

# Scientific American.

THE ADVOCATE OF INDUSTRY, AND JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC, MECHANICAL AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS.

VOLUME IX.]

NEW-YORK AUGUST 26, 1854.

[NUMBER 50.]

THE  
SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN,  
PUBLISHED WEEKLY,  
At 128 Fulton street, N. Y. (Sun Building.)  
BY MUNN & CO.

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TERMS—\$2 a-year:—\$1 in advance and the remainder in six months.

### The California Snake Bird.

Alexander S. Taylor, of Monterey, in his "Familiar Sketches of the Natural History of California," says, that in the coast counties of Southern California there exists a singular species of bird, generally called, on account of his well known mortal aversion to all members of the snake tribe, the "snake bird." It is not a bird of prey, but lives entirely on grain, like the gallinacia. When full grown, it measures two feet from the end of its tail to the tip of its beak. The tail has four or five long feathers tipped with white. Its feet are furnished with four toes, two in front and two behind, and all are guarded with sharp, needle-like claws. The color of the bird is a mottled, yellowish gray, and it rarely attains the weight of a pound. Its beak is two and a half inches long, and very hard and sharp.

When this bird finds a rattlesnake—and rattlesnakes are to be found in great numbers in Southern California, wherever the ground is covered by the cactus plant—it immediately proceeds, with the greatest caution and despatch, to gather the fallen cactus fruit and dry lobes, and quietly enclose him in to the height of a foot or more—the spikes and spines of the plant, strong and sharp as needles, serving as an insurmountable barrier to the escape of the snake. This being accomplished, the bird gathers with its feet and claws the young cones of the pine, which are as hard and heavy as stones, and hovering over its enemy, lets them fall, one by one, from a height of five or six feet, upon the infuriated viper, who, surrounded by prickles and points wherever he turns, is soon fully aroused to the danger of his position. The bird, with malicious screams, continues to drop cone after cone, until his foe is exhausted, and then picks the snake to death with its iron beak.

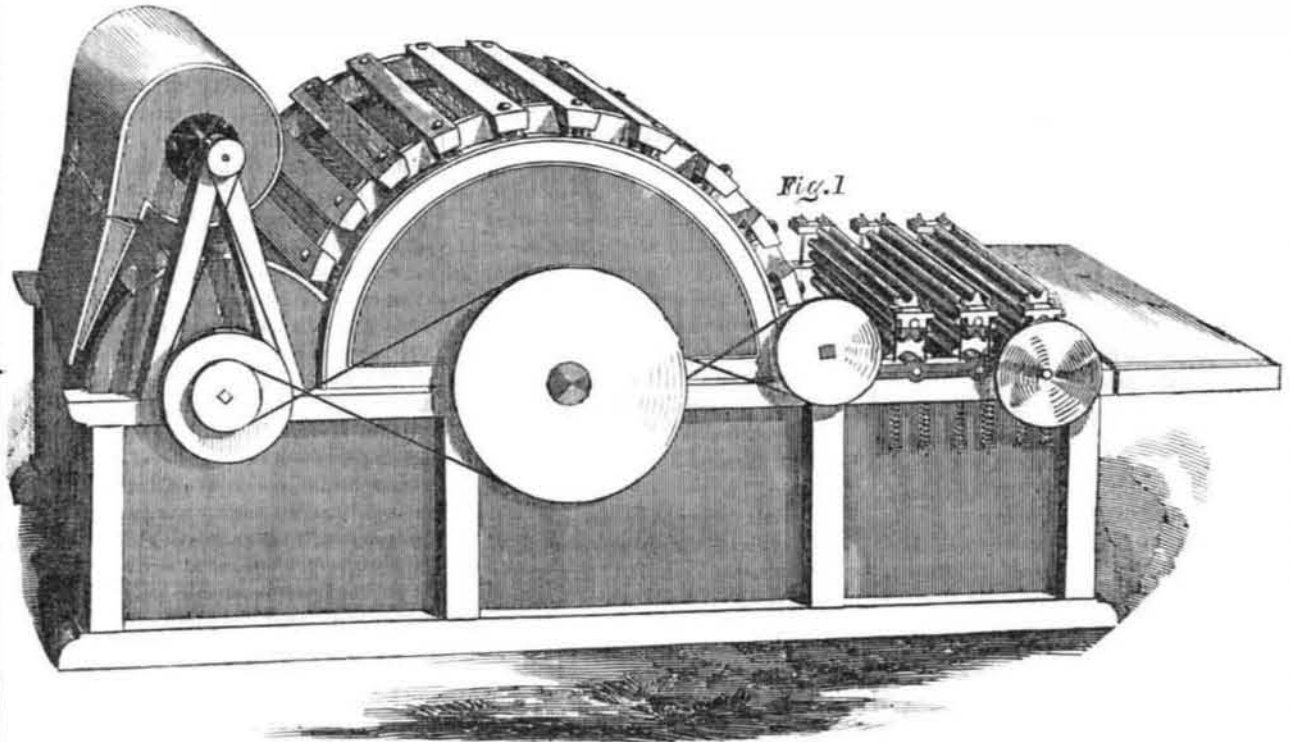
### French Exhibition.

