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The young man's book of amusement

Halifax, 1848

To procure Nitrous Oxide, or Laughing Gas

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minute or two, light the lamp again, and nearly the same phenomenon will be displayed as from the beginning. Let the repetition of lighting and blowing out the lamp be made for three or four times at least, that the stars may be increased. After the third or fourth time of blowing out the lamp, in a few minutes after the internal surface of the flask is dry, many of the stars will shoot with great splendour, from side to side, and some of them will fire off with brilliant rays; these appearances will continue several minutes. What remains in the flask will serve for the same experiment several times, and without adding any more water. Care should be taken, after the operation is over, to lay the flask and water in a cool secure place.

To procure Nitrous Oxide, or Laughing Gas.

Take two or three ounces of nitrate of ammonia in crystals, and put it into a retort, then apply the heat of a lamp to the retort, taking care that the heat does not exceed 500 degrees. When the crystals begin to melt, the gas will be produced in considerable quantities. The gas may also be produced, though not so pure, by pouring nitric acid, diluted with fire, or six times its weight of water, on copper filings or small pieces of tin. The gas is given out till the acid begins to turn brown; the process must then be stopped.