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THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

"To please the fancy—and improve the mind."

Vol. I.]

HALIFAX, N. S. JULY 3, 1835.

[No 25.]

NATURAL HISTORY.

HAWK AND KITE.

This bird, which is distinguished by the swiftness of its flight, is appropriately termed *the fier*, in the Hebrew scriptures. But the term is not confined to the individual species of bird properly called the hawk; it includes the various species of the falcon family, which is very numerous.

The HAWK was highly venerated by the heathen, but it was pronounced unclean by the Jewish lawgiver; and was an abomination to the people of Israel. Its flesh was not to be eaten, nor its carcass touched with impunity. The reason of this law may probably be found in the dispositions and qualities of the bird; she is a bird of prey, and, by consequence, cruel in her temper, and gross in her manners. Her mode of living, too, may, perhaps, impart a disagreeable taste and flavour to the flesh, and render it, particularly in a warm climate, improper for the table.

Most of the species of hawks are birds of passage, to which circumstance there is a reference in Job xxxiv. 26:

*Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom,
And stretch her wings towards the south?*

That is, 'doth she know, through thy skill and wisdom, the precise period for taking flight, or migrating and stretching her wings towards a southern or warmer climate?' Her migration is not conducted by the wisdom and prudence of man, but by the superintending and upholding providence of God.

The KITE may with propriety be noticed here, as it belongs to the same family of birds. It is remarkable for the quickness of its sight, to which there is evidently an allusion in Job xxviii. 7, though the 'vulture' is inserted in our authorized version.

*There is a path which no fowl knoweth,
And which the eye of the kite hath not seen.*

THE HORSELEACH.

The import of the Hebrew word *horseleach* in the LXX, the Vulgate, and the Targums, as well as in the English and other modern versions of scripture, is by no means well ascertained. 'The horseleach,' says Solomon, 'hath two daughters, crying, give, give,' Prov. xxx. 15. Bochart thinks the translators have mistaken the import of one word for that of another very similar, and that it should be translated *Destiny*, or the necessity of dying; to which the Rabbins gave two daughters, Eden or Paradise, and Hades or Hell; the first of which invites the good, the second calls for the wicked.

And this interpretation is thought to be strengthened by ch. xxvii. 20; 'Hell and Destruction [Hades and the Grave] are never satisfied.' Paxton, on the other hand, contends that the common interpretation is in every respect entitled to the preference. Solomon, having in the preceding verses mentioned those that devoured the property of the poor, as the worst of all the generations he had specified, proceeds in the fifteenth verse, to state and illustrate the insatiable cupidity with which they prosecuted their schemes of rapine and plunder. As the horseleach hath two daughters, cruelty and thirst of blood, which cannot be satisfied; so, the oppressor of the poor has two dispositions, cruelty and avarice, which never say they have enough, but continually demand additional gratifications.

CASSIA.

In Exodus xxx. 24, Cassia is prescribed as one of the ingredients for composing the holy anointing oil. It is the bark of a tree of the bay tribe, which now grows chiefly in the East Indies. This bark was made known to the ancients, and highly esteemed by them; but, since the use of cinnamon has been generally adopted, the cassia bark has fallen into disrepute, on account of its inferiority. It is thicker and more coarse than cinnamon, of weaker quality, and abounds more with a viscid mucilaginous matter. For many purposes, however, Cassia, as being much less expensive, is substituted for cinnamon, but more particularly for the preparation of what is called oil of cinnamon.

Cassia was one of the articles of merchandise in the markets of Tyre, Ezek. xxvii. 10. The Cassia mentioned in Psalm xlv. 8, is thought to have been an extract, or essential oil, from the bark.

DANGERS OF A NOVA-SCOTIA FOG.

