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# THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

No. 27. VOL. 1.]

HALIFAX, SEPTEMBER 25, 1835.

[ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM.]

## NATURAL HISTORY.

### IMITATIVE POWERS OF THE HYENA.

Mr. R. Lee, in a work just published, entitled "Stories of Strange Lands," relates the following:—"The laugh of the hyena greatly resembles that of a maniac, and has a startling effect as it steals through the still night, even under our windows, which it approaches in search of food. The power of imitation given to these animals is very extraordinary, for they not only cry like the quadruped whom they wish to lure within their reach, but they even seem to utter human sounds. The commandant of a fortress on the western coast of Africa assured me, that for several evenings he had been disturbed at his dinner hour by the laughing and screaming of the native women, who passed under the walls in search of water. He sent his serjeant to them, who desired that they would take some other path, and they promised to obey. The next evening, however, the noise was heard again, which highly irritated the commandant, and he desired the serjeant to lie in ambush on the third evening, and rushing suddenly out on them, with a few soldiers, secure the women, and bring them to him in the fortress. The men took their stations as ordered, the laughing recommenced, and out they sallied, when, to their great astonishment, they only saw three hyenas standing in the path which had been frequented by the women, and so well counterfeiting their voices, that they could not have been detected but by sight. These hyenas are not very formidable, and will, at any time, rather fly from, than attack a human being."

### THE PRAIRIE DOGS.

A STORY BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

These animals of the prairies in the "far west" are of the cony kind, and about the size of a rabbit. They burrow under ground; and are said by travellers to live in communities or large villages of the extent of several acres. Over the whole of this extent, you see little heaps of dirt marking the places at which they enter their underground houses, and between these entrances there are hard beaten paths running from one to another in every direction, showing that they are social friends and good neighbors.

Travellers relate that there is a species of owls, which sometimes take their abode with the prairie dogs; especially in those cells, which, for some reason or other the dogs have left. Rattle-snakes, too, often get in among them. You know how difficult it is to keep all bad company out of any society—city, village, school, or family.

Washington Irving, who lately travelled in the West, calls these villages of prairie dogs little republics; and amuses himself by comparing them with republics of men. A visit to one of them, which he says covered a space of thirty acres, he describes in the following humorous manner:

"It was towards evening that I set out with a companion, to visit the village in question. Unluckily, it had been invaded in the course of the day by some of the rangers, who had shot two or three of its inhabitants, and thrown the whole community in confusion. As we approached we could perceive numbers of the inhabitants seated at the entrances of their cells, while sentinels seemed to have been posted on the outskirts, to keep a look out. At sight of us, the picket guards scampered in and gave the alarm; whereupon every inhabitant gave a short yelp, or bark, and dived into his hole, his heels twinkling in the air as if he had thrown a somerset.

We traversed the whole village, but not a whisker of an inhabitant was to be seen. We probed their cells as far as the ramrods of our rifles would reach, but could unearth neither dog nor owl, nor rattlesnake.

Moving quietly to a little distance, we lay down upon the ground, and watched for a long time, silent and motionless. By and by, a cautious old burgher would slowly put forth the end of his nose, but instantly draw it in again. Another at a greater distance, would emerge entirely; but catching a glance of us, would throw a somerset, and plunge back again into his hole. At length, some who resided on the opposite side of the village, taking courage from the continued stillness, would steal forth, and hurry off to a distant hole, the residence possibly of some family connection, or gossiping friend, about whose safety they were solicitous, or with whom they wished to compare notes about the late occurrences.

Others, still more bold, assembled in little knots, in the streets and public places, as if to discuss the recent outrages offered to the commonwealth, and the atrocious murders of their fellow burghers.

We rose from the ground and moved forward, to take a nearer view of these public proceedings, when, yelp! yelp! yelp!—there was a shrill alarm passed from mouth to mouth; the meetings suddenly dispersed; feet twinkled in the air in every direction, and in an instant all had vanished into the earth.

The dusk of the evening put an end to our observations, but the train of whimsical comparisons produced in my brain still continued after my return to camp; and in the night, as I lay awake after all the camp was asleep, and heard in the stillness of the hour,

a faint clamor of shrill voices from the distant village, I could not help picturing to myself the inhabitants gathered together in noisy assemblage, and windy debate, to devise plans for the public safety, and to vindicate the invaded rights and insulted dignity of the republic."

