

Literary and Miscellaneous.

From the London Literary Gazette.

FIRST AND LAST HOURS.

Lo'st thou the hour, the first of day? When the dew-drops are opening bright, When through the curtain of morning grey...

KNOWLEDGE FOR THE PEOPLE.

A series of pamphlets, with this title, have for some time been in the course of publication in London. They purport to be the productions of John Timbs, author of "Laconics," "Arcana of Science and Art," &c.

WHYS AND BECAUSES.

Why does water thrown on a brisk and flaming fire apparently increase the combustion? Because the water is converted into steam, which expanding and mixing with the flame, caused it to spread out into a much larger volume than it otherwise would have occupied.

Why should not flowers in water, and living plants in pots, be kept in bedrooms?

Because the flowers and plants greatly injure the purity of the air during the night, by giving out large quantities of carbonic acid, similar to that which is separated from the lungs by breathing, which is highly noxious.

Why is the distinction in the appearance, qualities, and value of tea?

Because of the difference in the times of gathering, which takes place from one to four times in each year, according to the age of the plant; those leaves which are gathered earliest in the spring, make the strongest and most valuable tea, such as pekoe, souchong, &c.

From the National Gazette.

JULIA BRACE.—DEAF, DUMB AND BLIND GIRL. At the Hartford Asylum.

By far the most interesting subject at present in the institution, is the poor deaf, dumb and blind girl, whose situation has been described in so beautiful and affecting a manner by Mrs. Sigourney. A charity box, the proceeds of which are designed exclusively for her support, is placed at the main entrance, which it is certain no stranger can pass, after viewing the utter desolation in which she was left by nature, without dropping his mite.

She was the daughter of exceedingly poor parents, who had several younger children, to whom she was in the habit of showing such offices of kindness as her afflicted state admitted. Notwithstanding her blindness, she early evinced a close observation with regard to articles of dress, preferring among those which were presented her as gifts, such as were of the finest texture.

Seated on her little block, weaving stripes of thin bark with pieces of leather and thread, which her father in his processes of making shoes rejected, she amused herself with constructing for her cat bonnets and vandykes, not wholly discordant with the principles of taste. Notwithstanding her peculiar helplessness, she was occasionally left with the care of the young children, while her mother went out to the occupation of washing.

Though her habits are peculiarly regular and consistent, yet occasionally some action occurs which it is difficult to explain. One morning during the past summer, while employed with her needle, she found herself in a corner of the room, he awaited, in a state of alarm, bordering on distraction, the issue of his horrible adventure. The keepers of his tormentor at length came to his relief, and released him from the jaws of the enemy.

They would change their position with regard to her, and each strive to take the watch which did not belong to him—but though she might at the same time hold two or three, neither stratagem nor persuasion would induce her to yield either of them, except to the person from whom she had received it. There seemed to be a principle in the tenacity with which she adhered to this system to give every one his own, which may probably be resolved into that moral honesty which has ever formed

a conspicuous part of her character. Though nurtured in extreme poverty and after her removal from the parental roof, in the constant habit of being in contact with articles of dress or food, which constantly tempted her desires, she has never been known to appropriate to herself, without permission the most trifling object. In a well educated child this would be no remarkable virtue; but in one who has had the benefit of no moral training to teach her to respect the right of property, and whose perfect blindness must often render it difficult even to define them, the incorruptible firmness of this innate principle is truly laudable.

Continuing to become an object of increased attention, and her more remote situation not being convenient for the access of strangers, application was made for her admission into the asylum, and permission was granted by the Directors into that peaceful refuge, some attempts were made by a benevolent instructor to teach her the alphabet, by means of letters both raised above and indented beneath a smooth surface. But it was in vain that she punctually repaired to the school room, and daily devoted hour after hour to copying their forms with pins upon a cushion.

