METERS THAT PLUNDER THE UNSUSPECTING

How Electric Light Companies Wax Unduly Fat.

Consumers Made the Victims of a Conscienceless Device.

Mechanical Contrivances That Will Cheat Without Human Agency.

CANNOT BE MADE HONEST

One Company Forced to Make Restitution to the Palace Hotel of a Large Sum.

Do you use electricity for light or power?

If so you will do well to keep close watch on the meter which tells the company how much to charge you, for it is a tricky little instrument and as erratic as a lovelorn maiden. Left to its own devices it will play the most fantastic tricks with the indicator, such as registering a less quantity than is actually used when only a few burners are lighted, while with a large number turned on it will register anywhere from 10 to 60 per cent more than it ought to.

With such a bare-faced little fraud plundering consumers unaided, it is easy to imagine what it is capable of doing with a little friendly assistance. This assistance may be any one of a hundred influences. For instance, one pole of a strong magnet will greatly decrease its speed, but the other pole, if brought in close proximity, will start it off at a record-breaking gait. An old file, a length of pipe, or even a wire left lying close to the meter will be the means of adding 10 or 20 per cent to the bill.

In short, the mechanical electric meter is so thoroughly disreputable that it could not be honest if it tried. This statement may sound rather strong, but it has the indorsement of no less an authority than H. N. Sessions, expert for the Gas Consumers' Association, who says, in the course of an article on the Watt meter in the Journal of Electricity of August, 1897:

"One point about the Watt meter, and, perhaps, not the least in the favor of the campanies selling light and power, is the very small percentage fast that their meter would have to record on large loads to discount a large percentage slow, and even the stoppage of the meter, on small loads. For example, a meter reading 5 per cent fast on 600 lamps burning for one hour, would discount an error of 50 per cent slow on ten lamps burning six hours.

"One may ask why the companies rely on meters that are liable to register slow as well as fast—in other words, cheat them as well as the consumers? This is easily answered. A meter is apt to register slow only when a few lamps are burning, as, for instance, in the day time when the company's employe comes around to examine the meter to determine the amount of your bill, or the meter man comes to test it. Then a limited number of lamps will be used. But at night, when all your incandescents, as well as your arc lights, are blazing away, the little machine in the basement is doing business for the company with the greatest fidelity."

Mr. Sessions states that there is no mechanical meter, and in the very nature of things, never will be one that is absolutely correct, that is within one per cent of correct, while none of those now in use are within three or four per cent of being correct. The only absolutely correct method of registering electricity, he says, is the old zinc-copper-chemical meter, but that is so expensive the companies have abandoned it for others.

There are three mechanical meters used by the companies in this city, the Scheffer, Thomson and Schellenber, all of which register the watts used by a dial. The Thomson is the meter most generally used and is fully as accurate as either of the others, which need not be construed as a strong recommendation of its virtues. Some of the largest consumers in the city have, by experience, learned of its vagaries, with the result that they employ their own experts to test the meters and compel the companies to strike an average in their bills.

Notably is this the case with the Palace Hotel, which is the largest individual consumer in town. The bills for lighting that hostelry with electricity will foot up $30,000 a year, a sum that warrants the keeping of careful watch on the meters. There are thirteen used to register the number of watts consumed, each attached to a different circuit. For several years the hotel management operated its own electric light plant, but with the starting up of competing companies the cost was reduced, until it was deemed advisable to buy electricity. The hotel employs an expert electrician, who is constantly inspecting the meters and his tests are invariably compared with those of the company's expert. Frequently Mr. Sessions has been called upon by the management to assist its expert, and their figures have, at times, shown a startling discrepancy from those of the company's employe. The result has been some big reductions in the bills, the largest being that of last October, when the company allowed a rebate of between $1100 and $1200 on what it claimed.

This, and numerous other rebates, were allowed without any protest, on the part of the company, probably because it knows that the hotel people are thoroughly familiar with electricity and the peculiarities of the meters, and consequently cannot be imposed upon. But with smaller consumers, who do not employ their own expert and rely entirely upon the employes of the various companies, the case is different, and complaints are daily occurrences.

One such case is that of the Orpheum Theater, whose bills for lighting ran up to such proportions, that recently it was deemed advisable to change from one company to another, with the result that the bills showed an immediate decrease of $30 to $40 each month.

