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NATURAL HISTORY.

THE GALL NUT.—See that curious gall nut. It is formed on the leaf of a tree. In that part of the leaf in which the female gall insect makes a hole for the purpose of depositing an egg, she discharges a peculiar fluid, which, by preventing the sap from passing in its natural course, causes a gradual enlargement, which becomes the habitation of the future insect, when hatched from the egg deposited there by the mother. In the autumn, this caterpillar changes into a fly, and gnaws a passage through the ball. These gall nuts form one of the ingredients of ink, and are also used in medicine.—*Dialogues on Natural Hist.*

AMPHIBIOUS ANIMALS.—Pray do you know the meaning of the word amphibious? I think I do. Does it not mean an animal that can live either in the water or on land?

Yes, that is quite right. Water rats are of the same kind, and otters, and many other animals. Water rats shew great ingenuity in the construction of their nests, which have two openings, one above the water, and the other beneath.—*The same.*

CURIOUS ANECDOTES OF DOGS.—A blind beggar's dog, besides leading his master in such a manner as to protect him from all danger, learned to know, not only the streets, but the very houses where the poor used to receive assistance. Whenever the animal came to one of these streets, he would not leave it till a call had been made at every house where his master had usually been encouraged. When the beggar began to ask alms, the dog lay down to rest himself, but the master was no sooner relieved, or refused assistance, than the dog rose immediately and went on regularly to the houses where the beggar had generally been relieved.—When a half-penny was thrown from a window, the dog would immediately set about to search for it, and would then lift it up from the ground, and put it into his master's hat. Even when bread was thrown down, the animal would not taste it, unless his master gave it him with his own hand.

Dogs have been taught to go regularly to the butcher's shop, and to carry home the meat in safety.

A mastiff, who had often observed his master ringing at the door for admission, had so learned to imitate him, that whenever he was accidentally shut out from any house where his master was visiting, he would himself always ring the bell.

There was a dog belonging to a grocer at Edinburgh, who greatly amused and astonished the people in the neighbourhood.

A man who went through the streets ringing a bell, and selling penny pies, happened one day to treat the dog with a pie. The next time he heard the pie-man's bell, he ran towards him, and seized him by the coat, and would not suffer him to pass. The pie-man, who understood what the animal wanted, showed him a penny, and pointed to his master, who stood at the street door, intending to shew the dog that he must ask his master for a penny before he could have a pie. The dog immediately went to his master, and made many signs to him, and directed looks to him as if he was earnestly begging for something. The master, who had seen what had happened, put a penny into the dog's mouth, which the dog instantly delivered to the pie-man, and received his pie. The traffic between the pie-man and the dog was practised for a long time afterwards.

THE MAHOGANY TREE.—The mahogany tree is found in great quantities on the low and woody lands, and even upon the rocks and in the countries on the western shores of the Caribbean sea, about Honduras and Campeachy. It is also abundant in the islands of Cuba and Hayti, and it used to be plentiful in Jamaica, where it was of excellent quality; but most of the larger trees have been cut down. It was formerly abundant on the Bahamas, where it grew on the rocks, to a great height, and four feet in diameter. The mahogany is a graceful tree, with many branches that form a very handsome head. The flowers are small and whitish and the seed vessel has some resemblance to that of the Barbadoes cedar. It so far corresponds with the pine tribe, that the timber is best upon the colder soils and in the most exposed situations. When it grows upon moist and warm lands, it is soft, coarse, spongy, and contains sap-wood, into which some worms will eat. That which is most accessible at Honduras is of this description; and therefore it is only used for coarser works, or for a ground on which to lay veneers of the choicer sorts. For the latter purpose it is well adapted, as it glues better than deal, and when properly holds seasoned, is not so apt to warp or to be eaten by insects. When it grows in favorable situations where it has room to spread, it is of much better quality and puts out larger branches, the junction of which with the stem furnish those beautifully curled pieces of which the choicest veneers are made. When among rocks and much exposed the size is inferior, and there is not so much variety of shading; but the timber is far superior and the color is more rich.

MOUNT ETNA.

