentially rigid contact with the rail, both laterally and vertically.

SECURING RAILS TO SLEEPERS.—Karl Louis Gocht, Chemnitz, Saxony, Germany. Combined with a rail and an inverted U-shaped sleeper, having an opening in its top, is a chair projecting through the opening from beneath, together with a frame beneath the rail, and means for locking the frame to the chair, the device dispensing with the use of bolts, spikes, and wedges, as with ordinary wooden sleepers.

NUT LOCK FOR RAIL JOINTS.—George C. Illingworth, Raritan, N. J. This is a device especially adapted for use with railroad rails, and which, when applied to the joints, will not be loosened by the vibration of the rail, and will also provide against the spreading of the rails, while obviating the necessity of tightening the lock nuts daily.

CAR COUPLING.—James A. Morse, Fort Bowie, Arizona Ter. In this coupling a standard is attached to the drawhead provided with a friction roller engaging with the pin, while a lever arm is pivoted at one end in the upper front surface of the drawhead, and there is a link connection between the upper end of the pin and the lower extremity of the arm, the device being designed to work automatically.

Mechanical.

FEED WATER COCK.—Henry D. Medrick, Port Jervis, N. Y. This a cock specially adapted to receive water in its passage from the tank to the boiler, whereby the water will be effectively strained, and the sediment automatically washed out by the water supply.

MOTOR.—William R. Bell, New York City. A sleeve or shaft to be driven is formed with recesses in which are mounted pawls, rings with internal ratchets being arranged to be engaged by the pawls, while bands are connected to the rings and to a pawl, the object being to provide a simple motor for light running machines, such as sewing machines, etc.

ADJUSTMENT OF SHAFTS.—Benjamin A. Dobson, Bolton, Lancaster County, England. This invention is for enabling the accuracy of the adjustment and the concentricity of the main cylinder and its shaft in carding machines to be readily tested and determined, in compensating adjustments for wear.

Electrical.

ELECTRIC MOTOR.—Frederick Yeiser, Tampa, Fla. A shaft is journaled eccentrically in a series of coils, and a series of armatures arranged around a cylinder at equidistant points, a corresponding series of circuit-operating cams being carried by the shaft, while circuit making and breaking levers are adapted to be operated by the cams, the object being to construct a simple motor in which the power will be developed by the oblique approach of the armature to the center of the helix.

Miscellaneous.

COAL CONVEYER.—Gustavus L. Stuebner, Long Island City, N. Y. This invention relates to a conveyer for depositing coal in bins, so that wagons and carts may be loaded from a trap at the bottom of the bins, a series of buckets or receptacles being supported on a track and adapted to be moved beneath a hopper or spout and over the bins, automatically depositing their contents in the bins.

BURGLAR ALARM.—Neil McIntyre, Brooklyn, N. Y. This is a device to be screwed on the inner face of a door or window, and has a piston rod to be drawn out to a contact with the edge of the door, with an arm held between the door jamb and its contiguous edge, a cap being so placed that on the opening of the door or window a spring will be released to explode the cap.

LAST BLOCK FASTENER.—William Cook, New York City. Combined with a last body is a last block having a longitudinal slot and a counter-sink at the outer end of the slot, a flattened head being held to the last body by a fixed nail or screw, the head being adapted to be turned independently of the nail or screw to bring it wholly within the longitudinal slot of the last block, or transversely thereto, the invention being an improvement on a former patented invention of the same inventor.

SHOE VARNISH BOTTLE.—John Hoerle, Brooklyn, N. Y. This bottle has a neck with lateral apertures to receive the ends of the thumb and forefinger, and a transversely compressible tube located in the neck, combined with a stopper having a wire to which is attached a sponge, whereby superabundance of the liquid may be squeezed out of the sponge as it is being withdrawn from the bottle.

SAFETY BURNER.—Joseph Mason, New York City. This device provides for the automatic shutting off of the supply should the gas go out or be blown out, and consists of an attachment having a gas passage in which there is a valve controlled by a spring and a diaphragm, the diaphragm forming one of the walls of an air chamber arranged in close proximity to the burner tip.

GAS GENERATOR.—Samuel McIlvaine, Oakwood, Ontario, Canada. This invention provides a

retort having an open top and a central bottom elevation, a vertical cylinder being set on the retort and having a gas exit pipe, while a steam and oil pipe pass down through the cylinder and connect with a funnel which partly incloses the central bottom elevation, the apparatus being simple and adapted for household use.

ENGRAVING.—William S. Eaton, Sag Harbor, N. Y. This invention relates to machine engraving on metal, and consists in producing a series of engraved pattern plates, each having a fragment only of the design, but collectively forming the complete work, the plates being successively used in transferring the design to the article to be engraved.

CORSET BUSK.—Isaac Levy, Newport, R. I. This busk is formed of a number of wires connected together to constitute a light, stiff busk, which will be flexible laterally as well as longitudinally to adapt it to the movements of the body, and to take the place of other forms of busk in one piece, such as those made of flat strips of steel, whalebone, etc.

