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## NATURAL HISTORY.

### THE GOAT.

This animal is found in every part of the world—easily domesticated,—and too well known to need a description. It is often mentioned in the Bible. Dr. Russell and other travellers inform us, that in Syria they have two kinds of goats; one that differs little from the common sort in Britain; the other remarkable for the length of its ears, which are sometimes upwards of a foot long, and broad in proportion. To this description of the goat it is, as Mr. Hammer reasonably supposes, that the prophet Amos refers, in expressing the smallness of that part of Israel that escaped from destruction, and were seated in foreign countries: 'As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion, two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria, and in Damascus,' ch. iii. 12.

The goat was one of the clean animals which the Israelites were permitted to eat, and to offer on the altar, (Exodus xii. 5, &c. ; ) and the flesh of the kid is frequently mentioned in terms which show that it was esteemed as a great delicacy, Gen. xxxviii. 16, 17; Jud. xvi. Solomon promises as a reward to the diligent husbandman, that he shall have *goat's milk* enough for his food, for the food of his household, and for the maintenance of his maidens, (Prov. xxvii. 27 ; ) which to us may appear somewhat strange; but Russell assures us, that in Aleppo, these animals are chiefly kept for their milk, of which they yield no inconsiderable quantity; that it is sweet and well-tasted, and frequently used for the making of cheese. This furnishes one amongst many instances of the importance of historical and local information to a right understanding of the sacred writings.

The following story, said to be true, shows that the goat possesses instinct, which in case of necessity, leads it to very ingenious contrivances.

"Round the crag of a high rock in Wales overhanging the sea, are the remains of an ancient castle, once the seat of grandeur but now serving only to heighten the prospect, and many perches above its base runs a projecting ledge, perhaps a foot wide.

A couple of goats grazing about the summit by some means got upon the ledge and one of them advancing till it arrived at an angle, was enabled to turn; but in its way back met its companion, which produced a most perplexing dilemma, for it was impossible to pass each other. Some persons having wandered near the ruins in order to gather some wild strawberries, which grew

in the neighboring woods arrived at this critical moment and were witnesses of their distress without being able to assist them. The poor animals were sensible of their unfortunate condition, and uttered the most doleful cries. After anxiously viewing them for some minutes, they ran to some cottages at a little distance to see if it was possible to discover any means of extricating them.—Men, women and children, led by curiosity, followed them to the spot; but they could only sympathize with the poor animals without giving them any relief lest they should be precipitated on the rocks beneath. Many plans were proposed, but all were ineffectual. After a considerable time, when hope had almost given place to despair, one of the goats was observed to kneel down with great caution and couch as close as it could lie; which was no sooner done, than the other with great dexterity, walked over him and they both returned the way they came in perfect safety."

How different from this was the conduct of the two men whose story is related by Capt. Riley. There is in Africa a pass cut in the side of an almost perpendicular mountain, barely wide enough for the passage of a single man or animal. To prevent trouble from persons meeting in this dangerous road, places were built up at each end from which the traveller could see the whole length. One night a Moor and a Jew, who had neglected the precaution of looking out before they entered the pass, both riding on mules, met in the narrowest part. As the mules could not pass each other, their riders prepared to fight for the passage, by sliding over the heads of their beasts. The Moor had a sharp sword, with which he soon cut in pieces the club, which was the only weapon of the Jew. The latter, finding death inevitable, clasped his antagonist round the waist, and sprung with him down the precipice, by which both were dashed to pieces. The place has ever since been called the *Jew's leap*.

One of the animals and both of the men might have been saved, had they possessed something of the disposition of the goats.

## COMMON THINGS.

### No. I.—HEAT.

Heat is more common, and more universally diffused, than any other substance connected with our earth. Every particle of air, water, earth, metals, every tree and leaf, every quadruped, fish or insect, contains more or less heat. And various bodies feel cold, not because they have no heat, but because they have less than our bodies, and

therefore take it from them. Most bodies contain heat stored up within them, which is not perceptible to our senses, and may frequently be brought out and rendered sensible. Water which is even cold to the hand, when mixed with three times its quantity of sulphuric acid, is rendered more than boiling hot. The heat is thrown out of the water, because it becomes more solid than before, and cannot retain all the heat it had in store. If water be mixed with lime, and cause it to slack, a portion of it becomes as solid as the lime itself, and of course can retain but a small quantity of the heat it had when liquid, and consequently throws off, or renders sensible an intense heat, and sometimes sets on fire ships or other vessels which contain it.

A piece of iron, which does not feel hot to the hand, may be made red hot, by giving it upon an anvil, a few quick and smart blows, which press out the insensible heat and render it sensible.

The air contained in a fire syringe, by a sudden compression, may be made to throw off heat enough to set fire to tinder, or a piece of cotton prepared for the purpose.

The friction of machinery, and of the limbs of trees, sometimes brings out so much insensible or latent heat, and renders it sensible, as to throw a manufactory or forest into a conflagration.

Although many bodies are not hot, but intensely cold, when tested by our senses, they may still be rendered more cold, or made to give up heat, which is proof that they contain it. And it is supposed that every particle of matter from the highest point in the atmosphere, to the centre of the earth, and even every atom of matter in other worlds and other systems, contains a portion of heat, to whatever degree of cold it may be reduced.

Heat is not only common and almost universal in its existence, but is scarcely less so in its application. Being deprived, during the winter, of a portion of the heat which the sun sends to us in rich abundance during the summer, chills our earth and locks it up in frost; and but for a seasonably returning spring would cease to afford sustenance either to the animal or vegetable creation. If he should withhold, even but a portion of his heat from our earth for a single year, it would present one vast and dismal gloom, without a man, an animal or plant living upon its surface.

### EVAPORATION.

Among the most extensive and important operations carried on by heat, is evaporation. By this process, the water furnished to our earth, is constantly performing the