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# THE WEEKLY MIRROR.

VOL. 2]

HALIFAX, DECEMBER 2, 1836.

No. 46

## The Weekly Mirror,

Is Printed and Published every Friday,

BY H. W. BLACKADAR,

At his Office, nearly opposite Bauer's wharf, and adjoining north of Mr. Allan McDonald's.

WHERE

All kinds of JOB PRINTING will be executed at a cheap rate.

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## NATURAL HISTORY.

### TORTOISE.

Tortoise; a genus of reptiles distinguished, as having no teeth, as subsisting on little food, as being tenacious of life, often passing months and even years without eating, and as living sometimes a week after the head is cut off. They are cased in a strong shell above and below. Some live on the land, and some in water. The Common Land Tortoise is about eight inches long; it lives on roots, fruits, insects, and worms, and lays its eggs in a hole in June, which are hatched in September; in autumn, it buries itself in the earth, lies torpid through the winter, and reappears in the spring. One of them has been known to live to the age of one hundred and twenty years, and then it died by accident. There are several other kinds of land Tortoise; there are also several species of fresh-water Tortoise, and several kinds of sea Tortoise. The most remarkable of the latter kind is the Green Turtle, so famous for making soup. It is found in many warm seas, and is often brought here from the West Indies, being taken on the sandy shores of those islands. The lubricated Tortoise resembles the preceding, and is found in the same places; it is famous for providing the shell of which combs are made. Its flesh is not good, but its eggs, like those of the green turtle, are excellent, and are often eaten. There are still other sea Tortoises, some of which weigh a thousand pounds.

## BIOGRAPHY.

### COPERNICUS NICHOLAS.

Copernicus Nicholas, a Prussian astronomer, and discoverer of the true system of the universe, was a native of Thorne in Prussia. In his twenty-third year he went into Italy in search of knowledge. After

some years absence and having in the mean time acted as professor of mathematics at Rome, he returned home. Here he began to apply his vast knowledge, to an examination of the different theories respecting the universe. The simplicity of the Pythagorean system pleased him best; and after twenty years of profound investigation, he removed from the machine of the universe, the cycles and epicycles of former astronomers, and placed the sun in the centre to illuminate and control the whole. This great discovery he kept concealed for more than thirty years, for fear of exciting against himself the ignorant persecuting spirit of bigotry. When at last he consented, through the importunities of his friends, to have his work published, and a copy of it was brought to him, he was a few hours afterwards seized with a violent effusion of blood, which terminated his life, 24th May, 1543, in his seventieth year.

ERASMUS, (Desiderius) was the most learned man of the age in which he lived, and contributed by his example and writings to the restoration of learning in Europe. He was somewhat of a wanderer, having occasionally resided in Italy, Switzerland, Holland, France and England. He was best pleased with the last of these countries, and there he met with the greatest encouragement from Henry VII., Sir Thomas More, and all the learned Englishmen of those days. He was the most correct and elegant Latin writer among the moderns. Rotterdam is to this day proud of having given birth to Erasmus. The house in which he was born is still marked out to the admiration of the traveller by a suitable inscription, and a beautiful copper statue was long since erected to his memory in an open part of the city. He died at Basil, July 12, 1536, aged 69.

From the New Haven Herald.

### ANNUAL METEORIC SHOWER.

Facts already ascertained leave no doubt of the recurrence of "the Meteoric Shower," on the morning of the 13th November. The preceding day had been rainy, and early the same night the sky was overcast; but before midnight the firmament became cloudless, and the stars shone with unwonted brilliancy.

About half past three o'clock, observing that the meteors began to appear in unusual numbers, I directed my attention towards

the eastern part of the heavens, whence they mostly proceeded, and closely watched the stars from the Great Bear on the north to Canis Major on the south, embracing in my field of view about one-third of the firmament.

It was soon discovered, that nearly all the meteors shot in directions which, on being traced back, met in one and the same point, near the Lion's Eye. For a quarter of an hour, from half past three o'clock, I counted twenty two meteors, of which all but three emanated from the above radiant point in Leo. Ten left luminous trains; twelve were without trains; and the three that did not conform to the general direction, moved perceptibly slower than the others. The greatest part shot off to the right and left of the radiant, a majority tending south, towards the heart of Hydra. The next fifteen minutes afforded but seven meteors, and the number gradually declined until day-light.