But the wickedness of these meters could be dwelt upon for an indefinite time, and for the benefit of the victims of their criminal work The Call will refer to them again.

AGED CYCLIST INJURED.

Albert Smidt, Foreman of the Western Sugar Refinery, Hurled From His Wheel.

Albert Smidt, 50 years of age, and foreman of the Western Sugar Refinery, was badly injured about 5 o'clock last evening by falling from his bicycle. He was trying to descend the hill on Alvarado street, near Douglass, when he lost control of his bicycle and shot down the grade with great speed. When near the bottom his front wheel struck an obstruction and he was hurled to the ground. Officer Anderson called a patrol wagon and removed him to his home at 120 Clipper street. Dr. T. V. Hughes attended the injured man and found he had sustained numerous scalp wounds, necessitating fifteen stitches. He also suffered several small cuts in the face and many bruises about the body. It is feared he has been internally injured.

WINNERS AT THE TWO PARKS.

Personal Mention.

One could almost hear the rumble of wheels in the Palace lobby last night. Every train brought in a carload of railroad officials, who will attend the council at Del Monte. The arrivals last night were: W. A. Bissell, assistant freight and traffic manager of the Santa Fe system; Edward Chambers, general freight agent of the Santa Fe, Pacific and Southern California Railway; W. R. McInnes, general agent, freight department of the Canadian Pacific Railway and Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie, and George O. Somers, general freight agent of the Great Northern Railway.

C. M. Hainz, editor of the Germania, is stopping at the Grand.

E. M. Cole and wife of Boston are at the Grand.

E. H. Schibeley, the Oroville banker, is at the Grand.

W. P. Harkey, Sheriff of Yuba County, arrived in the city last night and will stay at the Russ House while in town.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Sanger Pullman returned yesterday from Del Monte, and are stopping at the Palace.

It being the intention of J. F. Kennedy, successor to Morris & Kennedy, art dealers, 21 Post street, to retire from business, he offers his large stock irrespective of cost.

Bitten by a Dog.

OAKLAND, March 20.—Childena Fortudo, a girl 10 years of age, living at 611 Madison street, was badly bitten by a dog this evening while playing in the street. The brute grabbed her left hand and arm, making a painful wound. She was taken to the Receiving Hospital, where Steward Tobin cauterized the wound and dressed it.

COURSING AT THE TWO PARKS

The Local Dogs Easily Won the Day at Ingleside.

A Rank Outsider Captures the Finals at Union Park.

The Eastern Racers Do Not Seem to Improve in Form or Speed.

For Freedom Easily Defeats the Cracks, Rosette and Moondyne.

A Large Crowd Bet Piles of Money on the Results and the Talent Was Happy.

The New Wonder Has Just Been Imported From Old England.

At the Ingleside Coursing Park yesterday a large crowd saw the Eastern flyers defeated by the local hounds and the money that poured into the many pool boxes running showed conclusively that the talent are of the opinion that the Eastern dogs will never equal the speed of those raised on this coast. For weeks past many dog followers suggested that before giving an opinion they should wait for the hare chasers to be acclimated, but now that weeks and months have passed and better form is not shown, the betters are becoming aware that they have repeatedly placed their money in the wrong direction.

The improvement shown by Deckelman & Panario's Glen Roy during the past few months is a surprise, and although the hound has never been outside the money he went clear down the line yesterday and ran the final with Magic and sold favorite on the course. The talent had everything their own way, with one or two exceptions, and the bookies had all they could attend to handling the money. The crowd was large, and although the weather was raw the good sport was enjoyed. A splendid run was made by Lady Napoleon, a sapling, against Johnny R., and if improvement follows as is expected the Lady will be a stake winner in the near future. The odds on the Johnny R.-Bendalong course in the second ties was $5 to $1 in favor of Johnny R. and the talent suffered on the result when the white flag was shown at the instigation of Judge Grace. The hares all ran well, some of them making their escape.

