

THE CONSTITUTION OF MATTER.
It is a permanent and universal law of all organized bodies hitherto analysed, that the composition of substances is definite and invariable; the same compound always consisting of the same elements united together in the same proportions. Two substances may in some cases be mechanically mixed; but they will not combine to form a third substance different from both unless their component particles unite in definite proportions, that is to say, one part by weight of the substances, will unite with one part by weight of the other, or with two parts, or three, or four, &c., so as to form a new substance; but in any other proportions they will be mechanically mixed. For example, one part by weight of hydrogen gas will combine with eight parts by weight of oxygen gas and form water; or it will unite with sixteen parts by weight of oxygen and form a substance called peroxide of hydrogen; but added to any other weight of oxygen, it will produce one or more of these compounds mingled with the portion of oxygen or hydrogen in excess. The law of definite proportion established by Dr. Dalton on the principle that every compound body consists of a combination of atoms of its constituent parts, is of universal application, and in fact one of the most important discoveries in physical science, furnishing information previously unobtainable with regard to the most secret and minute operations of nature, and disclosing the relative weights—of the ultimate atoms of matter. Thus an atom of oxygen combining with an atom of hydrogen forms compound water; but as every drop of water, however small, consists of eight parts by weight of oxygen, and one part by weight of hydrogen, it follows that an atom of oxygen is eight times heavier than an atom of hydrogen. In the same manner sulphuretted hydrogen gas, which is emitted from rotten eggs) consists of sixteen parts by weight of sulphur and two of hydrogen; therefore, an atom of sulphur is eight times heavier than an atom of hydrogen. Carbonic oxide is constituted of six parts by weight of carbon and eight of oxygen, and an atom of oxygen has eight times by weight an atom of hydrogen, it follows that an atom of carbon is six times heavier than one of hydrogen. Since the same definite proportion holds in the composition of all substances that have been examined, it may be concluded that there are great differences in the weight of the ultimate particles of matter."—Mrs. Somerville.

J. J. BRUNER,
Editor & Proprietor.

Salisbury, N. C., Thursday, January 13, 1853.

A Story of Louis Napoleon.
The Dublin correspondent of the New York Courier furnishes the following curious piece of information, copied from the Belfast Chronicle, which, as he says, "tells its own story" which reads like a romance—a French one, perhaps:
There lives in Paris a gentleman, who, in December, 1847, wrote—"I can see with perfect clearness that Louis Philippe will not be three months on the throne of France." Louis Philippe was exiled in February, 1848. That gentleman wrote shortly after the Presidential election—"This Bonaparte scion is a traitor. Not a man looks at him but feels the instinct of striking him as a treacherous man. He will strike for the Consulate—for the Dictatorship; and God knows what will follow." He struck. The coup d'etat of December, 1851, tells how he struck. The same gentleman wrote in the March of the present year—"The tyrant aims at the empire. His gaze is fixed upon the crown. Before a year there will be a revival of the Bonaparte dynasty, and the French will kneel before Napoleon the Third." The empire has come.

The man who predicted these events is no common man. He thinks and looks around him. He participates in many movements quietly, and gathers knowledge which, in our view, no other man, at this moment, in or out of Paris, could find means to acquire. His previous predictions give us confidence in what he states. In fact we know him, and know that he would not detail as truth what he did not know to be true, for he is generally one of the least speculative individuals we have ever met.

Well, that gentleman—we would give his name if we were permitted—writes the subjoined on Thursday last, and all before whom it comes can measure its worth, and the amount of credence to be attached to it from what they have already learned. The revelation will seem curious to many; to us it is by no means so, as we are aware of the sources from which much of his information is derived, and how he derives it. That it is true we are convinced, and that the British government are "up" to the machinations of the French Emperor is evident from the revived state of our defences, from the embodiment of our militia, from the addition to our maritime hands, and from the establishment of a Channel Fleet.

The following is the communication referred to:
In a secluded part of the wood of Balouge, at a place called Madria, whilome the residence of Lamartine, is a house surrounded by trees, and the windows of which are never opened, except sometimes at dawn, as if to let in fresh air. This house, all day, and on many nights, has the air of being uninhabited; but often times at night there comes about suspicious looking characters, who take up their posts in the thickets, and then about twelve or one up come several carriages, with the blinds close down, the porte cochere is opened mysteriously, they drive in and the door closes behind them.

What is this place?
It is the residence of Virginie la Sabotiere. This, for many persons—indeed, nearly all—is no explanation. But let us enter one evening last week, and perhaps what may be going on may enlighten us.

