

Westminster Bridge Built of Epsom Salts.—Dr. Ryan, Professor of Chemistry, in a lecture delivered at the Polytechnic Institution, before the Duke of Richmond and several of the members of the Royal Agricultural Society, in illustration of the elementary principle of chemistry, stated that magnesian lime-stone contains from twenty four to forty-two per cent. of carbonate of magnesia, from which Epsom Salts are procured by the application of sulphuric acid. If Westminster Bridge, built of that rock, were covered with water and sulphuric acid, it would be converted into Epsom salts.

Pitt's Bridge.—The first stone of Blackfriars' bridge, the work of Robert Mylne, a Scotch architect, was laid on the 31st of October, 1760. It was originally called Pitt's bridge, in honour of William Pitt, the great Earl of Chatham. If the foundations shall ever be disturbed, there will be found beneath them a metal tablet, on which is inscribed, in Latin, the following grateful tribute of the citizens of London to the genius and patriotism of that illustrious statesman:—"On the last day of October, in the year 1760, and in the beginning of the most auspicious reign of George the Third, Sir Thomas Chitty, knight, lord-mayor, laid the first stone of this bridge, undertaken by the Common Council of London during the progress of a raging war (*flagrante bello*.) for the ornament and convenience of the city; Robert Mylne being the architect. In order that there might be handed down to posterity a monument of the affection of the city of London for the man who, by the power of his genius, by his high-mindedness and courage (under the Divine favour and happy auspices of George the Second,) restored, increased, and secured the British empire in Asia, Africa, and America, and restored the ancient reputation and power of his country amongst the nations of Europe, the citizens of London have unanimously voted this bridge to be inscribed with the name of William Pitt." Such tributes as the foregoing, literature should not willingly let die. A more appropriate, or deserved tribute, paid by the merchants of a mighty city to an illustrious statesman and patriot, it would be difficult to point out. The simple tablet, on which this inscription is engraved, lies deeply buried in the bosom of the Thames, and its very existence is, perhaps known but to few; and yet far more honourable than all civil crowns, far more than all the wealth and titles secured to him and to his posterity by his Sovereign and the legislature, was this affectionate, this unbought and voluntary testimony "unanimously voted" by the citizens of London, to the man who had restored to them the security of wealth and commerce, and the ancient renown which had rendered the name of an Englishman respected over the world.

M. Eolman, the director of the national porcelain manufactory of Sèvres, has succeeded in producing crystallized minerals, resembling very closely those produced by nature—chiefly precious and rare stones employed by jewellers. To obtain this result he has dissolved in boric acid, alum, zinc, magnesia, oxides of iron, and chrome, and then subjecting the solution to evaporation during three days, has obtained crystals of a mineral substance, equalling in hardness and in beauty and clearness of colour, the natural stones. With chrome M. Eolman has made most brilliant rubies, from two to three millimeters in length, and about as thick as a grain of corn. If rubies can be artificially made, secrets which the old alchemists pursued cannot be far off.

The Upas Tree.—We published some time since an account of the discovery of a tree on the Isthmus of Panama, having many of the characteristics of the fabled Upas tree of the East, as it is destructive of all animal and vegetable life that comes within its baneful influence. A number of the *Panama Herald*, received by the late arrival, has the following additional notice of this singular vegetable production:—"Riding out upon the 'Plains' a few miles from the city the other day with a friend, we had the fortune to have several of these trees pointed out to us. As far around each as its branches extended, the grass was dead—the ground almost bare, whilst all beyond it was fresh and green. Each tree seemed to form a circle around it by the appearance presented by the dead and live grass. They were all alike in this respect, and the trees all of the same appearance and character. Occasionally the skull of a dead mule or other animal were to be found lying either directly under the tree, or near by, indicating the effects of its deadly poison. Anxious as we felt to procure a branch and bring it to the city, that its fluids might be subjected to a chemical analysis, we were deterred by the threatening appearance they presented. We have no doubt as to the nature of the tree being as poisonous as the deadly Upas of the Nile. [New York Commercial Advocate.]

