

experiment and find what gives you the best results. We have no means of knowing what you will get.

(8037) A. A. asks: Would one solid piece of soft iron, say Norway iron, of proper size do for field magnet core for simple electric motor described in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT No. 641, instead of the strips of Russia iron, or are the strips better? A. Yes. The strips of iron are used in the motor because the plan is made for the benefit of those who have no tools for shaping iron. If one has a shop and tools, he can do better work and build a better machine.

(8038) H. L.—A dam lower down upon a stream cannot retard the water in the tailrace of another dam higher up the stream, if the back water of the lower dam does not reach into the tailrace of the upper dam.

NEW BOOKS, ETC.

SOILING CROPS AND THE SILO. By Thomas Shaw. New York: Orange Judd Company. 1900. 12mo. Pp. 366. Price \$1.50.

This new book by Prof. T. Shaw forms a companion volume to his "Forage Crops," published last year. The book is divided into two parts, the first of which treats of growing and feeding of all kinds of soiling crops. The second part discusses the silo. The subject is treated in a simple and comprehensive manner. It is a plea for the silo by a sensible discussion of the place of the silo. All progressive farmers should have a copy of this book.

MECHANICAL TRIUMPHS OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS. By Commander F. M. Barber, U. S. N., late Naval Attache. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Company, Ltd. 1900. 16mo. Pp. 123.

As the result of three visits to Egypt, it has been the author's experience that, notwithstanding the interest of travelers in the manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians and the nature of their stupendous monuments, the question most frequently asked with regard to the latter is not why did they create them, but how? How did they transport these great stones, and how did they lift them to the position in which they are now found? It has been the author's object in preparing this essay to solve the problem in a more complete manner than has yet been done, and to show what is actually known, and to suggest the most plausible theories. The author has produced a most attractive and readable little book, which is well printed and bound.

SPECIFICATIONS FOR STEEL BRIDGES TAKEN FROM DE PONTIUS. By J. A. L. Waddell. New York: John Wiley & Sons. 1900. 16mo. Pp. 178. Price \$1.25.

There is a considerable demand by draughtsmen and computers for the specifications of "De Pontibus," but that book is too expensive to use for specifications only, consequently the author and publishers of the work have concluded to print the said specifications, together with the tables and diagrams, separately from the other chapters; hence this little book, it is hoped, will serve the purpose of engineers at a third of the cost of the original treatise. It is a most admirable engineering treatise.

THE CHEMISTRY OF MATERIALS OF ENGINEERING. By A. H. Sexton. Manchester, England: The Technical Publishing Company. 1900. 12mo. Pp. 33.

For several years the author has given a course of lectures to engineering students on the materials of engineering, and he has felt the need of a suitable text-book for the class. To meet this need he has prepared the present volume. It covers the ground occupied by treatises which were beyond the reach of the ordinary student. The chemistry of iron, the manufacture of iron and steel, copper, lead, zinc, alloys, wood, stone, clay, mortar, cements, fuel, water, lubricants, paints and varnishes, are some of the subjects treated.

INORGANIC, GENERAL, MEDICAL, AND PHARMACEUTICAL CHEMISTRY. By Oscar Oldberg, Ph.D. Chicago: Medical Book Company. 1900. Two vols. 8vo. Pp. 522, 655. Price \$7.

It was the chief aim of the author in writing this book to prepare for the use of his pupils a treatise on the pharmacy of inorganic chemistry, but this could not be accomplished without including in the book so much of general, theoretical and descriptive chemistry that the inevitable outcome is instead a treatise on inorganic chemistry of pharmacy, including an adequate discussion of the fundamental principles of general theoretical chemistry. The author's chapters dealing with elementary theoretical chemistry are particularly to be commended. We have rarely seen the basic principles of chemistry so well presented. It is a most admirable section of the first volume and occupies some 314 pages. The second volume is devoted to a laboratory manual and includes probably all inorganic chemical preparations of medicinal or pharmaceutical use and nearly all of commercial importance, together with many compounds introduced solely for the purpose of instruction. The volumes are handsomely printed in large type and good paper, and are worthy of a large sale.

MODERN ELECTRIC RAILWAY MOTORS. By George T. Hanchett, S.B. New York: Street Railway Publishing Company. 8vo. Pp. 300. Price \$2.

This volume is a discussion of the current practice in electric railway motor construction, maintenance and repair. The trolley, both overhead and underground, has now displaced so thoroughly all other means of propulsion for street cars that any new and satisfactory books upon this subject are very welcome. The subject appears to be very adequately treated by the author. It is intended more particularly for those who have just entered or are about to enter active work in the electric railway field.

