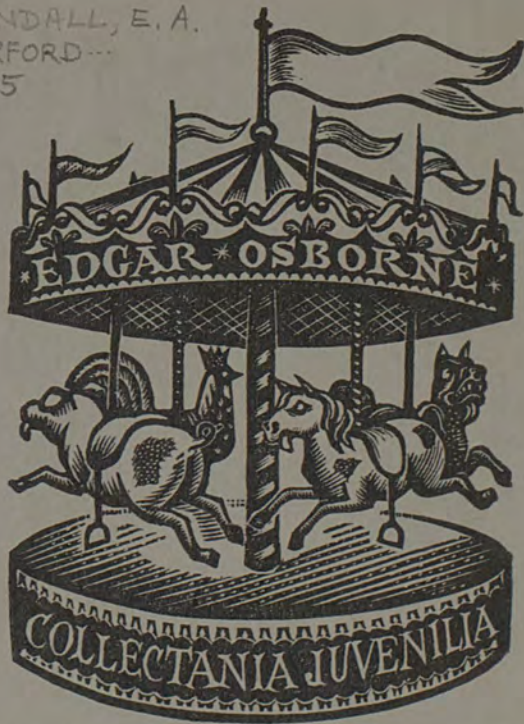


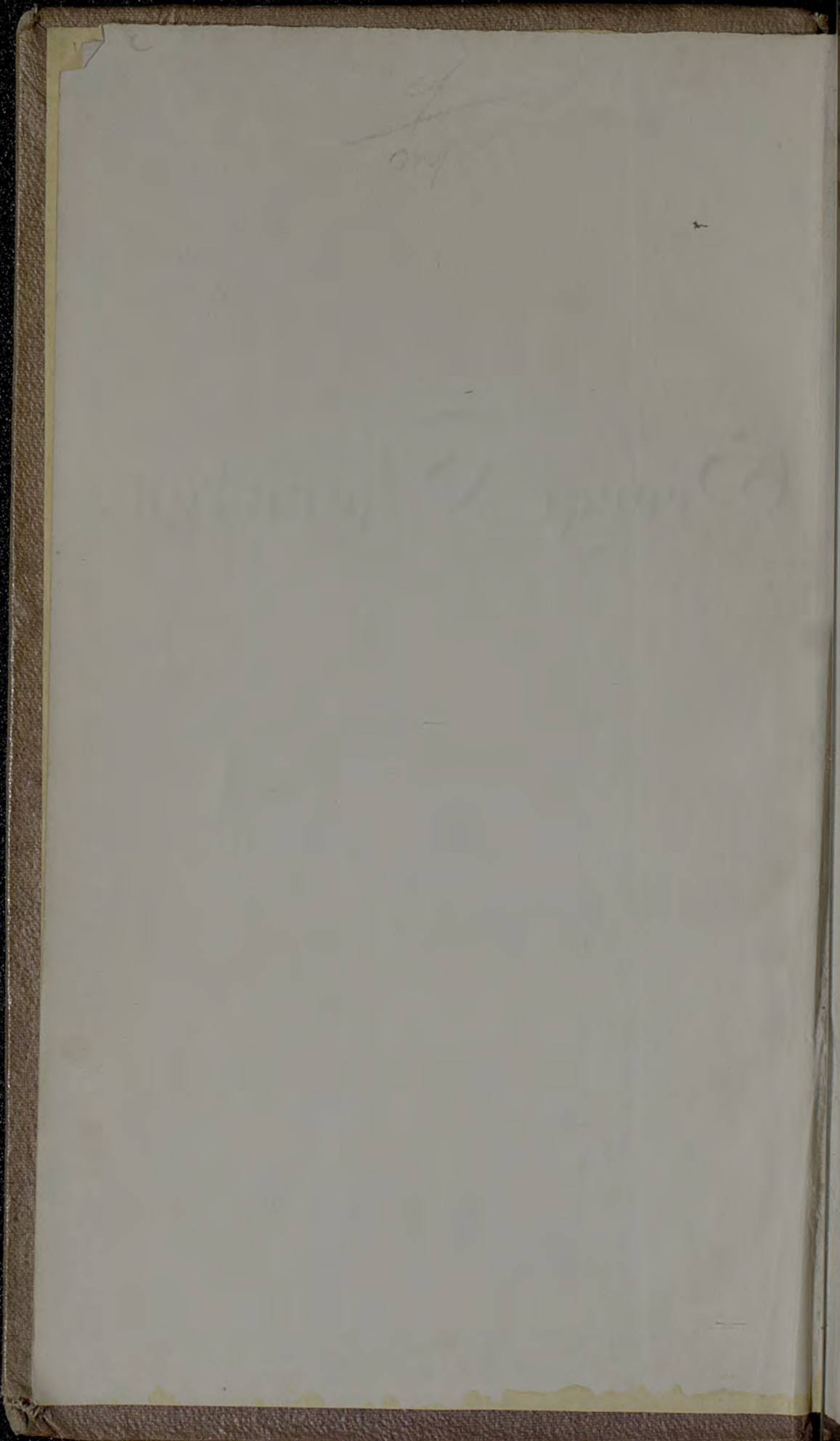
SB
KENDALL, E. A.
BURFORD---
1835
C.1



37131039 922 521

II 902

George Thornton.

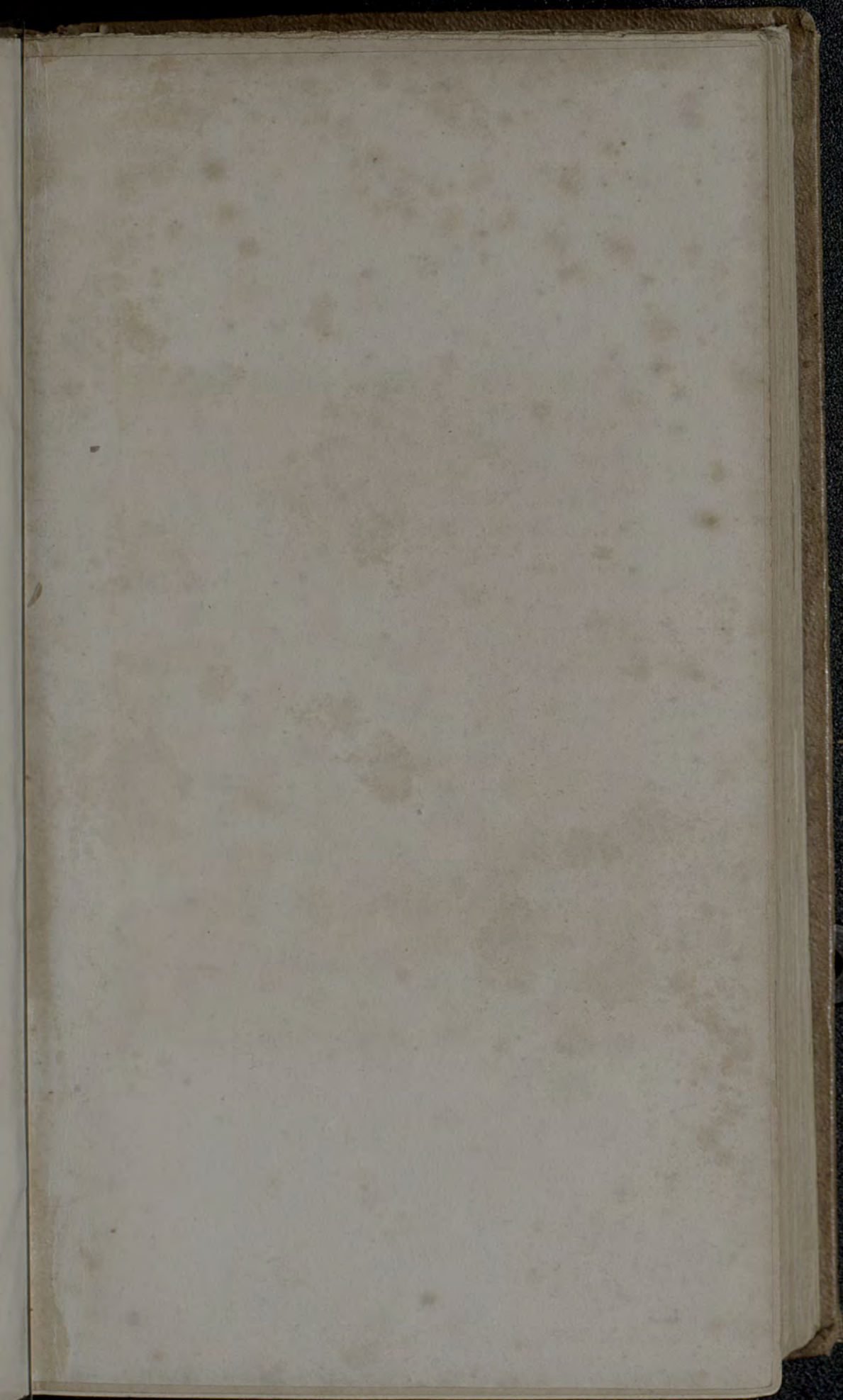


BURFORD COTTAGE,

AND ITS

ROBIN-RED-BREAST.

CHISWICK :
PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM.





B. Cruickshank.

Deysport.

BURFORD COTTAGE

London, Published by T. Agnew & Sons, Chiswick, Jan 7, 1855.

BURFORD COTTAGE,

AND ITS

ROBIN-RED-BREAST.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF KEEPER'S TRAVELS.

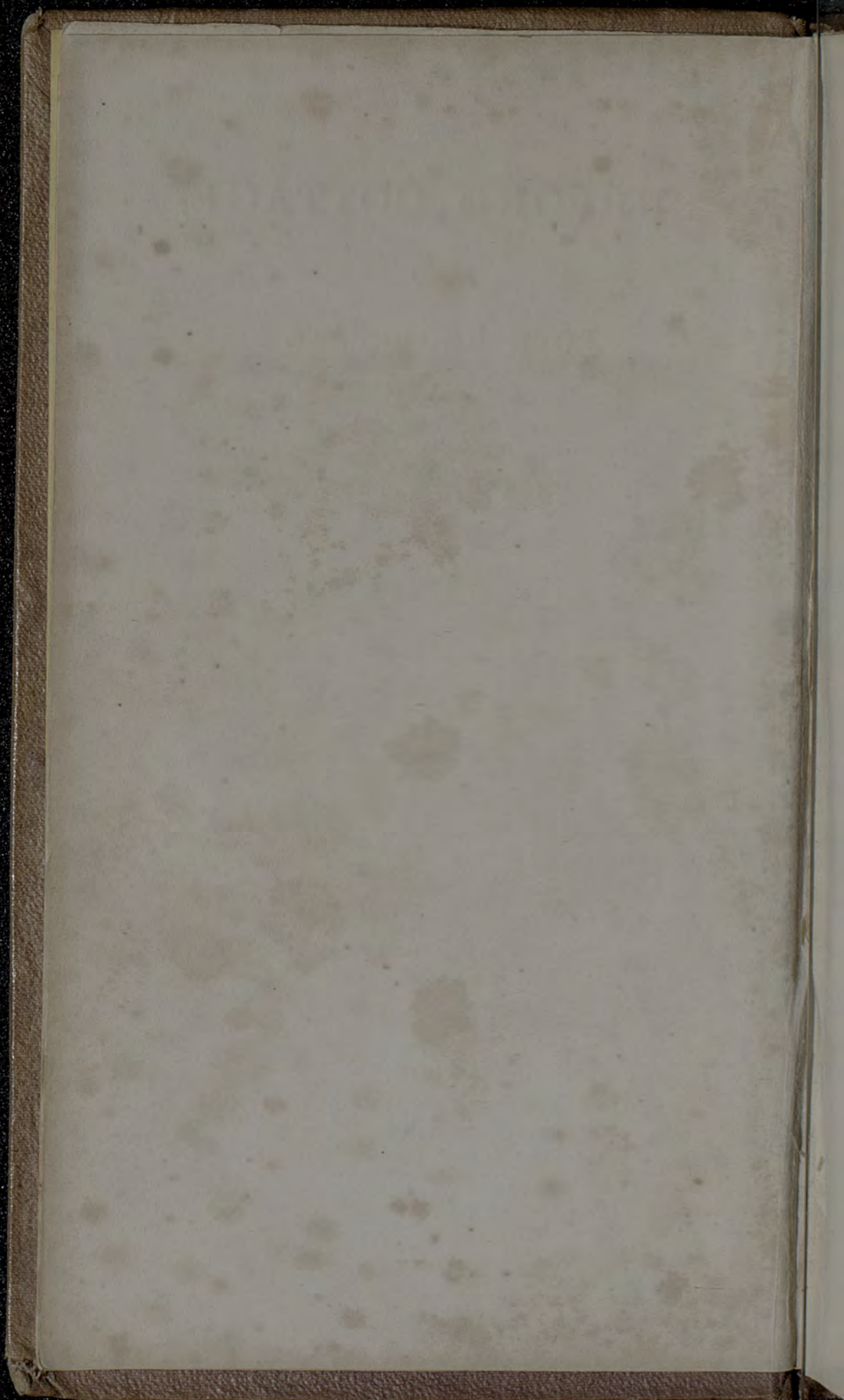


“ A bird of the air shall tell the matter.”

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR THOMAS TEGG AND SON, CHEAPSIDE;
TEGG, WISE, AND TEGG, DUBLIN ; GRIFFIN AND CO. GLASGOW ;
AND J. AND S. A. TEGG, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.

1835.



TO
JOHN FORSTER, ESQ.
OF EGHAM, IN THE COUNTY OF SURREY;

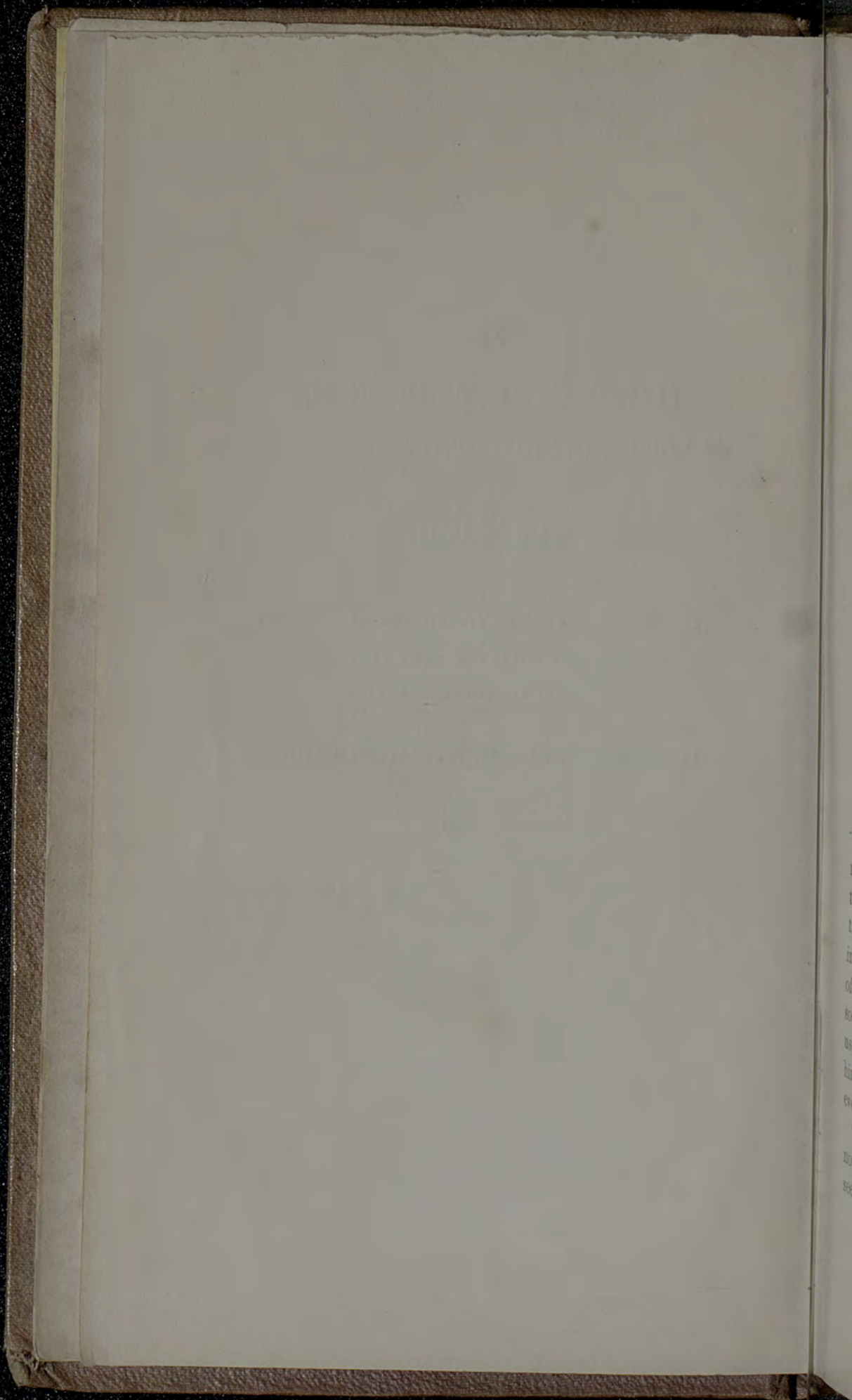
This Volume,

INTENDED FOR THE COMMUNICATION OF KNOWLEDGE,
AND FOR THE CULTIVATION OF VIRTUE,
AMONG ITS YOUTHFUL READERS,

IS WARMLY AND RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



BURFORD COTTAGE,

AND ITS

ROBIN-RED-BREAST.

CHAPTER I.

Not content
With every food of life to nourish man,
Thou mak'st all Nature beauty to his eye,
Or music to his ear! SMART.

“AH! Maria, there is the short, sweet note of the Robin-red-breast already!” cried Mr. Paulett to his wife, as he turned from one of the open French windows toward the breakfast-table, at Burford Cottage, one fine morning, last autumn: we are now only at the beginning of October, and yet the Robin appears to be growing sociable, and as if willing to establish himself among us, against the season of winter frosts. I have heard him once or twice before, at this time and in the evening, out of that fir, beyond the maple.”

“O, papa, where is the Robin?” cried little Emily, now in her eighth year; “where is the Robin? Let me see him! Shall I carry him some crumbs?”

“ Don't be too much in a hurry, Emily,” said Mrs. Paulett: “ wait till the weather grows colder, and all the leaves have fallen; and then he will leave his hiding-places, and come to you himself, and hop upon the window-sill, and even into the room, if you do but save him from the cat; but, if you disturb him now, you will frighten him away, and he will go to some other garden, where there are no impatient children to tease him; and we shall never hear his pretty note, nor see his smooth olive back, and large dark eye, and orange breast, in the bright frosty mornings, or under the dull gray skies of the long winter that is coming!”

“ What a very foolish girl Emily is, mamma,” burst forth her presumptuous brother, Richard, who had lived two years longer than herself: “ she is always so *impatient*; she never stays for anything,” he concluded, echoing and enlarging upon the word which had been made use of by his mother.

“ And are you much wiser or more patient than your sister, Mr. Grave-airs?” said Mrs. Paulett, checking, though with a laugh, the tone of superiority assumed by the young heir-apparent. “ You were upon the start, and with an exclamation of an ‘ O!’ at the very moment when your sister thought it best to ask her papa where the bird was to be found, before she sprang away with her crumbs!”

“ Yes, mamma,” added Emily, with much satisfaction; “ Richard is always ready to talk of my faults, but never of his own! Is he not, now, mamma?”

“ Ah! you are both alike,” finished Mrs. Paulett; “ you are as ready to find fault with Richard as he with you; and, perhaps, it is all very well, so long as you are not ill-natured to each other. Both of you are

quick-sighted to see the little slips of each; and, perhaps, by your so doing, both of you are improved, and your papa and I are saved a great deal of trouble!"

The Robin warbled his sweet note again; but, with the exception of one short-lived moment, the children were soon occupied too seriously with their breakfasts, to do more than look with fitful curiosity at the red and yellow leaves of the trees and shrubs that rose above the flowers, and were grouped around the grass; in the vain hope of distinguishing the little bird that wore the same colours as the leaves, and moved as gently and as silently as the lightest of those which, slightly burdened with the dew, were every moment floating, one after the other, from the spray above, to the littered herbage underneath.

"I am glad, however," said Mrs. Paulett, to her husband, "that the Robin has found us out again, or come back to his old quarters; for I dare to say that it is the same which we had with us last winter; and now, that all the gayer song-birds of the spring and summer are quite gone, we shall begin to know again the value of the little songs, at evening, and in the morning, of the Wren and Red-breast!"

"I am thinking, my love," returned Mr. Paulett, "of the real *value* of song-birds, in the list of human enjoyments; and therefore quite agree with you. The colours and odours of flowers, and of trees and herbs, and the songs of birds, are certainly substantial points for administering to human use and pleasure."

"We are to judge so, perhaps," replied Mrs. Paulett, "if it were only from the lively interest which is and ever has been taken in them by all mankind. Witness poets, historians, philosophers, statesmen, and their followers and admirers, men and women, young and old!"

“ Yes; and from the dejection and complaints,” resumed her husband, “ of those who, unlike ourselves, have ever been placed in situations to make them know what it really is to be without them! I observe, that in the latest book which we have seen concerning New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land, the author seriously advises emigrants to carry with them English singing-birds; in order, says he, to promote the breaking of the ‘ horrid silence which so often reigns in the vast forests of those countries!’ ”

“ No singing-birds!” interrupted Emily; “ why, I never heard of such countries in all my life! I would not live in them, if they were the prettiest countries in the world;—that is, unless I had a nice aviary, like Miss Fosbrooke’s, or a beautiful greenhouse, with little birds flying in it, and gold and silver fish swimming in large globes, like that beautiful new building at Lady Eddington’s.”

“ Well done, little chatterbox,” pursued her papa; “ and now I will tell you, that you may the better understand what you have to be thankful for, in the charming prospect from our windows, and in the delicious walks and drives about our village; in the paths over the green fields; in the clear brooks and little bridges; in the slopes, and hills, and valleys; in the cooing of the wood-pigeons; in the songs of the linnets, blackbirds, and thrushes; in the chatter of the furze-chat, and even in the cackle of the poultry, and the crow of the gallant cock;—I will tell you that much of those countries is described as being no less dismal to the eye, than empty to the ear; but especially dull and melancholy, because of the absence of song-birds, and of their consequent excessive *silence*: for, though we sometimes complain of you and your

brother for making more than your share of noise; yet it is true that *silence*, carried to excess, is one of the things which, if, in civilized life, and in ordinary situations, it could ever fall to our lot to feel it, most distressful to human nature, and probably, therefore, as injurious. This author, whom I am reading, though he talks of occasional magnificence of prospect, and even of Alpine scenery, in New South Wales; yet paints its interior, and even its coasts, and the coasts of all New Holland, as, in the most remarkable degree, flat, naked, solitary, and dreary. Ascending a hill, it must be confessed, of respectable height, he says, that from its summit, he beholds, even to the horizon, or like the prospect of an ocean, immense plains, of the greenest verdure, it is true, but without a single tree! One of the plains, not wholly seen from the hill, was known to be at least twenty-five miles in length, and from five to ten in breadth; and in the whole *flat*, there must have been at least a hundred thousand acres of land: 'It would be in vain,' he continues, 'for me to attempt to convey an idea of the effect of a view over these vast *solitudes*. The extreme *silence* which prevails here, almost exceeds what the imagination can conceive. It is true that some *emooes*, or perhaps a solitary bustard (?), can sometimes be distinguished; but they are generally afar off; and the traveller may frequently ride many miles without seeing a living creature.' Speaking of the shores of New Holland generally (and it is known that New South Wales is a part of New Holland, or, as it is sometimes called, Australia), he says, that they have a most dreary and inhospitable appearance. The circumference of New Holland is about six thousand miles; and he offers descriptions, from part to part, in order, says he, to give the reader some slight idea

how desolate and melancholy must be the general aspect of the shores of this immense island. A feature, too, to be added to the unfortunate landscape, is this, that in the interior there prevails, at the same time, a wide-spread want of water; and often, where rivulets and ponds (called, by courtesy, rivers and lakes) have recently existed, so as even to have received names from the earlier settlers, the names only, and not the waters, at present, from some undiscovered cause, continue*!"

"Oh, what a country," cried Mrs. Paulett, "for any body to go to! I often think so, upon account of the poor Mowbrays, and their fine children!"

"This is no description of the *whole* of the country," replied her husband; "and in parts, as has appeared, even from our author, there is no want of beauty, nor of forests, rivers, hills, and mountains. In Van Diemen's Land, especially, there is no sort of deficiency of beauties for the eye. But, besides that I wish these young people to understand how much they have to be grateful for, in having been born in any cultivated and civilized country, and especially in their own; I dwell upon the particular which is characteristic and melancholy in all these countries, whether upon their hills or in their dales, in their woods or in their open grounds; namely, their *silence*; and this, especially, from their deficiency in singing-birds."

"What! no larks nor nightingales," cried Richard; "nor goldfinches, nor linnets, nor Robin-red-breasts?"

"These islands of the Southern Hemisphere," answered his papa, "have nothing—not the least example—either animal or vegetable, exactly similar to what we witness in the Northern; or, at least, without such exceptions as are easily accounted for, and which

* See Breton's Excursions in New South Wales, &c. &c.

prove the rule* ; but, as to singing or song-birds, not only they have none of ours, but also, they are without any of their own !”

“ From all that we have read,” subjoined Mr. Paulett, “ it seems a strange country, this New Holland ! Placed at the other end of the globe, and scarcely risen above the ocean, its rivers run inland, instead of into the sea ; its lakes are no more than swamps during the rainy season, and sands during the dry ; its rivers are either failing at their sources, or else drowning all their banks ; its natives are described as of the lowest stage of humanity ; its birds and beasts are few, and, for the most part, of the most extraordinary forms ; some of its fishes poison those who eat them ; it has insects that are as abundant as they are detestable, and as detestable as they are abundant ; and, as to its fruits and flowers, what can we say in their favour, whether for number, or for beauty, or for sweetness ? Other new countries beautify our own with treasures without number ; but for what new beauties, or new sweetnesses, are we indebted to New Holland ? Look at the heaths, and aloes, and geraniums, and so many other ornaments of our greenhouses and conservatories, from the Cape of Good Hope ; at the dahlias, the sumachs, the Virginia creepers, that make our gardens gorgeous, from America ; look at the roses from India and Persia, and at the thirty-six varieties of jasmine which we derive from the same countries ;—but what have we to boast of from New Holland ?”

