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

**Halifax, 1848**

To produce fire by the mixture of two cold Liquids

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*The Well of Fire.*

Add gradually one ounce, by measure, of sulphuric acid, to five or six ounces of water in an earthenware basin; and add to it also, gradually, about three quarters of an ounce of granulated zinc. A rapid production of hydrogen gas will instantly take place. Then add, from time to time, a few pieces of phosphorus of the size of a pea. A multitude of gas bubbles will be produced, which will fire, on the surface of the effervescing liquid; the whole surface of the liquid will become luminous, and fire balls, with jets of fire, will dart from the bottom through the fluid with great rapidity, and a hissing noise.

*To produce fire by the mixture of two cold Liquids.*

Take half a pound of pure dry nitre, in powder, put it into a retort that is quite dry; add an equal quantity of highly rectified oil of vitriol, and distilling the mixture in a moderate sand heat, it will produce a liquor like a yellowish fume; this, when caught in a dry receiver, is *Glauber's Spirits of Nitre*; probably the preparation under that name, may be obtained at the chemist's, which will of course save much time and trouble.

You then put a drachm of distilled oil of cloves, turpentine, or carraways, in a glass vessel; and if you add an equal quantity, or rather more, of the

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above spirit, though both are in themselves perfectly cold, yet on mixing them together, a great flame will arise and destroy them both, leaving only a little resinous matter at the bottom.

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*The exploding Bubble.*

If you take up a small quantity of melted glass with a tube, (the bowl of a common tobacco pipe will do,) and let a drop fall into a vessel of water, it will chill and condense with a fine spiral tail, which being broken, the whole substance will burst with a loud explosion, without injury either to the party that holds it, or him that breaks it; but if the *thick* end be struck, even with a hammer, it will not break.

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*To give a Person a Supernatural Appearance.*

Put one part of phosphorus into six of olive oil, and digest them in a sand heat. Rub this on the face (taking care to shut the eyes) and the appearance in the dark will be supernaturally frightful; all the parts which have been rubbed appearing to be covered by a luminous lambent flame of a bluish colour, whilst the eyes and mouth appear like black spots. No danger whatever attends this experiment.