

# THE WEEKLY MIRROR.



VOL. 2 ]

HALIFAX, APRIL 16, 1836.

No. 13

## The Weekly Mirror,

Is Printed and Published every Friday,

BY H. W. BLACKADAR,

At his Office, nearly opposite Bauer's wharf, and adjoining north of Mr. Allan M'Donald's.

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.

#### MIGRATION OF FISHES.

The migration of birds, &c. is a very curious article in natural history, and furnishes a striking instance of a powerful instinct impressed on animals by the Creator.

Of all migrating animals, particular kinds of fishes perform the longest journeys, and in the greatest numbers.—The salmon, which makes regular migrations, frequents the northern regions alone, and is unknown in the Mediterranean sea, and in all the rivers which fall into it.

In the month of September salmons quit the ocean, and ascend the rivers to deposit their spawn. So strong is the instinct of migrating, that they press up the rivers with amazing keenness, and scarcely any obstacle is sufficient to retard their progress. They spring with great agility over cataracts several feet in height. When they find a place which they think proper for depositing their eggs, the male and female unite their labours in forming a convenient receptacle for the spawn in the sand, generally about eighteen inches deep. After this important office has been performed, they hasten back to the sea. Toward the end of March the young fry begin to appear, and gradually increase in size till they acquire the length of four or five inches, when they are called smelts or smoults. Herring likewise migrate. They are chiefly confined to the northern and temperate regions of the globe. They frequent the highest latitudes, and are some times found on the northern coasts of France. They appear in vast shoals on the coast of America, as far south as Carolina. In Chesapeak-bay there is an annual inundation of herrings; and they cover the shores in such amazing numbers as to become offensive to the inhabitants. The great winter rendezvous of the herrings is within or near the arctic circle, where they remain several months.

They begin their migration in large shoals southward in the spring; but in their progress meeting with the Shetland Islands, the shoal divides into two branches; one branch skirts the eastern, and the other the western shores of Great Britain; and they fill every bay and creek with their numbers, affording nourishment to many thousands of the human race.

Besides salmons and herrings there are many fishes which observe a regular migration, as mackerels, lampreys, pilchards, &c. About the middle of July, the pilchards, which are a species of herrings, though smaller, appear in vast numbers off the coasts of Cornwall. When winter approaches, like the herrings, they retire to the arctic seas.

### BIOGRAPHY.

#### JOHN MILTON.

John Milton, an illustrious poet, was the son of a scrivener in London, and born in Bread-street, in 1608. From St. Paul's school, he went to Christ's college, Cambridge, where he took his degrees in arts, being designed for the church; but not having an inclination to that calling, he returned to his father, who had retired from business with a good fortune, and settled at Horton, in Buckinghamshire. Here our poet wrote his *Comus*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Lycidas*, poems of such merit as would have alone immortalized his name. In 1638 he travelled into France and Italy, and on his return to England settled in London. The troubles breaking out between the king and parliament, Milton engaged as a political writer on the popular side. In 1643 he married the daughter of a justice of peace in Oxfordshire. He continued an ardent champion for the rebellious party, even after the murder of Charles I., which sanguinary deed he defended with his pen against Salmasius; but he was not disinterested in this, for the parliament rewarded him with one thousand pounds. About this time he was wholly deprived of his sight owing to a natural weakness, and an intense application to his studies. In 1652 he lost his wife, and soon afterwards took another. Though he was a determined republican, and wrote with energy and intemperance against monarchical government, "the very trappings of which," he said, "would support a commonwealth," yet he readily submitted to the usurpation

of Cromwell, to whom he became Latin secretary. Milton endeavoured to prevent the restoration; which event he had undoubted cause to dread, considering the active part taken by him in the rebellion. And when the ancient constitution was re-established, he was excepted out of the act of indemnity, on which he kept himself concealed for some time. By the kindness, however, of Sir William Davenant, and others, he obtained his pardon; soon after which he lost his second wife, and was not long without another. In the time of the plague he removed with his family to Chalfont, in Buckinghamshire, where he completed his *Paradise Lost*, which was printed first in 1667. For this immortal work he had only fifteen pounds, and that by instalments. For the idea of it he is said to be indebted to an Italian drama on the *Fall of Man*; and it is certain that he had himself an intention at first of writing only a tragedy on the same subject. As the work grew under his hand, his soaring genius gave it the form and consistence, the variety and elegance of an epic poem. After this he engaged in another called *Paradise Regained*; the occasion of which was as follows: John Elwood, the quaker, who was his amanuensis, calling upon him at Chalfont, and the conversation turning upon Milton's great work, Elwood observed, "Thou hast said much upon *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say on *Paradise Found*?" Milton paused, and the next time they met, he shewed Elwood the latter poem, saying, "This is owing to you." The *Paradise Regained*, though possessing many beauties, is in all respects inferior to the *Paradise Lost*; yet it is remarkable that the author gave it the preference. Milton died at his house in Bunhill-row in 1674, and lies interred in the parish church at St. Giles, Cripplegate, where a monument has been erected to his memory, and there is another in Westminster-abbey, set up by auditor Benson.

### THE VILLAGE.—No. 7.

#### BILL HOLLINS.

The calmest hours of our lives are, at times suddenly broken in upon by unexpected accidents, when quiet and peace are changed into uproar and consternation. The young and the old should be ready for these things. If it be in the shape of affliction, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God,