The ancients considered this mountain as the highest in the world; and it is, indeed, of an enormous height, although there are some that are still higher, particularly among those called the Andes, in South America. Mount Etna is in the island of Sicily, and its elevation above the level of the sea is said to be 10,983 feet, which is more than two miles. It may be seen from Valetta, the capital of Malta, on a clear day, and this is a distance of 150 miles. Etna is what is called a volcano, or burning mountain, it throws out fire, and smoke, and hot ashes; and a sort of liquid fire runs down its sides, which is called lava; and, when this is cold, it becomes hard like a stone, and takes a polish, and has the appearance of a beautiful sort of marble. There is a burning mountain likewise in Italy, called Vesuvius, and there are, indeed, several in different parts of the world, but these are the most celebrated.—Etna is said to be nearly thirty miles from the beginning of the ascent to the top of the mountain. For about the first twelve miles there are pastures and fruit-trees in great perfection, and there are also towns and villages. The climate is particularly hot in this part. A little higher it is cooler, and it abounds in timber trees of different kinds, some of which are of an enormous size. The upper part of the mountain is constantly covered with snow.

Mount Etna was celebrated as a volcano by the most ancient writers; we have accounts of an eruption 1693 years before the birth of Christ. We must not suppose that burning mountains are constantly vomiting forth these torrents of flames, and masses of stone, and ashes, but these terrible eruptions are frequently taking place, and are often the cause of dreadful destruction.—Whole towns have been completely buried by the ashes from these two mountains, or covered with the lava. In the year 1639, the torrent of burning lava from Mount Etna inundated a space of fourteen miles in length, and four in breadth, and buried, beneath it, part of the town of Catania, which is at the foot of the mountain. For several months before the lava broke out, the mountain was observed to send forth much smoke and flame.

Mount Vesuvius, though a large mountain, is not to be compared to Etna.

We may perhaps say more about these mountains some other day.

THE SOLDIER'S WIFE.

Within a very few miles of Edinburgh, there lives an old woman, known among her humble neighbours by the name of "Auld Susan." She was the daughter of a small farmer in the north of England, and in early life married a private soldier in a Scotch regiment, which happened to be quartered in the neighbourhood of her father's house. Having been on this account cast off and disowned by her parents, she followed her husband for many years during the early part of the last war, and in time became the mother of four sons, all of whom, as they grew up, attached themselves to the same regiment. After a long course of faithful service, Susan's husband was raised to the rank of serjeant; and as she was industrious and frugal, they contrived to make their situation more comfortable than that of a soldier's family generally is. Susan, however, had too much perilled upon the fortunes of war to continue long free from misery. She accompanied her husband and sons through the whole of the disastrous retreat of Sir John Moore. When the withdrawing army was finally engaged by the French at Corunna, she stood on a rising ground at no great distance from the field of action, ready to take charge of any of her family who might be obliged to retire disabled. While the fight was at the hottest, a wounded officer was borne past her, and on inquiring of the soldiers who carried him as to the fate of her husband and children, she was told that all, except one of the latter, were "down;" they had fallen in receiving a desperate charge of French cavalry. At this moment the tide of battle receded from the part of the field which it had hitherto chiefly occupied, and Susan rushed eagerly forward amidst the dead and dying, in the hope of finding her husband and sons, or at least some of them, still alive. The first sight which met her eyes was the prostrate body of the fourth son, who within the last few minutes had also been brought down, and was now, as she thought, on the point of expiring. Ere she could examine into the condition of the wounded lad, a large part of the enemy's cavalry swept across the field, in full retreat before the British, and she had only time to throw herself over the body of her son, in the desperate hope of protecting him from farther injury, when it swept over her like a whirlwind, leaving her with a broken leg and arm, and many severe bruises. In this helpless state she was found after the battle by a few survivors of the company to which she had belonged, and conveyed on board the transports along with the wrecks of the army. On inquiry, she found that the fate of her husband and three eldest sons was too fatally certain; that of the youngest was less so; his body had not been found, but there was little time for examination, and it seemed almost beyond a doubt that he had

also shared the fate of his father and brethren.

