

# JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscurnis jam nunc sermonibus aurem."

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## JUVENILE ENTERTAINER

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### CONDITIONS.

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## BIOGRAPHY.

### The Progress of Genius

FROM OBSCURE AND LOW SITUATIONS, TO EMINENCE AND CELEBRITY.

Genius is that gift of God which learning cannot confer, which no disadvantages of birth or education can wholly obscure.

#### URSUS, (NICOLAS-RAYMANUS.)

The famous Danish Mathematician, was in youth a Swine herd, and did not learn to read till he was eighteen; but his progress afterwards was very rapid both in the languages and sciences.

From Strasburgh, where he taught mathematics, he was invited to the professorship at Prague, and he is said to have invented an astronomical system so like that of Tycho BRAHE, to bring him into a dispute with that astronomer respecting the right of discovery.

## NATURAL HISTORY.

### THE GNOC.

Among the interesting varieties of animals in South Africa, the Gnoc holds a distinguished place. It is so different in its form from other beasts, that some persons have doubted the reality of its existence; and a few years ago, a gentleman of high rank and judgment gave it as his opinion, that the figure of the gnoc, instead of being a portrait drawn from nature, was a creature entirely of the artist's imagination. No doubts can, however, now be entertained on the subject, as one of these animals was for some time in the menagerie of the Prince of Orange at the Hague. The following account of its history and habits is extracted from Mr. Barrow's tour in Southern Africa.

The gnoc, or wild beast, so called by the Dutch, is the swiftest beast that ranges the plains of Africa; so swift indeed, that a traveller has always an opportunity of getting it into his possession. Nature, though regular and system-

atic in all her works, often puzzles and perplexes human systems, of which this animal affords an instance. In the shape of its body it evidently partakes of the horse, the ox, the stag, and the antelope: the shoulder, body, thighs, and mane are equine; the head completely bovine; the tail partly one and partly the other, exactly like that of the quacha; the legs, from the knee-joints downwards, and the feet, are slender and elegant, like those of the stag; and it has the subocular sinus, which is common to most, though not to all, of the antelope tribe.

Its head is about eighteen inches long; the upper part completely guarded by the rugged roots of the horns that spread across the forehead, leaving only a narrow channel between them, that wears out with age, as in the instance of the buffalo; the horns project forwards twelve inches, then turn in a short curve backwards ten inches; from the root to the point is only nine inches; down the middle of the face grows a ridge of black hair four inches in length; and from the under lip to the throat another ridge somewhat longer: the orbit of the eye is round, and surrounded by long white hairs that, like so many radii, diverge, and form a kind of star: this radiated eye gives to the animal a fierce and very uncommon look. The same sort of white vibrissae are thinly dispersed over the lips: the neck is little more than a foot long: on the upper part is a mane extending beyond the shoulders, erect, and five inches in length; the hair like bristles, black in the middle and white on each side; this mane appears as if it had been cut and trimmed with nice attention; the body is about three feet two inches long; the joints of the hip-bones project high, and form on the haunches a pair of hemispheres: the tail is two feet long, flat near the root, where the hair only grows out of the sides; this is white, bristly, and bushy: the whole length from the point of the nose to the end of the tail, seven feet ten inches, and the height three feet six inches; the color is that of a mouse, with a few ferruginous straggling hairs on the sides: like the mare, it has only two teats; and all its habits and its motions are equine; though a small animal, it appears of a very considerable size when prancing over the plains. The Gnoc might be considered an emblem of freedom, with the means of supporting it. Strength, swiftness, weapons of defence a nice nose, and a quick sight, it eminently possesses. When they happen to be disturbed, the whole herd begin to draw together, and to butt each other with their horns, to bound and play their various gambols; after which they gallop off to a distance. Their motions are extremely free, varied, and elegant. Though fierce and vicious, as it certainly is in its wild state, yet it probably might not be very difficult of domestication. No successful attempts, however, have yet been made to tame it. The flesh is so like that of an ox, both in appearance and taste, that it is not to be distinguished from it.

Monthly Repository.

## HISTORY.

### HOLY LAND—BETHLEHEM.

Bethlehem is situated at the distance of six miles from JERUSALEM, in a fine country, blest with a salubrious air, and abundant fertility. The water is conveyed in a low aqueduct which formerly passed to Jerusalem. The FONS SIGNATUS is a charming spring, yielding a constant supply of water to three large cisterns, one of which is still in good preservation. At a small distance from these, a beautiful rivulet called the DELICIE SOLOMONIS laves the herbage of the valley, and fertilizes several fine gardens, while the circumjacent soil is richly clothed with an elegant assemblage of fig-trees, vines and olives.

Bethlehem received its name, which signifies the House of Bread, from Abraham; and it was surnamed *Ep'rala*, the Fruitful, after Caleb's wife, to distinguish it from another Bethlehem, in the tribe of Zebulun. It belonged to the tribe of Judah; and also went by the name of the City of David, that monarch having there been born, and tended sheep in his childhood. Abijah, the seventh judge of Israel, Elimelech, Obed, Jesse, and Boaz, were, like David, natives of Bethlehem, and here must be placed the scene of the admirable eclogue of Ruth. St Matthias the apostle, also received life in the village of Bethlehem.

The convent is connected with the church by a court inclosed with lofty walls. This court leads by a small side-door into the church. The edifice is certainly of high antiquity, and, though often repaired, it still retains marks of its Grecian origin. On the pavement at the foot of the altar you observe a marble star, which corresponds, as tradition asserts, with the point of the heavens where the miraculous star that conducted the three kings became stationary. The Greeks occupy the choir of the Magi, as well as the two other naves formed by the transform of the cross. These last are empty, and without altars. Two spiral staircases, each composed of fifteen steps, open on the sides of the outer church, and conduct to the subterraneous church situated beneath this choir. At the farther extremity of the crypt, on the east side, is the spot where tradition reports the Virgin to have brought forth the Redeemer of Mankind. This spot is marked by a white marble, incrustated with jasper, and surrounded by a circle of silver, having rays resembling those with which the sun is represented. Around it are inscribed these words:

HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA  
JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS EST.

At the distance of seven paces towards the south after you have passed the foot of one of the staircases leading to the upper church, you find the Manger. You go down to it by two steps, for it is not upon a level with the rest of the crypt. It is a low recess, hewn out of the rock. A block of white marble, raised about a foot above the floor, and hollowed in the form of