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The young man's book of amusement

Halifax, 1848

The Miraculous Luminaries

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that an explosion will take place; if the room be darkened, the light will be seen upon its surface; continuing some time after the explosion. If chalk be used, it will also retain the light after the explosion, which will be of a different colour.

The Electrical Kiss.

A lady may challenge any gentleman, not acquainted with the experiment, that he will not be able to kiss her, although she may incline to meet him. If he accepts the challenge, and the machine turn while they are inclining their heads to kiss each other, provided their clothes do not touch before their lips meet, a spark of fire will fly from the lady to the gentleman, which will be sure to make him draw back, without accomplishing his design.

The Miraculous Luminaries.

You must previously prepare the following phosphorus: Calcine common oyster-shells, by burning them in the fire for half an hour; then reduce them to powder; of the clearest of which take three parts, and of flowers of sulphur one part; put the mixture into a crucible, about an inch and a half deep. Let it burn in a strong fire for rather better than an hour; and when it is cool, turn it out and break it in pieces;

and taking those pieces into a dark place, scrape off the parts that shine brightest, which, if good, will be a white powder.

Then construct a circular board, of three or four feet diameter, on the centre of which draw in gum-water, or any adhesive liquid, a half-moon, of three or four inches in diameter, and a number of stars round it, at different distances, and of various magnitudes. Strew the phosphorus over the figures, to the thickness of about a quarter of an inch, laying one coat over the other. Place this board behind a curtain; and when you draw the curtain up or back, discharge one electrifying jar or phial over each figure, at the distance of about an inch, and they will become illuminated, exhibiting a very striking resemblance of the moon and stars; and will continue to shine for about half an hour, their splendour being gradually more faint.

The Fiery Shower.

On the plate put a number of any kind of seeds, grains of sand, or brass dust. The conductor being strongly electrified, those light particles will be attracted and repelled by the plate suspended from the conductor, with amazing rapidity, so as to exhibit a perfect fiery shower.

Another way is by a sponge that has been soaked in water. When this sponge is first hung to the conductor, the water will drop from it very slowly; but