What is claimed is:

1. In combination, a platform with a torque absorbing surface in contact with a fastener element, said fastener element being rotatable about an axis oriented transversely to said platform, said platform comprising:

a base surface;

a plurality of raised surfaces projecting transversely to said base surface for contacting said fastener element, each said raised surface comprising a plateau, each said raised surface separated from at least an adjacent one of said raised surfaces by a channel positioned therebetween.

2. The combination according to claim 1, wherein said fastener element comprises a threaded nut.

3. The combination according to claim 1, wherein said fastener element comprises a head of a threaded bolt.

4. The combination according to claim 1, wherein each said plateau has a height of 0.060 inches above said base surface.

5. The combination according to claim 1, wherein each said plateau has a height ranging from 0.020 inches to 0.1 inches above said base surface.

6. The combination according to claim 1, wherein each said plateau has a minimum surface area of 0.010 square inches.

7. The combination according to claim 1, wherein each said plateau has a surface area ranging from 0.010 square inches to 0.1 square inches.

8. The combination according to claim 1, wherein each said plateau has a minimum surface area ranging from 0.020 to 0.075 square inches.

9. The combination according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a polygonal cross sectional shape.

10. The combination according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a round cross sectional shape.

11. The combination according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces is tapered, said at least one raised surface having a smaller perimeter at said plateau than at said base surface.

12. The combination according to claim 1, wherein said fastener element is softer than said plurality of raised surfaces.

13. The combination according to claim 1, wherein said fastener element comprises steel.

14. The combination according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of raised surfaces comprise ductile iron.

15. A coupling with a torque absorbing surface for joining pipe elements in end to end relation, said coupling comprising:

a first segment having first and second ends oppositely disposed;

a second segment having first and second ends oppositely disposed;

a first fastener attaching said first end of said first segment to said first end of said second segment;

a second fastener attaching said second end of said first segment to said second end of said second segment such that said segments surround a central space for receiving said pipe elements;

first and second connection members positioned respectively at each of said first and said second ends of each of said first and second segments, each said connection member comprising:

a base surface oriented transversely to one of said fasteners;

a plurality of raised surfaces projecting transversely to said base surface and engageable with said one of said fasteners, each said raised surface comprising a plateau, each said raised surface separated from at least an adjacent one of said raised surfaces by a channel positioned therebetween.

16. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein at least one of said fasteners comprises a threaded nut engageable with one of said raised surfaces.

17. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein at least one of said fasteners comprises a threaded bolt having a head engageable with one of said raised surfaces.

18. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein each said plateau has a height of 0.060 inches above said base surface.

19. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein each said plateau has a height ranging from 0.020 inches to 0.1 inches above said base surface.

20. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein each said plateau has a minimum surface area of 0.010 square inches.

21. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein each said plateau has a surface area ranging from 0.010 square inches to 0.1 square inches.

22. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a polygonal cross sectional shape.

23. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a round cross sectional shape.

24. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces is tapered, said at least one raised surface having a smaller perimeter at said plateau than at said base surface.

25. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein at least one of said fasteners is softer than said plurality of raised surfaces.

26. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein at least one of said fasteners comprises steel.

27. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein said plurality of raised surfaces comprise ductile iron.

28. The coupling according to claim 15, wherein said plurality of raised surfaces are integrally cast with said coupling.

29. A flange with a torque absorbing surface mountable on a pipe element, said flange comprising:

a ring having a contact face adapted to interface with a mating flange, and an exposed face arranged oppositely to said contact face, said exposed face comprising:

a base surface;

a plurality of raised surfaces projecting transversely to said base surface, each said raised surface comprising a plateau, each said raised surface separated from at least an adjacent one of said raised surfaces by a channel positioned therebetween.

30. The flange according to claim 29, wherein said plurality of raised surfaces extend around said entire exposed face.

31. The flange according to claim 29, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a polygonal cross sectional shape.

32. The flange according to claim 29, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a round cross sectional shape.

33. The flange according to claim 29, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces is tapered, said at least one raised surface having a smaller perimeter at said plateau than at said base surface.

34. The flange according to claim 29, wherein each said plateau has a height of 0.060 inches above said base surface.

35. The flange according to claim 29, wherein each said plateau has a height ranging from 0.020 inches to 0.1 inches above said base surface.

36. The flange according to claim 29, wherein each said plateau has a minimum surface area of 0.010 square inches.

37. The flange according to claim 29, wherein each said plateau has a surface area ranging from 0.010 square inches to 0.1 square inches.

38. A flange coupling with a torque absorbing surface for joining pipe elements, said flange coupling comprising:

a first ring having a first contact face and a first exposed face oppositely disposed;

a second ring having a second contact face and a second exposed face oppositely disposed, said second contact face interfacing with said first contact face;

a plurality of fasteners extending though said first and second rings, each of said fasteners comprising at least one rotatable member engaging at least one of said exposed faces of one of said rings, said at least one exposed face comprising:

a base surface;

a plurality of raised surfaces projecting transversely to said base surface, each said raised surface comprising a plateau, each

said raised surface separated from at least an adjacent one of said raised surfaces by a channel positioned therebetween.

39. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein said plurality of raised surfaces extend around said entire exposed face.

40. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a polygonal cross sectional shape.

41. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces has a round cross sectional shape.

42. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein at least one of said raised surfaces is tapered, said at least one raised surface having a smaller perimeter at said plateau than at said base surface.

43. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein said at least one rotatable member comprises a threaded nut engageable with at least one of said raised surfaces.

44. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein said at least one rotatable member comprises a threaded bolt having a head engageable with one of said raised surfaces.

45. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein said at least one rotatable member is softer than said plurality of raised surfaces.

46. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein said at least one rotatable member comprises steel.

47. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein said plurality of raised surfaces comprise ductile iron.

48. The flange coupling according to claim 38, wherein said plurality of raised surfaces are integrally cast with said at least one exposed face.