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The young man's book of amusement

Halifax, 1848

Simple Barometer

[urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-100120](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-100120)

point of a knife. The mixture will take place quietly ; but if the alloy of these two bodies be brought into contact with a globule of quicksilver, the compound when agitated instantly bursts into a most beautiful flame, and burns vividly.

Simple Barometer.

Take a common phial bottle, and cut off the rim and part of the neck. This may be done by a piece of string, or rather whipcord, twisted round it, and pulled strongly in a sawing position by two persons ; one of whom holds the bottle firmly in his left hand. Heated in a few minutes by the friction of the string, and then dipped suddenly into cold water, the bottle will be decapitated more easily than by any other means. Let the phial be now nearly filled with common pump-water, and, applying the finger to its mouth, turn it quickly upside down : on removing the finger, it will be found that only a few drops will escape. Without cork or stopper of any kind, the water will be retained within the bottle by the pressure of the external air ; the weight of air without the phial being so much greater than that of the small quantity within. Now let a bit of tape be tied round the middle of the bottle, to which the two ends of a string may be attached, so as to form a loop to hang on a nail : let it be thus suspended, in a perpendicular manner, with the mouth downwards ; and this is the barometer. When the weather is fair, and inclined

to be so, the water will be level with the section of the neck, or rather elevated above it, and forming a concave surface. When disposed to be wet, a drop will appear at the mouth, which will enlarge till it falls, and then another drop, while the humidity of the atmosphere continues.

Vegetable Chimney Ornaments.

In winter an elegant chimney ornament may be formed by cutting the head or thick end of a carrot, containing the bulb, and placing it in a shallow vessel with water. Young and delicate leaves unfold themselves, forming a radiated tuft of a very handsome appearance, and heightened by contrast with the season of the year.

To stain Wood Black.

Boil some chips of log-wood in water for about a quarter of an hour, then wash the piece of wood with it three or four times, allowing it to dry after each washing. Lastly, wash the wood by means of a common painting brush with vinegar, prepared as follows:—put one ounce of steel, or iron filings, into two ounces of vinegar, keep the phial near the fire, so as to be gently heated for about two hours, then decant the vinegar and keep it for use.