

## POETRY.

## A THOUGHT SUGGESTED BY THE NEW YEAR

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

THE more we live, more brief appear

Our life's succeeding stages:

A day to childhood seems a year,

And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,

Ere passion yet disorders,

Steals lingering like a river smooth

Along its grassy borders.

But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,

And Sorrow's shafts fly thicker,

Ye stars that measure life to man,

Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath,

And life itself is rapid,

Why, as we reach the Falls of Death,

Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange—yet who would change

Time's course to slower speeding?

When one by one our friends have gone,

And left our bosoms bleeding.

Heaven gives our years of fading strength

Indemnifying fleetness;

And those of youth, a seeming length

Proportioned to their sweetness.

## MISCELLANY.

## CURIOS DISCOVERIES IN PRACTICAL SCIENCE.

—Abundant examples might be cited of cases where the remarks of experienced artists, or even ordinary workmen, have led to the discovery of natural qualities, elements, or combinations, which have proved of the highest importance. Thus (to give an instance), a soap-manufacturer remarks, that the residuum of his ley, when exhausted of the alkali, for which he employs it, produces a corrosion of his copper boiler, for which he cannot account. He puts it into the hands of a scientific chemist for analysis, and the result is the discovery of one of the most singular and important chemical elements, *iodine*. The properties of this, being studied, are found to occur most appositely, in illustration and support of a variety of new, curious, and instructive views, then gaining ground in chemistry, and thus exercise a marked influence over the whole body of that science. Curiosity is excited; the origin of the new substance is traced to the sea-plants, from whose ashes the principal ingredient of soap is obtained, and, ultimately, to the sea-water itself. It is hence hunted through nature, discovered in salt-mines and springs, and pursued into all bodies which have a marine origin; among the rest into sponge. A medical practitioner (Dr Comdet, of Geneva,) then calls to mind a reputed remedy for the cure of one of the most grievous and dangerous disorders to which the human species is subject, the *goitre*, which infests the inhabitants of mountainous districts, to an extent that in this favoured land we have, happily, no experience of, and which was said to have been originally cured by the ashes of burnt sponge. Led by this indication, he tries the effect of *iodine* on that complaint, and the result establishes the extraordinary fact, that this singular substance, taken as a medicine, acts with the utmost promptitude and energy on *goitre*, dissipating the largest and most inveterate in a short time, and acting (of course, like all medicines, even the most approved, with occasional failures,) as a specific, or natural antagonist against that odious deformity.

In needle-manufactories, the workmen who point the needles are constantly exposed to

Large wens, or swellings about the neck and throat.

excessively minute particles of stool, which fly from the grindstones, and mix, though imperceptible to the eye, as the finest dust in the air, and are inhaled with their breath. The effect, though imperceptible on a short exposure, yet being constantly repeated from day to day, produces a constitutional irritation dependant on the tonic properties of the stool, which is sure to terminate in pulmonary consumption; insomuch that persons employed in this kind of work, used scarcely ever to attain the age of forty years. In vain was it attempted to purify the air, before its entry into the lungs, by gauzes, or linen guards; the dust was too fine and penetrating to be obstructed by such coarse expedients, till some ingenious person bethought him of that wonderful power, which every child who searches for its mother's needle with a magnet, or admires the motions of a few steel filings on a sheet of paper held above it, sees in exercise. Masks of magnetized steel-wire are now constructed and adapted to the faces of the workmen. By these, the air is not merely strained but searched in its passage through them, and each obnoxious atom arrested and removed.

Who would have conceived that *linen-rags* were capable of producing more than their own weight of *sugar*, by the simple agency of one of the cheapest and most abundant acids (the Sulphuric)? That *dry-bones* could be a magazine of nutriment, capable of preservation for years, and ready to yield up their sustenance in the form best adapted to the support of life on the application of that powerful agent, steam, which enters so largely into all our processes, or of an acid at once cheap and durable? that *saw-dust* itself is susceptible of conversion into a substance bearing no remote analogy to bread; and though certainly less palatable than that of flour, yet no way disagreeable, and both wholesome and digestible, as well as highly nutritive? — *Herschell's Natural Philosophy.*