It has been observed of persons who are deprived of a particular sense, that additional quickness or vigor is bestowed on those which remain. Thus blind persons are often distinguished by particular exquisiteness of touch, and the deaf and dumb, who gain all their knowledge through the eye, concentrates, as it were, their whole soul in that channel of observation. With her, whose eye, ear and tongue are alike dead, the capabilities both of touch and smell are exceedingly heightened.

As the abodes which from her earliest recollections she had inhabited, were circumscribed & humble, it was supposed that at her first reception into the asylum she would testify surprise at the comparative spaciousness of the mansion. But she immediately busied herself in quietly exploring the size of the apartments, and the height of the staircases; she even knelt and smelled to the thresholds; and now, as if by the union of a mysterious geometry with a powerful memory, never makes a false step upon a flight of stairs, or enters a wrong door, or mistakes her seat at the table.

Among her various excellencies, neatness, and love of order are conspicuous. Her simple wardrobe is systematically arranged, and it is impossible to displace a single article in her drawers, without her perceiving and restoring it. When the large baskets of clean linen are weekly brought from the laundress, she selects her own garments without hesitation, however widely they may be dispersed among the mass. If any part of her dress requires mending, she is prompt and skillful in repairing it, and her perseverance in this branch of economy, greatly diminishes the expense of her clothing.

Since her residence at the asylum, donations of charitable visitants have been considerable in amount. These are deposited in a box with an inscription, and she has been made to understand that the contents are devoted to her benefit. This box she frequently poises in her hand, expresses pleasure when it testifies an increase of weight; for she has long since ascertained that money is the medium for the supply of her wants, and attaches to it a proportionate value.

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Julia Brace leads a life of perfect contentment—and in this respect both an example and reproof to those who for trifling inconveniences indulge in repining, though surrounded by all the gifts of nature and fortune.

The genial influences of Spring wake her lone heart to gladness—and she gathers the first flowers, and even the young blades of grass and inhales their freshness with a delight bordering on transport. Sometimes, when apparently in deep thought, she is observed to burst into laughter, as if her associations of ideas were favorable not only to cheerfulness but to mirth. The society of her female companions in the Asylum is soothing to her feelings; and their habitual kind offices, the guiding of their arm in her walks, or the affectionate pressure of their hand, awaken in her demonstrations of gratitude and friendship.

male department who has acquired great penetration into the idioms of Julia's character, and her modes of communication, made her understand his profession by pressing a finger on his pulse. She immediately arose; and taking his hand led him with urgent solicitude of friendship to the side of the invalid, and placing his hand upon her pulse displayed an affectionate confidence in his powers of healing. As she has herself never been sick since early childhood, it is the more surprising that she should so readily comprehend the efficacy and benevolence of the medical profession. It would be easy to relate other remarkable circumstances respecting her, but it is not desirable that this article should be so far extended as to fatigue the reader.

A FISH STORY.

We find in the "New York Evening Post," the following record of an adventure that deserves promulgation. The modern Scipio who is the hero of the tale, carried the war into Africa sure enough. We object to that mode of fishing however; it has something anti-chivalrous about it. When a baited hook is thrown, there seems to be some will in the matter—the fish may bite or let it alone; but to pounce at once upon a Bass in his own element, and drive him ashore, high and dry, is entirely discreditable, and should be censured by true sportsmen.

A striped Bass, weighing forty pounds, was taken day before yesterday, by a colored servant living with Benjamin Baily, Esq. on the banks of the Harlem river, a little south of the bridge. The fish was discovered by the man from the end of the dock, which projected some distance into the river. At times he would sail gently along past the dock into quite shallow water, but how to capture him was the question. No net, nor hook and bait was at hand, and as the golden opportunity might not last long, our hero quickly resolved to encounter him single handed in his native element, and at a favorable moment he leaped from the dock directly upon his back. The affrighted fish darted from under him as though a shark was in pursuit, and as luck would have it, took a direction for the shore, and ran up nearly high and dry into the mud. Before he could get fairly afloat again and have a plenty of sea room to make his escape, the colored man seized him by the gills, dragged him up on the beach, and secured his prize.—U. S. Gaz.

