

## MY BIRTH-DAY.

BY MOORE.

My birth-day! what a different sound  
That word had in my youthful years,  
And now, each time the day comes round,  
Less and less white its mark appears!  
When first our scanty years are told,  
It seems a pastime to grow old:  
And as youth counts the shining links  
That time around him binds so fast,  
Pleased with the task he little thinks  
How hard that chain will press at last.  
Vain was the man, and false as vain,  
Who said, "were he ordained to run  
His long career of life again,  
He would do all that he had done."  
Ah! 'tis not thus the voice that dwells  
In sober birth-days speaks to me;  
Far otherwise—of time it tells  
Lavished unwisely, carelessly—  
Of counsels mock'd—of talents, made  
Haply for high and pure designs,  
But oft like Israel's incense laid  
Upon unholy earthly shrines—  
Of nursing many a wrong desire—  
Of wandering after love too far,  
And taking every meteor fire  
That crossed my pathway, for his star!  
All this it tells, and could I trace  
The imperfect picture o'er again,  
With power to add, retouch, efface  
The lights and shades, the joy and pain,  
How little of the past would stay!  
How quickly all would melt away,  
All—but that freedom of the mind  
Which hath been more than wealth to me;  
Those friendships on my boyhood twined,  
And kept till now unchangingly;  
And that dear home—that saving ark,  
Where love's true light at last I've found,  
Cheering within, when all grows dark  
And comfortless and stormy round.

## COLONEL HAMILTON SMITH'S HISTORY OF DOGS.

That cheap and elegant serial the *Naturalist's Library*, has had fresh spirit infused into it, in the thirty-fifth epoch of its existence. With the exactness of description which has distinguished the preceding numbers, and with sufficient of their literary merit, Colonel Hamilton Smith brings to his task a racy and original cast of mind, whose occasional roughness gives a character to its vigour. He has abundance of what Mr. McGillivray would call knowledge of books and stuffed creatures; but he has also surveyed his subjects in their original haunts, and acquired information from adventurous sportsmen, who have bearded even the lion in his den.

The two Americas and Europe, if not parts of Asia and Africa, have been visited by the Colonel; and friends have imparted to him accounts of the animals they have seen or slain in their Indian or other battues: their personal feats on the occasion being judiciously suppressed. Our naturalist, too, is acquainted with the writings of antiquity, and endeavours to identify the animals described by classical authors; a task of considerable difficulty, and not capable of rigid proof, from the generality of their accounts.

The generic term of Dogs, which forms the subject of the present and following volumes, embraces wolves, jackalls, the *lycisci*, or wild dogs, foxes, and fox-dogs, with the countless variety of the domesticated animals, and some wild tribes, respecting which it is doubted whether they are a civilized race run wild, or the original stock of the domestic dogs of the country. The primitive parent, the canine Adam of the different varieties existing in Europe, has indeed been a theme of much dispute. Buffon held that all our dogs were derived from the shepherd's dog: Mr. Bell, in an argument of great force and fulness, in which the knowledge of a physiologist is mixed with the reason of a man of sense, rather inclines to the wolf, but leaves the question open. Looking at the great variety of the same species of animals found in different parts of the world, and the evidence furnished by geology of the constant extinction of some species and the production of others, it is as logical to consider with Colonel Smith, that the varieties found wild in different regions, or in a domesticated state, may possibly have been produced from various stocks. The theory of one primitive type for certain animals seems to be a mere assumption, unsupported by authority or evidence. The Scriptures assure us as to one man being the parent of the human race, but they are silent as to other creatures. Existing facts are equally inconclusive. The elephant, the lion, and other of the nobler animals found in different continents, differ so slightly as to warrant the inference that the variety has arisen from local circumstances; but many races, neither domesticated nor capable of domestication—deer and monkeys for example—have as many varieties as those brought under the dominion of man. At the same time, the subject is uncertain, and very curious. Passing by the anatomical facts of Mr.

