A CALIFORNIA SCENE.

We give on this page an excellent reproduction of a choice painting, representing a fraction of the grand and beautiful as embodied in California natural scenery. The view combines the majesty of the mountains with the quiet beauty of the riverside; its quiet disturbed only by the wild life natural to our unfrequented districts. The view is on Kern river, one of the most notable of the Southern California streams. In an article recently published, the *Pacific Press* gives a characteristic sketch of the river and its course:

Kern river, or *Rio Bravo* as formerly called by the Mexicans, is a topographical exemplification of the course of but too many of earth's high born sons. In its early stages we find it a

VIEW ON THE KERN RIVER.—(A. Bierstadt.)

lovely little stream, rising in the region of Mt. Brewer and coursing south among some of the grandest scenery of the Sierras, passing on its way Mt. Williamson, Mt. Tyndall, Mt. Whitney and Mt. Agassiz, whose snow-capped peaks rise between 14,000 and 15,000 feet into the bluest of western skies, and whose waters pay tribute to the clear water of *Rio Bravo*. It is here among these grand old giants that Mr. A. Bierstadt, our celebrated national painter, has selected the subject of one of his works of art, the which our engraver has so well succeeded in copying. Here where we see the grand and sublime united with the mild and lovely we have indeed a combination well worthy the brush of the painter, or the pen of the poet.

Following its course still further down we find it leaving the mountains and entering among the rolling hills from whence it emerges into the heated and alkaline valley of the San Joaquin. For many miles it carries with it along its shores traces of its former loveliness, but gradually its waters become dark and muddy; it forms sloughs and miasmatic marshes, and its waters degenerate from pure and life-giving to fever and death-bearing.

It opens up, it is true, a large agricultural district, and much land that would otherwise be barren waste is made to produce abundantly by means of irrigation; hence many are induced to settle in this region where they may utilize its waters, but we think many who do so have reason sooner or later to regret their choice of location, more particularly, however, on account of its unhealthfulness, than for other reasons. The greater part of its waters finally empty into Goose lake, though much of it sinks in sloughs and a part finds its way into Kern lake. The region in which it rises is remarkable for its loveliness, but step by step it descends in its course of dissipation until it ignominiously comes to its end in Goose lake.

FALL OF METEORIC DUST.—Prof. Silvestris, of the Catania observatory, reports the fall on the night of the 29th of March of a shower of meteoric dust, mingled with rain. Besides the usual characteristics of color, chemical composition, and the mixture of mineral and organic particles and minute infusoria, there was a considerable proportion of iron, either in a purely metallic state or in metallic particles, coated with oxide. The size varied from a tenth to a hundredth part of a millimeter, and the form was either irregular or spherical, as if it had undergone fusion. This phenomenon was first observed in the Indian ocean, south of Java, in 1859, and has been corroborated by Prof. Nordenskjold's Arctic observations.

INCREASED USES FOR GLASS.—Considerable has been written about toughened glass as a material for railway sleepers, and now Mr. Bucknall, of England, intends to manufacture toughened glass pipes for water and gas works, for drains and chemical purposes, as well as transparent bricks, telegraph insulators, etc.

HARVEST DRINK.

During hot weather, and while engaged in harvest operations, a good deal of liquid is necessarily imbibed, for the pores are open and perspiration flows out. The question is, what is the best to drink? "On board steamers the firemen employed about the furnaces are sometimes greatly exhausted by heat. Their profuse perspiration renders a large quantity of water necessary to supply the waste. The ingestion of clear water under the circumstances appears to answer very imperfectly the wants of the system. It seems to pass through the circulation to the skin, percolates as through a sieve, and flows over the surface of the body in streams. A large drink of cold, or even cool water, under these circumstances, on an empty stomach, is very dangerous, and liable to produce death with almost the suddenness of an electric shock. Great practical advantage has been obtained by mixing farinaceous substances, particularly oatmeal, with the water to be used by the men employed at this kind of labor. The oatmeal is mixed in proportions of three or four ounces to a gallon of water, and used according to inclination by the firemen and coal-heavers. It might be difficult to determine why oatmeal for this purpose should be better than cornmeal, or buckwheat, or rye, wheat, millet, etc., but the firemen themselves seem to think it has the effect of making them as strong as horses. We may safely allow something for this sort of prejudice, which we know to be very portent among the influences on health and disease. The peculiar aroma of the oats is probably associated with a pleasant degree of stimulation of the alimentary mucous surface in such a way as to promote its complete digestion. It seems to fill the blood-vessels without increasing the amount of cutaneous exhalations. The men occasionally try acid, saccharine or alcoholic drinks as substitutes for the oats, but always with unsatisfactory results, except that they find molasses and water better than clear water, and they who are disposed to insist on the excellence of rum and whisky under all circumstances petition for these, and experience after each ingestion a momentary relief, followed by additional profuseness of perspiration and exhaustion."

A NEW and powerful thermo-electric battery which is spoken of in terms of the highest praise in the French journals, has been devised by M. Clamond, whose name is already associated with the substantial improvement of this class of apparatus. The apparatus referred to could not be understood without an illustration and description of special features, and for these we refer our readers to the pages of *La Nature* (Paris) for January 17th. It must suffice to say here that the apparatus is designed to produce electricity by the direct transformation of heat, and has demonstrated its utility for this purpose beyond question. The largest apparatus thus far constructed by M. Clamond is composed of 6,000 couples, with which he has been able to run two Serrin electric lamps yielding a light of from 800 to 1,000 candles for each lamp, with the consumption of 8 to 10 kilos (17.5 to 22 pounds) of coal per hour.

OIL PASTE SHOE-BLACKING.—As the *Scientific News* remarks, anyone may make his own oil-paste blacking if he cares to take the trouble. The following is a trustworthy recipe for the purpose:

Molasses	1 lb
Ivory black	1½ lb
Sweet oil	1 oz

Rub together in a Wedgwood mortar till all the ingredients form a perfectly smooth homogeneous mixture; then add a little lemon juice or strong vinegar, say the juice of one lemon, or about a wine-glass of strong vinegar, and thoroughly incorporate, with just enough water, added slowly, to gain the required consistency.

NEW REMEDY FOR BURNS.—An iron foundry man recommends as "a never-failing speedy remedy" for burns and scalds powdered pine wood charcoal.