In an apartment sumptuously furnished, is a grand supper laid out, resplendent with plate and brilliant with lights, and around sit half a dozen men and as many women, who, while sipping their champagne, are talking animatedly of conquest and empire, of aggression and rapine.

"Yes," says one, striking his fist on the table—a man with heavy moustache, hooked nose and saturnine, bilious countenance—"yes, when once I am crowned I will proclaim Jerome king of Holland, and not only proclaim him king, but make him king, while Belgium shall reign but as my vassal."

"Yes, sire," said all but one, whom we shall not mention.

"And then King of Rome and Italy, and Protector of the Helvetic Confederation shall be no empty titles—they shall be mine."

"But, sire, England?" observed one gently.

"England, my eternal nightmare! England, the assassin of my uncle! Every step I take I find her in my way. Let her take care, perfidious and meddling Albion. Let her beware that she interfere not, for, as surely as she interferes, will I land on her shores, and show them that their island is as easily made a French colony as was Algiers. They fancy themselves impregnable; they will find their mistake."

Thus spoke Louis Napoleon in the house of Virginie, la Sabotiere.

I must now explain who she is, and how he found himself there, premising that the information I am giving you may cost me dear, though I hope no one will aid the rascally police of Bonaparte in tracing the author of the news here given. How I obtained it is a secret of life and death. But every word I write is true. Louis Napoleon may not carry out his after-supper boast, but the words were spoken by him.

When Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was a State prisoner in Ham he was treated with very great kindness and consideration. Amongst others who saw him for different purposes was Virginie, a very pretty girl, daughter of an old snapper maker in Ham. After a while Louis made proposals, they were accepted, and two children were the result. These children he was very much attached to. They were provided for, and sent to first rate schools. On his advent to power, in 1848, the Prince gave Virginie a pension, and then, in December, 1851, he gave her the beautiful residence above alluded to.

With a natural taste for debauchery, resembling in character the debauchery of the Regent and Louis XV., one of the delights of Louis Napoleon is an orgy, with plenty of wine and women. In fact, his happiness is a rarefied ecstasy, such as when the Regent and Dubois lived. To indulge in these at St. Cloud and the Elysee would be dangerous, as there is a certain amount of public opinion still alive; but

then there was the cozy little house at Madria, and that has been selected by him as the seat of his midnight conferences on the affairs of the Empire. Surrounded by parasites, pimps and prostitutes, heated by wine, he tries to rouse himself in this despicable way to emulate his uncle.

Not a dozen persons in Paris, apart from his own clique, know a word of all this. But I have told it. Was I present? Did I not receive the report from one who was present; was the orgy revealed to a second party, and then to me? are questions I cannot answer.

I give the information as true, exact and historical. It may be denied. That will only prove its truth, as, for a Bonapartist to say a thing to be, is to prove that it is not.

From the Journal of Commerce.

LEPROSY.
Extensive publicity has but recently been given to the fact that this loathsome disease, precisely identical with that spoken of in the Scripture, still exists in various parts of Palestine, and has been carried to the Western coast of Norway, bordering upon the North Sea, where it is said to exist, all the way from the Naze to the North cape. It is not contagious, but hereditary; and the first cases that are known to have ever been cured by other than miraculous means, were eight who were treated in a "leprosy house," recently erected by the Government of Norway. Dr. Daniellssen, the physician, believes the cure to be effectual. A letter from Rev. J. C. Richmond, dated at Bergen, in September last, and published in the Evangelical Catholic, of this matter. The whole number affected by leprosy in that country, is estimated at three thousand. The disease has begun to penetrate inland, and is sometimes found far in the interior.

Mr. Richmond calls attention to the important fact that the Norwegian emigration to this country is to a great extent from leprous districts, and persons known to be infected have already emigrated to the United States. Dr. Daniellssen regards it as certain that the disease will develop itself among these emigrants, and might naturally be expected to become prevalent. Mr. Richmond recommends the adoption of the most stringent measures for the detection of such as are diseased, that they may be prevented from settling among us. He proposes the following remedy:
Many vessels with emigrants now sail annually from Norway to the United States. They land chiefly in New York. Let the city or the state enact a law, and make it known in Norway, appointing a physician to inquire if the disease exist among the emigrants who arrive, and if any such be found, let them have their choice between being transferred to a hospital or returned to their own country. The remedy may act harshly in some individual cases, but it is by no means more tyrannical than the quarantine laws that already exist. It will tend to secure future generations against one of the most fearful calamities that can become permanent among a people.

