



## XXIII. A new process for preparing cyanogen

Alexander Kemp Esq.

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very generally, for I would not trust to my recollection, and would have you, if you wish for perfect accuracy, to refer to the India House for a detailed account of what passed between you and the Government of India on the subject of lightning-conductors.

"I am however certain that there was no question or order on the 'removal' of lightning rods. The proposition discussed was one for erection of lightning-conductors for the safety of all powder magazines; such magazines having hitherto been thought secure from accident without them. And upon this questions arose,—1st, as to the necessity of such erections; and 2ndly, if erected, as to what should be the form and size and distance from each other, and from the magazine, of the conductors. I think that your reasonings upon the danger of small conductors placed very near to a hazardous building was very generally admitted to be convincing. In the end, as it were necessary that the rods, if constructed, should be made in England, it was thought best to refer the whole question to the authorities at home.

"Very faithfully yours,

(Signed)

"AUCKLAND."

"To Dr. W. B. O'Shaughnessy."

XXIII. *A new Process for preparing Cyanogen*.

By ALEXANDER KEMP, Esq.\*

ON mixing together cyanide of potassium and bichloride of mercury, both in powder, and leaving them for a few days, I observed that the mixture became of a greenish colour, which at first led me to suspect the presence of iron in the bichloride of mercury; but as I failed in detecting it, I next proceeded to make a few experiments with the substances, the result of which was, that I found that cyanogen might be more easily and æconomically obtained by the following method, than by any of the usual processes.

Take six parts perfectly dry ferrocyanide of potassium, and nine parts bichloride of mercury, both in fine powder, and mix them intimately together, then apply heat to the mixture, in a glass retort, when cyanogen gas will be disengaged, mercury at the same time distils over, and a dark-coloured matter is left in the retort, being a mixture of chloride of potassium and cyanide of iron.

University of Edinburgh, Aug. 11, 1843.

ALEX. KEMP.

\* Communicated by the Author.