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The complete art of making the chemical fulminating objects

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**The Complete Art**  
**OF**  
**MAKING**  
**THE**  
**Chemical Fulminating Objects,**  
**&c. &c. &c.**

*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*

*The whole Secret laid Open,*

OR THE

COMPLETE ART

OF

MAKING

*THE CHEMICAL*

FULMINATING OBJECTS,

*SUCH AS THE*

Lace, or Girt of Security,

*Fulminating Letters, Balls, Bombs,*

GARTERS, CARDS, SPIDERS, SEGARS,

Chairs, Drawers, Boots, Shoes, &c. &c.

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FOURTH EDITION.

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## ADDRESS

### TO THE READER.

That Chemistry is one of the most sublime sciences is generally acknowledged; to it may be ascribed the brilliant discoveries lately made in the arts and sciences, and without whose aid the wonderful phenomena, which are the subject of the following pages, could never have been discovered. The Author has for some time observed the wonder occasioned by the introduction of the chemical *Fulminating Objects* to the Public: they are indeed objects of wonder, and when it is considered how trifling a portion of matter it requires to produce effects so surprising, we cannot but hail that science as truly grand, which can create such rare productions, from what we daily handle, with such safety and unconcern, and without which we should be at a loss to carry on our intercourse in trade; I mean Silver, which is the basis of all the objects presented to view. I have long seen with astonishment the manufacture of these objects, and the knowledge of that manufacture confined to very few persons, and I considered that it could not but be very much wished by all who had witnessed these astonishing productions, to acquire a true knowledge of how, and by what means, they were produced; I therefore examined them minutely, and having discovered their composition, I have given them to the Public in an entire and perfect form, accompanied with patterns of the most difficult, and have enlarged them by several objects of my own invention. That they will be found an innocent amusement, as well as a safeguard, need not be doubted, and also tend to exemplify the astonishing powers of Chemistry, the study of which I would earnestly recommend to all who have not studied that science, and to those who have, to continue it with a steady perseverance. It is a study in itself truly sublime, it is highly conducive to morality, and tends most materially to convince every wavering or doubting mind, that the world we inhabit, and all its necessities, its conveniences, its luxuries, and its blessings, are the work of that Divine Author

"Who sees, with equal eye, as God of all,  
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall."

*Pope.*

Having said thus much, I can only assure my reader, that by adhering to the rules I have laid down in the following pages, they may enjoy a rational and innocent employment of time, and be able to inform learned enquirers the nature and properties of the objects of their leisure hours' amusement, and that it may inspire them with a thirst for nearer acquaintance with chemical truths, is the sincere wish of

THE AUTHOR.

*March 1, 1818.*

## **GENERAL**

### **OBSERVATIONS.**

In pointing out the method of forming the Fulminating objects I have endeavoured to be as explicit as possible; and I feel a confidence that every necessary information is here contained.

The reason why I sometimes mention Fulminating Silver, and at others preface it by Brugnatelli's, is, that there are two kinds: one sold under the name of Fulminating Silver, the other called Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver. The quantities here directed for each object must be strictly adhered to, as it is of too dangerous a nature to be increased in quantity, without the risk of accident. I must also beg great care will be observed in handling it, both before and after the objects are manufactured: with a trifling degree of caution, no accident can possibly occur; all that is required is to avoid heat and friction, as either in excess produces instant detonation. It is also necessary to guard against exploding the objects near the eyes; these precautions observed, no danger need be apprehended.

The best place to purchase the principal materials are the undermentioned places: for the Fulminating Silver, and Brugnatelli's Ditto, is Messrs. Accum and Garden, Old Compton-Street, London, and every other Manufacturing Chemist; the glass globes, of all sizes, are to be had of F. Pastorelli, Barometer and Thermometer Manufacturer, No. 4, Cross-Street, Hatton-Garden, London. The spiders are to be had of most glass blowers—for the cards, &c. every one is aware where to apply.

The glass composition is made as follows: take one ounce of gum arabic, and dissolve it in a quarter of a pint of water, boil it till tolerably thick, and then add as much coarse powdered glass as will form a very thick composition.

N.B. When the glass composition cannot be conveniently obtained, glass paper may be used, pasted in the same way as directed for the composition.