In closing his letter, which is addressed to Bishop Wainwright, he says:
"You have witnessed, as indeed you did in the East, the poor creatures, so afflicted with that type of the disease which covers the face, and even the eyelids with red tubercles, and, by the growth of the same within the throat, destroys the speech, or reduces it to a husky and hoarse effort, while the poor leper in a few years descends to the tomb; or could you behold the limbs by degrees dropping from the body, and while they remained, so destitute of feeling that the poor sufferers frequently burn themselves with deep scars before they are even aware of the heat, you would not wonder that I should wish to arouse such attention, before it be too late as may secure our posterity against this loathsome infliction.

A correspondent of the National Intelligencer gives an extremely interesting description of the leprosy, as it exists in Jerusalem. We extract the following:
The quarter of the Lepers is a sad and impressive place. By the laws of the land which have existed from scriptural times, they are isolated from all actual contact with their fellow men: yet there seems to be no prohibition to their going out beyond the walls of Jerusalem, and begging by the road-side. Near the gate of Zion, on the way to Bethlehem, I saw many of them sitting on the rocks, their hideous faces uncovered, thrusting forth their scaly hand for alms. Their huts are rudely constructed of earth and stones, seldom with more than one apartment, and this so filthy and loathsome, that it seemed unfit to be occupied by swine. Here they live and propagate, whole families together, without distinction of sex; and their dreadful malady is perpetuated from generation to generation, and the groans of the aged and dying are mingled with the feeble wail of the young that are brought forth branded for a life of misery.

A STEAMBOAT DISASTER ON THE MISSISSIPPI.
We find in the Natchez Courier of the 17th instant the following particulars of a late steamboat disaster on the Mississippi river, of which we have before had a brief account by Telegraph. This statement was furnished to the Courier by a passenger on the ill-fated boat:
The steamer Western World, from St. Louis, bound for New Orleans, had arrived about two hundred miles below Memphis at half past four o'clock on Tuesday morning, the 14th inst. It was dark and raining. A large steamer was seen coming upstream, which afterwards proved to be the H. R. W. Hill. The pilot of the World tapped his bell twice. The Hill replied with one tap. The World again tapped twice. The Hill again replied with one tap, and came on towards the World. The pilot of the World backed her wheels, and strove to get out of the way, but the Hill struck her some twenty feet from her bow, and cut her deep down into the water.

The passengers were then informed that the boat was sinking in one hundred feet of water. In about four minutes from that time she was turned bottom up, and in as many minutes more her cabins were broken up and floating from the wreck.

There were about forty deck passengers lost. Never shall I forget the wild shriek of agony that for a second rose above all other sounds as the vessel rolled over, and they were launched into eternity. One poor man got on board the Hill with his two youngest children, and turned to look for his wife and three more children that were following him, but in that brief space they had passed to the world of spirits.

The Hill remained by the wreck as long as she could, but the deck passengers had but a poor chance of escape, as the World's guards were full of oxen, and the other passages blocked up with corn. It is thought all the cabin passengers were saved. Mrs. Fitzwilliam, her three children, father, and servants, found themselves on board the Hill, in the same dress that they rose from their beds with the exception of a quilt the lady had around her. Another young lady was carried from her state room by the cook, fainting. Fortunately, these were the only lady passengers. There were about seventy in the gentlemen's cabin, and so noiselessly did they flee for their lives that scarcely a sound was heard in the cabin—a cry of fire adding, if possible, speed to their flight. Little or no baggage was saved, and but few escaped with a full suit of clothes.

BALLOONING.
Mons. Petit, accompanied by three of his friends made a balloon ascension in New Orleans on Christmas day. A large number of persons assembled and everything passed off to the satisfaction and delight of the crowd. The balloon was of immense size, but the car was the great curiosity. It was built in the shape of a large skiff, with extensive wings attached to the side, enabling M. Petit to guide the direction of his aerial craft from within. The car is built mostly of cork, lined around with cavities containing gas. The ascension took place soon after 2 o'clock, amid the cheers of the crowd, the stars and stripes flying from the light vessel. M. Petit for some time could be distinctly seen walking about in his frail structure, directing its movements. The excitement of the spectators was much heightened by witnessing the balloon pass through a beautiful white cloud, which for a time obscured the floating machine from sight. After rising a great height the balloon took different directions according to the will of its pilot, but finally went off in a south western direction.

Of the voyage of the aerial navigators the Crescent says:
"Mons. Petit and his three companions, who took a balloon ascension on Christmas arrived in safety at the New Basin, at four o'clock the next morning. We are informed by Mons. P. that he attained the great elevation of twenty thousand feet, at which height the pressure on the lungs was so great that it was with difficulty they could speak. During the ascent he encountered no less than six different currents of air—that from East to West being the strongest, but that at no time did he find any difficulty in directing the course of his frail bark at will.

