

THE INSTRUCTOR.

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NATURAL HISTORY



THE KANGUROO

The Kanguroo is one of the latest discoveries in the history of quadrupeds. It is a native of New Holland, and resembles most the animals of the jerboa kind, but is considerably larger, as it frequently is found to weigh upwards of eighty or ninety pounds. There are other circumstances in which it differs from these animals. The snout of the jerboa is short and round, that of the kanguroo long and slender. The head, neck and shoulders are very small in proportion to the other parts of the body. From its eating grass, which it has been seen to do, one would be apt to rank it among the ruminant animals; but from the canine teeth, which it is found to have, we may, on the other hand, suppose it to bear

some relation to the carnivorous. Upon the whole, however, it can be compared with none more properly than with animals of the jerboa kind, as its hind legs are much larger than the fore; it moves also precisely in the same manner, taking great bounds of ten or twelve feet at a time, and sometimes escaping even the fleetest greyhound, with which Mr. Banks pursued it. One of them that was killed proved to be good food; but a second, which weighed eighty-four pounds, and was not yet come to its full growth, was found to be much inferior. Its tail is nearly as long as the body, tapering towards the end.

The kanguroo, like the opossum, has a pouch for the reception of its young.

LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

NARRATIVE

OF A MARINER LEFT ON AN ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC.

Early in the year 1823, the subject of this narrative was, at the age of seven years, by one of the freaks of fortune, placed on board a ship employed in the South Sea fishery. The ship being in the latitude of the Gallapagos, a group of islands situated about two hundred miles west of Peru, she directed her course towards them for the purpose of obtaining wood and water; here they found an American brig which had arrived there, a day or two previous, with the same intention. They came to an anchor fronting a sandy beach of no very great extent, with high hills and lofty woods terminating the prospect; the inland parts at a little distance seemed impracticable from the great thickness of the forests. At 2, P.M., a number of hands were dispatched on shore in the long boat; but not meeting with so desirable a place for watering as they expected, some of the men entered the woods in search of "Quick freshes," while others proceeded along shore to find one less objectionable. Of the former party was young Lord, and whether he was led on by destiny, wildness, or want of caution, it so happened that he got separated from the rest, and entered quite unconsciously into the thickest part of the country. Having wandered on in this wild labyrinth for nearly two hours, and not finding any water, nor being able to knock down any of the birds which he occasionally disturbed, and chased from among the wild furze & thickets, he began to think of returning, not apprehending any more difficulty of egress than he had met with on entering. Being perfectly satisfied in his own mind that he was proceeding in the direction for the ship, he steadfastly pursued the path he had chosen; evening, however, began to wrap the forest in a deeper gloom, and only just sufficient light remained to show him that he had arrived at a place clothed with some very fine trees, beyond

which the woods grew so thick as to render them completely impassable. The fact now first flashed upon him, that he had proceeded some miles into the interior. Our youth was a character of much pleasantry and good humour, blended with a determined spirit, and resolution greatly superior to most boys of his age; to those qualities, in after years, may be attributed his saving the life of a boy who fell overboard from one of his Majesty's ships at Plymouth, and the promptitude and activity he displayed on another occasion, when a sailor fell from the fore-yard into the sea, which procured for him the high commendation of his superior officers with a certificate of the circumstance from his gallant commander. But to resume—the certainty of having lost himself did not appear to him to be a discovery of great importance, and with a buoyancy of spirit, he determined to pass the night in the woods, not doubting that on the morrow he should readily find his way back to the vessel.— In this hope, after having fortified himself with a good drink of water, from a spring just at hand, he ascended one of the trees; and here, notwithstanding the loud screaming of the night bird, and the continued whoopings of innumerable owls, 'making night hideous,' worn out by fatigue and watching, he slept till morning.

It may be imagined that at the first glimpse of daybreak, he was not a little anxious to get out of the wood, an anxiety increased by his experiencing that uneasy sensation which too long a fast is apt to produce. For some hours he wandered about in the intricacies of this wild uninhabited spot, supported in the hope, as he advanced, that his toils were near the termination. Often did he listen in breathless attention to catch the sound of any signal gun to guide his footsteps, and often did he shout in expectation of being heard by those who might have been dispatched in search of him. He ascended at intervals any high tree that he met within his progress, but found his view constantly intercepted by forests and elevated hills wooded to their summits. Hunger now