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### **COMPLETE ART, &c.**

#### **THE LACE,**

#### ***Or Girt of Security.***

The Lace or Girt is made of strong brace-web, after the manner and size of the paper pattern enclosed; the parts marked with ink are to be covered with the glass composition, to be laid on tolerably thick—say the thickness of a three shilling piece, and about an eighth of an inch broad in each place; let it remain until quite dry, and then sew it in like manner as the pattern, and from one to one grain and a half of Fulminating Silver to be enclosed in the part marked S; a piece of paper or silk well pasted on one side is then to be wrapped twice round in the same manner as the paper in the pattern is pinned; a strong lace-hole is then to be worked at each end—the manner of applying it is to hang it on two hooks, one on the door post, and the other on the door, taking care to place the part in such a position as to come in contact with the edge of the door, on its being opened, which will cause an immediate explosion louder than a musket. Hooks may also be placed on windows or shutters, and the Lace being hung on them will produce the same effect: a greater safeguard against midnight intruders has never been discovered.

## FULMINATING

### LETTERS.

The letter inclosed is a pattern of the manner in which they are put together, an examination of which will give the true idea to every attentive observer: a sheet of paper should be used doubled, and cut according to pattern; two slips of parchment must be used instead of those of paper, as enclosed in the pattern letter. The ends marked with Ink must be slightly covered with glass composition, and about an eighth of an inch wide, they must then be laid separately to dry, and when quite dry they must be sewn at one edge as shewn in the pattern, you must then put one third of a grain of Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver in between the parts marked S, a piece of coloured paper or ribbon is then to be pasted well on one side, and wound twice round in the same way as the paper is now pinned round. The parchment slips thus prepared, must be pasted at each end for about an inch, and so fastened to the letter marked with a cross; the letter is then to be folded, and no further sealing is required.

It must here be observed, that although the pattern is in miniature, the directions here given are intended for a common size letter; all that is required to make it so, being to use longer strips of parchment, taking care that the parchment is always as long as the letter is wide. This letter may be sent to any part of the world, and on its being opened will cause a report nearly as loud as a pistol: it is consequently well adapted to prove a never-failing source of amusement.

## *FULMINATING*

## **BALLS & BOMBS.**

The ball comprises a glass globe rather larger than a pea, having a small aperture, into which should be put from one third to half a grain of Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver: a piece of paper is then to be pasted carefully all over the ball, in order to cover the glass and prevent the escape of the Silver.—The method of using the balls is to throw them down smartly, or to place one under the ball of the heel and tread hard upon it, which causes an explosion equal to a pistol and free from danger; the latter method of using them is generally preferred, and is assuredly the most certain.

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A Bomb consists of the same materials as a ball, only on a larger scale: the globe for a bomb is the size of a common nut, and the quantity of Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver is from one grain to one grain and a half, according to the report wished to be produced. The way of applying bombs is by throwing them down with violence, and it should here be remembered that this is the less exceptionable method of using them: they should on no occasion be used, without apprising the bye-standers, nor must they ever be pressed on by the foot; as the shock produced by the detonation would be rather too violent.

## **FULMINATING**

### **SPIDERS.**

The Spider is formed after the manner of the common spider, it has a glass body, into which is put one third of a grain of fulminating silver. The manner of using: being formed in every respect so as to resemble the spider, they may be left on the ground, in closets, or on any article of wearing apparel, from whence they will consequently soon be dislodged, and from the natural antipathy towards this disagreeable insect, there can be no doubt of its being soon trod upon, when, to the no small surprise of the treader, a report equal to that of a pistol will be produced.—Many persons apply them to Ladies' Dresses, but from the well-known delicacy of female nerves, it were better perhaps to abstain from this experiment. Observe, the spiders cannot be exploded but by pressure, which is best done by the foot.

## **FULMINATING**

### **CARDS & SEGARS.**

The Card is of the pattern herein enclosed; it must be opened at one end with a pen-knife, as here shewn, into which opening put one-fourth, or one-third of a grain at most, of Fulminating Silver; the edges are then to be pasted slightly, and closed together; a notch should also be cut at the other end, as in the pattern. When dry it will be complete for use. The manner of using, is to take it by the notched end, and light the square end at the candle, when a sharp detonation ensues.—The Card should be three quarters of an inch wide, and from four to five inches in length. Cards thus prepared, have long sold in Paris under the denomination of "Detonating Cards."

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The SEGAR is made by just opening the end of a common Segar, (which may be had at all Tobacconists) and gently placing within it one-fourth of a grain of Fulminating Silver between the leaves, the end is then to be closed again, and care taken to close it, so as to prevent the Powder falling out. This, on being set fire to, causes a loud explosion, and not a little disconcerts the nerves of the smoker; nor does it fail to move the risible features of the lookers-on.

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The Segar, when exploded, may be smoked with perfect safety.

