

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE FOX, OR JACKAL.

It is somewhat doubtful, whether the fox of scripture be the common fox, or the jackal—the little eastern fox, as Hasselquist calls him.

The jackal, or Thaleb, as it is called in Arabia and Egypt, is said to be of the size of a middling dog, resembling the fox in the hinder parts, particularly the tail; and the wolf in the fore parts, especially the nose. Its legs are shorter than those of the fox, and its color is of a bright yellow; or in the warmest climates rather of a reddish brown.

Although this species of the wolf approaches very near to that of the dog, yet the jackal seems to be placed between them; to the savage fierceness of the wolf, it adds the impudent familiarity of the dog. Its cry is a howl, mixed with barking, and a lamentation resembling that of human distress. It is more noisy in its pursuits even than the dog, and more voracious than the wolf; though it never goes alone but always in a pack of forty or fifty together. They are very little afraid of mankind, but pursue their game to the very doors, without testifying either attachment or apprehension. They enter insolently into the sheep-folds, the yards, and the stables, and, when they can find nothing else, devour the leather harness, boots, and shoes and run off with what they have not time to swallow. They not only attack the living, but the dead; scratching up with their feet the new-made graves, and devouring the corpse. They always assist each other as well in this employment of exhumation, as in that of the chase; and while at their dreary work, exhort each other by a most mournful cry, resembling that of children under chastisement. Like all other savage animals, when they have once tasted human flesh, they can never after refrain from pursuing mankind. They watch the burying grounds, follow armies, and keep in the rear of caravans.

Such is the character which naturalists have furnished of the jackal, or Egyptian fox: let us see what references are made to it in scripture. To its carnivorous habits there is an allusion in Psalm lxxiii. 9, 10: 'Those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth: they shall fall by the sword; they shall be a portion for foxes;' and to its ravages in the vineyard, Solomon alludes in Cant. ii. 15: 'Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.' The meaning is, that false teachers corrupt the purity of doctrine, obscure the simplicity of worship, overturn the beau-

ty of a painted order, break the unity of believers, and extinguish the life and vigor of Christian practice. These words of Ezekiel may be understood in the same sense: 'O Jerusalem! thy prophets. (or, as the context gives the sense,) thy flattering teachers, are as foxes in the deserts,' chap. xiii. 4. This name they receive, because with vulpine subtilty, they speak lies in hypocrisy. Such teachers the apostle calls 'wolves in sheep's clothing;' 'deceitful workers, who, by their cunning, subvert whole houses; and whose word, like the tooth of a fox upon the vine, eats as a canker.'

FLAX.

This is a well known vegetable, upon which the industry of mankind has been exercised with the greatest success and utility. On passing a field of it, one is struck with astonishment, when he considers that this apparently insignificant plant may, by the labor and ingenuity of man, be made to assume an entirely new form and appearance, and to contribute to pleasure and health, by furnishing us with agreeable and ornamental apparel.

From time immemorial, Egypt was celebrated for the production or manufacture of flax. Wrought into inner garments, it constituted the principal dress of the inhabitants, and the priests never put on any other kind of clothing. The fine linen of Egypt is celebrated in all ancient authors, and its superior excellence is mentioned in the sacred Scripture. The manufacture of flax is still carried on in that country.

In Deut. 22. 11, is a prohibition of wearing a garment of flax and wool. The original word translated 'linen and woollen,' (Lev. xix. 19), is difficult of explanation. We are inclined to believe that it must rather refer to a garment of divers sorts, than to what we call 'lirsey woolsey;' to one made up of patchwork, differently colored and arranged, perhaps, for pride and show, like the coat of many colors made by Jacob for his son Joseph, Gen. xxxvii. 3.

In predicting the gentleness, caution, and tenderness with which the Messiah should manage his administration, Isaiah (ch. xli. 3) happily illustrates it by a proverb: 'The bruised reed he shall not break, and the smoking flax he shall not quench.' He shall not break even a bruised reed, which snaps asunder immediately when pressed with any considerable weight; nor shall he extinguish even the smoking flax, or the wick of a lamp, which, when it first begins to kindle, is put out by every motion. With such kind and condescending regards to the weakest of his people, and to the first openings and symptoms of a hopeful character, shall he proceed till he send forth judgement unto victory,

or till he make his righteous cause victorious. This place is quoted in Matt. xii. 20. where, by an easy metonymy, the material for the thing made, flax, is used for the wick of a lamp or taper; and that, by a synecdoche for the lamp or taper itself, which, when near going out, yields more smoke than light. 'He will not extinguish, or put out the dying lamp.'

EMIGRATION.

BY THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

I went the other day to see some particular friends on board the gallant ship, Helen Douglass, for the British settlements of America. Among the rest was Adam Holiday, a small farmer, who had lost his farm, and whom I had known intimately in my young days. He had a wife, and I think, nine sons and daughters: but his funds being short, he was obliged to leave his two oldest sons behind, until they themselves could procure the means of following him. An old pedlar, whom I think they named Simon Ainslie, was there distributing little tracts among the emigrants gratis, and perhaps trying to sell some of his cheap wares. The captain and he and Nicholson, the owner of the vessel, myself and some others, were standing around the father and sons, when the following interesting dialogue took place,—

"Now, Aidio, my man, ye're to behave yourself, and no be like a woman and greet, I canna bide to see the tears comin' papplin' ower thae manly young cheeks; for though you an' Jamie wad hae been my riches, my strength, an' shield in America, in helpin' me to clear my farm, it is out o' my power to take ye wi' me just now.—Therefore, be good lads, an' mind the things that's good. Read your Bibles, tell aye the truth, an' be obedient to your masters; an' the next year, or the next again, you will be able to join your mother an' me, an' we'll a' work together to ans another's hands."

"I dinna want to gang, father," said Adam, "until I can bring something wi' me to help you. I ken weel how you are circumstanced, an' how ye hae been circumstanced, an' how ye hae been screwed at home. But if there's siller to be made in Scotland in an honest way Jamie an' me will join you in a year or twa wi' something that will do ye good."

But this time poor little James' heart was like to burst with crying. He was a fine boy about fourteen. His father went to comfort him, but he made matters only the worse. "Hout, Jamie, dinna greet that gate man, for a thing that canna be helpit," said he. "Ye ken how weel I would hae