[From the N. Y. Journal of Commerce.]

### THE MOUNTAIN COTTAGE.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

I never so fully realized the beauty of these lines, as during the events which I now record. The circumstances by which I was surrounded, brought vividly to my mind the fact that persons born far from the theatre of active life, live, die, and are forgotten, like the flowers which perfume the air they breathe. As the river flows unruffled in its course through the wilderness to the ocean, so there are many who pass quietly down the tide of existence, until lost in the ocean of eternity.

All day I had wandered among the wild scenery of the Green Mountains, without (for nearly all that time) seeing a human habitation, until, at the close of the day, I came in view of a small cottage, the sight of which was indeed welcome. Fatigue and hunger naturally directed my steps to the cottage, which I found was formed by fastening the ends of logs together at right angles, thus making a hollow square, about ten feet high, surmounted with a high roof of rough boards. As I entered the rude enclosure, I turned to survey the surrounding scenery. The cottage was situated in the bosom of a deep valley, at the base of two gigantic mountains whose summits were lost among the clouds, and the sides of which were covered with unbroken green, save here and there an oak or a pine lifted its withering limbs, like Patriarchs who had withstood the storms of many winters.

In the front of the cottage was a stream of the purest water, leaping over its rocky bed, sparkling as it pursued its first descending course.

As I made signal of my approach, I was bid welcome by a lady less than middle aged, and of an unusually interesting appearance. Her mild intelligent, and I may add beautiful expression of countenance, her neat and appropriate dress, her simple and unostentatious manners, and the order of the household arrangements, at once interested and surprised me.—In her lap lay an infant, and clinging to her chair was her little daughter, I should judge six or eight years old, the image of her mother.

From the preparations making, I judged that their evening repast was approaching, to

join which I soon received a cordial invitation. Although I had some miles to ride to my lodgings, yet I could not resist the temptation to accept the invitation so cordially extended. The food was placed upon the table in a few plain dishes, yet they contained the choicest delicacies which the Green Mountains afforded: such as strawberries, fresh cream, new white bread, and most delicious butter. Very soon we were joined by her husband, a plain, though I doubt not an honest and industrious man, yet I could not help thinking him decidedly inferior to his wife.

As we surrounded the table, the good man with great simplicity and devotion, invoked the blessing of God, which soon informed me that they were religious people; and as we continued to converse, I learned that they were Methodists. Although not often permitted to enjoy the public ordinances of religion, yet they were simple hearted and pious.

In their conversation upon many subjects, they betrayed an ignorance sometimes quite amusing, but of the sublime truths of Revelation, their knowledge and intimacy were truly astonishing. The subject was the beginning and end of their contemplations; its greatness had absorbed them, its purity had elevated them, its benignity had softened their hearts; its fulness had satisfied their souls. On this theme they delighted to converse. It spread itself over their thoughts, it was manifested in their actions.

"Compared with this, how poor religious pride,

In all the pomp of method and of art,  
When men display to congregations wide  
Devotion's every grace except the heart.  
The Power incensed the pageant will desert,  
The pompous train, the sacerdotal stole,—  
But haply in some cottage far apart,  
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul,  
And in His book of life the inmates poor enrol."

While conversing with the good woman, a thought occurred to me, which I ventured to express to her, that so far removed from the advantages of education, they must necessarily experience the want of them for their children. To which she replied, "It has ever been my endeavor to learn my children as much as possible. And little Jane who now lies buried under those trees,"—pointing to a mound under the shade of a deep grove, where I looked and saw the spot which paternal fondness had delighted to adorn, and place upon it the rose, and decorate it with many a wild flower of the woods. When I again looked upon the mother, a tear was starting from her eye, and she proceeded. "As I was saying, my dear little Jane, before she died and was laid under those trees, would read as well as any one could wish. Oh yes! and many times, seated in her little chair there in the corner, she has read chapter after chapter from the Bible during the long winter evenings, and since she has been dead, we have let that little chair remain just were

