

**UNEXAMPLED ABSTINENCE.**—Mr. Reuben Kelsey, a respectable young man of Fairfield, in this county, aged about 25, is said to have subsisted on nothing but cold water, for more than forty days. His mind seems to have been partially abstracted; and he has chiefly kept his room, apparently averse to any intercourse with the world, for nearly three years past: the quantity of food taken by him for the last twelve months, is supposed to be less than that required for the nourishment of an infant; but during the period first named, neither persuasion, threats, nor force, have been effectual to make him swallow the least sustenance of any kind. Some particles of food, crowded between his teeth two weeks ago, were discharged from his nostrils directly after,—and no further compulsion has been used. He is described as wasted to a ghastly skeleton: still he is thought in a great measure to retain his senses, and to enjoy the benefits of sleep. This afflicting case is believed to be almost unparalleled; and has thus far baffled all the efforts of medical skill.—*Little-Falls Gazette.*

#### FRENCH BISCUIT.

A lady in Brighton has sent us the following recipe for the manufacture of very delicate cakes, known by the name of French Biscuit:

Take three now laid eggs—five ounces of flour—five ounces of sugar—and a little candied lemon peel; drop them on a tin, and strew over them a little sugar—bake them moderately.

#### LITERATURE.

THE SPEECH OF DR. ANDREW THOMSON,

On the opening of the

#### EDINBURGH HIGH SCHOOL.

My Lord Provost, I beg leave to say a few words in the name of the parents and guardians of the pupils attending the High School. It is a matter of rejoicing to the parents, and all who have an interest in the improvement and well-being of youth, that our metropolis has such a seminary as that on whose account we are this day assembled.—Edinburgh has been for ages distinguished by this inestimable privilege—one generation after another have continued to enjoy the benefits of it—and confessed and gloried in the obligation; and I may safely assert that at no former period were its advantages more richly shared, or more justly appreciated than at the present moment. To the existing patrons and their predecessors in office, we owe a large debt of gratitude for the kind, affectionate, warm and unremitting solicitude, with which they have watched over the interests of the Institution. That they have never erred in their management I will not venture to affirm. To say so, would be a piece of idle flattery, which I could not bring myself to utter, and which I am sure you would disdain to hear. But I speak my own honest sentiments, and those of my fellow-citizens, as I now do in their name and my own, our sense of the anxious care which you have uniformly shown to render this seminary more and more a public blessing—(applause)—the wisdom and zeal which has characterised your proceedings, and the eminent success by which your labours have hitherto been crowned. (Applause.) Under your auspices, it has borne its full and honourable share in advancing the cause of literature, especially as connected with the noble languages of Greece and Rome, and has demonstrated its superior excellence, by sending forth, from time to time, individuals not a few, who, by the liberal knowledge with which it had stored their minds, the discipline and training to which it had subjected their intellectual and moral powers, and the generous ambition which it awakened and fostered in their breast, came at length to occupy high and most important situations in all the various departments of public life, and have lived or are still living as monuments of its worth, to adorn their country and their age. On the pupils, now attending we must be supposed to look with a somewhat partial and indulgent eye; and yet it may not be indelicate to state, and I cannot refrain from stating, that while their number, amounting to 700 afford, a decisive proof that the community of Edinburgh have not lost their confidence in the High School, or fallen off in their attachment to it,—a proof the more decisive when we think of the accomplished and formidable rivalry with which, for some years it has had to struggle,—those who observe the mode in which the tuition of the pupils is con-

ducted, the attainments they have already reached, and if progress they are daily making, must be fully satisfied that this confidence and this attachment have not been misplaced, and we cannot help entertaining the delightful hope, that of that interesting and happy multitude now surrounding us, there will be very many who by their literary acquirements, their pious, virtuous conduct, their professional celebrity, their high sense of honour and of duty, their services in the Church and in the State, their patriotism, and their philanthropy, will give ample evidence how well they have been here reared for, and how admirably they have been here instructed. For this experience which we enjoy, and for the hope which we fondly cherish, we beg to tender our cordial thanks to you, the Honourable Patrons, and to you, the learned and skilful teachers, of this institution; and while we promise you a continuance of the respect, the gratitude the assistance, which you have so abundantly earned, and which, we feel assured, you will never do any thing to forfeit, we sincerely and earnestly commend you to the best blessing of Him whose Providence orders all our lot, and from whom, as the Father of Lights, cometh down to us every good and perfect gift. (Cheers.) My Lord Provost, there are two points upon which I wish to make a few remarks: The first respects this new building. We return you our most cordial thanks for transferring the High School from the situation which it formerly occupied to that in which it is now established. (Loud cheers from the boys.) \* \* \* The other point I would speak of regards the selection of teachers: I have always considered this as by far the most important point in education. But the idea entertained by some seems to be, that the system of education is the sum total of the concern. They consider the system is good, they think that the end is attained, and that the work is done; and they never dream that any imperfection can arise from those to whom it is committed to do the work; if there are any failures, they are sure to refer them to the system, and not the persons to whom the working of the system is committed. My doctrine is the very reverse of this; and I am so strongly impressed with it, that I would form it into an absolute maxim, and say, "Make a system what you please, still the teacher is every thing." Give us teachers to the High School of high scholarship, sound principles, exemplary characters—teachers who are not merely capable of acquiring knowledge, but who are moreover, capable of communicating that knowledge—teachers who can adapt their instruction to the capacity, tempers, and habits of the young persons under their care—teachers who combine great affection with great energy and great firmness,—above all, teachers who are in love with their profession,—who are very-enthusiasts in the cause, and who can say, not merely in the spirit of poetry, but from consciousness and heartfelt conviction of the truth.

Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,  
To teach the young idea how to shoot,  
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,  
To breathe th' enlivening spirit, and to fix  
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.

Give me teachers of this description, and I care little about the system; because, if it is bad, they will make it a good one—if good, they will make it better. On the other hand, if the teacher is of a different cast all goes wrong; if you give him a good system, he will make it a bad one; and if you give him a bad one he will make it worse. In the one case, you gain every thing, in the other every thing is lost. (Hear, hear, and applause.) I am not aware that this principle has been formally recognized by the patrons—but whether it has or not, I know they have hitherto acted upon it; for if any thing more than another has distinguished the exercise of the patronage of the Town Council, it has been the selection of the best qualified teachers for the High School. (Cheers.) They (the patrons) have hitherto acted as if they felt every thing depended upon the qualities of the teachers; and I might illustrate this by running over the numerous list which stand upon your record, from the commencement of the Institution, down to the appointment of the existing masters, whose presence forbids me to expatiate on their talents and their merits, which I should otherwise have had great pleasure in doing,—though why should I dwell upon talents

and merits which are so well known to all of us? (Cheers.) We thank you, my Lord, for what you have done so well in times past, and now beg that you may pursue the same course in all time to come.—Give us an Adam (pointing to the portrait of Dr. Adam)—give us a Pillans (pointing to the portrait of Professor Pillans)—give us a Carson—(Loud and continued cheering)—I say my Lord, repeat the boon, as I now repeat the request—give us an Adam, a Pillans, and a Carson,—give us better men if you can find them, and I say, in the name of parents and guardians of the children we will not only be contented, but grateful and delighted. You will thus reflect the highest credit on your own characters as guardians of this great and important establishment; you will effectually uphold the high character which the institution already maintains in the literary world—you will perpetuate and extend its usefulness, and your memories will be embalmed in the heart of an enlightened and grateful posterity.

From the Baltimore Gazette.

#### MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

This is an age of extraordinary—of wonderful discoveries—and many things which are familiar to us from common use, if they had been mentioned fifty years ago as merely probable, would have subjected the person expressing such an opinion to the risk of being laughed at as an absurd dreamer, or pitied as an insane theorist. The uses of steam, gas lights, and many other improvements, are instances which will be readily acknowledged. If the following account of a most important discovery should appear to be highly improbable, let it be recollected that it is not more so than some of those, now so familiar, were originally believed to be—and who will be impious enough to say, that it is impossible.

We have received the following from an esteemed and highly respectable friend, who is as little likely to be misled by a speculative theory, as any person we know—and we think the proof of the authenticity of the facts stated, too respectable to admit of a question that those respectable men in France believe in the truth of the discovery.

To the Editor of the Baltimore Gazette:

DEAR SIR:—I send you for publication, should you think it deserving a place in your paper, a hasty translation made by a friend, of an article from the "Courier Francais" of the 28th October last.

I leave it to your readers to determine the degree of importance to be attached to it; and, as respects the truth of the statements therein contained, I can say no more than that my personal acquaintance with the character of two of the Professors, who have vouched for the fidelity of the experiments, and their result gives me a moral conviction of the possibility of the scheme, which I have in vain sought for in any conception of the probable means employed by M. de Lafforro, or from any analogies founded upon my own experience and knowledge. On the supposition of the correctness of the statement, I am myself so particularly struck with its great importance, that I have determined to write to my friends in Paris, to ascertain the means of obtaining from the discoverer of the method, the extension of its utility to our own country. Should my efforts be crowned with any success beneficial to the American public, I consider it my duty to make it known to my countrymen; and will crave, as on this occasion, your assistance to that effect.

If practicable, I am desirous the article should appear entire, intending to send it to M. de Lafforro himself, as published here. Accept, my dear sir, the sincere expression of my great regard and high esteem.  
J. T. D.

Baltimore, 26th December, 1828.

The Lafforean method, by means of which READING is taught in the space of from NINE to FORTY hours.

(From the Courier Francais, of 28th Oct.)

Twenty-five years ago, M. de Lafforro, a lawyer of Agen, in France, dissatisfied with all the methods then used to teach reading, applied himself to the research of a new one. The old seeming to him merely mechanical, much confused and slow, M. de Lafforro conjectured, that by means of attentive observation and by analysis, a more philosophical and quicker method must necessarily be found. To suc-