pointed to him the necessity of seeking some means of subsistence; he accordingly prepared with his knife a formidable bludgeon, determined to knock on the head, if an opportunity offered, either biped or quadruped; and scarcely had an hour passed when he was startled by a rustling among the underwood, and he expected some kind of animal to sally forth, but he was surprised to see what in reality was neither one nor the other, for a large black snake glided out from its concealment and raised its head, "nimble in threat," at his approach. Having got within range of his stick, he immediately "rapped" it "o' the coxcomb," whereupon it rolled itself up, and after a few twists and twirls remained quite stationary, with its forked tongue thrust out of its mouth.—Although he had fasted a long time, yet his hunger had not as yet become so importunate as not to be resisted, otherwise he might have ventured upon a feed off this reptile. But his attention was diverted from the snake by the conviction of more dangers and difficulties. In this desolate situation night again overtook him, and although the climate of the island, notwithstanding its latitude, is generally mild, and the middle of the day pleasantly warm, yet the mornings and evenings are rather cold; consequently he had to struggle both against cold and hunger without any apparent remedy. The simple circumstance of having met with a snake in the day did not seem of much consequence, but the idea of meeting one in the night, occasioned by his hearing these peculiar noises usually made by them at this period, alarmed his imagination, and kept up a continual anxiety. There being some small springs which ran meandering through the woods, he was not in want of water, and after imbibing a sufficient quantity, he thought it advisable to lay aside all farther attempts for that day; he therefore ascended a tree, and having eaten some of the leaves, which in a degree alleviated his hunger, there remained during the obscurity of a night intensely dark, with his spirits "down at zero," for he now began to fear that the sleep would

sail without him, and the apprehension of such an occurrence with all its terrors, rushed upon his fancy; his situation appeared so hopeless, that he passed a sleepless and desponding night, the same noises being kept up in the woods, which convinced him that many birds of prey existed upon the island. When day began to appear, he descended from the tree, and had not got many paces when he perceived a large owl perched with the most imperturbable gravity upon the low bough, with its large eyes intently fixed on him, but as if unconscious of his appearance. He very quietly approached near enough to testify his joy at their meeting by instantly knocking it on the head; and thus he had the good fortune to provide himself with a breakfast. Not willing to waste time in useless attempts to obtain a fire (for the day previous his endeavors had been unavailing) he instantly set to work to alleviate his hunger; but from the difficulty of plucking off the feathers, and the shrivelled and yellow appearance of the skin, he had reason to conclude that it had been a tenant of the island, and had been guilty of screaming and whooping about the forest, for at least half a century. Having eaten sufficiently of this carrion, which left his mouth as bitter as wormwood, he set out with a determination of moving in a right line, which could not fail of bringing him to the sea shore at some part of the island. Towards evening he was seized with a most painful sickness, and felt cold and disheartened; he had not seen during this day any four-footed animal.

The night set in dark and rainy, and he took up his quarters at the base of a mountain, determined to ascend to the summit in the morning, in the hope of gaining a view of the sea; but the first thing he did was to get shelter in one of the low trees with the thickest foliage, which proved, in some measure, a defence against the tempestuous weather which now set in; the rain fell in torrents and he might truly have said, "Here's a night pities neither wise men nor fools!" In this dismal situation he fell asleep; and on awakening found him-

self in a very feeble condition and completely wet through.

(To be continued.)

TRAVELS.

THE PRISON OF SOCRATES—ATHENS.

We dismounted at the door of Socrates' prison. A hill between the Areopagus and the sea, is crowned with the remains of a showy monument to a Roman pro-consul. Just beneath it, the hill forms a low precipice, and in the face of it you see three low entrances to caverns hewn in the solid rock. The farthest to the right was the room of the Athenian guard, and within it is a chamber with a round ceiling, which the sage occupied during the thirty days of his imprisonment. There are marks of an iron door which separated it from the guard-room, and through the bars of this he refused the assistance of his friends to escape, and held those conversations with Crito, and others, which have made his name immortal. On the day upon which he was doomed to die, he was removed to the chamber nearest the Acropolis, and here the hemlock was presented to him. A shallower excavation between held an altar to the gods; and after his death, his body was here given to his friends.