There are few things more provoking than the fogs off Halifax; for, as they happen to be companions of that very wind, the south-east, which is the best for running in, the navigator is plagued with the tormenting consciousness, that if he could be allowed but a couple of hours of clear weather, his port would be gained, and his troubles over.—The clearing up, therefore, of these odious clouds or veils is about the most delightful thing I know; and the instantaneous effect which a clear sight of the land, or even of the sharp horizon, when far at sea, has on the mind of every person on board, is quite remarkable. All things look bright, fresh,

and more beautiful than ever. The stir over the whole ship at these moments is so great that even persons sitting below can tell at once that the fog has cleared away. The rapid clatter of the men's feet, springing up the hatchways at the lively sound of the boatswains call to "make sail!" soon follows. Then comes the cheerful voice of the officer, hailing the topmen to shake out the reefs, trice up the stay sails, and rig out the booms. That peculiar and well known kind of echo, also, by which the sound of the voice is thrown back from the wet sails, contributes in like manner, to produce a joyous elasticity of spirits, greater, I think than is excited by most of the ordinary occurrences of a sea life.

A year or two after the time I am speaking of, it was resolved to place a heavy gun upon the rock on which Sambro light-house is built; and, after a good deal of trouble, a long twenty-four pounder was hoisted up to the highest ridge of this prominent station. It was then arranged that, if, on the arrival of any ship off the harbour, in a period of fog, she chose to fire guns, these were to be answered from the light-house, and in this way a kind of audible though invisible telegraph might be set to work. If it happened that the officers of the ship were sufficiently familiar with the ground, and possessed nerves stout enough for such a groping kind of navigation, perilous at best, it was possible to run fairly into the harbor, notwithstanding the obscurity, by watching the sound of these guns, and attending closely to the depth of water.

I never was in any ship which ventured upon this feat, but I perfectly recollect a curious circumstance, which occurred, I think, to his Majesty's ship *Cambrian*.—She had run in from sea towards the coast, enveloped in one of these dense fogs. Of course they took for granted that the light-house and the adjacent land Halifax included were likewise covered with an impenetrable cloud of mist. But it so chanced, by what freak of Dame Nature, I know not, that the fog, on that day, was confined to the deep water, so that we who were in the port, could see it at the distance of several miles from the coast lying on the ocean like a huge stratum of snow, with an abrupt face fronting the shore. The *Cambrian*, lost in the midst of this fog bank, supposing herself to be near the land, fired a gun. To this the light-house replied; and so the ship and the light went on pelting away, gun for gun, during half the day without ever seeing one another. The people at the light-house had no means of com-

municating to the frigate that, if she could only stand on a little further, she would disentangle herself from the cloud, in which, like Jupiter Olympus of old she was wasting her thunder.

At last the captain, hopeless of its clearing up, gave orders to pipe to dinner; but as the weather, in all respects except this abominable haze, was quite fine, and the ship was still in deep water, he directed her to be steered towards the shore, and the lead kept constantly going. As one o'clock approached, he began to feel uneasy, from the water shoaling, and the light-house guns sounding closer and closer; but, being unwilling to disturb the men at dinner, he resolved to stand on for the remaining ten minutes of the hour. Lo and behold! however, they had not sailed half a mile further before the flying-gib-boom end emerged from the wall of mist—then the bowsprit shot into day light—and, lastly the ship herself, glided out of the cloud into the full blaze of a bright and “sunshine holy day.” All hands were instantly turned up to make sail; and the men, as they flew on deck, could scarcely believe their senses, when they saw behind them the fog bank, and right ahead the harbor’s mouth, with the bold cliffs of Cape Sambro on the left, and, farther still, the ships at their moorings, with their ensign and pendants blowing out, light and dry in the breeze.

A far different fate, alas! attended his Majesty’s ship *Atalante*, Captain Frederic Hickey. On the morning of the 10th Nov. 1813, this ship stood in for Halifax harbor in very thick weather, carefully feeling her way with the lead, and having look-out men at the jib-boom-end, fore-yard-arms, and every where else from which a glimpse of land was likely to be obtained. After breakfast a fog signal gun was fired, in expectation of its being answered by the light-house on Cape Sambro, near which it was known they must be. Within a few minutes, accordingly, a gun was heard in the north-north-west quarter, exactly where the light was supposed to lie. As the soundings agreed with the estimated position of the ship, and as the guns from the *Atalante*, fired at intervals of fifteen minutes, were regularly answered in the direction of the harbor’s mouth, it was determined to stand on so as to enter the port under the guidance of these sounds alone. By a fatal coincidence of circumstances, however, these answering guns were fired not by Cape Sambro, but by his Majesty’s ship *Barrossa*, which was likewise entangled by the fog. She too, supposed that she was communicating with the light-house, whereas it was the guns of the unfortunate *Atalante* that she heard all the time.

