The problem of the true solution of over-population is forcing itself upon us. Let those who dare, take the responsibility of deferring it by staving off in this age, under any pretext, religious moral, or political, the most profound and radical investigation of the whole social question.

THE RAILWAYS OF THE WORLD.—One of the most surprising circumstances attending the creation of railways, is the amount of capital which, within a limited period, has been expended in their construction and equipment. According to the calculations supplied in the work before us, there were in operation at the commencement of 1849, in different parts of the globe, a total length of 18,696 miles of railway, on which a capital of £368,567,000 had been actually expended. Besides this, it is estimated that there were at the same epoch, in progress of construction, a further extent of 7,829 miles, the cost of which when completed, would be £146,750,000! Thus when these latter lines shall have been brought into operation, the population of Europe and the United States (for it is there only that railways have made any progress) will have completed, within the period of less than a quarter of a century, 29,485 miles of railway; that is to say, a greater length than would completely surround the globe. at a cost of above five hundred millions sterling! To accomplishh this stupendous work, human industry must have appropriated out of its annual savings twenty millions sterling for twenty five successive years! Of this prodigious investment the small spot of the globe which we inhabit has had a share, which will form not the least striking fact in her history. Of the total length of railway in actual operation in all parts of the globe, twenty-seven miles in every hundred, are in the United Kingdom! But the proportion of the entire amount of railway capital contributed by British industry is even more remarkable. It appears that, of the entire amount of capital expended on the railways of the world, fifty-four pounds in every hundred; and of the capital to be expended on those in progress, sixty-eight pounds in every hundred, are appropriated to British railways!—*Dublin University Magazine.*

NATIONAL MUSIC.—The Russians and Danes are rich in possession of an original and most touching national music; Ireland. Scotland, and Wales, are alike favoured with the most exquisite native melodies, probably in the world. France, though more barren in the wealth of sweet sounds, has a few old airs, that redeem her from the charge of utter sterility. Austria, Bohemia, and Switzerland, each claim a thousand beautiful and characteristic mountain songs. Italy is the very palace of music; Germany its temple. Spain resounds with wild and martial strains; and the thick groves of Portugal with native music of a softer and sadder kind. All the nations of Europe—I presume those of all the world—possess some kind of national music, and are blessed by Heaven with some measure of perception as to the lovliness of harmonious sounds. England alone, England, and her descendent. America, seem to have been denied a sense, to want a capacity, to have been stinted of a faculty, to the possession of which she vainly aspires. The rich spirit of Italian music, the solemn sound of German melody, the wild free Enterpe of the Cantons, have in vain been summoned in turns to teach her how to listen; tis all in vain—she does listen painfully, she has learnt by dint of time, and much endurance. the technicalities of musical science; she pays regally her instructors in the divine pleasure; but all in vain: the spirit of melody is not in her, and spite of hosts of foreign musicians, in spite of the King's Theatre, in spite of singing and playing young ladies, and criticising young gentlemen, England, to the last day of her life, will be a dunce in music, for she hath it not in her; neither—or I am much mistaken—hath her daughter.—*Fanny Kemble.*

A NEW LIGHT.—The Scientific American has a letter from George Cadwallader Blaney, Fort Washita, Arkansas, stating that he has discovered, and applied for patents, in this country and Europe, for a mode of making a cheap brilliant gas, produced upon a new and scientific principle, which can be obtained at a cost less than one cent per thousand feet. Mr. Blaney says the process will far surpass every other means of producing gas extent; neither will the material raise in value on account of an increased demand. During the process, another article, more valuable than the gas itself, is produced. Neither is there required, during the operation, a single particle of wood, coal, water, or vegetable matter, and the material can be obtained in any climate or place, however remote from civilization.

A NATURAL FOUNTAIN OR SPOUTING SPRING.—A California correspondent of the Family Visitor gives some interesting sketches of scenery and incidents of his travels from St. Joseph across the plains to California. Among other things, he mentions a spouting spring.

After describing what are known as the Soda Springs, he says: Two miles further on, at the left of the road, ("Bear river,") are the *Steamboat Springs*, so called from the puffing, hissing noise, accompanying the discharge of the water. The principal spring is situated in the centre of a circular flat rock, about eight feet in diameter. The rock is elevated but a little above the surface of the river, which runs in a circular form about two-thirds around the rock. The water spouts up through an orifice in the rock, about three inches in diameter. It spouts up, as it were, by regular pulsations, in the form of a milk white foam to the height of about eighteen inches, like water boiling violently over a very hot fire. It also emits steam, and at every pulsation produces a hissing noise.

The water is hot and impregnated with soda like the water of the soda springs. A white man, living among the Shoshone Indians, whose lodge is three-fourths of a mile from Steamboat spring, informed us that the hissing or puffing sound varies in loudness with the height of the surrounding water. He said that when the water is highest, he could distinctly hear it at his lodge.

TO PREVENT THE ATTACK OF THE "ONION GRUB."—The growth of the onion is frequently prevented and the plant sometimes destroyed by a worm which attacks it as soon as it appears above ground. A correspondent of the *Gardener's Chronicle* states that he has applied nitrate of soda with good effects in preventing the ravages of this insect. He used half a pound of the salt to a gallon of water, and applied eight gallons to a bed of ten yards in length. He states that it checked the progress of the worms, and the crop turned out well.

FRIED POTATOES.—The French method of cooking potatoes affords a most agreeable dish. The potatoes are peeled, piped, and cut into thin slices, then thrown into a frying pan containing an abundance of hot lard. As soon as they become brown and crispy they are thrown into a collander to drain, then sprinkled with salt, and served up as hot as possible.