Nothing, except some of the touching narrations of scripture, ever seemed to me so affecting as the history of the death of Socrates. It has been likened, (I think, not profanely,) to that of Christ. His virtuous life, his belief in the immortality of the soul and a future state of reward and punishment, his forgiveness of his enemies and his god-like death, certainly prove him, in the absence of revealed light, to have walked the "darling path of human reason" with an almost inspired rectitude. I stood in the chamber which had received his last breath, not without emotion. The rocky wall about had witnessed his composure as he received the cup from his weeping jailor; the roughly-hewn floor beneath my

feet had sustained him, as he walked to and fro, till the poison had chilled his limbs; his last sigh, as he covered his head with his mantle and expired, passed forth by that low portal. It is not easy to be indifferent on spots like these. The spirit of the place is felt. We cannot turn back and touch the brighter links of that "fleshy chain," in which all human beings since the creation have been bound alike, without feeling, even through the rusty coil of ages, the electric sympathy. Socrates died here! The great human leap into eternity, the inevitable calamity of our race, was here taken more nobly than elsewhere. Whether the effect be to "frighten us from the shore" or to nerve us, by the example, to look more steadily before us, a serious thought, almost of course a salutary one, lurks in the very air.

We descended the hill and galloped our small Turkish horses at a stirring pace over the plain. The short stirrup and high-peaked saddle of the country are (at least to men of my length of limb) uncomfortable contrivances. With the knees almost up to the chin, one is compelled, of course, to lean far over the horse's head, and it requires all the fulness of Turkish trousers to conceal the awkwardness of the position. We drew rein at the entrance of the "olive grove." Our horses walked leisurely along the shaded path between the trees, and we arrived in a few minutes at the side of Plato's academy. The more ethereal portion of my pleasure in seeing it must be in recollection. The Cephissus was dry, the noon-day sun was hot, and we were glad to stop, with throbbing temples, under a cluster of fig trees, and eat the delicious fruit, forgetting all the philosophers incontinently. We sat in our saddles, and a Greek woman of great natural beauty, though dressed in rags, bent down boughs to our reach. The honey, from the over-ripe figs, dropped upon us as the wind shook the branches. Our dark-eyed & bright-lipped Pomona served us with a grace and cheerfulness that would draw me often to the neighbourhood of the academy if I lived in Athens. I venture to believe that Phryne herself, in so mean a dress,

would scarce have been so attractive:—We kissed our hands as our spirited horses leaped the hollow with which the trees were encircled, and passing the mound sacred to Furies, where *Cædipus* was swallowed up, dashed over the sultry plain once more, and were soon in Athens.

BIOGRAPHY.

DR. ADAM CLARKE.

The happy and improving period Dr. Clarke spent in London, came to an end, by an appointment to the Bristol circuit, where he lived in 1800, that dreadful period of scarcity, which pressed so hard on millions of the nation. His daughter writes, "From the effects of this distress, Mr. and Mrs. Clarke and their infant family suffered in common with others; but they concealed their necessities in order not to draw upon the sympathies of their friends, and frequently denied themselves a sufficiency of food, to save a part of each day's allotment of provisions to share with those wretched applicants who were in still greater need than themselves. Mr. Clarke would talk to his little ones on the subject, and show them their starving fellow-creatures, who, in cold, nakedness, and famine, besought relief; their eye would affect their hearts, and each voluntarily put by a bit of his breakfast and supper for these distressed poor; at its distribution they were all present, and were thus taught to see and feel the blessings of self-denial in the happiness it produced to others.

Dr. Clarke's domestic conduct was not merely good and exemplary, but delightful to his family. His ministerial duties and his studies occupied a great deal of time, but his working-day, which often lasted from four in the morning till eight or nine at night, earned for him an evening hour of relaxation in his domestic circle. This leisure he gained by other means. Neither he nor his wife ever used either tea or coffee. Abstinence from these luxuries was to Dr. Clarke both

an immense saving of precious time and probably a needful piece of economy, and to the end of his life he persisted in the practice. In one of his letters from Ireland, during his latter life, he remarks, that he had been drawn into a tea-party for the first time for many years. An early supper, certainly a very "spare feast," appears to have been the social meal of Dr. Clarke and his intimate friends, in the prime of his days.

RELIGIOUS.

COSOLATIONS OF RELIGION.

A life of sound religious principle has its joys. It is not that cold, dreary, inanimate tract of country, which it is so often described to be. Let the picture be drawn with candour and impartiality, and amidst a few fleeting clouds, there will be much sunshine to fill the scenery. The evening, more particularly, of a religious life, must ever be painted in glowing colours. And if the life of a real Christian could be analyzed, it would be found to contain more particles of satisfaction than the life of any other man. But make, I entreat you, the experiment for yourselves, and you will find that the "ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And if they be so in this world, what joys will they not lead you to in the world to come! There, every cloud will be dispelled, every mist dispersed; the veil will be drawn aside; we shall no longer see through a glass darkly; but shall see God face to face. We shall rest from our labours; all tears will be wiped from our faces and nothing will be heard but thanksgiving & the voice of melody. Then, we shall look back upon the many trials, temptations and vicissitudes of this life, as the Israelites, when arrived in the earthly Canaan, looked back upon the bondage of Egypt, the terrors of the wilderness, and the passage of the Red Sea. We shall commune together of those things which have happened. "Did not our hearts burn within us, while our great Leader, the Captain of our salvation, talked