A b[illegible] of $100 to $20 was offered in the Little Ingleside a day or two ago that Johnny R. would not win the stake. The money was soon deposited and interest was taken in the Johnny R. courses and much money went to the bad on the finish. It is supposed to be the bet that made the hound such a favorite over Bendalong, as the speed of the two hounds does not warrant such uneven money. On next Saturday and Sunday an open stake and a sapling stake, $2.50 entrance, $600 added, will be run off. Saplings to be eligible must be whelped in March, April and May, 1897. The drawing will take place Thursday evening. This is how the hounds ran:

First ties—H. Hanrahan's Mercury beat W. C. Glasson's Sylvanus; B. Dougherty's Tessle Fair beat W. Ryan's Soprano; T. Cronin's Johnny R beat W. Dalton's Lady Napoleon; D. Leonard's Bendalong beat D. Flynn's Tom Bell; Dr. Van Hummel's Van Cloie beat W. C. Glasson's Mystery; W. C. Glasson's Magic beat M. Michalik's Fireball; G. Smart's Silkwood beat Henry Spring's Dawn; P. Reilly's Ranger beat P. Carney's Nelly Daly; D. Kaber's Bell of Moscow beat Dr. Van Hummel's Chit Chat; Deckelman & Panario's Glen Roy beat James Byrne's Mohawk; Henry Spring's Pat Malloy beat E. J. Heney's Harkaway; D. Hooper's Koo Laun beat J. Dean's Brilliantine; J. M. Stilwell's Little Dell beat J. J. Edwards' Vida Shaw.

Second ties—Mercury beat Tessle Fair; Bendalong beat Johnny R; Magic beat Van Cloie; Silkwood beat Ranger; Glen Roy beat Belle of Moscow; Pat Malloy beat Koo Lawn; Little Dell a bye.

Third ties—Mercury beat Bendalong; Magic beat Silkwood; Glen Roy beat Little Dell; Pat Malloy a bye.

Fourth ties—Magic beat Mercury; Glen Roy beat Pat Malloy.

Final—Magic beat Glen Roy and won the money.

In the consolation stake Princess Marie ran a bye; J. J. Edmond's Forget beat Dr. Van Hummel's Van Traale; R. L. Lee's Coralie beat J. R. Dickson's Premier; H. Devine's Gilt Edge beat S. E. Portal's At Last; P. Brophy's Benicia Boy beat James Byrne's Nelly B; S. E. Portal's Lightning beat F. C. Mack's Black Patti; F. Brown's Alma beat Dr. Van Hummel's Van Nida.

First ties—Forget beat Princess Marie; Coralie beat Gilt Edge; Lightning beat Benicia Boy; Alma a bye.

Second ties—Coralie beat Forget; Lightning beat Alma.

Final—Coralie beat Lightning.

The war excitement makes the men who knew Captain Philo McGiffin well think of him regretfully in these days. He was a born fighter, as he proved in the battle of the Yalu; and all his life he longed for a chance to put up a good fight for the stars and stripes.

"I'm not fool enough to wish for a war," he said, "but if America's bound to have one, I hope it will come in my day, that's all. My idea of absolute happiness is to be on a good American man-of-war with a battle on hand and an enemy worth whipping."

For a few years he gave up naval life and tried to resign himself to stagnation in a little Western town; but the experiment went hard with him. The only water near the place was a miserable little stream that went sliding along in a disconsolate way. A foot bridge crossed it on the edge of the town; and there, leaning over the railing, staring in a homesick fashion at the strip of water and puffing at his cigar, the ex-naval man could be found at almost any hour of the day. Most of his matter-of-fact Western neighbors thought it was funny, but there were a few who called it pathetic.

When news of the Franco-Chinese trouble came the fighting blood in McGiffin's veins boiled and the West had to go by the board.

"I'm dying for the salt water, anyhow," he said, "and spoiling for a fight, and I'm going to take a hand in this shindy. I may never have another chance, we're so blamed peaceable in this generation."

He started for China, but the trouble was ended before he had a chance to join in, and then fate dropped him into the place in the Chinese navy, where at last he found the fight he had been looking for. The Yalu was hot enough to satisfy even him. Every one knows how he fought; and when, after it was all over, he came home a physical wreck and with death staring him in the face, he had only one regret.

"It was a great fight," he said to an old friend, "but if I'd had a Yankee ship under me and Yankee sailors beside me and a Yankee flag above me, we'd have shown the Japs what fighting means. I wish I could have been knocked to pieces under the stars and stripes, if it had to come. Still, it was a pretty fight."