it was before she died; and although I have seen the flowers blossom these three summers upon her grave, yet even now I sometimes look up, fondly expecting that I shall see her in her seat. But no, no. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord. Sometime before she died, it did seem as if He was preparing her for himself, she loved to read the bible so; and I believe that the Shepherd of Israel, who of old said, suffer little children to come unto me, took also this lamb in his arms and folded it in his bosom.—'Twas in the winter she began to decline. The winds swept around our dwelling, yet little Jane was so meek, she did not even lisp a complaint. It seemed as if the long tedious winter would never be gone; for we tho't if the Spring would come and cover the mountain with green, and deck the valleys with flowers, she would with them be renewed and well. The Spring did come, the mountains were covered with green, the valleys with flowers, and the air was filled with fragrance and the songs of birds. Every thing looked fresh and beautiful except my poor Jane. Her looks grew pale, and her voice grew faint. Often I would take her slender form in my arms and bear her to yonder grove,—and earnestly, oh, how earnestly! did I pray that the lily so drooping, might be revived. One day while there, holding her in my arms, she seemed unusually devout and tender, and looking me earnestly in the face she said, Mother, although I feel some stronger to day, yet I am sure I shall soon go to that bright place among the stars, where you say God lives. And Mother, the way does not look dark. If you will only lay me here under these trees and among the flowers, I am sure my Shepherd whom you have taught me to trust and love, will guide me to heaven, where we shall all meet at last, as you have so often told me; then we shall never part again. After a short but fervent prayer that this might be our happy lot, somewhat exhausted she fell asleep; a sweet smile lingered upon her face, and as she slept she looked so beautiful I leaned over to kiss her brow, but it was cold; her spirit had already ascended to Heaven."

In this artless story there was a natural pathos which was quite irresistible. The sternness of the father was unbent, his little daughter dissolved in tears, the narrator's feelings frequently interrupted her narrative, and even the sympathies of a stranger's heart were deeply excited.

Heavy as this stroke of Divine Providence had been, and deeply as they had felt it, yet religion pure and undefiled, shed over their humble path its hallowed influence, assuaging the griefs of this life, and pointing them to a full fruition above.

With increasing interest I continued to converse with these simple hearted people, and lingered until the deepening twilight

reminded me that I must depart. So after receiving their cordial invitations to visit them again, I mounted my horse and pursued my way, not without regret at taking leave of the Mountain Cottage.

From the Boston Transcript.

**MOONSHINE.** The gullible portion of the reading community have been hoaxed by an article which appeared, last week, in the New York Sun, purporting to be extracted from a supplement to the Edinburgh Journal of Science, and communicating intelligence of stupendous discoveries in the Moon, made by Sir John Herschel, from his observatory on the Cape of Good Hope—affected by the assistance of a new telescope of immense power. We have not room for the whole article, or scarcely for a small portion of it, or we would gladly translate it to our columns, for the reader's entertainment. We must confine ourself, therefore, to a brief abstract of the *New Lunar Discoveries*.

"The first night of observation commenced, with a series of brilliant discoveries. Basaltic Rock, of a greenish brown color, was first observed, of very perfect formation; next, flowers of a dark red hue, resembling the "papaver Rhoeas, or rose poppy of our sublimary cornfields;" then trees, like the yews of the English churchyard, followed by a forest of mountain firs, at the foot of which was a beautiful lake, bounded by shores, fairer than which angels never coasted, whose waters laved a beach of brilliant white sand, girt with wild castellated rocks, apparently of green marble; varied at chasms, occurring every two or three hundred feet, with grotesque blocks of chalk gypsum, and feathered and festooned at the summits with the clustering foliage of unknown trees. The water was nearly as blue as that of the deep ocean, and broke in large white billows upon the strand. The action of very high tides was quite manifest upon the face of the cliffs, for more than a hundred miles.

The detail of other discoveries in geology and botany—equally interesting—we must pass by, and come to a deep valley in the shade of the woods, on the south eastern side of which were herds of brown quadrupeds, having all the external characteristics of the bison. It had, however, one widely distinctive feature, common to every lunar quadruped discovered, namely, a remarkable fleshy appendage over the eyes, crossing the whole breadth of the forehead, and united to the ears like the upper front outline of the cap known to the ladies as Mary Queen of Scots's cap, lifted and lowered by means of the ears—a providential contrivance to protect the eyes of the animal from the great extremes of light and darkness to which all the animals of our side of the moon are periodically subjected. The next animal discovered resembled an auto-

lope,—bounding along the acclivitous glades of the woods, and running with great speed over the turf, with most graceful and fascinating motion.