Bell, the circumstance that the offspring of a wolf and a dog are prolific, is one of great weight; not less curious is the successive generations it requires to get rid of the symptoms of the wild blood—to civilize the savage; and the beneficial effects of what breeders call a cross, with its effects in changing the character, can be shown by a reference to human history. Look at a Southern Spaniard and an Englishman: the variety in feature and expression, and still more in disposition, is as strong as exists between many animals; and history enables us to trace the crosses which these respective people have undergone. In Spain, the Carthaginians first, then the Romans, then the Goths, and finally the Moors, mixed with the blood of the aboriginal inhabitants. In Britain, the Romans were followed by the Saxons, then by the Danes or Northmen, and they in turn by the Normans (Northmen with a cross of the Franks.) The origin of the indigenous races, and of the people who so invaded them, is indeed a matter of question; but the subject of original and migratory races, with the effects resulting, is too large a subject to embark in here. The true mode of investigating varieties, either in man or animals, is first to draw a distinct line between established facts and conjecture, and a line equally definite between the conclusions we may deduce from one and the speculations we may build upon the other.

Returning to Colonel Hamilton Smith, we have another illustration of the proverb, "nothing like leather." Mr. Mudie, in considering the effects which animals have produced on the civilization of mankind, noticed the dog, merely to dismiss him as useless for the purpose, with all his amiable qualities and the assistance he may render to the savage hunter. The Colonel, treating only of the dog, considers him the prime and primitive adjunct in the progressive advance of man.

"As the dog alone, of all the brute creation, voluntarily associates himself with the conditions of man's existence, it is fair to presume also that he was the first, and therefore the oldest of man's companions; that to his manifold good qualities the first hunters were indebted for their conquest and subjugation of other species. We do even now perceive, notwithstanding the advance of human reason and the progress of invention, that in a thousand instances we cannot dispense with his assistance.

"If we still feel the importance of his services in our state of society, what must have been the admiration of man, when, in the earliest period of patriarchal life, he was so much nearer to a state of nature!—when the wild hunter first beheld the joyous eyes of his voluntary associate, and heard his native howl modulated into barking; when he first perceived it assuming tones of domestication fit to express a master's purposes, and intonate the language which we still witness cattle, sheep, and even ducks and hawks learn to understand! What exultation must he have felt when, with the aid of his new friend, he was enabled to secure and domesticate the first kid, the first lamb of the mountain race!—when with greater combinations of force and skill between man and his dogs, the bull, the buffalo, the camel, the wild ass, and then the horse, were compelled to accept his yoke; and finally, when, with the same assistance, the wild boar was tamed, the lion repelled, and even attacked with success! Although the total development of canine education must have been the work of ages, yet that it was very early, however imperfect, of great acknowledged importance, is attested by the prominent station assigned to the dog in the earliest theologies of Paganism. We know that his name was given to one of the most beautiful stars among the oldest designated in the heavens, and that it served for the purpose of fixing an epoch in the solar year by its periodical appearance. Other constellations, nearly as old, were likewise noted by the name of dogs; and there are proofs, in typifying ideas by images representing physical objects, that the admiration of mankind degenerating into superstition, moral qualities of the highest order were figured with characteristics of the dog, till his name and his image became conspicuous in almost every Pagan system of theology."

As a specimen of the close descriptive style of the author as a natural historian, we will take this account of

## THE CHARACTERISTIC OF EUROPEAN WOLVES.

"Wolves howl more frequently when the weather is about to change to wet. They grovel with the nose in the earth, instead of digging with their paws, when they wish to conceal a part of their food or the droppings about their lairs. The parent wolves punish their whelps if they emit a scream of pain; they bite, maltreat, and drag them by the tail, till they have learned to bear pain in silence. Wolf-hunters commonly assert that the animal is weak in the loins, and when first put to speed that his hind-quarters seem to waver; but when warmed, that he will run without halting from the district where he has been hunted, taking a direct line for some favourite cover, perhaps forty miles or more in distance. On these occasions he will leap upon walls above eight feet high, cross rivers obliquely with the current, even if it be the Rhine, and never offer battle unless he be fairly turned; then he will endeavour to cripple the opponent by hasty snaps at the fore-legs, and resume his route. The track of a wolf is readily distinguished from that of a dog, by the middle claws being close together, while in the dog they are separated; the marks, however, when the wolf is at speed and the middle toes are separated, can be determined by the claws being deeper and the impression more hairy; the print is also longer and narrower, and the ball of the foot more prominent.

"Inferior in wily resources to the fox, the wolf is nevertheless endowed with great sagacity. His powers of scent are very deli-

cate, his hearing acute, and his habits always cautious. The European variety is naturally a beast of the woods; those of the arctic regions and of the steppes of Russia and Tartary have different manners, probably from necessity, and not choice.

