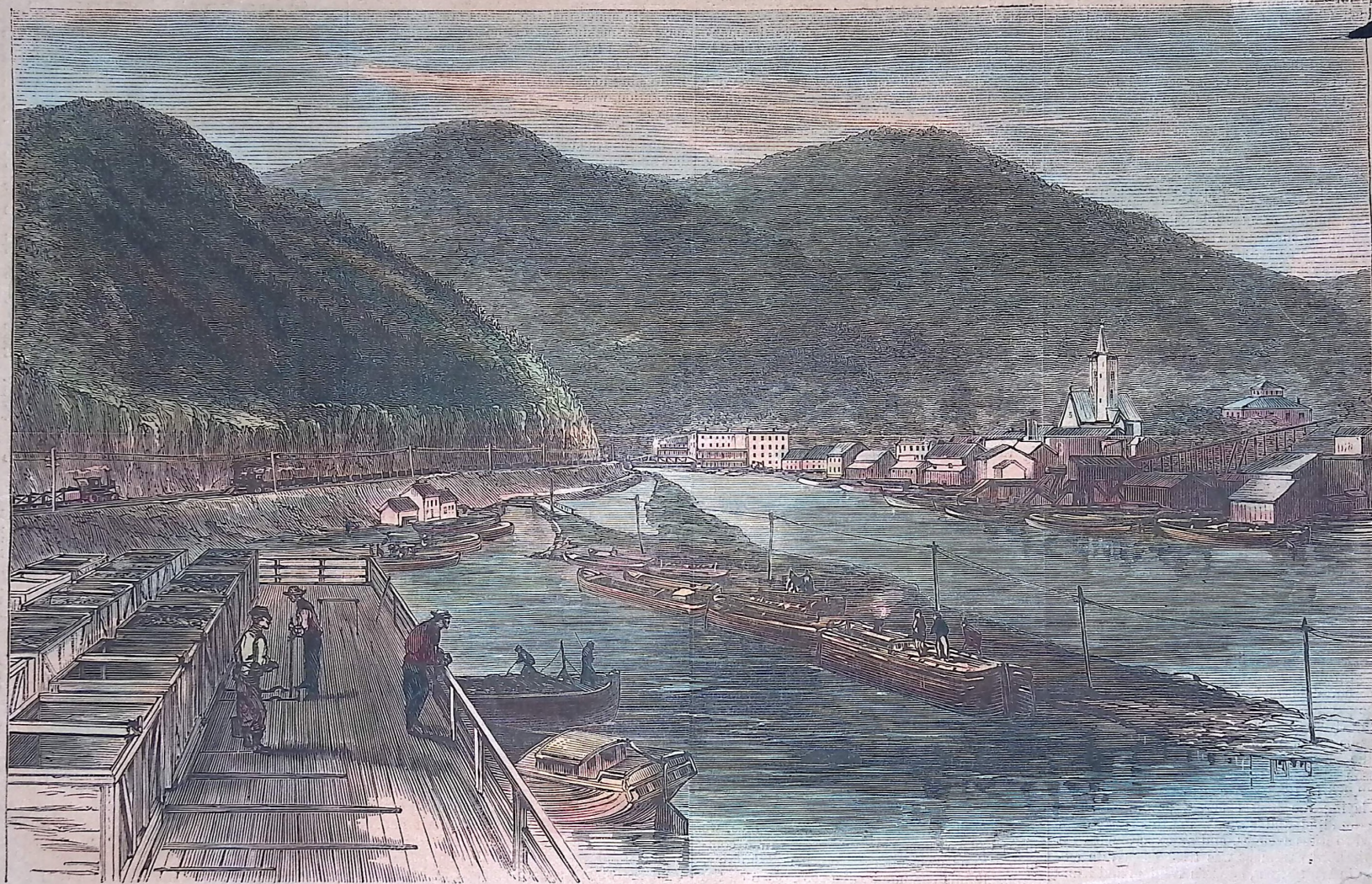


SEPTEMBER 18, 1869.]

HARPER'S WEEKLY.

605



VIEW OF MAUCH CHUNK, CARBON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.—[SKETCHED BY THEODORE R. DAVIS.]

... of Pennsylvania, resides at Mauch Chunk; and the grounds around his house, originally laid out by the exiled gardener of Louis Philippe, form one of the chief attractions of the town.

The tourist who has not ascended to Mount Pisgah in this region, and taken a trip over the Gravity Roads, has failed to experience one of the most novel of the pleasures incident to modern travel.

THE CONCRETE PAVEMENT.

THE number of experiments which have been made in the matter of street pavements in this city, and the partial or total failure of these experiments clearly illustrate the deficiency of the system adopted by our municipal government. This fault can be repaired only by the establishment of a bureau of construction and repairs, consisting of competent engineers, not subject to the interference of the Common Council, except possibly in the matter of expenditure. The success that has attended the limited independence of the Central Park Commissioners is a proof of the policy and economy of eliminating the question of politics from the conduct of public works.

