

PATENT OFFICE.

Some of the Queer Happenings in the World of Discovery—17,000 Models Sold for Old Junk.

The number of successful inventors is always large, but the number of unsuccessful ones is very much larger. Only the other day 17,000 models of projected inventions were sold for old junk. There is always somebody working at the unsalable problem of perpetual motion or making a flying machine. It not infrequently happens that, after a patent has been refused to an inventor, a subsequent application is granted by a different examiner.

It sometimes happens that a patent is granted to one man after somebody else has failed to receive a patent for the same invention. This is a fruitful source of litigation. Indeed, litigation about patent rights is so common that in the introduction of any valuable patent the legal expenses of defending it are a large part of the capital required. Immense sums were spent in defending Morse's patents for telegraphing, and the various patents for sewing machines, India rubber manufacture, and of the inventions that have revolutionized industrial processes. But, when rights are once established by law, the profits are enormous. It was shown in a recent case before the United States Court that for royalty alone on the manufacture of barbed fence wire more than \$1,000,000 a year were paid.

Inventors are now chiefly busy with electricity, and the Patent Office is deluged with devices for making new uses of the modern marvel, or for using it with new appliances. Many of these inventions run in the direction of motors. The opinion has gained some ground lately that storage batteries of electricity are not as successful as was at first expected. It is asserted by some that no storage battery ever gives out as much electricity as it receives, and that every moment decreases the amount yielded. Edison says the best storage battery is a ton of coal, which can be used at any time to drive a dynamo machine. Others, however, still think that the storage battery will produce wonderful results.

Inventors have always sought to utilize the forces of nature for the conservation of power. A good deal of time and money have been spent on efforts to utilize the force of the rise and fall of the tide. According to some plans the water is to be stored in a reservoir at high tide, and used to turn a water wheel when the tide falls. Another plan is to get the power from the rise and fall of a float. There used to be a tidal mill at Astoria and another at Charleston, S. C. The large amount of land required to get the requisite area of water surface is considered an insuperable objection to tidal mills.

A good deal of money has been expended on solar engines, in the hope of getting power out of the sun's rays. John Ericsson, the inventor of the Monitor and a thousand other things, has made some beautiful solar engines, and not long ago an inventor had a model of a solar engine on the top of the Cooper Union building, and managed to get up steam in a boiler. The trouble is, however, that the sun does not always shine, and the solar engine, to be of any practical use, must be accompanied with a storage reservoir of power that can be kept for a rainy day. After all, coal is nothing but the heat of the sun stored in past ages for present use.

There is no telling of what great value the discovery of the simplest fact may be. When bromine was discovered by Ballard in 1824, nothing of importance was expected from it. Now it is a valuable factor in photography, and a useful remedy for nervous affections.

Capital is never wanted to try even the most foolish inventions. Not long ago an inventor had an idea that he could, by the use of a naked wire, produce a return current and avoid electrical disturbances in cables. He could have got the capital to lay a long cable under ground to try his experiment. He was with difficulty dissuaded from doing this by a practical man, who saved him lots of money by wrapping several miles of cable about a barrel and arranging the naked wire as proposed by the inventor. The result was a complete failure, but the cost of the experiment was comparatively trifling. This is an illustration of the large amount of money that can be wasted through ignorance. Men will work away at an idea with no knowledge of what has been done or what can be done, only to discover at the end what they should have known at the beginning.

A good deal of money has been spent in the effort to introduce ice machines. There is, however, a strong competition to be encountered, since they may always be had for the gathering, and transportation is cheap.

Fire escapes are numbered by the thousand. Hardly a day passes that the Fire Commissioners are not compelled to test some new plan. A good deal of room is taken up in the Patent Office with the models of these contrivances.

A very good example of the eagerness with which capital can be secured to promote the most chimerical ideas may be seen in the story of the Keesley motor. The stockholders have been pretty thoroughly bled already, but are compelled to bleed still more in the hope of saving what they have already expended. The varying fate of capital invested is seen in the contrasting results of the two steam-

heating companies in New York City, one of which has proved a most lamentable failure, while the other has had a measure of success. It is not so certain that money invested underground will always return a fair interest. It may be necessary to incur great expense when an underground cable gives out, as the whole route may have to be dug up to find the break.

