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& Sharpe Manufacturing Company less than twenty years ago, and the writer himself was once within that time in negotiation with another leading builder of milling machines for the purpose of introducing the process in his works. Personally, when I hear the expressions of contempt for scraping and the scraper that are often made, I feel like telling the scoffers plainly that he is no mechanic. For myself I know that it was the scraper which gave me my first conceptions of the meaning of real accuracy as well as of originations.

The purpose of this letter is, however, to criticise the details of the Thorr index wheel described by Mr. Randol in your issue for June 9. While the main idea of the plate seems to be beyond criticism, and in fact to be a particularly meritorious solution of the problem, the method of holding the disks to the main plate seems to be very faulty to say the least. With the screw heads bottoming directly on the disks and the disks subject to the friction of the heads while they are being tightened, it would seem as though direct encouragement was offered to the disks to shift their positions and lead to decided doubt as to their positions being accurate in the end. This would be intensified by the practical impossibility of tapping the holes square with the plate, leading to binding of the disks by the screws on one side initially, with springing of the screws and shifting of the disks as the screws are tightened. It seems to me that the plan shown in Figs. 1 and 2 would overcome these objections and better insure that the disks do not shift their positions when the main plate to prevent turning, with good effect. With such an arrangement the plan of Fig. 3 would be as about as free from disturbing strains as Figs. 1 and 2.

C. O. GRIFFIN.

Amateurs and the Dictionary.

Editor American Machinist:

It has come to my knowledge that one or two of the respected readers of the "American Machinist" are afraid that I have insulted the dictionary by my recent use of the word amateur. Now, I am quite well aware that the word amateur has a very clearly defined significance, and that it fits very neatly an idea which it is often necessary to express. I am aware also that the present use of the word, although universally adopted, is a perversion of its original etymology. When in the course of events I have occasion to express the idea for which the word amateur originally stood why may I not use the word for that precise idea, when at the same time take pains to have it understood that I so mean? In speaking of "Amateurs in the Shop" that is precisely what I did, only that and nothing more.

If the "American Machinist" was the "American Horticulturist," and if I, as a contributor to it, should find it in my way to write something about green blackberries, I can imagine that I might find myself in just such a pickle as I am in now through my well intended remarks about shop amateurs. It is a well-known fact that blackberries are red when they are green, so that when a green blackberry is spoken of a red blackberry is meant, and it is quite possible that the compiler of some dictionary, or some self-constituted guardian of the linguistic proprieties, might arise and insist that, in the case of blackberries, as green means red so generally, it must and shall mean red always, and no one shall have any right to say green blackberries or to write green blackberries unless he means red blackberries. Now, it might happen that I would actually want to speak of genuinely green blackberries—blackberries of the color of grass, or of the Irish flag—what in such a case should a poor fellow do? If I must not say green when I mean green what must I say?

That is precisely the fix that I am in about the word amateur. If I may not say amateur when I mean amateur what must I say, so as to be understood? Before I was ten years old I was cruelly and brutally compelled to learn to conjugate the verb am, and the little knowledge so acquired has proved a dangerous thing, generally to myself, but sometimes to my neighbors. Of course I learned, therefore, that an amateur is first of all a lover, and so, naturally, when I wanted to speak of a man in the shop whose