The exact position of the radiant was near a small star, forming the apex of a triangle with the two bright stars in the face of Leo. Its right ascension was 145 deg. and declination 25. Its place was therefore very nearly the same as in 1831; differing only half a degree in right ascension, and all the phenomena very much resembled those observed that year, except that they continued for a shorter period.

Although shooting stars occur at various seasons of the year, yet these *meteoric showers*, whether they occur on a larger or a smaller scale, are marked by several peculiarities:—(1) The meteors are much more frequent than usual, and sometimes are exceedingly numerous. (2) A larger proportion than common, leave *luminous trains*. (3) They mostly seem to radiate from a common centre, and several years past the radiant has been in nearly the same part of the heavens, namely in the Constellation Leo. It is also exceedingly remarkable that the shower is not only repeated on the same day of the year, but arrives at its maximum every where, and at every recurrence, at nearly the same hour of the morning—from 3 to 4 o'clock.

By a letter obligingly communicated to the writer of this article from Samuel Dunster, Esq. agent of the Franklin Iron Works at Springvale, (Maine,) it appears,

that the display was considerably more splendid at that place than here. The whole number of meteors counted from 3 o'clock, to fifteen minutes past 6, was *two hundred and fifty-three*. An auroral arch which appeared in the north between the hours of 4 and 5, followed by auroral streamers, enhanced the interest of the meteoric exhibition. As was observed here, the meteoric emanated from a common radiant situated in the Constellation Leo.

This notice has been delayed in the hope of being able to add some particulars respecting the succeeding nights; but these have proved unfavorable for observation, with the exception of the night of the 15th, when the heavens were attentively observed from half past 2, to half past 3 o'clock. Only six meteors were noticed, of which two only left trains. These proceeded from a common point near the western horizon of the Great Bear,—a position at least fifteen degrees north of the radiant observed on the 13th.

Yale College, Nov. 13.

From the *MAGAZINE of Domestic Economy.*

#### FIRE-SIDE TOPICS.—THE FIRE.

It is a common saying, that in winter, 'the fire is the finest flower of the garden;' and in so far as the climate of the British Islands is concerned, the saying is literally true; so true, that there are, perhaps, more happy faces around English firesides on December nights, than there are in all the gardens of the world during the choicest month of the summer's bloom. It is customary for those who depict the beauties of nature, to speak of the 'language of flowers;' and some of them contrive to make those lovely things of the season discourse right eloquently. So let us see whether we cannot, in homely and fireside phrase, find some 'voice' in this flower, which cheers and benefits us so much in hall, in parlour, and in kitchen.

In the first place, when we think of it, the possession of the fire is the grand and distinguished physical characteristic of man, and the one which at once puts the sceptre of dominion into his hand, and makes him the lord of the nether world. When seamen traverse the wide-encircling sea, and come to islands previously untrodden by an European foot, if the night is diversified by sparkling flames, or the day by curling smoke, peeping through the openings of those lovely groves which nature's own hand plants in the lands of the sun, then he instantly says within himself, "Here are the dwellings of my fellow men; and whatever may be his colour or his habits, within the shades of those forests I shall find a man and a brother." No doubt there are accidental fires and volcanic ones, in the lighting up of which man has no concern; but these have peculiar characters by which they can

readily be distinguished; and they are, generally speaking, upon such a scale as that man cannot avail himself of them, for any useful purpose.

When we consider the peculiarity of the human structure, the rank which man holds in creation, and the height to which he may rise, if he hide not his talent in the earth of indolence or dissipation, we are speedily brought to the conviction that "the gift of fire" is the best as well as the most universal of those which a bountiful Creator has bestowed upon man. He has not the wings of eagles, the fierceness of lions and tigers, or the strength of elephants; but he has more: he can rub one dry stick against another, until the action of fire is elicited, and, marching forth armed with his firebrand, he can make the most powerful and the most ferocious tenants of the forest tremble at his approach. It seems, too, that the whole constitution of man's nature is so framed as to impel him on to the discovery and use of this grand engine of his physical power.