## HABITS OF WOLVES.

"In well-inhabited countries, where wolves are an object of constant persecution, they never quit cover to windward; they trot along its edges until the wind of the open country comes toward them, and they can be assured by their scent that no suspicious object is in that quarter; then they advance, snuffing the coming vapours, and keep as much as possible along hedges and brushwood to avoid detection, pushing forward in a single foray to the distance of many miles. If there be several, they keep in file, and step so nearly in each other's track, that in soft ground it would seem that only one had passed. They bound across narrow roads without leaving a foot-print, or follow them on the outside. These movements are seldom begun before dusk, or protracted beyond daybreak. If single, the wolf will visit outhouses, enter the farm-yard, first stopping, listening, snuffing up the air, smelling the ground, and springing over the threshold without touching it. When he retreats, his head is low, turned obliquely with one ear forward, the other back, his eyes burning like flame. He trots crouching, his brush obliterating the track of his feet, till at a distance from the scene of depredation; when going more freely, he continues his route to cover, and as he enters it, first raises his tail and flings it up in triumph.

"It is said that a wolf, when pressed by hunger and roaming around farms, will utter a single howl to entice the watch-dogs in pursuit of him. If they come out, he will flee till one is sufficiently forward to be singled out, attacked, and devoured; but dogs in general are more cautious, and even hounds require to be encouraged, or they will not follow upon the scent."

"The volume contains a memoir of Pallas, with a portrait, and a vignette of the well-known dogs of St. Bernard rescuing a traveller. The most valuable, and we suspect the most popular illustrations, however, are the thirty life-like portraits of different animals of the dog tribe, from the pencil of Colonel Smith. The reader who has no other notion of dogs and wolves than what he gets from the streets, menageries, and common histories, will be astonished at the extraordinary variety of nature, although he only sees a part of it.

## THE AUTHOR OF ROBINSON CRUSOE.

De Foe's writings, we perceive by the last London papers, are to be revived. It is a little remarkable that it has been heretofore so difficult to get at them. Indeed, most of them, it must be admitted, are unknown. They are as if they had never been. It is said that they amount in number to no less than *two hundred and ten*, large and small, political and others; and, moreover, they were not works designed for the aristocracy, for learned men, or for transient occasions. They were and are essentially popular, and were meant to be so. The London Examiner, a very able print, itself conducted on De Foe's political system altogether, in hailing the first number of a new and cheap edition of his complete works, now for the first time issued, truly observes that he was one of the people. For the people's sake he suffered unflinchingly the worst indignities with which tyranny attempts to enslave the free. To the people, emphatically, he addressed his books. His life was altogether passed in the people's service, and when he died in a poor and painful old age, it was to the humbler classes of his fellow countrymen he preferred to leave the vindication of his sufferings, and the preservation of his fame. Their time, to do justice to De Foe, has now just come; and henceforth, and wherever, over the whole globe, the people are to be found, the memory of De Foe will live, and the heaven of his genius work, among the whole mass of men, for evermore.

The Examiner calls him the most voluminous as well as the most various writer in the language; an assertion which will surprise most of us. Some of these things, individually, were very elaborate; witness one, now scarcely known by name, which he began in prison, where the administration of Queen Ann confined him for his political writings. We refer to the "*Review*," which he continued for twelve months to publish from that place, two numbers weekly. It is described as written all with his own hand; it treated of all the various topics of foreign and domestic occurrence; became an authority in politics and trade; delighted thousands with the discussions of a "scandal club;" handled marriage, love, poetry, language, "and all the prevailing tastes and fashions of the time." On leaving Newgate he enlarged its plan, published it thrice a week, and continued this marvellous, unexampled, and unassisted labour for upwards of *nine years*.

We have alluded to De Foe's sufferings. His whole life was spent in trouble. At length even his last friends deserted him; he was too liberal, too courageous, too much in advance of his generation. We are informed, in this connection, that the "*Shortest Way with the Dissenters*," was ordered to be burnt in New Palace-yard by the common hangman. De Foe concealed himself, and the following proclamation, giving us a minute description of his person, was issued from St. James's, on the 10th of January, 1703. "Whereas Daniel de Foe, alias De Fooe, is charged with writing a scandalous and seditious pamphlet, entitled, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*; he is a middle sized spare man, about forty years