THE EASTON GAZETTE.

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VOL. XXXIV. EASTON, MD., SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1851. No. 30.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY
SATURDAY MORNING,
BY
GRAHAM & JOHNSON.
J. A. JOHNSON, EDITOR.

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TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE, or TWO DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS if not paid within *one month* of the time of subscribing, or the renewal of subscription. In no case will the above terms be deviated from. No paper discontinued until all arrearages are paid, unless at the option of the publishers.

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From the Saturday Gazette.

THE SWEETS OF LIFE.

BY T. ELLWOOD GARRETT.

How pleasant is life, in its young sunny morn,
When the rose bud is lovely, without the dread thorn;
When the spirit of youth cannot brood over the past,
But revels in present hopes blooming fast;
When the rapt soul is eager to catch the first gleam
Of a destiny bright—should it prove but a dream.

How happy is life—let the young heart declare,
Who does not anticipate trial and care,
But turns to the sure source of comfort within,
Before the first inroads of passion and sin;
'Tis then that the purest emotions arise,
And hope for a home in congenial skies.

How valued is life—but not to the soul
Who finds its best charm the convivial bowl;
Who does not invoke the pure radiance divine,
But lightens his gloom by the spirit of wine;
His are not the pleasures inflicting no sting:
These are not the transports which sweeten life's spring.

How novel is life—the lone being can tell,
Who delights 'mid his own wild creations to dwell;
Whose wish is to live far remote from his kind,
With the offspring and pride of his magical mind.
If the spirit be wounded, it has its own balm;
And tempests that threaten are, lost in a calm.

How lovely is life, when its joyousness blends
With the smiles of a band of young clustering friends,
Who lighten the sorrows, and share all the bliss
Which checker a life so uncertain as this;
For friendship is sacred, its fountain is pure;
To love every one, is their love to secure.

'Tis the nectar of life—when the trusting heart kneels
At love's shrine, and confesses emotions it feels;
When the rich fount of feeling is welling in pride;
Abundance forbidding an ebb of the tide:
Then life is most sweet, when it feels that it gives
New impulse and life, to each being that lives.

The Fatal Concealment.

A THRILLING TALE.

SOME years after I commenced practice—but the precise date I shall, for obvious reasons, avoid mentioning—I had a friend at whose house I was a pretty constant visiter. He had a wife who was the magnet that drew me there. She was beautiful; but I shall not describe her. She was more than beautiful—she was fascinating—she was captivating. Her presence was to me like the intoxication of opium. I was only happy when under its influence, and yet, after every indulgence in the fatal pleasure, I sank into the deepest despondency. In my own justification I must say, that I never, in word or look, betrayed my feelings, though I had some reason to suspect that they were reciprocated; for, while in my company she was always gay, brilliant and witty, yet, as I learned from others, at times she was often sad and melancholy. Powerful—most powerful was the temptation to make an unreserved disclosure of my heart, but I resisted it. That I had the firmness so to do, has been for years my only consolation.

One morning I sat alone in my chamber. My clerk was absent. A gentle knock was just audible at the outer door. I shouted, "Come in!" in no very amiable humor, for I was indulging in a delicious reverie upon the subject of the lady of my heart, and the presence of an ordinary mortal was hateful. The door opened, and Mrs. —— entered. I do not know exactly what I did; but it seemed to be a long time before I had the power to rise and welcome her, while she stood there with a timid blush upon her face, and the glorious smile upon her lips which made me feel that it would be too great a happiness to die for.

"I don't wonder that you are surprised to see me here," she began, with a provoking little laugh; "but is your astonishment really too great to allow you to say, "How do you do?"

The spell was broken. I started up, and took her hand. I fear I pressed it more warmly, and held it longer than was absolutely necessary.

"Perhaps your surprise will be increased," she continued, "when I inform you that I have come upon business?"

I muttered something about not being so ambitious as to hope that she would visit me from any other motive. She took no notice of what I said, but I perceived that her face turned deadly pale, and that her hand trembled as she placed before me a bundle of papers.

"You will see by these;" she said, in a low, hurried voice, "that some property was left to me by my uncle, and by my grandfather, but so strictly settled that even I can touch nothing but the interest. Now, my husband is in want of a large sum of money at this moment, and I wish to examine the affair well, and see whether, by any twisting of the law, I can place a part of my capital at his disposal. Unintentionally I have done him a great wrong," she added, in a tone so low that no ears less jealously alive than mine could have caught the meaning; "and poor as this reparation is, it is all I can make, and I must do it if possible."