Accidental discoveries have supplied some of the most valuable processes of the industrial arts. It is said that the rolling of cold iron was first suggested by the fact that a workman who was placing a piece of hot iron in the rolls carelessly permitted his tongs to be drawn in. He noticed that they were rolled, and not broken. He called the attention of the Superintendent to the occurrence, and this led to investigation and experiment and the discovery that cold rolled iron is equal to steel for shafting purposes. The process of rolling iron cold was not long after patented, and millions of dollars have been made out of the patent.

There are many similar instances where observing workman have called attention to valuable processes. A signal one was in the early period of the cotton manufacture, when a good deal of trouble was caused by the cotton sticking to the bobbins. All the workmen in the mill were delayed by the necessity of stopping work to clean the bobbins. At last one workman found a way to obviate the trouble. He, and he alone in all the mills, had clean bobbins. For a long time he kept his secret to himself. He finally revealed it on the promise of a pint of beer a day for life. His secret was to "chalk the bobbins." That little scraping of salt on the bobbins saved millions of dollars a year, and the observing workman got not only his beer, but a competence.

Each extension of modern enterprise and skill brings with it a train of inventions. The railway, the telegraph, the steamboat, the development of iron, electricity and petroleum, have each produced a long line of inventors more or less successful, so that each of these industries might have a creditable exhibition by itself.

FEMALE FANCIES.

Mrs. Partington, dear old lady, says there are very few people now-a-days who suffer from "suggestion of the brain."

The latest new song is entitled "Save the Sweetest Kiss for Mother." That's good doctrine, but the young man will continue to leave it with his girl, just the same, till the mother calls for it.

"Your daughter? It is impossible! Why, you look more like twin sisters." "No; I assure you she is my only daughter," replied the pleased mother. And the polite old gentleman spoiled it all by remarking, "Well, well, she certainly looks old enough to be your sister!"

Poots' wife remarked to him, as they started out the other night to take supper with the Browns, that she expected Mr. B. would have a stunning coiffure. "Well, I am sure I hope so," grumbled Poots. "I haven't had anything good to eat since the last time we were at mother's."

Sentiment in the Bois de Boulogne. Romeo and Juliet are promenading on a beautiful summer evening. Romeo, raising his eyes to heaven, exclaims, "What an admirable spectacle! Look at those thousand stars that sparkle!" "Yes," replies Juliet, "they remind you of the lanterns on the carriages!"

When a Virginia belle was once surprised by her father in the parlor of a hotel at the White Sulphur Springs supporting upon her shoulder the head of a middle-aged admirer, she at once disarmed the impending rebuke by exclaiming: "Surely, father, this is not the first time you have seen an old head on young shoulders?"

"Simon, you have been drinking again. I smell liquor on your breath, and it was only yesterday you promised me, your fond wife, that you had now finally reformed." "Yes, Mrs. Mulberry (hic), ash so; but you see (hic) cholera's a raging in Egypt (hic), an' s'comin' in this direction like (hic) 'spress train. Got to begin to brace up my (hic) system in time, Mrs. (hic) Mulberry."

A young lady who has been at Molychukamunk, Mooselucmagentic, Ayboljoekamejns, Magaguadavic Cobbosse, Togus, Tomhegan, Katespogowegan, Brassan, Aziscoos, Ripogonus Ebeewe, Nahmakanta, Millinoket, Monsweak, Mattawamkeag and other fashionable resorts down in Maine, had an awfully nice time, but she lamed her jaw in trying to tell the Home Circle in her village about her travels.

An economical housewife says: Two drinks of whisky mean a pound and a half of beefsteak; two beers, a dinner of mutton chops; a cocktail, an egg-plant or head of cauliflower. "What'll you take, Charley?" stands for a nice oyster stew for the whole family Sunday morning. "Set 'em up again!" means sugar in the house for a month. This is a bit of practical domestic economy furnished by a workingman for the consideration of his fellows.

A citizen and stranger were riding along Beacon street the other day at low tide when the latter's olfactory nerves were assailed by the odor peculiar to this district. "Not exactly ean de Cologne," remarked the citizen. "Oh, no," replied the citizen, with French accent, "O—dor Boston. We are nothing if not original." —Boston Globe.

In France bachelors have to serve in the army twice as long as married men. The life of a bachelor is of no particular importance in a community.