"It was the intention of the Navigator to have made a landing on the coast of Florida, but upon throwing over a bag of ballast for the purpose of lightening his car, the hook of the bag caught upon some of the rigging attached to the balloon, below and out of his reach, thus rendering his descent into the waters of Lake Borgne unavoidable. The point at which they struck the water was near a hundred miles from the city, which space had been traversed in less than one hour.

"Upon touching the water, the car, which was heavily ballasted, sank immediately, immersing the voyagers in the water, but with presence of mind, they clung to the fastenings of the balloon until the car having discharged itself of its contents, rose bottom upwards, and there seated themselves on the bottom, and there remained until rescued from their perilous position—after being twenty five minutes in the water—by the steamer Alabama."

¶ The Presbyterian and Congregational Convention of Wisconsin, adopted a resolution in favor of the Maine Liquor Law, and recommending that an effort be made by the churches to have such a law passed by the next Legislature of Wisconsin.

OUR PLANK ROADS.
At the beginning of the last year we gave an account of the progress of the several Plank Roads in course of construction from this town. We propose now to continue it up to the present time.

FAYETTEVILLE AND WESTERN ROAD.
We learn that 106 miles continuously of the main stem of this Road are now under toll—that some 5 miles more are completed, but not in connection—leaving only about 7 miles unfinished between Fayetteville and Salem. Besides this, the Company is about to construct a branch, (leaving the main stem 33 miles from town,) about 12 miles long, to Evans' Mill on Deep River. This branch has been surveyed, located, and a steam mill removed to the work. Active operations will be commenced on it in a few days. In addition to this, the Company propose to build another branch to this branch, leaving it about 11 miles from the main stem, and running 4½ miles to Gulf (Haughton's Bridge). Active operation will be commenced on it in a few days. Contracts for constructing both these branches have been made at \$1250 per mile.

A separate Company has been organized under a charter granted by the last Legislature, to construct a Road from Gulf to Graham, in Alamance county. Stock has been subscribed to secure the Road to Dixon's Foundry within 12 miles of Graham, with every prospect of its continuance. This may be considered as a continuation of the Western Road, although constructed under a different charter.

FAYETTEVILLE AND SOUTHERN ROAD.
This work is now complete. The Road leaves town through both Gillespie and Winslow streets, unites in about 1½ miles, & goes thence to Lumber Bridge, 15 miles passing through all the heavy sand, and terminating in Robeson county, where there are firm, good roads. This Company has made good dividends during the past year. In to-day's paper there is a semi annual dividend of 4 per cent. advertised.

FAYETTEVILLE AND NORTHERN ROAD.
Ten miles of this Road have been constructed during the past year and is now under toll. The Company purchased the Clarendon Bridge in March last, at a cost of 12,000. From the receipts of the Bridge from April 1st, and from 8 miles of the Road since Sept. 10, this Company has been able to declare 6 per cent. dividend on its capital stock, leaving a considerable surplus. The work will be prosecuted vigorously during the ensuing year.

FAYETTEVILLE AND CENTRE ROAD.
Fifteen miles of this Road have been completed, and 20 miles more put under contract, reaching to Blue's Bridge in Richmond county. The Company is making every effort to have this Road extended to Concord in Cabarrus county. Great hopes were entertained of aid from the late Legislature, but the effort failed. If any assistance was due to any section of our State, it was to this. The Peedee country has never heretofore asked or received anything from the State, and we think something was due it. The contract to Blue's Bridge will be vigorously pressed, and by Jan'y 1854, that much, if no more, will be completed. It is to be hoped that Richmond, Montgomery and Stanly counties will not let the work stop at the Richmond line.

FAYETTEVILLE AND RALEIGH ROAD.
This Company, organized as a joint stock Co., and without a charter, has constructed a Road from Fayetteville to Kingsbury, 11 miles, and has put the same under toll. Surveys have been run to McNeill's Ferry on Cape Fear. A charter was obtained from the last Legislature, and the Company will be soon organized under the charter, and will be prepared to carry on the work more advantageously.—North Carolinian.

MAN SHOT IN PHILADELPHIA.
PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 25, 1852.
Singleton Mercer, well known as having several years since killed Mr. Herberton, was shot in the head last night in an oyster cellar, at the corner of Third and Chestnut streets. The person who fired the pistol escaped.