Origin of the Word "Whig."—In the sixteenth century, there arose in England a party opposed to the King, in favour of a republican form of Government, in which the people would have a voice. The party adopted as their motto, "We hope in God." The initials, or first letter of each word combined, read "Whig," and were used to name or designate the party. Thus the word "Whig," originally meant opposition to kings and monarchies, and friendship for the very form of government under which we exist. It originated in England a century and a half before our revolution. [United States Paper.]

Editorial and Official Notices, &c.

DELAY IN ANNOUNCING THE ANNUAL SCHOOL APPORTIONMENT FOR 1852.

We direct the especial attention of Local Superintendents to the Official Circular addressed to them (on page 90), by the Chief Superintendent of Schools, on the subject of distributing the School Fund for the current year.

We have purposely delayed issuing this number of the *Journal*, in order to include that circular in its pages, so that it might thereby reach Local Superintendents two or three weeks earlier than had it been delayed for the July number.

We extremely regret our inability to announce the official apportionment of the Legislative School Grant to the several cities, towns, villages, townships and counties in Upper Canada, for 1852, in this month's *Journal*. No effort has been spared by the Educational Department to obtain a satisfactory basis upon which to make the current year's apportionment. And strange as it may appear, we have to state, that as yet the Department is not in possession of complete returns of even the school population for 1851, owing to the unaccountable neglect (although written to) of some Local Superintendents to transmit to the Education Office their Annual Reports for last year! Application was also made to each of the Census Commissioners in Upper Canada, and to the Secretary of the Provincial Board of Registration and Statistics, to obtain complete returns of the population of the Province, upon which to base the school apportionment for this year, but without effect; and not until personal application was made to the Statistical Office, at Quebec, was the Chief Superintendent able to procure a sufficiently correct data by which to be guided in making the annual apportionment of the School Grant, as required by law. We regret that, after all the delay, however, those returns were received too late by the Educational Department to enable us to avail ourselves of them in this number of the *Journal*. The apportionment for the current year, however, together with the statistics of the general population of the Province for 1852, will be published in the *Journal of Education* for July. Our readers will be agreeably surprised to learn that the population of Upper Canada reaches within about 50,000 or 60,000 of being *one million of souls!* Thus has our population doubled within a few years. May it increase as fast in knowledge and in virtue as in population! For righteousness alone exalteth a nation.

SCHOOL ATLAS OF GENERAL GEOGRAPHY, AND SCHOOL ATLAS OF PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY:

By Alexander Keith Johnston. Edinburgh: Blackwood and Sons. Educational Depository, Toronto. Price 12s. 6d. each.

The eminent firm of Blackwood & Sons have not issued any work in their long and successful career as publishers which should be more heartily welcomed than the two volumes above indicated. The Physical School Atlas may be considered a new feature in books of every day education, and its importance cannot be too highly appreciated. "Physical Geography," in the words of the preface, "is the history of nature presented in its most attractive form—the exponent of the wonders which the Almighty Creator has scattered so profusely around us. Few subjects of general education are, therefore, so well fitted to expand and elevate the mind, or satisfy the curiosity of youth." This work is abridged from the great Atlas by the same author. There are eighteen maps, exquisitely engraved, carefully indicated and coloured, exhibiting the ethnography, religious statistics, the geology, climates, temperature, the animals, vegetables, with brief and explicit descriptions of each. There are twenty-two maps in the General School Atlas—they are remarkable for their distinctness, and this is greatly enhanced by the sea being depicted in an agreeable blue-tinted ink. The index itself alone renders the work doubly valuable; by it a reference is had to the latitude and longitude, as well as to the map upon which it is found. These maps cannot fail to be the ready adjunct of every scholar and student, and we cordially wish the publishers the highest meed of profit that can be realized for so desirable an addition to the school form as well as to the library table.

WANTED immediately, a good qualified and experienced TEACHER, for School-Section No. 6, Etobicoke. Salary £60 per annum. Apply to Wm. Smith, Geo. Baily, or John Acrow, Trustees.

TORONTO: Printed and Published by THOMAS HUGH BENTLEY.

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All communications to be addressed to Mr. J. GEORGE HODGINS, Education Office, Toronto.