### ***Fulminating Pins.***

Take one third of a grain of Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver, and enclose in a very small fold of paper; this enclose in a second paper, which has been previously pasted, and then let it be wrapped 2 or 3 times round a common pin, observing to leave the point clear.—Pins, thus prepared, may be stuck in the wick of the candle, in the candle itself, or thrown into the fire, and immediately on their taking fire a loud explosion will follow.

Observe, not to place them too near any person's eyes, least, on an explosion, the pins should be thrown out, which might prove unpleasant.

### ***FULMINATING***

### **WAX TAPERS.**

These Tapers are prepared by taking off a small part of the wax, near the tip of the wick, and putting one-third of a grain of Fulminating Silver in the wick, then replace the wax, and on its taking fire, a loud Detonation will be produced.

## FULMINATING

### GARTERS.

The garter is formed of common tape, or of the common worsted binding, which should not exceed the length and breadth of the enclosed pattern; the parts marked with ink are to be covered with the glass composition in the same manner as directed for the Lace of Security; suffer it to remain till quite dry, and then sew it together as in the pattern; half a grain of the Fulminating Silver is then to be placed between the parts marked S, and a piece of paper or ribbon, well pasted on one side, is to be wrapped twice round in the same way as directed for the lace. The manner of applying it is, to take one end in each hand, and by suddenly pulling it, a loud report will be given, equal to a large pistol.—This experiment may also be performed by offering one end to another person, and requesting them to pull against you, or by giving them the garter, and desiring them to use it as first directed. Keep the garter below the eyes.

### *Fulminating Chairs*

Are thus prepared: Enclose half a grain of Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver in a piece of glass paper, and that should be again enclosed in a square piece of tinfoil; this doubled in a very small compass may be placed immediately under the foot of a chair, and the chair placed very lightly upon it, or pasting it would be much better; be careful to stand the chair down very gently: on any one's setting down on a chair so prepared, a loud Detonation will follow.—This experiment is particularly innocent, and may be productive of much mirth.

## FULMINATING

### *DRAWERS.*

The preparation for the drawers is the same as used for the chairs: it should be pasted directly under the drawer, or on the side; if the drawer be left partly open, the effect will more certainly be produced: on the drawer being opened or shut, a loud explosion



will be caused. This experiment is also perfectly harmless, and as there could be no suspicion of the trick, it cannot fail to prove the source of much amusement, to create great surprise, and to cause many whimsical conjectures as to the origin of the wonderful phenomenon.

### ***FULMINATING***

#### **SNUFFERS.**

One fourth of a grain of Fulminating Silver is to be inclosed in a small piece of paper, and put inside the snuffers; on the snuffers being applied to the candle, a smart report will follow. Be careful to notice, that the snuffers are quite cold when the paper is introduced, as the heat would cause it to explode sooner than might be thought agreeable.

### **FULMINATING**

#### **BOOTS & SHOES.**

These are prepared by enclosing half a grain of Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver in a fold of glass paper, and pasting it in the middle of a piece of court plaster; if the edges of the court plaster are then slightly wet, it will adhere, and must be placed in the middle of the heel of a boot or shoe, and by being pressed upon will detonate loudly. Observe, it must be fastened on the outside of the heel.

This experiment may be easily accomplished, while you are left alone, in any apartment where boots or shoes are kept, and would cause a tolerable degree of astonishment to the wearer, on his placing his foot to the ground.

### **FULMINATING**

#### ***PIPE LIGHTS.***

These lights are made by inserting one-third of a grain of Fulminating Silver, in one end of a piece of hemp-stalk, in the same way as directed for the Segars. A piece of stout deal shaving might be used, prepared in the same manner as directed for the

Fulminating Cards. Be careful to notice, that, whatever is used, has some particular mark attached to it, so as to point out which end is to be lighted.

## ***FULMINATING***

### **WALKING STICKS.**

These may be made by inclosing half a grain of Brugnatelli's Fulminating Silver in a small fold of glass paper, and putting it into a ferule, which ferule may be placed gently on the stick; and on its being applied to the ground, a loud explosion will take place.

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A vast number of other Fulminating objects might be prepared by the same means as here used, as it must have been observed, the Silver detonates either by friction or heat. But great attention must be paid to the quantity of Fulminating Silver used, as very unpleasant consequences might arise from the use of too large a quantity; and on the other hand, no effect produced by too small a quantity; but from one fourth to half a grain will most commonly be found quite sufficient for those purposes that require handling; and here again let me impress it on the mind, how necessary it is to pay attention to the quantities I have here specified for each object: and let me request that it may in no one instance be exceeded.

### **FINIS.**

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