There was certainly no inconsiderable risk incurred by running in for the harbor’s mouth under such circumstances. But it will often

happen that it becomes the officer’s duty to put his ship as well as his life in hazard; and this appears to have been exactly one of those cases. Captain Hickey was charged with urgent despatches relative to the enemy’s fleet, which it was of the greatest importance should be delivered without an hour’s delay. But there was every appearance of this fog lasting a week; and as he and his officers had passed over the ground a hundred times before, and were as intimately acquainted with the spot as any pilot could be, it was resolved to try the bold experiment; and the ship was forthwith steered in the supposed direction of Halifax.

They had not, however, stood on far, before one of the look-out men exclaimed, “breakers ahead! Hard a-starboard!”—But it was too late, for, before the helm could be put over, the ship was amongst those formidable reefs known by the name of the sisters’ rocks, or eastern ledge of Sambro Island. The rudder and half of the sternpost, together with the greater part of the false keel, were driven off by the first blow and floated up along side. There is some reason to believe, indeed, that a portion of the bottom of the ship, loaded with one hundred and twenty tons of iron ballast, were torn from the upper works by this fearful blow, and that the ship which instantly filled with water, was afterwards buoyed up merely by the empty casks, till the decks and sides burst through or were riven asunder by the waves.

To be Concluded in our next.

THE LITTLE WOOD-CUTTER.

A short time ago, I heard a story about a little boy named Richard, who, with his mother, lived in a house in the woods. The story was told to me for a true one, and I will tell it to you as I heard it. Richard and his mother, did not live in a fine brick house, but in one built of rough logs, and plastered with clay and straw. By industry and care, they managed to get along very comfortably, and they were, perhaps as contented and happy, as if they owned a palace. In summer, their little garden yielded them a plenty of fruits and vegetables, and there were berries enough on the neighbouring hills. In winter, Richard would cut a quantity of wood, and placing it on a raft, would sail some miles down the river to a village, where he could exchange his cargo for flour, or corn, or other kinds of food.

One day, towards the beginning of spring, after he had been cutting wood in the forest, he stopped a moment beside a tall tree to rest himself. He then ran down to the river’s brink to mend his raft. The river had been lately swollen by the heavy rains, and by the melting of the snow, and now rushed between its banks with great violence.

Richard had stepped on his raft, to fasten it together more securely, when the timber

on which he stood, was loosened, and floated away with him into the deep water. He was then obliged to fall down and cling to the wood, in order to keep from tumbling overboard. The tide was so strong that he could not swim, and he was swept along so fast, that, in a minute, he lost sight of his home. His mother had seen him from the window, and pale with terror, had hastened forth to try to save him. She ran along the bank in spite of the bushes and brambles, which scratched her limbs, until she was stopped by a wide ditch, over which she could not pass. She then climbed a high rock, and looked down the river to see if she could discover her boy. He was too where to be seen.

Sadly did the poor mother return to her solitary home. On her way, she could think of nothing but the good deeds and amiable manners of her son. She remembered how he walked twelve miles one stormy night to buy her a little medicine; and she called to mind a hundred other little things, which had long slumbered in her memory. She knew not what she should do without him to help, to love and to cheer her! and her eyes so filled with tears, that she could hardly see the path before her. When she entered the little room of her hut, and saw the chair, in which Richard used to sit, standing vacant on the hearth, she felt that her own strength could not sustain her.—She prayed fervently to her Father in Heaven to guide and uphold her, and then only could she think, with any resignation of her loss.

Almost a month passed away, and she still mourned for her son with inconsolable grief. She had made every possible inquiry concerning his fate, but no one could tell her anything about him. The days now seemed longer and more tedious to her, than they had ever seemed before. The trees had begun to look gay with blossoms and young leaves. The air was warm and delightful, and the stream, that flowed by the little hut, never went with a sweeter murmur.—The birds darted from bough to bough, and sung aloud, as if to tell how happy they were. But no pleasant sight or sound could raise a smile on the face of the poor woman, who had lost her son.