I pretended to study the papers before me, but the light danced and mingled; and if, by a great effort, I forced my eyes to distinguish a word, it conveyed not the slightest meaning to my whirling brain.—Every drop of blood in my body seemed imbued with a separate consciousness, and to be tingling and rushing to the side next to her, whose presence within a short distance of me was the only thing of which I had a distinct perception. I hung my head to hide from her the emotion of which I was thoroughly ashamed.

It may well be believed that I was in no condition to give a professional opinion; but I got over the difficulty by telling her I must have time to study the case, and promising to let her know the result.

"You are a tiresome creature," she said, with a little coquettish air. "I really expected that for once in your life, and for a friend, too, you might have got rid of the law's delays, and give me your opinion in half an hour; so far, at least, as to tell me whether there is a probability of my being able to do what I desire. But I see you are just like the rest of the lawyers—time! time! time! I suppose, now, you will keep about it till I am dead; and then it will go to my husband, in the course of law."

"It may not require more than half an hour to ascertain so much, when I can direct my thoughts to it for that space of time," I replied; and I knew that the words rattled like shot out of my mouth. "But would you be so unreasonable as to require an artist to draw a straight line while he was under a fit of the delirium tremens?"

"You are an incomprehensible person," she replied, rather coldly; "so I shall leave you to your legal and lawful studies. But if you are going to have an attack of the delirium tremens, perhaps I had better send in the doctor. Shall I?"

"Well, I don't anticipate an attack this morning," I answered, with a forced laugh; "so I will not give you the trouble. The fact is, I had been violently agitated a short time since, and my mind has not quite recovered its equilibrium."

We talked for a few minutes longer—she, quizzing me in her light, playful manner—and—and I, delighted to be so teased, standing stupid and dumb, scarcely able to say a word, though very anxious to prolong the delightful moments by keeping up the war of *badinage*. At length, she went to the door, and I was about to escort her down stairs, when we heard some one speaking below.

"Good God!" she exclaimed, clinging wildly to my arm; "that is my husband's voice! If he finds me here, I am ruined."

"Don't be alarmed," I replied, endeavoring to reassure her; "you came here upon business, and such business, too!—He could only love you all the more for it."

"You don't know about this so well as I do," she said shuddering convulsively. "He is jealous—exceedingly, of you; and oh! I fear not without some cause. Hide me somewhere, for mercy's sake!"

I do not know how it happened, but my arm was around her, and I half carried her across the room to a large book closet.

"Can you stay here?" I asked, hastily. "I will leave the door ajar for air."

"No! shut it—lock it—take away the key, or I shall not feel safe. There is plenty of air!" and she sprang into the recess.

For one moment her eyes met mine, and I thought they beamed with deep, impassioned love. The next, I had locked the door upon my treasure, thrown the papers she had brought; into a drawer, and was apparently busy, pen in hand, when *my friend* entered. He commenced in a roundabout way, to question me upon certain points of the law respecting marriage settlements, &c., and, after a tedious amount of circumlocution, he gave me to understand that all this regarded a desired transfer of some property of his wife's into his own hands. He had come, in fact, upon the same errand as that generous creature! He also had a copy of her relatives' wills, and these I was compelled to examine closely, for he was desperately pertinacious, and would not be put off. I was angry at the thought of what his poor wife must be suffering, pent up in that narrow prison, and I felt that I could have kicked her husband out of doors for keeping her there. At last, he made a move as if to go. I started up, and stood ready to bow him out.

"So," said he, tying up his papers with provoking deliberation, "nothing but my wife's death, you say, can put me in possession of this money. I want it very much, but nobody will suspect me of desiring her death for the sake of having it a little sooner."

