

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

In a letter to the Paris Academy, Professor Silvestri, of Catania, gives some particulars of a terrible earthquake that occurred in the neighbourhood of Glarre, at ten o'clock on the night of the 18th of July. It has destroyed two hundred houses, killed sixty-four people, and wounded nearly as many. The village of Fondode-Macchia, at the foot of Mount Moscarello, is reduced to a mass of stones. The most destructive effects of the earthquake have been over a space about a kilometre in area, in a longitudinal direction from Fondode-Macchia to the sea.

NEW FIRE ANNIHILATOR—A number of scientific gentlemen have been witnessing experiments at Mr. Willing's premises, at King's Cross, with a new fire extinguisher, the patent of Dr. Carlier and Mr. Vignon. A huge fire was lighted three times, each more powerful than its predecessor, and a man with one of the machines, it is said, completely mastered the conflagration in a few seconds. The machine is portable, and costs from £4 to £6. It is always charged; may be slung upon a person's shoulders; and can be used by a child. The charge simply consists of a large scintillating compound; and the vessel being air-tight and capable of bearing a pressure of 150 lb to the inch, the liquid containing the gas can be projected to a considerable distance. The experiments were deemed satisfactory.

VITREOUS VARNISH—That a vitreous varnish will improvise musical sounds there was evidence lately given in the *BUILDER*, where it was stated, in an article on church bells, that a peculiar mellowness of the tone of old bells was produced by the oxidation of the surface of the metal, forming a sort of glassy crust over it. Glass insulators, too, are said to improve the tones of pianos.

MR. GALE, who believes that he has discovered the secret of making gunpowder innocuous, has patented and revealed his plan. He mixes glass, ground very fine, with the powder in the proportion of four to one, and the powder will then bear to be stirred with a red-hot poker without exploding.

THE WAY BUTTER IS MADE IN NORMANDY—The cream is tied up in a canvas bag, and then buried in a hole in the ground for twenty-five hours. At the end of this time it forms a hard mass, which is broken up with a wooden pestle, whereupon the buttermilk runs away. The pounding and the washing only occupy two minutes, and, as the reader will see, the butter is made with less labour than in any churn yet invented. In the winter, when the ground is frozen, the cream is buried in sand placed for the purpose in cellars, and a double bag is sometimes employed to make sure of getting no sand or earth into the butter.

At the last meeting of the Academy of Sciences, M. Pankowski detailed some experiments which showed that meat salted with acetate of soda is easily dried, keeps an agreeable odour, and, moreover, is more easily unsalted than meat prepared with common salt.

A REASONABLE HINT—One who knows assures us that repeated doses of a few drops of clove oil, in which camphor has been dissolved, form an excellent cure for incipient bowel complaint. One pennyworth of the oil will dissolve about a pennyworth of the camphor.

A most remarkable case of prolonged sleeping fits is given in *The Medical Times*. The patient, whose case was more fully reported in a previous number of that journal, still sleeps as long and profoundly as ever, although the first attack commenced five years ago. All the means at present employed fail to arouse him when asleep; and his friends state that he has lately lost activity and energy. The number of hours he sleeps ranges from 11 to 133, whilst the number of hours he remains awake averages about 6. Whatever time of the day the patient rises, he always feels tired and sleepy the same evening, and returns to bed about 10 o'clock. Several times his friends have endeavoured to keep him awake all night, and once, with very great effort, they accomplished it. Another case of prolonged sleep was reported some time previously, by M. Blandet. Here the patient slept forty days, then fifty, and afterwards twelve months; but these extraordinary fits of torpidity were separated by long intervals of health.

CAUSES OF SUDDEN DEATH—Very few of the sudden deaths which are said to arise from diseases of the heart, do really arise from that cause. To ascertain the real origin of sudden deaths, the experiment has been tried in Europe, and reported to a scientific congress held at Strasbourg. Sixty-six cases of sudden death were made the subject of a thorough *post mortem* examination. In these cases, only two had died from disease of the heart. Nine out of sixty-six had died from apoplexy, while there were forty-six cases of congestion of the lungs, that is, the lungs were so full of blood they could not work, there not being room enough for a sufficient quantity of air to enter to support life. The causes that produce congestion of the lungs are—cold feet, tight clothing, costive bowels, sitting still until chilled after being warmed with labour or a rapid walk; going too suddenly from a close, heated room into the cold air, especially after speaking, and sudden depressive news operating on the blood. These causes of sudden death being known, an avoidance of them may serve to lengthen many valuable lives, which would otherwise be lost under the verdict of heart-complaint. That disease is supposed to be inevitable and incurable, hence many may not take the pains they would to avoid sudden death, if they knew it lay in their power.

TO PRESERVE THE FLOWERS OF A NOSEOGAT—Let a spoonful of charcoal powder be added to the water, and the flowers will last as long as they would on the plant, without any need of changing the water, or taking any trouble at all.