We've others like him in the navy of which our Spanish friends speak so slightingly; but if the fight is to come it's a pity McGiffin couldn't have lived at least a year longer and have had his heart's desire.—New York Sun.

MUSICAL HAPPENINGS.

Marteau-Lachaume Orchestral Concert—The Lelys' Scotch Song Recitals.

Marteau and Lachaume were aided by an orchestra at the concert given last night in the Metropolitan Hall. Marteau directed the performance of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, and considering the band was a scratch one, which had not rehearsed any too often, he gave a quite creditable reading of the symphony. Lachaume led the "Tannhauser" overture with fair result. He ably directed in the Mendelssohn violin concerto, in which Marteau's beautiful tone and technique found congenial material. The audience was somewhat small, but hugely enthusiastic, especially over the solos of the pianist and violinist. The auditorium has not been selected as yet for the final Marteau-Lachaume concerts, which are to be given Wednesday and Saturday.

To-night and to-morrow night, at the Young Men's Auditorium, Mr. and Mrs. Durward Lely will give recitals of Scotch songs for the benefit of Clan Fraser, O. S. C. The first recital will be entitled, "A Nicht wi' Burns," the second, "Rose, Thistle and Shamrock." Mr. Lely was at one time Patti's leading tenor.

A Small Blaze.

Box 286—At 6 o'clock last evening there was a fire at Twenty-fourth street and Potrero avenue, in Matthenson's hay barn. It was damaged to the extent of $50. Carelessness in the use of matches caused the blaze. J. H. Ripple was the owner of the building.

To Cure a Cold in One Day

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. 25c. The genuine has L. B. Q. on each tablet.

M'GIFFIN'S GREAT DESIRE.

The Chance Longed For by the Hero of the Yalu to Fight Under the Stars and Stripes.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

Our Importations for Spring, 1898, are now all ready for inspection. This season we offer a most magnificent assortment of High Novelties in all Departments.

O'Connor, Moffatt & Co.
INCORPORATED 1892.

111, 113, 115, 117, 119, 121 POST STREET.

INIQUITY BEHIND GILDED GATES

The Combined Influence of the Churches United Against Bacon Place.

An Effort Is Being Made to Cleanse the Tenderloin District.

The evil that has tainted the atmosphere of what is known as "The Tenderloin" section of this city and on which so much has appeared in the public papers during the period when Quincy and Mary streets were being purified, has once more assumed shape, in the united action of the Protestant and Catholic churches to drive this evil entirely out of that section.

At present those who have been driven out of Chinatown and the two streets already mentioned have become domiciled in what is known as Bacon place, a small cul de sac running off Pine street between Dupont and Kearny streets. Here behind closed doors, so to speak, as the alleyway is enclosed by gilded gates, are concentrated over 100 of the most depraved females known to this community.

Living off and following these unfortunate creatures are a set of male parasites, opium fiends, thieves and all-round rascals, with police records. To keep this class of social outcasts within bounds it costs the taxpayers $600 a month by keeping sufficient police officers on constant duty day and night, exclusively in this section.

So objectionable has this evil become that the clergy of St. Mary's and of Grace Cathedral are now united in making one final effort to have the women removed, and the entire section known as the "Tenderloin" cleansed of all such influences. The Chief of Police will be appealed to once more, and should this fail then the courts will be resorted to for relief.

TOOK CARBOLIC ACID.

Mrs. Sallie Silverman, While Despondent, Attempts to End Her Existence.

Mrs. Sallie Silverman of 439 Geary street tried to commit suicide yesterday by swallowing carbolic acid, but was prevented by her sister-in-law, Mrs. Wallfisch, who dashed the phial containing the poison from her uplifted hand. The latter's hands were terribly blistered by the acid, while the would-be suicide escaped with a burned mouth and face. Fearing she had swallowed some of the poison Officer W. W. Wilson was called in and he hurriedly removed her to the Receiving Hospital.

Mrs. Silverman, who is but 22 years of age, separated from her husband a few weeks ago. She had been living with her three-year-old child and sister-in-law. Becoming discouraged at her lot she bought the poison and attempted to take it. Mrs. Silverman said last evening that she wanted to die, because she had trouble, but after being put to bed, the thought of her child made her repent.

