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The young man's book of amusement

Halifax, 1848

Exploding Salt

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The Distorting Mirror.

Opticians sometimes grind a glass mirror concave in one direction only, or longitudinally; it is in fact a concave portion of a cylinder, the breadth of which may be considered that of the mirror. A person looking at his face in this mirror, in the direction of its concavity, will see it curiously distorted in a very lengthened appearance; and by turning the cylindrical mirror a quarter round, his visage will appear distorted another way, by an apparent increase in width only. If in a very near situation before it, you put your finger on the right hand side of your nose, it will appear the same in the mirror: but if in a distant situation, somewhat beyond the centre of concavity, you again look at your face in the mirror, your finger will appear to be removed to the other side of your nose.

Exploding Salt.

If a small quantity of powdered charcoal and hypoxymuriate of potash be rubbed together in a mortar, an explosion will be produced, and the charcoal inflamed. Three parts of this salt, and one of sulphur, rubbed together in a mortar, produce a violent detonation. If struck with a hammer, on an anvil, there is an explosion like the report of a pistol.

When concentrated sulphuric acid is poured upon this salt, there is a considerable explosion; it is

thrown about to
red flame: and
accompanied with

Method of taking

Clip the wings
in the form of a
thick clean gauze
press it on the
a piece of white
your finger, or
bodies are to be
between the wings

To one pound
quick lime; put
whole boil till red
ster in, and if it
come off, it is a
not, let it boil a
filter it off, and it
ings of horn. I
first anointing
into a mass, and
please.

thrown about to a great distance, sometimes with a red flame : and there is exhaled a brown vapour, accompanied with a strong odour.

Method of taking an Impression of Butterflies on Paper.

Clip the wings off the butterfly, lay them on clean, in the form of a butterfly when flying. Spread some thick clean gum-water on another piece of paper, press it on the wings, and it will take them up ; lay a piece of white paper over it, and rub it gently with your finger, or the smooth handle of a knife. The bodies are to be drawn in the space which you leave between the wings.

To soften Horn.

To one pound of wood-ashes, add two pounds of quick lime ; put them in a quart of water. Let the whole boil till reduced to one-third. Then dip a feather in, and if on drawing it out, the plume should come off, it is a proof that it has boiled enough ; if not, let it boil a little longer. When it is settled, filter it off, and in the liquor thus strained, put shavings of horn. Let them soak for three days ; and first anointing your hands with oil, work the horn into a mass, and print or mould it into any shape you please.