He laughed at his own poor jest, and I made a sort of hyena chorus to it, that sounded strange and hysterical, even to my own years. He went at last, but stopped again on the stairs, and detained me there, talking, for full five minutes longer. I felt by sympathy, all the pangs of suffocation. My throat seemed swollen—my forehead bursting. Great God! will he never be gone! Will he stand here gossipping about the weather and the generalities of the law, while his lovely wife, who came to sacrifice her individual interests for his sake, dies a terrible and lingering death! He is gone! I rush back into my room. A step behind me makes me turn round. It is my clerk—curses on him! I ground my teeth in unavailing rage. I could have stabbed him—shot him—beaten out his brains—hurled him headlong down the stairs! But any violence would have compromised *her*. In a few minutes my brain was clear again.

"Watson," I cried, "Mr. —— has just left. He is gone up Fleet street, I think; run after him, and request him to leave those papers with me. Say to him I would like to examine them more at leisure.—Run, run quickly, and you will overtake him."

Watson disappeared. I turned the key of the outer door, and Sprang toward the closet. As I unlocked it, I remembered the look she had given me as I shut it; and I wondered, with a beating heart, whether the same expression would greet my enraptured gaze when I opened it.—There she stood, with her eyes calmly fixed on mine.

"You are safe, dearest," I murmured.

She did not rebuke me for calling her so; and emboldened by her silence, I took her hand to lead her from her narrow prison. She moved forwards, and fell into my arms a *corpse!*

I cannot well recall what followed. I only know that I tried every means for her restoration to life; but, alas! without success. Of one thing I was firmly convinced—she had not died from suffocation. I had once seen the body of a man who was killed by the falling in of the mouth of a pit. I recollected his purple and swollen face, and his lax, warm limbs. *She* was pale, rigid, cold. The tumult of her own emotions must have killed her the moment the door was closed upon her. By some means I kept my secret from the knowledge of Watson and every one else. All that night I was *trying to recover her* Then I formed the project of shutting her up in the closet—locking up the chambers, and going abroad for twenty years. But that idea was rejected as quickly as formed, for it would be hardly possible that the presence of a dead body in the house should not be discovered before that time. Next, I thought of setting fire to the place, burning all my books and papers, making a funeral pile of them; and thus ruining myself to save the secret But that thought, too, was dismissed. It might cause loss of life and property to many innocent people, and would be but a bungling proceeding after all; as, if the fire was discovered early, policemen, firemen, mobs, all would break, in, and finding her body there, all would be lost—for it was more to save her reputation than my life, that I was striving and plotting.

In the meantime, I was a prey to the most painful anxiety. I was sure that by that time she must have been missed and sought for. Perhaps she had been seen to enter my chambers. Every step that I heard, I feared might be that of a policeman. In the morning, a stranger called on business. This, of course, was nothing extraordinary; but, when he had gone, I felt that he was a detective officer, and had come as a spy. I thurst a few clothes into a carpet-bag, intending to escape to France. I caught up a box of matches, to set the place on fire. I grasped a razor, and look eargerly on its keen edge as the surest and swiftest way of ending my misery. But then, all these would leave *her* to the jests of the world, and my own sufferings were nothing in comparison. At this distance of time, I can look back impartially and coolly upon that dreadful day; and I can solemnly declare, that I would rather have been hanged for murdering her, than to have allowed a breath to sully her fair fame!

I had just laid down the razor, when a hurried step crossed the ante-room. It was her husband's!

Now, I thought, all *is* lost! She was seen to enter here, and he has come to claim her.

"My dear——," he began, in a nervous, unsettled way, "you remember the business that I came about, yesterday?"

"Perfectly."

"And do you remember the words I used, as I was going? I mean, in answer to what you said about my not being able to touch this money till after the death of my wife?"

"Yes, I remember them distinctly."

"My wife has disappeared since yesterday morning," he continued, turning even paler than before; "and if anything serious should have happened, you know, and you should repeat those expressions, they might be laid hold of, and I don't know what would be the consequence. I might be suspected of having murdered her."

Poor fellow! If I had not known the truth, I should have suspected it myself, from his excessive terror and anxiety.—He wiped the perspiration from his face, and sank into a chair. The sight of a person more frightened than myself reassured me. I was calmer than I had been since the preceding morning.

"Where did she go? How was she dressed?" I inquired, anxious to know all that I could on the subject.

"I don't know. She told me she was going out shopping and visiting; but no one saw her leave the house, and none of the servants know exactly how she was dressed. When I went home to dinner, the first thing I heard was that she had not returned."

"What have you done? Have you sent to the police and to the hospitals?"

"Yes, and to every friend and tradesman where she was at all likely to call."

