

The Hydraulic Cloth Press.—This machine is intended to press the cloth in order to reduce its bulk. The illustration shows the press to work by power only, but when desired it can be constructed to work also by hand, the method of working being readily understood from the illustration. The pump lifts the water from the tank and forces it into the ram cylinder ; the pressure of the water then compels the ram to rise, and with it the table on which the cloth has been placed. The table is thus gradually forced against the plate overhead, supported by four pillars ; and, by means of a rod fixed to one side of the table, the driving strap is changed from the fast to the loose pulley when the desired pressure has been obtained, and by opening the valve the table descends by its own weight, and the water in the ram cylinder is returned to the tank.

The Growth of the Works of Messrs. Platt Brothers & Company, Ltd.

The early venture of Mr. Henry Platt soon outgrew its humble environment, and he shortly entered into partnership with Mr. Elijah Hibbert, an Oldham engineer, and father of Sir John Tomlinson Hibbert, K.C.B., J.P., D.L., D.C.L., a former Member of Parliament for the borough of Oldham. The partnership was known by the name of Hibbert & Platt, and proved so successful, that a further enlargement of premises was necessary. The old quarters at Ferney Bank were given up for a far more advantageous site at the east end of the town. These works were later known as the Hartford Old Works, to distinguish them from the Hartford New Works, which were subsequently erected at the West, or Werneth side.

In 1837 interests in the firm were secured by John and Joseph Platt, the two eldest sons of the founder, and the name of the concern was changed to Hibbert, Platt, & Sons. In 1842 Mr. Henry Platt died, followed three years later by Mr. Joseph Platt, and the concern then passed into the hands of Mr. Hibbert and the remaining Mr. John Platt. At this juncture Mr. James Platt, another son of the founder, joined the firm, and when in 1846 Mr. Hibbert died, the entire management of the works, which by this time had acquired a notable reputation and assumed important dimensions, devolved on the two surviving partners. Eventually they acquired the interest which Mr. Hibbert had in the firm, and became absolute proprietors of the industry,