It is probable that the natives of New Holland when first visited by Europeans, were the rudest race upon the surface of the globe, or were equalled in this respect only by the same black people which are found in the central forests of Borneo, and several of the other large islands on the south-east of Asia. Generally speaking, they had no clothing and no habitations; their historical knowledge did not extend farther than their own memories, and their geographical knowledge only to a few miles. On some of the more fertile spots, they made a sort of bark huts, about the same size as those which the gipsies erect in our green lanes; and in some places they also had very rude canoes, in which they could paddle for a short distance across the water. In other places they had nothing of this kind, but performed their trifling navigations, which amounted only to passing from one side of a creek to the other, upon logs of light wood, astride which they sat with their feet clasped round, and paddling themselves along with their hands—so that these logs were the real, and the only real, sea horses. But still, whether in canoe or on log, or whether uproned with plaited bark or absolutely naked, not one of those rude savages was without his fire-stick, consisting of a little disc of wood, with a hollow in it, and a short piece of stick, by pressing the end of which against the hollow, and twirling it round between his hands at the same time, he could contrive very speedily to ignite some light vegetable matter, and from that very soon kindle a fire, for protection or for cooking, as the case might be.

Thus we see, from the case of these people, that fire is the very first discovery of mankind; and the very simple fact of its being so is sufficient to establish the truth of its being the most useful, and the one which

is capable of being applied to the greatest number of purposes. When we further consider that no creature on earth except man has any knowledge of fire, or any capacity of producing it, but that in their wild state it is an object of terror to the whole of them, we cannot fail to be further convinced of the great advantages which man derives from it, and consequently how very useful the knowledge of it must be to everybody, more so indeed than anything else that we could name; for, as we have already mentioned, it is the first possession which rude man acquires; and when we look around us, we shall not fail to discover that it is the grand instrument in the very highest improvement which the arts have acquired in civilized society.

Secondly, look around, and reflect what England would be without fire, both in respect of direct comfort and of useful application. Fire forms our substitute for the light and heat of the sun, at those seasons when these are withdrawn from us, in order to afford the beauty of summer and the plenty of autumn to the southern hemisphere. The modifications are endless, and so are the applications and the advantages; but the process is every where substantially the same. We warm ourselves by means of fire; we prepare our provisions by means of fire; we light our houses and streets and roads by means of fire; our steam-ships defy and defeat both wind and tide by means of fire; our steam-carriages transport goods and passengers at the rate of a mile in two minutes, by means of fire; and our steam-engines perform, by means of fire, ten times the mechanical labour which could be performed by all the men, women, and children, and all the horses and other working animals, now living on the face of the earth.

The fire which so cheers us on a winter night is, therefore, a whole library of knowledge, a whole museum of nature, and a machine of art, to the capacity of which no bounds can be set. How exceedingly desirable, then that we should be well and thoroughly acquainted with its nature!

#### THE MAN CATCHER.

During Baxter's residence in Coventry, he, in company with several of the ejected ministers who resided there, commenced preaching in a house by the side of a common, not many miles from the city. The time of service being rather early in the morning, Baxter set out for the place the preceding evening. The night being dark, he missed his way, and after wandering about for a considerable time, espied a light on a rising ground at some distance; to which he immediately bent his steps. On his arrival, he found it emanated from the window of a gentleman's house.

He called and begged to be allowed to remain until morning; at the same time, stating that he had lost his way. The servant informed his master, that a person of very respectable appearance was at the door; and wished to be accommodated for the night. The gentleman ordered the servant to invite him in. The invitation was cordially accepted; and Baxter met with the greatest hospitality. At supper, the gentlemen inquired what was the profession or employment of his guest.