WALL PROTECTOR.—Roldin S. Robbins and Alphonzo H. Broad, Berkeley, Cal. This is a device adapted to be secured to the backs of chairs, sofas, and other pieces of furniture, and consists of a combined base plate and roller-supporting arms formed integral from a cast or stamped blank, the protector being adapted for use upon a vertical or inclined surface, in each case conforming to the line of the wall, from the globular shape of the roller.

GATE.—Cornelius C. Epp, Bradshaw, Neb. This is a gate particularly adapted for country roads, the gate swinging between from a hinge post and a latch post to a stop post, both the latter being provided with spring catches, and the gate being adapted to be operated by a rope or cord extending to some distance at the side of the road.

GRATING.—Donald McDonald, Louisville, Ky. This grating is composed of round bars of metal gained and intersecting each other, couplings covering the joint, and is especially adapted for the use of jails, in fences and other work.

BINDER.—Asa K. Owen, Lake Geneva, Wis. This is a temporary binder for holding bill and letter heads, in which the upper surface will be of the same level as the paper held by the binder, and in which the paper may be readily introduced in the binder and firmly held in the position of use.

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN BUILDING EDITION.

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1. Elegant plate in colors, showing elevation in perspective and floor plans for a dwelling costing four thousand dollars. Page of details, etc.
2. Plate in colors of a summer cottage for one thousand two hundred dollars. Floor plans and page of details.
3. Design for a bank building, with plan and view of interior.
4. Perspectives and floor plans of an elegant residence at Bell Haven Park, in Greenwich, Conn. S. Edwin Tobey, Boston, Mass., architect.
5. A mountain cottage lately erected at St. Cloud, Orange, N. J. Elevation and floor plans. Architect Mr. Arthur D. Pickering, New York.
6. A dwelling at Springfield, Mass. Plans and perspective elevation. Cost eight thousand five hundred dollars.
7. Engraving showing perspective elevation of a cottage erected at Roseville, N. J., at a cost of six thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars. Floor plans. F. W. Ward, architect, New York.
8. Illustration and floor plans of a combined school house and country cottage erected at St. Cloud, Orange, N. J. Arthur D. Pickering, New York, architect.
9. A residence at Springfield, Mass. Perspective elevation and floor plans. Cost three thousand five hundred dollars. J. D. & W. H. McKnight, architects.
10. A cottage built at Roseville, N. J., for six thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars. Elevation and floor plans.
11. A cottage at Holyoke, Mass., lately erected for Howard A. Crafts, at a cost of three thousand one hundred dollars.
12. View of Auburndale Station, Boston and Albany Railroad, with plan of station grounds. H. H. Richardson, architect.
13. Miscellaneous Contents: The final payment clause in building contracts.—The plan.—Bending wood.—The Stanford tomb.—Experiments with cement mortar.—The railroad in horticulture.—The improved "Economy" furnace, illustrated.—The Academy at Mount St. Vincent on the Hudson, N. Y.—Wrought iron and cement lined pipes, illustrated.—Sheathing and lath combined, illustrated.—Artistic wood mantels.—A new ventilating furnace, illustrated.—Creosote wood preserving stains.—Large trees.—Rotary cutting tools for working wood, illustrated.

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Notes & Queries

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References to former articles or answers should give date of paper and page or number of question.

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(832) W. F. B. writes: I have worried for some time over a musical paradox, and although my communication is somewhat lengthy, I hope you will kindly shed some light on my difficulty. The conditions I am to assume will no doubt seem ludicrous, but although not practical to demonstrate, I think they are theoretically possible. It is this: We will assume we have one thousand violoncellos, all of which are tuned with absolute precision, the string on any one of them corresponding exactly in pitch with the same string on any of the others. Now, according to the principle of sympathetic vibrations, if we vibrate the note "a" on one instrument, the other nine hundred and ninety-nine will respond loudly, and with increased loudness caused by the influence of so many instruments upon each other. If we now place upon the "belly" of one of them a one pound iron weight (the instrument being in a horizontal position), and vibrate with a bow a certain note, the belly will vibrate and the weight be agitated and moved. This we can readily demonstrate with a single instrument. Now, if we had placed a similar weight on each of the one thousand, would not all have been moved by their sympathetic vibrations? If so, we have moved one thousand pounds, which represents an expenditure of energy greater than was used to cause the vibration of the first instrument, and therefore a creation of energy. A. Each weight might be moved a very little, but the total work expended in moving them would not equal that expended in vibrating the original string. Again, it is an error to assume that the multitude of instruments will cause each individual one to vibrate more loudly than the first. The effect of so

many is simply to absorb and reabsorb vibrations from the first, which else would have gone through space without being caught by sympathetically tuned strings.

(833) R. B. M. — Emulsions prepared with ammonia are very sensitive. See Abney's book on photography with emulsions. Gelatino-chloride paper is referred to. It may be printed out or developed. Chrome alum is introduced in the emulsion to make the film withstand heat. The following hydroxylamine developer is recommended:

No. 1.
Pyrogallol..... 437 grains.
Hydroxylamine chloride..... 60 "
Water..... 12 oz.