Upon her arrival in England, the poor woman was sent to the hospital until her wounds were cured, but after her recovery, was turned out desolate and destitute upon the world. A representation of her case to the War Office was unattended to; nor would her honest pride permit her to persist in importunity. The same independence of spirit forbade her seeking the assistance of her relatives. By means of a small subscription raised among her late husband's comrades, she travelled on foot to the place of his birth near Edinburgh, and with what was left she was enabled to put a few articles of furniture into a cottage which a worthy farmer rented to her for an almost nominal sum. The same kind friend afterwards procured her, although not without difficulty, a small weekly allowance—a mere pittance—from the parish funds, with which, and by means of knitting, spinning, rearing a few chickens, and the various other humble expedients of helpless poverty (for she was disabled from field-labour), she contrived to support existence in decency, if not in comfort.

Twelve years had passed away, and approaching age was gradually rendering the lonely widow less and less able to obtain the scanty means of sustenance, when one summer afternoon, as she sat knitting at the door of her cottage, a poor crippled object approached, dressed in rags, and weak from disease and fatigue. From the remnants of his tattered clothes, it was evident he had been a soldier, and the widow's heart warmed towards him, as, resigning to him her seat, she entered the cottage and brought him out a drink of meal and water, being all that her humble store enabled her to offer for his refreshment. The soldier looked wistfully at her as he took the bowl—the next moment it dropped from his hand.—"Mother!" he cried, and fell forward in the old woman's arms. It was her youngest son James, whom she thought she had left a corpse on the fatal field of Corunna. After mutually supposing each other to be dead for the long space of twelve years, these unfortunate beings were doomed to be re-united in this vale of sorrow, mutually helpless, feeble, and destitute. But the love of a mother never dies; the poor widow scrupled not to solicit those aids for her son which she never would have asked for herself, and the assistance of some compassionate friends procured her the means of restoring him to health, although he never regained his full strength.

James's story, from the time of their last parting, was a short and sad one. He had recovered from the temporary trance into which his wound had at first thrown him, had seen his mother's mangled and apparently senseless body lying beside him; and, concluding she was dead, had endeavoured to crawl out of the way of further danger, but

fell into the hands of a part of the enemy. He remained a prisoner in France for upwards of two years, when, an exchange having taken place, he was once more placed in the British ranks, and sent with his regiment to North America. He had served there during the whole war with the United States, and was subsequently transferred to West India station, where his wounds broke out afresh, and his health declined, in consequence of the heat of the climate. Those acquainted with military matters will understand, although the writer of these lines confesses his inability exactly to describe, how a British soldier may be deprived of the recompense to which his wounds and length of service legally and justly entitle him. The poor man we speak of met this unworthy fate—he had, at his earnest request, been transferred into a regiment ordered for England (seeing certain death before him in the tropics), which was disbanded the moment of their arrival, and he was thrown utterly destitute, and left to beg or starve, after all his hardships and meritorious services to his country. Being unable to work, he was compelled to assume the mendicant's degraded habit, and had begged his way down to his father's birth-place in Scotland, in the hope of finding some of his relatives alive, and able to shelter him, when he unexpectedly recognized his old mother in the manner described.

This humble narrative is now done. The widow and her son still reside together, supported by his earnings as a day-labourer, and concluding, in obscure penury, a life of hardship, exertion, and sorrow.

IRON MINE IN SWEDEN.

The following interesting description of the interior of an iron mine, is from the pen of a traveller who visited it.

For grandeur of effect, filling the mind of the spectator with a degree of wonder, which amounts to awe, there is no place where human labour is exhibited under circumstances more tremendously striking. As we draw near to the wide and open abyss, a vast and sudden prospect of yawning caverns and prodigious machinery prepared us for the descent. We approached the edge of the dreadful gulf, whence the ore is raised, and ventured to look down; standing on the verge of a sort of platform, constructed over it in such a manner as to command a view into the great opening, as far as the eye could penetrate amidst its gloomy depths; for, to the sight it is bottomless. Immense buckets, suspended by rattling chains, were passing up and down; and we could perceive ladders scaling all the inward precipices on which the work people, reduced by their distance to pigmies in size, were ascending and descending. Far below the most of these figures a deep and gaping gulf, the mouth of the lower-most pits, was by its

