

DAILY NEWS
20 SEPTEMBER 1872

BAROMETER TUBES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—I am most ready to learn, and to confess myself in error, when I am so. It seems undoubted, from the evidence of such eminent instrument makers as those whose letters you publish this day, that there is serious ultimate risk in putting an iron wire into an ordinary barometer tube. No doubt there are differences between tubes; some are far better annealed than others. All I know from my own experience is that I occupied myself for hours on consecutive days with one of the very set of tubes supplied to Lieutenant Dawson, practising with a thin soft iron wire in removing bubbles of air that tenaciously adhered to the mercury, and that the tube was perfectly sound up to the time when I last inspected it, which was some months after. I write now from the country, and am ignorant of its present condition. It must be distinctly borne in mind that the memorandum about instruments was in no sense an instruction. It contained mere private hints, the best I could give, rudely jotted down—reminders of conversation and supplementary to it, and not in any way binding on Lieutenant Dawson, who could obtain as much information as he pleased elsewhere. I have not a copy of the memorandum by me, but the phrases of "corking" and of putting the "paper outside the tube," referred, I am sure, the one to an off-hand colloquial phrase of "corking with the finger," and the other to an additional precaution to prevent the chance of dropping or wasting mercury, the mercury being filtered through a paper cone into the tube, and the outside paper catching, temporarily, any overflow. The iron wire was not part of Sir Thomas Maclear's method. I am alone guilty of suggesting it, and I unhesitatingly withdraw it.—I am, &c.,

Sept. 19.

FRANCIS GALTON.
