conſtable, appointed by the delivery of a rod at the an­nual convention.

SHEARBILL, the *Rhynchops Nigra* of Linnæus, the *Black Skimmer* of Pennant and Latham, and *Cut- water* of Cateſhy. Its bill is much compreſſed ; the edges are ſharp ; the lower mandible is four inches and a half long ; the upper only three ; the baſe red ; the rest is black : the forehead, chin, front of the neck, the breaſt, and belly, are white: the head and whole upper part of the body are black : the wings are of the same colour : the lower part of the inner webs of the pri­maries is white : the tail is ſhort, and a little forked ; the middle feathers are duſky ; the others are white on their ſides : the legs are weak and red : the length is one foot eight inches : the extent is three feet ſeven inches. It inhabits America from New York to Gui­ana. It ſkims nimbly along the water, with its under mandible just beneath the ſurface, feeding on the infects and ſmall fiſh as it proceeds. It frequents alſo oyſter- banks ; its bill being partly like that of the oyſter- catcher, adapted for preying on thoſe ſhell-fish.

SHEATHING, in the ſea-language, is the caſing that part of a ſhip which is to be under water with fir- board of an inch thick ; firſt laying hair and tar mixed together under the boards, and then nailing them on, in order to prevent worms from eating the ſhip’s bot­tom.—Ships of war are now generally ſheathed with copper : but copper ſheathing is liable to be corroded by the action of ſalt water, and ſomething is ſtill want­ing to effect this purpoſe. It is very probable that tar might anſwer very well.

In the Corniſh mines, copper or braſs pumps are often placed in the deepeſt parts, and are conſequentlyexpoſed to the vitriolic or other mineral waters with which ſome of theſe mines abound, and which are known to have a much ſtronger effect on copper than ſea-water. Theſe pumps are generally about six feet long, and are ſcrewed together, and made tight by the interpoſition of a ring of lead, and the joinings are after­wards tarred. One of theſe pumps was ſo much cor­roded as to render it unfit for uſe ; but the ſpots of tar, which by accident had dropped on it, preſerved the parts they covered from the action of the water. Theſe projected in ſome places more than a quarter of an inch ; and the joints were ſo far defended by the thin coat of tar, that it was as perfect as when it came from the hands of the manufacturer. If tar thus effectually de­fends copper from theſe acrimonious waters, can there remain a doubt of its preſerving it from the much milder waters of the ſea ?

SHEATS, in a ſhip, are ropes bent to the clews of the sails ; ſerving in the lower sails to haul aft the clews of the ſail ; but in topſails they ſerve to haul home the clew of the ſail cloſe to the yard-arm.

SHEEP, in zoology. See OvIs and Wool.

Amongſt the various animals with which Divine Pro­vidence has ſtored the world for the uſe of man, none is to b e found more innocent, more uſeful, or more valu­

able, than the ſheep. The ſheep ſupplies us with food and clothing, and finds ample employment for our poor at all times and ſeaſons of the year, whereby a variety of manufactures of woollen cloth is carried on without interruption to domeſtic comfort and loſs to friendly ſociety or injury to health, as is the caſe with many other occupations. Every lock of wool that grows on its back becomes the means of ſupport to ſtaplers, dyers, pickers, ſcourers, ſcriblers, carders, comb­ers, ſpinners, ſpoolers, warpers, queelers, weavers, fullers, tuckers, burlers, ſhearmen, preſſers, clothiers, and packers, who, one after another, tumble and toſs, and twiſt, and bake, and boil, this raw material, till they have each extracted a livelihood out of it ; and then comes the merchant, who, in his turn, ſhips it (in its higheſt ſtate of improvement) to all quarters of the globe, from whence he brings back every kind of riches to his country, in return for this valuable commodity which the ſheep affords.

Beſides this, the uſeful animal, after being deprived of his coat, produces another againſt the next year ; and when we are hungry, and kill him for food, he gives us his ſkin to employ the fell-mongers and parch­ment-makers, who ſupply us with a durable material for ſecuring our eſtates, rights, and poſſeſſions ; and if our enemies take the field againſt us, ſupplies us with a powerful inſtrument for rouſing our courage to repel their attacks. When the parchment-maker has taken as much of the ſkin as he can uſe, the glue-maker comes after and picks up every morſel that is left, and there­with ſupplies a material for the carpenter and cabi­net-maker, which they cannot do without, and which is eſſentially neceſſary before we can have elegant furni­ture in our houſes ; tables, chairs, looking-glaſſes, and a hundred other articles of convenience : and when the winter nights come on, while we are deprived of the cheering light of the ſun, the ſheep ſupplies us with an artificial mode of light, whereby we preſerve every pleaſure of domeſtic ſociety, and with whose aſſiſtance we can continue our work, or write or read, and improve our minds, or enjoy the facial mirth of our tables. An­other part of the ſlaughtered animal ſupplies us with an ingredient necessary for making good common ſoap, a useful ſtore for producing cleanlineſs in every family, rich or poor. Neither need the horns be thrown away ; for they are converted by the button-makers and turners into a cheap kind of buttons, tips for bows, and many uſeful ornaments. From the very trotters an oil is extracted uſeful for many purpoſes, and they afford good food when baked in an oven.

Even the bones are uſeful alſo ; for by a late inven­tion of Dr Higgins, they are found, when reduced to aſhes, to be an uſeful and eſſential ingredient in the compoſition of the fineſt artificial ſtone in ornamental work for chimney-pieces, cornices of rooms, houſes, &c. which renders the composition more durable by effec­tually preventing its cracking @@(a).

If it is objected to the meek inoffenſive creature, that

@@@(a) Any curious perſon would be much entertained to ſee the manufactory of bone-aſh, new carried on by Mr Miniſh of White chapel, New Road, wherein the bones of ſheep and cows undergo many ingenious proceſſes. 1. There is a mill to break them ; 2. A cauldron to extract their oil, marrow, and fat ; 3. A reverberatory to heat them red-hot ; 4. An oven for thoſe bones to moulder to aſhes; 5. A ſtill to collect the fumes of the burnt