"You may depend upon it," I replied, very impressively, "that I will not repeat what you said yesterday. You are right in supposing that it might tell against you very much if she should be found dead under suspicious circumstances."

He talked a little longer, and then went to renew the search for his wife. How I preserved my self-possession during this interview I do not know: so far from being really calm, I could have gnawed the flesh off my bones in my agony.

That night, when the doors were fastentened, and I was alone—except for the company of the dead—I shut myself up in the closet for two hours, to ascertain whether she had died from want of air, for I distrusted my own knowledge of the appearance of suffocated persons. The place was well supplied with air from several large crevices. My first idea was correct—she had died from some other cause.

When I emerged from the closet, I found that the night was intensely dark. It was raining in torrents, and the thunder and wind roared a terrific chorus, passed by the sullen booming of the river, then at high tide, and already swolen by the rain. I sat there in the dark upon the floor, holding the cold, stiff hand of the dead within my own. I thought dreamily how often it had welcomed me with its soft pressure, while the sweet eyes had beamed brightly into mine, and the full, pouting lips had wreathed into dimples of delight. Now that hand that used to be so plump, so full of warmth and life, was rigid and cold!—those eyes were glazed and ghastly! those lips were clammy and hard! Tears came to my relief. I wept as grown men seldom weep, and with that heart-easing gush came a new idea of escape for her and me. I was ready to believe at that moment that her spirit rested upon mine, and inspired the thought—for it burst upon me suddenly, with a conviction that if executed a the instant, it would be crowned with success. How could I otherwise have had the temerity to snatch her up in my arms, carry her down stairs, at the risk of being encountered by some of the other inhabitants of the house, bear her through the courts, and, by a way that I knew, into the garden?

The river was running strong and deep against the wall. I pressed one kiss upon her cold forehead, and threw her into the stream. Gladly, gladly would I have gone with her, and held her in my heart till death; but the impulse was still on me, and without delay I hastened back. No one saw me, and the beating rain effaced my footprints.

A few days after, I saw by the papers that her body had been found far down the river. The medical evidence, after a *post mortem* examination, was that she died from rupture of the heart, and that death took place before immersion in the water. So they conjectured that she had been standing by the river when the fatal attack seized her, and had fallen in unperceived; and they returned a verdict of accidental death, and she was buried in a pretty country church-yard, near where they found her.

Two years later her husband married again. He is stout and ruddy, and laughs as heartily as ever.

I shall die a bachelor. I am lean and pale, and bowed and grey-haired, and the sound of my own laugh is strange to me.

A GOOD SALESMAN.

A vender of buttons, buckles, and other small wares, who occupied a small shop at the head of the street in Glasgow, in which, erewhile, the notable Bailie Jarvie domiciled, noticed a country lout standing at his window one day, with an undecided kind of wanting to buy expression on his face, and inquired whether they had "ony pistols to sell?" The shopman had long studied the counter-logic of endeavoring to pursuade a customer to buy what you may have no sale, rather than what the customer may ask for. "Man," said he "what would be the use o' a pistol to you?—lame yoursel an may be some ither body wi't! You should buy a flute; see, there's ane, an' its no sea dear as a pistol; just stop an' open, finger about, thae sax wee holes, an' blaw in at the big ane, and ye can hae ony tune ye like after a wee while's practice; besides, you'll maybe blaw a tune into the heart o' some blythe lassie, that'll bring you the worth o' a thousand pistols or German flutes either." "Man," said the simpleton, "I'm glad that I've met wi' you the day—just tie't up;" and, paying down the price asked, and bidding guid day, with a significant nod of the head, remarked, "It'll be no my faut gin ye getna an opportunity of riding the broose at my waddin' sin' ye hae learned me to be my ain piper."

To pronounce a man happy merely because he is rich, is just as absurd as to call a man healthy because he has enough to eat.

