

consequently that the specific gravity of light is to that of water, as 400,000,000, to 1, nearly. Allowing the velocity of solar light and heat, to be simultaneous, the ratio of the specific gravity of heat to that of water must also be nearly as 400,000,000 to one.

Supposing that the contents of each bottle used by the Count, to weigh 2lbs. Troy, and that the bulk of the caloric capable of reducing the ice to a state of fluidity amounted to  $\frac{1}{4}$  the bulk of the ice, there would be added to the absolute weight of the latter, about the 500 millioneth part of its original weight, which it would be impossible to ascertain by means of the nicest balance. All therefore that can with propriety be deduced from the Count's experiments, is that the gravity of caloric is so very trifling as to baffle the application of practical experiments in proving it.

I am Sir, yours, &c. &c.

Newry, 18th Oct.

W.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,  
ACCORDING to the theory of Lavoisier, the combination of light and oxygen, exhibits itself in the form of fire.

To adopt the language of your Correspondent *Mechanicus*, soaring in the *high and rarefied atmosphere of theory*, is of little service without keeping our eyes attentively fixed also on practical experiments; I have found this amply verified in putting the subject of your Correspondent C. D. to the test of experiment. At the distance of 18 inches, from a fire, I this day placed a thermometer in a room completely dark; the thermometer rose to 109 degrees, where it remained stationary. I then threw open the window shutters, and admitted the light of the sun to strike on the fire; and the thermometer most obstinately remained at 109 degrees.

A pint of water also boiled on a fire in a darkened room; and another pint on a second fire, exposed to the action of solar light, in exactly the same time.

N. B. the heat of both the fires was found to be the same by the help of the thermometer.

As it is in the power of your Corres-

pondent, to make the experiment for himself, he will be enabled to satisfy his curiosity very easily on the subject. I need not say any thing in addition, but that as I fell into an error, from depending merely on theory, I am glad my practical experiment has afforded me an opportunity of detecting and acknowledging it thus publicly. I am sir, your constant reader.

16th Oct. 1808.

TYRO.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens:  
stat nomine *Humbag*.

MR. EDITOR,

COMPLAINT is the privilege of the sufferer: I therefore claim your attention, until I state my grievance.

I am obliged to reside in a small town. This, of itself, forms no part of my complaint; as to me, what is termed want of society, presents no horrors. My pursuits are rather out of fashion, and my modes of thinking equally so; as for example, I find little inducement to prefer the insipid gossiping of a tea-table, or what is technically named, a *ghost*, to the interesting converse my inclinations lead me to cultivate "with the mighty dead."

How striking the contrast!...On the one side the frivolous, the perts, the insipid, disgusting with the nauseous repetitions of worn-out witticisms, nauseous even to the utterer, and given through the mere incapacity of presenting better; on the other, those whom Richard de Bury feelingly and not inelegantly describes (speaking of his books) "Hi sunt magistri, qui nos instruunt sine virgis & ferula, sine verbis & colera, sine pane & pecunia. Si accedis, non dormiunt; si inquiris, non se abscondunt; non remurmurant, si oberres; cachinnos nesciunt, si ignores."\*

\* Richard de Bury died in 1345. On the accession of Edward III. he was made successively Bishop of Durham, Chancellor and Treasurer of England. He was singularly studious, and his passion for books rose, as he himself acknowledges, to a pitch of madness. He had considerable riches, and expended the whole in purchasing scarce and curious manuscripts, and getting others copied. The

We can collect from the writers of the last age, that considerations of our foreign or domestic interests, or observations on matters of taste and learning were introduced to heighten the pleasure of occasional meetings: but now the vapid uniformity forced upon society, compels those who would avoid the odium attached to pedantry, diligently to avoid any attempt at promoting useful conversation; and all who enroll themselves in the bands of fashion, must wear her dull pale livery. I have sometimes been a compelled participator in the *polished pleasures* of such parties, and was comforted under the misery of my situation, only by reflecting that I should return to my companions at home with the greater pleasure; just as a man who had been forced through the wards of a lazaret, or a mad-house, returns with heightened enjoyment to the peaceful freedom of a rural life.

The pleasure I feel in contemplating this, has insensibly led me from the main object of this address to you, which is to call for your co-operation in the censure of that wretched perversion of the human faculties, called *humbugging*.

The humbugger is the great pest of this town: I can reject invitations to parties, or discourage the intimacy of persons I disapprove of, but the humbugger, cased in impenetrable stupidity, feels no hints, disregards all open marks of dislike, and fastens on his unhappy victim, till he has worried him with *his fun*. You, perhaps, are fortunately ignorant of the qualities and characteristics of this being, as you live where the busy and active would spurn from their paths these drones of existence, and where the brisk current of life can never subside into the green mantled pool, the fruitful matrix of these grubs of torpid existence. As I unfortunately an qualifi-

above quotation contains an animated description of his opinion concerning his books. "These are teachers, who instruct without rod or scourge; without noise or passion; without food or wages: if you visit them, they sleep not; if you want them, they do not fide themselves; should you mistake their meaning, they do not complain; neither do they laugh at you, if you be ignorant."

ed to give you some idea of them, I shall make the attempt, though despairing to do the subject justice, and shall endeavour neither "to extenuate nor set down aught in malice."