Mr. B. from things spoken by his host, saw it was necessary to be on his guard, and replied, 'I am a man-catcher, sir.' A man catcher, said the gentlemen, are you? You are the very person I want. I am a justice of the peace in this district, and am determined to seize on Dick Baxter who is expected to preach at a neighboring cottage to-morrow morning, and you shall go with me, and I doubt not we shall easily apprehend the rogue. Baxter no longer remained ignorant of the quality of his host, and consented to accompany him. After breakfast next morning, they accordingly set out in the magistrate's carriage for the place. When they arrived, the people were beginning to assemble on the out side of the house; but no Dick Baxter made his appearance to preach. The justice seemed to be considerably disappointed; and said to his companion, he supposed that Baxter had been apprised of his design, and would not fulfil his engagement. After waiting for some time in ardent expectation of the approach of the Nonconformist, but without effect, Mr. B. told the magistrate, that it was a pity for so many people to be collected together, and on the sabbath morning, too, without something being said to them respecting religion; and hoped he would deliver a short address to them on that subject. He replied, that as all religious services should begin with prayer, he could not perform that part of the duty, not having his prayer book in his pocket.—However, said the gentleman, I am persuaded that a person of your appearance and respectability, would be able to pray with them, as well as to talk to them. I beg, therefore, that you will be so good as to begin with prayer. After a few modest refusals, Baxter commenced the service with a prayer at once solemn and fervid. The magistrate was soon melted into tears. The man of God then delivered a most impressive sermon; after which, the magistrate

stepped up to him and said, he felt truly thankful that Baxter had not come, for he had never heard any thing that so much affected him, in the whole course of his life. Baxter turning around to him, with a pithos not to be imitated, said: 'Sir, I am the very Dick Baxter of whom you are in pursuit—I am entirely at your disposal.' But the justice having felt so much, during the service, entirely laid aside his enmity.

## POLITENESS.

*How few little children think it worth while to be polite to their playmates and friends. By politeness, I do not mean a great deal of unnecessary bowing and courtesying, but that delicate attention to the comfort of those around us that springs from a kind, generous heart. How many little children enter a room without noticing respectfully those who are older than themselves. I have seen them come in of a cold, winter day, and draw their little chairs up before the fire in such a way that those who were sitting back could not feel the warmth of it at all; and this without the least apology for such a breach of politeness. Then perhaps they interrupt those in the room when they are engaged in conversation, by asking some foolish question, instead of waiting till an opportunity was given them to speak. Then they are impolite to their little playmates, their sisters, if they have any; instead of assisting them, when their help is really needed, they leave them to help themselves. How many little boys think it beneath them to be kind and polite to a sister.*

*I have seen some few who thought differently. I recollect last winter I used to meet a fine manly lad, drawing his sister to school on his sled. Her little rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes bore testimony that his politeness was not thrown away upon her. She would pat his cheek with her little soft hand and call him her "kind brother." He would frequently meet boys of his acquaintance who would urge him to leave his sister and go with them to coast on the common. His answer always was, "Yes, when I have carried little Emily to school!" Do you think that boy was not a good son, a good brother? I never saw him impatient when he was walking with his little sister, because her little feet could not "keep up" with his.—He didn't give her a sly twitch as some little boys do, or frighten her with stories of "old men," or "beggars," till she was afraid of her shadow. No; he was always polite to her, and do you think he will forget to be polite as he grows older? No; for it will become a habit with him, and the little attentions which cost him nothing, and are so gratifying to those who receive them, will gain him many a friend.*

*Think of this when you are tempted to be rude or selfish or unkind to those about you, and remember that you lose nothing by being polite. But a stronger motive than that should influence us, we should "do unto others as we would that they should do unto us."—Who is it that has said "Be ye kind one to another?"*

## POWER OF MEMORY.

Senece says he could in his youth repeat a thousand names in the same order as they were read to him. Themistocles made himself master of the Persian language in a year's time. Alcibiades understood as many languages as he commanded nations; that is no less than twenty-two. Cyrus retained the name of every soldier in his army. Julius says of Julius Cæsar, in his oration for Ligarius, that he never forget any thing but an injury. A girl at a Sabbath evening school in the north, repeated the 119th psalm without a mistake. A blind man who lived in the town of Sterling could repeat the whole Bible, which he acquired by hearing children read at school. He used to say, that if he heard any thing read which he never forgot it. But, though he could repeat the Bible, he seemed very ignorant of its great truths, not aware of their value. Mr. Wesley remarks: 'Thomas Walsh was so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the O.T. or any Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell, after a little pause, not only how often one or the other occurred in the Bible, but what it meant in every place.'