She was sitting by her window one evening, when she thus spoke to herself: “The summer days will come, and the sky will look blue and bright above me, and the earth will be green beneath my feet, but I shall not be happy, for my heart and my home are desolate—Richard why?”—“Did you speak mother,” exclaimed a voice at the door, and the next moment the boy, whom she was bewailing, rushed into her arms.

The surprise was a little too sudden, and at first, the good woman almost believed it to be a dream. Richard soon satisfied her

that it was reality, and then—you cannot conceive of her joy.

"But how, my dear Richard were you saved," she said, "and where have you been this long, long while?"

"Why, mother," answered Richard, "it is only a month since my old raft served me such a trick, and gave me such a ducking in the river. It is only a month; but in that time, what strange things have I seen!"

"Tell me quick, Richard, what has happened to you."

"Well: I was carried down by the tide clear into Penobscot Bay. I determined, that if I sunk, the old timber should sink with me, and so I kept a pretty tight hold of it. But at length, I grew tired. At one time, I was a good deal frightened by a big fish, which, I believe, was a shark. I hit it a pretty hard knock with the end of my oar, and it did not trouble me afterwards. I now felt so cold, and my hands were so numb, that I feared I should have to quit my hold; and, mother, I prayed to my Maker, to forgive whatever sins I had committed.

"A few minutes afterwards, on turning round, I saw a sloop, loaded with wood, at a short distance. I halloed as loud as I could, but the wind made such a noise, that the sailors did not hear me. How very, very sad did I feel, when I saw the vessel sail on, without me, almost out of sight! But my sorrow was changed to joy, when I saw her tack (that means, turn round) and come towards me. A boat, with three men in it, soon put forth from her, and came up by my side. They lifted me into it, and carried me to the sloop.

"For two days I felt very ill. But the men were very kind: they dried my clothes, and took good care of me. They said that they did not hear me call, when I was on the timber, but had seen me with a spy-glass. One of the sailors thought it was a sea-serpent, which they saw, but the others laughed at him, and the captain finally determined to send a boat to pick me up. He did so, and was glad enough, to find that he had saved the life of a fellow being.

"In the course of a week, I grew very well and strong. I could run up the mast, and pull the ropes, and help the sailors furl the sails, when the wind blew hard. The captain told me that he was going to Boston. I was sorry to hear this, for I knew, that you could not do well without me, and that it would be some time before I could return home.

"When we came in sight of Boston, I climbed up the mast to look at the great city, of which I had heard so much. We passed between two beautiful forts, and then I could see Boston very plainly. The houses are built close together, and are very high: most of them are made with red bricks.—There is one large building, above all the others, with a round top, which a sailor

told me was the State House. There are a few trees, but not half so many as are about our house.

"When our sloop came to the wharf, I jumped on shore, and helped the men tie the vessel to a round post, which was on the wharf. I then took a walk with Captain Luff, (his name was Luff) to see the city. Here they call the roads, streets. We walked along the streets, and saw crowds of people. The shops were very fine, and the windows were filled with gay and glittering sights. In the evening what do you suppose they lit their lamps with? They use a sort of air called gas, and it gives a better light than oil or candles!

I staid in Boston nearly a fortnight.—When Captain Luff had sold his wood, and was ready to go home, I went on board the sloop. We hoisted the sails, and the vessel glided away from the wharf. We passed between the two forts, and were soon out at sea again. The next night we had a severe storm. The waves swept over the deck, and I thought we should sink. But God protected us. In a few days we arrived safe in Penobscot bay. The Captain wanted me to stay with him and become a sailor, but I thanked him, and hastened away to see you. I walked two days through the woods, and at night the farmers were good enough to let me sleep on the sweet hay in their barns. They also gave me plenty to eat; and here, my dear mother, I am at last."

MUSIC AMONG THE JEWS.

Music is of two kinds;—*vocal*, or that which is made wholly by the voice; and *instrumental*, or that which is made by means of instruments. Sometimes they are combined, as when a person plays on an instrument and sings at the same time.

Music is very ancient. Jubal, who lived before the deluge, was said to be the father of those who played on the harp and the organ.