The humbugger then is of the *worthy* line of simulators and dissimulators, hypocrites, liars and slanderers, and forms a separate class from this circumstance only, that he is each, and all of these at different times, without even the palliation of temptation.

He aims at wit, or as it is termed in the cant of the race, *fun*; and the plan he pursues, which is uniform in the aim, though varied in the execution, is to exert the utmost of his little ability to appear as a man of veracity, and then to expose to ridicule the person, who did not know him to be a gross liar; thus founding his claim to what he calls *humour* on *acknowledged falsehood*, and having proclaimed himself that odious thing a liar, he arrogates praise to himself, and erects into an imagined trophy, the monument of his disgrace.

As your Magazine will probably possess attractions powerful enough to interest even the insipid beings I am speaking of, it might be expected, I should address some admonition to them, but not so: that would be a hopeless labour indeed; and when I requested your co-operation, it was not to twist ropes of sand, but to mark this egregious disgusting folly, with your heaviest disapprobation, and thus to deter those, who are not yet stiffened in the vice. For these, I would endeavour to depict a humbugger in the abstract, and hang him up like a scarecrow, in terrorem. I would endeavour to extinguish their ardour for imitation, by pointing out the only requisite for such a pursuit: not any virtue, not any talent, not mere insipidity of character; but a total negation of all that is meritorious, and an actual acquirement of that, which is uniformly and justly abhorred by men of principle, namely *lying*. The humbugger must totally discard all reverence for truth, and be anxious to preserve so much of the *appearance* of it only, as will further his purposes. He must endeavour to become frontless. Intellect is unne-

cessary, for the mere fool can coin a lie; and a lie is the beginning and end of a humbug. Intellect indeed would be an insuperable obstacle in this *honourable* course, as it would chidingly and incessantly suggest the baseness, as well as meanness of it, together with the incurable contempt, with which through it every qualification in the character becomes infected. I would now ask those, who seem commencing their imitative career, is such a character desirable? are lies honourable? or, is that to be imitated, which by openly violating the fundamental principles of morality, proclaims the last stage of besotted folly?

It appears fully, hence, that the humbugger is, in the perfection of the character, a liar, foolish, stupid, and idle. This surely is no enviable character; and to a man, who feels the charms of truth, there must be much annoyance in beholding them so neglected.

The displeasure, which is usually felt by those, who are the object of this wretched burlesque of wit, ought to be exchanged for laughter, as certainly *the joke*, if *there be any*, in such things, is against the person who is anxious to prove himself worthless, and not against him, who, ignorant of the *joker's* real character, has received him as worthy. Consistently with this view, when I began the consideration of the subject, I had resolved on treating it in a ludicrous manner, and devising some ridiculous nickname that might stick to the *worthy joker* and make him an object of just notoriety.

But if we consider the matter with due seriousness, we should rather feel compassion for those wretched creatures when we see them abuse the gifts of providence, and pervert to the service of folly and actual vice, what was intended to lead them to the acquirement of lasting advantages. Reason was given to man to guide him in his duty, and not by its perversion to be subservient to the purposes of depravity.

Let me have the sanction of your opinion on this subject, and then I shall have a hope, that some attention will be paid to these well meant

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representations of your friend and servant.

*Rockville.*

MOROMASTIX.

*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

THOUGHTS ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

THE Printing Press has been justly stiled, "the vehicle of all knowledge:" a Spanish gentleman travelling through England a few years ago, upon hearing of the cruel and harsh treatment in prison, that some Englishmen endured, for political publications, observed how far more humane it would be to prevent the obnoxious publications, than to permit them to be printed, and then punish the persons concerned; but an Englishman, who was present, replied, "this would be too open a violation of the liberty of the Press."\* the Spaniard, no doubt, thought that the government of his country ordered things better than to have the name of the liberty of the press, and then make truth a libel.

The Emperor, Napoleon, has locked up the French press, except when hostile manifestoes are to be issued: then, indeed, there is a form of consultation in the cabinet. The senate, the hall of legislature, the tribunate, all ring with denunciations against the unhappy prince that he is about to dethrone; and even the ministers of the altar are obliged to join in the cry of war. The passions of the people of that country so easily excited, are roused to frenzy.

There can be no stronger proof of the want of the liberty of the press in France, than what has been lately exhibited to our view with respect to Spanish affairs; an insurrection which the *Moniteur* now tells us broke out in May, was not noticed in that paper, until the 6th of September, when the details of the French army's operations during four months, are given to us by order of the government. It appears that our late governor general of India † the

\* See Espriella's Letters from England.

† See a series of letters, addressed to the Marquis of Wellesley, late governor general of India, including a correspondence with the government of M M