

residue behind, most of the ash passing up the chimney in the form of an almost impalpable powder. Perhaps the most cogent argument in favour of the fact of its popularity is that although much enquired for in Montreal, there is not a pound of it to be procured. It has all been bought up at prices varying from \$5, to \$7 per ton according to the varying prices of coal and wood. Its use has, as yet, been mainly confined here to culinary purposes and for fuel for locomotives but it is extremely probable that before long, peat will be made to serve a most important end in manufacturing operations, enabling us to utilize our large and valuable iron deposits.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Dublin Society, a highly important report on the value of peat as a fuel in Siemens' Gas Furnace, was received from Dr. Reynolds the Society's Professor of Analytical Chemistry, who says, "I have much pleasure in being able to report that the application of 'Siemens' Regenerative Furnace' to the economical combustion of rough, air-dried peat in great manufacturing operation, has proved eminently successful in this country. When I venture to draw attention to this important practical matter in a letter presented to the Council at the commencement of the 'fuel famine' in 1872, theoretical considerations chiefly led me to the conclusion that Siemens' apparatus was best suited for the purpose. The Great Southern and Western Railway Company, however, acting upon the suggestion and advice of its distinguished engineer, Mr. Alexander Macdonnell, have since erected a Siemens' furnace at their fine works at Inchicore. This furnace has now been more than two months in full operation, rough and poor peat being the only fuel employed. Notwithstanding the low quality of the turf used, the degree of heat obtainable is so great that the melting point of steel can be easily reached. This furnace has hitherto been regularly employed in forging large quantities of iron at Inchicore; and Mr. Macdonnell informs me that the quality of the iron turned out from this peat-fed Siemens' furnace is superior to that forged in the common air-furnace fed with the best coal. Still more important is the remarkable result which has been arrived at by Mr. Macdonnell, namely, that $5\frac{1}{2}$ tons of rough turf suffice to forge one ton of iron in the Siemens' furnace, whereas six tons of good coal or about two've tons of good peat must be burned in the common air-furnace in order to produce the same effect. Therefore, a manufacturer using a Siemens' furnace can obtain rather more heating effect from one ton of peat, costing 14s., than another using only the air-furnace can derive from one ton of coal at 28s. It is calculated that at least £3 10s. per ton of iron forged is saved at Inchicore by the use of Siemens' furnace fed with peat. Results such as these need no comment. I would only, therefore, venture to express the hope that manufacturers may now profit by the example and experience of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, and may utilise some of the immense power which the invaluable labours of Sir Richard Griffith long since proved to be stored up in the peat bogs of this country."

Peat is, indeed, attracting attention almost everywhere just now. The Western United States are looking to it to supply them with fuel and on our recent visit to the works at St. Hubert we were informed that the officers of the Company are constantly receiving inquiries from both hemispheres as to the most economical methods of production. Much of the information contained above has already appeared in a New York daily—in fact it would seem that part of the series of peat deposits mentioned should be along the Northern portion of that State. Our Canadian peat works, important as they are, however, promise before very long to become of much greater importance and if they also enable us to turn out the iron we so much need in

the extension of our railroads and for other purposes, they cannot fail to give an immense impulse to the general industry of the country.

News from the Stickeen mines is somewhat contradictory. First a correspondent writes that things are prosperous and the claims paying well, but that all the good claims are taken up. Then in about a month it is stated that about a hundred disappointed miners have arrived at Olympia, who say that the Stickeen mines are the worst sell ever got up on the Pacific coast and that hundreds of men are in the mines without a dollar or a pound of provisions. The *California Mining and Scientific Press* expresses itself on the subject as follows:—

"It seems as if repeated bitter experience would prevent most prospectors going to these periodical 'excitements' without at least money enough to get back again; more especially when the mines are in as inhospitable and distant a district as the Stickeen river country. The long winters were enough to deter most men, but the stories of fabulous richness—always prevalent about new mines—led many others to try their fortunes in the snowy regions of Dease's lake. It is probable, however, that some of the men who went to these mines must have made something, for a month or so ago a correspondent wrote that all the claims worth anything were taken up. We suppose that the late arrivals at the mines, most of whom expected a good claim immediately, must have been disappointed in seeing all the available mining ground already located; and fully realizing by that time the rigour of the climate of the region, they made up their minds to return. Of course such men will give the country a bad name, as those who are lucky will give it a good one. Many enthusiastic prospectors will not take the words of other parties about new mines but must see for themselves, and in so doing they often get 'bit' badly. It is strange, but nevertheless true, that all the mining 'excitements' in British Columbia and that region have turned out badly, and a large proportion of the men who went to the different localities, returned poorer but wiser men."

In view of the great increase just now taking place in the number of American inventions introduced into Europe the so far as possible universal assimilation of patent laws is becoming a question of moment to American patentees, especially when we take into account the loose and unsatisfactory nature of the patent systems of some of the European nations. The subject is being energetically considered in England where a deputation from the Associated Chambers of Commerce lately waited on the Foreign Minister urging his attention to the subject of the assimilation of the patent laws of England and the United States, which would be but a preliminary step to the assimilation of those of other countries. Lord Derby felt inclined to encourage the step but doubted whether the Americans were willing to co-operate. Since then it has been proposed to form a deputation of the Americans in London, representing patent interests, who should wait on the Foreign Minister and assure him of the interest felt in the United States in this movement. The London members of the Executive Committee of the Vienna Patent Congress also have the matter in hand and it is said that they propose to press it to an early conclusion.

A number of Pullman cars were shipped last fall from Montreal to be introduced on the English railroads. The cars in due time made their appearance on the Midland Railway and are said to have caused "quite a sensation." A trial trip was made, from Derby to London a distance of 129 miles, with two cars carrying a party of Engineers. The train was timed very fast so as to ascertain how much the cars would shake about, and all other trains were shunted for this one.