“ Pardon me, my dearest,” answered her husband ;

* This is a question upon which the author of these pages has long since offered notices to the scientific world ; and upon which circumstances alone have hitherto delayed the appearance of his fuller observations.

“ but you omit all the exceptions that may be made in favour of poor New Holland, which, after all, has a certain number of valuable gifts in each of these kinds, even as already discovered ; and you are to remember, too, that as to much the larger part of its surface, it is still wholly unexplored. If now, too, we know enough of it to risk the assertion, that all its beauties, in plants and animals, are comparatively few, still they are not nothing. It must be confessed to you, in the meantime, that the quadrupeds of New Holland make but a scanty and meagre show ; and that instead of the beautiful, the noble, the graceful, and even the picturesque proportions, magnitudes, ornaments, and colours, of our elks, our deer, and antelopes, our oxen, horses, and sheep, our camels and our *asses* (for I will not leave the shaggy *donkey* out of the catalogue) ; to say nothing of the elephant, the zebra, the rhinoceros and hippopotamus, which adorn and dignify our Northern Hemisphere ; we find no quadruped, in New Holland, larger or more beautiful than the limping kangaroo, its wombats, peramelas, flying phalangistas, echnidas, and ornithorynchuses. Even its beasts of prey are small, and, as it were, contemptible. It has neither bear, nor wolf, nor fox ; and much less the kingly lion, the glorious tiger, the beautiful leopard, or alike beautiful panther ; though some of our emigrants have carried out fox-hounds, to where there is no chase but for kangaroo-dogs ; and though the charming poet of the “ Pleasures of Hope,” in a later production of his muse, has pictured “ panthers ” as now lapping at the river sides of New Holland ; an event which, even in the future, can never happen till some panther, carried in our ships to the coast of New Holland, shall afterward slip the cage of its showman, or the den of some Zoological Garden, to be established

(and perhaps shortly!) beneath the stars of the Antarctic Pole.—”

Mr. Paulett was uttering the last syllables of his instructive speech, when, enlivened, I suppose, by the tones of his voice, and the store of new ideas which I was collecting from all I heard, *I*, the Robin-red-breast, who am here reporting it to the reader;—*I*, once again, sung out the sugary cadence that had opened the conversation, but that now, to my real regret, brought it to a sudden close! To find that there was a part of the world in which, at least as Mr. Paulett pretended, there are no such things as Robin-red-breasts, was an occurrence so startling to my fancy, that I involuntarily hopped a little from twig to twig, and ejaculated a few hasty notes, either incredulous of the unexpected history; or shocked, liked Mrs. Paulett, at the notion of so strange a country; or inwardly rejoicing that I was far away from it! But the effect of my vivacity was very different from any thing that I either designed or wished. Richard, with all his philosophy, did not refrain from rising off his chair, and calling out, a little loudly, “There is Robin again! there is Robin!” and Emily, though anxious, upon this occasion, to appear more discreet than her brother, as well as more attentive to their mamma’s advice, still permitted herself to be drawn, a step or two, toward the nearest window. Mr. and Mrs. Paulett recollected that breakfast had been for some time finished; Mr. Paulett had business; Mrs. Paulett had orders for the servants; and the children had lessons that could not wait. Every one arose, and I, too, took to my wings. The family left the breakfast-parlour; and I, for my part, flew into the adjacent grove.

CHAP. II.

What cannot arts and industry perform?

BEATTIE.

THE following day, at the same hour, was as bright as that which had preceded it; and I was again sunning myself about the maple-tree, and indulging in the freshness of the morning air, when the family at Burton Cottage assembled at their breakfast. My little song was again heard; and such are the links by which ideas are connected with each other, and so easily do outward things enkindle inward, that there seemed to want but this, in order that the whole party should resume its yesterday's reflections upon singing-birds; upon Robin-red-breasts; and upon New Holland, which is without the whole!

"You allowed, however, my dear," said Mrs. Paulett, "that New Holland is really a singular corner of the globe, with many blemishes, and many imperfections; at least comparatively so, and as taking all the remainder of the earth into the account?"

"Oh! doubtless," answered her husband, "the whole of that is true; but let us sum up, on the other side, a part of those things which may either soften our sentence upon it for the present, or encourage our hopes for it, as to the future. New Holland has really every aspect of being comparatively a *new* country; a country newly raised (in the comparison with more

Northern continents and islands) above the level of the sea. That interior hollowness, or basin-like formation of the surface, which is the cause of the running of so many of its rivers inland, instead of to the sea, is not the least of the circumstances which may justify such an idea; for it is common, both with the sea, and with great rivers, to raise, by means of their deposits, either in storms or inundations, their immediate shores and banks above the level of the remoter soil which they thus engirdle. It is thus, so often, with the downs, or *dunes*, or hills upon the sea-coasts; and it is thus that the immediate banks of the Mississippi (for example) are natural dykes, or higher than the lands behind them. But, in such a structure of its surface, New Holland is not peculiar; or, rather, the peculiarity consists only in the lateness of the day at which we see it. In the heart of Northern Asia, and lying between Northern Mongolia and Northern China, quite to the Chinese Wall, is a vast and hollow tract of country, in which every thing demonstrates its being the dry bed of an ancient sea. The Mongols, upon the authority of tradition, assert that it anciently contained a sea, and add, that it will receive a sea again. The Chinese call it Han Hae, or the Dried-up Sea; and assert, that the people of Corea, if so disposed, by availing themselves of this inland basin, and opening a passage to it, through their mountains, from the great ocean upon its coast, might inundate, not only all Mongolia, but all Russia at the same time! This vast hollow, the Shan Mo of the Chinese, and True Gobi, Cobi, Desert, or Desert of Gobi, or Cobi (written Kobi on our maps), is in the midst of the more extended Gobi, from which it is separated by the Boosoo Shilolm, or Girdle of Rocks: Gobi,

in the Mongolian tongue, signifying the same with Sahara, in the north of Africa; that is, a country without wood and water; while by the opposite term, Changgae, is to be understood a fertile, hilly, wooded, and well-watered country. In the True Gobi, or the Mo of the Chinese, which, however, is small, as compared with the whole country, the sands and clays are abundant in salt; there are little salt lakes still left; and the plants are a peculiar species of the genera that are found upon the sea-coasts*. I compare," added Mr. Paulett, "with this changing state of a sunken and internal portion of the North of Asia, the internal basin of New Holland."

"But what say you to the natives?" pursued Mrs. Paulett.

"I believe, in the first place," answered her husband, "that they are decried to excess by the Europeans; and, in the second place, I account for their deficiencies, bodily and intellectual, such as they are, from the acknowledged deficiencies of their country, and from their depressed and unassisted situation. I believe that they belong to the great family of man, and not to that of the oran-otang, to which so many would consign them. There are persons so ignorant as to assert that they are without any form, or even sentiment, of religion; as if man any where, or at any time, has subsisted in such a state; and as if, in point of fact, these very persons did not, in the same breath, inform us of circumstances which make manifest their possession of a religion! In a cave, in a certain direction, has been found a carving of a figure

* Recent Journey of Dr. Bunge, from St. Petersburg to the Frontiers of China.

of the sun, and of certain other symbols; and I doubt not these people belong to the ancient and simple congregation of sun-worshippers, or fire-worshippers, whom the sage of Persia, not founded, but instructed! They are accused, by our colonists and convicts, of being thieves and murderers; but the point is pretty well settled, that even allowing for the natural resentment and resistance of the people of an invaded country, Europeans, and not the aborigines, are the ordinary aggressors, and that what follows is less robbery and murder, than war and vengeance, and even a struggle for life and food. But what Europeans ask for, and more commonly obtain, is the full power and all privilege to plunder, and commit enormities, without suffering by any reprisal; and from this habitual course of things, their surprise is even as real as their outcries are astounding, if, by any chance, they receive blow for blow! Even when things have taken some shape of order between the strangers and the natives, the outrages of the former, and the patient suffering of the latter, become the established order also. I remember, that when I was in the neighbourhood of the Tuscarora Village, at Lewistown, upon the river Niagara, in North America, and when in other similar neighbourhoods; I never failed to hear, upon white authority itself, that the Indians were discouraged from all attempts at cultivating their little plots of ground, by the constant plunder of the white people; so that for the former to plant corn, or beans, or melons, or cucumbers, with any hope of gathering either, would be absurd! That the Indians would plunder the grounds or gardens of the white people, nobody so much as dreamed of; but that the white people would plunder those of the Indians, was held as cer-

tain as it was cruel! Except that, in general circumstances, savages are universally found more honest and less corrupt than the men of civilization, there is no reason why we should expect the natives of New Holland to be more free from crime than their European invaders; but that, while the latter are hourly diminishing the supplies of food, by the destruction of the kangaroos, and of 'such small deer,' which is the whole that their country affords, the former should fall under the temptation to molest the flocks and herds of the settlers can hardly be thought, even in savages, very extraordinary!"

"You are so stout a champion," said Mrs. Paulett, "for the natives of New Holland, who, be it remembered also, are at least in a very inferior condition of humanity to those of the adjacent islands, particularly New Zealand; that I long to hear what you will say for its plants, and still more, for its animals?"

"The plants of *Botany Bay*, my love," cried Mr. Paulett, "are certainly not scanty, however limited may be the number of those that are singularly useful or ornamental; but here, as well as in what belongs to the naked surface of the country, is space for that progress of improvement upon which I reckon so largely for the future. I have supposed that New Holland is comparatively a new country from the hand of nature, and it is certainly new under the hand of man; and this latter point brings us round again to our singing-birds, and our Robin-red-breasts; and to some other considerations which I am willing, in this discussion, to press upon the memory of our children, as lessons of a fruitful wisdom, to accompany the formal lessons of their *geography*. We seldom think of, and more seldom, perhaps, do we

justly appreciate, all the changes, direct and indirect, upon the surface of the earth, as well as the more obvious accommodations, which are wrought and fashioned by the labour of man; that is, what advantages, in these respects, belong to one country above another; and what just division we ought to make in our thoughts, between the works of nature, and the works of art, as we find them upon the surface of the globe.

“My dear children,” continued Mr. Paulett (but addressing himself, as he now spoke, more immediately to Emily and Richard); “that acquaintance with the sites, the circumstances, and the natural productions of foreign and distant countries, which, with so many other matters of fact, it is, in an especial manner, the education of the day to attempt the fixing of in youthful memories like yours, and to which I am now contributing my share; all this is estimable, no doubt, as connected with what is called *liberal knowledge*, and to prevent (as is the more common motive) young persons from ‘showing,’ as it is said, ‘their ignorance;’ that is, because there are *certain*, and, in short, *innumerable* things, of which it is expected that persons, and even children, of a certain condition and opportunity in life (by ancient allusion called the liberal or *free* condition, and by familiar and not unconnected usage, the respectable, the *gentle*, or *genteel*), should never be seen in ignorance. But this memory of facts is, at the last, of very little use or dignity, compared with the higher wisdom which, from instance to instance, it is our duty and our happiness to draw from them; and which, when we are either too young, too dull, too thoughtless, or too ill-informed, to draw it for ourselves, we should learn from the lips of others. Now, the facts of which we have been speaking this

morning (and a great many of which I think you will remember, if it is only from their relation to song-birds, and to our Robin-red-breast in particular), may serve to impress upon your minds two solemn and even practical truths, eminently worthy of a *liberal education*, because corrective of vulgar prejudices, of narrow estimates, and of idle errors—”

“ Listen, Richard,” said Mrs. Paulett; “ and don’t plague poor pussy, Emily, by forcing her bonnet on, while your papa is talking to you !”

“ The first thing,” proceeded their papa, “ which I wish to fix in your young memories, belongs to natural history, and the next to human. You have read, in a poem as elegant as it is pious, that ‘ *all nature*’ is filled with music for the ear of man; and you have also seen, in another poem, of much, but of less unmingled merit, the natural earth described as supereminently beautiful, because—

‘ As yet untouched by any meaner hand
Than his who made it;’

But, in remarks like these, there is, as you have now heard, exaggeration, inaccuracy, and, as to the latter, even a share of superstition. It is not in “ *all nature*,” that all the charms of nature are always to be found; and it would be untrue if we were to say, that so mean a hand as that of man is any where incapable, or is not continually successful, in giving natural beauty to scenes of nature otherwise very much in want of it; not less than in making the works of nature useful as to human purposes. In truth, nature supplies all the materials, and all the principles, either of utility or beauty; man is the author of none of these, nor has he the power to make even the smallest of them; but

it is the obvious destiny of art, the power and the privilege of man, to seize upon these materials and these principles, and by their means, to perform works, which, instead of being despised,—instead of being spoken of invidiously, in contrast with those of nature—often dispute the palm of beauty with the works of nature, and always glorify nature, as testifying the powers of the creature which nature has endowed! Looking only to rural objects, and to the surface of the earth, for food, for labour, and for travel; looking only to the landscape and to the ground-plot; and putting out of view our roads and bridges, and other of the more conspicuous of the field and forest works of man, in how many other particulars does not man assist the face of nature, as well for natural beauty, as for human sustenance and ease? It is most certain that, from space to space, and in particular situations, nature herself collects together a whole profusion of her charms, excludes deformity, gives to man all models, and asks nothing from his aid. She has her woods, her lawns, her slopes, her dells; her peaceful vales and awful summits; her sparkling torrents, her clear streams, her limpid springs; her radiant flowers, and all her many-coloured foliages. But in how many other situations, does not, and cannot the hand of man release nature from a thousand thraldoms which obstruct her labours, and transplant into silent, solitary, and sterile spots, treasures which are nature's own, but yet beyond her local reach? How much that is rugged can he not smooth; how much that is uniform can he not vary; how much that is barren can he not fertilize; how much that is pestilential can he not purify? To how many stagnant waters can he not give motion; and upon how many bleak

and naked surfaces can he not spread out the richest carpet of flowers, and the richest canopies of fruits? Let not, then, the works of nature be overrated, or at least too narrowly interpreted; and let not those of men be despised, nor too hastily distinguished from those of nature, seeing that they are the works of men, themselves the works of nature!

“In the example, then, of a new country, how much is there not to be expected for the future, from the works of men, whether as to their plants, their animals, their general productions, or as to the appearance of their surface only! Those solitary and silent flats, shall they one day not be lowing with cattle, bleating with sheep, shining with corn-fields, blushing with orchards; smiling with cottages and villages, warm with the smoke of chimneys, and gay with the domes of cities; shall not canals water the dry places, and drains redeem the marshes?

“Nor is this all. It is not only what is direct from the labours of man, but what is indirect as well; what follows without design, and often without expectation. Culture changes the soils of countries; and commerce and cultivation together, change, in the most remarkable manner, the productions of soils, as well spontaneous as laboured. The introduction of new plants and of new animals effects extraordinary and collateral changes even in the wild zoology and botany of countries. A foreign species of rat, which could have arrived only on shipboard, is said to have found its way into England; to have spread itself over the country; and to have exterminated the native species. The English house-fly, now abundant in North America, is said to have been carried there in English ships. Seeds of foreign weeds, and grubs and

eggs of foreign insects and reptiles, travel with the seeds and roots of foreign grain, and roots, and flowers. The English weed, St. John's-wort, at first hailed in English America as a rarity,—as a relic from *home*,—has multiplied itself into a weed of America, as common as it is troublesome. But without foreign species, the changes of the condition of the earth's surface, from wet to dry, from dry to wet, from covered to open, from open to covered, or from ploughed to unploughed, destroy, produce, and change the forms, the colours, and the habits of native, and even local species, plants and animals; for, as to the effect, in our common agriculture, for example, of the manure of lime-dressings upon a cold, wet surface, it is not merely to weaken or strengthen the growth of the plants previously indigenous; but to change the species, killing some of the old ones, and producing new ones; and what is more marvellous, as well as sure, that, except within a certain distance of the sea, a dressing of gypsum, or plaster of Paris, will bring a spontaneous growth of white clover, where white clover was never seen before! Or, reverting again, to foreign introductions; a single species, animal or vegetable, may effect, in the consequences of its appearance, a series of even considerable changes in the native species of organized matter, the most remote in nature from itself. In South America, where, as you all know (and as in America in general), the *horse* was unknown, till carried thither by Europeans; it has been remarked, that the large herds in which they now feed wild over the country, have already altered very considerably its natural features! The ancient bulbous-rooted and indigenous plants, and numerous species of aloes, with which the plains (or *pampas*) were formerly overspread, have perished under

the trampling of their hoofs, and are wholly disappeared; while, in the place of these, the ground has become covered with a fine grass, mixed with a species of creeping thistle, hardy enough to endure what has destroyed its vegetable predecessors! But the vegetable economy of South America being thus altered, that of the insect world, subsisting upon the vegetable, was to be expected to alter too; an event which has actually happened: while, along with the changes in the insects and the plants, and the direct presence of the *horses*, the very birds, and the beasts of prey, have acquired new habits! There is no saying, therefore, what changes may hereafter make their appearance in such a country as New Holland, effected, directly or indirectly, by the hand of man; changes in its soils, its temperatures, its seasons, and its plants and animals; and consequent, one way and the other, upon human culture, commerce, arts, and civilization. Already the wild kangaroo of the Southern Hemisphere, is seen hopping and grazing in the same pastures with the horse, and ox, and sheep, of the Northern side of the equator, carried thither by the hand of man; and the various effects of whose presence upon the Southern soil, as to its composition, its pressure under their feet, its dressing from their manure, its growth from their bite, or its gain in plants, insects, reptiles, birds, quadrupeds, and even, perhaps, in fishes, remains to be discovered through the succession of ages! As to *singing-birds*, in the meantime, and as to small birds in general, or at least as to many of their species, it is a circumstance worthy of remark, that in every country, even where they are native, their multiplication and frequent appearance is often accompaniment of *man*, and of man in a civilized state; or, in other words,

that their frequency and multiplication, often require, for their production, the presence and the *civilization of mankind**; truths of a nature not to be disputed as to numerous quadrupeds as well; as horses, oxen, sheep, dogs, cats; and the broods, as wild or as unprotected as those of birds,—namely, rats and mice. In a certain sense, therefore, these creatures are parasitical animals; they are the companions of man, and his dependents for food and life. The small birds, that feed upon grain and seeds, are but little seen at considerable distances from our farmsteads and our houses; so, that I have ground for every hope for New Holland, even to its population with singing-birds; and not the least of my anticipations in its regard, is its future covering with a civilization wholly English, at least as far as the differences of situation and circumstances can be expected to breed up a people really similar. Its name of New Holland, in the meantime, is without appropriate meaning; and I could wish to see it denominated, by English authority, South Britain!

“The absence of singing-birds, in pathless forests, and uncultivated countries, has been remarked, not in New Holland alone, but in America and elsewhere. In almost all regions, the solitary forests and plains are silent, and only the gardens, and the fields, and farm-

* It is often a matter for reflection, and a visible sign of man's dominion upon the earth, to see the conspicuousness of the works of man in the general landscape, and the importance of their bearing, even in the midst of the proudest works of nature. Anacreon justly insists upon the works of men, as features of a beautiful prospect; and Shakspeare, even in supposing the destruction of the “great globe,” remembers, not alone, nor even first, the seas and mountains, but—

“The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples!”

yards, musical and loquacious: 'Every leaf was at rest,' says the poet, travelling in North America,

' ——— and I heard not a sound,
Save the woodpecker tapping the hollow beech-tree.'

And to the same general cause to which we are here referring, may be ascribed, perhaps, much of that deficiency of song-birds which is usually reported of *tropical* (that is, to Europeans, *new and uncultivated*) countries. Goldsmith gives to the Torrid Zone,

" Those matted woods, where birds forget to sing."

That, in New Holland, there may, at the same time, be few or no native species of singing-bird, is a real probability, considering the entire singularity of all its zoological characteristics.

" But this," added Mr. Paulett, " is the *human history* in our debate; and that part of our survey of nature which is connected with civilization in general, and with the relative conditions of the different countries of the globe, out of which, at another time, we may draw our second *lesson*. At present," concluded he, " let us only make it our remark, that since man is obviously destined, not to live in the single society of his own species, but in the midst of a group also of various animals, and these animals to live with man; it follows that both have been destined likewise, to live together harmoniously, kindly, and with love. Domestic strife, or coldness, or inhospitality, can be no part of the law of nature; and I even think it obvious, that there exists the very opposite law, a law as certain in natural morals, as the law of attraction in physics, which makes all these living things take pleasure in each other's society; makes them sympathise with each other; draws them toge-

ther, and therefore establishes to demonstration how they ought to live together. Montaigne, as philosophically as prettily, says, that he doubts whether his dog has not as much pleasure in him, as he in his dog; and I think it clear that even our little Robin-red-breast, however shy of his company, comes to us because he likes us; while the simple fact, that we like his coming, establishes our duty to treat him, when he is come, with peace, if not with bounty. We should take no pleasure in him if nature had not a further object in view;—that of making us his friend!"

"Oh! papa!" cried Richard and Emily, both at once; "when winter is here, and the poor Robin is hungry, and will show himself at our window, and eat our crumbs; how pleased we shall be to throw them to him upon the snow, and the hard ground, every morning, and every evening; and to hear him sing to us his little song, in the darkest and dullest weather!"

Their papa and mamma praised them for these kind thoughts; and I flew to drink and bathe at the edge of a brook which ran through the garden, thankful that human creatures felt so much goodness toward little Red-breasts, and rejoicing in the prospect of hospitality at Burford Cottage, during the hardships of the approaching season.

CHAP. III.

A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains, and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create,
And what perceive. WORDSWORTH.

THE day, however, had not gone by, before a different scene was spread around me ; nor before I thought myself the most deficient in foresight, of all the mortals of the fields and towns, in having ventured to count upon enjoying the comforts acceptable in winter, at the hands of the gentle inhabitants of Burford Cottage!

There lives, in the midst of the village, and near a clump of towering elm-trees, a Mr. Ephraim Gubbins, a somewhat aged schoolmaster, who with his wife, scarcely younger than himself, and a pretty and amiable daughter, in her twentieth year, are all the inhabitants of a small antique dwelling, once the abode of prouder people ; except that in its large oaken parlour, there is assembled, thrice in every day, Sundays, and Wednesday and Saturday afternoons excepted, half of all the boys that belong to the village and its neighbourhood. Mr. Gubbins is a staid person, mild in his manners, and, as I had hitherto thought, one of the worthiest and most hospitable of men. His habits are studious ; he reads much ; and when he can escape from his school-room, he walks about the fields and lanes, climbs the sides of the hills, penetrates into the deepest woods, and often pauses, either to pick up something which he thinks curious, or to gather flowers,

which he carries home to his wife or daughter; or to look into the streams, or at the clouds, or at the stars, or to delight in the open landscape, or to listen to little birds like myself, or to the lark, or to the thrush; or apparently to meditate upon what he sees or hears, or upon the recollections that come into his mind. Sometimes observed, and sometimes otherwise, often have I been the companion of his walks, no less than a guest upon his floor, or have come upon him unawares at the stile, or by the hedge-side, or among the bramble-bushes; and, except that I have been upon my guard against his dog, never did I think myself, either at home or abroad, but as visiting, or meeting, or travelling with a friend to me, and to every thing else around him. Meditation and research seem two of his greatest pleasures; and Mr. Gubbins is even distinguished for the merciful things which he teaches, concerning birds and beasts, and all the animal creation; and especially for his regard to the duties of hospitality to the Red-breast, and his strict commands upon his boys, never to betray the confidence with which our little race enters and risks its safety in the abode of man; lessons in which his wife and daughter echo all that comes from his mouth; his wife adding to his precepts the examples of houses that have trembled, in storms, wherein the Robin had been molested; and his daughter seizing the cat into her arms whenever I alighted near the door, and repeating, to the praise of all my ancestors, the story of the pious cares of the Robin-red-breasts over the Children in the Wood! How, then, could I, a Robin-red-breast, have expected sorrow from any deed of Mr. Ephraim Gubbins?

It is with the second day of the week that I have begun the series of events which belong to my enter-

taining and instructive history. Upon the morning of Monday, my song attracted the attention of Mr. Paulett and his children; upon that of Tuesday it renewed the conversation at the breakfast-table; and now, the Tuesday afternoon beholds me looking out for part of my supper (as, in the months of autumn, it was my general wont to do) in the garden of Mr. Gubbins. This particular afternoon, however, the shade of the elder-trees, among the dark leaves and purple berries of which latter were now my movements, was lengthened over a delicate and unusual little heap of food, which, somewhat to my surprise, lay upon the ground; and which, though at a distance from the house, had every appearance of household fare, and might have passed for the kind crumblings of cheese, and eggs, and sugar, and the whitest bread, expressly prepared for myself, by the pretty fingers of Mr. Gubbins's daughter, Mary! So choice a meal, and such singular good fortune, were things not to be neglected; and, while I rejoiced in the latter, I scrutinized the former, first with my right eye, and then with my left, as, from perch to perch among the branches, I descended toward the treat! What even satisfied me that the dish had been positively intended for my use, was the peculiarity, that it was carefully concealed and fenced around, upon three sides, by as many new bricks, carefully and orderly set upon their edges, in such manner as to make a little case or chest (I scarcely know which), and so as to make a perfect parallelogram in figure; while at the top it was almost entirely shut up against all unwelcome guests, by a lid, or door, or covering, formed by another brick, which, in some manner or other, was made to stand aslant, and only to afford room sufficient for *me* to enter in, and to feed freely upon

the feast! So much apparent care and partiality, for so humble an individual as myself (for I could not doubt that it was I who was the flattered object of all this preparation and contrivance), absolutely pleased my vanity as highly, or more highly, than the prospect of the supper pleased my palate; and, in another instant, I had descended into the little case, and opened upon a crumb of cheese the two mandibles of my bill!

