

THE MASON BEE.—"One good old lady took up her position within a foot of the sofa on which I was accustomed to lounge during the extreme heat of the day. I therefore could watch all her motions without any trouble. I copy here the memorandum made at the time:

House completely built in about three hours; diameter of the foundation-circle 6-8ths of an inch, height when completed, 5-8ths, and door or chimney projecting scarcely 1-8th. I could not decide whether more than one bee was occupied in the construction, because they are so much alike; but there never have two appeared at the same time. When the building was finished, it was left for the remainder of the day to consolidate, and it soon became quite hard and dry. Next morning, as soon as the sun was up, I found the labourer of the preceding day arrive, and in her arms a long slender green caterpillar. She approached the open door or chimney, but did not rest on it, for while hovering on the wing she contrived to push the head of the caterpillar into the hole, and then gradually, and by piecemeal, to force in the whole body. As soon as this was fairly out of sight, she took her departure, and in five minutes returned with another victim. I counted 7 of these caterpillars pushed into the same building. The eighth time she returned without a caterpillar, but with a load of clay, with which in an instant she closed up the open door, and immediately began to lay a new foundation. This she finished before noon, and left it to dry for the rest of the day. Next morning I saw her bringing the caterpillars, but did not remain to count them.

"I allowed the process to go on for four days, when with a sharp table-knife I removed the first nest from the wainscot, and found the ova hatched, and the caterpillars, in whose bodies they had been deposited, nearly all destroyed by the young grubs. In the second the ova had not burst, and in the third the cell was quite crammed with the still fresh bodies of the green caterpillars. I found in the huts that had not been disturbed, the wall broken on one side or other, and that when taken down they were quite empty. Here then we find the insect first preparing a prison for the caterpillars, in whose bodies she deposits her ova for the purpose of being hatched, and which bodies also supply the young with food, until able to destroy the wall of the building, and find nourishment elsewhere."—*Halliday's West Indies.*

GUIANA CUCKOO AND A WREN.—"The little wren which I have already mentioned, seems to be so alarmed and annoyed by what is here called the lazy-bird (the *Cuculus rufo*), that she seeks and avails herself as much as possible of the protection of man, building her nest in the most frequented rooms of the house. One actually hatched and reared her young brood under a table in the mess-room of the 25th regiment, at Eve Leary barracks, a room frequented by hundreds daily, and where noise and uproar generally prevailed for half the night, yet nothing seemed to disturb her. To hang up an empty soda-water bottle in the open veranda is considered by this bird as a great boon, as in it she finds a retreat which the lazy-bird cannot reach; yet it is a most remarkable fact, that should the lazy-bird succeed in getting her egg placed in the little wren's nest, she not only hatches it, but is most indefatigable in procuring food for the ravenous maw of the alien monster that has destroyed her own natural offspring.

"Here, as in Europe, the young of the foster-mother disappear as soon as the young cuckoo is hatched. Can it be a recollection of the cruel fate of her own young, and of the additional labour she will have to undergo, that makes her thus so persevering in her endeavours to escape from the pursuit of her remorseless persecutor? I saw a lazy-bird to-day follow a wren into the drawing room at Camp House, and was with difficulty driven out and prevented from taking possession of the wren's nest."—*Ibid.*

EXTRAORDINARY INSTANCE OF INSTINCT.—"A hive of bees have made a lodgement in the north wall of the dining-room, about six inches from the window-sill. They enter by a small opening, which is covered by the window-shutter, when it is fastened back by the iron hook that secures it; and I find that when the shutter is firmly hooked back, it completely obstructs their entrance. It is not often however, that the servants are at the trouble of fixing the hook; but as it has been done occasionally, the bees must have found it an annoyance, and, with the view of providing against it, they have surrounded the hole in the wall by a ball of clay, of the size of a hen's egg, which, though it does not prevent the shutter from being hooked back, keeps it at a sufficient distance from the wall to permit the bees to pass easily behind it. I can discern no other reasons for their having placed this ball of clay over their entrance, unless it is to prevent the rain being driven into the hole when it is not protected by the shutter. In either case, we have here a wonderful example of the power of instinct. I have twice removed the ball of clay, but have always found it restored. The bee is very like the meadow, or fog-bee, of England, small and short-bodied. The hive does not seem to

be numerous. I seldom see more than three or four at a time about the entrance. I do not think they have any sting, for when I destroyed their clay-guard they were irritated, but did not attempt to sting or molest me."—*Ib.*