Singing is first mentioned in the history of Jacob. Laban complained that Jacob went away from him so abruptly that he did not have an opportunity to accompany him with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp.

As soon as the children of Israel were fairly over the Red Sea, Moses composed a song and sung it with the men; while his sister Miriam, at the head of the women, also sung it, with dancing and playing on instruments.

David, had a great taste for music, and was also called the "sweet singer of Israel." He appointed many of the Levites to sing and play on instruments in the tabernacle.—Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun were his three great music masters. These three teachers had in all 21 sons—Asaph four, Jeduthun six, and Heman fourteen. They were also music masters; and were placed at the head

of 21 great bands that served by turns, after David's death, in the temple of Solomon. These bands of music were some of them very large. As it was the whole business of their lives to learn and practice music, vocal or instrumental, it is to be supposed that they understood it well.—They had female musicians in the temple, as well as males; but they were generally daughters of the Levites.

Kings, too, had their particular music. Asaph was David's music master.—Ezra mentions 200 singing men and singing women who came back with him from the captivity at Babylon.

What their music was in those days, we do not so well know. It is probable that it was a mixture of several voices all singing together in the same tune; and that it consisted of only one part, and was not made up, as now, of bass, tenor, treble, &c.—They also accompanied it, with music on instruments.

Of instruments, they had very many kinds. They had the harp, the pipe, the violin, the tabret, the lyre, the psaltery, the cymbal, the sambuc, the flute, the trumpet, the drum, &c.

You will find singing mentioned in nearly every book, in both the old and New Testament; and sometimes in every chapter, for a considerable space together. Paul and Silas sang praises, even at midnight; and Paul and James speak of singing psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs; to say nothing of the employments of the angels and glorified spirits, mentioned in Revelation; and of the praises of the angels on the night of the birth of the Redeemer.

We do not read that there were any of the 27 music masters of David that had bad voices or were destitute of an ear for music, or a taste for it. How happens it then that so many make such a complaint nowadays?

—Why are not our voices as good as those of the Levites, and our taste for music as universal?—*Parley's Hist. of Music.*

THE CALCULATING GIRL.

A little girl, six years old, heard it read the other day from a newspaper, that at some audience "four persons were present, whose children amounted to fifty-eight;" and after an instant she exclaimed, that's just fourteen and a half each; how very odd!"—*Jur. Repository.*

—*The John Porter, after an absence of only fifty seven days, returned to this Port on Saturday evening last from Liverpool.—She brought London Papers to the 26th May and Liverpool to the 27th. Their contents are not very interesting. No debate of any consequence had taken place in Parliament. Lord John Russell had been returned for Stroud—R. Gaz*

POETRY.

MARY DOW.

'Come in, little stranger,' I said
As she tapped at my half open door;
While the blanket pinned over her head,
Just reached to the basket she bore.

A look full of innocence fell
From her modest and pretty blue eye,
As she said, 'I have matches to sell;
And hope you are willing to buy.'

'A penny a bunch is the price;
I think you'll not find it too much;
They're tied up so even and nice,
And ready to light with a touch.'

I asked, 'what's your name little girl?'
'Tis Mary,' she said, 'Mary Dow.'
And carelessly tossed off a curl,
That played o'er her delicate brow.

'My father was lost in the deep,
The ship never got to the shore,
And mother is sad, and will weep,
When she hears the wind blow, and sea roar.'

'She sits there at home without food,
Beside our poor sick Willie's bed;
She paid all her money for wood,
And so I sell matches for bread.'

'For every time that she tries,
Some things she'd be paid for, to make,
And lays down the baby it cries,
And that makes my sick brother wake.'

'I'd go to the yard and get chips,
But then it would make me too sad;
To see men there building ships,
And think they had made one so bud.'

'I've one other gown, and with care,
We think it may decently pass,
With my bonnet that's put by to wear
To meeting and Sunday school class.'

'I love to go there, where I'm taught
Of One, who's so wise and so good,
He knows every action and thought,
And gives e'en the raven his food.'

'For he, I am sure, who can take
Such fatherly care of a bird,
Will never forget or forsake
The children who trust to his word.'

