Department Notes.

The *Iron Age* has recently published a system of steam heating for machine shops by the late Robert Briggs, which is interesting in connection with the problem of heating our own shops.

What a neat habit the civils have of covering their desks with a little brown pall loaded with shot and hemmed all around. You would think they were all married men, from their fear of dust.

Mr. Burchard, director of the mint, in his recently published "Report upon the Statistics of the Production of the Precious Metals," gives $16,800,000 as the value of the product of gold for the State of California in 1882.

There are six regular fourth-year mechanicals and they are kept hard at work by Prof. Lanza and Messrs. Fisher and Peabody. Some dynamometer tests have been made at the Institute Fair, and some experiments undertaken on the strength of leather belting. The second and third year mechanicals receive instruction from Messrs. Schwamb and Stephens.

Prof. F. W. Clarke, of Cincinnati, lately appointed chemist of the U. S. Geological Survey, intends to take a few bright young chemists to be employed in original research work in inorganic chemistry. These will be rated as "volunteer assistants." The work will constitute a kind of post-graduate course. The researches will be published and each assistant will receive the credit of his work, but no salary will be given, the experience and glory gained being supposed to compensate for their time and labor. Applicants may address the professor at Washington, D. C, care of U. S. Geol. Survey.

We have received a report of the Proceedings of the Society of Arts of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for 1881-82. It is particularly interesting as containing an account of the introduction of President Walker by the late Prof. Rogers. The latter briefly and clearly described the early days of the Society of Arts, which then constituted the Institute of Technology, and then the foundation of the school itself. The pamphlet also contains the full reports of Prof. Lanza's tests on the strength of wooden columns and those on the transverse strength of large spruce beams.

The walls of the architectural drawing-room present a fine appearance hung with drawings and casts, carefully arranged so as to have every advantage of light and effect in grouping.

The new class in charcoal drawing from the casts seems to attract a great deal of attention from the men of other departments, especially the first-year men.

After every recitation on Tuesdays and Thursdays the windows of the architectural library opening into the hall are besieged with a crowd of fellows who stand in admiration watching the efforts of the architects to get the dancing fuan to dance on paper. Criticism and kindly (?) encouragement is not spared.

Drawing from the cast is a revival, we believe, of a very useful part of the architects' course which has fallen into disuse of late years. It is now the plan to carry the student on, and a life class will be formed early in the winter. The idea is not so much to perfect the student in figure drawing as to render ease and facility in sketching.

Drawing from life is not only the most difficult but it is also the very best method for acquiring a rapid and easy style in sketching.

Mr. Turner will resume his classes in water color at an early date.

Since last year the assaying department has been much improved by the addition of a new set of cupel tongs, muffle scrapers, and other tools, and the limitation of the assays to lead, silver, and gold ores, thus allowing us to become quite familiar with these processes and causing a corresponding rise in the character of the results.

With the Illinois, Col., galena eighty and eighty-one per cent was obtained.

In the shop the second year have begun carpentry, the third year forging, while the fourth year are just finishing chipping and filing. The