darkness rendered impervious to the view.—From the spot where we stood down to the place where the buckets are filled, the distance might be about seventyfive fathoms; and, as soon as any of these buckets emerged from the gloomy cavity we have mentioned, or until they entered into it, in their descent they were visible; but, below this point they were hid in darkness. The clanking of the chains, the groaning of the pumps, the hallooing of the miners, the creaking of the blocks and wheels, the trampling of horses, the beating of the hammers, and the loud and frequent subterraneous thunder from the blasting of the rocks by gunpowder, in the midst of all this scene of excavation and uproar, produced an effect which no stranger can behold unmoved. We descended with two of the miners and our interpreter into this abyss. The ladders, instead of being placed like those in our Cornish mines, on a series of platforms as so many landing places, are lashed together in one unbroken line, extending many fathoms; and, being warped to suit the inclination or curvature of the sides of the precipices, they are not always perpendicular, but hang over in such a manner, that, even if a person held fast by his hands, and if his feet should happen to slip, they would fly off from the rock, and leave him suspended over the gulf.—Yet such ladders are the only means of access to the works below; and, as the laborers are not accustomed to receive strangers, they neither use the precautions, nor offer the assistance usually afforded in more frequented mines. In the principal tin-mines of Cornwall, the staves of the ladders are alternately bars of wood and iron; here they were of wood only, and in some parts rotten and broken, making us often wish, during our descent, that we had never undertaken an exploit so hazardous. In addition to the danger to be apprehended from the damaged state of the ladders, the staves were covered with ice or mud; and thus rendered so cold and slippery, that we could have no dependence on our benumbed fingers if our feet failed us. Then to complete our apprehension, as we mentioned this to the miners, they said, "Have a care, it was just so talking about the staves, that one of our women fell about four years ago as she was descending to her work." "Fell! said our Swedish interpreter rather simply, "and, pray, what became of her?" "Became of her!" continued the foremost of our guides, disengaging one of his hands from the ladder, and slapping it forcibly against his thigh, as if to illustrate the manner of the catastrophe—"she became a pancake."

After much fatigue, and no small share of apprehension, we at length reached the bottom of the mine. Here we had no sooner arrived, than our conductors, taking each of us by an arm, hurried us along through regions of "thick ribbed ice," and dark-

ness, into a vaulted level, through which we were to pass into the principal chamber of the mine. The noise of countless hammers, all in vehement action, increased as we crept along this level; until at length, subduing every other sound, we could no longer hear each other speak, notwithstanding our utmost efforts. At this moment we were ushered into a prodigious cavern, whence the sounds proceeded; and here, amidst falling waters, tumbling rocks, steam, ice, and gun-powder, about fifty miners were in the very height of their employment. The magnitude of the cavern, over all parts of which their labors were going on, was alone sufficient to prove that the iron ore is not deposited in veins, but in beds. Above, below, on every side, and in every nook of this fearful dungeon, glimmering tapers disclosed the grim and anxious countenances of the miners. They were now driving bolts of iron into the rocks, to bore cavities for the gunpowder for blasting. Scarcely had we recovered from the stupefaction occasioned by our first introduction into this Pandæmonium, when the noise of the hammers ceased, and a tremendous blast was near the point of its explosion. We had scarcely retraced with all speed our steps along the level, and were beginning to ascend the ladders, than the full volume of the thunder reached us, and seemed to shake the earth itself with its terrible vibrations.—*Dr. Clarke's Travels.*

DEPTH OF THE OCEAN.—The depth of the ocean is a point which has puzzled alike philosophers and practical men, and is, after all, left in the wide field of conjecture.—The most probable guide is analogy, and the wisest men, judging by this criterion, have presumed that the depth of the sea may be measured by the height of mountains, the highest of which are between 20,000 and 30,000 feet. The greatest depth that has been tried to be measured, is that found in the Northern ocean, by Lord Mulgrave.—He heaved out a very heavy sounding lead, and gave out along with it, cable rope to the length of 4680 feet, without finding bottom.