'And now, if I only can sell
The matches I brought out to-day,
I think I shall do very well,
And mother'll rejoice at the pay.'

'Fly home, little bird,' then I thought,
'Fly home, full of joy to your nest?'
For I took all the matches she brought,—
And Mary may tell you the rest.

Faults in others.—Those who censure others, ought first to examine themselves; for great censoriousness is generally indicative of great hypocrisy.

BENJAMIN WEST.

The first display of talent in the infant mind of Mr. West was curious, and still more so from its occurring where there was nothing to excite it. America contained scarcely a specimen of fine arts; and being the son of a Quaker, he had never seen a picture or a print. His pencil was of his own invention, his colours were given to him by an Indian, his whole progress was a series of invention, and painting to him was not the result of a lesson but an intuitive passion.

When only seven years of age, he was one day left with the charge of an infant niece in the cradle, and had a fan to flap away the flies from the child. The motion of the fan made the child smile and its beauty attracted his attention. He looked at it with a pleasure he had never before experienced; and observing some paper on the table, together with pens and red and black ink, he seized them with agitation, and endeavoured to delineate a portrait, although at that period he had never seen an engraving, or a picture.—Hearing the approach of his mother and sister, he endeavoured to conceal what he had been doing, but the old lady observing his confusion, asked what he had been about, and insisted on seeing the paper. He obeyed, entreated her not to be angry Mrs. West, after looking some time at the drawing with evident pleasure, said to her daughter, "I declare he has made a likeness of little Sally;" and kissed him with much fondness and satisfaction.—This encouraged him to say, that if it would give her any pleasure, he would make drawings of the flowers which she held in her hand; for his genius was awakened and he felt that he could imitate any thing that pleased his sight. In after life he used to say, "My mother's kiss made me a painter."

Young West used pen and ink for his drawings, until hair pencils were described to him, when he found a substitute in the tapering fur of a cat's tail. In the following year a cousin sent him a box of colors and pencils, with several pieces of canvass prepared for the easel, and six engravings.—The box was received with delight, and West now found all his wants supplied. He rose at the dawn of the following day, and carried the box to the garret, where he spread the canvass, prepared his pallet, and began to imitate the figure in the engraving. Enchanted with his art, he forgot his school-hours, and joined the family at dinner without mentioning the employment in which he had been engaged. In the afternoon he again retired to the garret; and for several days successively he withdrew in the same manner, and devoted himself to painting.—Mrs. West, suspecting that the box occasioned his neglect of school, went into the garret and found him employed on a picture. Her anger was soon appeased by a sight of

his performance. She kissed him with transports of affection, and promised that she would intercede with his father to pardon his absence from school. The piece finished in his eighth year was exhibited sixty-seven years afterwards, in the same room with his sublime picture of "Christ rejected;" and the artists declared that there were inventive touches in his first juvenile essay, which all his subsequent experience had never enabled him to surpass.

LAZY HABITS ABOUT BOOKS.

Rip, -rip—went the leaves of a book, as I sat in a mechanic's reading room, one day, and I started up to see what the matter was. Mr. L. had taken a book from the counter, and seated himself opposite to me, to peruse it; when finding some of the leaves uncut, without looking round for a paper-knife, he was forcing them open with the side of his hand. Sometimes, he was quite successful, but at others, the leaves were separated so irregularly that the jagged edges extended quite into the print, and injured the book.

The gentleman was a stranger to me, and I was unwilling to say any thing; but I dislike exceedingly, this careless, lazy habit of separating book leaves. It is bad enough when the book is our own; but it is much worse when it belongs to another;—worse still when it belongs to a public library.

RAINBOW.

Almost every one has heard the following ancient proverb.

A rainbow in the morning is the shepherd's warning;
A rainbow at night is the shepherd's delight.

We will give our young readers an explanation of this omen.

A rainbow can only occur, when the clouds containing or depositing the rain are opposite to the sun; and in the evening the rainbow is in the east, and in the morning in the west; and as our heavy rains in the warm season are usually brought by a south-westerly wind, a rainbow in the west indicates that the bad weather is on the road, by the wind to us; whereas, the rainbow in the east proves that the rain in these clouds is passing away.—*Juv. Watchman.*

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