

greatly promoting the advancement in civilization of the inhabitants of those islands to which its energies are more peculiarly applied. We are informed by the Secretary, the Rev. W. Stobbs, that specimens illustrative of natural history from the southern parts of the kingdom will be peculiarly acceptable to the Society, and as we feel confident that many of our readers will have much pleasure in advancing this promising institution, we think that we cannot do better than refer them to the Secretary, whose residence is at Stromness, Orkney.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PRIZE QUESTION.

To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.

GENTLEMEN,—Having met with the following announcement in the ‘*Repertorium der gesammten Deutschen Literatur*,’ No. XVII. September Heft, 1840, and thinking it might be interesting to some of your readers, I have transmitted it for publication in the *Annals*.

“The Royal Academy of Berlin wishes that experiments be instituted for the purpose of ascertaining, if only in one plant, in what the physical and chemical effects of the mineral constituents and salts which plants derive from the earth during the process of development consist. The inquiry to be conducted with a special regard both to the substances formed by the decaying parts of the plant and to those excreted by the roots; the object of the whole being to elucidate the question of the conversion of the constituents of the soil, as clay, gypsum, &c., into the structure of the plant.” A prize of 300 Thalers (45*l.*) will be awarded to the best paper on this subject which may be written in the German, French, or Latin languages, and must be sent in before the 31st of March 1841. The awarding of the prize to be made in July. Each paper must be accompanied by a motto upon a sealed envelope bearing the writer’s name.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient Servant,

EDWIN LANKESTER, M.D.

Campsall, Feb. 27, 1840.

BOTTLE-NOSSED WHALE.

The following detailed account of one of the *Hyperoodons* noticed in the *Annals* for February last, has been communicated to me by Mr. Henry Johnson, Royal Institution, Liverpool.—WM. THOMPSON.

Belfast, May 4, 1840.

“I beg leave to say that, in your paper published in the *Annals Ann. Nat. Hist.* Vol. 5. No. 32. July 1840. 2 c

of Nat. Hist. for February last, p. 379, you are right in supposing it to have been the Bottle-nosed Whale that was taken near Liverpool. It was exhibited on the Cheshire coast, opposite Liverpool: I went and saw it. It measured 25 feet long and 13 feet in girth; from the point of the nose to the pectoral fin 6 feet, pectoral fin 2 feet 5 inches, from the point of the nose to the eye 3 feet 9 inches. From the origin of the dorsal fin to the end of the tail 9 feet; width of tail 6 feet, dorsal fin 20 inches; from the eye to the gape 21 inches. It was caught at East Hoylake in four feet water, and when first seen was throwing the water from the blow-hole two roods high. The fishermen attempted to stick grappling irons into its sides, but they slid off; and when its assailants were about to give up the chase, (by this time the tide was making fast, and the whale was exerting itself to get away,) one of the prongs of the grappling irons slid along, and by chance caught in the blow-hole, after which it blew no more water and died almost instantly without a struggle. After being shown opposite Liverpool for a few days, it was taken back to Hoylake, cut up, and boiled for oil. Its stomach contained an immense quantity of cuttle-fish beaks, in fact there was nothing else in it. There were two teeth in the lower jaw, very conical in form, and very sharp-pointed. The part which was above the socket resembles a cock's spur, but the lower half is suddenly swelled out and hollow. They measure 1 inch 8 lines in length; no part of them was observable above the gum, and it was not till I cut for them that I saw them. The bones were purchased by the Committee of the Royal Institution, and I intend having them put up this summer.—HENRY JOHNSON, Royal Institution.

Liverpool, April 25, 1840."

REMARKABLE CHANGE OF HABIT IN THE HARE.

MY DEAR LORD,—I send you the story of the Hares I told at Florence-court; Major Bingham is the proprietor alluded to, and my father related the story in a Lecture for the Zoological Society 'On the Instinct of Animals.'

Most truly yours,

To the Earl of Enniskillen.

S. G. OTWAY.

April 22, 1840.

"A considerable landed proprietor has a large tract of sand hills within the Mullet, which tract (open as it is to all the Atlantic storms) has been found to have been greatly impaired by the introduction of rabbits, who by their burrowing and disturbing the bent



1840. "Bottle-nosed Whale." *Annals of natural history* 5, 361–362.
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