

THE
MIRROR OF TASTE,

AND

DRAMATIC CENSOR.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

VOL. II.

PUBLISHED BY BRADFORD AND INSKEEP, PHILADELPHIA;
AND INSKEEP AND BRADFORD, NEW-YORK.

J. Maxwell, Printer.

1810.

who has mentioned his labours in terms of flattering approbation. He lately painted a portrait of Farmer Jessy, the original inoculator of the cow pox, for the members of the vaccine institution, who, in compliment to his excellent picture, presented him with a handsome piece of plate, bearing an appropriate inscription.

SPORTING INTELLIGENCE:

SALE OF WILD BEASTS.

The most valuable and curious collection of animals ever exhibited to the people of any nation was that which the deceased Mr. Pidcock had brought together, and shown for several years at his menagerie over Exeter Change, London. At particular seasons certain portions of the collection were drawn in large covered carriages up and down to the great fairs in England for the purpose of exhibition. In these journies many accidents happened by oversetting and otherwise; animals were killed, and in one or two instances the loss sustained was very heavy. From the unnatural state of confinement, close air and other causes also several dropped off yearly, and one large elephant which had cost an immense sum of money, died of drinking for the gratification of those who chose to be at the expense of treating him for the curiosity of seeing an elephant swig porter out of a pewter pot. Notwithstanding these losses Mr. Pidcock not only kept up, but progressively increased the number and the value of his collection, for many years before he died, when a public sale of the whole then in the menagerie took place by vendue. Lord Stanley and a crowd of amateurs of the first rank and opulence attended, and bought some articles; but the principal purchasers were showmen who bought, in the way of their business, intending to exhibit their shaggy companions at country fairs as Pidcock had done before them.

It is to be observed that the people of London were gratified, some time since, by the exhibition of a stupendous elephant, which died by poison, administered in a clandestine manner, by some insidious enemy. The huge bones of this Asiatic quadruped were afterwards preserved, and on the present occasion the skeleton was put up for sale. The auctioneer informed his hearers that it was the only one in Europe, a great national curiosity, worthy the attention of a virtuoso. The first sum bidden was twenty guineas, which increased to forty-nine. Two gentlemen then continued to bid against each other, and the skeleton was finally knocked down for fifty-five guineas, to a gentleman of the faculty. The skeleton of the spermaceti whale, sixty-six feet long, which formerly appeared in Rackstraw's museum, sold for nine guineas. A stuffed rhinoceros produced the important sum of five shillings. The horn of this scarce animal was also put up. The auctioneer observed—"Show the horn; it is a very fine one, and let the ladies and gentlemen, who are partial to horns, have a good opportunity to indulge their fancy." The horn sold for one pound two shillings. A very fine preserved monkey, denominated the Satyr, attracted much attention. He was knocked down to a lady, who professed herself fond of extraordinary subjects, for two pounds four shillings. A preserved baboon, bearing a watchman's lantern and rattle, sold for one pound twelve. This effigy appeared as capable of performing his duty as many of our nocturnal guardians. Many scarce and beautiful birds, sold at low prices, and the whole that sold on the first day, consisting of 205 lots, produced about 140l, only.

On the next day the elephant which arrived a short time since in the Lord Keith Indiaman, was disposed of by private contract. Two lions were sent to the tower, as the property of the prince of Brunswick, and the remainder of the savage collection remained to be purchased by the best bidder. A lion and lioness of majestic deportment, were sold to a person named Miles, for two hundred guineas. Both these animals were so tame, that a child might caress and play with them without danger. It was stated that they had been taken in a French prize, going as a present to Bonaparte. A royal Bengal tiger sold for eighty guineas, and

many more scarce and beautiful quadrupeds produced larger sums. This menagerie comprised a very useful and valuable collection of wild animals. Our artists have occasionally derived great information by copying the living subjects in their dens; and, on the whole, its dissolution may be considered a loss to the metropolis. The purchasers in general are showmen, who intend to exhibit their savage companions at country fairs.

CATS KILLED BY A RAT.

THAT the whole of the cat kind, including even the lion and tiger, are a cowardly tribe is only known to those, who are tolerably well versed in zoology. To those who have not considered how clear the distinction is between bravery and ferocity, and who therefore associate the idea of intrepidity with the fell tiger and the sanguinary panther and leopard, the proposition will appear extravagant: nevertheless it is true. Of all animals the dog alone will attack a much superior enemy, and fight against any odds. The cat-kind, even when hungry, never attack where they are not sure of possessing superior force.

A very singular instance of the cowardice of the tribe, occurred lately in London. At a place called Bank side, Westminster, on the margin of the Thames, a labouring man caught a large rat. Being a fellow of an eccentric turn of mind he took it in his head that he could train the animal to fight its natural hunter, the cat; and to that end fed it entirely on young kittens in order to give it confidence, as well as taste for it as prey; and at the same time allowed it no liquid but milk, for the purpose of strengthening it. After he had thus dieted the rat for a fortnight he proposed that it should fight as many cats as it could, at half a crown each, stipulating in return that the person whose cat might kill it should be entitled to one guinea. At four o'clock on that day a full grown cat was put to the rat in a vat, in which the rat had been previously fed; but the cat instantly jumped out, and would not face the rat. No less than fifteen cats were, one after another, set on to combat this animal; of which eight ran away, and seven lay dead. A sixteenth