INSTINCTIVE PROPENSITIES OF ANIMALS.—At the last meeting of the Royal Society a highly interesting paper on this subject was read by Mr. Knight. The author narrates several curious facts illustrative of his position, viz, that the propensities of animals are conveyed to them by their predecessors, without reference to education or habit. A terrier and spaniel, brought up in utter ignorance of their natural pursuits, if we be allowed the phrase, were taken out by the author, and placed within sight of a pole-cat. The terrier displayed all the symptoms of violent anger, while the spaniel looked on with indifference, but sprang his game the moment it was observed. Mr Knight supposes that these hereditary propensities might be made to cease, and others be substituted. The springing-spaniel, for example, probably never would have been heard of, had not shooting on the wing been introduced. On this point, also, the author observes that the woodcock, now a very wild bird, was, sixty years ago, on its first introduction amongst us, comparatively tame; this wildness being superinduced, as it were, by the constant alarm in which it is kept during the shooting season. Other facts are given with respect to that class of dogs called retrievers, in sportsmen's language; though wholly untaught, they acted as well as the best instructed dogs. The paper terminates with a remark on the hereditary propensities of the Norwegian poney, which are singularly confirmatory of the foregoing. A paper by Capt. Lloyd, of Port Louis, was noticed. This communication contains the result, we believe, of 50,000 observations, barometrical and other, made by the author at the above-named place.

MALAY BARGAINING.—In their communications with each other, the Malays are always polite, abusive language never being employed amongst them. Every man carries a kris at his side, ready to avenge an insult should it be offered to him; and the certainty of instant recourse to this weapon, no doubt, tends in a great measure to prevent the occurrence of any event that might call for its use.

In trading with the Malays, an European should always endeavour to keep his temper; which an individual not accustomed to them will sometimes find a matter of difficulty. In making a purchase, they will offer five dollars for an article worth twenty; and, should the vender put himself in a passion, they will tease him with like offers, in the hope that he will give them the goods at the cheapest rate for the sake of getting away.

Their commercial transactions being generally conducted in places in which a number of individuals are collected together,—as, for instance, in the court of the Sultan, or at the residence of the Capitan China,—if secrecy should be required, they adopt a mode of bargaining by means of the fingers, which precludes the bystanders from discovering what is going on. The parties grasp each other's hands, and the purchaser makes an offer by pressing one of the joints of the vender's fingers, there being to each joint a number attached, from one to ten; and touching a certain part of the hand will show whether the offer is in tens, hundreds, or thousand. The hands of the dealers are covered with a handkerchief, so that none of the people present can see what is going forward. When the purchaser has made his offer, the vender, by another grip, lets him know what price he will take; and thus they continue, one increasing his offer and the other lowering his demand, until the bargain is concluded or broken off. This custom has, I think, been introduced by the Arabs; for they were always the greatest adepts at it, while the Javanese and other natives who have little communication with them, are unacquainted with the method.—*Earls Indian Archipelago.*

MISERY OF AMERICAN SLAVES.—We visited the negro quarter, a part of the estate which filled me with disgust wherever I went. It is something between a haunt of monkeys and a dwelling-place of human beings. The natural good taste so remarkable in free negroes is here extinguished. Their small, dingy, untidy houses, their cribs, the children crouching round the fire, the animal deportment of the grown-up, the brutish chagrins and enjoyments of the old, were all loathsome. There was some relief in seeing the children playing in the sun, and sometimes fowls clucking and strutting round the houses; but otherwise a walk through a lunatic asylum is far less painful than a visit to the slave quarter of an estate. The children are left during working hours in the charge of a woman; and they are bright, and brisk, and merry enough for the season, however slow and stupid they may be destined to become.—*Miss Martineau.*

