

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. M.—Received. If not accepted, will attend to your request.

E. H.—Well, we believe, we are exactly what you claim the gentleman you refer to is, and we will prove it in good time. Your suggestion shall receive due consideration. To the last paragraph of your letter we reply—not in all cases. It is too bad, is it not?

WYVANT.—We shall be glad to receive the other MSS. you refer to. Your contribution will appear in due course.

OTAC.—We either did not receive or must have overlooked your communication.

McFADDEN.—Evidently your friend had no reference to the late total eclipse.

A. S.—We shall be glad to hear from you whenever you can make it convenient to write.

L. L. B.—At present we have not been able to give our attention to your communication.

GINGARELLA.—We will reply to your queries in the order you have placed them. The best method we can suggest to strengthen the memory is to read carefully a page or two—not too much at first—of any author you may have at hand. The following day endeavour to write out the substance of what you have read, as nearly as possible, in the words of the author. Persevere in this course—it will give you the habit of reading carefully and must eventually considerably strengthen your powers of memory. To the second query we are unable to give any satisfactory reply. To the third we would suggest either Beeton's Biographical Dictionary or Appleton's Cyclopaedia of Biography. Our answer to the last query is that we believe hesitancy in speech is frequently occasioned, or, at least increased, by nervousness. Resolutely determine to speak very slowly; practice when you are alone, and not likely to be hurried. Persevere—it will give you confidence—and in due time Gingarrella will be able to prattle as merrily as a young lady who writes such a pleasant letter deserves to.

We are compelled to defer replies to a number of correspondents until our next issue.

LITERARY GOSSIP.

Mr. J. O. HALLIWELL, the well-known Shakespearean commentator, is very anxious to trace the whereabouts of an imperfect copy of Shakespeare's "Love's Labour Lost," 1593, which was sold at Messrs. Sotheby's in 1826, "for the small sum of £2 6s." The late Mr. Thomas Thorpe, the learned bookseller, bought it; but all endeavours to trace it further have failed. Mr. Halliwell says:—"Now, if this imperfect copy has the first three leaves of text in fine condition, the sum of one hundred guineas will be given for it," on application to him.

A short time since, a little brochure was issued in Paris, giving a history of the popular subscription in Paris to the Lincoln Medal. From this we learn that it is intended to present the Medal to Mrs. Lincoln on the 14th of next April, the anniversary of the assassination. The brochure is entitled "La Medaille de la Liberté," and contains, besides the narrative and correspondence in relation to the medal, a biography of the late President.

THE original manuscript of Humboldt's "Cosmos" has just been presented to the Emperor Napoleon by M. Buschmann, Royal Librarian, and member of the Berlin Scientific Academy. This very valuable collection consisted of five immense volumes in quarto, containing the corrected sheets from which the first edition of the work was struck at Baron Georges de Colla's printing-office at Stutgard. The Emperor has sent the MS. to the Imperial Library, as he conceives that so valuable a gift ought not to remain in any private collection.

Mr. FREDERICK HUTCH, the well-known book-collector, who purchased at the sale of the late Mr. George Daniel's library the celebrated unique collection of seventy black-letter ballads, printed

between the years 1559 and 1597, for 750*l.*, is about to reprint them in a single volume, as his contribution to the members of the Philobiblon Society: the impression will be very limited, and only for private distribution. A more important addition to our collection of old English poetry can scarcely be imagined, whilst to the student of English philology the book will have a value beyond all price.

MONTE CASSINO, half way between Rome and Naples, for nearly fourteen centuries the very cradle and centre of religion and literature, the receptacle during the Dark Ages of what remains to us of the writings of the ancients, says "O. B.," in a letter to the *Daily News*, is one of the condemned monasteries.

THE KING of Italy has conferred the title of Baron on Mr. S. S. Kirkup, an English artist residing at Florence, but whose attention of late years has been directed to the investigation and illustration of the poems of Dante.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

MR. BABINET states that the coming Summer will be marked by extreme drought. All the springs, he states, will be dried up, "for when there is no snow, there are no fountains." It is the snow alone which moistens the earth interiorly. Rain water does not penetrate sufficiently, being carried off rapidly by evaporation, except in wooded districts.

FRICTION MATCHES.—The first friction matches were introduced in 1832. In France and England alone 300,000 pounds of phosphorus are annually made into matches. Three pounds of this substance are sufficient to tip five or six millions of matches.

OIL AND COKE FROM COAL AND SLACK.—Mr. J. Nicholas, of Aspull, near Wigan, proposes to produce oil and coke from coal and slack, and from condensable vapours. The oven should be capable of being made steam-tight, and at the top are two apertures, one communicating with a condenser, and the other with the air. The oven is charged in the usual manner, and the draft-holes and all apertures are carefully closed, with the exception of the aperture leading to the condenser. The products are condensed and purified in the usual manner.