FREDERICK, Md. Oct. 19.

A friend, upon whose accuracy and veracity we have the most perfect reliance, vouches for the truth of the following:

THE DEVIL WITH TWO TAILS.

We have all heard of Le Diaple Boiteux, but it was reserved to this age, and to the city of Frederick, to discover the devil with two tails. On Thursday night last, a caravan of wild beasts arrived in this place, and put up at one of the hotels. Among them chanced to be an elephant, which, being too large to enter an ordinary stable, it was found necessary to accommodate in a large and close carriage house. This it seems, had been previously taken possession of as a lodging for the night, by a hale two fisted negro from the mountain, who was employed in hauling timber to the rail road, and who had never seen, or perhaps heard of an elephant before in his life.—He was fast asleep when his room-mate was ushered in, and did not awake until, as was his custom, at the first dawn of the morning.—Hearing a rustling in the straw, he turned and looked, and rubbed his eyes and looked again, till the pupils dilated almost to bursting.—"Hence, horrible shadow, unreal mockery, hence!"

What could it be! The devil to a certainty! the huge mass moved and approached him, when lo! a tail at both ends put all doubts to flight, and revealed his Satanic majesty in all the terrors of his reputed attributes. With one despairing spasmodic leap, the affrighted wagoner rushed against the door—it was locked—and there was no other possible way of escape. He screamed for help; he groaned in agony. Worse than that of Sancho in the pit, was the predicament of the miserable African—for no kind master was within hearing to afford him protection. The "Devil with two tails" stood over him, and wrapped his soft and flexible fore-tail around his neck, and whisked it in his face—and then "he grinned horribly a ghastly smile." In vain he besought him to have mercy—to spare him a little longer.—The Devil with two tails heeded not his supplications—but kept smelling and feeling him, and brandishing his tail, which he now extended and now contracted, until, in the imagination of the negro, there was nothing so distant or so near as to be secure from it. The louder he screamed, the more the devil felt him. Shrank up in the least possible dimensions in a corner of the room, he awaited, in a state of alarm, bordering on distraction, the issue of his horrible adventure. The keepers of his tormentor at length came to his relief, and released him from the jaws of the enemy.

After his liberation, he had a severe chill of several hours duration, accompanied by a transient derangement. Having now recovered not only his health but his courage, he swears "by ginny he was not so much skeered at his bigness—but that tarna! tail at each end." Quere—Does not Sambo deserve the premium offered for the best original tail?—Polit. Exam.

The earth is 2,048,572 miles nearer the sun in winter than in summer. Its motion is 17 miles in a second; so that if a man pulls of his hat to another in the street, he goes many miles bare headed without catching cold.

Longevity.—Parr, an Englishman, born in 1625, was married at the age of 120, retained his vigor till 140, and died at 152. A Dane by the name of Drakenbery, died in 1772, at the age of 147. A Norwegian, by the name of Surrington, died in 1797, at the age of 160.

Enlarged Fruit.—One of the most pleasing and remarkable experiments made in horticulture, is that of Prof. Poiteau, in the production of enlarged Peaches. He made an incision round the limb of a peach tree, which, as has long been known, will make the fruit larger. He took a bud from this branch, and inoculated another tree. The consequence is that the fruit is of the same enlarged size as that of the experimented branch.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, OCTOBER 12, 1831.

THE House of Representatives, by a resolution of the 4th of May, 1830, directed the Secretary of the Treasury to collect and communicate to the House, such information, and report his views on the same, as, in his opinion, may be useful and important to Congress, in enacting regulations for the navigation of steam-boats or steam vessels, with a view to guard against the dangers arising from the bursting of their boilers.

Such measures were accordingly taken, as were thought best calculated to obtain the requisite information. But, although some highly interesting and valuable communications have been received, the Department has not succeeded in collecting facts sufficient to enable it to fulfil the directions of the House.