THE BAD BOY.

He Gets His Pa Arrested for Stealing Chickens and Then Puts Prize Packages in a Grab-Bag.

"Well, well," remarked the groceryman as the boy came into the store and sat up on the edge of the counter, "you loom up well for a boy with the ague. I thought you couldn't get out of bed, you haven't been around for nearly a week."

"O, the ague's quinine in this town while I was sick. Any how they fired nearly a barrel of it down my neck," replied the boy, helping himself to an apple.

"I heard your father was arrested last Saturday. What's the trouble?" asked the groceryman as he closed a new gate at the end of the counter he had had made to keep the boy away from the sugar bin.

"Well he did come near being run in, sure, and I guess he would if it hadn't been for me. You see ma has been sick ever since she went into the deacons cellar to draw cider and met that skunk, so she told pa if he would get a couple of good fat hens, she would try and make a pot pie for Sunday, as she felt her health failing, and if her appetite didn't improve soon she would go hence, whatever that means. So that evening pa started out after hens. He was too late to get dressed ones, so he got two live ones from the market and started home. Me and my chum were layin' for him, and when he got about half way home it commenced to rain and he started on a run so as to not get wet. We followed and met a policeman and told him we saw a man steal two hens, and pointed pa out as the man. The policeman started after him and yelled at him to halt, but pa did not hear him. Pretty soon pa saw some one was chasing him, and thought it was a robber, so he ran all the harder. Then the policeman pulled out his revolver and fired in the air to scare pa, just as one of the hens got her wings loose and flopped it in pa's eye. Pa dropped with a groan and said: 'I'm shot. Tell my wife I died happy.' Then a crowd got around him and was going to hang the policeman, but he swore the shot came across the street, for he saw two men run, and said he didn't carry a revolver anyway, and the crowd might search him. But I saw him throw it over in a yard and me and my chum got it the next morning. When pa found he wasn't dead, he called for a stretcher to be carried home to die with his family. While some of the crowd went for the stretcher, the rest began to see where the bullet went in, and when they couldn't find it, he got up and offered to lick any man that said he was shot. Just then another policeman came up and said he recognized pa as 'Chicago Bill,' a notorious safe-robber and that a reward was offered for him. Pa said he was an honest man and agreed to go back to the market with the chickens and be identified. They found only one of the chickens, but the market man knew pa and fixed it, and then the policeman began to beg pa's pardon and pa gave him five dollars to keep still about it. When pa got home he told ma how he had helped catch a safe blower and when he got his share of the reward she could have a new seal-skin sacque."

"Your father'll kill you some day. But what about that fuss at the social at the deacon's night before last?" asked the groceryman, as he picked the fly specks off from a lot of maple sugar he was putting away for 'new maple sugar' next spring. "I heard the whole church was mad at each other over a grab-bag, and the presiding elder had all he could do to quiet things down."

"That don't amount to much," replied the boy. "There's always something turns up when the sociable season first starts in. You see, ma was appointed a committee to fix up a grab-bag. Me and my chum were digging bait that morning to go fishing, when pa came out and said, 'Henery I believe you put up that chicken job on me, and I don't believe anything but hard work will reform you. I want you to spade up the ground under the currant bushes.' I asked him if he wanted a hump-backed, disfigured boy, made so by hard work. Pa said he would risk the hump, and told me to pitch in, and then went down town. My chum said he would help me, and me and him got the job done before two o'clock. When we got done I come in and found ma had finished the grab-bag, and had it all loaded, with the top fastened with a pucker string, and hung on the back of a chair. Ma was up stairs getting her Sunday clothes on, to go to the sociable, so it didn't take me and my chum long to empty the bag and get first choice. Then I got our mouse trap and took it to the barn, and caught two nice big fat mice and put 'em in a collar-box with holes cut in it, to give 'em air, and dropped that in the bag. Then my chum remembered a big snapping turtle he had in the swill barrel, and me and him got that and wiped it as dry as we could, and tied it all up but its head and put that in just as the deacon's hired man came to take the bag over to the sociable. Me and my chum went down to his house and waited till the people got over to the sociable and then we went over and got up in a tree where we could see through the open window, and hear all that was going on. Pa he stood over by the bag and shouted, 'Ten

