

SCIENCE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1887.

AT NÄÄS, SWEDEN, the third summer course of normal training in slöjd, which is the equivalent of our manual training, began towards the end of July with a total attendance of eighty. Of these, twelve were English and eighteen were Italians, sent by their government to receive the training. New and commodious buildings had been erected during the past year, and the school was favored with many distinguished visitors during the summer. Encouraged by the reception of her article in the London *Journal of Education* on slöjd, Miss Evelyn Chapman announces a slöjd training-course for teachers, to be held at Birmingham during the holidays. Miss Chapman has an efficient colleague in Miss Nyström of Stockholm, who was the first directress at the Nääs seminary. It is hoped that the efforts of these two ladies will result in introducing manual training in the board schools of Great Britain. In this country the progress of manual training has been very rapid of late, and we hear almost daily that some new locality is considering the subject. Paterson, N.J., is about to take favorable action in this matter, and Hoboken and other cities of the same State are expected to follow Paterson's example.

THE *New York Times*, a paper which has in earlier days, in the contributions of Holley and Newton and their successors, supplied much more valuable and interesting scientific matter to its readers than the average daily newspaper seems to feel called upon to give the intelligent portion of its patrons, and which has dealt less in the coarse and vulgar accounts of crime and folly which make up the average staple than many of its contemporaries, recently, under the heading, 'Is Heavy Artillery doomed?' presents an account of an invention, destined, apparently, to overthrow all existing methods of ordnance construction and operation. Since the *Times* has allowed its 'funny man' entrance into its editorial columns, its readers have sometimes been at loss to know whether some of its articles are genuine 'information,' are the product of an overworked vender of the 'humorous,' or are simply the gossip of an ignorant penny-a-liner. The several characters are sometimes found to operate in so circumscribed a field, that it is difficult to say whether the article of the day is to be assigned to one or to another of these usually far-removed classes. Possibly it may be the intention, as apparently in the article here referred to, to kill two birds with one stone, amusing the smaller and more intelligent class of readers, while gulling most mercilessly the larger and less well informed body of its patrons, who may not have had the advantages of a good common-school education. It certainly cannot be presumed that its editors are of the latter class. The general make-up and character of the *Times*, and the fact that its proof-reading and orthography are very correct, would forbid that supposition being held a moment. The story which it is so difficult to classify, and of which it is so utterly impossible to guess the origin, is that a distinguished Russian chemist has discovered a new explosive, of extraordinary power, and endowed with a capacity for evading or directly overcoming the second of Newton's laws. This new compound furnishes an exception to the general rule, and here action and re-action are *not* "equal and opposite in direction." In fact, the re-action is turned directly about, apparently, and effectively assists direct action in its destructive mission. This wonderful explosive acts in but one direction, and that is the direction which is suggested to it by its manipulators. A tube of cardboard, of tissue-

paper, — or, we may presume, the geometrician's imaginary cylinder, — serves to communicate the intent of the 'captain of the gun,' and the stored energy of the combustible starts off in the indicated direction, impelling the projectile with inconceivable force, and with not even sufficient recoil or lateral expenditure of force to crumple the imponderable gun. The latter, it may be presumed, is, when out of action, packed down like an opera-hat into the least possible space, and put in the pocket of the officer in command, or stored in the caisson until again required for the demolition of an iron-clad or the destruction of a fortress. The only really puzzling fact is, however, that the inventor of this extraordinary explosive, in the quiet seclusion of the *Times* office, — for the Russian must have become domiciled there, — does not seem to have successfully applied the tremendous brain-power, which has thus defied the laws of nature, to the completion of his work by also inventing a projectile of lightness commensurate with that of his gun, and to have endowed his explosive with a 'negative gravity' such as readers of his article must experience and appreciate. He would thus have realized the idea of Lord Lytton, and would have won immortal fame by presenting to the world the blessed 'VRILL,' which we now know only in the fictions of that great novelist. We would suggest to our neighbor of the *Times* that he secure a good supply of that marvellous 'sleetover,' and turn it, first upon his 'funny man,' and then upon those unsympathetic neighbors among the 'great New York dailies' who are prone to smile at such *facetiae*.

AT THE RECENT meeting in New York, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the fact that the remains of the great naturalist Audubon lie in an obscure and little-visited portion of Trinity Cemetery, New York City, and that his tomb is unmarked by any distinguishing monument, was brought to the attention of the members. The demands upon the time of all in attendance at that meeting were so great, that no action was taken by the association, although the most lively interest was expressed by individual members, and the propriety of marking the resting-place of the founder of American ornithology by a suitable monument was appreciated. The Audubon plot in Trinity Cemetery will probably be disturbed by the continuation westward of 153d Street. The trustees of the cemetery have with commendable liberality assigned the Audubon family a new lot close to 155th Street, in full sight of Audubon Park, and near the end of Audubon Avenue, when this shall be continued from the north, and are in hearty co-operation with the monument enterprise. At the first autumn meeting of the New York Academy of Sciences, a committee was appointed to solicit funds and make all arrangements for a monument. Vice-President Trowbridge then appointed as such a committee, Prof. Thomas Egleston of the School of Mines, chairman, Prof. Daniel S. Martin of Rutgers Female College, and Dr. N. L. Britton of Columbia College. This committee has organized with Dr. Britton as secretary and treasurer, and is now ready to receive subscriptions, which will be properly acknowledged. Checks should be made payable to N. L. Britton, treasurer, and post-office orders should be drawn on Station H, New York City. The committee estimates that between six and ten thousand dollars will be required to erect and engrave a shaft worthy the memory of America's first naturalist, and, while confident that this amount will be forthcoming, desires to have interest taken in the project by scientists in all departments, in all portions of the country.