

THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

"To please the fancy—and improve the mind."

Vol. [I.]

HALIFAX, N. S. JUNE 12, 1835.

[No. 22.]

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BEE.

There is scarcely a more wonderful little creature in the world than a bee. There are generally three sorts of bees in a hive; the queen bee, and the drones and the working bees. The queen bee is the mother of all the rest. The drones are the males.

The industry, and order, and regularity of the working bees is truly surprising.—There seems to be a delightful sort of disposition among them which seems to lead them to think and contrive how they can help one another in their work.

A honey comb is a wonderful and beautiful contrivance: the bees make it of wax. They can go in on either side, but there is a division half way down, so that there are two sets of cells. These cells are all in the form of a hexagon; that is, a figure with six sides; and these sort of figures fit into one another so exactly, that there is no vacant space between them, and no waste of wax: this is a beautiful contrivance; the more it is examined, the more wonderful it appears. When bees are put into a new hive, they immediately set about making combs; they are all in full activity, all at work, all helping one another, and though in great crowds, not in any confusion, but working in great order, so as to get through their work without needless delay, and at the same time to do it well. They seem to divide themselves into companies, whilst they are employed, and thus their work is done sooner and better.

In winter we know that the bees cannot go out to get honey, and they would therefore die for want of food, if they had not contrived to lay by a good store whilst they were able to work. And, besides this, there is many "a rainy day" even in the summer time when they cannot leave the hive; but as these little creatures have been prudent, there is always their stock to go to; just like those industrious people who have always a little stock in a savings' bank to look to when they are not able to work.

The bees collect honey from flowers. As soon as they are full, they return to the hive, and stow it in the cells of the comb. Sometimes a loaded bee, in his way home, meets a hungry companion on the road.—He then stops, like a good-natured fellow, to give a little help to his friend in need.—When he gets home, he finds numbers of his companions who were obliged to stay at home and work, and he then offers them some of his store, that they may not be obliged to stop their work for the sake of going to

search for food. When they have laid up a store in their cells for winter, they make a lid to the box, and shut it up, that they may not be tempted to take away any of their stock as long as they are able to maintain themselves from day to day, by their out-doors work. We should all do well to imitate the bee.

GEOMETRY.

LINES.—Some persons, of great intelligence, appear to use the words vertical and perpendicular, as synonymous. There is probably about the same distinction between the meaning of these two words, as in quadruped and horse, tree and oak, or rock and granite.

Every vertical line is perpendicular, but every perpendicular line is not vertical. A line is vertical, only when it is perpendicular to the horizon, or to the horizontal line.—Two lines may be perpendicular to each other, in any position in relation to the horizon.

All lines that form right angles with each other, are perpendicular, whether they lie in one position or another.

This distinction is not only plain, but important to be observed, to avoid confusion, even in the exact science of Mathematics.

As the first impressions made upon the minds of infants, are of the forms and shapes of objects around them, and one of the first propensities a wish to imitate, some of the first instruments proper to put into the hands of children, either for amusement or instruction, are the slate and pencil.

When a child can draw a vertical and horizontal line, he has learned an important lesson, and taken an important step in writing, in drawing generally, and in practical education. This children will do at a very early age, and with a degree of skill which will surprise any one who witnesses it for the first time. Slates and pencils are certainly more important than books for young children, whether at home or in school.

HISTORY.

There is something strangely interesting in the whole history of America. That a land so extensive—with climes so various and delightful—should have been so long hidden from the world of enterprise, curiosity and civilization, and left to be wrought curiously and grandly by the rude hand of nature, and enjoyed only by the wild roaming Indian,—all this, as often as contemplated, excites our wonder. For the history of its aboriginal population, and its condition before

the arrival of Europeans, only a small portion of the existing materials have as yet been collected. From what part of the eastern world the American Indians first came has not yet been discovered. More light, we hope, will be shed on this subject, especially on what respects North America, by the American Antiquarian Societies. The materials we have, which indicate Indian history, and mode of life, consist, for the most part, of rude hatchets and knives of stone, of mortars for bruising maize, of arrow heads, and similar articles. A second class consists of articles which the natives received from the earliest settlers. There is a third, and more interesting class, derived from the nations that built the forts or *tumuli*, (graves, walls, artificial eminences, hearths, &c.) in North America. To judge from these works, the people who wrought them must have been better acquainted with the useful arts than the present Indians. From the lofty trees with which they are overgrown, it is concluded that a long period must have elapsed—perhaps a thousand years—since the desertion of these fabrics by the people by whom they were constructed. They are found in the vicinity of each other, spread over the great plains from the southern shores of Lake Erie to the Gulf of Mexico, generally in the neighbourhood of the great rivers. Their structure is regular, and they have been supposed to warrant the opinion of the existence, in ancient times, of great cities along the Mississippi. As we proceed further south, these works increase in number and magnitude. Their traces may be followed, through the provinces of Texas and Mexico, into South America. Although the accounts of the earliest generations of this quarter of the world are scanty and obscure, its latter history is rich in occurrences. The Icelanders made a voyage in 982, to Winland, (the name given to the tract extending from Greenland to Labrador,) and the Venitians gave some information respecting the West India Islands (in maps of 1424); but America still remained a sealed book for Europe till the period of its discovery by Columbus, in 1492.

THE TOWER OF LONDON.

Where is there a young person to be found in the British dominions who has never heard of the Tower of London? One of the first places to be seen by the stranger who visits London is the Tower; and one of the first questions put to a stranger returning from London is, "Did you go to the Tower?" In short, if you have seen the whole of London's fine city, and yet have not visited the