The Avon Bridge is now opened for the accommodation of the Public. It is 1150 feet long, supported by four piers, and approached on the Wind-or side by an inclined plane of upwards of 800 feet, and on the Fair-mouth side by a new road of nearly a mile in length.

## MARRIED.

On Thursday evening last, by the Rev. Dr. Willis, Mr. James Purcell, to Jane, third daughter of Mr. George Glazebrook, both of this place.

## DIED.

On Thursday morning, 24th inst. in the 89th year of her age, Mrs. Susanna Toler, an old and respectable inhabitant of this place.

Wednesday morning, of the prevailing Influenza, Kate Reading, second and youngest daughter of John Leander Starr, Esq.

Thursday morning, Grace Nordbeck, infant daughter of Mr. Robert P. Woodill, aged seven weeks and three days.

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May 13, 1836.



From the *Taken*, for 1837.

### THE MOTHERS JEWEL.

Jewel most precious thy mother to deck,  
Clinging so fast by the chain on my neck,  
Locking thy little white fingers to hold  
Closer and closer the circlets of gold—  
Stronger than these are the links that confine  
De'er my fond bosom this treasure of mine!  
Gift from thy maker, so pure and so dear,  
Almost I hold thee with trembling and fear.

Whence is this gladness so holy and now,  
Felt as I clasp thee, or have thee in view?  
What is the noose that slips over my mind,  
Drawing it back if I leave thee behind?  
Soft is the bondage, but strong is the knot—  
O! when the mother her babe has forgot,  
Ceasing from joy in so sacred a trust,  
Dark should'er eye be, and closed for the dust.

Spirit immortal with light from above,  
Over this now-opened fountain of love,  
Forth from my heart as it gushes so free,  
Sparkling, and playing, and leaping to thee,  
Painting the Rainbow of hope till they seem  
Brighter than reason—too true for a dream!  
What shall I call thee? My glory? My sun?  
Thee I cannot name thee, thou beautiful one!

'Rilliant celestial' so priceless is worth,  
How shall I keep thee unspotted from earth?  
How shall I save thee from ruin by crime,  
Dimmed not by sorrow, untarnished by time?  
Who from the thief and the robber who stray  
Over life's path, shall I hide thee away?  
Purer is the setting but richer the gem,  
Oh! thou'lt be coveted—sought for by them!

I must devote thee to ONE who is pure.  
Touched by whose brightness thine own will be sure.  
Borne in his bosom, no vapour can dim,  
Nothing can win, or can pluck thee from him.  
Seamless and holy the garments he folds  
Over his jewels that closely he holds.  
Hence unto him be my little one given!  
Yea, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven!

Letter from Sir J. Herschel read at the  
British Association for the advancement of  
Science at Bristol, August 21.

“*FELHAUSEN*, Cape of Good Hope,  
June 13th, 1836.

“By your last, which only reached me  
yesterday, (though dated on the 16 of March.)  
I learn that the meeting of the British  
Association will take place early in August.  
Had it been in September, it might have  
been practicable for me to have drawn up,  
(not without difficulty) somewhat of a  
detailed report of my proceedings here. As  
it is, however, nothing short of a miracle  
could enable me to do so in time for your  
meeting. The fact is, since our arrival here,  
I have been so entirely occupied with the  
mechanical processes of observations, and the  
actual cutting and carrying of my harvest,  
that I have not had any time to thresh it out  
for consumption; or, to drop figure, I have  
got a monstrous collection of rough observa-  
tions, but hardly a figure reduced. So much  
as this, however, I may say, that I have

swept over all, or nearly all that part of the  
heavens, which is incisable, or hardly visible  
in England, except just in the immediate  
vicinity of the pole (a most barren region,)  
and (favoured by a season of almost unin-  
terrupted clear sky, and a definition and  
tranquility of the stars under great apertures  
and magnifying powers which I want  
language to express,) have amassed a large  
collection of nebulae and double stars of all  
classes, orders and degrees. Of some of the  
most remarkable objects which have occurred  
to me I have sent a brief list to Schumacher,  
who may probably have inserted them in his  
*Astronomical Journal*; I can here only find  
time or room for a few general remarks.