But in what terms shall I describe the catastrophe that followed? A sudden darkness, a loud noise, and an inward shaking of all the bricks, from the surfaces to the very centres of their porous bodies, deprived me, for an instant, of all consciousness, and nearly of all sensation. An earthquake and a total eclipse conjoined, these were the least of the fearful phenomena of nature which I could imagine, unfortunately occurring at the very commencement of my luxurious supper, the very first mouthful of which had fallen untasted from my bill! To enhance, too, the difficulties of the place and situation in which I was, there were timbers between the bricks, of which I had previously taken no account, but which, as I now know, materially assisted the subtle construction of the extraordinary fabric. There was, in the first place, a wooden pile, or low upright stool or pillar, deeply implanted, and occupying the central place between the two bricky sides, while it stood forward in the parallelogram, like the foremast of a ship. Then, there was a forked twig from a tree, clipped at the two ends of the fork, and also behind the point from which they diverged; and it was upon the two branches of this fork, as well as upon the earth beneath, that the delicate crumbs, beneath the shameful temptation of which I fell, had been laid, with a skill and artifice as marvellous as

they were deceitful. To crown all, there was a third timber, a movable post or beam, which, while the hindmost end of the fork was placed upon the pile or stool, was itself placed upright upon the fork, so as to hold the latter upon the stool at its bottom; while, at its top, it supported the slanting brick, or door, or lid, or cover, of the foul, misleading cave or chest! In a word, it was the whole mechanism, and most abhorred design, of this detested engine (too painfully successful, in my unfortunate case!) that when a deluded stranger, like myself, should but once have entered the horrid, gaping mouth (as I now, disabused, only too plainly understand it) of the devouring trap; then, the slightest touch of his gentle bill, or wings, or claws, disturbing the vile fork, should upset the post which rests upon it, and down come the slanting brick; and darkness, in the narrow and tomb-like precincts, envelope at once the fluttering bird, the falling timbers, and the insidious food! Think of me, then, as the victim of all this cunning, and a prisoner in this frightful dungeon!

After striking my wings, for a second or two, against the bricks and timbers, I sunk upon the earth, confounded, terrified, despairing, and too careless, for a long interval, of what was now to become of me, even to refold my wings against my sides. As to the loathsome food, the reader may well believe, that all of it lay beneath me, and around me, untouched and disregarded! What had I to do with food? Could food throw down my prison walls, or make them transparent to the light of heaven? No; I was plunged into a want more instantly pressing than that of food—the want of liberty! I thought of this only, and forgot, or refused to listen to, my stomach!

But when a quarter of an hour had passed over my

head, and over the four bricks which enthralled and covered me; and when, now, my beating heart began to throb less violently, and less audibly, and to suffer, in the returning equilibrium of my faculties, the partial working of my brain; what perplexed me beyond measure was, to understand, both who could have built up this abominable bird-trap, and how it could have been built up at all, in the garden of Mr. Gubbins, and especially in that solitary and sequestered part of the garden in which I had found it, and which, for its sequestration and solitariness, had long been my sacred and my chosen haunt? I, by this time, had sufficiently recollected the figure of the trap, many of the likenesses of which I had seen in other gardens than that of Mr. Gubbins; though never, till now, had I been unwise enough to enter one! I had seen sparrows, and chaffinches, and greenfinches fall into such traps; I had seen boys build the traps; and had seen them carry off the prey; and I had heard Mr. Gubbins exclaim, time after time, against all such doings by his scholars, whom, besides, I knew that he prevented from intruding into that part of his garden, which, for this very reason, I considered my own purlieu and undisturbable retreat! How, then, could the odious brick-trap have been built in such a place? Could it have been built for me? And by whom could it have been built?—built, too, and baited with the delicious fare of Mrs. Gubbins's kitchen, and of Mary's platter! Mr. Gubbins was a preacher against such acts; and Mary and her mother were incapable of them by nature!

“It is the boys, then,” cried I; “it is the boys,” and my heart fluttered anew; “it is the rebellious urchins of the school-room that have done this thing;

that have stolen into the recesses of the most hospitable garden in the village; that have escaped the eye of the master, and bade defiance to his commandments; that have envied Mary Gubbins her little visitant, her little sprite; and Mrs. Gubbins her household deity; and Mr. Gubbins the ornament of his stone floor, and the recreation of his meal-times! They have stolen into the depths of his garden; they have built a decoy for his sacred Robin; they have profaned the good man's sanctuary; and ere long (perhaps warily, by night, or else tardily, to-morrow morning) they will lift the ponderous brick which keeps me here; clutch me, trembling and yet struggling, in their bold hands; bear me away to some frightful cage; treat me with a mockery of food; and see me pine and starve, and moping with closed eye, and with dirty, ruffled plumage, and day-sleeps; till, prone upon my back, I lie dead and uncomely, upon the gravel of the board! This is my fate! here ends my life of love, and peace, and music; I sing, now, my death song; I sing, now, my dirge and elegy! Farewell, my fellow Robins! farewell, my mate and young ones! farewell, my loving mother! farewell, my brother songsters, to whom I have so often murmured forth my lays responsive! farewell, ye lawns, and springs, and copses; ye valleys and ye uplands! farewell, ye juicy blackberries, ye scarlet haws; and you, ye blazing, fire-coloured hips! farewell, ye azure skies, thou western heaven, and that

‘———eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state!’

Farewell, thou Burford Cottage, and ye hospitable providers of its table; farewell, ye tender children, Emily and Richard; farewell the promise of your

winter crumbs, and the sounds of your tinkling voices, as pleasing to my ears, as they have been emboldening to my heart; and farewell, Mary and Mrs. and Mr. Gubbins, within whose own demesne I have fallen; fallen by traitorous hands, a victim to the contempt and contravention of all your precepts, cares, and anxious prohibitions!"

I should, perhaps, have added more to this long and deep lament, but that almost before I had uttered the concluding syllables which I here recite, my ears caught up the sounds of distant, but always approaching footsteps. They belonged but to a single pair of feet; and I thought I could distinguish, that, as they were not those of the light or hasty steps of youth, so, also, they were not the stealthy ones of him that, both as to place and purpose, is upon trespass, and fears either discovery or reproof: as for me, miserable and overwhelming as was my condition in the trap, I knew not whether to exult in the thought of a speedy deliverance from it, or to faint at the contemplation of the misery that was to follow; or, if I had room for choice, no time was left me for deliberation. The feet drew nearer and more near; the path received them heavier and more heavy; I heard the breathing of the fearful one that was moving toward me; the feet came close to the trap; the nearer sound of the breathing told me that my betrayer (or, could it be my deliverer?) was stooping down to it; the upper brick was partly lifted; the light of heaven was partially admitted to me; I prepared to fly, to spring, to struggle, to escape to the woods and fields; but a large, strong hand encompassed my body, despised the bitings of my bill, compressed my wings, and held my feet; so that yielding, or rather powerless in limb, panting, breathless, but still unsubdued in spirit; I was lifted, motion-

less, like a lock of wool, or like an apple, from the ground; helpless, but with a keen and investigating eye, to behold myself in the hand of—the venerable schoolmaster, Ephraim Gubbins!

New hopes, new doubts, new confusion, new perplexity! Was Mr. Gubbins, this time, my old friend, or my new foe? His right hand restrained me; it enclosed me: he did not let me fly; he did not launch me into the sweet evening air; yet he smoothed the feathers upon the crown of my head, with the fore finger of his left hand, carried my bill to his lips, and toiled to overcome my impatience of captivity, by addressing me, in soothing tones, with words of such equivocal meaning as these: “Don’t be frightened, my little fellow; no harm shall happen to thee; I would not hurt thee for the world. Wait but till to-morrow, and thee* shalt see, I warrant thee!”

“Wait but till to-morrow!” “Wait only till to-morrow!” I was a prisoner, then, till the morrow, whatever after might befall me; I, that till this petrifying hour, had known nothing but “free Nature’s grace,” and against whom no creature, and no thing, had ever “barred the windows of the sky!” And what was Mr. Gubbins’s purpose with me? Was he attempting, by smooth words, to reconcile me to enthralment? Would he encage me, bind me, torture me; look on me, and see me die, a prisoner? “Wait only till to-morrow!” Did he think, that from the experience of a night, even in the softest methods of confinement, I should renounce, contentedly, the use of my wings; and barter, without heart-breaking, the fields and gar-

* Grammar would require *thou* for *thee*, in this part of Mr. Gubbins’s discourse; but it must have fallen under observation, that most of the *theeing* and *thouing* people among us, use *thee* in the nominative case, as well as in the others.

dens for the sightliest cage; and the vicissitudes of want and plenty, of warmth and cold, and food and hunger, for the shelter of any roof, or for a perpetual trough of seed, or pan of paste? If such, too, were his barbarous design, by what means was he to pursue it? If the lessons of his life were to be forgotten or reversed; if he would not be ashamed, before his scholars, to be the gaoler of a Robin; yet how was he to get the consent of his family? Would his wife endure it? Would the tears of Mary suffer it? I could find no explanation for all my wonderment, as, still holding me, though in the gentlest manner, he walked hastily through the garden toward the house!

Arrived at the door of the latter, I reckoned confidently, if not upon a speedy release, through the remonstrances of Mrs. Gubbins and the supplications of her daughter, at least upon a solution of the mystery of my capture and detention. But no! Mr. Gubbins, in his own house, conducted himself with evident secrecy and fear, and wholly concealed me from the sight of his wife and daughter! Slowly, and silently, and cautiously, he turned aside from the kitchen-door, and ascended the old staircase, even to the cockloft! There, to my fresh agony, he placed me in a cage which had plainly been prepared for my reception; which was largely supplied with food; and round and above which he drew baize and flannels, to keep me warm, leaving an open space, at the same time, for the admission of fresh air; and accompanying all his actions by the repetition of words and tones intended to be soothing and encouraging: "Wait only till to-morrow, my pretty little Robin, and thee shalt see, I warrant thee! I would not hurt thee for the world, my pretty little Robin!"

A few seconds more, and Mr. Gubbins had left me for the night, and descended the old staircase. My amazement equalled my affliction. That it was Mr. Gubbins himself who laid the trap for me, and who had designed, beforehand, to place me in my present thralldrom, was now certain. That Mary and her mother were ignorant of all; that Mr. Gubbins was afraid of their becoming acquainted with it; and that I had nothing, therefore, to hope, either from their reproaches or intercession (unless, indeed, in the extreme case of their accidental discovery of my sufferings); all this, in like manner, was unquestionable. What, then, was to become of me? What was in reserve for me? In the midst of all this disquietude of grief and terror, I was still incapable of eating or drinking, though, as I have said, Mr. Gubbins had omitted nothing to supply my wants in both of these respects. I was supperless and hungry, yet I could not eat; thirsty, and yet I could not drink. But the cockloft was growing dark, and the night-air becoming cold, and heavy with dew; and weariness and drowsiness crept over my limbs, and placed their lead upon my eyes. I folded my head under my wing, and fell asleep; but still endeavouring, so long as recollection remained, to hope the best that I was able, from all that I had previously known of Mr. Gubbins; from all that had been kind and gentle in him, even upon this strange occasion; and from the hopeful meaning which his tone and manner had seemed so strongly intended to convey, in uttering the words, "I would not hurt thee for the world;" and, "Wait only till to-morrow, and thee shalt see, I warrant thee!"

CHAP. IV.

Dear is my little native vale,
The Red-breast builds and warbles there!

ROGERS.

BEFORE the rising of the sun, on the next day, I awoke; but, then, could only by degrees come to the recollection of where I was, and how I had arrived there! I remembered all, only to return to grief, or rather to a dull despondency; and hardly allowed myself the smallest ray of hope from the words of Mr. Gubbins on the preceding night! The gray dawn advanced; and though, in my sad situation, I had little relish for any note of my accustomed morning song, yet partly to salute the light, and partly in the faint hope that Mrs. or Mary Gubbins might hear me; and hearing, restore me to the skies; I sung, two or three times, and even, without affecting to do so, in my most plaintive manner, all the parts of my little lay. But there was no echo, no return; all was silence in and near my solitary loft; and I sunk into a correspondent, though a waking gloom. I neither ate nor drank, now, any more than in the evening, of the meat and drink of slavery which stood beside me. The cock was crowing in the hen-house; the wren had sung while it was yet dark; I, for my part, was cheerless; a prisoner and alone; and waiting for my fate!

Two hours afterward, however, I heard a step up the ladder; and instantly I flattered myself with the belief that Mary Gubbins had indeed heard me, and would find me, and procure my release! To encourage

and to guide her search, and to make myself sure of her compassion, I prolonged every note, and gave to each my tenderest and most supplicating air. But, alas! the voice which answered, and the step which followed it, were not Mary's, but her father's; the man who had become so cruel to me, and whom, now (and in spite of his smooth words), I so much dreaded. Uplifting the trap-door, and with a hideous cap upon his head (its worsted tassel bolt upright upon the crown), the ugly vision was too soon before my eyes, but accompanied with speeches that were at least intended for my comfort and satisfaction: "That's my pretty Robin," said Mr. Gubbins; "what, chanting thy morning song, just as if thee wer't among the springs and bushes, and (like any other early bird) hadst found the worm! And so thou hast, my Robin; for, see," continued he, "I have been into the garden for thee, and dug thee worms and grubs, and here they are;" at saying which he passed into the cage a wooden spoonful of garden-mould, with worms and insects, of nothing of all of which, in the meantime, had I the smallest will or disposition to take notice!

"I'll tell thee what," presently subjoined Mr. Gubbins, after waiting, in vain, to see me eat, and pushing the dainties toward me, in all directions, to allure me; "I'll tell thee what, my pretty Robin," he subjoined, "I will take thee, cage and all, for the present, to neighbour Mowbray's; now, before any body is stirring in the street, and before my wife or daughter is in the kitchen, and especially before my boys are coming to school; for it would never do for the young rogues to see their old master caging a Robin; me, that have so long taught them every thing to the contrary; and, as to my Mary and her mother, they would break

their poor hearts, and be scared out of their seven senses, if they thought that I could do such a thing; and dear souls, they would never be reconciled to my experiment, and they don't know the pains that must sometimes be taken in the search for knowledge! I would not have even Mowbray's wife or children see me with thee, my Robin; for they, too, would be in arms at my seeming cruelty; but Mowbray is a kind neighbour, and a sensible man, and will let me deposit thee for a season, my Robin, and then thee shalt see what thee shalt see! Poor Mowbray, his wife and children will be milking the cows, and looking after the new-laid eggs, to serve the quality in the village; and he will be sure to be moving about somewhere; for, early and late, the honest creatures are striving, and preparing to part with their little all, for their sad voyage to Van Diemen's Land. Ah! my pretty Robin," added he, "the poor Mowbrays are going further than thee, and yet they love home as well as thee dost, I warrant thee; and I do not know what we shall do without them, for they are kind neighbours, and there is nobody besides them that sells such good milk, and such nice new-laid eggs. Come along, my little Robin, and let us see where neighbour Mowbray will put thee!"

Saying this, Mr. Gubbins lifted the cage which contained me, and spread over it, for concealment, the coverings which he had by night wrapped about it to keep me warm; and descending the ladder and the stairs, walked hastily down the street with me, to Mowbray's farmhouse. It was even yet the still of the morning. None of the villagers were abroad; the water of a little stream, which flowed gently by the road side, upon which some ducks were just about to

make their first appearance for the day, was unrippled by the slightest breeze, but received into it the shadows of the trees, just as if they fell upon so much glass; and, rising behind an October mist, the great globe of the sun showed its red fire but a little above the level of the gate of Farmer Mowbray's straw-yard. Entering the cart-lodge, and hiding and securing me and my cage, for the moment, beneath a sack, in the corner of the inside of a waggon, Mr. Gubbins then left me, to go in search, as he did not fail to say to himself (but talking, as it were to me), of his friend Mowbray, and to make him the confident of my presence, and of the designs he had upon me; in a word, of the whole subject of my miseries and fears! A few seconds answered his purpose. He returned, bringing with him Mowbray; and now I was carried and locked into the granary, Mr. Gubbins saying to me, during this process, "I told thee, my pretty Robin, that I would not hurt thee for the world, and that thee need'st but wait till the morrow; and now thee and I will have a walk through the fields as soon as I have dined, and thee shalt see what thee shalt see. For, neighbour Mowbray," he continued, addressing all the rest to the friend beside him; "thee know'st that, like my scholars, I have a half-holiday to-day, because it is Wednesday; and thee know'st, too, that I love to turn my half-holidays to profit, by getting a breathing in the fields, and by studying the works they show me!"

"Aye, Mr. Gubbins," said Farmer Mowbray, "you are right; you are right. You do well to get a mouthful of fresh air when you can, and to look at the green fields, and the blue skies; and to smell the furrows, and to hear the sparrows and the crows; and, by the way, yon's a piece of turnips for you to look at, that's

all over as green as an emerald! I often pity you, Mr. Gubbins, though my boys get their learning from you, and we can never be too thankful; I often pity you, and think, when I am enjoying myself at dung-cart, or at plough, or at threshing in the barn there, along with my men; what a hard life you have of it, stived up in your school-room, or fastened to your desk, or poring over your books! But, as to that poor bird, it makes me groan (and so it does the mother and the children), that where we are going, we shall never, as they say, see the like of it, nor of any of the pretty warblers that I have listened too, man and boy, along our valley, ever since that I was born! It is a trying thing, friend Gubbins, to leave one's native place, without a hope of returning; and to carry away mother and child to a far country, and over a wide ocean, and to sit down where every thing must be strange and *unkid-like**, and nothing that we have seen before!"

"Indeed it is, neighbour Mowbray," replied Mr. Gubbins; "and we often talk of thee and thine, at the old house, accordingly; and my wife and daughter cry when they think of parting with thee and thy wife, and thy promising boys and girls, and especially with little Fanny; and 'Squire Paulett, and his lady, and the parson, and the doctor, and all thy neighbours are sorry for thee. But is there no hope, friend Mowbray? Is the die cast? Must thee certainly go?"

"There is but one chance left," said Mowbray; "'Squire Paulett (God reward him for it!) is doing all

* A country pronunciation of *uncouth*, but used in the sense of dreary; melancholy. The literal signification of *uncouth*, is strange, unknown, unusual; but, though from that single root, the relative ideas which the word also represents are various.

he can to see me righted; and, if he succeeds, why, then, we may stay by the old barns, and the old barns may stay by us; but I am afraid of the worst and the worst. Might, they say, overcomes right; and, though I know I sha'n't lose the day, if 'Squire Paulett can help it, I fear it's all in vain, all that he is doing for me!"

"It makes me gay as a lark in spring," cried Mr. Gubbins, "to hear that thee hast still a chance; and that 'Squire Paulett, who is always doing good for the whole parish, is still at work for thee: and, with thy cause in such hands, I counsel thee, not so much to fear the worst, as to hope the best; and to look about thee, whether thee, and thy wife, and thy children, cannot yet stay at home, and live upon English ground, and listen to English song-birds! So, fare thee well, neighbour, for this morning; and, as soon as I have sent away my boys, and snapped up a hasty dinner, I shall come to thee for my Robin, and set out upon my journey. Good bye, Robin; be patient, my little fellow, till noon; and then thee shalt soon see what thee shalt see!" Thus saying, he stepped out of the granary, followed by Farmer Mowbray, who locked the door upon me.

In what manner I passed the dreary hours of my continued confinement, from sun-rise till the afternoon, the reader, who is aware of what I have described already, will easily imagine! But my tyrant came at last. Entering the granary with Farmer Mowbray, and setting about to cheer me with his unintelligible words of promise, and of pledge to occasion me no hurt, he opened the cage door; and taking me once more into his terrific hand, placed me (will it be believed?) within the meshes of some cabbage-net, or else of such a net as certain persons hang in the

breeding-cages of canary-birds! "There, my pretty Robin!" said he, "thee wilt have plenty of air; and nothing will crush thee, nor bruise thee; for, though I must cover thee and thy net with a handkerchief, till we are clear of the village, lest the sight of thee in my hand should breed scandal against old Gubbins; yet, as soon as we are fairly beyond the village, I will let thee breathe thy fill, and see the skies and the fields and hedges; and, more than this, thy troubles will soon be over, and thee shalt see what thee shalt see!" Barbarous man, how can my troubles soon be over, shuddered I to myself, unless my life is to be over too; for when or where is the life that is without its troubles? Doth not the Scotch *Robin* sing—

"There's nocht but care on every han',—"

and wilt thou imbrue thy hypocritical hands in my blood, under pretext that my troubles will soon be over; and wilt thou hide me under thy handkerchief in the village, to hide thy guilt also, and prevent scandal against old Gubbins; and then carry me into the lone fields, and kill me where there are none but the dumb sheep to be the witnesses? So, for a minute or two, I struggled as hard as I was able, and bit, and pecked, and scratched, and kicked at the meshes, but to no purpose; and then I sunk again into despair, and lay motionless at the bottom of the net! "Well," said Farmer Mowbray, as Mr. Gubbins led him, by the back way of the farm, and by the side of the turnips; "well, I shall be curious to know the end of it; so, I wish thee success, and I pity the poor bird the while; but remember me to Cobbler Dykes: he will soon make him a halter, and I dare say that you will do it all as it should be, between you both. Good afternoon!"

“ ‘ Good afternoon,’ repeated I, with horror, to myself! ‘ Good afternoon!’—‘ Farewell for ever’ would have been the least that Farmer Mowbray should have said, if he had been speaking to me! Cobbler Dykes is to make me a halter! so, that the monster Gubbins will not spill my blood, for fear of detection; and I am to die, not in the light of the sun, and amid the flowers of the fields, and while the linnets are singing on the spray, and by the single wickedness of the horrid Mr. Gubbins; but there are two grim conspirators against my life, and Farmer Mowbray is an accessory before the fact! He said he was ‘ curious to see the end of it;’ that is, ‘ the end of *me!*’ I like his curiosity! And this is what Mr. Gubbins meant in the morning, by talking of the ‘ pursuit of knowledge!’ A Robin is to be strangled, in order that a cobbler, a schoolmaster, and a farmer, may grow knowing! And I am to be hanged in a cobbler’s stall, as well as stifled with the smell of wax and leather, and my knell is to be rung upon a lapstone! A pretty story for the world, if secrecy were not sure to wrap it in darkness;—if history could ever really tell the tale of

‘ Who kill’d Cock Robin!’ ”

Mr. Gubbins was as good as his word in one respect, and I feared that he would be equally steady in all his purposes! We were no sooner in the turnip-field, than he took his handkerchief from off the net, and let me see and breathe the scenes and air around me; and now, being out of sight and hearing of the village, he returned to what I believed to be his hollow, canting, treacherous, and double-meaning speeches, about doing me no harm; bringing my troubles to a finish; and letting me see what I should see! Unable to let him know much of my mind, I displayed at least

my anger and discontent by the most perfect silence; and, indeed, thought of little beside the cruel fate which I judged impending, and of the joys and comforts of Burford Cottage, and of all the vale in which it stands, and which I was never more to feel!

“Over brake, and over briar;” over gates, and over stiles; over pasture, and over arable, through fields and woods,—Mr. Gubbins hurried me along; every now and then, however, caressing me, and disturbing me with the accents of a tongue which, that day, I thought a serpent’s for its deceit; and which seemed to me rather to hiss, than to strike out any of those silver tones that, before, I had been accustomed to fancy in it! Sometimes, indeed, to the depths of my reverie, came the tinkling of the sheep-bells, and the whistling of the ploughboy; the chattering of the jay, the screaming of the pie, and the rich melody of the blackbird; but what delight could I now take in any of these; I, whom two foul conspirators were soon to choke, and to plunder of the power to give one note to the full concert of the universal grove? Mile after mile was travelled in this, to me, afflicting manner; the beams of the sun, the whiteness of the clouds, the gold and crimson of the autumnal trees, the purple and the yellow of the field-flowers; the verdure of the grass, the lowing of the cattle, the bleating of the sheep, the songs of a thousand birds, seemed to be the deckings and celebration of a jubilee; and through all that scene, and joyousness, and stir, I and Mr. Gubbins wound our way—to a funeral—an execution; and I the sufferer and the slain!

Every now and then, too, Mr. Gubbins, as was so natural in a guilty person, either looked carefully behind him, or seemed to stop, as if afraid to overtake

some neighbour, or at least something that was human and humane, and to whom his doings might become apparent. The white bark of a distant birch-tree, shining in the evening sun, how often did he not mistake it for the white apron, or white frock, of an innocent village maiden, coming from market or from the fair; and the gray trunks of the ash-trees, did not every one of them appear the coat or the cloak of some village patriarch or matron, before whom, as before their children, he would have sunk into the earth which he was treading, to see himself detected in his feats against a Robin? Once, where a gap in the hedge, upon the crest of a hill, and a space between the bank, and the remains of a stile, gave place to a solitary post, "Of a surety," cried he, "there is a man—no, it is a boy—and it is Jem Pry, as I am a school-master, and as my name is Gubbins! What shall I do? If I go back, he will be upon my heels; if I push on, I shall be by his side; if I wait till the sun shall be going down, Mrs. Dykes will have put away her tea-things; and the twelve miles which I have to walk (six out, and six to my own home again) will not be finished till late, and Mrs. Gubbins will think that I am robbed and murdered?" After a pause, then, he proceeded, as the only alternative which was left to him; but first carefully covering, with his handkerchief, me and the net which held me. The post speedily showed itself a post, and he returned the handkerchief to his pocket; but, in five minutes after, upon abruptly turning a hedge, he found himself really close behind Ralph Wilcox, an old neighbour, and old companion, and whom he could neither escape, nor omit to congratulate upon the yielding of his rheumatism! Hastily replacing, therefore, his

handkerchief, he joined Ralph Wilcox, vowed that he was glad to see him, complimented his firm steps, and (what I thought extraordinary) confessed that he was going to Cobbler Dykes's! At the next division of the path, however, he anxiously took leave of Ralph, insisting that the way through the wood in the bottom was the nearest and the driest, though Ralph declared it a quarter of a mile about, and that he would find it wet and spongy with the showers and fallen leaves: "Good-night, then, good-night," said Ralph; "an' ye will go your own way; and mind you tell the cobbler and his wife that I axed after them kindly, and that he must get my heavy shoes done, now that winter's a-coming. Ah!" continued he, raising his voice, as Mr. Gubbins strode away from him, toward the wood; "ah! you are two comical rogues, for your curiosity and your larning; and you are always a-doing something together, to make you more and more knowing! P's sure you don't carry that there handkerchief for nothing; but that you and the cobbler are after some queer thing together!"

Mr. Gubbins mended his pace, and I sunk into the lowest corner of my net, at words which seemed to import discovery to him, and conviction of my fate to me! "*Comical rogues,*" I sighed and murmured! "*rogues,* there can be no doubt; but where does Ralph Wilcox find his *tragic* villains?" I might have lifted my voice while we were in company with that rustic, but I was not sure but that he would have joined his friend for my destruction; and, besides, I feared that if Mr. Gubbins did but hear me tweet, he might pinch my windpipe, or twist my neck, in the concealment of the handkerchief, and kill me unseen, and on the spot!

