

THE WEEKLY MIRROR.



OL. 27

HALIFAX, MARCH 11, 1836.

No. 3.

The Weekly Mirror,

Is Printed and Published every Friday,
BY H. W. BLACKADAR,
At his Office, head of Mr. M. G. Black's wharf.

WHERE
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.

THE HUMMINGBIRD

Of this curious little bird there are six or seven varieties, from the size of a small wren down to that of a humblebee. Their principal food is the honey which they extract, while on wing, from the bottom of tubular shaped flowers. The smallest Hummingbird is about the size of a hazel nut. The feathers on its wings and tail are black; but those on its body and under its wings, are of a greenish-brown, with a fine red gloss, which no silk or velvet can imitate. The bill is black and slender, and the head is adorned with a small crest, which sparkles in the sun like a little star in the middle of the forehead. The larger Hummingbird, which is nearly half as big as the wren, is without a crest; but to make amends it is covered from the throat half way down the belly, with ruby coloured feathers, which, in some lights, are as bright as fire. The heads of both are small, with little round eyes, as black as jet.

The nests of these birds, which are about the size of a hen's egg cut in two, are not less curious than the rest: they are generally suspended in the air, at the point of the twigs of an orange, a pomegranate, or a tree; and are composed of cotton, moss, and the fibres of vegetables. The females lay two eggs about the size of small peas, and as white as snow, with here and there a yellow speck; at the end of twelve days the young ones appear. They are hatched by the sitting of the male and female alternately. They are at first bare, but are gradually covered with down, and at last with feathers.

Small as the Hummingbird is, it has great courage and violent passions. If it finds that a flower has been deprived of its honey, it will pluck it off, throw it on the ground, and sometimes tear it to pieces; and it often fights with a desperate fury which is astonishing in a creature of such diminutive size. It will even allow a man to come within two yards of it before it will take to flight.

Hummingbirds are caught by blowing water on them from a tube, or shooting at them with sand.

HYSSOP.

This vegetable receives its name from its detersive and cleansing qualities, whence it was used in sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb (Exod. xii. 22;) in cleansing the leprosy (Lev. xiv. 4, 6, 51, 52;) in composing the water of purification (Numb. xix. 6,) and also in sprinkling it, ver 18. It was typical of the purifying virtue of the bitter sufferings of Christ, and it is plain, from Ps. li. 9, that the Psalmist understood its import.

The hyssop is an herb of a bitter taste, and grows on the mountains near Jerusalem, as well as on the walls of the city. Hasselquists speaks of some which was a very diminutive moss—a striking contrast to the tall and majestic cedar. See 1 Kings iv. 33.

Bochart, Schrucher, Parkhurst, and other critics, to get rid of a supposed discrepancy between the evangelists, have conceived that the hyssop of John xix 29 must be considered as synonymous with the reed or cane of Matt. xxvii. 48, and Mark xv. 36; and hence Wolfius has taken some pains to show that there was a species of hyssop whose stalk was sometimes two feet long, and therefore sufficient to reach a person on a cross, that was by no means so lofty as some have erroneously conceived. but the difficulty, as Dr. Harris has shown, is not in the text itself, which is sufficiently intelligible, and clearly compatible with the statement of the other evangelists. John does not mention the reed; but says, that when they had put the sponge upon hyssop; that is, when they had added *bitter to the sour or gall to the vinegar* they advance it to our Saviour's mouth, no doubt, with the reed.

BIOGRAPHY.

HANDEL.

George F. Handel, an illustrious musician, was born at Halle in Saxony, in 1684. His father, who intended him for the law, perceiving his propensity to music, prohibited all instruments from his house. The son, however, contrived to have a small clavichord concealed in the garret, where he used to amuse himself when the family were asleep. At the age of seven he went with his father to the court of the duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, to whom Handel's brother-in-law was valet. While there he got into the

church one morning, and began to play on the organ. The duke, who was in the church, surprised at the playing, asked who it was, and on being informed, he expostulated with the old gentleman for restraining his son's inclination; in consequence of which a master was provided for him. Handel made so great a progress, that at the age of nine he composed the church service. In 1698 he went to Berlin, where he was greatly noticed by the king of Prussia. From thence he went to Hamburgh, and had a dispute with another musician, who made a push at him with his sword as they were coming out of the orchestra, but a music-book in his bosom prevented the weapon from piercing his heart. Here he composed, at the age of 14, his opera of Almeria. Soon after this he visited Italy, and at Florence, produced the opera of Rodrigo. In 1710 he visited England, but being under an engagement to the elector of Hanover, his stay was short. In 1672 he returned, and obtained a pension of 200*l.* a-year, which was afterwards doubled. He died at London in 1759. A complete edition of his works was published by Dr. Arnold.

WHO CAN BEAR TO BE TOLD OF HIS FAULTS!

Were the question to be proposed to youth, maturity, or old age, "Who can bear to be told of his faults?" a thousand tongues would be ready to reply. "I can;" but though the thousand were to be multiplied by ten thousand, it would not alter the truth of the remark, that it is a very rare thing to meet with any one who can bear to be told of his faults.

In my younger days I proposed to a few of my acquaintances, an occasional meeting for the express object of pointing out, in a friendly way, the failings which we had from time to time discovered in each other; when one of my friends, knowing more of human nature than myself, disconcerted me by proposing that we should meet in a nut-shell, being very confident, that all the members I should succeed in assembling together, might be easily be contained in that limited receptacle.

"Confess your faults one to another," is an injunction not difficult to be complied with when our self-love is not wounded—when we have some advantage to gain, or punishment to avoid; but these cases do not prove that we can bear to be told of our faults.

There are some who appear patiently to endure a reproof; others who will thank you for having administered it; and a third