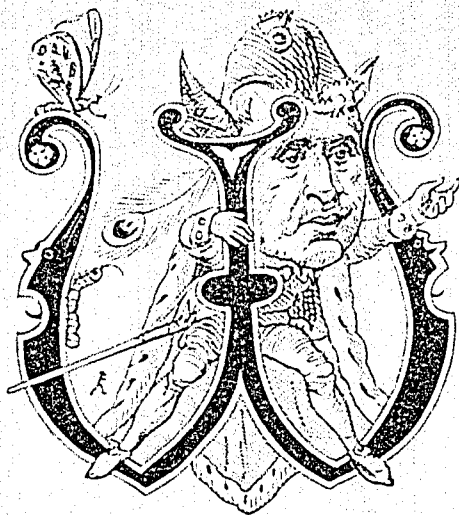


NATURAL HISTORY SERIES.

No 4.



E come now to a species, of which it may be said—slightly altering the words of Dryden, applied to a vastly different subject—

"The force of nature could no further go. She made the third to join the other two."

Such is the Governor, or *Zoolite*. This species appears to occupy an *inter alia* position, being evidently

designed by nature to connect, as it were, two of the grand divisions into which the world is divided,—namely, the Animal and Mineral Kingdoms. Whoever will take the trouble to study, for a short time, that vast and magnificent system of things which comprises the world, will discover that not only between the large divisions, but between every species, no matter how small or apparently insignificant, which differs from some other in an essential degree, a third is placed which partakes of the natures of both, and forms a sort of connecting link between them, joining, by this means, the whole system of creation in one magnificent family or chain. So well is this known to naturalists that they will describe to you a member of this huge body politic, though they may never yet have seen or heard of it, but which they will tell you must inevitably exist somewhere. Thus, between beasts and fishes we have animals known as amphibious, being neither wholly the one or the other. So, also, we have flying fishes, and birds which are equally at home in sea or air. Between vegetable and mineral, and mineral and animal, also, the same rule infallibly holds good.

Of this nature is the Governor, or *Zoolite*, which connects the two latter divisions of nature, being a sort of animated fossil, with the form and appearance of man.

It was supposed to have been one of this kind which was dug up in the States a short time ago, and which excited considerable curiosity, as a petrified human being. This idea is rendered all the more probable, from the fact that it would require a very short period of petrification to convert them into a purely mineral substance.

This species is not very common anywhere, which is, perhaps, a wise provision of nature, as they have never been found to confer any great benefits on mankind,—to fill the position we have described, evidently being the only object for which she intended them. A few, however, are found in almost every country, chiefly belonging to menageries and exhibitions, of one kind and

another, being, from their variety, a subject of interest to almost everybody.

In this capacity they are to be tolerated, but, like the Grand Trunk Debentures, one does not want too many of them. They are, besides, very expensive to keep, as they require not only to be luxuriously housed and fed, but a large sum has to be paid for keeping them,—probably on account of their dangerous character, for though they are not, generally, of a ferocious disposition, yet they have frequently been known to break away from all control, and commit such ravages as to render them unsafe to be trusted. Thus, a few years ago, in Jamaica, one escaped in this way, and created considerable consternation, by killing a number of people before it was again taken; but it was at last captured, and sent to England, causing considerable curiosity and excitement in that usually peaceful country. Nor is this the only instance, as many others might be cited to prove the savage taint which frequently runs in their veins.

This species has been known to naturalists, and the world generally, since a very early period,—indeed it is frequently mentioned by the writers of the Old Testament, from which we would infer that, at that time, they were pretty common; but, assuming that to be the case, they must have gradually decreased in numbers, probably owing to the progressive tendencies of the world being uncongenial to their existence, as has been the case with many species of the lower orders of animals. It is *large*, and rather finely made, with a noble step and somewhat pompous carriage.

There are several specimens of this animal in Canada. There is one, particularly, in Quebec,—a very fine one, we believe,—belonging to a zoological society there, which often creates considerable interest and amusement, by the fantastic tricks which it has learnt to perform, and which prove, notwithstanding the theory of many scientific men, that this species *is* endowed with some degree of intelligence. This one, when irritated and angry, will throw itself in a passion, and *bellow* in the most frightful manner.

There is another at Toronto, belonging to a similar institution, which, though not so ostentatious in appearance, or altogether so perfect a specimen, will, when enraged, *howl and* "roar you as 'twere any nightingale."

INFANTICIDE.

One of the Upper Canada papers says that Miss Rye is getting rid of her children rapidly. Fatal effects of Old Rye. What suggestions of unutterable horror! How does she get rid of them? By starvations, drowning, hanging, suffocation? Or is she too kind to them, and does it by stufication, thereby inducing indigestion, colic and wry faces? What wretches these newspaper men are! "Getting rid of them,"—too bad!

"The bank whereon the wild thyme (time) grows" appears to be an ever-verdant one, judging from the quantity of that article in the hands of some of our young bloods.

The "Rights" women are generally most anxious to secure marriage rites.