By almost the same mail we received copies of the January number of The Engineering Magazine and Cassier's Magazine, both of which are fine examples of modern journalism. The Engineering Magazine contains no less than 327 pages of reading matter, and in connection with the advertisements justly bears out the claims of the publishers that it is the largest single issue of any magazine. The number is what is called the "Works Management Number," and deals with such vast enterprises as the Elswick Works of Lord Armstrong, the huge enterprises built up by Andrew Carnegie, the founders of the Krupp establishments, George Westinghouse, inventor, organizer and director. Then follows a series of elaborate articles within the purview of the title.

Cassier's Magazine for January, while much smaller, is beautifully printed and illustrated. The interesting feature about it is that which is called the "library edition." That is, instead of having the usual paper covers like all other magazines, the library copy will hereafter be furnished in handsome cloth covers, printed on extra heavy paper. In this form each separate copy of Cassier's will be a substantial volume and the contents will be well preserved.

INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Issued for the Week Ending JANUARY 22, 1901, AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

[See note at end of list about copies of these patents.]

- Acid, making pieric, M. Neumann..... 666,627
Adding-machine, F. F. Canode..... 666,599
Adding-machine, J. H. Davis..... 666,499
Advertising, &c., apparatus for, H. E. Hopewell..... 666,524
Aerial navigation, machine for, J. H. Dillon-Gregg..... 666,266
Alkali, electricity, and hydrogen from alkali-metal amalgam, apparatus for producing, J. W. Kynaston..... 666,387
Angle-bar straightener, R. A. Blair..... 666,619
Animal-trap, J. E. Tompkins..... 666,625
Animal-trap, J. Wisencup..... 666,389
Ax-forging die, W. R. Wood..... 666,585
Bag-holder, H. H. Greene..... 666,516
Bag-holder, F. H. Ward..... 666,296
Bale-band fasteners, turning-tool for, D. M. Campbell..... 666,492
Baling-press, S. J. Webb..... 666,283
Bearing boxing, ball, J. W. Dickinson, Jr..... 666,378
Bearing for agricultural machinery, wheel, L. Heath..... 666,420
Bed, folding, Harris & Andrews..... 666,521
Bed-spring support, S. Froward..... 666,505
Bell, pedal, Nykterdall & Kimball..... 666,386
Bell, H. Meli..... 666,450
Bicycle-support, S. E. Parsons..... 666,550
Bicycle-support, A. Samuelson..... 666,358
Bicycles, adjustable crank-hanger for, C. von der Heyde..... 666,445
Binocular glasses, J. Aitchison..... 666,611
Boat-detaching device, life, J. Carnegie..... 666,600
Roller-cleaning device, W. Chesterman..... 666,408
Boring-machine, automatic, J. W. Brown, Jr..... 666,486
Bottle, non-refillable, J. S. Haggerty..... 666,511
Bottle, water, J. Hurley..... 666,313
Brake mechanism, M. E. Routan..... 666,562
Brick-carrying device, F. E. Sprout..... 666,331
Brush, folding, T. R. Shearer..... 666,360
Brush-handle, C. Klauberg..... 666,319
Buckle and snap-hook, combined, B. F. Van Camp..... 666,288
Buckle, belt, J. Ritter..... 666,285
Buckle, shoe, C. Klinger..... 666,320
Buey, self-announcing, W. S. Bryant..... 666,259
Burglar-alarm and sash-lock, combined, J. G. Moser..... 666,542
Buttons, upholstering, E. E. Fiken..... 666,503
Caisson, W. H. McFadden..... 666,388
Camera, A. P. Prentice..... 666,556
Can-capping machine, P. Swensen..... 666,572
Canners cooking-crate, W. A. Robinson..... 666,629
Candyng fruit, W. J. Dunnachie..... 666,413
Cane mill, sugar, P. A. Cazes..... 666,377
Car belster, railway, G. I. King..... 666,276
Car-coupling, automatic, H. G. Dunston..... 666,475
Car, dumping, R. D. Allen..... 666,589
Car fender, street, R. Thompson..... 666,399
Car heater, electric, E. E. Gold..... 666,418
Car stop, W. H. Perry..... 666,437
Car, storage-battery-transfer, G. H. Condict..... 666,303
Car-window dust-guard, L. G. Clark..... 666,601
Cars, &c., safety device for tram, C. H. A. Meyer..... 666,539
Carbonating apparatus, liquid, G. D. Rhinehart..... 666,559
Carbureter, J. Wilkinson..... 666,483
Card-setting machines, tooth forming and inserting mechanism for, O. Arnold..... 666,370
Cartridge loader and reloader, W. W. Moore..... 666,540
Casting apparatus, iron, R. H. Wainford..... 666,307
Chain wrench, W. H. Burr..... 666,490
Chain, machine for making ornamental, W. I. Macomber..... 666,634
Chair fan attachment, reeking, O. Herrmann..... 666,310
Chimney-top, J. Wood..... 666,209
Chuck, Z. T. Furbish..... 666,507
Chuck, reducing, Z. T. Furbish..... 666,503
Chuck, supplementary, Z. T. Furbish..... 666,511
Cigar-box, O. Beebe..... 666,459
Cipher-code system, C. P. Hall..... 666,520
Clamp. See Routing-machine clamp.
Clock, illuminated, R. B. Garvan..... 666,381
Cloth-cutting machine, W. Gerhard..... 666,513
Cloth-treating machine, D. Gessner..... 666,382
Clutch, A. G. Sargent..... 666,563
Clutch, friction, King & Barnhart..... 666,348
Cock for water or other fluids, self-closing, A. Hansen..... 666,383
Coffee-pot, T. Babin..... 666,593

