Thursday Evening, May 6th, 1875, at 7.31 o'clock, for the purpose of electina Trustees, receive reports and transact such other business as may come before it.

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Wednesday, - May 5, 1875,

TOUGHENED GLASS.

OME PARTICULARS OF THE RE-CENT REMARKABLE DISCOVERY. Although the manufacture of glass has been carried on for about 2,000 years, it does not appear that any attempts to overcome its inherent brittleness and liability to fracture, and at the same time to preserve its transparency, have have ever been made, which is doubtful. It is true that the French philosopher Reaumer, many years since, hardened glass somewhat by exposing it to a high temperature for a considerable time. But this process, which is technically fermed devitrification, while it hardens, at the same time crystalizes the glass and renders it opaque, the product being known as Reamur's porcelain. Seven years since, however, M. Francois to congratulate M. de la Bastie on the useful and valuable discovery years since, however, M. Francois de la Bastie, a French engineer, after long and patient investigation into the subject, discovered a simple means of rendering glass practically unbrittle, and at the same time of preserving its transparency. There were many deliparency. There were many delicate conditions involved in the process by which he obtained this J. T. LITTLE. President. result, his success being achieved much in the same way as was Pal-

lissy's, but on endeavoring to repeat the successful experiment he failed signally. For two years more M. de la Bastie, who possesses ample means, strove without avail to rediscover the secret of his success. At length, however, he succeeded in so doing, and has since been en gaged in perfecting his invention and developing a laboratory ex-periment into practical working. The process of conversion, in the main, is a very simple one, so simple that it seems singular it was never thought of before. Broadly stated it consists in heat ng the glass at a certain temperature and plunging it while hot in-to a bath consisting of a heated oleaginous compound. There are, however, many conditions in con-nection with the details of the process upon which a satisfactory result depends, and the neglect of any, even in a slight degree, constitutes the difference between suc cess and failure. Thus, the glass may be underheated and may not be susceptible to the effect of the bath, or it may be overheated and

then it will lose its shape, or, again, it may be rightly heated and yet be spoiled in the course of transference to the bath. Moreover, the oleaginous constituents of the bath and their temperature have an im portant bearing upon the ultimate result. These and numerous other points of detail bave all been satisfactorfly settled by M. de la Bastie, who has designed furnaces and baths by means of which his toughpractically without fear or mis-

chance. The time occupied in the actual process of tempering is merely nominal, for directly the articles are brought to the required temper ature they are plunged into the bath and instantly withdrawn. The cost of tempering, too, is stated to be very small.

We have observed that M. de la Bastle went through a long course of experimental research before he attained success. He first worked,

as an engineer naturally would, apon mechanical principles. Know-ing that the fragility of glass results the weakness of the cohesion of its molecules, he not unreasonably expected that, by forcing these molecules more closely together, and thus rendering the mass more compact, the strength and solidity of the material would be increased. But this doctrine, which holds good with iron and steel, as Sir Joseph Whitworth has practically demonstrated, does not apply to glass-compression failing to toughen it, even if applied to it when in a fluid or soft condition. By applying heat, however, which is only ferce in another form, the desired end is attained, and the physical properties of the material become altered in a

very remarkable manner. To this singular fact we can testify, from the inspection of a number of toughened glass articles at the offices of Messrs. Abel Rey & Bros., 29 Mincing Lane, the representatives of M. de la Bastie in England. In these articles, which consist of watch-glasses, plates, dishes, and sheet glasses, both colored and plain, neither transparency nor color is affected at all, and the ring or sound only slightly. These articles—some of them being exceedingly this ingly thin - were thrown indis criminately across a room against a wall, and fell spinning on the deal floor. Water was boiled in a saucer ever a fire, and the saucer was quickly removed to a comparatively cold place, and was unaffected by the sudden change of temperature. One corner of a piece of glass was held by the hand in a gas flame until the corner became ex-ceedingly hot, but the heat was not communicated to the other portion of the glass, neither was it cracked from unequal expansion. A comparative experiment was then made with a piece of ordinary plate glass and a similar piece of toughened glass, in order to show their respective powers of resistance to fracture from the force of impact by a falling weight. In each case the glass was about six inches square,

glass was about six inches square, and was placed in a frame, the weight being dropped upon its center. With the ordinary glass, a two-ounce brass weight falling on it from a height of 12 and 18 inches respectively did no damage, but at 24 inches the glass was broken into several fragments. With a thinner piece of toughened glass no impression was made by the same weight falling from heights ranging from 2 to 10 feet, the weight simply rebounding from off the glass. An eight ounce iron weight, tried at eight ounce iron weight, tried at two and four feet respectively, gave similar results. Upon the height being increased to six feet, however, the glass broke. But here another singular result was pro-duced; instead of breaking into about a dozen pieces, as did the or-dinary glass, it was literally smash-ed to atoms. The largest frag-ments measured about half an inch in length and breadth, and these were easily reduced by the fingers

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were easily reduced by the fingers to atoms varying in size from that of a pin's point to that of a large pin's head. The lines of fractures in the fragments presented to the eye the appearance of irregular lace work, and these lines were, moreover, apparent to the touch, but more palpably on one side of the glass than the other. Which of the two sides was the one that received the first impact of the blow we are not able to determine. Another peculiarity is that the edges of the fracture are by ne means so of the fracture are by ne means so sharp, and therefore capable of causing incised wounds, as are those causing incised wounds, as are those of ordinary glass. It would seem that the toughened glass possesses enormous cohesive power, but that if the equilibrium of the mass is disturbed at any one point the disturbance or disintegration instantly extends throughout the whole piece, the atoms no longer possessing the power of cohesion.

Of the practical nature of M. de la Bastie's unique discovery there can be no question whatever, nor can there be any doubt of its value in the arts, sciences and manufac-

in the arts, sciences and manufac-tures. The applications which sug-gest themselves are innumerable, and above and beyond the useful-ness of the process with regard to articles of domestic use come im-portant considerations affecting the

applied sciences, especially in connection with chemical manufactures and similar industries, where a material alike uninfluenced by the action of heat or acids has been so long and so vainly sought formotably in connection with vitriol chambers in the manufacture of

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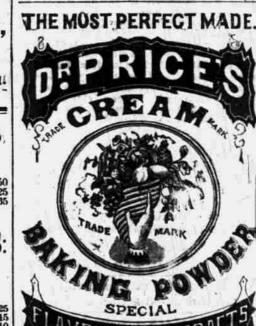
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