VESUVIUS.—A paragraph appeared in the papers some weeks since, stating that "a grand project was on foot at Naples" to extinguish the fires of Vesuvius, by the introduction of the waters of the neighboring sea upon the flaming mass, said to lie some thousand feet below the ocean level. This paragraph has attracted the attention of our representative at the Neapolitan court and elicited from him the following interesting letter, addressed to the editors of the National Intelligencer:

To render such a project feasible, there should be some reason to believe that the fires of Vesuvius are concentrated within a contracted space. Geological speculation and natural facts are at variance with such a theory. The eruptions always affect the surrounding country to a distance of fifteen and twenty miles. The *Solfaterra*, the ancient *Forum Vulcani*, ceases to smoke—the thermal waters in Lake Agnano no longer bubble up to the surface—and every hot spring in the region of the Campi Phlegræi, sixteen miles from Versuvius, is agitated, or its vitality suspended, during the convulsion. The wells dry up, and shocks of earthquake, more or less violent, admonish the poulations thirty miles distant that the volcanoe is in labor, and that an eruption is at hand.

These phenomena all indicate that Vesuvius is only a vent for a vast field of fire, and mineral combustion, spreading under the surface of the earth to a great depth, and to an unknown extent. The twenty-six extinct craters, and the *semivivant* Salfaterra and Monte Nuovo, in the Campi Phlegræi, are proofs that the earth may seek other issues in this vicinity for its raging fires than through Vesuvius. Monte Nuovo, in 1538, after the succession of twenty earthquakes in twenty-four hours, rose, amid smoke and the discharge of fiery stones, on the shores of the Lucrine lake, in forty-eight hours to a height of four hundred and forty feet; and there it remains to this day. It is composed entirely of volcanic ashes, scoriæ, and lava stones, and it is only now, after the lapse of three centuries, begining to yield to cultivation. The heat of the earth around its base, a circumference of a mile and a half, denotes the near approach of hidden fires to the surface. Naples lies upon an isthmus, between the living volcano of Vesuvius and the slumbering and silent craters around the gulf of Baiæ; and I have no doubt but that beneath *the crust upon which the city rests* is a fiery flood connecting these two opposite volcanic tracts.

It is the general opinion here that Naples would be endangered were Vesuvius to become inactive. It is the safety-valve of the imprisoned steam and gases in the bowels of the earth, which, deprived of this mode of escape, would elsewhere explode with accumulated fury. Since A. D. 79, when, afther an unknown interval of slumber, it returned to active life, with the exception of the eartquake and volcanic creation of Monte Nuovo, the borders of Campania Felix have been exempt from destructive subterranean convulsion. The silence of anctent writers leaves us in the dark as to the length of this period of lethargy.—Strabo, thirty years before the birth of Christ, *supposes* it to have once been a volcano, from its form and from the matter around its summit; in his time its slopes were covered with richly-cultivated fields and vineyards. The fact, however, that the buried Herculaneum rests upon a lava foundation, as the superincumbent Resina does upon the sixty feet separating strata of lava between it and its Roman predecessor, and that the charriot wheel tracked streets of Pompeii are laid in the same substance, furnishes conclusive evidence that, at a remote and unrecorded epoch, Vesuvius had poured its burning streams over the plains of Campania. It was probably during this season of repose that the craters of Campi Phlegræi were in full blaze, and that the turf hills which environ Naples were thrown up.

Since A. D. 79, when Herculaneum and Pompeii were destroyed, forty-six eruptions have occurred; at first at irregular and prolonged intervals, but within the two last centuries rarely taking place more than ten years apart. It is problematical if Vesuvius has not to a great degree compensated for its destructive ravages by the increased productive powers it has given to the soil. After eighty or a hundred years, the country overrun by lava becomes tillable again, and yields the most luxuriant crops of grain, the most prolific vineyards, and fig and lemon and orange plantations.—The grapes upon volcanic soils makes the strongest, and, with care, the best species of wine. The traveller, as he passes over the railroad from Naples to Pompeii will find the road carried for miles through deposites of lava as solid and apparently as deeply imbedded in the earth as granite; on either side he will see deep quarries, from which blocks are being cut for transportation to Naples, and, as he walks the streets of that city and the surrounding towns, he will be astonished to know that they, as well as the sea-walls, breakwaters, and quays, are all laid in this once fused material, vomited from the inexhaustible Vesuvian furnace.

It is an error to suppose that jets of fire are to be seen by night upon the peak.—When not in eruption, its only sign of vitality is the smoke rising in light wreaths in the dry summer air, collecting into a balloon shape, and floating off in the blue ether, as if the genius of the infernal regions were issuing from the bowels of the earth on a voyage to the supernal antipodes. After heavy showers of rain in spring and autumn, or snow in winter, the smoke ascends in black massy columns, enveloping the summit in an impenetrable veil.

