

PROFESSOR FARADAY AMONG THE MINERS.

As illustrative of the rocklessness of men engaged in specially dangerous occupations, the *American Artizan* gives the following anecdote of the late Professor Faraday, which it says will be new to ninety-nine folks out of a hundred; the hundredth being he who reads the printed proceedings of the Royal Society (England), in one of the latest numbers of which there is a rich collection of biographical facts, chiefly derived from the correspondence and note-books of Faraday. The famous philosopher and equally renowned geologist (Sir Charles Lyell) were sent as Government commissioners to watch the inquest upon those who died by the explosion in the Haswell colliery, in 1844. Faraday cross-examined the witnesses very pertinently. Among other questions, he asked "how the rate of flow of air-current was measured." An inspector of the colliery, in reply, took a pinch of gunpowder from a box, as if it were snuff, and let it fall through the flame of a candle. His companion, with a watch, noted the time that the smoke took to travel a certain distance. The method satisfied Faraday, but he remarked on the careless handling of the powder, and asked where it was kept.

"In a bag tightly tied," was the reply. "Yes but where do you keep the bag?" asked Faraday. "You are sitting on it," quoth the callous collier. The well-intentioned miners, not over-stocked with soft chairs, had given the commissioner their best substitute for a cushion. Faraday's agility in vacating his seat may be imagined, so may his expostulations, which (we are mildly informed) were animated and expressive. For the rest of the inquest he sat without a cushion on his chair.

THE DRY EARTH SYSTEM APPLIED TO WOUNDS.

The *Mechanics' Magazine* says:—"The dry earth system has achieved a new triumph in America. Dry sifted earth has been used as an application to offensive wounds, with magical effect. The *Medical Times* states that there was a case of compound fracture so offensive that it defied the effects of ventilation and the usual disinfectants. The wound was covered with dry earth, the odour was absorbed, and with the abatement of this came a speedy improvement in the character of the wound. Encouraged by this result, Dr. Hewson has applied it with marked success in the treatment of every other disease attended with profuse and offensive suppuration—ulcers of the legs, contused and sloughing wounds, gunshot wounds, severe burns, cancer. In all these it is said to have succeeded beyond expectation, and it is now proposed to apply it to small-pox, the most offensive and virulent of all maladies.

MUSTARD PLASTERS.—By using syrup or molasses for mustard plasters, they will keep soft and flexible, and not dry up and become hard, as when mixed with water. A thin paper or fine cloth should come between the plaster and the skin. The strength of the plaster is varied by the addition of more or less flour.

LIQUID BLACKING.—1. Take ivory black 5 oz., molasses 4 oz., sweet oil $\frac{3}{4}$ oz., triturate until the oil is perfectly killed, then stir in gradually vinegar and beer bottom of each $\frac{1}{4}$ of a pint, and continue the agitation until the mixture is complete. 2. Take ivory black 1 lb., molasses $\frac{3}{4}$ lb., sperm oil 2 oz., beer and vinegar each one pint; proceed as before.

CARBONIC ACID FROM WELLS.—A correspondent of the *Scientific American* says an umbrella let down and hauled up rapidly, a number of times in succession, in a few minutes removed the gas from a well so foul as to instantly extinguish a candle previous to the use of the umbrella.

CLEANING TINWARE.—Acids should never be employed to clean tinware, because they attack the metal and remove it from the iron of which it forms a thin coat. We refer to articles made of tin plate, which consists of iron covered with tin. Rub the article first with rotten-stone and sweet oil, the same as recommended for brass, then finish with whitening and a piece of soft leather. Articles made wholly of tin should be cleaned in the same manner. In a dry atmosphere, planished tin ware will remain bright for a long period, but they soon become tarnished in moist air.

WHEAT-BEAN.—If chemistry had rendered no higher service to common life than to analyze our daily bread, it would have placed society under a perpetual obligation. It is now generally understood that in bolting ground wheat, the sieve takes out the best and most nutritious parts of the grain. A process has of late been patented in England for grinding the bran into fine powder and mixing it with the flour. A German chemist has discovered a method by which bran may be bleached entirely white, so as to be cooked with the flour, thus adding to its nutritive power without affecting its color.

NEW MODE OF SMOKING HAMS.—The *New England Farmer* recommends, first, smoking the interior of the barrel designed to hold the hams, by burning a bushel of smouldering corn-cobs in it, and afterward putting the hams in the barrel together with the brine. It says that, treated in this way, the hams will have the taste of smoked meat, and will keep just the same as if smoked in the usual way. Perhaps they will, but the smoky taste must come from the creosote with which the barrel is impregnated by the smoking, and why not apply the creosote direct to hams in the first place, either by the usual smoking or by a slight admixture of creosote with the brine?