CHAP. V.

The parted bosom clings to wonted home.

LORD BYRON.

“WELCOME! welcome!” cried Cobbler Dykes, as Mr. Gubbins entered, at length, the village to which he was bound, and drew near to the stall, of which the door was open, and in which, the moment before, the inquisitive and cheerful artificer was at once hammering his newest leather, and singing his oldest song: “Welcome! welcome! Master Gubbins,” he exclaimed; “I see thee’st gotten him, and now we’ll lose no time in doing his business! Poor thing! it’s growing latish, you see; and it will be best to do it while there’s daylight enough. He will like it the better!” Judge for yourself, reader, of my feelings, at this astounding moment!

“Ah! John,” cried Mrs. Dykes, from the adjoining and only other chamber in the house, “thee should’st have had the collar ready, man. But, now late or not late, let Mr. Gubbins have a cup of nice tea before thee meddles with Robin. I have just poured the water into the pot, and the cakes are hot at the fire, and the bird will take no harm while you both take a cup of tea; and then you can make an end of him as soon as you like, and the sooner, I am sure, the better! Poor thing! where is he? I shouldn’t wonder if he would like to eat a little first, himself?”

Mr. Gubbins, by this time, had reached Mrs. Dykes’s

tea-table; and, at her invitation, he did not hesitate to remove the handkerchief from off the net, and to lay me, confined as I was within it, upon a second table, nearer to the window. There was room for me to put out my tail, and even my head, through the meshes; and Mrs. Dykes had quickly placed, close to my bosom, and almost in my bill, a heap of bread-crumbs, and even a spoonfull of cold water; adding to her former remarks, that she "should not wonder, too, if I were dry, as well as hungry!"

Hunger and thirst, what were they to me, and water and crumbs of bread, how could I look at them, when my eyes were occupied with such sights as the cobbler's inner chamber now discovered to my view?—Abating the stall in which he worked, and which, besides its lasts, its knives, its awls, and bristles, and besides even the ballads, and the newest pictures of kings and councillors, held, even itself, a few strings of bird's eggs, the bill of a crane, and the skull of a weazel;—abating this, the adjoining chamber, as I have said, was the entire house of the cobbler and his wife; and with what variety and fulness was not this chamber furnished, till, within it, there was scarcely room for guest or hosts to move; or, moving, to avoid displacing or dislodging something, of which the legs were lost or broken, the fastenings rotten, or the supports unsteady! Here were a bed, and tables, and arm-chairs, and stools, and chests, and worn-out cushions, and pieces of darned and threadbare carpet; but it was upon the walls that hung or stuck the objects that fixed all my thoughts, and in which the reader has to learn what it was my eyes beheld! I say nothing of the blackened canvas-pictures and their dim golden frames; nothing of cups and saucers,

India fans, shelly grottoes, sanded churches, ancient almanacs, or older samplers; nor of the plaster casts of busts, and gems, and medals, in this studio of the cobbler virtuoso, besides pebbles, crystals, peacocks' and parrots' feathers, and ears of corn, and feathery tops of reeds, and gothic watch-cases, with gothic watches in them, upon and over the whole mantel-piece; but I beg the reader to pity me, when I tell him, that I saw—in glazed black boxes, papered white within,—the feathery coverings, and beaded eyes, of shrivelled and distorted birds, perched upon sticks exactly like the timbers in my trap, and garnished forth with tufts of yellow withered moss, or made to hold, in their dead beaks, beetles as dead as the beaks, and by which, living, they could not have been so detained! For a single instant, I believed that all these birds were yet alive, and that the real secret of my lot was, that I had been brought to be imprisoned in their company; but, besides that I soon discovered in the glaring eyes, the cramped legs and necks, and the smeared and ruffled feathers, that they were but mockeries of living gait and beauty; I was also soon assisted, by Mr. Gubbins himself, to learn the history of these piteous mummies, and to form, once more, a new estimate of the horrors which probably awaited me, when those “comical rogues” of Ralph Wilcox, finishing their tea, should set about to finish me as well! I learned that Cobbler Dykes was an adept at stuffing birds and beasts; that he stripped off skins as he stripped off upper-leathers; that he pared joints and flesh as he pared soles; and that he sewed up bodies which he had embalmed, as he sewed up seams which had given way! Mr. Gubbins complimented him upon his skill, and admired his last new

performances, which consisted, however, not, this time, in deforming the aspects of birds, but only those of beasts; a grinning kitten, which looked as if it were then drowning; and a monkey, dried, and habited like a sailor, seated in a boat, at his oar, and smoking a short blackened pipe, which the cobbler, with some reluctance, had spared from his own mouth, to adorn the mouth of Pug. I took notice that Mr. Dykes had not judged proper to habit Pug as a cobbler, and to give him a bench and apron; as some other stuffer, and at least a sailor, less tenacious of the respect belonging to shoe-mending, would have been likely to prefer!

I saw plainly, at this juncture, and in long and dismal perspective, the whole series of all those remaining troubles of my existence which Mr. Gubbins had assured me should soon be over! It was clear enough, with the sights now before me, that Cobbler Dykes was to make me a collar; that I was to be hanged, or at least strangled, perhaps by the united hands of Mr. Gubbins and the cobbler and his wife; and that then, instead of being buried in the shade of a rose-bush, as would have been performed by Emily and Richard, had I died in the garden of Burford Cottage; or thrown into the next green field, or even upon the next dunghill, as I might have hoped from savages any thing short of those that had engaged in the present plot; and in which I might have been swallowed by the first carrion-crow, or given my feathers to the sportive winds, my flesh to the beetles, green and gold; and my bones been picked by the ants, who would have left them only in ivory whiteness;—instead of this, after my strangling, I was to be cut and carved, and embalmed and camphorated, and cobbled

into the semblance of life, to enrich, years after years, the museum of Mr. Dykes! Was I not to be pitied?

"I think, friend Dykes," said Mr. Gubbins, "that it cannot be less than fifty years since thee and I found out each other's taste for Nature and her works; since we began to collect flowers, and leaves, and shells, and birds'-eggs; and since we used to rise together in the morning to listen to the larks; and go into the woods at night, to drink in, with all our ears, the luscious tunings of the nightingale?"

"It's true, it's true," replied Cobbler Dykes, "but thee always soaredst higher than I; and, not content with the birds, and beasts, and crickets, and butterflies, thee lookedst at the stars, and at the skies that hold them; and would'st needs find out *causes*, and be a philosopher, while I was but a humble naturalist!"

"Ah! Master Dykes," returned Mr. Gubbins, "thee hadst always a head, too, as well as I; but thee wast more taken with outward figures of things, and I with their inner substance. Yet, though I have given myself to books, and thee to mechanics and handicraft; thee hast persevered in the gaining of natural knowledge, and art no mean ornithologist, I can tell thee; as well as diver into many other matters of curious entertainment. Thee hast a head, Master Dykes; and I think (though, perhaps, I know not how it happens) that there are not a few examples of artists of thy gentle craft, that are curious in books or in nature, like thyself."

"I have always been curious concerning birds, I confess," said Cobbler Dykes: "thee know'st that I have been up early and late, to catch them, and to stuff them; and to hang them, as thee seest, about my

poor ragged walls. I love the little creatures so much; their feathers are so beautiful, and there is such a variety!"

"Oh! the ogre," I exclaimed to myself; "his love of birds is the counterpart of the love of those who love 'a leg and a wing, and a piece of the breast;' he loves them as they were loved by a certain divine, who writes thus to his grandson: 'You are fond of birds, especially pretty little birds, that have pretty feathers, —blue, green, yellow, red, fine glossy black, and fair lily white, with nice bills and beautiful legs. Now you must know, Adam, that I am very fond of these nice little birds. I love little birds; yes, *I love them even when they are dead*; and *I get their skins stuffed*, and made to look just as if the birds were alive*!' Loving soul! and just such as he, thought I, are these lovers of birds, Messrs. Gubbins and Dykes; for these curious people are sometimes sad tormentors of the objects of their curiosity! I thank the reverend writer, in the meantime, for all that he has said of *Robins*; and especially for his hint about giving us morsels of *cheese*, of which, as he justly says, we are "very fond." Alas! *cheese* drew myself into the trap!

I omit, however, a great part of the conversation of these men-wolves, and of the witch that managed the tea-cups (for these they long appeared to me); partly because much of it had nothing to do with myself, and therefore to me, during these lingering moments, no object to fix my attention, or imprint my memory; and partly because much more of it consisted in the sickening details (some of them already known to the reader), of my hapless capture in the brick

* Life of Adam Clarke, LL. D., F. S. A., &c.

trap; and the full account of which, the long premeditation of the violence, the cunning of the artifice, and the chuckling of the triumph, all contributed to disgust, enrage, and mortify me. I hasten toward a brighter period; or, toward that epoch in the tale-talk, which dissipated my heavier fears, and softened my fiercer anger; which promised me a speedy restoration to my freedom, and only left me to smile at the ignorance, and to resent the frivolous impertinence, which had occasioned me so much pain, and grief, and terror, and thirst, and hunger; but of all which no serious consequence was to follow or remain! I had been brought from home only to see whether I could find my way back; and I was to be set free in the twinkling of an eye, though with a leather collar round my neck,—that *I* might be known for *I*! The reader will be half as happy as I was, to learn this most favourable change in my day's prospects!

“And yet,” said Cobbler Dykes, “though it may be as well to prove it by experiment, I think there is hardly room for doubt that Robin will find his way home, and take his supper in his old quarters, wherever they are, this very evening. The distance is but six miles; he must certainly know the country; and, in his way of travelling, neither the distance nor the time can be worth mentioning. They say that the crow flies twenty-five miles an hour, the goose sixty, and the swift ninety.”

“Thee knowest,” remarked Mr. Gubbins, “that it is only about his finding his way that I am curious; and that I allow the time and the distance, provided he does not lose himself, to be no difficulties in the matter. Thee knowest, in short, that it has been a favourite notion of mine, that other birds, and indeed other

animals of all kinds, find their way home, when they are parted from it, as readily as *pigeons*, though it has not happened that men have taken equal notice in all cases. Thee mayest be sure, friend Dykes, that I expect my pretty Robin to come back, and to find no difficulty; for I would not else expose him to the trial. I would not harm him for the world; and I told him that he had only to wait till this afternoon, to see the end of all his troubles."

These words of good Mr. Gubbins restored an entire friendship between us. I forgave him the small sins of all the rest. The forgiveness, too, which I imparted, returned to beatify myself. Health and strength came back to me with good humour. I could eat and drink; and I thought that it would be no bad thing to make a meal, before I was set forward on my flight. I pecked at Mrs. Dykes's crumbs, and reached at the water; and, seeing me thus lively, and desirous of food, every hand began to minister to my comfort and my wishes. Mrs. Dykes put saffron into the water, to cheer me; and crumbs of cheese beside the bread; and Mr. Gubbins even produced from his pocket a hard egg, to chop the yolk, and mingle it, with maw-seed and milk, along with the crumbs, into a heartening paste. I ate and drank freely; and though I was not a little impatient for my collar and my flight, I listened with some degree of interest to the prolonged discussions of the two naturalists, which still delayed my journey.

"Thy experiment with thy Robin-red-breast," said the cobbler, "will prove little, because he is already too near at home; but the faculty which all animals possess of keeping the road they want, through dis-

tances the most remote, and where, to human apprehension, there is nothing natural to direct their course, is certainly among the striking phenomena of nature; though, at last, it only shows, what we ought to have believed beforehand, that all things are provided with means apportioned to their necessities. Dogs, cats, horses, oxen, sheep,—all things find their way, in circumstances which often surprise us; and the return of the dove to his dove-cote is no more, and even upon a scale comparatively much less, than the marvellous return of the swallow to his mansion, and the martin to his temple; and of so many other birds of passage; to leave out of our present thoughts the number of migrating fishes, and of four-footed beasts!”

“Thee sayest well and cautiously,” interrupted Mr. Gubbins, “that it is to human apprehension only, that they have nothing natural to guide them; for their guides, in reality, must be as plainly natural, as they are sure and efficacious?”

“And among these,” assented Cobbler Dykes, “must be the exquisite powers of their eyes, their nostrils, and their ears. They see, smell, and hear, where, to our limited experience, those functions seem impossible. They take the minutest notice, too, (as I am persuaded), of the visible forms and appearances of things; and above all, they are directed by the most intense internal sensibility, throughout their entire frames, to the state of the atmosphere, affecting the state of their own bodies; so as to be informed of times and seasons, of the hours of the day, of the direction of places, and of the approach, and approaching departure of particular weathers, or of atmospheric phenomena; to an extent, and with a precision,

of which, as we do not ourselves, in our artificial ways of life, depend so implicitly upon such aids, we form no adequate idea!"

"As to what thee sayest," again interrupted Mr. Gubbins, "about their taking notice of places; let me tell thee, while I think of it, an anecdote of a dog, which I have heard of from London, since thee and I enjoyed ourselves in this sort of talk; and which, though as short as it is simple, and as simple as it is short, will prove more for the reasoning powers of the animal, and against a blind instinct, than many longer tales. The dog was of a large size, but not a twelvemonth old. His master lived at the second door from the corner, in one of those numerous streets which cross each other at right angles, in the north-west part of the town; and where the pavement, lamps, steps, doors, and fronts of the houses are all so much alike. I should add, that at the distance of twenty doors, there was a second corner of two crossing streets, almost exactly resembling the first. Now, the well-grown puppy, perplexed by these similitudes, would frequently mistake his master's door, but only to this extent: he would go to the *second* door from the second corner, instead of the *second* door from the first; and what did this make manifest, but that the dog did not know the door, or at any time find it, through a blind and inexplicable instinct, but by the same rule that would have guided his master himself, in any similar emergency. The door which he had to find was a second door from a *corner*; that he knew; and though, for some little time, he often mistook the *corner*, he never failed to fix upon a *second door*!"

"I admire thy story," said Cobbler Dykes, "as one that is more than commonly to the point; and though

what I have to give in exchange belongs rather to the whole herd of general stories of the sagacity or reasonableness of dogs, or their approach to human manners and modes of action, yet I venture to recite it. We have, in our village, a terrier, which, at home and abroad, shows his sagacity, in various ways, to the equal admiration of his master and his mistress. At home, if he is hungry, and if the usual supply of food is wanting, his mistress can put money into his mouth, which he will carry to a dog's-meat shop, and lay down in exchange for a meal. Abroad, his master, who is a labouring man, and whom he accompanies, in the evening, to chat and take a pint, at the King's Head, can send him, with a halfpenny in his mouth, to the bar; and, in his mouth, he will bring back a biscuit in exchange. He neither trespasses upon the biscuit, nor does he carry the money to the dog's-meat shop, as, in the former case, and for his own food, he knows that he has leave to do."

"Well!" said Mr. Gubbins, "so we go on, adding story to story; but it is time thee madest the collar, and that poor Robin was on his way." The collar was then made in an instant, and fastened upon my neck; and now, to my unspeakable joy, and amid the good words and wishes of the whole party, I was released from the detested net, and suffered to fly at large. This done, it was not long before I had shrouded myself, for the night, in the most retired part of the garden of Burford Cottage.

CHAP. VI.

To trust again, and be again deceived!

ANON.

I GAVE my reader to understand, for his sympathetic satisfaction, even before closing the final page of my late chapter, that I reached Burford Cottage safely and expeditiously, after once escaping from the net of Mr. Gubbins, and from Cobbler Dykes's storehouse of the works of art and nature. There can be no doubt, but that Mr. Gubbins's experiment (so very disagreeable to me, who was the subject of it!) was little better than trivial; for how could he suppose any other than that I must know my way for six miles round my nest*? Cunning Mr. Gubbins! He did not know how often I had accompanied even his own solitary rambles for parts of that distance; or met or overtook him within that circuit from his home, springing from twenty yards to twenty yards along the hedge-rows, and stopping when he stopped, and turning back when he turned back; though all without his giving that particular attention to me, which I was bestowing upon him! Cunning Mr. Gubbins! He did not, and he does not know, that if men, and women, and children watch and note the ways, and looks, and figures, and colours of Robins; so, Robins also watch and note the ways,

* A similar experiment, however, and one which is upon record, was lately tried in reality, and in the instance of a Red-breast; and *three miles* was all the space, on that occasion, interposed.

and looks, and figures, and colours of men, and women, and children, their faces and their clothes; and observe new coats, and hats, and shawls, and bonnets; and are pleased and displeas'd with new ribands, and new fashions! If Robins, alive or stuffed, are objects of curiosity, and sometimes of wonder and amazement, and I will add, of love and admiration, and of pity and compassion, to humanity; why should not humanity, as well, be sometimes the same object of curiosity, amazement, wonder, pity, love, or admiration, to us inquisitive, sensitive, tender-hearted Robins; for are not all the universe united in the same bonds of sympathy, and in the same watchfulness of one another's wants, or forms, or ways? Besides, we often have to roam in search of food; and sometimes in search after our straying young ones.

But, though I enjoy'd, in this manner, a general knowledge of the country round, yet I had never actually visited Cobbler Dykes's village before the evening in question; and it behov'd me, therefore, at my first flying from the fingers of Mr. Gubbins, to look about, and see which way I was to go. I alighted, therefore, very speedily, upon the top of the opposite palings, as well for this special purpose, as to dress my wings and tail, and to recover myself a little from the nervousness attendant upon my late situation and confinement, of which freedom and the open air now made me even more duly sensible. As I perceived, however, at the next instant, that all my late acquaintance were in full gape at my doings; as there were but a few yards between us; and as I could not very well be sure of what the *curiosity* of my kind admirers might next put it into their heads to do upon my account; I made a second spring, and did not stop

till I reached the weathercock at the top of the gable-end of a barn, where I prepared myself for further flight with greater safety, and possessed a view for no small part of my way. The place and colours of the light of heaven showed me the road I was to take, and warned me of the lateness of the hour; besides which, I felt the dew descending, and the cold increasing. The gale behind me brought with it other odours than those which belonged to home, and which, even for this reason, I knew to be on the opposite side. It blew off a wood of beech-trees, and was scented, too, with the pine, and came dry and sharp over the summits of the hills; while to my native and daily air belonged, in greater proportion, the breezes soft and moist from the streams and meadows, and the breath of willows, birches, ash-trees, and of rich grass and shining daisies*. Informed and fixed upon my road; re-practised in the employment of my wings; my feathers dressed and nerves restored; I soon after accomplished, at a succession of short flights, the first three miles of my journey; and now I distinctly saw before me the heads of well-known trees, the spire of the village church, the smoke of the village mansion; and even beheld beneath my feet the dingles in which I often fed, and the waters which I often sipped and splashed. Looking behind me, I saw, upon the brow of a distant eminence, Mr. Gubbins, striding homeward with all his might; and I should have laughed, if nature had taught me to laugh as well as to sing, at the laborious speed, and panting exertion, with which he was plainly endeavouring, before the evening-star should glitter upward to the zenith, to reach his wished-for home, and make amends

* Day's-eyes?

for the loss of time incurred through his ingenious curiosity! Elated at my own superior springiness, my shorter road, and freer yielding element, I scarcely saw him, I confess, before I once more rose into the air; and, tilting as I went, very soon was I beneath the yew-tree, and its berries, in the village churchyard; after which, a few short and jocund trips lodged me in safety behind the richly-flowered laurustinuses in Mr. Paulett's garden. The cat was prowling round it when I arrived, but I swept softly and silently into the large fir above, without her seeing me, or hearing the least rustle; though her uplifted nose and whiskers betrayed and confirmed her suspicions of the taint of prey, diffused in the still evening atmosphere*. I slept soundly till the morning. Mr. Gubbins, as I afterwards collected from his stories to his friends, did not reach home till an hour after me.

When morning, however, came, I found that it was not exactly true, as promised me by Mr. Gubbins, the day before, that all my troubles should end with the sunshine of that day. I had taken, hitherto, no more than small account of my collar. I admit, that from the moment of my freedom, I had made frequent and desultory attempts to remove it by means of my feet, (for I could not reach it with my bill); but I had found

* The cat kind have smellers, as well as feelers, in their whiskers; that is, the nerves of smell are elongated from the nose into the whiskers, and to their extremities. It follows from this, that they can discover their prey aloft, and through the medium of the air; while, in the contrast, the dog has no scent but for the ground, upon which, as is the common understanding, the *scent must lie*, or he is thrown out of the chase. If the fox, therefore, by leaping, or by taking the water, breaks the line of tainted earth, he thus eludes the *dog*; while the *cat*, destined, especially in the case of birds, to seek its prey where it may never touch the ground, has movable *smellers*, with which to pursue, as it were, and detect it in the air.

it give way; and I was at first too anxious for my home, and afterward too heavy for sleep, to think much on an encumbrance which I yet thought required only a serious effort to be at once dislodged. Unfortunate that I was! When morning came, and with it all the morning's strength and vigour, and keenness of apprehension, no effort that I could make released me from my collar! I was without experience in leathern collars, and without instruments to deal with them. Their infliction and stubbornness, like those of brick traps, and of some other of the works of human art, were calamities against which Nature has given to Robin-red-breasts no natural defence nor remedy. The burden of the collar was not great, but it totally interfered with all arrangements of my toilet for the due appearance of my neck; and, as to itself, how was it possible for me to show myself abroad, in so hideous, and it must be added, so humiliating a disguise? How could I account for it to my fellow birds? Was I to tell the adventure of the trap? Had I acquired it by misbehaviour? Was it like the fool's-cap of the school-children? Had it been put upon me when I was napping; or, worse, when I was gluttonously feeding, and therefore inattentive! Had Richard or Emily stolen behind me, and slipped it upon me unawares; thereby demonstrating, that though it might be difficult for mice to bell the cat, young children might collar a Robin! So disgraceful a suspicion exceeded endurance. "Ho-ho! ha-ha! hu-hu! he-he! hi-hi!" would a whole flock of Robins, and sparrows, and finches, and tom-tits exclaim; and repeat, and echo with a thousand voices: "so, Robin has let Emily slip a collar round his neck; and to-morrow she will catch him, by putting salt upon his tail!" A scene like this, it was

impossible to meet, even if it were to be no more than thus merry, and if I had nothing to dread from it but ridicule! But ridicule is the first shade of hatred, of anger, and of violence; and who could tell but the disgusted birds might march from jest to pecks and blows, striking their bills and claws, first, indeed, at my collar, but soon after into my neck and eyes, my muscles and my heart! I was afraid therefore, as much as I was ashamed. And, then, for Burford Cottage—for the recesses of its shrubbery—for the enclosure of its lawn—for the microcosm of its flower-beds! Could I be seen in either; or, trusting myself into their precincts, and even warbling behind a pine-cone, or behind the velvet of a dahlia-flower, could I escape the danger of being seen? I had set my heart upon flying and warbling at Burford Cottage in the morning; but I had reckoned *without my collar!* This would have been my joy, my consolation, my reward; nay, more, my triumph! But was I to appear as a thrall instead of conqueror, and as a collared bondsman and a serf? Was I to show myself estranged, in a new guise, and as the menial of another; or was I to encourage, at Burford Cottage, by the contagion of such a display, the belief that it was possible for its inmates to make a menial of me themselves? Every particle of these thoughts was inadmissible; and the troubles of my foul captivity, so far from having reached their end, were still bowing me to the ground; for they condemned me to solitude, to seclusion, stillness, silence, terror, shame, and sorrow; to a hiding-place, a nook, a corner; to dumbness, self-denial, hungering, and thirsting; and all this in the midst of the wide skies and the open fields, and with an outspread table, and with running water, and with

stout feet and bill, and with unfettered wings! Oh, Mr. Gubbins, Mr. Gubbins; and oh, Cobbler Dykes, and thy atrocious leathern collar!

But mark the end; mark the sorrows consequent upon the collar, and the ministry of those sorrows for its removal; mark the new temptations which it brought upon me; the new griefs through which it led me: griefs, however, which were my deliverers, when no deliverance could reach me but through them! Such is so often the tissue of worldly events, and to such chequered fate must Robins submit, as well as men! We must grow happy through our tears, and reach the temple of our wishes through the briers and the sloughs of our despair!

I had pined, I had trembled, I had grown faint; I had hungered, I had thirsted,—hour after hour. I had refused the early worm, and the whole morning's meal; but it was now the approach of noon, and I bethought me, that at this season, when all my feathered fellow creatures were at rest, and not thronging the highways of heaven, I might slip, haply unobserved, from my quarters in Mr. Paulett's garden, to those in Mr. Gubbins's, where, overcoming my natural antipathy to the scene of the brick trap, armed by experience against a repetition of the same ill, and possibly even aided by some kind device of Mary Gubbins or her mother, or even of the curious lord of the place, to shorten my absence, or to indemnify its cares; I might yet, obscurely, secretly, and without noise or ostentation, find a sufficient dinner, a retreat of safety, and an afternoon's repose! I flew, then, timidly and cautiously, passing from bough to bough, and from tree to tree, beneath the covert of the shade, across the brook, and into the sunny paddock; over the horns of

the cows, by the ears of the old horse, once more into the shade, away through the orchard, adown by the parson's glebe, up by the prospect hill, along by the wheelwright's paling; and, then, with a bold and lengthened spring, once more among the elder-trees in Mr. Gubbins's own garden! It was Elysium for me to be there, considering all that I had left behind!

The time of the day was passed when I might have hoped for worms or beetles. They, too, like the birds that hunt them, were at their noontide rest, and safe from hungry stragglers; but I had been beneath the elder-trees only a short time, when glancing my eager eye upon each side, I saw the very thing which I had hoped for, and which indulged all my wishes! The experience of delusion in this garden of Calypso was strong in my recollection. I was no prisoner for brick traps! Smart devices of sticks and cheese-parings had had their day for Robin! But still, the probability of some peace-offering from Mr. Gubbins, or of some wave-offering from his daughter, was so probable, and would, just now, be so acceptable! What, then, had I the rapture to behold? Enough and to spare, of bread and cheese, all set out for me; and where was this new and undeceitful feast laid out? Not in the dark hollow of an ugly trap of bricks, nor beneath the overhanging weight, and closing barrier, of any dreadful, slanting, ticklishly supported brick cover! No; all was fair, and in the light! Just beside the adjoining pathway, and amid the spreading leaves and flowers of the blue and glossy periwinkle, stood an upright wire cage, the only use of which, in this transaction, appeared to me to be that of raising to view, as upon a platform, the crumbs of bread and cheese which were strewn upon its top; not, indeed, upon the

very top of all, and exposed to every comer and common pilferer, but still within an attic, open-windowed, and of open wire, without disguise as well:—the snug-gest chamber, as it seemed to me, that ever was devised for a hungry stranger to enjoy a meal in; alone, abundant, not to be lessened by untimely droppings-in of any other hungry guest!