with us by the way, and opened to us the scriptures?" Did not we then anticipate that which we now actually enjoy? Blessed for ever be God the Father, who hath given us this glorious inheritance? For ever blessed be God the Son who hath purchased it with his own blood. Blessed through all eternity be God the Holy Ghost, who hath sanctified us, and made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light! To whom, three persons and one God, be all honour and glory for ever and ever! Amen.

I cannot think that man amiable or even innocent, who, after the placidity and refreshment of a night's rest, can awake only to his resentments. He must forget the Being who sheds this balmy blessing over our shattered, perhaps perverted senses, and who enjoins the forgiveness of all injuries before the sun go down upon our wrath.—DE VERE.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MY MOTHER'S GRAVE.

"I had a mother once, like you,
Who o'er my pillow hung;
Kiss'd from my cheek the briny dew,
And taught my faltering tongue.
But then, there came a fearful day,
I sought my mother's bed,
Till harsh hands tore me thence away,
And told me she was dead."

It was thirteen years since my mother's death, when, after a long absence from my native village, I stood beside the sacred mound, beneath which I had seen her buried. Since that mournful period, great changes had some over me. My childish years had passed away, and with them had passed my youthful character. The world was altered too; and, as I stood at my mother's grave, I could hardly realize that I was the same thoughtless, happy creature, whose cheeks she so often kissed in her excess of tenderness. But the varied events of thirteen years had not effaced the remembrance of that mother's smile. It seemed as if I had seen her yesterday,—as if the blessed

sound of her voice was then in my ear. The gay dreams of my infancy and childhood were brought back so distinctly to my mind, that had it not been for one bitter recollection, the tears I shed would have been gentle and refreshing. The circumstance may seem a trifling one; but the thought of it even now agonizes my heart; and I relate it, that those children who have parents to love them, may learn to value them as they ought.

My mother had been ill a long time, and I had become so accustomed to her pale face, and weak voice, that I was not frightened at them, as children usually are. At first, it is true, I had sobbed violently, for they had told me she would die; but when, the day after, I returned from school, and found her the same, I began to believe she would always be spared to me.

One day, when I had lost my place in the class, and done my work wrong side outward, I came home discouraged and fretful. I went into my mother's chamber; she was paler than usual, but she met me with the same affectionate smile, that always welcomed my return. Alas! when I look back, through the lapse of thirteen years, I think my heart must have been stone, not to have been melted by it.

She requested me to go down stairs, and bring her a glass of water. I pettishly asked why she did not call the domestic to do it. With a look of mild reproach, which I shall never forget, if I live to be a hundred years old, she said, "And will not my daughter bring a glass of water for her poor sick mother?"

I went and brought the water; but I did not do it kindly. Instead of smiling, and kissing her, as I was wont to do, I sat the glass down very quick, and left the room.

After playing a short time, I went to bed, without bidding my mother "good night;" but when alone in my room, in darkness and silence, I remembered how pale she looked, and how her voice trembled when she said, "Will not my daughter bring a glass of water for her poor sick mother?"

I could not sleep; and I stole into her chamber to ask forgiveness. She had just sunk into an uneasy slumber, and they told me I must not awaken her. I did not tell any one what troubled me, but stole back to my bed, resolved to rise early in the morning, and tell her how sorry I was for my conduct.

The sun was shining brightly when I awoke; and hurrying on my clothes, I hastened to my mother's room. She was dead!—she never spoke to me more—never smiled upon me again! and when I touched the hand that used to rest upon my head in blessing, it was so cold it made me start. I bowed down by her side, and sobbed in the bitterness of my heart. I thought then I wished I could die, and be buried with her; and, old as I now am, I would give worlds, were they mine to give, could my mother but have lived to tell me she forgave my childish ingratitude. But I cannot call her back; and when I stand by her grave, and whenever I think of her manifold kindness, the memory of that reproachful look she gave me will “bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder.”

READING AND REFLECTION.