cents a grab; don't let anybody be backward in a good cause.' Three or four had put up their ten cents and made a grab when an old maid from Oshkosh, who had been to the springs for hysterics, got in her work on the collar-box. When she got the cover off, one of the mice that knew his business, jumped on her shoulder and crawled down her neck, and the other dropped down on the floor and started around to meet the other. You'd a died to see her flop and show her stocking and scream. The deacon's folks thought it was another attack of hysterics, and pa and the deacon got her on the sofa and held her while they poured paregoric and cayenne pepper down her. When she got loose she screamed all the harder. Then one of the other women see the mouse and got up in the chair and shook her skirts and asked the new young minister to help her catch the mouse. The poor fellow looked as though he would like to, but he failed. Just then the bottom of the chair broke and let her fall over on ma and tore her bangs all down. Ma called her a 'hateful thing' and told her she ought to be ashamed of herself. Finally they got things in order, but no one wanted to tackle the bag, and as here was where the profits come in, pa braced up and said he'd like to know why everybody acted so 'spicious, he'd like to see a grab-bag that would give him the hysterics, and said 'women are always gettin' scared at nothin'.' He then put down ten cents and jammed his hand way down in the bottom of the bag, but he didn't keep it there long. He give a jump and yanked his hand out yelling 'thunder!' Then he swung it over his head to shake it off, and brought it down on the deacon's head, and smashed his specs. Then he swung it the other way, and struck the woman president of the sewing society in the stomach and knocked her down in the deacon's lap. After pa had hollered himself hoarse, and thumbed half the people in the room, the turtle let go, and pa said he 'could lick the man that put that steel trap in the grab-bag.' Then pa and ma got mad, and everybody began to jaw, and they all went home. There's been a sort of coldness among the members ever since. I guess pa won't have a hump-backed boy, but I'll get even with him, you just see if I don't."

And the boy went out and took a sign, "Warranted Fresh," from the fruit stand, and hung it on a blind horse that was hitched to a garbage wagon in front of the store.

AFRICAN SIMPLICITY.

Some of the Belgian explorers who have just returned to Europe from Africa tell amusing stories of the simplicity of the natives and their unlimited confidence in the power of the Europeans, to whom they attribute the control over the rain and sunshine. A Belgian Lieutenant who has just returned from crossing the continent from the Congo to Zanzibar, was asked by the natives near the latter place to remove the drouth. Having noticed that the rain followed him on his way from west to east, he gravely promised to let it rain if they would exempt him from paying the usual tribute. They promised at once, and soon afterward they were rewarded by a downfall of rain. "The populations in those parts," says the *Independence Belge*, "are in that state of civilization called the iron age. Slavery is deeply rooted, but the time seems to be gradually approaching when they may exchange it for the higher state of serfdom. The introduction of a feudal system would at present be of greatest benefit to the natives, who at present use slaves as a substitute for money—estimating values according to the number of slaves by which any commodity can be bought."

A delightful custom is in vogue among the Baltimore ladies, according to a newspaper of that city, which says: "A close observer in the park on a fair afternoon will see that every lady who makes a pretense to style wears a different make of dog—a dog with some feature or characteristic different from any other canine on the drive. This variety is easily secured. We are about to give a local secret away, because, as journalists, it is our duty to tell the truth and to furnish information upon all subjects. The secret of this admirable variety is that every lady makes her own dog. She decides for herself the style of dog she will affect. She then buys the shaded plush, cloth, satin, linen or fur that her nimble fingers can manipulate into the shape she wants, and then she cuts out her canine pet, stuffs it with raw cotton, sews on its tail and ears, fits a couple of glass marbles in for eyes, and there she has a dog which she can hold in the most graceful attitude, suited precisely in size and shape to her favorite breed, and in color harmonizing beautifully with her complexion and dress. Some ultra fashionable families have a number of these pudging pugs and poodles made up and constantly on hand to match their various costumes."

An English writer says that "kissing is a natural proceeding, and one which, within certain limitations, constitutes a highly pleasing experience. We once heard a young man say a kiss was 'bully,' but the English writer's definition may be the correct one, albeit no more expressive."

Very few young and blushing English sonnettes now claim that they came over with the first Lydia Thompson troupe. Like soldiers of the late war, members of the late war, members of the old Thompson troupe are veterans, if alive.