Dead, Dying or Worse.

Sam Thall, who is at present manager for Jim Corbett, has just received a letter from George M. Welty, the well-known theatrical man, now in Johannesburg. It is short, succinct and terse: "Tell the boys I have quit the show business forever. Beg them not to write, but just pray for me."

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

The fac-simile signature of Chas. H. Fletcher is on every wrapper.

GOLDBERG BOWEN & CO.

It's a temptation sometimes to a grocer to buy imitation foods

He could make so much more profit and get rich quicker

So he reasons and too often falls

It requires stamina to sell pure food of the best quality all the time

SPECIAL SAVING SALE
Monday Tuesday Wednesday

Tomato Catsup 15c
regularly 20c bottle
Salmon Steaks—Columbia river 12½c
regularly 15c tin 1 lb.
Cooked ready for use
French castile soap 25c
After Wednesday 30 bar
The kind with the lather
Scotch whiskey D C L $1
regularly $1.35 (Caledonian)
Irish whiskey D C L 80c
regularly $1 (Killycroy)
Glace fruits—French 35c
regularly 50c pound here
pine apple—cherries and assorted
Cocktails—Imperial Cocktail Co 90c
regularly $1.25 bottle
gin—martini—vermouth
old Tom gin—manhattan—whiskey
Rock and Rye $1
regularly $1.25—German rock
candy and pure rye whiskey
Corkscrew—for pocket 15c
regularly 25c—three inches long
and half inch diameter when
closed—nickel plated
Dates—black 10c
regularly 15c pound
Figs—Smyrna 15c
regularly 20c and 25c pound
Preserved ginger 30c
regularly 35c pot—C & B
Booth's Old Tom gin 85c
regularly $1 bottle
Field's orange bitters 85c
regularly $1 bottle
Listerine—an antiseptic bottle 65c
Lemons 15c
regularly 25c

BEE brand tea just from Ceylon, in original lead foil packages

Just received a fresh invoice of Hungarian paprika—the best spice for a sluggish liver

It takes careful buying to be able to compete with grocers nowadays
Good grocery buying has also taught us how to buy cigars to compete with exclusive dealers to our advantage—and yours
Fresh cigars now being unpacked.

432 Pine 215 Sutter 2800 California San Francisco
1075 Clay between Eleventh and Twelfth Oakland

ADVERTISEMENTS.

It Pays to Trade in The Mission.

PATTOSIEN'S

It Pays to Trade in The Mission.

CORNER SIXTEENTH AND MISSION STREETS.

THERE IS A POINT

On the downgrade of Quality where CHEAPNESS CEASES TO BE ECONOMY. We never cross this line. We meet all price competition, re-enforced with the best quality made.

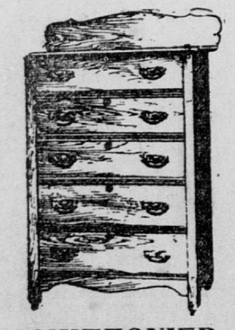
Four carloads of Furniture consigned to us arrived in badly damaged condition. The owner offered them to us at our own price. It was a tempting offer, for a liberal dose of varnish covers a multitude of sin. We rejected the whole lot. As a business concern we cherish nothing higher than the full confidence of our customers, for, as Lord Chatham says, "perfect confidence is a plant of slow growth, but its bloom is beautiful indeed." We bend all our efforts to keep the flowers intact and their fragrance unimpaired. We trust that we have done so.

FURNITURE BARGAINS.

A DARING TABLE SALE.
TERRIFIC SELLING SURE TO FOLLOW.

DINING TABLE.

Solid oak, 6 legs, full extension, like cut $5.75



CHIFFONIER.

Solid Oak, polished top, 18 by 33 inches, height 55 inches $5.75

One of those unmatchable bargains you only find at Pattosien's.