I could not be too thankful for this prepared repast; nor, except that I dedicated a few moments to looking carefully upon every side, so that none saw me, and none had any chance of cheating me, I could not be too quick in laying hold of the good before me. I sunk down, in my soft manner, from the elder-branches; but with as much rapidity as if I had seen a grub or beetle just emerging from beneath a pebble, or from out of the mould: I dived into the wire-wove attic; I seized the nearest cheese-paring;—a wire trap-door snapped down upon me, as quick and noisy as a pistol-lock; I rushed against the wires before me, to escape immediately from the ill-timed cause of alarm;—but, alas! alas! alas! I was a second time a prisoner, and a second time the prisoner of Mr. Gubbins!

My fright, my disappointment, my rage, my fury, my hopelessness, my mortification; all this were long to tell; but the issue was short, and the secret soon explained! I had sulked, and fretted, and fasted in the midst of plenty, in a corner of my new trap, (for a new and differently formed trap it was, that, after all, I had ignorantly entered,) only a quarter of an hour, before I saw Mr. Gubbins advancing, at once to relieve, and as I apprehended, more permanently to hold me; nor before he took me from his cage-trap, caressed me in his bosom, assured me that this was my final trouble at his hands; told me that he had schemed to catch

me this second time only to complete his experiment; only to be assured of my return; and that he would take off my collar, and set me free in the woods and gardens, as soon as he had once shown me dressed in it to his wife and daughter, and to Farmer Mowbray and his family, in proof of the same experiment, and as a means of ensuring the belief, that he knew me to be the same Robin which he had before caught in his garden; which he had carried to Cobbler Dykes's; which Cobbler Dykes was to come to see again that afternoon; and which he had now caught and identified once more in his garden! All this he said to me, or rather to himself, and only in make-believe to me; for I hardly fancy that he thought I understood him, or that I had any other chance of finding out the meaning of his behaviour to me, than by waiting the event! I received consolation, however, and as will be supposed, from what he said; understanding his words, and trusting and believing in his explanations. He had hitherto seemed to keep his faith; he had released me once, after catching me; and I persuaded myself therefore, and by no means, as will appear, in vain, that he would this second time do the whole that he talked of and professed.

In the short interval, nevertheless, between the closing of the trap, and the arrival of Mr. Gubbins, my misfortune had not failed to bring around me the kind attentions of some fellow Robins. My cries, at the first moment of my capture, were heard in the surrounding gardens and thickets; and even my hapless figure seen through the wiry bars of the trap upon the top of the *decoy-cage*, (for the horrid engine was nothing short of a decoy-cage!) had fixed the eyes of my friendly and compassionate semblances, as they flitted over

head. The decoy-cage, for its proper ends and application, consisted in two chambers or compartments, the one above, and the other below, but all transparent, and seemingly but one, through the construction of its deceitful wires! The compartment underneath was a perfect and ordinary cage, in which, according to the plan of the demon who, doubtless, was the inventor, a bird inured to thralldom should be placed; while upon its top, but separated by a floor of wires, was the second and smaller chamber, and which had nothing in common with the cell below, except its wooden posts and transoms, and its iron gratings! This attic cell was of low ceiling, without a perch, without a trough, without a water-lead or glass; without, as I have implied or said, a wooden board or floor, the one as absent as the other; and even without a door—a proper honest house-door—conspicuous by its side, adapted to fair dealing, whether of freedom or confinement! But no! to this detested garret there belonged no door except (oh fitting name!) a *trap-door*—a door first-cousin to a sky-light,—and, in the instance of the wire-door of the decoy-cage, not darker or less transparent than its relation! Now the whole of the treacherous fabric is intended to be seen through—it was not *seen through*, however, by me; and thus, when a free bird, travelling or disporting in the

“ —empty, vast, and wandering air,”

beholds a brother or a sister, really in the lower den or cellar, but which he thinks to be the entire mansion; he alights, converses, sees good fare, tries the wires, finds the open garret-door; and designing but to pass a social minute, and take a friendly bite and sup, he enters; the trap falls, or snaps-to, like a gun-lock or a

mouse-trap; and the fond stranger finds himself at once precluded from retreat; as far as ever from his friend, and plate, and glass; and pent between an iron floor and an iron ceiling, so near to each other that it is much if he can hold his head up between them, till the traitorous fowler comes to remove him from the trap to the dark dungeon, not a decoy-cage, scarcely loftier, and not so large as the vile trap itself!

Thus, then, was I circumstanced;—not, as I had yet to thank my stars, not the decoyer, but the decoyed;—for, however hapless, I had yet one happiness, and it was no small one, that I was guiltless, innocent;—the injured only, not the injurer! But thus, then, was I circumstanced. There was no decoy-bird underneath. The proper cage was empty of a tenant, though furnished with a dinner; and it was I that filled the trap, with its foul door closed down, as impermeable to feathered visitor, as the closed hatches of a ship to water in a gale! But my cries ascended through the bars; they reached the thickets and the gardens; and hence, though the secluded Robins that sat in them might have seemed few or none to any searcher but the sorrowful, I had soon about me one, two, or three; and, soonest of the three, my mother! The pitying strangers, like my mother herself, did all they could to help me; but what was it they could do? I did not seem to be in want of food (nor did my stomach, as the reader knows, want it any more than it could have it), or they would have brought it to me in their endearing bills! I could not fly away with them; that they saw, and mourned over me therefor! It was not through a broken wing, or through a wound, or through weakness; or they would have joined their strength to carry me! But

I was a sufferer through unnatural means, and such as they had no art to overcome! They could give me, then, but their condolences, and those were not withheld; but (condolences bestowed, and sympathy expressed, and kindly hopes imparted, and second visits promised) the pitying strangers, one by one, fled, and left me; not indeed alone, but to the sole solace of my mother!

She, poor bird, after trying, like the rest, to set me free, found nothing within her power, but to share, as far as wires allowed, my prison and detention; and these she seemed resolved to share with perseverance. Upon a neighbouring spray, she, from her own coming, to that of Mr. Gubbins, sat, like the sister of Moses, or like the mother of the five kings whom Joshua hung upon five trees; she, an anxious or a weeping watcher, sat, and returned and returned my sighs, till the sounding path, and shaken branches, announced a human footstep. At that moment, it is true, she vanished to the next tree; for what remained, even to her, at this new shock, amidst all her timidity and helplessness? She, small guardian, had no power, like eagle, or like pelican, or even like dove or hen against a hawk, to make battle for her young one! She was a reed in the blast, and must bend! The way of the weak (and by turns we all are weak) is to shrink before the weapon, and to escape only as they fly, or as they are spared. Mr. Gubbins came, and still my mother watched; he carried me toward the house, and my mother hid herself in the thicket; she took with her grief and fear, and found nothing to help her, except hope!

CHAP. VII.

The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
For human fellowship, as being void
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike
To love and friendship both; that is not pleased
With sight of animals enjoying life,
Nor feels their happiness augment its own!

COWPER.

MR. GUBBINS, so long as the success of his experiment was uncertain, had been very careful to conceal from his wife and daughter; from his neighbours (with the exception of his necessary confidence in Farmer Mowbray, and in his confederate, Cobbler Dykes); from the boys in his school-room, and even from Sukey in the kitchen, the gentle pranks which he was playing with my poor self! But, now that every thing had gone to his wish, and all (as I rejoiced most sincerely to hear him say) was over, except the single remaining act of setting me at liberty; now, he was too happy in the reward of his labours; too proud of the issue to which he had brought them; and too bold in the consciousness that he could justify his proceedings, not to spring with the glee and lightness of a child of five years old, bearing me conspicuous in his hand, from the trap to the little shed under which all the females were at the moment busy in making elder-berry wine!

Quick, however, as were all his motions, and ready as he felt his tongue to give an account, to the utmost advantage, of all his motives, and even performances; swifter still were the acts and words of reproof which

he instantaneously drew down upon himself, in the unhesitating anticipation that he had certainly done me wrong. It is beautiful to observe among mankind, those wayward creatures who need so many governors and monitors to keep them in any thing like a course of justice, especially toward their inferiors (Robin-red-breasts and others); it is beautiful to observe among mankind, the operation of that *instinct* which they possess, to denounce, with the rapidity of heaven's own lightning, and with the loudness of heaven's own thunder, whatever they see, or think that they see, amiss, in the conduct of their fellows; so, that every man, to every man, is a judge and an executioner, and an echo of the rules and sentences of universal order! True it is that this instinct, like other instincts, often operates blindly; whence it happens that very innocent actions, and very innocent persons, fall daily under its scourge, through the mistakes of these same judges and executioners, who, with whatever honesty, yet often with rashness, and oftener still with ignorance, imagine both of them to be guilty. But, instead of staying to explain how this admirable and amiable human instinct is sometimes made a means of evil, while it is more generally a means of good, I shall only give the example, as afforded in my particular case; where Mr. Gubbins, for the time, was doomed to meet all that visitation of reproof, not from his wife only, but from his daughter, and from his serving-maid, of which he had lived in terror from the first moment that he even thought of intermeddling with me; which was the genuine outcry of offended nature, bursting from the members of his household; and of which his dread before it came, and his passing consternation when it arrived,

shows how happily dependent are all these giants upon the good opinion of their fellow-giants; and how this instinct of theirs serves to punish crimes when committed, and to prevent more than it is ever called upon to punish! No sooner had Mr. Gubbins, in showing my little head from the hollow between his bended thumb and his fore-finger, unguardedly let it be known that he had caught me in a trap, and had set a trap to catch me; than, one after another, or all at the same time, these were the exclamations which his pained and terrified ears were made to receive into their cells:

“ Oh, Ephraim Gubbins,” cried his wife, “ how could you!—”

“ Oh, father,” cried Mary Gubbins, “ how could you!—”

“ Oh, master,” cried Sukey, the serving-maid, “ how could you!”

And much had Mr. Gubbins to exert himself, with all his eloquence and his explanations, before he was able to pacify, even in some small degree, the heaving bosoms, either of his wife, his daughter, or his serving-maid, as to the hard case in which he had involved poor little Robin-red-breast! Said I not that this beautiful human instinct is the voice of nature itself, the guide of the human race, and the protector of the feeble and the innocent? Alas! how could that extraordinary species, so strong and so self-willed, contrive to live for themselves, or to be bearable to others, without its aid? What is it that they would not do, if, besides other fears, they feared not the reproof of others, nor valued their good opinion?

It was now that Mr. Gubbins explained, in words that it consoled and delighted me to hear, and that

again more than half recovered for him all my previous good opinion, the whole mystery of his behaviour to me, and especially of my second entrapment, and of the odious leathern collar upon my neck. It was necessary, he said, to his proof that I could find my way home, that he should catch me again, in order to be able to show me, not only to his family, but to his brother philosopher, Mr. Dykes; and, as Mr. Dykes was an acute sort of person, and not likely to be satisfied with any evidence short of the best, or to consider any point established, while, as he was accustomed to say (hanging up his lasts at the same moment), there remained "a peg to hang a doubt upon;" so, it had been necessary to make him put, with his own hands, a collar of his own workmanship, round the neck of the little bird, which, not at all by its own consent, had been made one of the three parties to "this great questioning of nature (such were Mr. Gubbins's lofty words), as to the sagacity of some of the humblest of her animated creatures." I was glad (or upon principles of generosity, I ought to have been glad) that when, forsooth! my deep inquirer bent his thoughts upon some of the "humblest" of animated creatures, he imposed the suffering upon me, rather than upon an unfortunate ant, or slug, or worm, which might have shown him sagacity, in its degree, as truly as a Robin; and I was glad, beyond all question, that the secret of my terrible collar was now explained, and so explained as to promise me a speedy disengagement. "Ah!" said I to myself, "so it is then, that out of what I thought the accumulation of misfortune, is to come my joy? I could by no means get rid of my collar by my own art; but this second entrapment is the means by which my destiny has come to

my relief!" My collar, even in the decoy-cage, had continued to be the bitterest of my misfortunes; and when my compassionate fellow-Robins, and even when my mother, came to condole and to moan with me, I kept myself shrunk and huddled together with a two-fold contraction, lest they, or even she, should observe that degradation which added misery even to the narrow limits of my trap! The feelings of shame, and of apprehended ridicule and contempt, with which I wore that badge of my bodily thralldom, have already been explained; and the reader sees the broad distinction which must have belonged, in the eye of my dear fellow-birds, and even parent, between the being merely shut up in a trap, and dishonoured by a collar. The trap spoke for me, and told all my story. Any bird, of my size, might have been caught in a trap; but as to how I came by a collar,—as to that, it was possible to indulge in a hundred surmises, and to put on it such constructions as were more than sufficient to ruin, as I have before suggested, my good name, for a bird of common sense, or common spirit. Oh! the collar was detestable. "Dread shame" has always been the motto of my family, as well as of some other people's; so, that I had been wretched ever since I wore it, and now became transported when I heard that it was very soon to be taken off!

I was impatient—fearfully impatient for the time; and I confess that I had my anxieties, whether there were not too much probability that I was to undergo another march to our cobbler's stall and dead menagerie, before the happy event should come upon me! I soon found, however, to my rapture, that an appointment had been made between the two naturalists, in virtue of which Mr. Dykes was to bring home some

mended shoes, and take his tea with the wearers, upon that very afternoon; Mr. Gubbins having securely reckoned, it seems, from my unsuspecting simplicity, that I should be caught quite in time for an exhibition at a four o'clock tea-table! My breast blushes redder than ever, to think that every thing should have happened to his calculation; and yet, at last, where is the shame of having fallen into the snare of the fowler; and of having been lost, not through any moral fault, but only because I had not greater wisdom than falls to the lot of Robin-red-breasts, or sometimes to the fortune of their betters?

Cobbler Dykes, indeed, was very shortly at the open door of Mr. Gubbins's mansion; and scarcely sooner at the open door, than across the threshold, and welcomed to a chair. There were one or two things, however, which outstripped, in their haste, almost the welcoming, but certainly the seating, of the honest and ingenious cobbler (dressed though he was in his best, to visit his distant customers, and to sit by the side of Madam Gubbins and her daughter); and these foremost things, and things which could not wait, were no other than to proclaim to the visitor the actual arrival of myself, and to show me, all collared as I was, to eyes that could not be deceived as to the identity of the collar; and that were able to know again (so observant and familiar with us birds was Mr. Dykes) the very feathers on my neck, and on my wing, and the hairs around my mandibles, and the length and colour of my claws. All, therefore, was now acknowledged by Mr. Dykes, his "spectacles on nose," as fair, convincing, and conclusive. Mr. Gubbins was congratulated, and the latter looked in triumph at his wife and daughter; and called even

upon Sukey to bear witness, as well to the marvel of the event, as to the truth of all that he had previously related! For my part, I thought the whole affair was now so thoroughly complete, that my liberty must be instant; and that the Prospero who held me bound, would now, like his predecessor in the play, sink his wand in the sea (that is, take the collar off my neck), and leave me, another Ariel, to fly away, and to sing my song; which, even though spring-time was yet to come, I had determined should be—

“ Merrily, cheerily shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough!”

But still another scene, or more than one, as soon appeared, was to be enacted,—not, indeed, in the tragedy, but in the very serious comedy—of my most anxious captivity,—before its absolute conclusion. Tea was not yet entirely ready; and though Mrs. Gubbins and her daughter kindly and considerately urged upon the necromancers their duty to dismiss me before the sun-down and my bedtime; yet, upon the other side, it was insisted that every possible advantage should be taken of the rare event, during the short interval only, that, as all agreed, it was still to last. Mr. Gubbins’s scholars were still upon their forms; and the worthy man (for he was worthy, and if he had a fault, it was only in being too curious about Robin-red-breasts!) was, as I have described him, both a schoolmaster and a philosopher; and was fond, in his humble way, and in the humble way of his scholars and neighbours, of joining nature with books, and things with words, for the better instruction of his hearers; besides, his adventure with the Robin was now as sure of school and village fame as he could be

willing, or even wish; and he was desirous of an honourable report, in the school-room and in the village, as in his parlour and his kitchen, as well of the philosophy and innocence of his motives, as of the success and skill of his experiment. Taking, therefore, Cobbler Dykes, as his full voucher, by the arm (and who, at the same time, could make inquiry, as to whose shoes wanted capping for holes worn at marbles, or seams new sewing, through rotting, and through splashing, in the kennels and the brooks), he proceeded first to the school-room; and there, casting off from himself all cruelty of purpose, and all deficiency of veneration for the Jove-protected Robin-red-breast; he bade the charmed and eager scholars view the extraordinary Robin, returned (for that was his comparison) like a long absent and far-sought voyager from the Arctic Regions, and from the Magnetic Poles, to gladden his native and his sympathizing country, and to perch upon his accustomed poplar-tree! Sorry am I to add, that among the imps to whom this excellent discourse was addressed, it was not one or two alone, that I heard whispering to each other, "I wish it was mine! I could put it into such a nice cage, if I had it at home;" and similar expressions, all inconsistent with the bodily freedom, and truly with the lives, of the whole race of Robin-red-breasts! I say no more, however, upon that subject; except that, in the first place, it was a caution to me, to think always of traps, and decoy-cages, and leather collars; and in the next, that I am willing to hope the good words of Mr. Gubbins wrought a change in the sentiments of my young beholders, though I did not stay long enough to hear them say so!

But the second, and really penultimate adventure,

was to show me to Farmer Mowbray, and to all the family at the farm-house. Mr. Gubbins, besides that he had a little vanity upon the subject, even there, thought it a compliment due to the friendly farmer, to inform him of the result of all the contrivance; and to verify his words by his testimonies, in return for his loan of the granary, and for his cooperation and secrecy. Mrs. Gubbins longed to see me upon the wing; but she could not dispute her husband's arguments for my visit to the Mowbrays; and moreover, the kettle did not boil, so that it was impossible to deny, that with due expedition, the visit might still be made and finished before the tea could by any means be ready. Besides, the Mowbrays were customers of Cobbler Dykes; and who knew but both mending and making might be wanting, before the tearful voyage of the former to Van Diemen's Land; an occasion, too, which, at any rate, demanded Dykes's affectionate farewell? Upon the whole, then, Mrs. Gubbins showed submission, and her daughter resignation; but the former charged, and the latter prayed, my possessor to bring me back, before releasing me, to the offending roof which had seen me a prisoner; so that their own eyes might be assured of my deliverance, and that the benediction belonging to the deed should not be lost upon the rafters, nor fail to purify the spot that had been tainted by the sin! I could see, too, that as we left the door (Mr. Gubbins, Cobbler Dykes, and my poor self), the wistful looks and palpitating heart of Sukey went along with us, half fearful that there might still be a deception or a disaster; or half grudging that another instant should find me still in bondage!

Away we moved, then, to Farmer Mowbray's; and, there, as before, all my story was repeated, and all my

figure (with the frightful collar, too) exposed to every gaze; to the farmer's; to his wife's; to their six children's; and to three or four neighbours, sitting or standing in the kitchen, and who had come, like the comforters of Job, but in a more comfortable spirit, to show their regard for the departing family. Here, though Mr. Gubbins's reasons were admitted to his excuse, all the party pitied me for the troubles I had undergone; and all seemed to be happy that I was about to be made happy too. Even to the smallest of the tanned-necked and white-headed children I was held down, to be wondered at, and to be kissed; and a lesson, in my behalf, and in that of my fellows, was duteously held forth; but, fortunately, Mr. Dykes early recollected that "Mistress" would be waiting tea, besides being impatient for my release; so that (Mr. Dykes and Mr. Gubbins having first learned, with sincere gratification, that the voyage of the Mowbrays was not so near, nor even so certain, as had been purposed, and the latter having been requested to return for orders), most joyfully did I find our march begun for Mr. Gubbins's fireside!

Brought once more within the hospitable verge, it was but a short time before my collar was cut away, and I was set actually at liberty; but while the scissors were looking for, and while a cup of tea was taking, a few words escaped to my ears, such as flattered me afresh upon the score of my discovered importance in the volume of nature; and such, therefore, as I trust the reader will pardon me for having the selfishness to add to this chapter of my book.

"And happy shall I be," said the good and tender-hearted woman, when the dear little bird is on his wings again! I knew that there was something wrong

about the house, but I could not tell what; and little did I think that Ephraim had been the man to cause it. Mr. Dykes, as I am a living woman (and I don't care whom thee tells it to), and as our Mary, and as Sukey, are witnesses of the truth of what I say; on Tuesday night, when, as I now find, poor Bobby was in the cage, in the dark loft, at the top of the house; here, at this very table, I thought I heard our best blue and white china punchbowl crack, while it stood quietly upon the projecting shelf in the beaufet (and nobody near it); and, just at the same time, too, all my gilt-edged coffee-cups jingle upon their hooks, along the shelf in front of the punch-bowl! And Sukey and Mary know (though, poor things, they did not hear the crack, nor the jingling, not they), that I jumped up in a moment (as who would not in my place?) and went to the beaufet; and there were the coffee-cups as still as mice, and the punch-bowl without a crack in it, and just as sound as when my dear old grandmother gave it to me, forty years ago, when I was married to my Ephraim!"

"Ah! Bridget," cried Mr. Gubbins, "thee wilt live and die by those old notions that thee learnedst of thy dear grandmother, when thee used to sit by her knee, as I have often seen thee, and as I think I see thee now; and thee and I small chits together! But, Master Dykes, thee knowest, or thee oughtest to know (a man well-learned like thee), what is the meaning of all these fancies, which it is the fashion to call old women's fancies; and all which, by the way, more or less of them, are still alive throughout society, old and young, and in the cottage and the palace too!"

"Why, as to that, Mr. Gubbins," replied Cobbler Dykes, "thee answerest rather too boldly for me; for,

d'ye see, though I be a bit of an ornithologist, and can fit a shoe and hammer a sole with any man, yet I don't pretend that I know every thing, as thee dost. Thee hast had books for many a day, while I have been waxing my thread; and though I can think while I wax, and sometimes sing a song; yet, ye see, I can't read at such a time; and so my learning has been neglected, and I don't know how I should understand what I believe there are plenty of lords, and dukes, and judges, and generals, know as little about as myself, and are sometimes as ready to believe, as any of your old women!"

"I'll tell thee, then, Master Dykes," resumed Mr. Gubbins; "and first let me remark, that while there are many to make mention of these things only to laugh at them, or to cause a laugh to be raised at them; it is my mind to mention them chiefly to explain them."

"Go on, friend Gubbins, go on," cried Cobbler Dykes; "there is no man to do it better!"

"Aye," interrupted Mrs. Gubbins, "but he will be a cunning man indeed, if he can persuade me that I did not hear the punch-bowl crack when it did not crack; or that it did not sound as if it cracked, because he had caught a Robin-red-breast in a trap, and put it into a cage, and kept it from its mate, all alone in our cockloft!"

"Good Bridget," pursued Mr. Gubbins, "be patient with thy husband; and be satisfied when I tell thee that I think thy heart is right, even though thy learning should be wrong! Master Dykes," he added (applying himself to the task he had undertaken), "thee know'st that all these notions are ancient, very ancient; and I can tell thee that they had, and still

have a meaning, and a fine one. They are abuses of fine principles, but still the principles are fine. Master Dykes, the fathers of mankind were no fools, any more than are their sons; though, like their sons also, those fathers had their errors! Well; the fathers have thought one way, and the sons have thought another; for thinking, or, as it is called, *learning*, has its vicissitudes, from age to age, and from year to year, like fond hopes, and like noble houses. Now the sons have a principle (and there must be a single and governing *principle* at the bottom of every system of thinking or of learning); a *principle* in which they agree with old Democritus and Epicurus, and others, of making the world out of particles or atoms, all separable, and all separated from each other; and, from this, they go on to separate, not only particles from particles, but things from things, and, as I am afraid, man from man! But, mark me (for here comes the story of the Robin and the punch-bowl), the fathers had another principle—a principle of union. They believed all things a continuity, and therefore a connexion. They supposed a *sympathy* among all things; a *sympathy* of each thing for all other things! Now, dostn't thee see, Master Dykes, that here was the *sympathy* between Dame's punchbowl and coffee-cups, and the Robin-red-breast! The Robin-red-breast was ill used, or the rule of right was broken as to the Robin-red-breast; and so the coffee-cups and punch-bowl were uneasy, and moreover, would have had no objection to set Dame a hunting about the house, till she had found the Robin-red-breast, and had set him at liberty! Thee wilt say that this is nonsense, and so it is; but it is no more than the abuse of a principle as reasonable as it is noble; and that touches the heart, even while it is rejected by

the head! Is it not a grand thing to suppose one joined and sympathizing universe, alive, through all its parts, to all the joys and all the sorrows of every thing composing it?"

"Aye, sure," cried Cobbler Dykes, half melted, and half awed at what he was hearing; "and a man might be excused, mayhap, if he shed tears at only thinking of it!"—As for me, I was amazed to find that Mr. Gubbins's punch-bowl and coffee-cup could have been generous enough to sympathise in my misfortunes; but, after all, what was it but stretching a little further that sympathy which I, for my own part, had actually found in so many human, and in so many feathered fellow-creatures; and which, as they tell, so many human creatures feel for others, or for the thought of others, whom they have never seen, and who, perhaps, never had existence? 'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,' says the play; and what was I to the coffee-cups and punch-bowl? There is the whole case!

"And observe thee, too," continued Mr. Gubbins, "that this is the explanation of a thousand prodigies, and a thousand warnings, and similar imaginations, sometimes in the house, and sometimes in the fields; such as crackings of furniture, music in the air, and endless things of the same sort. All are built upon the abuse of the noble principle of a supposed sympathy in all things for each other, and the devotion of that sympathy to all their interests; and in morals, to the interests of justice and of mercy. It is upon this ground, that the poet, echoing the philosopher, or echoing the people, has represented to us, that

—————"Murder, though it hath no tongue,
Can yet speak with most miraculous organ;"

and that, for its discovery,

"Trees have been known to speak, and stones to move."

“There is some beauty, then, and some value, Master Gubbins, even in the errors depending upon your principle,” rejoined Cobbler Dykes?

“There is, there is, friend Dykes,” answered Mr. Gubbins; “and, even with all the deformity, and with all the mischief which likewise belong to it, mankind will never part with it at heart, whatever may be the outside learning of the day!”

