

# THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

No. 46. VOL. 1.]

HALIFAX, NOVEMBER 27, 1835.

[ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM.]

## NATURAL HISTORY.

### THE BAT.

This singular creature, which possesses properties that connect it with both beasts and birds, has been variously placed in systems of natural history. The editor of Calmet, says, 'it is too much a bird to be properly a beast, and too much a beast to be properly a bird.' Doubts as to its nature, however, no longer exist. The bat is now universally made to take its place among the animal tribes, to which the bringing forth its young alive, its hair, its teeth, as well as the rest of its habitudes and conformation, evidently entitles it. In no particular, scarcely does it resemble a bird, except in its power of sustaining itself in the air, which circumstance is scarcely enough to balance the weight of those particulars which we have noticed, as placing it among quadrupeds.

The Hebrew name of the bat denotes 'the flier in duskiness,' i. e. the evening. It was similarly named by the Greeks and the Latins. In Dent. xiv. 18, 19, it is well described: 'Moreover the bat, and every creeping thing that flieth, is unclean to you: they shall not be eaten.'

The legs of the bat are formed in a very particular manner. It creeps with the infirmities of its flight. During the entire winter, it conveys itself in its hole, as it does, also, during the day time even in summer, never venturing out except for an hour or two in the evening, in order to supply itself with food. The usual place in which it takes up its abode is the hollow of a tree, a dark cavern, or the chink of some ruined building, of which it seems particularly fond. This illustrates Isaiah, ii. 20: 'In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold to the moles and to the bats: that is, he shall carry his idols into the dark caverns, old ruins, or desolate places, to which he himself shall flee for refuge; and so shall give them up, and relinquish them to the filthy animals that frequent such places, and have taken possession of them as their proper habitation.'

### DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY OF CANTON.

That part of the city which is surrounded by a wall is built nearly in the form of a square, and is divided by a wall running from east to west, into two parts. The northern, which is much the largest part, is called the old city; the southern part is called the new city. According to some foreign as well as native books, the northern part was once "composed, as it were, of three different towns, separated by very fine high walls, but so conjoined, that the same gate served to go out from the one and en-

ter the other." These divisions ceased long ago to exist. The new city was built at a much later period than the old. The entire circuit of the wall which now includes both divisions of the city, is variously estimated by the Chinese. At a quick step we have walked the whole distance in little less than two hours, and think it cannot exceed six English miles. On the south side the walls run nearly due east and west, parallel to the river, and distant from it perhaps fifteen or twenty rods. On the north, where the city "rests on the brow of the hill," the wall takes a serpentine course; and its base at the highest point on the hill is perhaps 200 to 300 feet above the surface of the river.

The walls are composed partly of stone, and partly of bricks: the former is chiefly coarse sand-stone, and forms the foundation and lower part of the walls and the arches of the gates; the latter are small and of a soft texture. In several places, particularly along the east side of the city, the elements have made such inroads on the walls as to afford satisfactory evidence, that before the prowess of a modern foe they would present but a feeble resistance. They rise nearly perpendicularly, and vary in height from twenty-five to thirty-five or forty feet. In thickness they are twenty or twenty-five feet. They are the highest and the most substantial on the north side, evidently so built because in that direction hostile bands would be the most likely to make an attack. A line of battlements, with embrasures at intervals of a few feet, are raised on the top of the wall round the whole city; these the Chinese call *chingjin*, literally, city-men; and in the rear of them there is a broad pathway. There are two wings, or short walls, one at the south-east, and the other at the south-west corner of the city, which stretch out from the main walls; these were designed to block up the narrow space between the walls and the ditches of the city. Through each of these, there is a gate in every respect similar to those of the city.

The gates of the city are sixteen in number: four of these lead through the wall which separates the old from the new city; so that there are only twelve outer gates. A few soldiers are stationed at each of the gates, to watch them by day, and to close and guard them by night. They are shut at an early hour in the evening, and opened at dawn of day. Except on special occasions, no one is allowed to pass in or out during the night-watches; but a small fee will usually open the way, yet always exposes the keepers to punishment.

We must now extend our description so as to include the suburbs; the streets and

buildings of which differ very little, if at all, from those within the walls. On the west they spread out nearly in the form of isosceles right angled triangle, opening to the north-west, having the river on the south, and the western wall of the city, for its two equal sides. On the south, they occupy the whole space between the wall and the river. On the east, they are much less extensive than on the west. There are no buildings on the north except a few small huts near the principal gate. Taken collectively, the suburbs are scarcely less extensive or less populous than the city within the walls.

The streets of Canton are numerous: we have before us a catalogue containing the names of more than six hundred: among which we find the "dragon street," the "flying dragon street," the "martial dragon street," the "flower street," the "golden street," the "golden flower street;" and among many more of a similar kind, we meet with a few which we should not care to translate. There are several long streets, but most of them are short and crooked. They vary in width from two to sixteen feet; but generally they are about six or eight feet wide, and they are every where flugged with large stones, chiefly granite. The motley crowd that often throngs these streets is very great indeed. At a busy hour of the day, the stout, half-naked, vociferating porters, carrying every description of merchandise, and the nimble sedan-bearers, in noise and bustle make up for the deficiency of carts and carriages; these, together with the numerous travellers, various kinds of retailers, pedlars, beggars, &c., present before the spectator a scene which we shall not attempt to describe.

Not a few of the visitors, and not a little of the merchandise, brought together here, are conveyed into the city by means of canals or ditches. There are several of these; one of the largest of them extends along the whole length of the wall on the east of the city, and another one on the west side. Between these, two and communicating with them, there is a third canal which runs along near the wall on the north side of the new city; so that boats can enter on the west, pass through the city, and out at the eastern side, and vice versa. There are other canals in the eastern and western suburbs; and one in the southern. Into these larger channels a great number of smaller ones flow: these the Chinese call the "veins of the city." There are also several reservoirs; but none of them are of great extent. Much of the water for the use of the inhabitants is supplied from the river and canals; wells are frequent; rain-water is employed also;