In consideration, therefore, of the difficulty of obtaining the requisite information, by any means within the power of the Department, and of the deep interest which the community, and more especially those engaged in steam navigation have in the subject, it is thought best to make this public application to all who may be able, and are disposed to promote the benevolent object of the Resolution.

Accidents like those, which it is the desire of the House to prevent, have, unfortunately, been so numerous, that many persons will have it in their power to state the causes and circumstances of such casualties; and these, collected from various parts of the Union, cannot fail to be highly useful.

With a view to assist in giving that information a precise and explicit character, the following queries were prepared:— It is not intended, however, to confine it to the points presented in them, or the form of communication which they may seem to indicate. On the contrary, the Department will be happy to receive any information within the scope of the resolution, and communicated in such manner as the writer may be pleased to employ.

It is desirable that communications on this subject should be transmitted by the first of December, or early as may be thereafter.

LOUIS McLANE,

Secretary of the Treasury.

INTERROGATORIES IN RELATION TO THE BURSTING OF STEAM BOILERS.

- 1. Are you acquainted with the nature and use of Steam Engines? In what employment have you been engaged? Were you present, and in what capacity, at the bursting of any steam boiler, or collapsing of a flue; or have you been made acquainted, by other means, with the facts in any such case? If so, in what case? 2. In that case, was the water in the boiler above the gauge cocks? If not, at what height compared with the lower gauge cock? 3. If the boiler contained a flue, what was the difference between the height of its upper side and that of the lower gauge cock? 4. What was the weight per square inch on the safety valve? 5. Had the safety valve ever been found rusted or sticking in the aperture, or was it so at the time? 6. Had that part of the boiler above the water ever been heated to a red heat, or approaching thereto? 7. Was there any incrustation or sediment found at the bottom of the boiler? If so, what was its thickness and composition? 8. In what part was the boiler rent, and what were the appearance and extent of the rent? 9. If the bursting happened to the boiler of a steamboat, was the boat under way, or at rest? Was the valve open? If so, how long before the accident? Was it opened by the Engineer, or by pressure? 10. Was the piston going at its usual speed, or faster or slower? 11. Had the firemen found any unusual difficulty in keeping up the motion of the engine previously to the bursting of the boiler; and if so, how long before? 12. Do the iron boilers used in the Western waters generally accumulate a calcareous incrustation at the bottom? If so, have any or what means been used, with success, to prevent it? 13. Is it observed that when there is a sediment or incrustation on the bottom of the boiler, it requires more fire than usual to raise the steam; and how often is the sediment removed, and by what means? 14. Are any means used for preventing incrustation on the bottom of boilers; and, if so, what effect has been observed? 15. Have any means been employed to prove steam boilers before they are used or afterwards and what pressure has usually been applied to iron of a given thickness? Are the proofs made when the iron is cold or hot? 16. Is there any instrument employed to ascertain the temperature of the boiler above the water, or of the steam in the upper part of the boiler? If so, what is it? 17. What means are used to prevent the fire from the fire place and flue from extending to the boat? 18. Have you ever seen steam boilers heated to a red heat on the upper side? If so, is such a temperature regarded as a cause of exploding the boiler? 19. Have any means been used in the construction of boilers or fire places to prevent the heating of the upper part of the boiler? If so, what are they? 20. How many persons were scalded by steam, and at what distance was each from the boiler? At what distance from the boiler was the steam supposed to be hot enough to scald? Was the current of steam from the rent in the boiler instantaneous, or did it continue for some time, and how long? What number of persons were wounded by the parts of the boiler or machinery, which were driven off by the explosion; and what position did each of these persons occupy in the boat? 21. Have you ever observed the piston to move irregularly, for a few minutes, or for a few strokes, alternately faster or slower than its usual speed, without perceiving any change in the resistance to the paddles, or any other obvious cause for such irregularity; and, if so, how was it accounted for? 22. To what immediate cause have you attributed the bursting of the steam boilers, which have come within your knowledge? 23. Are there any other facts within your knowledge in relation to this subject, which appear to be important in the present enquiry? If so, please to state them.