M. Gardissal, our agent in Paris, writes that "notwithstanding the influence of war and apprehensions respecting the crops, immense preparations are being made for the Exhibition. The Palais de l'Industrie is approaching its finish, and supplementary buildings are being added, so as to treble the showing room." We are urgently called upon to request American manufacturers to take their proper position in the Exhibition. We perceive very little spirit among our people respecting the affair, but we hope their skill and genius will be fully represented.

### Cannelton Cotton Factory.

In the "Scientific American" of the 29th July, there was a notice of the success of the cotton factory at Cannelton, Kentucky. It should have been Cannelton, Indiana. A correspondent informs us, that upon the opposite side of the river, four miles from Cannelton, there has been a large cotton mill standing idle and for sale, for more than a year. The great success of Cannelton, Indiana—the town and manufactories—he attributes to the abundance and cheapness of coal in its immediate vicinity.

### PICKING AND CLEANING FLAX.



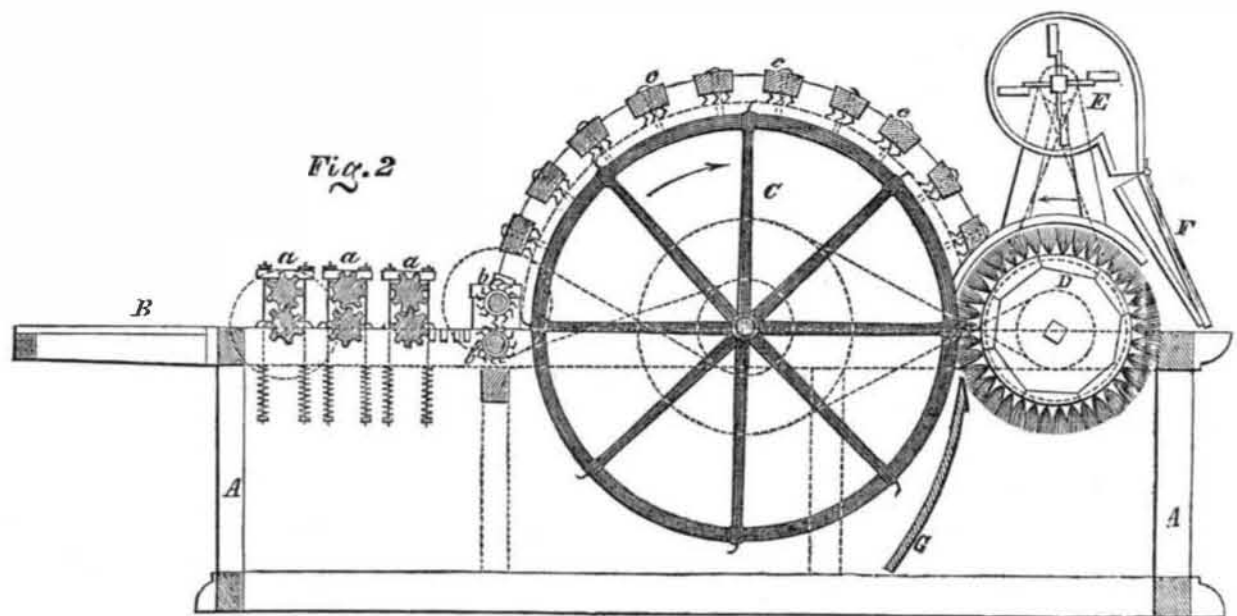
On the 14th of last February a patent was issued to A. H. Caryl, of Sandusky, Ohio, for the improvements in machinery for Dressing Flax, represented by the accompanying engravings, of which figure 1 is a perspective, and figure 2 a vertical longitudinal section.