Through the centre of a valley flowed a large branching river, abounding in islands and water birds; mountains and lakes, and craters of extinct volcanoes, were numerous. Dr Herschel classified not less than thirty-eight species of forest trees, and nearly twice this number of plants, found in one tract alone. Of animals, he classified nine species of mammalia, and five of oviparia. Among the former is a small kind of reindeer, the elk, moose, the horned bear, and the biped beaver. But time would fail us, if we were to describe a twentieth part of the wonders, and we pass on to the great discovery—the probable *mankind* of the moon.

They averaged four feet in height, were covered, except on the face, with short and glossy copper-colored hair, and had wings composed of a thin membrane, without hair, lying snugly upon their backs, from the top of the shoulders to the calves of the legs. The face, which was of a yellowish flesh color, was a slight improvement upon that of the large orang outang, being more open and intelligent in its expression, and having a much greater expansion of forehead. The mouth, however, was very prominent, though somewhat relieved by a thick beard upon the lower jaw, and by lips far more human than those of any species of the simiagenus. In general symmetry of body and limbs, they were infinitely superior to the orang outang. The hair on the head was a darker color than that of the body, closely curled, but apparently not woolly, and arranged in two curious semi-circles over the temple of the forehead. Their feet could only be seen as they were alternately lifted in walking, but they appeared thin, and very protuberant at the heel. These creatures were evidently engaged in conversation; their gesticulation, more particularly the varied action of their hands and arms, appeared impassioned and emphatic.

Such are some of the marvellous discoveries, the wonderful facts, brought to light by Sir John Herschel's telescope—according to the *New-York Sun*, and the supplement to the *Edinburgh Journal of Science*.

**Divisibility of Matter.**—The following are interesting particulars in the arts or in nature, helping the mind to conceive how minute the ultimate atoms of matter must be.

**Goldbeaters,** by hammering, reduce gold to leaves so thin, that 280,000 must be laid upon each other to produce the thickness of an inch. They are so thin, that if formed into a book, 1,500 would occupy only the space of a single leaf of common paper; and an octavo volume of an inch thick would have about as many pages as the books of a well-stocked ordinary library

containing 1,500 volumes of 400 pages in each; yet these leaves are perfect, or without holes, so that one of them laid upon any surface, as gilding, gives the appearance of solid gold.

Still thinner than this is the coating of gold, upon the silver wire of what is called gold lace, and we are not sure that such coating is of only one atom thick.

Platinum and silver can be drawn into wire much finer than human hair.

A grain of blue vitriol, or carmine, will tinge a gallon of water, so that in every drop the color may be perceived.

A grain of musk will scent a room for twenty years, and will have lost but little of its weight.

The carrion crow smells its food at a distance of many miles.

The thread of the silk-worm is so small, that many folds are twisted together to form our finest sewing-thread; but that of the spider is smaller still, for two drachms of it by weight, would reach from London to Edinburgh, or 40 miles.

In the milt of a codfish, or in water in which certain vegetables have been infused, the microscope discovers animalcules, of which many thousands together do not equal in bulk a grain of sand: yet, these have their blood and other subordinate parts like larger animals; and indeed nature, with a singular prodigality, has supplied many of them with organs as complex as those of the whale or elephant. Now the body of an animalcule consists of the same substances or ultimate atoms, as the body of man himself. In a single pound of matter, it thus appears, there may be more living creatures than of human beings on the face of the globe. What a scene has the microscope laid open to the admiration of the philosophic inquirer!

Water, mercury, sulphur, or, in general, any substance, when sufficiently heated, rises as invisible vapor or gas; in other words, is made to assume the aeriform state. Great heat, therefore, would cause the whole of the material universe to disappear, the most solid bodies becoming as invisible and impalpable as the air we breathe. Utter annihilation would seem but one stage beyond this.