The last two eruptions have broken out on the eastern flank, where the country is less thickly populated than on the southern or sea side. I recently visited the spot where the lava of 1850 descended. In going and returning, I travelled entirely around the mountain, passing through one of the most fertile districts of country I have ever seen. The vegetation was much more advanced and the atmosphere warmer along the base than out upon the plain. In four hours we had made half the circuit and arrived at the village of Ottajano; three quarters of a mile beyond this point, after crossing the lava of 1839, we came to that of 1850. It had poured down from the crater in a flood several miles in width, and some thirty feet in depth, and had suddenly halted upon the plain, seven miles from its source, forming a precipitous wall of rock. The beautiful grounds of the Prince of Ottanjano, as well as his *Casino*, were laid waste, and a church and a small hamlet completely buried up.—Strange to say, such is the latent heat of lava, that a wisp of straw, upon being placed in a crevice, was immediately blown into a flame by the wind. The depression of the cone on this side is so great that it is probable that future eruptions will continue to take the direction of Ottajano, unless one of unusual force should open a rent in the wall towards Torre del Greco, when terrible destruction would be occasioned to the subjacent towns. People build, live, and cultivate every where on and about Vesuvius, with as much confidence as if the "great project" of extinguishing the volcano were actually accomplished. Should I be in this neighborhood when that "prodigious" undertaking is begun, you may rely upon my reporting progress." The fickleness of Uncle Sam towards his agents abroad will no doubt deprive me of that pleasure, and I am afraid of my successors *ad infinitum* will not be more fortunate than your humble servant.

E. J. M.

SECRETARY CORWIN.—The Dayton Gazette relates the following story of Secretary Corwin. Its humor is characteristic:

To a friend of ours who saw him the other day at Lebanon, he gave a most amusing, and we doubt not, truthful account of the condition of things in the Treasury Department, when he entered upon the duties of Secretary. The Clerks, he estimates, were *sick* on an average, about half the time—but it struck him as somewhat remarkable that, much as they were sick, none of them died. The fact was apparent at a glance, that they did very little work for the public, and the inference was irresistible, that something must be done for them. Accordingly the Secretary turned physician, and began to prescribe for the invalids. He issued an order that all Clerks who were absent from their desks a certain number of days, say two, on account of sicknes, should submit to a proportionate deduction from their respective salaries; and that all who were absent longer, say one week, would be required either to *die or resign*.

The prescription worked like a charm, and in a short time there was not a sick clerk in the whole Department A healthier set of men than they are now Mr. Corwin declares cannot be found anywhere.

ANOTHER BLOODY TRAGEDY.—The Richmond Republican of Friday has an account of another bloody and serious rencountre between some young men of the town of Lynchburg and county of Amherst:

A young gentleman of Lynchburg or vicinity, by the name of Williams, who had eloped with a daughter of Richard G. Morris, Esq, of Amherst, was attacked on Monday last, at Lovingston, Nelson county, where the parties accidentally met, by a son of Mr. Morris, whereupon a general melee took place between Williams, his brother, and a Mr. Hill, on one side, and young Mr. Morris on the other. Revolvers were used by all parties, and it is said that Messrs. Morris and Hill were instantly killed, and one of the Messrs. Williams mortally wounded. The sad occurrence took place at a public dinner table, and it is said that a lady, who was in the room at the time was also near being killed. We trust that this account may turn out to be exaggerated, though the news comes in a pretty direct way.

PAINE'S ATMOSPHERIC LIGHT.—The Manchester, (N. H. Messenger gives an account of the exhibition of Paine's new atmospheric light at the City Hall in that place on Tuesday evening of last week.—Atmospheric air was taken and passed thro' a series of six tin jars, connected by pipes, so that the air had to pass through a fluid in each jar, to a receiver from which it was conducted to half a dozen Argand burners, and being ignited, made a more brilliant light, as the editor declares, than any other gas light he ever witnessed. A committee, of whom Dr. Crosley was chairman, chosen by the citizens to examine the subject reported that, in their opinion, no imposition had been practiced, but the air was made inflamable and highly luminous and burning, by its passage through the fluid. This change they believed to be mechanical and not chemical.

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