

A TWIN HOUSE.

We present an engraving of a most excellent design for a pair of houses, built of stone and mortar, and embracing a new idea in twin houses. The buildings have been recently erected for the Overbrook Farms Company, at Overbrook, Pa. The design is treated in the English Gothic style of architecture. It has many unique features, and the most striking and novel one is the verge boards at gables, which are very handsomely cut and executed. The brick wall rising up through roof and between the buildings is a dividing line, and according to the ordinance of Philadelphia. The first story is built of Chestnut Hill granite of a bluish gray color; the second story is plastered. The gables are beamed, forming panels which are filled in with similar plaster work. The roof is shingled and finished natural.

Dimensions: The front is 100 feet, including both houses, and the depth 35 feet, exclusive of piazzas. Height of ceilings: Cellar, 7 feet; first story, 9 feet 6 inches; second, 9 feet; third, 8 feet 6 inches. Both houses are trimmed alike, so a description of one will suffice for the other. The plan is most excellent, and the apartments are so arranged as to be provided with light and ventilation at both ends of the room. The vestibule is paneled in oak and provided with a tiled mosaic floor. Hall is trimmed with oak, and is furnished with a paneled wainscoting and ceiling beams. It contains a nook, separated by a spindle transom and archway, and provided with a paneled seat and an open fireplace built of brick and furnished with a tiled hearth and a mantel made from special design.

The staircase is a very handsome one, and is fitted up with carved newel posts, balusters and rail; it is lighted effectively by stained glass window on first landing. Parlor is treated in white and gold, and is furnished with a fireplace with tiled hearth and facings, and a mantel to correspond with the trim. Dining room is trimmed with oak. It has a paneled wainscot and seat. Kitchen is isolated from the other apartments by the butler's pantry and rear hall, which is a good feature. This kitchen is trimmed and wainscoted with yellow pine, and is fitted up complete with the best modern conveniences. The second floor is trimmed with sycamore, and it contains four bedrooms, closets, and bathroom, the latter tiled and furnished with the usual fixtures and exposed plumbing. Third floor contains two bedrooms and trunk room. Cemented cellar contains laundry and other necessary apartments. The house is electric wired for call and light, and is heated by the central plant. Cost \$15,000. Mr. W. L. Price, 731 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa., was the architect.

Our engraving was made directly from a photograph of the building, taken specially for the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN Building Edition.

A BICYCLE SKIRT PROTECTOR.

A bicycle attachment to prevent mud from being thrown by the rear wheel on the rider, and to protect the skirts of a lady, preventing their being blown about by the wind or being caught in the chain or wheel, is shown in the accompanying illustration, and has been patented in the United States and Eng-



McNAUGHTON'S BICYCLE ATTACHMENT.

land by John G. McNaughton, of Salisbury, N. C. It consists principally of a mud guard, preferably made in the form of an eagle bending over the rear wheel, with his head pointing rearward and his wings extending outwardly on each side. It is rigidly mounted on the frame, and the wings are hinged and provided with springs to keep them distended, while allowing them to fold inwardly should the bicycle fall on its side. Just back of the crank axle are bearings in which are hinged legs, preferably made of a continuous U-shaped bar, the legs simulating to some extent those of an eagle, and having at their extremities claws grasping bearing blocks to contact with the ground and hold the bicycle upright when still, while also adapted to serve as brakes when it is desired to stop the machine. Rigidly attached to the middle portion of the bar forming the legs is an elbow connected to a slide rod, and the latter is connected to a hand lever fulcrumed in convenient reach of the rider, whereby the legs may be thrown down to serve as a brake, or as supports when the rider dismounts.

A Curious Electrical Accident.

The power house at Thirteenth and Mount Vernon Streets, Philadelphia, from which the Union Traction Company operated a half dozen of its lines of trolley cars, was destroyed by fire on the evening of March 3.

About 6 o'clock some of the employes were swinging a big crane around, and the iron chain hanging from the arm struck a generator. The blow smashed the generator and a violent explosion followed. The breaking of the generator blew out every circuit and wrecked all the dynamos which were running.

Following the explosion, fire started and gutted the building and destroyed the eight dynamos or rendered them useless. The dynamos were the property of the Westinghouse Electric Company, as the traction company said that they were not working properly, and had therefore never accepted them, and the Westinghouse Company were running them at their own expense, pending some decision in the matter. The loss is about \$500,000, principally on the valuable machinery in the building. The power house was a large brick structure, covering a third of the block, and contained eight dynamos and other valuable machinery.

Soldiers' Beds.

The soldier's bed varies notably in the different European armies. According to Dr. Viry, the following are the principal varieties, in which, perhaps, we may see the reflection of national characteristics, says the Medical Record. In England the bed is hard; the soldier lies on a thin mattress that rests on canvas stretched over a frame. In Spain the soldier has only a straw bed, but he is allowed besides this a pillow, two sheets, two blankets, and a covered quilt, sometimes even a cover for the feet. It is almost sybaritic. In Germany and Austria he has a simple straw bed with one or two covers, neither sheet nor mattress. In Russia, until recently, the soldier slept with his clothes on, on a camp bed; but now ordinary beds begin to be used—the result of contact with more civilized countries. After this, it cannot be doubted that the French soldier's bed is the best of all, with its wooden or iron bedstead, a straw bed, a wool mattress, sheets, a brown woolen coverlet, and an extra quilt for cold weather. Thus the bed of the French soldier is the softest of all soldiers' beds, as that of the French peasant is acknowledged also to be the best of all European countries.

A PREPARATORY Antarctic expedition will start from Melbourne during the summer and will pass the winter on Victoria Land. The main expedition, with two ships, will set out after the return of the first expedition and will proceed southward along the meridian of Kerguelen Islands. One of the ships is to remain there while the other will attempt to reach the magnetic pole and the south pole.—Der Stein der Weisen.



A DOUBLE DWELLING HOUSE AT OVERBROOK FARMS, PA.