“Thank thee, thank thee,” cried Cobbler Dykes; “and only two questions more. Since thee drawest the fancies of our country-people (asking pardon of Madam Gubbins) out of the very learning of the ancient schools, how dost thee account for their having obtained them from such a source; and also why is it, as thee thinkest, that they hold their ground among low and high, even to this day, and will do still, in spite of the efforts of modern learning to overthrow them?”

“I believe,” said Mr. Gubbins, “that contrary to common opinion, the direct diffusion of the learning of the age, whatever it was, was very wide in ancient times. I believe that the indirect diffusion was wider still; and that, by one means or the other, it descended and spread abroad, so as to reach all individuals, and was by them transmitted to their children. I believe, too, that, error and truth together, it was the more easily spread, and now keeps its hold, because its great or primary principle is true, and is therefore congenial with human apprehensions. And it was a blessed fountain for men to drink at, however sometimes muddy! It united all men, rich and poor, and small and great, and servant and lord, and lord and servant. With the natural principle, that all things were in natural union, went the moral principle, that all things were in moral union, or held together in one bond of sym-

pathy and love. Your atomical philosophy,—your doctrine of *atoms*, separable and separated—not less in tendency than in principle, is the opposite of every thing of this kind, either natural, moral, or intellectual*.

“As to the rest,” concluded Mr. Gubbins, “we must not attempt to hide, that the errors which are the corruptions from the principle are enormous, and many more than we have adverted to. The principle itself is one of the parents of superstition, at the same time as of all just thinking; the latter being its *use*, the former its *abuse*. But, be the whole of this as it may, so it has happened, that (such is the case of our Robin and our punch-bowl, and its similitudes) thoughts which, not without reason, were once treasured beneath the *cloaks* of philosophers, and passed for the sublimest of thoughts in the Academy, and under the Portico †; are now passed to no *cloaks* at all (or at least are pretended so to be), except the *red-cloaks* of a village!”

* It is well known that the doctrine of the *sympathies* was in high vogue over all Europe not more than two centuries ago; and, in England, under the special auspices of Sir Kenelm Digby. But the physical or metaphysical root and rationale of the doctrine, and its moral influences and inferences, have seldom, perhaps, attracted much attention.

† In Greece, a *cloak* was the distinguishing garb of a philosopher.

CHAP. VIII.

Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. WORDSWORTH.

I SHALL not talk to my indulgent reader of the inward joy, the rapture, or the ecstasy, with which, at length, I found myself absolutely free; and hardly of the transports and tender welcome with which my return into the thickets and plantations was greeted by my mother, and my mate, and my companions! Suffice it to say, that upon my first flying from Mr. Gubbins's door, almost in doubt but that I should strike my wings against the insides of the wires of another decoy-cage, I perched upon the thick twig of an adjacent horse-chestnut-tree, just behind one of its few remaining fans, presented by its large, but brown and shrivelling leaves. Here, I shook and pruned my feathers, heated, soiled, and disarranged as they were, by all the handling which I had suffered; and scratched my head, and cleaned my bill, the latter against the smooth and silky bark of my supporting twig. This done, I felt myself refreshed, and had perceived, by this time, that I was really free; so, that now, I had spirits to take a new and longer flight, crossing again the road, or village street, and embowering myself in the opposite gardens. But, arrived within those happier precincts, I was still without the courage to mix myself at once with my fellows; or even to expose myself at ease to the immediate chance of view. I sat, for the space of a few minutes, in the

shelter of a mountain-ash, motionless and silent, "thinking of nothing," and deadened in my feelings. At length, hunched at my shoulders, and moving only my mouth, I ventured upon a meek exercise of my voice; hoping that my watchful mother, or my mate, would catch the sound of even so faint a cry, and thus arrive to witness my restoration, and to rejoin the broken links which should hold me to my species. But I listened, received no answer, became dumb once more, and sat dejected and inactive. Again, however, I called, and, this time, a little louder than before, and yet again received no answer. At this, I grew disappointed, fretful, and impatient; but my irritation was of service to me. It roused me to bolder efforts, and to a determination to be heard. I cried again. I said, "Mother, I am here; I am free; those who molested me have let me go!" No answer. "Mother, mother!" I screamed out; "mother and mate, mate and mother, I am here! I am here!"—"Where, where?" returned, at last, the honeyed voice of my mother! "Here, here!" I replied; and "Where, where?" was again her question. "In this mountain-ash!" was my reply; but while I yet answered, I had already spread my wings, and was flying in the direction of her voice; and she, too, had been impelled by her ears, even while she cried out "Where, where;" so, that we met mid-way in the air, and alighted together against the almost upright branches of an eringo-bush, where, at the same instant came my mate, flying and crying, the more strongly both, the nearer she approached us; and now too, our neighbour Red-breasts, discovering the event, came also, with quick songs of pleasure. Oh! you should have heard the mingled and strangely-shifting music of the quire; how expressive, how intelligent, how fond, how

plainly descriptive of the story! There was no need of words, for sounds said every thing! Sounds asked questions; sounds returned replies; sounds poured out pity; sounds were full of thanks; sounds expressed all emotions;—sorrow, commiseration, joy, and love! Articulation was unwanted; variety of tone and accent, this did all. The bushes rang with our clamour! We Red-breasts, as we have little relish for the society of any other species of bird than our own, so likewise we are not, in general, very sociable among ourselves; but a great occasion, like that which I am now describing, might well lead, as it did lead, to some brief departure from our solitary habits!

The sun, however, was, by this time, descending low; and our suppers were not only to be eaten, but even to be found. We hunted, therefore, and fed, separately or altogether, as food offered itself to our bills. I, for my part, fed, but soon grew sleepy; and I slept.

With the first dawn of the morning, I was again awake and hungry; but I was one of nature's commoners by birth, and might make prize of any thing that suited me. Worms and insects were stirring, like myself; so, that I gave chase as the game rose, and was soon breakfasted. Nothing remained but to pick up the dainties that might afterward fall in my way, and to visit my friends, and the pretty garden, at Burford Cottage; from both of which, through adverse fortune, I had now been absent for two whole days. This morning, at the cottage breakfast-hour, I promised myself a renewal of the pleasures which I derived from them, and from which I trusted never more to be rent asunder!

Sometimes springing, therefore, and sometimes

gliding, from bush to bush, and from tree to tree, I found myself, almost as soon as I pleased, in front of the friendly windows; but where every thing was yet in stillness within doors, and where I amused myself, for some time, quietly and alone, without.

The morning was bright and warm, and the earth continued heated by the effect of the summer rays, though the sun, for an ample month past, had been sped southward down the ecliptic. The dahlias or georgias*, the asters and the holyoaks† continued in luxuriant and gorgeous bloom; there were the soft pink flowers of the tobacco-plant, and the heliotropes, with their large and small "patines of bright gold," still illuminating and blushing in the borders; and the air was still sweet with jasmin and clematis; the stocks kept their lasting spikes of blossom, and the well-pruned China-roses seemed resolved even that the winter should look as smiling and as beauteous as the spring. With these temptations, too, the windows of the cottage were still as open to the floor, and to the velvet carpet of the grass-plot, as in the most beaming and most flowery of the mornings of July. Thus I saw and heard every thing in the parlour, as soon as its guests appeared, but was myself silent under the foliage; and if I sunk upon the mould, or rose again among the branches, I moved so gently that nothing was struck nor shaken, and that no bending or recovering spray, nor no falling nor rustling leaf, told that I was moving, or had moved.

I confess that I preserved this quietude and silence

* It is known that these flowers are variously called *dahlias*, from Dahl, a German horticulturalist; and *georgias*, from Georgia, in North America, their native country.

† Vulgo, hollyhocks.

a good deal in the secret hope, that at least in the course of the family-breakfast that was to begin, my ears would be soothed, and my heart warmed, by overhearing some expression of regret, or at the lowest, some manifestation of surprise, that, for two whole mornings, and two whole evenings, I had neither been heard nor seen; a vanity (if it was one) which I defend from the same argument that, though upon a different occasion, I have already held, as to the value which, happily, and for the benefit of all creatures, all creatures place upon the love, attachment, and good opinion of all other creatures!

Nor was I long before I received the tribute that I wished for: "The Robin is not come this morning, mamma," said Richard, "any more than yesterday; and I am sadly afraid that it was I who frightened him away!"

"I hope not, my dear," answered Mrs. Paulett, "for we are all of us pleased when he comes to us; as, indeed, every body is; for the Red-breast is a general favourite. But it was early in the season for us to hear him, as we did on Tuesday last; so, that we are hardly to expect him now, or at least to expect him every day, and must wait till the weather grows colder. You know that the Robin is a very shy bird at all other times; and, upon the whole, I am in hopes that he does not keep away because you frightened him."

"Mamma!" said Emily, "is every body as fond of Robin as we are?"

"I really fancy so, my Emily," returned Mrs. Paulett; "and though this particular bird has some peculiar claims upon ourselves, which we will consider another time, yet, in general, the love of nature, and of all

natural things, is one of those happy ties and meeting-places that bring all the world together; gentle and simple, young and old; the great, the grave, the humble, and the gay. It is recorded, for example, of Sir Thomas More, once Lord High Chancellor of England, the zealous advocate of Grecian learning, at a time when that great light of the human intellect was the scorn and detestation of the then barbarians of the English universities; and finally, Sir Thomas More, the martyr to undaunted principle, civil and religious, under the outrageous tyranny, and through the personal wickedness, of his original admirer, Henry the Eighth; Sir Thomas More added to his love of all the works of art, an unbounded love and curiosity as to all the works of nature. Besides his fondness for all our native species in the animal creation, to which he added the culture of astronomy, and of the natural sciences in general; if any new or curious foreign beast or bird was brought to London, he was sure to go to see it, and often to purchase it, adding it to his collection at Chelsea; where, besides books and music, and sculpture and painting, he had numerous specimens in natural history, living and dead, in which he and his family took delight, and which he exhibited to his friends—Henry himself, at one period, not excepted. I have not read, indeed, that Sir Thomas More was particularly remarked for his love of Robin-red-breasts; but I have no doubt, that, at least, he did not neglect such pretty birds as those, amid his regard for the whole natural kingdom!”

“But, mamma,” interrupted Richard, “you said, the other day, that you would let us read, in a book which you would show us, the fondness of a very grave and zealous preacher, who died but lately,

for the Robins, and for all sorts of little birds. Here is the book; now, will you help us to find where it is that the Robins are mentioned in it, and let us read what is said about them?"

With both of Richard's requests Mrs. Paulett immediately complied; and the consequence was, that I had the very agreeable satisfaction to hear, not only how much the worthy gentleman in question used to prize us Robins; but, also, what pains he used to take to please birds of my feather, and to see them when they were pleased; and especially to tickle their palates with the article of *cheese*. The passage which Richard read was contained in a letter to the gentleman's grandson (part of which letter I had formerly heard read, and have already made allusion to), and ran in such words as these:—"You must know, Adam, that I am very fond of these nice little birds; and often take crumbs of bread and scatter them under the windows, that they may come and pick them up; and once I put a stick in the ground before the parlour-window, with a cross-stick on the top of it, just like your letter T, that you have been learning in your A B C, and often would I lift the window, and cry, 'Bobby, Bobby;' and the sweet Red-breast, so soon as he could hear my voice, would fly near the window, and sit on the cross-stick; then, I left the crumbs and bits of cheese, of which they are very fond, upon the ledge of the window; and when I had shut down the sash, then Bobby would come, and eat them all up."

"There is another part of that letter, my dear Richard," said Mr. Paulett, "which I should like you to read; because in it you will find the writer of the same opinion as myself, concerning the value of song-birds, and of beautiful birds, among other sources of

the pleasures of human life. I may take this opportunity of qualifying a remark which I lately made, as to the comparative absence, at least, of song-birds in uncultivated countries. In the northern wilds of North America, where the fur-bearing animals are hunted, and where three hundred and twenty species of birds, resident and migratory together, have been already counted; and even in other wild divisions of that continent; the melody of the song-birds is said to be profuse and exquisite.—But, now, pray read to us what follows the words, ‘I will give some of them to you, Adam, because I love you;’—and Richard read accordingly:

“Now, my dear Adam, I much like these little birds. Is it because they have very beautiful feathers, and beaks, and legs; or because they sing so delightfully, run so fast, and fly so swiftly? All this, indeed, I love; but I love them most because it was the same good God who made them, that made myself; and he who feeds me, feeds them also, and takes care of them: and he made them beautiful, that you and I, and all people, might be pleased with their fine feathers, and sweet singing. Now, a man who has a great deal of money, may go to places where people sing for money, or [may] have music in the house, such as your dear Cecilia plays; but there are a great many poor people in the world, who have scarcely money enough to buy bread when they are hungry, or clothes to keep them warm in the cold weather. Now, my dear, these cannot hire people to sing, nor can they have music in the house, like your mamma, yet they love music; so, would it not be a pity that they should not have some also? See, then, why the good God, who made you, formed so many fine birds, with

such sweet voices, to sing the sweetest songs! These are the *poor man's music*; they sing to him for nothing. They do not even ask a crumb of bread of the poor man; and, when he is going to work in the morning, they sing to encourage him; and when he is returning home in the evening, very weary, because he has worked very hard, then they sing again, that he may be pleased, and not grieve nor fret. Now, is not God very good, for making these pretty little musicians, to encourage and comfort the poor labouring man *?"—Here Richard finished his reading.

"We will next have something of the same sort in verse," said Mr. Paulett; "for verse is usually more impressive,—more careful, and more sprightly in the expression, and more captivating to the ear—than prose; and the poets have uttered, at least, as many truths as prose-writers, and with an energy and beauty peculiar to themselves. Repeat, Emily, those pretty lines which you learned, yesterday, out of Thomas Warton's Ode, 'The Hamlet;' where there is the same idea, as to the enjoyment of song-birds by the labouring poor, but in union with that of their pleasures from other luxuries of nature; particularly the odours of the flowers and herbage."—Emily did as her papa bade her, and therefore repeated the following lines:

" When morning's twilight-tinctured beam
Strikes their low thatch with slanting gleam,
They move abroad, in ether blue,
To dip the sithe in fragrant dew;
The sheaf to bind, the beech to fell,
That nodding shades a craggy dell.

" 'Midst gloomy glades, in warbles clear,
Wild nature's sweetest notes they hear:

* Life of Adam Clarke, LL. D. F. S. A.

On green untrodden banks they view
 The hyacinth's neglected hue* :
 In their lone haunts, and woodland rounds,
 They spy the squirrel's airy bounds ;
 And startle from her ashen spray,
 Across the glen, the screaming jay :
 Each native charm their steps explore,
 Of solitude's sequestered store.

For then the moon, with cloudless ray,
 Mounts, to illumine their homeward way :
 Their weary spirits to relieve,
 The meadows incense breathe at eve !"

" And now," said Mr. Paulett, " the plain English of all this is, that these sources of pleasure are as accessible, and at least as valuable, to the poor as to the rich. They are the inheritance universal of mankind. Milton gives them to Adam and Eve in Paradise :

" Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
 With song of earliest birds ;"

and how much he could enjoy them himself, appears by his placing them first on his list of *mirthful*

" —unreproved pleasures free ;"

as well as in the vivacity with which he describes them, and among others, the singing of the lark before the rising of the sun :

" To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And, singing, startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tower in the skies,
 Till the dapple dawn doth rise ;

* The wild hyacinths of our English woods and hedge-rows, commonly called blue-bells.

Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweetbriar and the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine!"

"But it seems to me," said the voice of a gentleman whom I had not before heard or seen at Burford Cottage, and whom I soon found to be a visitor; "it seems to me, that though all this, about birds, and flowers, and the labouring poor, sounds very well in poetry, it is little better than romance: I am afraid that the poor care very little about these kinds of enjoyments. Their tastes are too uncultivated, and their pleasures not so refined; and I should imagine that you, my dear Paulett, thoroughly agree with me upon this point, considering what I know of some of your opinions?"

"My dear friend Hartley," returned Mr. Paulett, "you have been in foreign countries, and in many foreign adventures, for some time; and, after the observation you have now made, I would willingly believe, that you have rather forgotten what experience must certainly once have taught you, concerning the character and inclinations of the labouring poor, considered as a body, and not under the view which merely partial instances might seem to justify. Give me leave to express my opinions for myself; of which it is one, that there are all sorts of people among the poor, not less than among the rich; and that it would be just as wrong, in any way, to judge the poor by wholesale as the rich. No doubt, there are coarse and vicious persons among the poor, not less than among the rich; and certainly, where, either from the denials or the cares of poverty, or from any other cause, there is

an extreme of present suffering, or where, upon any other account, there is no contented or tolerably easy mind; there, we have little reason to expect a relish for the simple pleasures of nature. But it is with the poor, as it is with the rich,—

‘When the mind’s well, the body’s delicate,’

and open to all delicate perceptions. I feel and express myself, in the mean time, warmly upon this point of controversy with you, because we live in an unhappy age, when a swarm of fierce and narrow-minded persons are employed in exciting the small and poor to contempt and hatred of the great and rich, and, by necessary consequence, tempting the rich and great to contempt and hatred of the poor; and because this sort of estimate of the character of the poor, tends to assist that separation of man from man which is threatened by all the list of modern notions. May I trust, however, that assisted by their education, their loftier views across the depths and surface of society, the happier station which they enjoy, and the milder feelings which that should cherish; the rich, and the superior in accidental condition, whatever the provocation given them, will continue the consideration, tenderness, respect, and sympathy for the poor, which, through every past age of English history, have formed the predominating character of wealth and rank among us; and which, if late and unsuspecting witnesses and observers are to be relied on, is not, even yet, declining, be the bitterness, in some quarters existing, as bitter as it may!—You refer, my friend Hartley, to some of my *opinions*; but we have the testimony of a critic of very opposite opinions to mine*, that it is not,

* Mr. E. L. Bulwer, in the New Monthly Magazine.

for example, the recent or living writers of my cast of opinion (as Southey, Sir Walter Scott, and others), the tendency of whose works is to encourage unkindly or disrespectful feelings toward the poor; but that this is actually the tendency of the works of opposite writers, as of the strange enthusiast, Bysche Shelley, and so many others of his school. Again, we have the well supported testimony of the pretended American observer of our public men, whom I lately quoted, that none of them are so eager, or none more so, to take up the cause of the poor, to proclaim the misfortune of their large number, or to lament their sufferings, or to press for the discovery of national means of relief, as well as to contribute individual, as those of my own *opinions*; of which truth he cites the recent instance, that it remained for one of our Bishops* to be the first to deplore in Parliament, and in the face of the country, that in the south-west of England, there are paupers harnessed to carts, like cattle. But, now, I will venture to finish my reply, by mentioning two instances of the show of feeling, in matters of taste, in the labouring poor, such as you avow yourself to think improbable among persons of their condition.

“ My first case,” continued Mr. Paulett, “ is that of a Cumberland shepherd, with whom a tourist was once conversing upon the spoliations of the flocks, occasionally committed by the eagles in that mountainous part of England: ‘ It is a pity,’ cried the tourist, ‘ that the eagles are not all destroyed!’ ‘ Why,

* Dr. Law, Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells. The evil, however, is confined to the circumstance that these labourers are paupers; and that, consequently, their labour is *forced*, and different from that which men willingly and usually undertake. In any other view, the substitution of human labour for that of cattle, would only be to feed and multiply men, instead of beasts.

no,' answered the shepherd, 'I think not. To be sure, they take a lamb or two sometimes; but, then, *they do look so noble!*'

"My other case," concluded Mr. Paulett, "is comprised in a very humble anecdote, which I give upon my own authority, and which refers to classes of poor of whom we still less frequently entertain any romantic opinions, than of shepherds or other country-people. I was walking, not long since, through one of the suburbs on the western side of London, when two young men, in company with each other, and going my way, continued to precede me, for some little time, by a distance of eight or ten paces. The younger was a servant in livery, and the elder a journeyman baker, with an empty basket, slung, by means of its handle, upon his shoulder. They were talking together at every step they went; and what do you think they were talking of? It was of the comparative beauty of the houses and gardens which they successively passed; of the taste of the architect, in the church lately erected, and which followed next; and of the choice of pleasantness, pretty gardens and handsome houses, between the suburb in which they were, and some of the other suburbs of London! Lords and ladies, princes and princesses, then, could not have talked more innocently, nor more upon subjects of an agreeable *virtù*, than did this livery-servant and this journeyman baker; and so true it is, that

'There's no such difference 'twixt man and man
As haughty wits suppose. The beggar treads
Upon the monarch's heels*.'

"Well!" said Mr. Hartley, "I have no doubt but

* The Village Curate; a poem, by Bishop Hurdis.

you are right; and yet I hardly expected such sentiments from *you*."

"My dear friend," returned Mr. Paulett, "you labour under the ordinary mistake; but believe me, that if we put out of sight a few fools (such as are to be found of every condition and persuasion), there are none who admit more freely or more practically the natural equality of mankind, than those who approve and would maintain the artificial distinctions of society!"

"And is it really true," interrupted Emily, "and not something like fable, that eagles carry away lambs? Are they large and strong enough, and how far do they carry them?"

"They certainly carry away lambs," answered Mr. Hartley, to Emily; "and such accidents have happened as their carrying away babies; and it sometimes also happens (generally, I suppose, through their being frightened) that they drop the things upon which they seize; events which may even have contributed to the dispersion of breeds of animals from one place and another. There is, or lately was, upon the Isle of Arran, close to the western coast of Ireland, a single sheep, of a breed not cultivated upon the island, which I have often seen feeding among the flocks of a different figure, in the grass which surrounds its ruined religious edifices. That sheep has lived unmolested, while hundreds of its temporary companions have surrendered their lives, because the few inhabitants either reverence, or at least respect, the peculiar circumstances of its introduction among them. While it was yet a tender lamb, an eagle had pounced upon it with his talons, as it fed upon the border of the adjacent coast, from which the island is separated by no more

than a very narrow arm of the sea. Being in possession of his prey, he flew with it to the island, in some part of which he had probably his nest. Either because the flight was long, or the lamb heavy, he flew slower and nearer to the ground than usual; so that an islander, who saw him as he flew, and perceived what plunder he was carrying, was able to strike him with the stone which he lost no time in throwing; and, upon this, the eagle, more thoughtful of his escape than of his supper, dropped the lamb upon the foreign turf, and soared away. The lamb was in no respect so hurt or injured by its seizure, flight, or fall, but that it lived to crop the grass in the strange country; and the owner of the soil, and all the little population of the Isle of Arran, moved by its narrow escape, respecting the rites of hospitality, and believing, perhaps, that its arrival was a destiny, and the token of some promised good to their small territory and community, would neither part with it nor kill it; but preserved it, as I have before told you, a solitary stranger by birth and appearance, among the small native flocks. It is, or it was, a sight for visitors, and a story for the children, and a date for the later history of their island; to show how, and when, and where, the fleecy stranger came among them, borne over an arm of the tempestuous Atlantic, and dropped from the talons of an eagle!"

"Oh!" cried Emily, at this juncture, and disturbed even from the anxious regard with which she had been listening to the story of the Irish eagle and the lamb; "Oh! I do think I see Robin-red-breast again, under the leaves of his old tree;" and in truth, I certainly had let myself be seen, in the course of the

joyous movements of my head and tail, to which I was inspired by all the pleasant things which I had heard about myself, and about Robins, and about singing-birds in general. I confess that the idea of leaving eagles to take lambs at their pleasure had not charmed me quite so much, because it made me think of hawks and cats and Robin-red-breasts, all together; nor had I so well understood what passed about servants and bakers, and houses and church steeples; but I had hopped and picked the time away, trusting that I should either see some crumbs, or hear of myself once more; and so, as I have said, it happened!

“Where, where?” cried Richard; and Emily pointed to the tree; but, now, I was no longer visible.

“Oh! I hope you saw him,” said Richard. “And I hope so, too,” said Mrs. Paulett. So, charmed with the kind wishes of my friends, I sung one of my blithest songs, at which every face smiled, and in which I bade them, at once good-morrow, and farewell for the day.

CHAP. IX.

He travels and expatiates :—as the bee
From flower to flower, so he from land to land !
The manners, customs, policy of all,
Pay tribute to the stores he gleans :
He seeks intelligence in every clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return—a rich repast for me !
He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
Ascend his topmast ; through his peering eyes,
Discover countries !

COWPER.

AT my next day's visit to the cottage, I heard little beside the voice of Mr. Hartley. That gentleman, as I soon found, had for many years been a voyager and traveller, and the chief scene of his adventures had been Central Africa, or that part of the African continent which is crossed by the Equinoctial or Equatorial Line, and is properly Nigritia or Negroland, and the region of the Quorra, or Quarra, or the river Niger : "To the north of this," said Mr. Hartley, "we have the countries of Abyssinia, Egypt, Barbary, Morocco, and the rest ; and to the south, the Hottentots and Caffres, and various nations which are not Negro ; and, again, the English colony of the Cape of Good Hope. To the north also, we have Mohammedan populations, ordinarily versed in all those arts, and educated in all those habits, which are generally understood by the term *civilization*, and resembling what is European ; and to the south, pastoral nations, such as the

Caffres and others; and even a people living almost wholly upon roots: I mean the Bosjesmanns, or Wild Hottentots, so called by the Dutch or ancient colonists of the Cape. To the south, too, we have the famous Desert, or famous Deserts; and Mount Atlas, the mighty range, in whose aspect, from the Mediterranean, originates the fable of that Atlas which is said to support the heavens; and so many other grand and lovely fables of the ancient Greeks, and of those to whom the ancient Greeks are recent moderns. To the north, we have Libya, Numidia, and Egypt and Abyssinia, and those other African countries, illustrious in the antique world; and to the south, we have regions, unknown, at least to modern Europe, till within three hundred years past; and never yet the seats of civilization, unless the civilization of the Dutch and English colonists."

