



The Weekly Mirror,

Is Printed and Published every Friday,

BY H. W. BLACKADAR,

At his Office, head of Mr. M. G. Black's wharf.

WHERE

All kinds of JOB PRINTING will be executed at a very cheap rate.

Terms of the Mirror Five Shillings per annum payable in advance.

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE LYRE-BIRD; OR, SUPERB MENURA.

New Holland, which affords so rich a harvest to the student of nature, and which produces the most singular and anomalous beings with which we are at present acquainted, is the native country of this rare and beautiful bird, the habits and manners of which are yet but little known. Considered by many naturalists as allied to the paradise, or birds of paradise, it exhibits in its general form, and especially in the figure, of its large elongated nails, which are evidently adapted for scratching up the soil, a certain degree of approximation to the gallinaceous tribe, to which others are inclined to refer it; but there is, however, a group of ground thrushes as they are expressively called, to which, in the characters of the plumage and in habits, it would appear, we think, to be still nearer related.

Dr. Shaw, in his account of the manners of the superb menura, says, "At the early part of the morning it begins singing, having (as is reported) a very fine natural note; and gradually ascending some rocky eminence, scratches up the ground in the manner of some of the pheasant tribe, elevating its tail, and at intervals imitating the notes of every other bird within hearing; and after having continued this exercise for about two hours, again descends into the valleys, or lower grounds." This account has been confirmed to us by the testimony of a gentleman, who, during his residence in New Holland, took particular pains to investigate its manners and habits: he describes the menura as being very shy and recluse, and consequently not easy to be observed. Its own notes are rich and melodious, and it imitates those of other birds with admirable tact and execution; these powers of melody are the more remarkable, as connected with its size and rasorial habits, for the voice both of the birds of paradise and of

the gallinaceous tribe is harsh and discordant. Dr. Latham informs us, that the menura is "chiefly found in the hilly parts of the country, and called by the inhabitants the 'mountain pheasant'; as to its general manners, very little has come to our knowledge. It will occasionally perch on trees, but for the most part is found on the ground, having the manners of our poultry, as is manifest from observing the ends of the claws, which in most specimens are much blunted." Like many other desiderata to the naturalist from New Holland, this curious bird has never been brought alive to Europe.

In size, the menura, is about equal to a pheasant. Its general plumage is of a dull brown, inclining to rufous on the quill-feathers; the tail, which is much longer than the body, consists of feathers so arranged, and of such different sorts, as to form, when elevated, a figure bearing no unapparent resemblance to an ancient lyre.

BIOGRAPHY.

CHARLES VON LINNÆUS.

Charles von, Linnæus, or *Linne*, a celebrated naturalist, was the son of a clergyman, and born at Roeshult, in the province of Smaland in Sweden, in 1707. He studied physic at Leyden, and in 1735 took his doctor's degree in that faculty, after which he settled at Stockholm. At the age of 34 he was appointed professor of physic and botany in the university of Upsal. He also became physician to the king, who created him a knight of the polar star, and conferred on him a pension with a patent nobility. He was the founder and first president of the academy of Stockholm, and a member of several foreign societies. Linnæus travelled into Norway, Dalecarlia, Desert Lapland, Germany, Holland, France, and England, in eager pursuit of his favourite science. In this country he was greatly noticed by our most famous naturalists, and brought a letter of introduction to sir Hans Sloane from Boerhaave. He invented a new method of dividing plants into classes, and he extended the same to animals. He died in 1778. His son *Charles Linnæus* was professor of medicine at Upsal, and died in 1783, aged 45; he was the last of the family.

A liar is a hector towards God, and a coward towards man.

ELM TREE HALL.

I love to tell a cheerful tale,
In happy-hearted mood;
Come, read it with a willing mind,
For it may do thee good!

About twenty years ago there lived a singular gentleman in the old Hall among the Elm Trees. He was about three score years of age, very rich, and somewhat odd in many of his habits, but for generosity and benevolence he had no equal.

His dress was as old fashioned as his habits. He wore a cocked hat, richly embroidered, a waistcoat reaching nearly to his knees, and his shoes came up almost to his ankles. No poor cottager stood in need of comforts which he was not ready to supply, no sick man or woman languished for want of his assistance, and not even a beggar, unless a known impostor, went empty handed from the Hall.

The sick he sooth'd, the hungry fed,
Bade care and sorrow fly,
And loved to raise the downcast head
Of friendless poverty.

Now it happened that the old gentleman wanted a boy to wait upon him at table, and to attend to him in different ways, for he was very fond of young people. But much as he liked the society of the young, he had a great aversion to that curiosity in which many young people are apt to indulge. He used to say, "The boy who will peep into a drawer will be tempted to take something out of it, and he who will steal a penny in his youth will steal a pound in his manhood."

This disposition to repress evil, as well as to encourage good conduct, formed a part of his character, for though of a cheerful temper, and not given to severity, he never would pass over a fault till it was acknowledged and repented of.

No sooner was it known that the old gentleman was in want of a servant, than twenty applications were made for the situation; but had there been forty, no one would have been engaged until he had undergone a trial, for a boy with a curious, prying disposition the old gentleman would not engage. It was on a Monday morning that seven lads, dressed in their Sunday clothes, with faces as bright as cherry-cheeked apples, made their appearance at the Hall, each of them desirous to obtain the situation they applied for. Now the old gentleman, being of a singular disposition, had prepared a room in such a way that, if any of the