STEAMERS ON THE ATLANTIC.—Every thing promises that it will not be long ere the Atlantic is ploughed as regularly by steamers as it is now by sailing vessels;

indeed, all things considered, it is perhaps surprising that the object should not have been effected many years ago. Steam boats of a peculiar construction are now building at New York, for the packet service between that port and Liverpool; and another is constructing at Blackwall for an English company, who do not, however anticipate that they shall be able to commence operations before the spring of 1838. Meanwhile a steamer plies regularly between London and Jamaica. It has performed the trip several times, although the fact has attracted very little attention.

AN AWKWARD DILEMMA, IF TRUE.—When Sir Francis Burdett was in the zenith of his popularity, and just after he first became the representative for the city of Westminster, some of his honest constituents, who are known, issued a bill in the form of a Bank of England note, on which was inscribed a "promise to pay the bearer, on demand, the sum of £1000, when Sir F. Burdett ceases to be a patriot and an honest man." It is said that some of these notes are in the possession of individuals, who intend suing the issuers for the amount, the baronet having become an apostate, and a most dishonest political character.—*Bath Guardian.*

DUELLING IN FRANCE.—In consequence of the fatal termination of a duel that took place last year between M. Prestat, now a sub-lieutenant in one of the regiments in Africa, and a M. Hans, both at that time in the Polytechnic School, and in which the latter was killed, the mother of M. Hans, a widow, brought an action against his adversary for a compensation for her loss. The case was heard last week before the Tribunal de Premiere instance, and Lieut. Prestat was adjudged by the Court to pay the widow an annuity of 800 francs for her life. This example might be happily followed in our law courts.

RICH BEGGAR.—Last week, a beggar, cased in rags, was brought up by the police officers of Dumfermline, for insolence in the exercise of his profession. On being searched, there were found on him bank checks, and gold and silver to the amount of £438. The Magistrate treated him to a new suit of clothes at his own expense, as his former habiliments were intolerable. He is a perfect miser, and is named Robert Forrest or Ferguson.—*Fife Herald.*

The art of sailing is merely an imitation of the nautilus. There are thirty species; some so large that drinking cups are made of their shells. The fish is independent of its shell. In sailing it stretches out two of its arms, which hold up a membrane of a sail; and with two other arms and its tail, rows and steers. The prodigious number and size of those in a fossil state proves that they were at one period more important than they have been since. Man has exerted his power as the universal destroyer.—*Ibid.*

THE PEARL.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1837.

Our British dates by the Packet are from London to the 8th of June. They add but little of interesting or important information to our previous advices. The monied affairs of Europe were still dark and lowering. Spain is yet the theatre of civil war—the Queen's cause, however, was presenting a more favorable aspect than of late. In Great Britain on the celebration of the Princess Victoria's Birthday, the gloom and depression of the people arising from their commercial distress, appear to have been shaken off, and the rejoicings were general and ardent.

THE PRINCESS VICTORIA.—Wednesday, the day on which the Princess Victoria completed her eighteenth year, was very generally kept as a festival in the Metropolis. Most of the great shops were closed the whole or part of the day, and the workmen in the manufactories and breweries were allowed a holiday. Neither House of Parliament sat. At night there were splendid illuminations all over London; and the throng of carriages and people on foot was immense. It was a beautiful evening for the display of gas-lights.

At the Thames Police-office, on Wednesday, the captain of a West Indian man, from Jamaica, applied for the assistance of Magistrates to secure a negro who had concealed himself in his ship, and was not discovered until 3 days after he left Jamaica, unless he took him back he should be liable to a heavy penalty. Mr. Ballantyne said, he supposed the negro liked England better than Jamaica; and as he was accused of no crime, nobody here could force him to go back; he was perfectly free in England.

COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS.—The state of the commercial and manufacturing interests is very discouraging, if not alarming. In the northern and midland counties, the working people