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- Comminuting machine, G. D. Coleman..... 666,409
Compressible tube, D. Smith..... 666,443
Conduit, underground, I. D. Smead..... 666,331
Consecutive-view apparatus, H. Casler..... 666,495
Cooking apparatus, steam, M. J. Roach..... 666,357
Cooking feed or scalding hogs, device for, M. M. Johnston..... 666,273
Cotton-press, steam lever, S. J. Webb..... 666,294
Coupling. See Car-coupling. Shaft-coupling. Thrill-coupling.
Coupling, Krause & Zill..... 666,531
Crato, knockdown, W. A. Woolsey..... 666,587
Cream-separator, centrifugal, J. H. Fleming..... 666,344
Cultivator, R. L. Kerr..... 666,317
Cultivator, listed-corn, Carpenter & McIlvain..... 666,494
Curtain-pole, telescopic, J. O. Clark..... 666,467
Cutter. See Band-cutter. Flue-cutter. Food-cutter. Paper-cutter.
Cutting apparatus, endless, J. A. Wisner..... 666,298
Cycle driving mechanism, J. Parker..... 666,548
Delimiting-machine, J. Kasmeier..... 666,384
Die-holder, J. Bradley..... 666,462
Display-rack for pipe goods, A. Olson..... 666,350
Doors, manufacturing, J. A. Wheeler..... 666,295
Drier. See Fertilizer-drier. Sardine-drier. Drying can or cylinder, A. A. Hunting..... 666,477
Duplicating apparatus, A. E. Dick..... 666,410
Dye, violet anthracene, O. Bally..... 666,594
Dyeing with basic dyes, Becke & Bablich..... 666,256
Electric light cord-adjuster, W. C. Tregenberg..... 666,400
Electric motors, construction of, F. A. Johnson..... 666,315
Electric switch and resistance, C. W. Atkinson..... 666,255
Electric traction, R. Brown..... 666,258
Electrotherapeutic apparatus, J. S. Mead..... 666,431
Embossing-die, J. T. Clear..... 666,463
Engine-exhaust muffler, J. C. Gebhart..... 666,622
Engine-indicator coupling device, H. D. Bullen..... 666,407
Engine speed-regulator, explosive, De Dien & Ponton..... 666,501
Engines, hydrocarbon vaporizer and mixer for explosion, J. C. Gebhart..... 666,623
Engines, sparking igniter for explosive, G. L. Reenstierna..... 666,439
Envelope, R. Rudkin..... 666,561
Eyeglass-guard, P. J. & W. N. Dachtera..... 666,498
Fabric. See Woven fabric.
Fare-register, W. H. Cooley..... 666,469
Farming implement, E. F. Dickey..... 666,265
Feed-water of marine boilers, superheating apparatus for, Levi & Radonich..... 666,337
Fence machines, clip-feeding mechanism for wire, B. Williams..... 666,402
Fence, wire, W. S. Rowland..... 666,560
Fender. See Car-fender.
Fertilizer-drier, W. K. Campbell..... 666,301
Field-glass, &c., coin-operated, J. W. Patterson..... 666,351
File-cabinet, C. Schroeder..... 666,359
Filter, T. C. Hefel..... 666,421
Fire-alarm, W. J. Partridge..... 666,628
Firearm recoil-cushion, C. E. Shaw..... 666,564
Firearm, revolving, L. H. Dyer..... 666,476
Firearm, revolving, F. B. Pope..... 666,555
Fire-extinguisher, automatic, M. F. Elliott..... 666,604
Fish-hook, D. A. Pledge..... 666,309
Fishing-reel, W. H. Talbot..... 666,398
Flax-puller, M. Anderson..... 666,254
Floor, E. Geest..... 666,345
Flower made of fur, artificial, C. Hartmann..... 666,522
Flue-cutter, G. W. Ridler..... 666,284
Folding box, G. L. Johnstone..... 666,274
Food-cutter, C. E. Hopkins..... 666,525
Formaldehyde-vapors, producing, J. J. A. Trillat..... 666,579
Freezer, C. R. Hamilton..... 666,269
Furnaces, cinder or hot-metal car for blast, E. A. Veimer..... 666,447
Fuse for firing shells, Buckham & Dardier..... 666,487
Garment-holder, L. M. Marble..... 666,608
Garment-hook, B. F. Wallace..... 666,339
Garment, infant's, Schnebel & Werle..... 666,286