WITTY AND WHIMSICAL.

ADVICE from an old soaker. Never put water in your liquor; it inevitably damps your spirits.

THE governor of a country prison when asked how many he could hang on his new drop, replied, "Why, sir, we can hang six; but can hang four comfortably!"

THE Chinese believe, when an eclipse takes place, that a monster is preying on the sun, and go forth with drums and cymbals to scare him away.

"PA, they tell us about the angry ocean; what makes the ocean angry?"—"Oh, it has been crossed so often."

DIFFERENT PREMISES—Sydney Smith, passing a by-street behind St. Paul's, heard two women abusing each other from opposite houses. "They will never agree," said the wit; "they argue from different premises."

When can donkey be spelt with one letter?—When it's U!

SHUTTING UP THE PARSON—The best joke we have heard for a long time was cracked by a village preacher. He was preaching on a very sultry day, in a small room, and was annoyed by those who casually dropped in, after the services had commenced, invariably closing the door after them. His patience at length exhausted by the extreme oppressiveness of the heat, he vociferated to an offender, "Friend, I believe if I was preaching in a bottle, you would put the cork in!"

At the Manchester Exhibition, some years ago, we overheard a group of mill-girls commenting on that wonderful picture, "The Three Maries." "Which be 'em?" said one. "Why, 'one's Bloody Mary (was the reply), and 'other's Mary Queen o' Scots; and hang me if I know who t'issin is." A younger girl, fresher from her school, suggested that the third might perhaps be the Virgin Mary; but her hint did not carry conviction with it.

"THAT was a horrible affair," said a gentleman in company, the murder of Dean, and the sealing up of his remains in a tin box!"—"What Dean?" asked half a dozen voices at once. "Sar Dean," replied the wag.

A New York Sabbath school teacher asked a young pupil the meaning of "the wages of sin is death." The boy did not know what wages were, and was asked "what his father got on Saturday night?"—"Drunk," was the answer.

THE CROOK—"My friends," said a returned missionary, at one of the late anniversary meetings, "let us avoid sectarian bitterness. The inhabitants of Hindostan, where I have been labouring for many years, have a proverb that, 'Though you bathe a dog's tail in oil, and bind it in splints, yet you cannot get the crook out of it.' Now, a man's sectarian bias is simply the crook in the dog's tail, which cannot be eradicated; and I hold that everyone should be allowed to wag his own *sectarianity in peace!*" [Great laughter and applause.]

WHEN the Committee of the French Academy were employed in preparing the well-known Academic Dictionary, Cuvier, renowned for his wit as well as his learning, came one day into the room where they were holding a session. "Glad to see you, M. Cuvier," said one of the forty; "we have just finished a definition which we think quite satisfactory, but on which we should like to have your opinion. We have been defining the word crab, and explained it thus: 'Crab, a small red fish which walks backwards.'"—"Perfect, gentlemen," said Cuvier, "only if you will give me leave, I will make one small observation in natural history. The crab is not a fish, it is not red, it does not walk backwards. With these exceptions your definition is excellent."

A DIRTY PATIENT—Abernethy once said to a rich but dirty patient, who consulted him about an eruption, "Let your servant bring to you three or four pails of water, and put it into a washtub; take off your clothes, get into it, and rub yourself well with soap and a rough towel, and you'll recover."—"This advice seems very much like telling me to wash myself," said the patient.—"Well," said Abernethy, "it may be open to such a construction."

"I've heard, captain," said an English traveller to the captain of a steamer, running on the Upper Mississippi, "that your Western steamboats can run in very shallow water—where, in fact, the water is not more than two or three feet deep!"—"Two or three feet deep!" exclaimed the captain, in tones of withering contempt; "why, we wouldn't give a—for a boat out here that couldn't run on the *secat* of a water-jutcher!"

A GOOD anecdote is told of Manger Price, Theodore Hook, and the eccentric Canon. After a dinner given by Mr. Stephen Price, of Drury Lane Theatre, all the guests, with the exception of Cannon and Theodore Hook, having long since retired, the host, who was suffering from a severe attack of gout, was compelled to allude pretty plainly to the lateness of the hour. No notice, however, was taken of the hint; and, unable to endure any longer the pain of sitting up, Mr. Price at length slipped quietly off to bed. On the following morning he inquired of his servant, "Pray, at what time did those gentlemen go last night?" replied John, "They are not gone, sir; they have just rung for coffee."

A NEW WAY TO ECONOMY—A person in Paris noticed a poor man with a wooden leg walking past his hotel, and gave him a franc. The next day he saw the supposed beggar, but he had changed the wooden leg from the right to the left. Enraged at the deception, he went up to the man, and exclaimed, "You rascal, you had the wooden leg on the other side yesterday! You are not lame at all!"—"Monsieur," was the response with dignity, "I never said I was. I wear a wooden leg for economy, so as not to wear out my trousers—and I change the leg to prevent one leg of the trousers wearing out before the other."