The statistics of the several kinds of pavement laid down within twenty years, presented by a survey of the city, would stand approximately as follows:

	Square yards.
Stone-block	1,913,342
Nicolson	53,564
Fisk concrete (estimated)	5,000
Stafford (estimated)	700
Cobble-stone (estimated)	3,000,000

Since 1866 the cobble-stone pavement has gone out of use. During that year 17,254 square yards were put down—under contract 10,222, and at private expense 7032—but one ordinance looking to the laying of it in any part of the city being passed while the previously mentioned work was going on. This ordinance provided for a cobble-stone pavement on Bank Street from West Street to the river. The career of the Nicolson pavement began with the disuse of the cobble-stone, in the putting down of 490 square yards on Nassau Street in 1866, of 29,001 in 1867, and of 29,073 in 1868. A contract was also made for laying the Fisk concrete pavement along One-hundred-and-seventy-fourth Street, from Third to First avenues, and an experiment with the Stafford pavement was tried at private expense in Wall Street, between William and Hanover streets. The ordinance in favor of the latter on the corner between Fourteenth and Fifty-ninth streets, together with six

will be developed from the present crude concretes.

Our illustration on page 605 shows the manner in which the Fisk concrete pavement is laid. This pavement is composed of gravel, broken stone, cinders, and coal ashes (free from all foreign substances), mixed in definite proportions with tar, rosin, and asphaltum. The road-bed, properly prepared, the composition is spread on in layers of moderate thickness, successively rolled with heavy rollers for uniformity and compactness. These layers form a sufficiently strong roadway of from a half to three-quarters of a foot in depth, and can be put down at an expense, per square foot, not exceeding the expense of the asphalt road as constructed in Paris. It remains for years and attrition to test the practical value of this concrete; but, in general, it may be remarked, that it is heartily and highly commended by thoughtful engineers as a step in the right direction. The sonorousness of the hoof-beat, as enabling the pedestrian to measure the imminence of passing vehicles, is an element of concretes over wooden pavements, illustrated in an eminent degree by the asphaltic road, the value of which as a preventive of accidents can not be overestimated. This style of pavement has been adopted by the Central Park Commissioners.

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA BY THE CHINESE.

Was Columbus the first discoverer of America, or did he only rediscover that continent after it had, in remote ages, been found, peopled, and forgotten by the Old World? It is curious that this question has not been more generally raised, for it is very clear that one of two things must be true: either the people whom Columbus found in America must have been descended from emigrants from the Old World, and therefore America was known to the Old World before Columbus's time, or else the aborigines of the western hemisphere were the result of spontaneous human generation—the development of man from a lower species of animal, or descended from a second Adam and Eve, whose origin would be equally puzzling. Unless we are prepared to cast aside Holy Writ, and all our general notions of the origin of the human race, we must believe that there was at one time communication between the Old World and the New. Probably this communication took place on the opposite side of the world to ours, between the eastern coast of Asia and the side of America most remote from Europe: and I believe it is

torian, Prescott, about the maquay-tree in Mexico. He states that the Aztecs prepared a pulp for paper-making out of the bark of this tree. Then, even its leaves were used for thatching; its fibres for making ropes; its roots yielded a nourishing food; and its sap, by means of fermentation, was made into an intoxicating drink. The accounts given by the Chinese and Spaniards, although a thousand years apart, agree in stating that the natives did not possess any iron, but only copper; that they made all their tools, for working in stone and metals, out of a mixture of copper and tin; and they, in comparison with the nations of Europe and Asia, thought but little of the worth of silver and gold. The religious customs and forms of worship presented the same characteristics to the Chinese fourteen hundred years ago as to the Spaniards four hundred years ago. There is, moreover, a remarkable resemblance between the religion of the Aztecs and the Buddhism of the Chinese, as well as between the manners and customs of the Aztecs and those of the people of China. There is also a great similarity between the features of the Indian tribes of Middle and South America and those of the Chinese, and, as Haulay, the Chinese interpreter of whom we spoke above, states, between the accent and most of the monosyllabic words of the Chinese and Indian languages. Indeed, this writer gives a list of words which point to a close relationship; and infers therefrom that there must have been emigration from China to the American continent at a most early period indeed, as the official accounts of Buddhist priests fourteen hundred years ago notice these things as existing already. Perhaps now old records may be recovered in China which may furnish full particulars of this question. It is at any rate remarkable and confirmative of the idea of emigration from China to America at some remote period, that at the time of the discovery of America by the Spaniards the Indian tribes on the coast of the Pacific, opposite to China, for the most part, enjoyed a state of culture of ancient growth, while the inhabitants of the Atlantic shore were found by Europeans in a state of original barbarism. If the idea of America having been discovered before the time of Columbus be correct, it only goes to prove that there is nothing new under the sun; and that Shelly was right in his bold but beautiful lines—"Thou canst not find one spot whereon no city stood." Admitting this, who can tell whether civilization did not exist in America when we were plunged in barbarism? and, stranger still, whether the endless march of ages in rolling over our present cultivation may not obliterate it, and sever the two hemis-

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Entered according to Act of Congress in the Year 1858 by Henry H. Rogers, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PASS OF THE LEHIGH, AT MAUGH CHUNK.

Lithograph