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## **The young man's book of amusement**

**Halifax, 1848**

A more powerful Fulminating Powder

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*Fulminating Powder.*

Mix together one drachm of sulphur, three drachms of nitre of potass, and two drachms of carbonate of potass (all previously powdered) in a sheet of writing-paper. When properly mixed, put them into a small stoppered phial. An eighth or a sixteenth part of this, put into a fire-shovel of tin-plate, held over the fire for a few minutes will explode; immediately before the explosion, a violet-coloured flame will be seen to hover over it.

*Another way.*

Rub together in a hot marble mortar, with a wooden pestle, three parts, by weight, of nitre, two of mild vegetable alkali, and one of flowers of sulphur, till the whole is accurately mixed. If a drachm of this powder be exposed to a gentle heat, in an iron ladle, till it melts, it will explode with a noise as loud as the report of a cannon.

*A more powerful Fulminating Powder.*

The most wonderful instance of chemical detonation is formed by the combination of volatile alkali with silver. Gunpowder, or fulminating gold, are

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not to be compared with this invention, and the great danger attending its manufacture prevents us from giving a methodical account of its preparation to our readers, particularly as it can be purchased, properly prepared, of the chemists.

The slightest agitation or friction is sufficient to cause its explosion. When it is once obtained, it can no longer be touched with safety. The falling of a few atoms of it, from a small height produces an explosion, a drop of water falling on it has the same effect. No attempt can be made to inclose it in a bottle, but it must be let alone in the capsule, wherein by evaporation it obtains this terrible property. To make this experiment with safety, no greater quantity than a grain of silver should be used; the last process of drying should be made in a metallic vessel, and the face of the operator defended by a mask with strong glass eyes.

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*To prepare Fulminating Silver.*

Dissolve pure silver in nitric acid, and precipitate the silver by lime-water; put the precipitate upon filtering paper, and when dry, put it into a shallow vessel, then pour liquid ammonia upon it, and when it has stood about twelve hours, pour off the liquid, and a black powder will remain, which must be carefully set by to dry.

Powder.

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