The object of this machine is for breaking and cleaning tangled flax straw. The machines now in use are of two kinds; one without the breaker for cleaning scutched tow, the other as here represented; the apparatus for breaking the straw having been added since the patent was granted.

A is a stout frame, and B a feed table for the tangled flax straw, which has been thrashed

for the seed, and which our farmers unwisely, for want of proper machinery, have heretofore generally suffered to rot in the barn yard. For the table, B, an endless revolving apron is used on the working machines; *aaa* are fluted breaking rollers, to which the straw is carried by the apron, B. These rollers have their bearing boxes resting on springs so as to accommodate their pressure to unequal quantities of the straw, which is well broken—that is the heart, boon, or woody part of it, when it reaches the feed card rollers, *bb*. Between the breaking rollers, *a*, and the ones, *b*, there is placed a small revolving table which carries the straw from the breakers into the feeders.

These latter, *bb*, extend the whole width of the frame and are covered with coarse cards, the teeth of which are hooked towards the fluted rolls (contrary to the mode represented by a mistake on the model, from which the draughtsman made the drawings) to prevent the flax being too rapidly drawn into the large picker cylinder, C. This cylinder has part of its periphery covered with section cards, as shown, and between these there are slats or wire rods to sustain the flax. There is also a stationary cover secured on the frame over the picker cylinder. This cover is formed of section cards, *cc*, with their teeth inside. The picker revolves in the direction shown by the



arrow and draws in the flax through the feed card rolls, *bb*, and scrapes off most of the woody matter. As the flax is carried upward by the picker cylinder, it is held to the action of the top stationary cards, *cc*, by the slats or cross rods on its periphery. The *shive* or woody matter of the flax, by this carding action, is separated from the fibrous part and falls down through the open slats to the pit below; D is a brush roller placed behind the picker, C, and revolves as shown by the arrow. Below it is placed a curved spring curb, G, with a thin edge. When the flax is carried

over by the picker, C, this edge holds it to the action of the brush roller, D, which thereby licks it up and carries it round to be discharged at the back end of the machine. The flax is stripped or blown off the brush roller by a strong blast from the fan blower, E. This blast is concentrated in the tapering hinged trunk, F, and directed on the brush roller, which revolves in an opposite direction to the blast. By this means the flax is stripped from the brush and laid open and loose upon the floor. This explanation of the figures will render the operation of the machine perfectly

clear to any person. One of these machines is now in operation at Little Falls, N. Y., and two in Ohio—one in Sandusky and the other in Painsville.

More information respecting it may be obtained of J. T. Daly, No. 113 Wall street, this city, or of the patentee, in Sandusky, Ohio.

### The Ericsson.

The steamer Ericsson went down the Bay yesterday, on another trial trip.—[N. Y. Tribune, Aug. 18th.

Oh! what a change, Mr. T—.