

SCIENTIFIC GLEANINGS.

FLOUR.

Flour, it is said, will not stand the action of the sun's rays, as, even when shaded from the direct action, an alteration takes place in the gluten similar to that produced when the stones heat.

WHITE BRICKS.

A new product is described from the waste sands of glass factories. The sand is subjected to an immense pressure, and then baked in furnaces at a high temperature, so as to produce blocks of various forms and dimensions of a uniform white color, which are composed of almost pure silica. The crushing load is from 370 to 450 kilograms per square centimetre. The product has remarkable solidity and tenacity; it is not affected by the hardest frosts or by the action of the sun or rain; it resists very high temperatures, provided no flux is present; it is very light, its specific gravity being only 1.5; it is of a fine white color, which will make it sought for many architectural effects in combination with bricks or stones of other colors.

TO POLISH PLATE GLASS.

Rub the surface gently first with a clean pad of fine cotton wool, and afterwards with a similar pad covered with cotton velvet which has been charged with fine rouge. The surface will under this treatment acquire a polish of great brilliancy, quite free from any scratches.

IRON WELDING.

According to Herr Wedding, the molecular arrangement of iron has far greater influence on the welding than the amount of carbon. To generalize from a few analyses, the capacity of welding increases with the amount of silicon and decreases with the amount of manganese present. Reiser's idea that the capacity of welding is influenced by the foreign substances present, in so far as they affect the crystalline structure of iron, is more probable than Ledbur's idea that the foreign substances present have a deleterious influence on the welding property of iron proportional to their amount.

HEARING THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC INDUCTION.

Dr. Schaper recently demonstrated to an audience the magnetic induction exercised by the Earth. A number of telephones were arranged in series upon one circuit, which was rapidly made and broken by an interrupter. A telephone was then repeatedly turned end for end in such a way that its north and south poles were alternately the uppermost, and at each reversal a crack was heard in all the telephones, resulting from the induction of the Earth on the central magnet. If the experiment be made with an induction bobbin only, the crack is extremely feeble, due in that case to the induction of the Earth on the bobbin. The telephone may be replaced by a magnet wrapped with insulated wire. The degree of sensibility of the telephones can be determined, if the axis of rotation of the magnet employed in the experiment be brought little by little nearer to that of the inclining apparatus.

SCIENTIFIC BASEBALL.

Science has come to the aid of baseball players, and announces, for the benefit of batsmen who are ambitious to make heavy hits, that the ball should be struck at the angle of twenty-three degrees in order to send it to the greatest possible distance. Repeated experiments with artillery have proved that a ball fired from a cannon at this angle will carry further than if fired at any other angle with a like charge of powder.

CLEAN CELLARS NECESSARY FOR HEALTHY HOMES.

In city and country alike, it is the dark corners, the neglected and little used places in a house, which most frequently contribute to its unhealthfulness, and in ways which are the more insidious because so often unsuspected. In this respect the cellars of many houses have much to answer for, for they are generally dark and damp, with no direct rays of the sun to kill the mephitic gases which always seek these low levels, and no ventilation to disperse them, even where the cellars themselves are not made the depositories of cast-off rubbish and vegetable refuse. Therefore the warning cannot be too often given, especially in the spring, when so many families move into new houses, and when the good housewife generally enforces the most thorough cleaning and overhauling of the year, to look to it that the cellar is not neglected. Their ceilings and walls should be plastered and whitewashed or calcimined where possible, to keep them dry and clean, and the occupants should prevent their cellars above all things also from becoming "poke holes" for rubbish; the floors should be well paved or cemented, to keep out emanations from the soil; and where this can be done, they should be ventilated by keeping open, in dry weather, windows or doors communicating with the outside air. Emanations from cellars do not kill in a night; they are but too frequently not noticed at all, although damp and mouldy cellars have undoubtedly done much to undermine the health of many families. This cellar air is taken up through the rooms of a house gradually, and in small doses at a time, but the warmer air of the upper rooms produces an upward current every time the cellar door is opened, and neglect in regard to this matter is sure to entail serious consequences because the real reason is so often overlooked.

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