

acres might set the streets on fire, if they could not the rivers. The solidification of Carbonic Acid Gas excited attention recently, in Boston. This discovery is French, and of late date. Dr. Webster during the delivery of lectures at Boston, succeeded in producing the article. We subjoin a notice.

“He first formed the gas in large quantities, which, after being subjected to a very great pressure in a strong vessel, was taken out, and exhibited in a solidified form. This solidified substance is somewhat like snow, though more compact. It is excessively cold, so much so, that when held in the hand, it produces the same effect as excessive heat, and soon raises a blister. After being a short time exposed to the air, it disappears, melting, as it were, returning to its original state as a gas. Dr. Webster repeated the operation several times, and handed round to the audience the freshly made substance. By being wrapped in cotton wool and kept from the air, this could be preserved for some time.”

A Mr. Shaw, of the United States, who is described as the inventor of the percussion caps for guns, has discovered, it is said, a mode by which the smoke at the vent of great guns, during their discharge, can be altogether avoided. This smoke has been a matter of much annoyance, especially on board ships of war and between decks. By this invention, not a particle of smoke, or fire is seen, while the machinery is not injured by moisture, and leaves no soil after a day's firing. The inventor intended to submit his discovery to the governments of Europe and America. By some informality, it appears, he lost the privilege of a patent right to the percussion cap,—which has been recently introduced into military use in England, to a great extent,—and has been substituted by Royal ordinance, for the old mode, in Prussia.—It is a curious feature in society, that a man will, apparently, sit down as calmly, to devise an improved mode of destroying his fellow creatures, according to law, as he would to any common place work.—Is this to be accounted for, by the development of the organs of destructiveness and combativeness,—or the depression of benevolence and conscientiousness,—or by the habit which men get into, in a highly cultivated state of society, of, sometimes, overlooking the ends in the means,—and sometimes, overlooking the means in the ends? A comparison of Iron and Wood, as a material for building Steamers, has been made. The advantages of Iron are thus enumerated.—It is said to be, from 15 to 20 per cent cheaper than wood, and its relative capacity is greater, 430 tons in an Iron vessel gives an equal interior to 500 tons wood.—The Iron is more durable, without repairs,—one had been used for 16 years, and was then found clean and smooth.—Preservation from fire.—Preservation from accident by leaks, by the division of the hold into departments, and readiness in discovering such accident.—Freedom from the engine-room smell in the cabins,—and from bilge water.—Diminution of danger from lightning, as the whole vessel is a conductor.—Temperature, in warm climates.—Freedom from insects.—Greater power in resisting shocks in striking.—An iron vessel has struck, and has been bruised but continued tight, when a wooden vessel so situated, would have gone to pieces.—Superior buoyancy.—Cheapness in cost.—A few objections, no doubt, might be made in favour of Wood. In a case of decided wreck, and breaking up, there would be no use in striking to the hull of an Iron vessel in hopes of getting a plank. It might be answered, however, that floating apparatus, and materials for rafts, might be provided.—The advocates of Iron assert that it will eventually be generally adopted.—One of the Landers prosecuted his discoveries in Africa on board an Iron Steamer,—a few are in use in the United Kingdom, and one has been plying 21 years on the Seine, France. A very interesting experiment, of, apparently, more than filling a vessel, is given in a late No. of the Journal of Franklin Institute. It is said that in “old times” there was an ascetic establishment, whose chief peculiarity was the observing of silence, except on extraordinary occasions. One day, an applicant for admission appeared at the gate, and the member attending, instead of giving a verbal answer, retired for a moment, and returned bearing a globe brimful of water,—thus intimating, that there was no vacancy for new members. The person applying understood the sign, but stooping down, picked up a rose leaf and laid it carefully on the surface of the water,—in this manner, replying, that although apparently full, an addition might be admissable. The aptness of the reply, so much in the spirit of the Institution, decided the brother hood, and the applicant

was received. The experiment mentioned above, much more strongly exhibits the same fact, that fulness may receive addition. It is as follows,—fill a tumbler with some spirituous liquor, so that it shall be on the point of overflowing,—take a handful of raw cotton, and lay it in the liquor in small portions at a time. The tumbler will take the whole, and will not overflow. Water would answer for the experiment, but not so well as the spirit, because it is not absorbed so readily. A writer makes the following remarks on this subject.

“Several theories were stated by persons who witnessed the experiment; such as, that the filaments of cotton, by their capillary action the cotton subdivided the particles of liquor, so that they occupied a less space, etc. It appears to be accounted for more satisfactorily, by supposing the fluid to insinuate itself between the filaments of cotton, and thus permit the latter to occupy no more space than is due to their actual solidity.”

Catlin, the celebrated collector of Indian curiosities, &c. and painter of Indian portraits, &c. New York, recently (where he had been exhibiting his collection in England. He intends to publish his notes and observations, and to exhibit his gallery of paintings. The Secretary of the Treasury had directed the admission of his paintings to the duty. In a letter to a New York Editor, Mr. Catlin expresses his hopes to return to America, in better than former circumstances, his gallery, to the American Government, as a national collection.

M. Magendie has been trying Galvanism on a Polish Officer, who, for five years, was deaf, dumb, and without taste. Hearing and taste have been somewhat discovered, and the restoration of speech was hoped for.

The following condensed paragraph gives a striking view of the Intellectual resources of London.

“There are in the metropolis no less than 41 societies devoted to scientific, literary, and collateral pursuits, meeting periodically, distinct from literary and scientific institutions, of which there is one in every considerable district. The Royal Society, extends to every department of natural knowledge, its attention is now restricted to the more abstract department of each. For the study of antiquities there are two—the Society of Antiquaries, and the Numismatic Society, which is confined to coins and medals. For natural history there are eight—the Linnean Society, the Zoological and Entomological Societies, the Horticultural, Royal Botanic, Metropolitan, and Linnæan Societies, and the Royal Society of Horticulture. For astronomy, the Royal Astronomical and the Uranian Societies; for objects of particular or scientific investigation, the Meteorological, and the Geographical Societies. The Society of Arts objects to be embraced specially by it are now recognized in the more exclusive exertions of the Institute of British Architects and Civil Engineers, and the Architectural Society. The Geographical and the Geological Societies. The Royal Society of Literature, devoted to objects of literary research. The Royal Asiatic Society takes the sciences, languages, and antiquities of the eastern continent; and the Statistical Society, which gives the details of all sciences where numbers are concerned. The Royal, London, and United Service Institutions, for lectures and conversations, are of a miscellaneous character. The English Agricultural Society, meets periodically, devoted to the reading of papers, and publication of tracts on medical subjects, there are eight, viz. the Society of Physicians, the London and Westminster Medical Societies, the Hunterian, Harveyian, and the Society of Medical Jurisprudence. To conversational societies, belong the Amateurs, and the Antiquaries Societies. The number of meetings computed by these societies, is 1,000,000 in the session of 33 weeks, or 17,000 in the year. The total receipts of the societies, is £41,000, and the funded property, £1,000,000. The Royal, Antiquarian, Geographical, and Geological Societies, receive aid from government, and the Royal Society, the Geographical Society, and the Geological Society, receive aid from the same source. There are five scientific institutions in the metropolis, viz. the Royal Society, the Royal Astronomical Society, the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Asiatic Society, and the Royal Statistical Society. Unaided by government, there are 36 scientific institutions, the total number of literary and scientific institutions in the metropolis may be estimated at 41, less the five aided by government, to the interest derived from an endowment of property, about £20,000.

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