

Miscellany.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF CHEAPNESS.

THE LUCIFER MATCH.

SOME twenty years ago the process of obtaining fire, in every house in England, with few exceptions, was as rude, as laborious, and as uncertain, as the effort of the Indian to produce a flame by the friction of two dry sticks.

The nightlamp and the rushlight were for the comparatively luxurious. In the bed-rooms of the cottager, the artisan, and the small tradesman, the infant at its mother's side too often awoke, like Milton's nightingale, 'darkling'—but that 'nocturnal note' was something different from 'harmonious numbers.' The mother was soon on her feet: the friendly tinder-box was duly sought. Click. click. click; not a spark tells upon the sullen blackness. More rapidly does the flint ply the sympathetic steel. The room is bright with the radiant shower. But the child, familiar enough with the operation, impatient at its tediousness, and shouts till the mother is frantic. At length one lucky spark does its office—the tinder is alight. Now for the match. It will not burn. A gentle breath is wafted into the murky box: the face that leans over the tinder is in a glow. Another match, and another, and another. They are all damp. The toil-worn father 'swears a prayer or two'; the baby is inextinguishable; and the misery is only ended when the good man has gone to the street door, and after long shivering has obtained a light from the watchman.

In this the beginning of our series of Illustrations of Cheapness, let us trace this antique machinery through the various stages of its production.

The tinder-box and the steel had nothing peculiar. The tinsman made the one as he made the saucepan, with hammer and shears; the other was forged at the great metal factories of Sheffield and Birmingham; and happy was it for the purchaser if it were something better than a rude piece of iron, very uncomfortable to grasp. The nearest chalk quarry supplied the flint. The domestic manufacture of the tinder was a serious affair. At due seasons, and very often if the premises were damp, a stifling smell rose from the kitchen, which, to those who

without a top, in which of an outer case, open at first box slides. The n and the empty boxes fill is opened: he seizes a pot the required number with them rapidly into a sort etenly together, confines he tightens with his foot with a knife on a hinge, a strong leverage: the each end of the frame: and thrusts it into a h stantly closes, and rep matches on his right h uments is performed with pled; for in this way, tw are cut, and two thousa one boy, at the wages of boxes. Each dozen b they are ready for the boxes daily filled at this gross.

The *wholesale* price matches, is FOURPENCE THREAPENCE.

There are about ten L in London. There are towns. The wholesale to the supply of the me borhood by the London carriers refuse to recei sidered dangerous in therefore assume that consume the metropoli population as upwards habited houses at about us endeavor to estimate the articles of domestic

At the manufactory are fifty gross, or seven turned out daily, made which will produce sev sand matches. Taking in the year, this will g dred and sixteen milli two millions one hund being a box of one hun vidual of the London pu other Lucifer manufa