Solid oak 8-foot Extension Table, worth $15 00; sale price $8.00
25 patterns of Extension Tables, some in 8, some in 10, and some 12 feet lengths; to be closed out at half factory prices.
Solid oak Cane Seat Dining Chairs, worth $1 40; for $1.00
Solid oak box seat Dining Chair, with cane seat; worth $2 25; for $1.50
Oak and Imitation Mahogany Hanging Hall Mirrors, with bevel French plate glass, 3 double hooks; worth $7 00; for $4.75
1 lot handsome Parlor Tables, 24-inch top, twisted leg, with lower shelf in quarter-sawed oak, mahogany finish and old English oak; regular price $7 50; sale price $3.50
2 solid Mahogany Colonial Pattern Library Tables 28 by 48 inch top; worth $30 00; to close at $17.50
$28 00—Very handsome Combination Desks and Book Cases, made of fine quarter-sawed oak; special sale price $13.75
$12 00—Ladies' Desks, in quarter-sawed oak, mahogany finish and birdseye maple, beautiful, dainty and artistic little desks at the specially low price of $6.75
$15 00—Book Cases, in good quality, quarter-sawed oak, well polished and finished, size 5 feet high by 30 inches wide; sale price $7.25
We will place on sale to-morrow morning a lot of sample Book Cases, in oak and mahogany finish. Many excellent bargains will be found in this lot. Prices from ..... $7.25 up

PARLOR FURNITURE—

$95 00 Parlor Suit, finely inlaid, latest style upholstering; sale price $62.50
$65 00 Parlor Suit, handsomely inlaid, imported silk damask coverings; sale price $37.50
$45 00 Parlor Suit, hand carved and assortment of coverings; sale price $24.75

COUCHES AND BED LOUNGES—

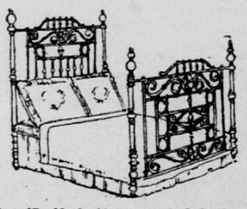
$10 00 Corduroy Couches $6.50
$14 00 Imported Velour Couches $7.65
$18 00 French Tapestry Couches $12.50
$28 00 Library Couches $18.00
$33 00 Heavy Tapestry Couches $22.00
$36 00 Rare Pattern Tapestry Couches $25.00
Our own reliable make. Sale on the second floor.

DRESSERS AND CHIFFONIERS—

Full swell front all quartered Oak Dressers, oval French plate mirror; the $20 00 kind; at $14.75
Solid Oak Dressers, large bevel mirror, worth $12 50; special price $8.75
A $35 00 Birdseye Maple Dresser, large French plate mirror; at $22.50
All Quartered Oak Chiffoniers, worth $9 50; the best value we have yet shown; special price $6.75

ENAMELED BEDS.

Our line of Enamel Beds you will find to be larger and more complete than you've seen elsewhere—the quality and finish of a higher grade—the prices lower. We quote a few special prices—



$4 for $7, $8 & $9 enameled beds.
$7 for $10, $12 & $15 enameled beds.
$20 for $30 brass beds.
$30 for $45 brass beds.
$6.50 for $8¼ Centaur mattresses.
$12.50 for $18 curled hair mattresses.

CARPETS AND RUGS.

The biggest, brightest and best lighted Carpet Department in San Francisco—on the north end of the second floor—Carpets and Floor Coverings are our strong point; buying in great lots and our ridiculously low rent enables us to make prices below all others.

Tapestry Brussels—Extra quality, wool surface and fast colorings 45c
Extra Super Ingrain—Best quality, new designs and shadings 50c
Wilton Velvets—Smith, Stinson & Sanford, well-known makes, with or without borders 90c
Smyrna Rugs—John Bromley & Sons' extra quality new effects, 37x72 inches—worth $5.75 ..... $3.50
China Matting—Fancy checks and stripes regular 20 quality 15c
Japanese Linen Warp Matting—Novelty designs and colorings—our usual 35c grade 25c
25c Floor Oil Cloth—oil glazed surface and thoroughly printed—all widths—per square yard 20c
KENSINGTON ART SQUARES—(whole carpets) 2½x3 yards, $3—3x3½ yards, $4.25—3x4 yards $4.75
ROYAL SMYRNA RUGS—9x12 ft $22
SMITH'S AXMINSTER RUGS—8¼x10½ $21
2000 SMYRNA RUGS—30x60 inches $1.90
SMITH'S MOQUETTE RUGS—24x50 inches $2.30
TAYKO JAPANESE RUGS—9x12 feet $11
SCOTCH OR ENGLISH LINOLEUM—2 or 4 yards wide—excellent goods for wear and very sightly patterns 50c

ALL ROADS LEAD TO PATTOSIEN'S.