HEAVY HEADS.

A Curious Complaint—The Tyranny of Champagne at London Dinner-Tables.

"A confirmed diner-out," writes to the *Pall Mall Gazette* as follows: "There are few things more strange than the small use to which the happy possessors of fine clarets in England put their wines, and especially is this the case in London, where the tyranny of champagne is at its height. Not any one who is in the habit of dining out relate his experience of the last season. He will tell you that, whether the dinner has been at a private house or a club at a bachelor's rooms or at a hotel, at the Smiths with £10,000, or at the Browns with £700 a year, the staple of the entertainment has been champagne. I do not mean to say that the champagne has been the same in all cases, or equally well served; but there it was in some form or other (generally iced beyond recognition), and there was no escape from it. Now, it is far from my intention to decry champagne, which at certain times and seasons is superior to all other wines. What, for instance, is more enjoyable, and one may add more wholesome, after a long and wearisome day's work than a pint of fine champagne with one's well-earned dinner? What is comparable to it, when after a long stretch down the reaches of the Thames we gain at length the blissful haven of lunch? What would Ascot or Goodwood be without champagne? But it is a different thing. How well one knows the routine! First the glass of sherry after your soup; then the glass of hock (generally rather thin) after the fish, and then the inevitable. It is true that in some houses it is the custom to send round claret as an alternative to hock, and sometimes to champagne; but it seems to be thought that because you do not drink champagne you are therefore incapable of appreciating any decent wine, for your alternative is generally a poor bourgeois vintage, which becomes almost as fatiguing as champagne before the end of dinner. Perhaps no alternative is offered, and you murmur in the butler's ear, 'Is there any claret?' With a hesitating 'Yes, sir,' he will extract from the cellaret the remnants of a bottle of Medoc, opened perhaps the day before, and with this you must preface be content. But, it will be said, the host produces his fine claret after dinner.' He may, but to very little purpose. The hostess as she passes her husband whispers 'Remember, we are going off to Lady So-and-so's,' which means that two hours have been expended on dinner. The host, therefore, sends round with all expedition his best claret, his brown sherry, and perhaps his old port and Madeira; but ere they have traversed the table a counter-attraction is offered in the shape of a cigar-case, which means, as far as wine is concerned, you might as well drink Medoc as Lafitte. Now if this was occasional it would not signify, but on every night from Easter to the end of July it is a serious matter. Every wine merchant will tell you that champagne is the wine most fatiguing to the palate to taste, how much more so to drink continuously! On the other hand the least irksome wine to taste is claret; now as at a dinner party in London, one is obliged to be two hours in a space more or less confined and hot, and a certain amount of liquids as a necessity, why should not claret have a chance?"

"It is not the custom, at all events, in London to lay down a hog-head of a favorite wine; but most people who keep up any cellar at all have a few dozens of three or four different kinds of claret. If these three or four different kinds were given in proper sequence during dinner according to their respective vintage or merit instead of the eternal champagne, a pleasant variety would be imparted to a repast which is now sadly monotonous. If it be objected that ladies do not care for claret, I think it is an assertion hardly warranted by facts; my own experience is decidedly the contrary. The truth is that a lady hardly ever takes fine claret. At home she will drink claret and water, which, of course, is some ordinary or bourgeois wine; if she dines out or has friends at her own house, champagne is invariably given, and as she rarely takes more than one wine, there is an end of it. At clubs, too, the same fashion prevails, and with even less reason; there at least is plenty to choose from, for every good club has a large variety of clarets. But no; if Jones is entertaining Brown and Robinson he will probably order a magnum of champagne to start with, and when that is consumed he will suggest that they should 'stick to it.' They generally do 'stick to it,' with the not infrequent results of a heavy head and dry palate in the morning. Now, for the price of his magnum alone Jones might have given his friends a Panilac, a Pontet Canet, and a Leoville—far greater variety at the time and certain immunity from evil effects next day."

He was a college man, only about six weeks at large, and was traveling in Missouri. He made a mild little mash on the train, and was sealing the same with wild oranges of the desert which are sold by the fiery outlaw of the train. "Allow me," he said gracefully, "to remove the epidemics." "Lor, no," she hastily interjected, "I want to eat that. But you can peel off the skin; I don't want to get my fingers all sticky." And it so was.