## DESTRUCTION OF A WHOLE FAMILY BY THE

COLD.—We have just learned the particulars, says the *Haverstraw Times*, of one of the most melancholy circumstances it has ever fallen to our lot to record. During the protracted inclement weather, much tear has been entertained for the safety of the more poor destitute inhabitants that reside far up the mountains, and to approach whom has been impossible, from the vast body of snow upon the ground. The few warm days have, in a measure, dissipated the late snow drifts, and persons have ventured into the mountains in quest of timber-wood, or in pursuit of game. Many are the objects of suffering and distress that issue from the mountain cabins, some with frozen feet, some with frozen hands, and some brought to the verge of the grave by absolute hunger. Last Saturday a person was passing through the mountains, when, beyond Orange county line, he saw a man, near a cabin, in a sitting posture and partly covered with snow. On approaching, he discovered he was frozen to death, and that he had in his hand a wooden shovel with which he had evidently been labouring to open a passage from his snow-bound habitation. Satisfying himself that the man had been sometime dead, he entered the cabin, upon the floor of which, to his infinite horror, he found the frozen bodies of a middle aged woman and two children. He immediately raised the neighbors, the nearest of whom resided at a distance of a mile and a half, and on further examination, it was ascertained, from appearances, that they had consumed every particle of food and fuel, and perceiving no likelihood of the storm abating, it is supposed that the father was attempting to clear a path to some wood, which lay a short distance from the cabin, when he expired; and the mother and children being

destitute of food and fire, and poorly clad, could not have long survived him. It is difficult to imagine a situation more replete with horror and distress than was that of this unfortunate family, when they felt all the torments of cold, hunger, and approaching death.

HOUSEHOLD AFFAIRS.—Every housewife knows how to make *herb tea*. The herbs are put into a cup or dish, hot water turned upon them, and they are suffered to steep—why not to boil? Because a large portion of their medicinal virtues, and particularly the principle of flavor, the most volatile property they contain, is dissipated by boiling, and the virtues of the tea lost. In the processes of boiling and fermentation, the natural flavor and aroma of the choicest vegetable production are dissipated and changed. Yet though every woman knows how to make *herb tea*, few seem to know how to make *green or black tea*, or *coffee*; or knowing, do not reduce their knowledge to practice. A mistaken economy, to get all the strength, induces them generally to boil the latter well, and often the former; and the consequence is, that instead of a grateful refreshing beverage, they give us a dull, acrid, or insipid substitute, retaining nothing pleasant but the color and heat. The aroma, which gives the liquor its value, and which should be recognized by the nose as well as palate, is gone—with the steam, and with it much of the flavor. They not only boil out the strength but they waste it. Now, without intending to infringe upon the prerogative of the good wife, we do advise, that she will make her green and black, as she does her herb tea, without boiling; and that she will only leach her coffee, by putting it, when recently burnt and fresh ground, into a strainer, fitted to the top of the coffee pot, and turning upon it as much boiling water as would suffice in the old mode. We can assure our fair readers, from reason as well as experience, that this is the best way, not only to gratify the taste, but to promote economy. Less tea and coffee are required in the steeping and leaching, than in the boiling process, and the beverage obtained by the mode recommended is more tonic, exhilarating and pleasant.—*Cultivator.*

## CARE AND MANAGEMENT OF TOOLS.—

The goodness of saws, chisels, and other edge tools, depends upon the quality of the steel, which should be uniform throughout, and it is always better to have them too hard than too soft, as use will reduce the temper. If you wish to restore the temper, yourself, melt a sufficient quantity of lead to immerse the cutting part of the tool. Having previously brightened its surface, plunge it into the melted lead for a few minutes, till it gets sufficiently hot to melt a candle, with which rub its surface, then keep it in again until the steel assumes a straw colour, (but be careful not to let it turn blue,) rub it again with tallow, and let it cool; if yet too soft, wipe the grease off, and repeat the process without the tallow, and when sufficiently hot, plunge it into cold spring water, or water and vinegar mixed. A saw too hard may be tempered by the same means. In other cutting tools you must wait till the steel just begins to turn blue, which is a temper that will give it more elasticity, and at the same time sufficient hardness.

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