OXYGEN AND OZONE.—When oxygen is converted into ozone, by passing through it a current of electricity, a diminution of volume takes place. The greatest contraction occurs with the silent discharge, and amounts to about one thirty-fifth of the volume of gas. The passage of sparks has less effect than the silent discharge, and will even destroy a part of the contraction obtained by the latter. If the apparatus be exposed for a short time to the temperature of 250 degrees centigrade so as to destroy the ozone, it will be found that the gas on cooling has recovered exactly its original volume.

TO COLOUR STRAW BLACK.—The following is a black colour for straw hats:—The quantities of material are intended for twenty-five hats or bonnets. They are kept for two hours in a boiling decoction of four pounds of logwood, one pound of sumach, and five ounces of fustic; they are afterwards dipped into a solution of nitrate of iron of four degrees Beaume, then well rinsed with water, and when dry are painted over with a solution of gum or dextrine. The iron liquor, as well as the other ingredients, is kept by all dealers in dye-stuffs.

An invention of importance to the mercantile marine is said to have been made by a Frenchman of the name of Des Coraux, of Lyons. It consists in placing goods in waggons or cases in the hold of the ship, and by means of a simple apparatus, worked by the steam that is let off on arriving in port, hoisting them on to the deck, where they are placed in trucks on rails, and run on to the quay. By this system it is alleged that the unloading of a ship can be effected in a very short time by two men.

WITTY AND WHIMSICAL.

AN old lady's definition of the science of astronomy. All moonshine and of no earthly use.

When is a regiment like a ship?—When under canvas.

Why are Irish prisons like fishing-boats?—Because they are receptacles for captured Finny-uns.

"One good turn deserves another," as the alderman said when he discharged the thief who voted for him.

THE WORST THING OUT.—Out of tune.

AMUSEMENT FOR YOUNG LADIES ON A WET AFTERNOON.—Knitting their eyebrows.

THE TREETALLER'S PARADISE.—The Temperate Zone.

A French nobleman, who had been satirised by Voltaire, meeting the poet soon after, gave him a hearty drubbing. The poet immediately flew to the Duke of Orleans, told him how he had been used, and begged he would do him justice. "Sir," replied the duke, with a significant smile, "it has been done you already!"

DRAWINGS OF CORK.—Jack Bannister, praising the hospitality of the Irish, after his return from one of his trips to the sister kingdom, was asked if he had been in Cork.—No," replied the wit; "but I saw a great many drawings of it."

FASTIDIOUS.—A young man in a music-shop was lately overpowered by a fastidious young lady, who wanted to purchase "Mr. Hood's—a song of the—a—gentleman's under-garment!" The young man is still alive.

TREACLE.—A sharp grocer, when a customer who was buying a gallon of treacle observed that a good deal remained in the measure after it was turned, remarked, "There was some in the measure before I drew your gallon."

A POLITE FRENCHMAN.—An empress of Germany asked a French officer if the Princess Royal of France was, as the world reported her, the most beautiful woman in Europe.—"I thought so before I met your majesty," replied the polite Frenchman.

TO CORRESPONDENTS,

THE following communications are accepted:—"Twenty-pound Note."—"Plum Pudding for Three."—"A Case of Sham-pain. By a Re-tale-er."—"Will you take some Wedding Cake?" Declined.—"Cod Liver Oil and Turpentine."—"A Night in the Rain."—"Kicks, Slaps, and Thumps."—"Good Advice."

REVENGE.—We remember of a vengeful individual, who, in the exuberance of his rage at some one who offended him, said, "I'll have revenge! I'll do something terrible! I'll give his little boy a tin horn."

ABATING A NUISANCE.—An Irishman who was brought up in the police-court, some time ago, charged with whipping his scolding wife, claimed that he was guilty of no offence, and that he was acting in strict accordance with an ordinance of the Board of Health. "Sure, your honour," said he to the judge, "I was only a-bating a nuisance."

INGENUOUS MALICE.—Two actresses, in presence of a third, were a few nights ago quarrelling in Paris—as even actresses will do at times; they got very violent, and finally approached the question of age. This was too much for the youngest, and she came out with language more forcible than flattering, more "pagan than parliamentary." Suddenly she paused in her *bravura* of bad words, and turning to the witness of their quarrel, said, "Oh, what have I done? Abused her, called her such names! I never knew who was my mother, and she might be."

It is said that when Thelwall was on his trial at the Old Bailey for high treason, during the evidence for the prosecution he wrote the following note, and sent it by his counsel: "Mr. Erskine, I am determined to plead my cause myself." Mr. Erskine wrote under it, "If you do you'll be hanged," to which the wall immediately returned this reply: "I'll be hanged, then, if I do."