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

**Halifax, 1848**

Of Saltpetre

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*Of Saltpetre.*

Saltpetre being the principal ingredient in fire-works, and a volatile body, by reason of its inflammable and ærial parts, is easily rarefied by fire; but not so soon when foul and gross, as when purified from its crude and earthy parts, which greatly retard its velocity; therefore when any quantity of fire-works is intended to be made, it would be necessary first to examine the saltpetre; for if it be not well cleansed from all impurities, and of a good sort, your works will not have their proper effect.

*To Pulverize Saltpetre.*

Take a copper kettle, the bottom being spherical, and put into it fourteen pounds of refined saltpetre, with two quarts or five pints of clean water; then put the kettle on a slow fire, and when the saltpetre is dissolved, if any impurities arise, skim them off, and keep constantly stirring it with two large sticks till all the water exhales. When done enough, it will appear like white sand, and as fine as flour; but if it should boil too fast, take the kettle off the fire, and set it on some wet sand, which will prevent the saltpetre from sticking to the kettle. When you have pulverized a quantity, be careful to keep it in a dry place, not exposed to the air.

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