No. 2.
Sodium sulphite crystals..... 2 oz.
Sodium carbonate..... 4 oz.
Water..... 12 oz.

To develop, add one drachm of Nos. 1 and 2 to 2 oz. of water. We think the spots on the paper were due to acid silver bath.

(834) E. W. E. K. asks how the inner surface of a hollow glass sphere 12 to 18 inches diameter, such as are frequently met with in Europe, in parks and public places, used as reflecting mirrors for the surrounding objects and landscape, could be successfully covered by amalgam of tin, etc. (silvered). A. The following receipts are given for coating glass globes: a. Take 1/2 ounce of clean lead, and melt it with an equal weight of pure tin, then immediately add 1/2 ounce of bismuth, and carefully skim off the dross; remove the alloy from the fire, and before it grows cold add 5 ounces of mercury, and stir the whole well together, then put the fluid amalgam into a clean glass, and it is fit for use. When this amalgam is used for silvering, let it be first strained through a linen rag, then gently pour some ounces thereof into the globe intended to be silvered; the alloy should be poured into the globe by means of a paper or glass funnel reaching almost to the bottom of the globe, to prevent its splashing the sides; the globe should be turned every way very slowly, to fasten the silvering. b. Make an alloy of 3 ounces of lead, 2 ounces of tin, and 5 ounces of bismuth; put a portion of this alloy into the globe, and expose it to a gentle heat until the compound is melted; it melts at 197° Fah.; then by turning the globe slowly round an equal coating may be laid on, which, when cold, hardens and firmly adheres. This is one of the cheapest and most durable methods of silvering glass globes internally. For either process the globe must be very clean.

(835) Gillem, Barrie, writes: I am successful in lining underground cisterns for rain water against leakage by using Portland cement. I have tried the same plan in coating with Portland cement the walls and floors inside some cellars under dwelling houses, and cannot prevent a leakage from outside, although finished inside equal to a cistern lining. Can you or any reader of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN kindly explain the trouble and suggest a remedy? A. You cannot secure perfect tightness by cement alone. The floor must have a layer of asphalt or equivalent concrete either above or underneath the Portland cement concrete. If the latter is made thick enough, very little water will pass. As regards cisterns, if after they are perfectly dry you were to paint them with melted paraffin wax, it would do much to secure them, but if properly made and free from cracks, the leakage through Portland cement mortar properly backed should be imperceptible.

(836) H. P. S. asks (1) for the simplest way to obtain oxygen gas. A. Ignite in a retort a mixture of one-sixth part binoxide of manganese with three parts chlorate of potash. 2. How to keep it. A. Do not keep it, but make it on the same day it is to be used. You can collect it in India rubber bags or in a gas holder. 3. How to direct a stream of the gas through a spirit lamp on to a ball of quicklime. A. Expel it through a fine one-sixteenth inch nozzle from the bags or gas holder by placing weights thereon, and hold the nozzle just outside of the margin of the flame. It will act as a blowpipe. You can procure from the dealers apparatus for making the gas as you use it, and properly constructed alcohol burners, etc.

(837) "Mere Sham" asks (1) for a good method of coloring meerschaum pipes. A. Smoking tobacco in the pipe is the best method of coloring. They can be stained by wood-staining processes, but unsatisfactorily. 2. How to boil one. A. They are boiled by immersion in hot beeswax. It should be done by a qualified person.

(838) W. P. asks (1) how to soften paint brushes which have become hardened by paint drying on them. A. Soak in turpentine or benzine and renew the fluid occasionally. 2. How may they be kept soft when not using? A. Wash out thoroughly with turpentine or benzine after using, or if this is objectionable keep them in water. This will exclude oxygen or air, without which oil paint cannot dry.

(839) F. E. H. asks (1) for a receipt for making gunpowder. A. Pulverize separately nitrate of potash 75 parts, sulphur 10 parts, charcoal 15 parts, all by weight. Mix them with water and continue the pulverization for a long time, keeping it moist. Then roll out into thin cylinders and allow it to dry, when you may break it up into grains. 2. Also if saltpeter and niter are the same? A. Yes.

(840) N. M. asks if there is any case on record of spontaneous combustion under any circumstances in cotton waste or rags wet with kerosene oil. A. We know of no such case, and doubt its probability. Were such a case reported, we should suspect the presence of some other oil or fatty substance.

(841) J. Q.—The sample of water is probably charged with sulphate of iron from decomposition of iron deposits. We doubt if it has any value.

(842) W. H. S. asks: What chemicals, if any, mixed with water will produce a combustion or evolve gas if heated? A. Sodium in warm water will float on the surface, evolve hydrogen gas, and will catch fire and burn on the surface. It is very dangerous, generally exploding toward the close of the operation. Magnesium decomposes hot water, with evolution of