INDIAN WIT.—Notwithstanding the peculiar sombreness of the North American Indian, he is capable of exercising his wit upon occasions. For instance, one of the Micmacks, not long since, entered a tavern in one of the country towns of Nova Scotia, to purchase some spirits, for which ten shillings a gallon were demanded—double the retail Halifax price. The Indian expostulated on the extraordinary price asked.—The landlord endeavoured to justify it, by explaining the expense of conveyance, the loss of interest, &c. and illustrated his remarks by saying, it was as expensive to keep a hogshead of rum as a milch cow.—The Indian humourously replied, "may be

it drinks as much water, (alluding to its adulteration) but certain no eat so much hay!"—*Chamber's Journal.*

ORIENTAL ANECDOTES.—Two brothers amuse themselves by imagining, if they had a piece of ground, what they would do with it. In his half, one brother would make a flower-garden; in his, the other would keep cows and buffaloes. This the former brother would not permit, because the cattle would destroy his flowers; whereupon they began to quarrel, and ultimately to fight.—The by-standers observed, 'Why this is the very proverb—the thread before it be cotton, is gone to fisticuffs with the weaver.'

WEEKLY MIRROR.

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1835.

SAVINGS BANK.—This useful Institution is established under the authority of the Legislature, and is under the particular patronage of the Lieutenant-Governor. It is kept at the Treasurer's Office in the Province Building, and is open to receive deposits every Monday morning, between the hours of 8 and 10 o'clock. The benefits of the Institution are confined to Tradesmen, Mechanics, Servants, Labourers, Soldiers, seafaring Men, and Charitable Societies.—Deposits are received of not less than one shilling at each payment, and no depositor can lodge more than £50 in any one year. Deposits bear interest at the rate of 4 per cent. per ann. Received between 30th July, 1832, and 31st March, 1835—£12,523 17; withdrawn in the same period—£4094 10 8. Classification of depositors 97 Servants; 47 Mechanics; 52 Labourers; 7 Mariners; 7 Widows; 13 Minors; 3 Truckmen; 23 Soldiers; 14 not classed. Total 263.

The Officers of His Majesty's Customs, at the Port of Liverpool, have made seizure of an American Smuggling Vessel, with a very valuable Cargo on board, consisting of tea, tobacco, coffee, shoes and boots, and most every article necessary to supply the fishermen along the Coast, to the prejudice of the British Merchant; the value is said to be about four thousand dollars.—Nov.

H. M. Packet Stammer, Lieut. Sutton, arrived yesterday in 32 days, bringing London papers to the 2d of April.

Lord John Russell's motion for an Address to the King, for the application of the surplus Church Revenues in Ireland to secular purposes, was carried against Ministers by a majority of 33.

Prince Augusta of Portugal died of Quinsey after a very short illness.

The 7th of April had been fixed for the final discussion of the American claim in the French Chambers. Lord Amherst has been appointed Commissioner to Canada in the room of Lord Canterbury.

POETRY.

THE BANKS OF THE DOVE.

The following beautiful lines were written (while a mere boy) by M. Saddler, Esq. well known for his exertions in the House of Commons, in behalf of the poor boys and girls who are overworked in the factories.—They were composed on account of the death of his mother, several years before, just as he was about to leave his native village.—The Dove is a small river in Derbyshire.

*Adieu to the banks of the Dove,
My happiest moments are flown;
I must leave the retreats that I love,
For scenes far remote and unknown.*

*But wherever my lot may be cast,
Whatever my fortune may prove,
I shall think of the days that are past,
I shall sigh for the banks of the Dove.*

*Ye friends of my earliest youth,
From you how reluctant I part;
Your friendships were founded in truth,
And shall ne'er be erased from my heart.*

*Companions, perhaps, I may find,
But where shall I meet with such love,
With attachments so lasting and kind,
As I leave on the banks of the Dove?*

*Thou sweet little village farewell!
Every object around thee is dear;
Every woodland and meadow and dell;—
Where I wandered for many a year.*

*Ye villas and cots so well known,
Will your inmates continue to love?
Will ye think on a friend when he's gone
Far away from the banks of the Dove.*

*But oft has the Dove's crystal wave,
Flowed lately commixed with my tears,
Since my mother was laid in her grave,
Where yon hallowed turret appears.*

*Oh Sexton remember the spot,
And lay me beside her I love,
Whenever this body is brought
To sleep on the banks of the Dove.*

*Till then, in the visions of night,
O may her loved spirit descend,
And tell me, though hid from her sight,
She still is my guardian and friend.*

*The thoughts of her presence shall keep
My footsteps, when tempted to rove;
And sweeten my woes while I weep
For her, on the banks of the Dove.*

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

Sir Isaac Newton is one of the most eminent men we read of. He was the only child of a Mr. John Newton of Colesworth, in Lincolnshire. Mr. Newton had an estate of about a hundred and twenty pounds a year, which he cultivated himself. His son Isaac was born at Grantham, on the Christmasday of 1642. Sir Isaac Newton's father died when he was very young. After

the death of her husband, Mrs. Newton, by the advice of her brother Mr. Askew, put Isaac to school at Grantham.