“The general aspect of the southern  
circumpolar region, including in that expres-  
sion 60 or 70 deg. of S. P. D. is in a high  
degree rich and magnificent, owing to the  
superior brilliancy and larger development of  
the Milky Way, which from the constellation  
of Orion to that of Antinous, is in a blaze  
of light, strangely interrupted, however,  
with vacant and almost starless patches,  
especially in Scorpio, near Centauri and the  
cross; while to the north it fades away pale  
and dim, and is in comparison hardly  
traceable. I think it is impossible to view  
this splendid zone, with the astonishingly  
rich and evenly-distributed fringe of stars of  
the third and fourth magnitudes, which form  
a broad skirt to its southern border, like a  
vast curtain,—without an impression amount-  
ing to a conviction, that the Milky Way is  
not a mere stratum, but an annulus, or at  
least, that our system is placed within one of  
the poorer and almost vacant parts of its  
general mass, and that eccentrically, so as to  
be much nearer to the parts about the cross,  
than to that diametrically opposed to it.

“The two Magellanick clouds, *Nubecula*  
*Major* and *Minor*, are very extraordinary  
objects. The greater is a congeries of stars,  
clusters of irregular form, globular clusters  
and nebulae, of various magnitudes and de-  
grees of condensation, among which is  
interspersed a large portion of irresolvable  
nebulae, which may be, and probably is, star-  
dust, but which the powers of the twenty feet  
telescope show only as a general illumination  
of the field to view, forming a bright ground  
on which the other objects are scattered. Some  
of the objects in it are of very singular  
and incomprehensible forms; the chief one  
especially (30 Doradus), which consists of  
a number of loops, united in a kind of un-  
clear centre or knot, like a bunch of ribbons  
disposed in what is called a true lover's knot.  
There is no part of the heavens where so  
many nebulae and clusters are crowded into  
so small a space as this 'cloud.' 'The  
*Nubecula Junior*' is a much less striking  
object. It abounds more in irresolvable  
nebulous light, but the nebulae and clusters  
in it are fewer and fainter, though immedi-  
ately joining to it is one of the richest and  
most magnificent globular clusters in the

hemisphere (47 Toucani). It is somewhat  
singular that this nebula is placed a full  
hour too late in Right Ascension in all maps  
and catalogues, probably owing to a misprint  
or other similar cause of error, in the autho-  
rities employed to construct them.

“The great nebulae in Orion and Argi  
are, however, by far the most surprising  
objects this hemisphere presents. The former  
appears to much greater advantage than in  
our latitudes, and presents many appendages,  
branches, and convolutions, which are not  
discernible in its low situation in Europe.  
The latter is an object sui generis, and which,  
without a figure, it would be useless to  
attempt a description of. I should mention  
that I have spared, and shall continue to  
spare no pains to procure correct drawings  
of these and the other southern nebulae. I  
cannot trace in Argi, as seen in the twenty  
feet, any resemblance to the figures published  
of it; though in the seven feet equatorial  
(furnished with a five inch achromatich  
object glass) some leading features of those  
figures may be recognized. It is of immense  
extent, and crowded with stars, to which the  
nebulae form a brilliant back-ground.

“The planetary nebulae of the southern  
circumpolar sky are numerous (for the class  
of objects) and highly characteristic. I have  
discovered no less than five, quite as sharply  
terminated in their discs as planets, and of  
uniform light. Indeed, the first on which I  
fell was so perfectly planetary in its appear-  
ance, that it was not until several observations  
of it at the Royal Observatory, by Mr.  
Maclean, had annihilated all supposition of  
its motion, that I could relinquish the  
exciting idea that I had really found a new  
member of our own system, revolving in an  
orbit more inclined than Pallas.

“You may form some idea of this, as  
regards clearness of sky, from what was told  
me by our provisional governor, Colonel  
Bell,—viz. that out of forty-two successive  
days, he had only three times been disap-  
pointed in finding Venus, with the naked  
eye, in broad sunshine (at 8 A. M.). I read  
with ease, a few nights ago, the most involved  
parts of a lady's closely crossed letter by the  
light of an eclipsed moon, then near the  
zenith—(certainly the eclipse was not a  
great one).”

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November 4.

J. MUNRO.