this invention is applicable to all rail-roads, and that upon the works of Mr. Brandling alone the use of 50 horses will be dispensed with, and the corn necessary for the consumption of at least 200 men saved. We cannot forbear to hail the invention as of vast public utility, and to rank the inventor among the benefactors of his country. The eight waggons of coal brought to Leeds at the launching of the machine was, by order of Mr. Blenkinsop, presented to the General Infirmary."

A. F. R.

ELECTRIC LIGHT IN 1853.—The electric light is common enough now, and fairly familiar to all readers of 'N. & Q.,' many of whom can remember its introduction; but the following seems to be an early notice of its practical use, and worth recording:

"On Friday last [i.e. 18 May, 1853] one of the Citizen steamers started from Chelsea for Gravesend at 9 P.M., carrying an electric lamp, with a parabolic reflector on each paddle-box, returning to town at 3 A.M. As brilliantly illuminated both banks of the river, shedding a flood of light on the objects and edifices in the way, including Chelsea College, the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's, and Greenwich Hospital. The effect, as seen from the bridges, is said to have been remarkably striking and beautiful. The shipping in the Pool, below London Bridge, was as conspicuously seen as in the light of day—a most important fact in relation to the subject of safety to life at sea, and the national question of a perfect system of lighthouses on the British coasts."—Journal of the Society of Arts, i. 323.

I am not a practical man, but I presume that the brilliancy described was one of the causes of failure, and I know of no other use or notice of the electric light at that period. According to 'Haydn's Dictionary of Dates,' the 'most perfect' lamp was shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1855; Prof. Tyndall first used it at the Royal Institution in 1856; it was introduced for sea vessels at Sheerness in 1871, at the Lizard lighthouse in 1878, and at the Gaiety Theatre, London, the same year. I have consulted P. Higgs's translation of Hippolyte Fontaine's 'Practical Treatise on Electric Lighting,' especially chap. viii.; but the notice I have quoted seems the earliest.

A. RHODES.

"SWEET LAVENDER." (See 10 S. x. 146; xii. 176; 11 S. ii. 144.)—It seems but yesterday that the soft refrain, "Buy my sweet la-ven-der," was being chanted in the streets of suburban London; and lo! the itinerant merchants from the fields at Mitcham and elsewhere are again with us. Nor will there be many objectors to a melodious dry so pleasantly remindful of the strewing by the careful housewife of wardrobe or linen cupboard with those lilac, delicately scented sprigs. Business would not appear to be particularly brisk with these peaceful invaders. It is to be feared that the opinions expressed last season as to a declining cultivation of the fragrant shrub were warranted. Cecil Clarke. Junior Athenæum Club.

MURDERED WATER CHARGED IN THE BILL.—More than two years ago a correspondent inquired (10 S. xi. 410) where this story could be found, but no reply has appeared.

The following passage is from the portion devoted to 'Anecdotes et Bons Mots' of the 'Œuvres Choisis de Nicolas Chamfort' (édition Jouaust), i. 71:

"Milord Hamilton, personnage très-satisfaisant, étant ivre dans une hôtellerie d'Angleterre, avait tué un garçon d'auberge et était rentré sans savoir ce qu'il avait fait. L'aubergiste arriva tout effrayé et lui dit: Milord, savez-vous que vous avez tué ce garçon? Le lord lui répondit en balbutiant: Mettez-le sur la carte."

It appears to me quite possible that the story is of Chamfort's own composition, for he excelled in writing brief dialogues, maxims, and historiettes. It would be interesting to know the date of the earliest appearance of the story in English. Chamfort, it may be added, died in 1794.

R. L. MORETON.

"CASTLES IN SPAIN": "CASTLE IN THE AIR."—During the long struggle between Peter the Cruel and Don Enrique the latter was crowned at Burgos for the second time in 1366. He scattered honours among his supporters with so lavish a hand that "a popular saying took its birth from this hour of easy generosity—Mercedes Enriqueñas or Enrique's favours signify gifts obtained before they are earned. The more universal expression of 'Castles in Spain' is also by some authorities attributed to this episode."—Storer's 'Peter the Cruel: a Life of the notorious Don Pedro of Castle,' &c., p. 280.

I observe, however, that Le Roux de Lincy refers the saying to the thirteenth century, and cites from the 'Roman de la Rose':—

Telle fois te sera avis Que tu tiendras celle au clair vis, Du tout ta compagne Lors feras chasteaux en Espagne.

It is probable, therefore, that the Enrique incident only gave an impulse to the currency of the phrase. Our native "castle in the air" is more impalpable and of greater charm than the château en Espagne. I do not know who first spoke of the visionary edifice in nubibus.

St. ISWITHIN.