

JUVENILE ENTERTAINER.

"Torquet ab obscanis jam nunc sermonibus aurem."

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THE JUVENILE ENTERTAINER

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BIOGRAPHY.

BEN. JOHNSON.

In Westminster Abbey is erected a noble Monument with a Busto in Basso Relievo, the memory of Ben Johnson, the first who translated the English Stage, after the manner of the Ancients. This gentleman was the son of a clergyman in Westauster, and was educated in the college belonging to this Abbey, while Mr Cambden was Master of it, whose care for him he gratefully acknowledged. After his father's death his mother married her second husband, a Bricklayer, and taking him from school, forced him to work at her Husband's trade; during which time, 'tis said he worked in some buildings in Lincoln's Inn, with his sword in one hand, and *Horace* in the other; but Master Cambden taking pity that excellent arts should be lost, recommended him to Sir Walter Raleigh, whose son he attended in his travels; upon his return they parted, and Mr Johnson went to Cambridge, where he was elected into St. John's college; his stay here is uncertain; but afterwards coming to London, and eager to try his natural bent to Poetry, he applied himself to a certain Broth, or playhouse, called the *Green Curtain* near Shore-ch, or Clerkenwell; but he made a poor progress there: Afterwards, with the advantages of liter conversation, he attempted a second time, and succeeded so well as to gain the same character among the Dramatick writers that time. He left the world in his 63d year, viz: 1637, viz: 16th of August, and was three years afterwards buried in this Abbey, in the North Isle, under the ancient Escutcheon of the *de Roos*, over whose Tomb one Young, afterwards a Knight in K Charles II's time, of Great Milton in Oxfordshire, placed a stone, which cost eighteen pence, and on it this Inscription:

O rare Ben. Johnson!

Which stone is still remaining. There was said, a considerable sum of money gathered among the curious men of that time, for erecting a Monument or Statue over him, the Rebel-

lion breaking out prevented it. The Monument which is now set up in this place we are speaking of, was done by some person of quality whose name was desired to be concealed. It has only the old inscription, *O rare Ben. Johnson!* and is a neat piece of work; but a mistake of the Sculptor, in setting the Buttons on the left side of the coat, occasioned the following Epigram.

O rare Ben. Johnson! What, a turncoat grown!
Thou ne'er wer't such till clad in Stone.
When Time thy Coat, thy only Coat impairs,
Thou'lt find a Patron in a hundred years:
Then let not this mistake disturb thy Sprite,
Another Age shall set thy Buttons right.

NATURAL HISTORY.

A DOMESTICATED WEASEL.

Although Buffon was of opinion that the weasel was an animal incapable of domestication we have the following interesting account of one in a letter of Mademoiselle de Laistre. 'If I pour some milk into my hands,' says she, 'it will drink a good deal; but if I do not pay it this compliment it will scarcely take a drop. When it is satisfied, it generally goes to sleep. My chamber is the place of its residence; and I have found a method of dispelling its strong odours by perfumes. During the day, it sleeps inside a quilt, entering by a place that is unsewed in its edge, which it accidentally discovered. At night, I keep it in a wired cage, which it always enters with much reluctance, but leaves with joy. If the servant sets it at liberty before I am up in the morning, after a thousand gambols, it comes into my bed, and reposes in my hand, or on my bosom. If I am up before it is let out, it will fly to me in rapture, and spend half an hour in caressing me, playing with my fingers, and nibbling at them with its teeth like a little dog; leaping on my head and on my neck, and then running round my arm with the softness and elegance of a squirrel. Such is its agility, that it will leap into my hands, although upwards of a yard distant, if I present them to it. It exhibits much adroitness and cunning to obtain any wished for object; and it is so capricious at times, as to perform certain acts apparently from contradiction. It seems at all times exceedingly desirous of being noticed, watching my eye during all its little pranks, to see if I observe it. If I am inattentive to its sports, it seems to have no pleasure in them, immediately desists, and lays itself down to repose. It is so lively, that the moment I awake it, however sound its sleep may be; it instantly resumes its gambols with as much spirit as before it slept. It never is out of temper, unless when much teased, or when under confinement, which it mortally detests; in which case it displays its displeasure by a kind of low murmur, quite opposed to the sound of its voice when pleased. This little creature can distinguish my voice amid twenty others, and springs over every one in the room

till it has found me. Nothing can exceed the lively and pleasing way it caresses me with its two little paws; it frequently pats me on the chin, in a manner that expresses the utmost fondness. This, with a thousand other kindnesses, convinces me of the sincerity of its attachment. He is quite aware of my intention, when dressed to go out, and then it is with much difficulty I can rid myself of him. On these occasions he will conceal himself behind a cabinet near the door, and spring on me as I pass with astonishing quickness. His vivacity, agility, and voice, with the manner he utters it, have a strong similitude to those faculties in a squirrel. In the summer season, he runs about all night squeaking; but since the cold set in, he has desisted from this practice; but has sometimes expressed this particular sound when rolling on my bed in the sunbeams. It seems extremely probable that the weasel sips the dew, judging from the remarkable manner he drinks milk from my hand. He will never drink water when he can get milk, and then in such a small way, that he appears only to do it to cool his tongue, for he evinced fear on several occasions, when water was presented to him. During the summer showers, I caught some rain water, and endeavoured to get him to enter it to bathe himself, but this he would not do. I then dipt a piece of linen cloth in it; this seemed to afford him much pleasure, by rolling himself over it, which he did frequently. The curiosity of this little pet is unbounded, for it is impossible to open a drawer or box without his roving through every part of them; if even a piece of paper or a book is looked at, he will also examine it with attention. Every thing I take into my hand he must run up to, and survey with an attentive scrutiny. I have a young dog and cat, with both of which he is very familiar; he will scamper over their necks, backs, and legs, without their offering him the smallest injury."

THE WOODPECKER.

James Vila, Esq of Bedford, Ms has left in our office a sample of the labours of the RED-HEADED WOODPECKER which exhibits a curious specimen of the power and industry of that little animal. This consists of the branch of a young tough white oak, between two and three inches in diameter, perforated in its centre by the bill of the bird. The hole, is as neat and well defined as could have been mortised by a mallet and chisel. The object of the woodpecker, in this performance, was, evidently the attainment of a worm, probably one of the species of the Borer which so often attacks the apple tree. The worm had made a hole in the branch about the size of a goose quill, 4 or 5 inches below the place gouged out by the bird, and was proceeding upwards when the woodpecker brake in upon and devoured the depraedor. That this little despised workman, viz the red headed woodpecker, with his head for a mallet and his bill for a chisel, should make such a perforation, is more