**Gypsies.**—Gypsies are wandering tribes who live, in general, in the most extreme state of wretchedness, and seem to hold in contempt every thing that has any tendency to raise human beings above the state of absolute barbarism. They are very numerous on the continent; in England much less so; and in Scotland they are now extremely few.—Their origin, although generally supposed to be Egyptian, is involved in great obscurity. In this country, as well as on the Continent, their general profession is that of working in iron and brass, which is only a sort of cover for the manner

in which they obtain their living. It is, however, but justice to state, that at present many of them, particularly in the midland counties of England, are regularly licensed hawkers, who although they still keep themselves distinct in society, exhibit many proofs of industry, and in the winter season reside in the towns, and send their children to school; from which circumstances it may rationally be expected that they will gradually become incorporated with civilized society.

**Have no taste for Study.**—Have no taste for study? Cannot study?—Who are they? Are they in some dark corner of the universe—shut out from all the beautiful things of God's creation—dragging out a brutish existence, with no hope of ever being ameliorated from their gloomy condition? Or are they in a glorious creation, without an understanding to perceive, and a heart to feel, the divine influences every where diffused around them? One or the other of these must be case—if we may make deductions from their own language. If they have the noble faculties of mind, and their own words are correct, they cannot be where a brilliant sun is gleaming down upon them—and where the stars of heaven are glimmering in their diamond radiance. They cannot be standing upon one of the beautiful globes in the eternal space of Jehovah. They can see no giant mountains towering to the clouds—no green vallies spangled with the flowers of earth smiling around them. They can hear no sound rolling away from the sublime depths of the ocean. They can see no lightnings flashing in the broad expanse above them; nor hear the sound of the artillery of heaven thundering over the wide firmament, as if it would shake the pillars of the universe. If they could see and hear all this,—they would inquire about the earth they tread upon; the beautiful things scattered in such profusion around them; and the sun, and the everlasting stars above them. But it is a fact, that they do possess this inexhaustible mind; and they do dwell in the grand universe of God; and they are obliged to alter their very nature, in order to descend into their deplorable situation. The fact is, the hours of their lives which might be devoted to the pursuit of knowledge, are wasted in practices, the effect of which is to render the mind insensible to the sublimity of the universe in which they dwell.—*Lyceum*.

There is no book no print so cheap as a newspaper—none so interesting, because it consists of a variety, measured out in suitable proportions as to time and quantity. Being new every week or day it invites to a habit of reading, and affords an easy and agreeable mode of acquiring knowledge so essential to the welfare of the individual and community.

## POETRY.

*From the New-Bedford Gazette.*

"Fame and Hope and Wealth and Friendship, are all a dream—Love alone is a reality."—ANONYMOUS.

And what is Fame? An idle dream  
That flits across the brain!  
Just like a bubble on the stream,  
That swift dissolves again.

And wealth is but a gilded god—  
The creature of an hour,  
It flies before misfortunes' rod;  
'Tis transient as the flower.

And hope is like the gorgeous hue  
Of yonder setting sun;  
Fleeting as morning's early dew—  
A dream but just begun.

And what is Friendship? Ask not me,  
Who never saw her face  
Perchance such feeling there may be—  
Though faint must be its trace.

Then what is Love? A ray of light  
Sent from the world above,  
To guide us through this realm of night—  
Heaven's sweet missive dove.

'Tis this alone that gives a glow  
To this cold hearted sphere,  
And makes the stream of gladness flow  
In pleasure's sparkling tear.

For Hope and Wealth and Friends and Fame  
Are fickle, false, and cold;  
They live in fancy or in name,  
They're glittering brass, not gold.

But love is of a heavenly birth,  
A part of God himself  
A rainbow sent from Heaven to earth—  
'Tis happiness itself.

## VARIETIES.

## TEMPERANCE IN DIETING.

*The opinion of a few enlightened Moralists and Physicians.*

ADDISON.—"For my part, when I behold a fashionable table set out in all its magnificence, I fancy that I see gout and dropsies, fevers and lethargies, with innumerable other distempers, lying in ambush among the dishes."

HANNAH MORE.—"It has been observed by medical writers, that the sober excess, in which we may indulge by eating and drinking a little too much at every day's dinner, and every night's supper, more effectually undermines the health, than those more rare excesses by which others now and then break in upon a life of general sobriety."