"Central Africa," added Mr. Hartley, "remains what almost the whole of Africa ever was, and still continues,—the 'terra incognita'—the unknown country of the world; and therefore, a country delivered over to the mental caprice of European ignorance and fancy. It is, indeed, a country abounding with novelties, as well as with imputations of novelty; and, in this view, it still continues open to us to say, what used to be said, in the later days of ancient Rome, 'What! always something new from Africa!' From Africa we have the chimpanzee, or western oran-otang, the nearest brute approach to the human figure, in combined fabric and sagacity; from Africa, the ostrich, or camel-bird; the giraffe, or camel-leopard; the zebra, and the quagga, or qua-cha; the Gray and the White Pelicans; the latter the true Pelican of the Wilderness, and the former (according to the account and engraved figure of Mr. Lander) the bird which may have contri-

buted to preserve for the Pelican of the Wilderness the reputation of wounding its breast to feed its young with its blood (an extraordinary action, Master Richard, of which you have seen so many pictured and sculptured representations*!); and, lastly, from Africa, we have the hippopotamus, or river-horse; and an African horse (or at least the account of one) which, like the ass, bears the mark of a cross upon its back and shoulders. But the latest, and truly African (or marvellous) discovery in that country, is that of a vegetable-serpent, or animal-plant, which, says a French traveller, creeps whither it will, and at once eats and digests food, and bears flowers!

“A plant in Africa!” exclaimed Richard, half in raptures, and half in fear; “a plant in Africa, that eats, and that goes about as it likes!” and then added, “Oh! how I should like to have one! Is it tame? Would it follow me like a dog? Oh! how I should like to have a *plant* that eats and creeps about!”

* According to Mr. Lander, “the Gray Pelican abounds on the margins of the rivers and streams in Houssa;” and he proceeds to assure us, that the female, in this species, does appear to feed her young with what may at least be mistaken for blood, but drawn, not from her breast, but from her back: “They build their nests,” says he, “close to the water’s edge, near to which they always stand to feed their young. It is somewhat singular,” he adds, “that the opinion of the Pelican feeding its young with its blood, is as general in Houssa as it is among the lower class of people in Europe; and to this belief I must acknowledge myself a proselyte. I have stood, for a long while together, by the side of this stupid animal, watching its motions, and seeing it bend its head, for its offspring to extract their nourishment. The young ones thrust their beaks into a small round aperture at the lower part of the back of the neck of their parent; and they swallow the substance which flows freely through. If it be not blood that issues from the old bird, it is a red liquid so closely resembling it, that the difference cannot be perceived.”—*Lander’s Records of Captain Clapperton’s last Expedition, &c. &c.*

“Stay a little, Richard, my good fellow,” interposed Mr. Hartley; “I am by no means sure that you will ever see one; it may be an idle story after all; I am almost sure that it will prove so; I tell you, that ‘something new from Africa,’ has been the cry, ever since Africa was first known to the good people of ancient Rome; and though many new and uncouth things have confessedly come out of Africa, I am not yet satisfied of the truth of this latest of its wonders—the plant-snake, or vegetable-serpent!”

“The story can hardly be true,” said Mr. Paulett?

“I dare say not,” returned Mr. Hartley; “I dare to say that there is some exaggeration; but Africa, as I have remarked, has always been the place out of which, even more than from all others, human credulity has been tried. It is always the express country of monsters, as well as of enchantments. It is observable that even Homer places his Calypso, and her swine, and every such monstrosity, upon the African side of the Mediterranean; and I think that it is in that part of the map, too, that we should look for Shakspeare’s uninhabited island, and his *Tempest*;—his rugged Caliban, his ‘witch Sycorax,’ and his ‘delicate Ariel.’ Egypt, upon the other hand, has Homer’s uniform tribute of respect and admiration; he paints that country as the depository of arts and learning, and as the beauty of civilization; but, then, Egypt, in his time, was reckoned part, not of Africa, but of Asia.”

“But arts, learning, and civilization,” said Mr. Paulett, “have made but little way, as I have always understood, into the heart of Africa?”

“Very little way indeed,” said Mr. Hartley; “and especially upon this eastern coast. It is the east and the south of Africa that are the least civilized. These

countries are Pagan; while the north and the west are those parts in which chiefly prevail, along with the Mohammedan faith, Mohammedan arts and learning. I do not mean, however, to insinuate that Mohammedan Africa is always riper than Africa Pagan, in what we call civilization. Travellers report, that under many aspects, the Pagan negro is a better man than the Mohammedan negro. Taking things in the opposite view, however, there are many deformities in Pagan Africa which have no existence in those parts which are under Mohammedan law and influence."

"I imagine nothing but desolation—nothing but horror," said Mrs. Paulett, "throughout this eastern coast of Africa; whence, even to this day, so many Negro slaves are taken annually. I imagine only a fiery sky, a burning soil, a leafless country;—a land, as I have read, hissing with ten millions of serpents as you approach it; and inhabited by men, lawless, ferocious, bloody, naked, destitute, hideous,—more like beasts than men!"

"Africa, as you well know, madam," returned Mr. Hartley, "is a very large country; and, even as to this part of it, I assure you that you were never more mistaken, than as to such notions of its state. I will suppose," continued he, "that our ship is at this moment approaching Badagry*, a little African kingdom, which I have not long since visited; and where, by the hands of certain Portuguese residents and sea-captains, there is, in fact, still carried on a frightful commerce in slaves. Now, if we were so

* The word "badagry" signifies, "a woman." The town or city of Badagry, of which the name is applied to the whole kingdom, is literally "the city of *the Woman*;" but who "the Woman" was or is, is more than Europeans understand.

approaching that country, to which there also belong other horrors and enormities, what is it that we should see? A beautiful line of coast,—of coast singularly beautiful and attractive—bordering a transparent sea! Trees in great number and variety, and of magnificent dimensions, and luxuriant foliage, adorn the face of all the country that presents itself; while the beauty of African nature is sweetly heightened by the appearance, at frequent intervals, of little peaceful villages, embosomed in the trees (among which remember always the prominent and stately palm-trees), and reflected along the water's edge. Where, too, as the trees afford successive openings, the eye is charmed with the thick forests that, at a little distance, are spread over the landscape; and of which the darksome shade contrasts itself with the smiling verdure of cultivated plains, pleasantly studded with clumps of cocoa and other trees, and enlivened by a glorious sunshine: the whole displaying a rich and variegated picture of genuine rural charms!"

"You surprise me, truly!" said Mrs. Paulett; "can this be Negroland; can this be that terrible country, the theatre of the African slave-trade, and the horror of the human world?"

"If, now," continued Mr. Hartley, "we were to take to our boat, and make our way through the surf, to the bright and pebbly beach, we should shortly afterward (perhaps within half a mile) arrive at the mouth of a small river, a solitary place, where, however, stands a single hut,—a feteesh hut*,—or house of worship, a square building, ornamented, in front, with a species of shining stone, the product of the country. To

* In French orthography, fétiche.

this hut, or little temple, or house of worship, the Pagan natives resort, to pray, or to give thanks, when they are to venture upon the water, or when they have landed in safety; and, here, bundles of wood, earthenware, or other articles of property will be seen deposited around, for temporary stay; because, near these consecrated walls, and upon this consecrated ground, they are believed to be under divine protection; and because (such is the reverence for the house and place) scarcely ever is there heard-of an individual, profane, as well as dishonest enough, to steal or do them damage, whatever length of time they may remain. You will forgive my remarking upon the kindred feelings, upon those points, exhibited by mankind in many, and, as it might be hoped, in most parts of Europe. In the south of France, though there is much poverty, and though many crimes of violence and other sorts are committed, yet the silver balls, which are the customary ornaments of the funeral monuments of the rich, stand unmolested in the churchyards; and, in parts, and perhaps the whole, of Roman Catholic Switzerland, whatever other features may disfigure that division of the Helvetic body, it is usual for such as find any thing lost (money itself inclusive) to place it upon the large crucifix which is seen in every churchyard, and to leave it there to be owned; and there is no example in remembrance, of any thing thus placed being taken away, except by the right owner!"

"I begin to be enchanted," said Mrs. Paulett, "with the little kingdom of Badagry!"

"Aye, there it is," continued Mr. Hartley; "we are all of us in such haste to come to our conclusions! Well, let us pass this sacred edifice (for such is the English of the term 'feteesh-hut'), and cross this little

river, and keep along the beach ; and, now, an hour or two will bring us to the banks of the greater river, named, by the Portuguese, Formosa, or the Beautiful ; a mile in width, and upon the opposite side of which stands the city, such as it is—the royal city—of Badagry. In that city we shall find a daily market, tolerably supplied with small and lean cattle, and sheep ; and with goats, swine, poultry, maize, palm-wine, country cloth, and other goods ; as well as a multitude of houses, all (except the king's) constructed of bamboo cane, and of but one storey. The king, perhaps, as we are Englishmen, will send us a present of a bullock, a fat pig, and some fowls ; and, perhaps, he will condescend also, in honour of our country, to make us a visit, in all the pomp of his best, but yet small magnificence. In this part of my description, I must forewarn you, that, here, we are upon a spot frequented by Europeans, and where certain sorts of European merchandise are commonly carried ; so that, far more than in the interior, Badagry will display to you a worse than barbarous, because incongruous mixture of native and foreign productions and things, such as are out of all harmony with each other. We shall see the king (the name of the present king is Ado'ly) come mounted upon a diminutive black horse, and followed by about a hundred and fifty of his subjects, dancing and capering before and behind him ; while a number of musicians, performing upon native instruments of the rudest description, increase considerably the animation and vehemence of gesture of these loyal attendants. He will be sumptuously arrayed, in a scarlet cloak, literally covered with gold lace, and white kerseymere trowsers, similarly embroidered. His hat (for he will appear hatted) will be turned up in front with rich bands of gold lace,

and decorated with a splendid plume of ostrich feathers, waving gracefully above. Close to his horse's head will march two boys or pages, each carrying a musket in his hand, and dressed in plain scarlet coats, with white collars, and large cocked hats, tastefully trimmed with gold lace; which costly material all classes of Badagrians exceedingly admire. Two fighting-chiefs will accompany the king on foot, familiarly chatting with him as he advances."

"You astonish us," cried Mrs. Paulett.

"Yes," pursued Mr. Hartley; "and I shall astonish you still more, when I tell you, that your next sight will be that of this gorgeously attired monarch alighted from his black pony, and squatted upon the ground, outside your house, with an umbrella spread over his head, and a dozen natives fanning the air around him. After this, if one of our party should place himself behind him, hoisting the English union-jack above all; then, seated upon the ground, his equipments glittering in the sun, his warriors, his pages, and his women disposed about him, and the English flag, held by a white man, waving in the wind, and music inspiring all; then, there will be no bounds to the personal joy of the prince, looking and speaking, for that moment at least, as the happiest man in the universe; while the equal rapture of his people, shouting, chattering, cracking of fingers, clapping of hands, singing, dancing, jumping, and indulging in every species of delighted antic, will go far beyond my powers of description. Alas! that I must add, that the beloved liquor of rum will be passing freely, all this time, among every rank, and adding not a little to the noise and tumult of the hour; and that the king of Badagry, first abandoning all pretension of rank and birth, and

then growing as cheerful and as merry as the meanest and most jovial of his subjects, will hardly depart before the rum is all consumed, and his kingship grown a little tipsy! When he goes, however, the procession, the dances, and all the cries and songs will be resumed as at his coming.—King Ado'ly has the reputation of being a friendly, good sort of man. He is of the middle size, inclining to corpulency, and was, when I saw him, about forty-five years of age. He has the utmost respect for English arts, manufactures, and inventions. Once, when the use of the telescope was experimentally shown to him, he confessed his unfeigned astonishment, and that he could scarcely believe the maker to have been no more than mortal. Upon being shown a collection of English productions, intended for trade and presents in the interior, he minutely examined every article, without, however, expressing the slightest inclination to reserve any thing for himself."

"That speaks much in his praise," remarked Mrs. Paulett, "considering his rude condition, and that every thing, no doubt, was, for the moment, in his power!"

"Yes," returned Mr. Hartley, "all this is very well; but, if I were to go on, and to tell you half the horrors, that in spite of what I have said, are practised in Badagry, and to which even Ado'ly is personally a party, you would almost rush back into your first ideas of what Africa and her people are! Africa, in short, is a land of the most violent contrasts, physical and moral; barrenness and fertility, sands and verdure, droughts and gushing streams, ferocity and mildness, humanity and barbarism; but, above all, (and this we may charge exclusively upon that part

of Africa which is Negroland,) it is a land of blood. It is here, in the most especial manner, that we might be tempted to cry out—

‘ There is no flesh in man’s obdurate heart,
It does not feel for man!’

What may have been the case with all the world in former ages; what may have been the case with even the north of Africa in former ages (for we know that even Pagan Rome waged a religious war against the human sacrifices of the Carthaginians); what depths of gratitude we may owe—what crowns of amaranth and hallowed glory—may be due to those successive legislators (among them the four-and-twenty Budhas of the East), who, step by step, have weaned both civil and religious life at large from sanguinary rites and practices, I do not undertake to say; but this, I believe, is certain, that after contemplating at least the Asia, Europe, America, and even all the rest of Africa, of the present day, we may challenge the globe to produce any other country, including even cannibal countries, in which human blood is so prodigally, and so unpityingly shed, as in Negroland, or Central Africa! It gives its peculiar lustre to modern Christendom, that (though the date of such an improvement is but little removed from us) it has at length brought, even into national practice, the treating of all men with humanity, be they friends or foes, or denizens or aliens. Descending lower, we find crowds of nations, inhuman indeed to enemies, and sometimes even to aliens; but still tender of the lives, and of the comforts, and especially of the blood, of all their friends and countrymen. It is reserved for the Negro nations to afford the contrast even to this latter class. With them (and the seeming

inconsistency is strange), a predominant mildness of character and manners—a cheerful and a buoyant spirit—a rage for song and dance—an incessant relish for the liveliest and most innocent amusements—a sweetness of voice, and a winning playfulness of manner;—with them (the Negro nations), I say, all this is united, not merely with occasional, but with frequent, periodical, customary, and established domestic slaughter, civil and religious, such as none besides themselves exhibit! I will not recur to other, and I may add, to still more atrocious examples, especially of civil slaughter, with which, from other parts of Negroland, my memory serves me; but I cannot forbear to give you a slight taste of those that are always to be met with in Badagry; and, at the same time, I repeat, that these things are to be reconciled (with what skill I leave to yourself) with a Negro character in general amiable and pure!—That I am not imposing upon you, as to either head, opinions that are solely mine, you will partly see from the words of a book which I have in my pocket, and which express the opinions of the most recent of African travellers upon the Negro temper, though simply as to its changes in ordinary or daily life. The character, says my author, which Plutarch gives of the Athenians, is strictly applicable to the people of Africa in general, in times of peace: ‘They are easily provoked to anger, and as easily induced to resume sentiments of benevolence and compassion.’ This we found to be true in numberless instances; particularly amongst the gentler sex, whose apprehensions are quicker and more lively, and whose finer feelings more easily excited, than those of their male companions. We not unfrequently observed persons quarrelling and fighting in

one moment, with all the bitterness of angry elevated passions, and in the next as gentle as lambs, and the most cordial friends in the universe; forgetting their previous noisy dispute in the performance of reciprocal acts of kindness and good nature. But these descriptions, as well of Plutarch as of my author, are so much the descriptions of the human temper in the universal; the darker part of them discovering itself in proportion as the individual is uncivilized, and the brighter being the redeeming point in a natural character, and one so highly to be esteemed in preference to a civilized sullenness, and to a prolonged resentment*; that I quote them chiefly to sustain my first position, that the Negro character 'in general,' and (as my author also has it) 'in times of peace,' is benevolent, compassionate, gentle as the lamb; cordially friendly; kind; good-natured. Of the sanguinary deeds of which it is nevertheless capable, and in which, in truth, it is trained upon its native soil, and may be continued by tradition, as well as by temperament, I shall say another word or two hereafter. We will defer any additional allusion to the barbarous and sanguinary scenes of Central African society, till, with your good leave, I shall once more have attempted to convey an idea of the natural beauty which adorns the country; and even of the moral virtues which, actually, and in the midst of all, elevate and give happiness to its sable

* Blacklock, the blind poet and divine of Dumfriesshire, has these lines, in a rhythmical portrait of himself:

*"Like all mankind, with vanity I'm blessed,
Conscious of wit I never yet possessed:
To strong desires my heart an easy prey,
Oft feels their force, yet never owns their sway:
This hour, perhaps, as death, I hate my foe;
The next, I wonder why I should do so!"*

people! Here, as every where else, there is so much of good, mixed up with so much that is bad, that it is a task of great difficulty, for any one who is scrupulous to do justice to the character of his fellow-creatures, to make a statement that shall be neither too favourable nor too unfavourable. Even in Central Africa, while there is much vice and wickedness to be corrected, there is also much merit and goodness which we need not be ashamed, ourselves, to copy and to emulate!"

CHAP. X.

If chance thy home
 Salute thee with a father's honoured name,
 Go, call thy sons: instruct them what a debt
 They owe their ancestors: and make them swear
 To pay it, by transmitting down, entire,
 Those sacred rights to which themselves were born!

AKENSIDE.

"WE are very much obliged to Mr. Hartley," said, next morning, Mr. Paulett, to his wife and children, "for the accounts that he has so far given us of the Negro nations, and of the rich though burning African region they inhabit; and when he returns to us, after his visit to London, we shall be glad to hear more of a part of the world, which, like that, is so little known to us; and of which, as it must plainly seem, we entertain many erroneous notions. For my part," he added (but here addressing himself more particularly to Mrs. Paulett), "I am the better pleased with our friend's in-

formation because these little ones have heard it; and this, again, because, the more they know of foreign countries, the better they may make comparisons with their own; and the less the danger that they should be without a proper sense of its deficiencies upon the one side, and of its great claims to their esteem and pride upon so very many others! I would not have them blind to its defects and vices; but I am sorry when I see any English people too little informed to be aware of the supereminence of England; that is, of its virtues, of its greatness, and of its arts and civilization; and I should be still more sorry to see any ignorance of that kind among these young people whom we are bringing up. The way to love their country, and to do their duty by it, is to admire it; and, happily, the way to admire it, is to know it!"

Mr. Paulett might, perhaps, have gone further; and more, even now, might have been said upon the same subject, had it not pleased *me* (I scarcely know why) to open a song at the very moment when the amiable gentleman made a pause after the words "to know it." Emily and Richard were alive, as usual, to my notes; and even their papa and mamma united with them in withdrawing their attention from every thing else, to bestow it once more upon their favourite Robin. Mrs. Paulett even approved, and even directed that Emily, stirring very gently, should throw out a few crumbs, in front of one of the windows, upon the gravel walk which ran between them and the grass; and, when this was done, all the party waited, for some minutes, motionless and silent, in the hope that I would descend across the little lawn, and look about, and pick them up. I could not find courage, however, for the pro-

ceeding which would have gratified them. The crumbs, at the time, were of no sufficient value to me, to tempt me in the way of danger. I did not know whether or not I might trust Mr. Paulett more freely than Mr. Gubbins; for the former, too, might be a philosopher, and might have an experiment to try upon Robin-red-breasts; and, then, there were the children, and perhaps there was the cat; and all this to a Robin that was by no means hungry! Very soon, Mrs. Paulett contented herself, and contented her son and daughter, with the remarks, that if "Robin" did not pick up the crumbs, the sparrows would; and that all the family must wait, as hitherto, for colder weather, when he would be "glad enough," she triumphantly added, "to come to the window, and even to enter the room, if Richard and Emily should be careful to do nothing to terrify him, while he came softly and cautiously, looking first at one, and next at another, and to the right and to the left, at every inch he moved!"

"Mamma," said, then, Emily (not displeased that silence was no longer enforced); "Mamma, why do they call a Robin 'Robin?'"

"Clever Emily!" cried Richard, interrupting, and enjoying a new triumph over the mistakes of his sister: "clever Emily! to ask why a Robin is called 'Robin!' Why, if it is a 'Robin,' it ought to be called so!"

"Aye," said Emily (who, this time, saw that she could find no other fault with the criticism), "but you know, and mamma knows, what I mean, though you are so quick in finding out that I have not spoken properly! I mean, why is the bird called 'Robin,' which you know, mamma, is a man's name, and not a bird's? I know why it is called a Red-breast; that is,

because of the red feathers upon its breast, as anybody may see; but why should a Red-breast be called 'Robin?' "

"Indeed, Emily," said Mrs. Paulett, "I am afraid that I cannot tell you: you must ask your papa. You know that your papa likes you to ask such questions; for he says that there is a reason for every thing, and especially for all words and names; and that he thinks it very ill-informed and foolish, when people say, that names or words have no meaning, and that things are called so and so, and only because they are so called."

Emily lost no time in putting her question to her papa; but the latter began his reply by confessing that he was not sure he could explain the application of the name of "Robin," though he had his suspicions (he subjoined) as to the real origin. "But first," said he, "you must remember, that it has been a practice, all over the world, to use familiar names for animals, either proper names or descriptive ones, in speaking either to them, or of them. The Swedes call the Red-breast Tommi Liden; the Norwegians, Peter *Ros-mad* (or *Red-breast*); and the Germans, Thomas Gierdet. As to descriptive names, the Arabs call a number of animals by the name of 'fathers,' while, by this, they only mean, that they are of a *gray* colour, or coloured like the heads and beards of aged or gray-headed men; and it is thus that you and your schoolfellows," said he, to Richard, "call a certain large *gray* fly, of the gnat kind or figure, by the name of 'Father Longlegs;'—for all the gnats are *gray*."

"But all *fathers*," said Richard, "have not gray heads nor beards? You have none yourself, papa?"

"The term 'father,' however," observed Mr. Paulett,

“ is also applied generally to aged men ; and besides, all fathers are old, as compared with boys and girls. But you know that you also make the addition of ‘ *Old Father Longlegs* ;’ an epithet which may either imply that the insect is ‘ old,’ because it is a ‘ father ;’ or, that this is an ‘ *old father*,’ because it is *gray*, while other fathers are young. But so much, as to familiar and *descriptive* names of animals. With respect to *proper* ones (as Meg, or Mag, or Margery, or Margaret, for a *pie* or *piet* ; and this of Robin, for a Red-breast), there are many which might be mentioned ; but I think that this of ‘ Robin,’ which is the French diminutive of ‘ Robert,’ has been given to the Red-breast as calling it, in fondness and respect, a *fairy*.”

“ A *fairy*, papa,” cried Emily ?

“ Yes, my love, a *fairy* ;” answered Mr. Paulett, “ and only in the best form of that fanciful idea ; for I need not remind you, that in all your *fairy* tales and tales of the *genii*, which have the same meaning, you always read of fairies and *genii* both good and bad.”

“ But, la ! papa, why should they call a Red-breast a *fairy*,” still pursued the inquisitive Emily ?

“ A *good* fairy, because of the gentleness of the manners which we witness in it ; because of its entering our houses like a little household god ; because of its hanging about us, in our walks, along the hedges or in the woods, like a little guardian spirit ; because of the softness and noiselessness of its motions, and of the kindness, that is, the esteem which it seems to feel for us : for it *receives* so prettily, that we are almost as thankful as if it *gave* !”

“ O papa,” said the now satisfied Emily ; “ I shall love Robin better than ever, now that I think he is a fairy ; though I know that fairies are all nonsense, and

that there are no such things: but, then, it is so pretty to think and talk of them!"

"You are like my Cumberland shepherd; you are for pleasures of the eye, and of the imagination, as well as for those that are more substantial. But, since you are so sensible a little girl, and, by the help of your mamma, have so well learned that there are no such things as fairies in reality, though you must continually hear of them, either in the poetry of the learned, or in the superstitions of the ignorant; I may add, that I think Gray had some notion (though, perhaps, but indistinctly) of this *fairy* character of the Red-breast, where, in an omitted verse of his famous Elegy, he says,

' And little footsteps lightly print the ground ;'

words which may seem to have a double allusion, one to the covering of the Children in the Wood with leaves, by the Robin-red-breasts; and the other to the fabled rings and dances of the fairies."

"But why, papa," said Richard, "should even a fairy be called Robin, or Robert?"

"I am not sure that I know," replied Mr. Paulett, "and therefore I will say nothing about that; but so it is, that this name implies a fairy throughout Europe: not the king of the fairies, Oberon; but the most active of them, sometimes called Robin Goodfellow, but who, under another aspect (for it is the same fairies who are good and bad) might also be called Robin *Badfellow*. As Goodfellow he does all manner of acts of kindness, and as Badfellow, every sort of mischief."

"Then, papa," continued Richard, "he is the same as Puck, in Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*?"

“He is,” returned Mr. Paulett; “and he is the French ‘Robert le Diable.’ In the ancient history of Limerick, in Ireland, or so long ago as the twelfth or thirteenth century, there is an account of one *Robin Artisson*, a fairy who used to sweep the streets before day-light, only to steal the dirt, and carry it away for manure, to the farm of a great lady in the neighbouring city; who, by the way, and as the story went, used to reward and compel him to his work of plunder by means of offerings of peacocks’ eyes, and other enchantments; whence, at the least, we see that Ireland knew what it was to have peacocks, and knew the value of manure for its lands, even in the twelfth or thirteenth century, if no earlier! While, for the rest, Robin (meaning Robin the Fairy) is or was always the country name of any midnight robber or outlaw; particularly, or, perhaps, exclusively, if he were very active, and therefore mysterious, committing violence at several distant places within short spaces of time. There has been one of this sort and name, within a few years past, in Sweden; and I fancy that it was in this character that the celebrated robber and outlaw, the Earl of Huntingdon, obtained the name of Robin Hood. ‘Robin Hood,’ as I take it, is a name having exactly the same meaning as ‘Hobgoblin,’ which, in the opposite or bad sense, is the name of Puck or Goodfellow. ‘Hob,’ like Bob, and Robin, and Dobbin, is a contraction, or at least a change, for ‘Robert;’ and ‘goblin’ (though for reasons which it would be too long to tell you now), means one that wears a *hood*. Now, as the meteor which is sometimes called Jack o’ Lantern, or Jack of the Lantern, is also called Will o’ the Wisp, or Will of, or with, the Wisp; so, Robin Hood, as I imagine, signifies Robert of, or with, or in, the Hood;

or Robin the Fairy, or Robert le Diable; or, by another term, Robert the Goblin.”