An Irish dragon, on having heard that his widowed mother had married since he quitted Ireland, exclaimed, "Murder! I hope she won't have a son older than me; if she does, I shall lose the estate."

A NICE THING OF IT.
THEY give books very odd names now says:—"What Will He Do With It?" "Out of the Depths," "Such Things Are," and the like.

A dry fellow stopped into a bookseller's shop the other day, and asked the shopman—
"Have you got the 'Woman in White'?"

"Yes," replied he.

"All Alone!" said the inquirer.

"Yes," responded the shopman.

"In the Dark?" still queried the stranger.

"Yes, sir," again promptly replied the attendant.

"Well, all I've got to say is," retorted the questioner, as he turned to the door, "you've got a mighty nice thing of it. Good byo!"

The shopman was in a very low state at last accounts, but it is hoped that careful nursing will bring him "Out of the Depths."

WHY THEY DIFFER—A facetious boy asked one of his playmates how a hardware dealer differed from a bootmaker. The latter, somewhat puzzled, gave it up. "Why, because the one sold nails, and the other nailed soles," was the reply.

SUGGESTED EPITAPH—The following epitaph, suggested by the disloyal wits of the period, went the fashionable rounds soon after the demise of Frederick Prince of Wales, son of George 2nd—

"Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather;
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another;
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her;
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation;
But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
There's no more to be said."

THE late Archbishop of Dublin once inquired of a physician, "Why does the operation of hanging kill a man?"—"Because," inspiration is checked, circulation stopped, and blood suffuses and congests the brain."—"Bosh!" replied his grace; "it is because the rope is not long enough to let his feet touch the ground."

MR. PHILIP THICKNESS, father of the late Lord Audley, being in want of money, applied to his son for assistance. This being denied, he immediately hired a cobbler's stall, directly opposite his lordship's house, and put up a board on which was inscribed, in large letters, "Boots and Shoes mended in the best and cheapest manner, by Philip Thickness, father of Lord Audley." His lordship took the hint, and the board was removed.

DIPLOMATIC ANECDOTES—The most flippant of diplomatic asses, Prince Schwartzburg, was so grossly impertinent as to remark energetically to Lord Ward that English diplomats spoke shocking bad French. "Ah," said the English nobleman to the Austrian stript, "you must remember that we have not had the advantage of having our capital cities so often occupied by French troops as some of the continental nations." This sharp comment on the German's text was as creditable to Lord Ward as a reply of an English ambassador to Napoleon, at the time of the rupture of the peace of Amiens. "I will make an attack on England," said that most imperious of muscular genies, the first consul, in a burst of fury, to Lord Whitworth.—"That is your affair, sir," was the reply.—"I will annihilate you," roared the consul.—"Ah, sir, that is our affair," was the calm and noble reply of the representative of a great people.

CURIOUS, IF TRUE—An anecdote to make the mouth water is going the rounds to this effect:—It appears that the largest lauded proprietor of Spain is the Duke d'Osuna, of the amount of whose property the 600 stewards alone know the extent. The duke was met recently by an *attache* of the English Embassy at Madrid in one of the salons of that capital, to whom the *attache* said, "Monsieur le Duc, I have a mission to execute for my embassy in Andalusia, and am going to leave Madrid to-morrow. Would you kindly give me the permission to shoot over your property?" "Willingly, my dear sir, was the reply, "if I had any property in Andalusia, but I have not."—"I beg your pardon, Monsieur le Duc, but you have."—"What?"—"Yes, truly."—"Are you quite sure?"—"Nothing is easier than to make the discovery, Monsieur le Duc." The duke went to his Madrid man of business the next day, and found, to his surprise, that he had indeed ten thousand acres in that province. We fancy it would be rather difficult to beat that in Canada, and that most of us would remember that we had a stray ten thousand acres more or less, were it over so stray.

DON'T ATTEMPT IT—Dip the Mississippi dry with a teaspoon—twist your heel into the toe of your boot—send up fishing-hooks with balloons and fish for stars—get astride a gossamer and chase a comet—when a rain storm is coming down like the catastrophe of Niagara, remember where you left your umbrella—choke a flea with a brickbat—in short, prove everything hitherto considered impossible to be possible—but never attempt to coax a woman to say she will when she has made up her mind to say she won't.

A SNOOC—The *North British Mail* tells a story of a needy electrician who was dunned by an energetic creditor; wearied with his importunity the debtor attached his electric battery to the door-knob. When the creditor attempted to lift the latch, the shock he received, as was perceived by his chuckling debtor through a "peck" hole, fairly knocked him down, and, on recovering himself somewhat, he concluded that he had suffered a stroke of paralysis.