When Isaac had finished his studies, his mother took him home, and meant, as she had no other child, to have the pleasure of his company, and that he should manage their little estate, as his father had done. But Mr. Askew found out that his nephew employed himself in a very different manner from that of attending to his farm, for his mind was wholly occupied with learning; and one day his uncle found him in a hay loft, working a mathematical problem. He thought it a pity that such a talent should not be cultivated, and he prevailed on his mother to send him to Trinity College, in Cambridge. Isaac had not been there long, before he was taken notice of by Dr. Isaac Barrow, who soon found out his bright genius, and felt a great friendship for him. Isaac was industrious, and learned more of mathematics in a few years than many persons could have learned in their whole life. He found out a great deal that had never been known before, and, when he was 27 years old, he was chosen professor of mathematics in the University of Cambridge, in the room of Dr. Barrow, who had just given up that place.

Newton studied for many hours a day. Whatever he undertook, he was determined to do it well, and he did not care how much time and labour it cost him, so that he did but succeed at last. When he met with any thing in books or figures that he did not, at first, understand, he never laid it aside; if it were figures, he thought on it again and again, until he felt that he understood it; or, if it were a book, he read it over and over, until what at first appeared too difficult for him ever to know, at last became quite easy to him. By this patience and thought, Newton made so many discoveries, that he is known as one of the most wonderful men that ever lived.

Newton was chosen member of Parliament for the university of Cambridge, in consequence of his great learning, and the wonderful books that he had written. This was in the reign of king James the Second. He was also appointed warden of the mint, in which situation he was of great service in managing the coinage of the country. Three years after this, he was appointed master of the mint, which situation was a very profitable one, and he held it for the rest of his life. In the year 1705, he was knighted by Queen Anne; and about this time he wrote and published some other books.—When George the First came to be king, Newton was better known at Court than before. The princess of Wales was used very often to ask Newton questions, and to say that she thought herself happy in living at the same time with so great a man, and having had the pleasure of talking with him,

and gaining instruction from him. When Newton read, he always made notes on the books as he read them; and these notes generally contained a great deal of information beyond what was in the books.

With all his learning, Newton was one of the kindest men in the world. His temper is said to have been so mild, that nothing could disturb it, and he was so great a lover of peace that he had quite a horror of having disputes of any kind with any one.

His power of thinking was so great, that when once he fixed his attention on any subject, he could remain steadily fixed upon it without allowing any other thoughts to come into his head: and this is the right way for a man to make himself thoroughly master of any subject. A quarrel or disturbance would have taken his mind from thinking steadily on what he wished to think, and therefore he avoided disputes. And yet if any person had real business with him, he would lay aside his studies with the greatest good humour, and begin them again when the business was over. Newton was as modest as he was learned; he never talked of himself, or gave any one the least reason to believe that he was proud or vain of his learning.—He treated those below him with the same kind consideration as if they had been his equals, and he thought no man to be despised but the wicked.

Of all the great variety of books which he possessed, he studied none so much as the Bible; because he found that more happiness could be learned from that than from any other book.

This great man enjoyed a very good state of health until he was eighty years of age, when he had a very painful disorder: for the five following years, he was sometimes better and sometimes worse; but during all this time, he never made the least complaint, nor shewed any impatience.—He died at the age of eighty-four years.

DOING GOOD.—Blacksmiths possess strong arms by exercising their arms. Musicians procure good voices by exercising their voices. Orators, philosophers, and statesmen procure strong intellects by exercising their intellects. Philanthropists possess large benevolence to their fellow-men by exercising their benevolent-feelings. But last, and more important than all the rest, children obtain kind and generous hearts by exercising their hearts—by *doing good*—by kindness to each other.

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