The mind of the man of extensive reading without reflection, resembles a vast army of barbarians. The materials to form a commanding power are possessed by both, but are inefficient for the want of order. The numbers of the one, and the acquisitions of the other, instead of furthering, frequently retard their operations, and neither are under the control of their nominal masters. Both attempt to carry their point by the display rather than the disposition of their forces, and are thus often foiled by a much inferior but better regulated antagonist. A skilful general is to such an army what thought is to such a mind. Arranging its resources, concentrating its strength, substituting discipline for chaotic confusion, and giving energy, point and perseverance to its effort. Teaching to delve the secret mine—to aim its artillery, and wield its

weapons; in fine, to conquer its foes by conquering itself, to command by being commanded.

We gladly give insertion to the following communication, and shall be happy at all times to accommodate our friend “G.” with a corner of the INSTRUCTOR. We hope that his example will be followed by others.

FOR THE INSTRUCTOR.

SIR,—A periodical whose object is to promote mental, moral and religious improvement, deserves support. I hope the publisher will meet with such countenance as to enable him to proceed with the INSTRUCTOR. There are two ways of affording support, viz., by becoming a subscriber and affording occasional communications. Solicitous that your paper be continued and enlarged, I shall recommend it to those with whom I have any influence, and sometimes contribute a scrap for insertion, should it meet with your approval. You can do as you please with the following lines:—

Sweet, silent Eve! thy gently breathing gales
Touches the finest movements of the soul,
Wafts o'er each chord of feeling the dear tales
Of joys which softly o'er the bosom stole.

Season serene! I hail thy smiling beam,
Smiling all lovely o'er the rosy west,
And drop a tear, while all alone I dream
Of scenes forever, now forever past.

Yet oft, methinks, borne on thy softest sighs,
Like cadence dying on the ambient air,
The distant strains of heavenly minstrelies
Serenely falls upon the listening ear—
Wafting the soul to yonder happy shore,
Where sighs shall mingle with our songs no
more.

Montreal, July 2, 1835.

G.

W.'s third letter on Phrenology has been received. It will appear in our next.

POETRY.

CONTEMPLATION.

They are all up—the innumerable stars—
And hold their place in heaven. My eyes have
been

Searching the pearly depths through which
they spring

Like beautiful creations, till I feel
As if it were a new and perfect world,
Waiting in silence for the word of God
To breathe it into motion. There they stand,
Shining in order, like a living hymn
Written in light, awaking at the breath
Of the celestial dawn, and praising Him
Who made them, with the harmony of spheres.
I would I had an angel's ear to list
That melody! I would that I might float
Up in that boundless element, and feel
Its ravishing vibrations, like a pulse;
Beating in heaven! My spirit is athirst
For music—rare! I would bathe
My soul in a serener atmosphere
Than this! I long to mingle with the flock
Led by the "living waters," and lie down
In the "green pastures" of the better land.
When wilt thou break, dull fetter! When shall I
Gather my wings, and, like a rushing thought,
Stretch onward, star by star, up to heaven!"

Thus mused Alethe. She was one to whom
Life had been like the witching of a dream,
Of an untroubled sweetness. She was born
Of a high race, and laid upon the knee,
With her soft eye persuing listlessly
The fretted roof, or on mosaic floors,
Grasped at the tessellated squares, inwrought
With metals curiously. Her childhood pass'd
Like fairy—amid fountains and green haunts,
Trying her little feet upon a lawn
Of velvet evenness, and hiding flowers
In her sweet bosom, as if it were a fair
And pearly altar to crush incense on.
Her youth—O, that was queenly! She was
like

A dream of poetry that may not be
Written or told—exceeding beautiful;

And so came worshippers, and rank bow'd
down

And breathed upon her heart, as with a breath
Of pride; and bound her forehead gorgeously
With dazzling scorn, and gave unto her step
A majesty as if she trod the sea,
And the proud waves, unbidden, lifted her.
And so she grew to woman—her mere look
Strong as a monarch's signal, and her hand
The ambition of a kingdom.

From all this
Turn'd her high heart away! She had a mind
Deep and immortal, and it would not feed
On pageantry, She thirsted for a spring
Of a serener element, and drank
Philosophy, and for a little while
She was allay'd—till, presently, it turn'd
Bitter within her, and her spirit grew
Faint for undying waters.

Then she came
To the pure fount of God—and is athirst
No more—save when the "fever of the world"
Falleth upon her; she will go, sometimes,
Out in the star light quietness, and breathe
A holy aspiration after heaven!

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We would feel obliged to these of our read-
ers who may feel disposed to furnish us with
original articles on any of the subjects contain-
ed in the INSTRUCTOR.