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No. 750.

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THE COPYRIGHT BILL FAILS TO PASS.

resentatives by a vote of 126 to 98 disproves the assertion so often made in certain quarters that the sentiwas asked to make it a law.

be a publishers' bill, and to be strongly opposed to the seven yards. this side the ocean at all.

was due to the action of Mr. Payson, of Illinois, by three yearly crops of cotton. which was struck out the provision that foreign books should be printed in the United States to obtain a copyright.

But was it not logical and reasonable to divest it of was to benefit authors?

The promoters of the measure have all along maintained that the author has as clear a right to the possession and free disposal of the work of his brain as the producer of any other kind of marketable merchandise. They insisted that it was dishonest to take a market, would have given him leave only on condition from the already fruitful cotton plant. that he accepted the terms of publishers on this side the water. How he would be in any wise bettered by such an arrangement it is hard to see; how the cause of that international honesty of which so much has been said would be advanced by such an arrangement, is equally obscure.

To the ordinary mind the bill which has been defeated looked simply to self-interest, to the interest of a small class of the community, to wit, to the publishers, as against the many. It would, in fact, have tended to raise the price and consequently restrict the sale of the reprint, that boon to hungry readers. If that was not the aim of the promoters of international copyright, it would assuredly have been the result of the measure they sought to have made a law.

A FIBER FROM COTTON STALKS.

The result of the formation of the jute bagging trust has been to array against it the powerful Farmers' Alliance, now numbering, it is claimed, over two million members in the South and West. When the trust was first formed, the price for bagging was advanced from seven to twelve and fourteen cents a yard, though the price since then has fallen very much from the latter figures. The Southern planters requiring bagging for their cotton made up their minds on no account to make any purchases from the jute bagging trust, and some of them, in order to keep this vow, have used other bagging which entailed a net loss of a dollar on every bale sent to market. The high price of jute bagging, as well as the bitter war between the planters and the trust, have greatly stimulated the production of substitutes. Pine needles, bear grass, palmetto, and Spanish bayonet fibers have all been employed, but

stalks by means of a breaker. It is said, however, that The defeat of the copyright bill in the House of Rep- | the bark can also be stripped off by hand, or the stalks may go through the machine in their natural state, and the rollers will do the work just as thoroughly. The ment of the public is growing more and more favorably main feature of the fiber-producing machine consists in disposed to the measure, for, remembering that the the forward and backward movement of the rollers, vote on the measure last session was almost a tie, it which action separates the fiber while the water underwould seem that longer consideration of its merits has neath washes out the glue. The advocates of the new increased rather than lessened the opposition to its process claim that they can pay \$2 a ton for cotton passage. Nor will the fate of this bill appear unde- stalks delivered at railroad stations, and make from served, when its characteristics and intent are criti- them a bagging which can be sold at 71/2 cents a yard, cally examined. It purported to be an "authors'" bill. a price at which they claim jute bagging cannot be In their name it was drawn up, in their name Congress, manufactured at a profit. The article produced from cotton fiber weighs about two and a quarter pounds to On examination it proved, instead of an authors', to the yard, and the average requirement for a bale is

interest of the general public, giving the publishers A cotton exporter recently stated that the bagging the right to increase the cost of foreign books-a vir-|made from cotton stalks which he had examined retual monopoly or patent for 42 years; indeed, the sembled jute so closely that even a person who was foreign author being left to accept whatever terms accustomed to handling cotton would not readily dewere offered him or be debarred from publishing on tect the difference. It will not stain the cotton, and will show marks easily. It is said that the annual The promotors of the bill seem agreed that its defeat yield of stalks will produce bagging sufficient to bale

Should the new fiber stand the test of general use, it is easy to see that a new and extensive industry has been opened up. Cotton stalks have heretofore been considered a nuisance by planters, but if they can be this clause, its passage being asked on the plea that it made into a bagging for the baling of cotton, a great step in advance will be made. No one dreamed a few years ago that oil as well as other valuable products could be produced in paying quantities from cotton seed, but this utilization of the seed forms one of the most striking as well as one of the most important of recent advances in manufacturing. The public will foreign author's works without compensation. Yet doubtless watch with much interest, to see if still anthe law they recommended, instead of opening a free other new and important product is to be developed

-----Opening of the New Dry Dock at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

The Simpson dry dock, which has already been described and illustrated by us (see SCIENTIFIC AMERI-CAN, November 30, 1889) was formally opened on Friday, May 9, in the presence of a number of spectators, including many visitors and invited guests from Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, as well as representative naval officers, engineers, and others of the vicinity. Promptly at 10:30 A. M. the dock was flooded, and in one hour and five minutes was full. The caisson was then lightened by the ejection of some of its water ballast and floated to one side. The U.S. monitor Puritan was next placed in the dock, the caisson was replaced and the large pumps started, emptying the dock and leaving the ship upon the keel and bilge blocks. A very elegant collation was then tendered the visitors. In all respects the occasion may be termed a success, and the officials of the Brooklyn Navy Yard are to be congratulated on this last addition to their plant.

Keeping at it.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the best work of the world is done by people of great strength and great opportunities. It is unquestionably an advantage to have both these things, but neither of them. quoting from the Manufacturer and Builder, is a necessity to the man who has the spirit and the pluck to achieve great results. Some of the greatest work of our time has been done by men of physical feebleness. No man has left a more distinct impression of himself on this generation than Charles Darwin, and there have been few men who have had to struggle against such prostrating ill health. Darwin was rarely able to work long at a time. He accomplished his great work by having a single aim, and putting every ounce of his force and every hour of his time into the task which he had set before him. He never scattered his energy, he never wasted an hour, and by steadily keeping at it, in spite of continual ill health and of long intervals of semi-invalidism, he

 Induans, now in operation at Lawrence, Kan.—Its present work and future prospects, with graphic illustrations 11987 V. ELECTRICITYResistance of Hydrogen and Other Gases.—By E. VILLARL.—A research upon the resistance of different gases to the electric discharge.—An investigation of orignality and merit 11975 VI. HOKOLOGY—The Alarm Watch.—The history of the alarm watch, with illustrations of a new system of sounder for a watch. —3 illust rations	Reliable advices from Augusta, Ga., recently received seem to indicate that the want of a satisfactory substi- tue for jute bagging has been met by producing a fiber from cotton stalks. Mr. William E. Jackson, a lawyer of Augusta, has given a good deal of time and attention to developing the process. He commenced experimenting with a machine patented to produce certain South American fibers by running cotton stalks through it and then submitted the fiber to a carding machine, and the result was an article which closely Jackson then sent a bale of this material to a bagging factory at Paterson, N. J., and proceeded thither himself, and the bagging which was produced under his direction has been declared to be an excellent article. A detailed description of the process by which the fiber has been obtained cannot be given at this time,