

## The Weekly Mirror,

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WHERE

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

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### NATURAL HISTORY.

#### THE BISON.

The Bison, which is another animal of the cow kind, differs from the rest in having a lump between its shoulders; and the size of these animals varies so completely, that it is difficult to give an idea of their height.

Upon taking a slight survey of this creature, he bears some resemblance to the lion's face; he has a thick long shaggy mane, and a beard extending from the throat to the chin; his head is small; his eyes fiery and red, and so full of fury and ill-nature, that they absolutely intimidate with their glare; the forehead is extremely wide: the horns are large, and placed so far asunder that three men might easily sit in the space; on the middle of the back there rises a hump nearly as high as a camel's, and covered with hair; and those who hunt the animal for the sake of its food, consider it a most delicate and luxurious treat. In a state of nature this creature is so wild, that the hunters are obliged to fly for safety to those trees where their thick foliage secures them from his sight; and he can only be taken by digging deep pits in the earth, and covering them over with grass and boughs of trees, when the noise of the hunters impel him forward, and he is suddenly precipitated into their snare.

Though this creature seems so untameable in its natural state, it may easily be made subservient to the will of man; and the Hottentots, in particular have so completely subdued them, that they seem to consider them as domestic friends; they bend their knees to receive burdens, and are completely gentle as the most docile of our steeds.

The Bisons, or cows with a hump, differ according to the parts of the world in which they are found; though it generally allows that the tame ones diminish very much in size, when compared with the wild. Some have horns, and some are without; some have them depressed and others raised: but all become docile and gentle when tamed, and many are furnished with lustrous and soft hair.

The Bison of Malabar, Abyssinia, and Madagascar, are, from the luxuriance of their pastures, all of the large kind, but those of Arabia, Petraea, and most parts of Africa are small, and appear of the zebu kind.

From this it appears that Naturalists have given various names to creatures which in reality are the same, or differ in circumstances merely accidental: the wild cow and the tame, the animal of Europe, and that of Asia, Africa, and America, the bonasas and the urus, the bizon, and the sebu, are doubtless one and the same race; and where they allowed to mix with each other, in a few generations the distinction would cease.—*New Preceptor.*

### BIOGRAPHY.

#### FRANCIS BACON.

Francis Bacon, a great lawyer and statesman, but a much greater philosopher, was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, lord keeper of the great seal, which is the same office as that of Lord chancellor of England.

The son was born at York house, in the Strand, in 1561, and in his infancy shewed signs of a happy genius and strong judgement. When he was but a child, he was introduced to Queen Elizabeth, who asked him how old he was; to which he answered, "that he was two years younger than her majesty's happy reign;" for the queen was crowned in 1559. This fine compliment gave so much satisfaction to that discerning queen, that she bestowed many marks of her royal favour upon Mr. Bacon, whom she used to call her "young lord keeper."

But the dazzling splendours of a court, and the smiles of his sovereign, did not entice him from his studies. His progress in learning was so great, that at the age of twelve years he was sent to the university of Cambridge, where he had for his tutor Dr. Whitgift, who was afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury: Under this learned and pious divine, he applied to his books with such uncommon diligence, that before he was sixteen years old, he had gone through the whole circle of the liberal arts and sciences, as they were then taught; besides making a great proficiency in the learned languages and divinity.

His father, the lord keeper, discovering in his son such a ripeness of judgement and virtue, as well as of knowledge, resolved to send him, young as he was, to France, that he might gain an acquaintance with affairs of state. He was accordingly committed to the care of Sir Amias Pawlet, the English ambassador at Paris: and so well did he conduct himself in that situation, as to be sent to England with a commission of importance to the queen, which required both secrecy and dispatch. He executed this honorable trust with such applause, as gained both him and the ambassador great credit. Our young statesman then returned to France, where he applied himself not only to his studies, but cultivated the friend-

ship of men of learning, and made many useful observations upon public affairs, as appears from a succinct view of the state of Europe, which he wrote when he was only nineteen.

But while he was thus honorably improving himself abroad in such pursuits as might best answer the expectations entertained of him, the sudden death of his father recalled him to England, where, finding that his portion, owing to the largeness of the family, was but small, he resolved to make the law his profession. He accordingly entered himself a student of Gray's Inn, where, in his twenty-eight year, he became reader to the society; that is, read lectures upon profound questions in the law. About the same time he was also appointed queen's counsel, but did not receive any substantial preferment or distinction till the reign of King James the First, when he had passed through the offices of solicitor and attorney general, and finally, that of chancellor, on which occasion he was made a viscount. He died at Highgate, in 1626. His fame for universal learning was so extensive, that in his last illness a French nobleman, of very high distinction, went to pay him a visit, and finding him in bed, with the curtains drawn, "You resemble," said the Marquis, "the angels; we hear those heavenly beings constantly talked of, and we believe them superior to mankind, but we never have the consolation of seeing them."—"If the charity of others," replied the dying philosopher; "compare me to an angel, my own infirmities tell me I am but a man!"

In the midst of his professional employments, and the fatiguing engagements of state affairs, this great man applied to his studies with unremitting ardour. He was the first who discarded a slavish adherence to theory and hypothesis in philosophy, and laid it down as a maxim, "that in the study of nature we should always proceed, not upon conjecture and theory, but upon experiment alone?"

*Runaway Steam Engine.*—One of the most curious circumstances in the history of locomotive engines occurred on Sunday afternoon at the depot of the Leeds. The firemen had lighted a fire under the boiler of a locomotive engine which was attached to a train, and left them. The steam got up sooner than they anticipated, and the engine set off without either guide or train, and being unincumbered proceeded with fearful rapidity. The astonishment of the firemen may be easily conceived when they found the engine out of sight. The persons who saw it in its flight were amazed beyond measure as it seemed literally to fly. At length when the fire abated and then lessen-