Gas and steam engine, reversible, Strain & Nicodemus..... 666,364
Gas burner, hand-lighting acetylene, H. C. Thomson..... 666,335
Gas-engine, L. F. Burger..... 666,260
Gas generator, acetylene, T. G. Ames..... 666,591
Gas generator, acetylene, J. W. Pritchard..... 666,453
Gas generator, acetylene, M. Wagner..... 666,581
Gas-making illuminating, E. R. Bessemfelder..... 666,257
Gate, J. W. Carson..... 666,376
Glassware, machine for manufacturing down, C. E. Blue..... 666,595
Glassware-manufacturing apparatus, A. Humphrey..... 666,422
Governor, spring-motor, B. G. Royal..... 666,609
Grain-separator, J. B. Pedrick..... 666,552
Grave signalling apparatus, M. E. Griffith..... 666,606
Grease-cup, convertible, G. Kirkland..... 666,318
Grinding-machine, J. Macphail..... 666,319
Gun-alarm, W. T. Baggett..... 666,472
Gun-alarm, hammerless, W. T. Baggett..... 666,405
Hair and fabric clasp, L. G. Kraus..... 666,532
Handles to files, &c., fixing, J. H. Morgan..... 666,281
Harvester apouts, stretching device for grain, H. J. Case..... 666,486
Harvester, corn, S. P. Dous..... 666,380
Hat, apparel, L. Naundorf..... 666,546
Hat-box, H. L. Perry..... 666,352
Hat or cap, A. Pedro..... 666,436
Hat-perforating machine, F. C. Hedshen..... 666,323
Hat-sizing machine, F. Stacy..... 666,363
Hay-fork trip, J. Patton, Sr..... 666,551
High and low water alarm, C. E. Zimmerman..... 666,411
Hitching and unhitching horses, apparatus for, D. C. Fulton..... 666,506
Horse-detacher for hay-elevators, H. Schwartz..... 666,287
Horseshoe, H. G. Covey..... 666,304
Horseshoe-nail, J. R. Williams..... 666,583
Hose handler or carrier, G. P. De Welfe..... 666,474
Hose-nozzle, J. P. Van Sickle..... 666,590
Hose-supporter, R. Gorton..... 666,515
Hydrocarbon-burner, G. A. Loeben..... 666,588
Igniter, electric, C. D. Wright..... 666,638
Index, sliding, W. F. Manry..... 666,676
Ink-roller, H. G. Squires..... 666,362
Insulator, H. W. Woolbert..... 666,586
Internal-combustion engine, H. F. Wallmann..... 666,368
Ironing-board and bench, combined, R. Stahl..... 666,332
Joint. See Universal joint.
Journal-bearing, O. A. Stuettermann..... 666,570
Kettle or dish cleaner, &c., L. C. Farmer..... 666,433
Kite, C. H. Lamson..... 666,427
Label-gumming machine, S. E. Tily..... 666,576
Labeling-machine, C. A. Burt..... 666,491
Ladder, J. Howard..... 666,526
Ladder, F. S. Seagrav..... 666,441
Ladder for berths, collapsible, W. C. Sherman..... 666,566
Lamp, electrical glow, A. Couch..... 666,602
Latch, gate, A. S. Jones..... 666,425
Leather-working machine, J. Boyle..... 666,401
Letter-box, street, A. M. Cushing..... 666,472
Lightning-arrestor, W. N. McAughey..... 666,545
Lightning-arrestor, C. A. Rolfe..... 666,329
Linotype-machine, J. Donegan..... 666,412
Liquids and beverages, ameliorating and pasteurizing fermented, Lavollay & Bourgeois..... 666,535
Lock, Burns & Mercer..... 666,489
Locomotive, J. Player..... 666,393
Locomotive-boiler, J. Player..... 666,392
Locomotive exhaust mechanism, J. Player..... 666,395
Loom, filling-supply, O. Janelle..... 666,272
Loom for weaving and cutting pile fabrics, R. L. Hattersley et al..... 666,270
Loom woft-replenishing mechanism, J. Keith..... 666,385
Lubricator. See Wheel-lubricator.
Lubricator, M. F. Cox..... 666,283
Mail-bag closure, Crawford & Bichy..... 666,613
Mailing arranging apparatus, F. H. C. Mey..... 666,432
Manufacturing, J. S. Kemp..... 666,426
Mattress, A. Battie..... 666,458
Measuring instrument, electrical, H. P. Ball..... 666,454
Melter, self-acting, G. Palazzi et al..... 666,481

(Continued on page 78)