

his belief that working at the bout-hammer, at the blacksmith's anvil, had been the means of strengthening his constitution and saving his life. Some particulars of Jex's early history are given in Young's "General View of the Agriculture of the County of Norfolk." We subjoin the following extract, written about the year 1802. "Under the head implements, I must not conclude without mentioning a person of most extraordinary mechanical talents. Mr. Jex, a young blacksmith at Billington, at sixteen years of age, having heard that there was such a machine as a way-measurer, he reflected by what machinery the result could be produced, and set to work to contrive one; the whole was his own invention. It was done as might be expected, in a roundabout way, a motion too accelerated, corrected by additional wheels but throughout the complicity such accurate calculations were the basis of his work, that when finished and tried it was perfectly correct without alteration. His inventive talents are unquestionable. He has made a machine for cutting watch pinions, a deepening tool, a machine for cutting and finishing watch-wheel teeth, of his own invention, a clock-barrel and fusee engine made without ever seeing anything of the kind. He made a clock, the teeth of the wheels cut with a hack saw, and the balance with a half round file. He has made an electric machine and a powerful horse-shoe magnet. Upon being shown by Mr. Munnings a common barrow-drill, the delivery by a notched cylinder, he invented and wrought an absolutely new delivery; a brass cylinder, with holes having moveable plugs governed by springs which clears the holes or cups, throwing out the seed of any size with great accuracy; and, not liking the application of the springs on the outside of the cylinder, reversed the whole, and in a second, now making, placed them most ingeniously within it." Shortly after Young's notice of him was written, Jex removed to Letheringsett, near Holt, where he worked as a common blacksmith till within the last thirty years. Since that time he has employed workmen in the practical part of his business, but he continued till his decease to live in the house adjoining the blacksmith's shop. The first watch ever constructed by Jex was made after he had settled at Letheringsett, for his friend the Rev. T. Mungs, of Gorget, near Dereham. *Every part of this watch, including the silver face, and every tool employed in its construction, were of Jex's own making.* One of the greatest efforts of Jex's inventive powers was the construction of a gold chronometer, with what is technically termed a "*detached escapement*" and compensating balance, which was made long before he ever saw or heard of the "*detached escapement*"—the principle of which has since been so successfully applied by Arnold and Earnshaw. Jex turned the jewels himself, made the cases, the chain, the mainspring, and indeed every part of the watch, except the dial. The very instruments with which he executed this wonderful piece of mechanism were of his own workmanship. It is only by watchmakers themselves that this triumph of skill can be adequately appreciated. They know that no single man is ever employed to make a complete chronometer, but that different parts of the mechanism are entrusted to different hands, and that many are employed upon a single watch. This watch is now in the possession of

Mr. Blakely, of Norwich. Such was Jex's thirst for information and such was his resolution to clear away every obstacle which impeded his progress, that, wishing to read some French works on Horology, he mastered, *unassisted*, the French language, when about sixty years of age! He then read the books in question, but found that they contained nothing which was new to him, he having become thoroughly acquainted with the subject by previous study of English authors. Another of Jex's inventions was a lathe of extraordinary power and ingenuity, which remained in his possession until his death. By means of this lathe, he was enabled to cut the teeth of wheels mathematically correct into any number even or odd, up to 2,000, by means of a dividing plate. He also constructed a lathe on a minute scale for turning diamonds; which is very complicated in its structure. He likewise invented an airtight furnace door for his own greenhouse, so constructed that the fire would keep lighted from Saturday night till Monday morning, thus obviating the necessity of attending to it on Sunday. About ten years ago he invented a method of opening greenhouse windows to any required width, and so fastened that the wind has no power over them. Jex was also an iron and brass founder, a glass-blower, a maker of mathematical instruments, barometers, thermometers, gun barrels, air guns, &c. Jex understood electricity, galvanism, electro-magnetism, &c., and had a thorough knowledge of chemistry as far as the metals are concerned. Amongst other sciences, Jex understood astronomy, and could calculate the time by the fixed stars. In taking astronomical observations, he was accustomed to make use of his own door-posts and a chimney opposite. He made telescopes and *metallic reflectors*, which are universally acknowledged to be extremely difficult of construction. He was naturally a timid man, and his disposition was shy and retiring; but whenever he met with anyone whose tastes were similar to his own, he would converse for hours with the greatest delight on any subject connected with the arts and sciences. He was a man of the strictest integrity, and of unimpeachable veracity. He was *entirely* destitute of the love of money, and sought out truth *for its own sake*, and with no view to any personal gain. Such an example is rare indeed in this grasping and selfish age. He was kind in his manner to the poor, and rarely sent a mendicant away without relief. In 1845, Jex had a stroke of paralysis, from the effects of which he never entirely recovered. His intellect gradually lost much of its original power, and the last year or two especially a very marked alteration was perceptible. He was again attacked with paralysis in November last—and his death took place the 5th of January. His remains are interred in Letheringsett churchyard.—*Norfolk News.*

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An editor in Alabama having read an article in Hall's Journal of Health, advising that husband and wife should sleep in separate rooms, says: "Dr. Hall can sleep when and where he chooses, but for himself, he intends to sleep where he can defend his wife against the rats and all other nocturnal foes as long as he has got one to defend."