THE WILD MAN.

This is the season of the year made sacred by old journalistic traditions to the appearance of the wild man. There is no more stable American institution than the wild man. That year should be marked with a black page in our history that fails to witness the advent of the wild man. No such year has yet arrived. The question of the presidential succession has trembled in the balance; we have had years of alienative, active and unhealthy, from our southern brothers; strange periods of change and disturbance have come to our young republic; but never yet has the season for the wild man come around without the wild man. Always prompt, always on hand at the proper time, he would be a valuable addition to any district telegraph messenger corps.

The wild man's favorite habitat is the woods of Tennessee; but some of him has been found in West Virginia, and a few have been known to affect Pennsylvania. Our own dear Empire State has made a praiseworthy though futile attempt at the production of a wild man. Cold and imaginative New England has failed in her duty in the matter of wild men, although the Concord School of Philosophy has raised some hopes in the breasts of those who would fain see the old commonwealth of Massachusetts show up a specimen that would outshine the best that the fertile south could do.

The wild man is usually discovered by berry pickers. When they see him they drop their tin cans, their jug of switchel and their self-possession and rush madly from the berry field, leaving behind them a broad swath of hair-pins and sun-bonnets.

Then the men of the neighborhood arm themselves with shot-guns of the pattern of 1812 and several jugs of whisky, and start out in pursuit of the monster. The only fruit of their chase, if it may be spoken of as fruit, is usually a neat collection of reptilia, mostly of the kind that are known to frequent the human boot.

Then comes a lull, during which the public mind remains in a state of gloomy suspense, mixed with feverish anticipation and punctuated with incredulity. Then two men who feel that they have a special and sacred call for the miraculous go out into the woods after chipmunks and casually encounter the wild man, who drives them from his sylvan lair with a fence-rail.

After this the wild man is generally wrapped in obscurity, and right-minded people, as a rule, approve of this endeavor to supply the deficiencies of his toilette.

But of late it has been held the proper thing to capture your wild man. This is a difficult and dangerous undertaking. Not because of any injuries which the wild man might inflict upon his pursuers during the process of capture, but because of the extreme awkwardness of disposing of your wild man after you have caught him. Obviously, the proper thing is to sell him to a museum; but it is equally obvious that this is impossible. The sale cannot be consummated without the delivery of the wild man. No museum yet recorded in the returns will accept a newspaper account of the capture of a wild man for the wild man himself. The patrons of a first-class museum would not like the substitution. You cannot poke a newspaper account in the ribs with umbrellas, or test its linguistic powers with scraps of bad French.

The latest wild man caught this season spoke German. From this it is inferred that he was originally a misguided musician who lost his interest in the world through an unwise attempt to work out a theory reconciling Wagner and the Bible.—Puck.

A PRISONER'S LETTER.

About a week ago Assistant District Attorney Kinsey sent a large arm-chair, that had been occupied by Governor Pattison when Comptroller, to the Penitentiary to be recaned. It was returned promptly. Mr. Kinsey sat down in it to read a newspaper. While idly swinging his hand to and fro his fingers touched a slip of paper that had been fastened to the arm of the chair and was almost imperceptible. He detached the slip, and opening it out, saw that it was a message from the convict who had done the repairing. The prisoner's name and the number of his cell were given, and the communication continued: "I got three years from Williamsport; got twenty-two months to do yet; will get out May 26, 1885; done this chair and made a good job of it. This ought to be worth some tobacco to whoever it belongs. Good-bye. Old man Time is rolling on; don't forget, whoever gets this note." Mr. Kinsey purchased five pounds of chewing tobacco of the best quality, put it in a pretty box and sent it to the convict, with his compliments.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

Before a London Police Court recently appeared a despondent husband and declared that his wife, Annie Lavinia Jane Caroline Clegg Le Chermant, was an unbearable person. Having previously procured a summons for her appearance to answer to the charges of opening their bedroom window at night, turning out the gas, stripping off the bed-clothes and assaulting her lord, he had now come into court a second time to announce that his polyglot spouse had cooked the summons and served it up hot on a plate for his dinner. This was an indignity to which Job himself had never been subjected, and he wanted redress.

A fine shade tree was recently cut down in the New York Central Park, because it obstructed the view of a soda fountain.