DR. CHEYNE.—"Most of all the chronic diseases, the infirmities of old age, and the short periods of the lives of Englishmen, are owing to repletion."

DR. FRANKLIN.—"In general, mankind, since the improvement of cookery, eat about twice as much as nature requires."

DR. FOTHERGILL, of London.—"It has been thought that more people suffer by hard drinking than immoderate eating; but

my observation leads me to take the opposite side."

*Laconics not to be found in Lacon.*—The taxes of state are more oppressive than the state taxes. Private comfort and public magnificence constitute the perfection of society. The cheapest government is not the best, but the best government is the cheapest. Philosophy is a fire of rotten stick, flickering in a desert, while all around is cold and dark. Religion is the glorious sun, cheering and illumining universally. What an annoyance are long speakers, long talkers, and long writers!—people who will not take time to think, or are not capable of thinking accurately. Once, when Dr. South had preached before Queen Anne, her Majesty observed to him "You have given me a most excellent discourse, Dr. South; but I wish you had had time to have made it longer." "Nay, Madam, replied the Doctor, "If I had had time, I should have made it shorter." The model of a debate is that given by Milton in the opening of the second book of Paradise Lost. The long poems and few ideas we daily see issuing from the Press prove what "great things arise from small." Our little patriots, like little birds, only open their mouths so wide—for something to put in, to stop them. The man who can only reply by force to an argument resembles St. Denis, who carried his head in his hand.

Mr. Seth T. Hurd, the famous lecturer on English grammar, in explaining to his pupils how that the noun was the foundation of all the other parts of speech, said it was like the bottom wheel of a factory, being that on which all the parts of speech depended, in the same manner as the upper wheels of a factory depended on the lower one. Having occasion afterwards to examine his pupils, in parsing, he asked a stout lad "What is a noun?" when the other replied with an air of confidence, "It's the bottom wheel of a factory."

*Effect of Music on a Wolf.*—As a Scotch bag-piper was traversing the mountains of Ulster, he was one evening encountered by a half-starved Irish wolf. In his distress the poor fellow could think of nothing better than to open his wallet, and try the effects of hospitality; he did so, and the greedy wolf swallowed every thing that was thrown to him with the greatest voracity. The stock of provisions was soon exhausted, and the piper's only resource was to try the virtue of his bag-pipe, which the wolf no sooner heard, than he took to the mountains with greater precipitation than he came down. The poor piper could not so perfectly enjoy his deliverance, but that with an angry look at parting he shook his head, and said—"Aye, are these your tricks? Had I ken'd your humor, you should ha'e your music before supper."

Lord Charles Somerset was telling a story about his walking in the woods at the Cape one day, when he came suddenly upon a huge shaggy lion. "Thinking to frighten him," said the noble Lord, "I ran at him with all my might." "Whereupon," said another, interrupting him, "he ran away with all his mane." "Just so replied his lordship.

*A Gentleman.*—In the true definition of a gentleman it is not meant to draw a line that would be invidious between high and low, rank and subordination, riches and poverty. The distinction is in the mind. Whoever is open, generous and true: whoever is of humane and affable demeanor; whoever is honorable in himself, and candid in his judgement of others, and requires no law but his word to make him fulfil an engagement, such a man is a gentleman, and such a man may be found among the tillers of the earth."

When we look at a field of corn we find that those stocks which raise their heads the highest are the emptiest. The same is the case with men. Those who assume the greatest consequence have generally the least share of judgment.

*Gaming.*—I look upon every man as a suicide from the moment he takes the dice box desperately in his hand; and all that follows in his career from that fatal time, is only sharpening the dagger before he strikes it to his heart.—Cumberland.

*Dispatch.*—False dispatch is one of the most dangerous things to business that can be. It is like that which physicians call pre-digestion, which is sure to fill the body full of crudities and secret seeds of diseases. I knew a wise man who had it for a bye-word, "stay a little, that we may make an end the sooner." On the other side, true dispatch is a rich thing, for time is the measure of business as money is of wares; and business is bought at a dear hand where there is small dispatch.—Bacon.

## JOB PRINTING.

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