With a natural taste for debauchery, resembling in character the debauchery of the Regent and Louis XV., one of the delights of Louis Napoleon is an orgy, with plenty of wine and women. In fact, his happiness is a rarefied ecstasy, such as when the Regent and Dubois lived. To indulge in these at St. Cloud and the Elysee would be dangerous, as there is a certain amount of public opinion still alive; but

NOT QUITE THE CHEESE.
A STRONG SKETCH.
On entering my rooms a few evenings since, I found Vol. 19th of the "Spirit," fresh from the bindery. Opening it, I commenced carelessly turning over the leaves, when my eyes fell on the sentence above; "Not quite the cheese." Now, what the deuce gave rise to that saying? I thought I, as the words recalled to memory a scene which was rather a strong impression on a sensitive organ, I did not easily forget it.

Some years since I was employed as a warehouse clerk, in a large shipping house in New Orleans, and while in that capacity, I came across something that wasn't "quite the cheese," as the sequel will testify.

One day a vessel came in, consigned to the house, having on board a large lot of cheese from New York; during the voyage, some of them had become damaged by bilge water, consequently the owners refused to receive it, as it was not, as the bills of lading said, "Delivered in good order and well condition," they were therefore sent to the consignees of the ship, to be stored until the case could be adjusted, I discovered a few days afterward, that as to perfume, they were decidedly too fragrant to remain in the ware house in June and reported the same to the concern, from whom I received orders to have them overhauled, and send all that was passable to Beard & Calhoun's auction mart, to be disposed of for the benefit of the underwriters, and the rest to the swamp.

I got a gang of black boys to work on them, and when they stirred 'em up, "Be the bones of Holl Kelly's quart mug! but the smell was illigant entirely." I kept a respectable distance, believe me, for strong nigger and strong cheese, on a hot June day, just bangs all common essences, including a certain *carmin* we read about.

Presently the boys turned out an immense fellow, about three feet six "across the stump," from which the box had rotted off; in the centre a space of about ten inches was very much decayed, and appeared to be about the consistency of mush, of a bluish tint, which was caused by the bilge water. The boys had just set it up on its edge, on a bale of gunny bags, when I noticed over the way a big darkey from Charleston, S. C., who was notorious for his butting propensities, having given most of the niggers in the vicinity a taste of his quality in that line. I had seen him and another fellow, the night previous, practising; they would stand, one on each side of a hydrant some ten yards distant, and run at each other with their heads lowered, and clapping their hands on the hydrant, they would butt like veteran rams.

But I thought struck me that I might cure him of his bragging and butting, and have some sport also, so I told the boys to keep dark, (which, by the way, caused very little exertion to them, all niggers,) and I called "Old Jake" over.

"They tell me you are a great fellow for butting, Jake?"

"I is some, Massa, das a fac—I done butt de wool 'tired of old Pete's head last night, and Massa Nichols was gwine to gib me goss! I kin jiss bang de head of ob any nigger in dese parts, myself—I kin!"

"Well, Jake, I've got a little job in that line for you when you haven't anything else to do."

"Ise on han for all dem kin of jobs, myself—I is."

"Well, you see that large cheese back there?"

"I does dat, I does, myself."

"Now, if you can butt a dent in it, you shall have it."

"Golly, Massa! you follin' dis nigger! No, I am not, Jake—just try me."

"Wot! you gib me de hull ob dat cheese if I butt a dent in um?"

"Yes."

"De Lar! I'll bust 'em wide open. I will, myself. Jess stan back dar, you Orleans niggers, and clar de track for Ole Souf Carlina, 'case I'se a comin, myself—I is!"

And Old Jake started back some fifty feet, and went at it at a good quick run, and the next instant I heard a dull, heavy sound, a kind of *squish*, and Old Jake's head disappeared from sight, with the top just visible on the other side, as he arose with his new-fashioned necktie, the soft rotten cheese oozing down all around him, as it settled down, so that just his eyes were visible. From the centre of it Jake's voice was scarcely audible, and half smothered, as he vainly tried to remove the immense cheese.

"O-o-o-er de Lor! Mas—took um orf! O-o-o, bress'd' Lor! Lif um up!—Gor a mighty, I—?"

Meanwhile I was nearly dead myself, having laid back on a cotton bale holding myself together to keep from bursting, while the boys stood around Old Jake, paying him off.

"De lor, de nigger's breff smell! you doesn't clean your teeth Old Jake!"

"I say you did't make more dan four times dat han, old hoss."

"Well, you is a nasty nigger, das a fac."

"Well, you is de biggest kine of Welsh Rabbit, you is."

"What you gib your hair grease?" and thus the boys run on Old Jake—now half smothered—until I took compassion on him, and told them to take it off. Jake didn't stay to claim his prize, but put out a growling—

"Gor a mighty! I done got sole dat time, Ise a case of Yaller fever—I is, myself!"