“Some persons very erroneously suppose, that by ‘Puck,’ we are to understand ‘Pug,’ or ‘a monkey;’ and that the denomination is to be ascribed to ‘Puck’s’ mischievous or wanton tricks: and others seem to fancy, that by ‘Hobgoblin,’ we mean a *hobbling* or *lame* goblin; for which reason, perhaps, Le Sage’s Asmodeus is a *wooden-legged* devil, or ‘Le Diable Boiteux.’ But, of ‘Hob,’ and of ‘Hobgoblin,’ I have given you my opinion; and I believe that ‘Puck,’ like ‘goblin,’ implies the wearer of a *hood*. Puck, pug, poke, peak, are part of a whole string of words of which all have the same general meaning. Hoods have ‘peaks’ or ‘pokes,’ or pointed ends, or ends drawn together, and are themselves, for that reason, pokes, peaks, pugs, or *pucks*; as in the word ‘pucker.’ Gray calls his *ladies*, in the Long Story, ‘the square hoods*’; and Puck is a ‘peaked hood’ under the same idea. Only, in more simplicity and strictness, there is no occasion for the epithet; for every hood is ‘peaked,’ or is itself a peak, poke, *puck*, or *pug*. A monkey is called *pug*, and even *monkey* itself, only because the fur about his head and throat is likened to a hood, or puck, or pug; and, because *monks* wear hoods or pucks, he is therefore called *monkey*, or ‘a little monk,’ in the same manner that we have a flower called ‘monk’s-hood:’ and, as to a particular species of monkey, it has the name of *capucin*, or *capuchin*, from an order of monks likewise so denominated, and of which the *hood* is peculiarly conspicuous in their dress; or, from this species only, the whole genus may

* “Cried the square hoods, in woful fidget.”

have come to be called *monkeys*. I repeat, that I still leave untold, why fairies, like monkeys (but not because they are likened to monkeys), are said to wear *hoods*, or *pucks*, and are thence called *hoods*, or *pucks*, or *goblins*. The reason is exceedingly different, but too long in its explanation to be told at present. *Monkeys* are called pucks or pugs upon account of a natural appearance in their forms; *fairies* are called pugs or pucks, upon account of their imaginary *dress*. 'Hoods,' or 'peaks,' give the name in either case."

"I shall like to read about Robin Hood again," said Richard, "now that I hear that people believed or called him a fairy; but I am thinking, papa, of what you said, the other morning, that there are none of these pretty Robin-red-breasts, and no singing-birds, and no birds that come about the houses, in New Holland and Van Diemen's Land?"

"What I said of the absence, in those countries, of so many of the natural productions to which we are accustomed in the Northern Hemisphere, and which includes plants as well as animals, is corroborated," returned Mr. Paulett, "by the present lately made by our gracious Queen Adelaide, of a collection of Northern plants to the colony of Van Diemen's Land; but I did not go quite so far as to say that there were no small birds in those countries, to come about the houses. There is a species of *swallow* in great numbers, and still more familiar (as we may think) than any of our own."

"But swallows are not so pretty, nor so easy to be acquainted with, as Red-breasts," interrupted Richard.

"Perhaps not," replied his papa; "but their familiarity and confidence, in living among us, and in building about our houses, has everywhere recom-

mended them to mankind; as is also the case with several other animals, including the stork, the dove or pigeon, and the dog. But these swallows of the Southern Hemisphere carry their confidence and familiarity very far. From the warmth and dryness of the season, the windows of a drawing-room, in the handsome house of a settler, were last year continually open during the breeding-time; and here, one pair of swallows built their nest within the room, but under the cornice; another, under the shelf, and at the corner, of the mantel-piece; and a third against the legs, under a table which was stationary in the middle of the room! This last was demolished, almost at its beginning, by the family, upon account of its inconvenience; the second was given up by the swallows themselves, because the children were continually prying into it; but, in the first, the young were actually hatched!"

"Mamma," said Emily, "I wish we had a pair of swallows, to build in our parlour!"

"I cannot say that I quite wish the same," replied Mrs. Paulett; "but listen to what your papa is going to add."

"I mean only, once more," concluded Mr. Paulett, "to bid you young people remember the recommendations of your native country, and how much you have to be thankful for, in being born, and bred, and living in it! The presence of the small birds, and song-birds, as I have told you (after making allowance for the different productions of different countries, and especially of the two Hemispheres, the Northern and the Southern), is often due to agriculture and gardening, and to the other works of human industry. It is due, also, to the greater or less advancement of wealth, and

arts, and the other attendants upon civilization, in particular countries respectively; and it is proper, as I have said, that you should know and remember at what an eminent height your own country is standing in these respects, in order that you may be justly proud of your share in the distinction, and still more, that you may love it, and do your duty by it, as you ought. Even the *southern* part of this island has a beauty of landscape, as well as richness of production, depending partly upon climate, and partly upon wealth and civilization, such as strikes the eyes of strangers as exclusively English; but which, to natives, and especially to children, may seem nothing more than is to be met with every where else. A late Scottish traveller to the neighbourhood of the town of Bedford, makes the remarks which I shall read to you, upon the country which he saw there: 'I visited the spot,' says he, 'one day in the spring, and shall not readily forget my morning's walk, and its accompanying circumstances. The landscape was truly *English*, and every thing seemed joyous and animated. The trees had not yet put forth their glorious garniture of leaves; but the brooks were perfectly transparent—the meadows rich with verdure; and here and there a tall fir-tree shot its green spiral branches into the air, and glistening masses of ivy twined round the trunk and arms of some old oak, or completely enveloped the marshy *hollands* and stunted elms. *Birds were singing gaily in the lanes and hedges*, husbandmen were busy sowing in the fields, and schoolboys were equally busy, *primrosing, or violeting*, in all the luxury of the Easter holidays. The poor man's spot of garden-ground showed its knots of spring-flowers, and its border of daisies, primroses, and crocuses, with its budding

gooseberry and currant bushes ; while the mistress of the cottage might be seen twirling her mop at the door in the sunshine, and thanking providence for *the beautiful fine weather.* The tourist, had he been a native of England, might equally have remarked upon the rapid spread of luxurious novelties of the garden, in England, from the proudest scenes of Stow or Chiswick, to the palings of the humblest cottage. The dahlia—

“ The dahlia, gem-like in its velvet fold ; ”

which was unknown in England before the Peace of Vienna, when the late Lady Castlereagh brought it from the Austrian gardens, is now luxuriant and various in every cottage-garden in the south of England, disputing ground with the old marygolds, and even sunflowers, and vying with the richest productions of horticulture. But to this,” continued Mr. Paulett, “ I may add a description of the appearance of our *whole* island, from the pen of one who affects to write as a foreigner, and whose picture, though a little poetical and exaggerated, has yet a general consistence with truth :— ‘ *An American citizen,* ’ says he, ‘ visits the continent of Europe, and on his way home passes some time in England. Here, he finds the roads, in every direction, far better than *any* he has seen before, and he sees more of them, on a given space, than in France or America. By the side of nearly all the great roads, he sees, *for the first time*, a well-kept footpath. In many places, the footpaths across fields are as *dry*, and smooth, and trim, as walks in pleasure-gardens. All the carriages on the roads are stronger and lighter, more useful and sightly, than those to which he is accustomed ; and the vast number of those carriages

strikes him with astonishment. The strength and beauty of the horses, the quality and neatness of their harness, and the very whips with which they are driven, excite his wonder. He exclaims—What magnificent crops! What beautiful meadows! What fine cattle and sheep! What skill, &c. The mansions are palaces, the farmhouses mansions; the merest village of cottages has an air of comfort; whilst the number of those mansions, farm-houses, and villages, gives to the *country* the appearance of a scattered *town*. But then the towns! Many of them are so extensive, the houses in them are so well built, the shops have such a display of rich goods, the streets are so well paved, and contain so large a portion of good houses; these *towns* are so full of well-dressed people,—that each of them might be taken for a *city*. Even the smallest towns appear like sections of a wealthy capital; and the number of towns, large and small, is so great, that together with the great number of good houses by the road-side out of town, one seems to be travelling all day through *one street*.' This gentleman adds (what helps to explain so much of the description he has given), that 'the people of England have accumulated a greater capital [or, acquired a greater mass of wealth], in proportion to their numbers, than ever was heard or dreamed of before, by any nation, since the beginning of the world*.'

“Another native of the same country (a minister of state), looking, not at our landscape and general surface, but at our metropolis of London, speaks in this manner of the great and always growing (and rapidly growing) greatness of that splendid city: ‘I went to

* England and America. *By an American.*

England again,' says he, 'on a short visit, in 1829. An interval of but four years had elapsed; yet I was amazed at the increase of London. The Regent's Park, which, when I first knew the west end of the town, disclosed nothing but lawns and fields, was now a city. You saw long rows of lofty buildings, in their outward aspect magnificent. * * Another city, hardly smaller, seemed to have sprung up in the neighbourhood of St. Pancras church and the London University. Belgrave Square, in another direction, broke upon me with like surprise. The road from Westminster Bridge to Greenwich exhibited, for several miles, compact ranges of new houses. Finchley Common, desolate in 1819, was covered with neat cottages, and indeed villages. In whatever direction I went, indications were similar. I say nothing of Carlton Terrace, for Carlton House was gone; or of the street, of two miles, from that point to Park Crescent, surpassing any other in London, or any that I saw in Europe. To make room for this new and spacious street, old ones had been pulled down, of which no vestige remained. I could scarcely, but for the evidence of my senses, have believed it all * !' Such," said Mr. Paulett, "is the manner in which London, its suburbs, and its improvements appeared, a few years ago, to the American Envoy; and to me, who have seen that gentleman's own country, and the rapid progress there, and have some idea, therefore, of the appearance and state of things in a *new country*; to me, the new buildings in and about London, and in almost every town, village, and division of this *old country*, Old England; and still more the advances in the fields, in drainage and

* Rush's Residence at the Court of London.

in enclosures; in the neatness and costliness of fences; in the change of cottages into farm-houses, and of farm-houses and cottages into villas and cottage-villas; and in the additions to farm-houses—in the change of their parlours into kitchens, and of their chambers into servants' rooms, while new buildings are afforded for the family;—to me, every thing in England seems as if new and wealthy colonists were hourly pouring into it; as if houses could scarcely be built or enlarged in haste enough for their accommodation, or lands cleared and enclosed, sufficient in space and luxury. Every thing seems advancing; nothing going back.”

“But, my dear children,” finally concluded Mr. Paulett, “I tell you these things of your country, not that you should stop at a mere pride of superiority; but that, from these particulars, as well as from others yet more important, you should learn to love it as becomes you: to feel that natural affection for it, which every warm heart feels for its native country, strengthened by the consideration of its greatness and its gifts; and to act well your own parts, toward it, and toward the world beside, so as to return your obligations, and to do honour to that birth-place from which so much honour comes to you! Remember, that besides all its wealth and external grandeur, the most distinguished of your modern poets has called your island,

‘The inviolate island of the brave and free;’

that Shakspeare, even in *his* time, could say of it,

——‘This dear, dear land,

Dear for its reputation through the world;’

and that an intermediate bard has extolled the lot of the Englishman, for that—

‘The dust of heroes is his native soil!’”

CHAP. XI.

It was the sound
Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,
When, for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss!

—The rudeness and swilled insolence. MILTON.

“QUITTING Badagry,” said the African traveller, whom a few mornings after, I found speaking, and who, as I soon learned, had returned the day before from London to the cottage; “quitting Badagry, city and territory together, let us cross the river, by the map, at Lagos, and enter the adjacent and equally Negro state of Yariba. That route will lead us into the interior, and toward the banks of the river Niger, or great river of Nigritia, or of Negroland, the country of the Blacks or Negroes, or this Central Africa of which we are speaking. That river, called, as it now appears, by some of the Negro nations, the Quorra, has been a geographical perplexity for ages; its termination, either in the sea or elsewhere, having been a secret never solved, though often sought for, till the recent expedition of the enterprising Cornish men and brothers, John and Richard Landers. On arriving at the town of Bookhar, near the entrance of which, as usual, is a solitary temple or feteesh-hut (in this instance, of large dimensions), Captain Clapperton, in passing through

that country, seated himself, with his party, under a large tree, and was quickly visited by hundreds of the inhabitants, who came in large companies to see the Europeans, and who, as soon as their first curiosity was satisfied, made way for their impatient neighbours. The children that were too small to catch a glimpse of them through the crowd, were perched upon the shoulders of their parents or other relations, who pointed the Europeans out to them, saying, 'There they are!' All, however, behaved with the strictest propriety; and, though they repeatedly laughed to each other, in making observations on the singularity of appearance, or whiteness of the stranger's skin, not a single word of derision or disrespect ever escaped them. Advancing from Bookhar toward the neighbouring town of Dagnoo, and being overtaken by the dark, they were preceded, say they, 'by a number of the kind inhabitants, with torches, to show us the intricate path.' From Dagnoo, they continued their journey towards Hunba, through a vast and ancient forest, sometimes broken by a grove of palm-trees, or a field of maize, or even a whole village, planted in some open space. In the path (for it is not to be called a road) they met numbers of both sexes, carrying bundles of palm leaves on their heads (used for thatching their huts); and the wild shrill cry of the gray parrot resounded from the trees. Hunba was a town in ruins, and the inhabitants appeared in a truly pitiable state; but, nevertheless, singing, dancing, and music-playing were kept up in it during the whole of the night, and with as much spirit and good humour as if they had been the most prosperous people in the world. At Bidgie, a pleasant town, in the midst of extensive fields of corn and plantains, the chief, a fine young

man, named Lollakelli, who was perpetually smiling, pressed them to stay with him the remainder of the day; and the inhabitants, who came in crowds to see them, eagerly paying them the same compliment, they did not hesitate long, but remained and slept there."

"I had little idea," said Mr. Paulett, "that travelling among the natives of Africa could have been thus agreeable!"

"Yes; and assisted by benevolence as well. Taking leave of the smiling Lollakelli, the strangers proceeded over dried marshes, which, as you know, are commonly rough ground; and here, about mid-day, Captain Clapperton, exhausted by the fatigue and heat, was resting himself, for a few instants, beneath the shade of a diminutive tree, when a native, on horseback, approached, and seeing him thus sunken upon the earth, dismounted, and insisted upon his getting upon his horse; which being done, the party marched onward to Atalabora, the black Samaritan accompanying them on foot. The town of Funnic was reached through large plantations of yams. Drawing near to Laboo, which they entered by moonlight, the Englishmen were met by horses sent by its chief for their accommodation. Laboo is delightfully situated on a rising ground, commanding an extensive and noble prospect. The approach is by a beautiful avenue of trees, between which, at certain measured distances, are erected feteesh-houses, held in the greatest veneration by the inhabitants. Immediately upon arriving, the strangers were conducted to the chief, whom they found sitting under the verandah of his dwelling, and who politely welcomed them to Laboo; observing, that he had been expecting them some hours before."

"Why this is real civilization," interrupted Mr. Pau-

lett, who could no longer repress his surprise; "and I see, that these people, as they are zealous in their faith, so they are religious also in their practice! Here are works, the fruits of faith."

"Assuredly," said Mr. Hartley; "and perhaps, I have well-nigh said enough to furnish you with what is the fairer side of native Negro manners. I will now turn your attention more particularly to the landscape, the amount of population, state of arts, and natural history of this Central Africa. Crossing a river called Akkeni, and still in the empire of Yariba, the party reached the village of Afoora, their journey to which had been rendered even more than ordinarily pleasant by the fragrant odour of the cotton-plant, in plantations of which the country abounded, and which was then in its full blossom;—by the wild solitary whistle of the gray parrot, and by the delightful melody of hundreds of small birds, poured from the branches of tall trees. The country, indeed, every where improved, as they penetrated further from the sea. Fields of maize, and plantations of cotton were numerous, while groves of palm, and clumps of cocoa-trees, scattered upon all sides, rendered the prospect from the hills inexpressibly beautiful. In the paths toward Assudo, the first walled town they had seen, they observed numbers of fine birds, with silky and brilliant plumage. The town of Assudo contains upwards of ten thousand inhabitants, whom the strangers found as curious as their rustic fellow-countrymen, and full as noisy; but still more modest and respectful, and therefore still more pleasing in their manners. Provisions, in abundance, at this, as at all other places, were supplied to them by the chief. In another part of their journey, they speak of the country as unspeakably fine, almost

clear of wood, and looking as fresh and beautiful as the richest parts of England, in the summer months. 'Plantations of rice and cotton,' says the narrator; 'fields of undulating corn; meadows covered with a lovely verdure; and gentle slopes, with herds and flocks grazing and browsing on them, looked as picturesque and rural as any landscape I had beheld in my own, or, indeed, in any country.' The scenery on the road from Afoora to Chiadoo, is extremely picturesque. The track wound by the sides of the Cong Mountains, over rocks and by the edges of precipices, or through romantic glens at their base, intersected by innumerable streams; and on all sides immense masses of granite, jutting abruptly from the hills or valleys, reared their heads, in some places, to the height of several hundred feet; while others, fearfully overhanging the narrow foot-way, inspired, into those who passed beneath them, a shuddering awe. With some danger, and more difficulty, the natives who carried the hammocks of one of the travellers, clambered with it the summit of one of the mounts; the prospect from which, up the one side, was immeasurably grand and imposing, and upon the other, enchantingly beautiful. Below their feet were lovely dales, cultivated in the highest degree, and planted with cotton, yams, plantains, and other crops; and fertilized with meandering rivulets, sparkling in the sunbeams; while all behind, was naked rocks, precipitously steep and rugged, many standing singly, and others piled loosely upon each other, apparently ready to tumble into the vale below. The vales, as well as the slopes and summits of the hills, studded with the cleanly habitations of the natives, completed the scene; throughout the whole of which was a grandeur, cheerfulness, and beauty, such as

the travellers had never seen surpassed. Pursuing still their route, they traversed, at another time, a region charmingly diversified with hills and dales, streamlets of water, groves of superb trees, which were peopled with birds of the gayest plumage; and enclosures of maize, yams, indigo, cotton, wheat and millet. But this was beyond Yariba, in the dominions of the Falatahs, whose government, but not the whole of whose people, is Mohammedan."

"You surprised me," said Mr. Paulett, "when you spoke of a walled town, containing ten thousand inhabitants!"

"Oh! there are towns in this part of Africa," replied Mr. Hartley, "containing ten, twenty, thirty, and forty thousand inhabitants, and more. Soccatoo, the Falatah capital, contains a hundred and forty thousand. But you are to understand that these walled towns, like ancient Babylon and Nineveh, and all the ancient fortified towns in the world, are in reality walled districts or tracts of country; and comprehend, besides the sites of the houses, the grounds on which the inhabitants graze cattle, and from which they raise provisions; and sometimes rivers, lakes, woods, and morasses also. When Captain Clapperton entered the city of Catunga, the capital of Yariba, he found it a five miles' ride, through the heat and dust, from the northern gate to the king's palace; and Cano, one of the towns in possession of the Falatahs, and ten miles in length within the walls, is intersected by a wide and deep morass, alternately filled with water, or else drying up. The walls of these towns are of clay; and the fortification includes an excellent provision of rows of trees, growing parallel to, and within the walls; which, in the no unfrequent case of actual siege, obstruct no

operation of the besieged without, afford an extra shelter to the low houses within; and, if necessary, can be cut down for any purpose rendered needful by warfare."

"I should like to be there to fight," said Richard; "but I do so much want to hear about those beautiful birds; and pray, Mr. Hartley, tell us whether there really are any serpents, and how big they are?"

"As to serpents, Master Richard," answered Mr. Hartley, "there is no denying that there are not a few in every part of Africa; but, as I hinted before, they commonly take care to get out of every body's way, so that bites, even of those that are venomous, are very rarely heard of. There are frequently seen in the woods of the countries of Borghoo and Hoossa, snakes of a large species, swinging in the sunbeams, with their tails encircling the branch of a tree; but, upon the approach of a human creature, they glide to the summit in an instant, and it is only thence that they venture to look down upon the head of the man or men beneath. Once, in the course of my rambles, I saw, and wounded, if not killed, with my gun, a boa-constrictor, of the thickness of a man's thigh, but the reptile would have been very glad to hide itself, and take no notice of me; and frequently, on waking in the morning, I have observed slender green snakes, variegated black, and common in most of the inhabited parts of Africa, and whose bite is mortal, gliding from under the mat upon which I had been sleeping, and making toward the door of the hut, without having injured me in the least, and with no thought but of escape. It is observable of all the reptile tribes, serpents as well as lizards (and which are all cold-blooded animals), that their fondness for warmth, which leads

them to bask in the sun, also draws them to beds and bed-chambers; that they thus seek the society of man; and that, different in nature from man, and from warm-blooded animals in general, as they so strikingly are, they even court domestication, and are far from being insensible to human kindness! A gentleman in England kept one of the harmless English green snakes for fourteen years, and the animal knew him well; and a friend of mine, resident in Jamaica, finds every morning, upon his washhand-stand, a lizard which has lived a length of time in his bed-chamber. While he is at the stand, the lizard keeps winking his eyes and looking at him; and it readily submits to be put a little aside occasionally, which my friend is accustomed to do, when, in the act of moving any thing, there is danger of hurting it."

"I hope I shall have a lizard," said Richard, "and I am sure I will not hurt it; but the birds—the beautiful birds;—you say there are such beautiful birds in Africa?"

"Well, among the great variety of species, there are many of rich and brilliant plumage. Parrots, the wild Guinea-fowl, and many species of doves, are seen among the beautiful trees which fill the forests interspersed throughout the country, and by their cries, their chatter, and their cooing, impart a grateful animation to the scene. Sometimes we see the golden pigeon, so called from the shining yellow which tinges the feathers upon its breast and under its wings; while the general colour of the bird is a rich and vivid blue. I may mention, also, the harvest-bird, known southward, even to the Cape, but there called the finy-fink. There are two varieties of this beautiful bird; the one yellow and black, and the other a bright scarlet,

or red and black. In each, the feathers are fine, soft, and silky; but the birds retain their splendid colours only while the corn is in the ground; and, by the time the corn is fairly housed, which is also just about the period when their young are able to take wing, their whole plumage is changed to a russet brown! It is from this singular coincidence that they have their name of harvest-birds."

"But are there no other birds," inquired the still eager Richard?

"Many (including ostriches, and others, of which I shall say no more); but I will mention, again, one other African bird, because its history has a curious and romantic interest. You are aware that a notion has come down to us from some antiquity, and is very widely spread—has become a proverb—a hackneyed emblem—and the subject of incessant pictures and other representations,—that the Pelican feeds its young with its own blood, which, with its bill, it causes to flow from its breast. Now, the species of Pelican with even the renown of which our northern countries is best and almost exclusively acquainted, is the White Pelican, or Pelican of the Wilderness, which is also the Pelican of Scripture; and it is very certain that this bird performs no such action as this ascribed to it, and which, by the way, had it been true, would probably have found its way into some Scriptural allusion or description; for Scripture is full of natural allusions and descriptions. The White Pelican, or Pelican of the Wilderness, having filled, with fish, at some lake or river, the enormous sac beneath its also enormous bill, wings its somewhat heavy way to its distant nest, in more arid situations of the wilderness or desert; and naturalists, by a species of com-

mentary often too prevalent, have tried to explain what has been called the ancient fable, by supposing that the bird, when seen conveying, with its own bill, its fishy prey into the bills of its young ones, had thence been fancifully described as feeding them from its breast, and with its blood. The late traveller, however, to whom I have already referred, seems to have made it certain, that a practice, much nearer to the ancient story, is really to be seen in a certain species of Pelican, but not in the species known in the more northern parts of the tropical regions of the world. It seems that, in Africa, so far south as Hoossa, the gray species of Pelican abounds upon the margins of the rivers, in the same manner that it, or another species, is seen in the southern parts of North America; while the White Pelican belongs to the warm countries in the northern. The Gray Pelicans are much smaller than the White; and their bills are even much smaller in proportion. In reality, they are not designed for a similar plan of life; for these live always upon the water, or by its edge, near to which latter they build their nests, and on which they always stand to feed their young. But the people of Hoossa speak as familiarly of the Pelican's feeding its young with its blood, as do we in Europe; and, for this they have apparent reason. It is the Gray Pelican, that is, the species of Pelican peculiar to these southern countries, which performs, and which alone performs, the action, or, rather, an action so nearly approaching to it, as might seem sufficient in itself to justify the original story, and to excuse what is wanting to its entire accuracy. 'I have stood for a long time together,' says my traveller, 'by the side of this stupid animal, watching its motions, and seeing it bending its head, for its off-

spring to extract the nourishment. The young ones thrust their beaks into a small round aperture at the lower part of the back of the neck of their parent; and they swallow the substance that flows freely through. If it be not blood that issues from the old bird, it is a red liquid so closely resembling it, that the difference cannot be perceived. I took a sketch of a Pelican feeding its young in this manner,' adds the traveller, 'in Hoossa, which is now in my possession.' Thus, Richard, it appears, that there is 'always something new from Africa;'—but you will find a better explanation than all, in a little book, entitled, 'The Pelican of the Wilderness; an Autobiography.'"

"Oh! but what else is there, sir, that you can tell us of in Africa;" inquired the insatiable Richard?

"I will not talk to you of elephants, lions, panthers, hyænas, and the wild boar; nor of the wild ox, and the innumerable herds and species of antelope, as well as apes, baboons, monkeys, and other beasts, with which every one knows Africa to abound; unless to remark that the camel, which is numerous in a state of domestication, is also found wild in Hoossa; that the elephant, which, in Africa, is never domesticated, is growing scarce in most parts of the forests of the interior, where, as the natives jocularly say, having learned the value of their tusks, they keep very much out of the hunters' way; and that the giraffe, or camelopard, which inhabits the south of Africa to the Cape, is also found, along with the wild camel, in the forests of Hoossa. But I must recur to what I have before said of the very small horse of the country, which has a black transverse streak on the back and shoulders, like the ass; and which is of a mouse colour, exceedingly shaggy, and with hair as fine and as soft as silk."

“ I shall have such a horse as that; shall I not, one day, papa?” cried Richard; to which he added, “ but you say nothing, Mr. Hartley, of the *tigers*; though I have heard that there are such very great tigers in Africa;—and you know, papa, that we saw a ‘ royal African tiger’ at Derby fair!”

“ ‘ Royal African tigers’ may very likely show themselves at Derby fair,” answered Mr. Hartley, “ where, as at most other fairs, there may not only have been this, but many other wonders also, which nature never owned; but I assure you, my dear young fair-goer, that there never was a tiger in all Africa, unless such an animal may have been brought thither on ship-board! I know very well, that naturalists, and even travellers, still talk of tigers as animals which are to be found in Africa; but I persist, not at all the less, in assuring you, that there is no tiger naturally in Africa; and I can safely add, that this is only one of many similar mistakes, still current in natural history, and in the mouths of travellers. All these are still ready to tell us, both of tigers and tiger-cats, in Africa; but there is no tiger in Africa; and, as to the tiger-cat, it is the wild ‘ cat-o’-mountain,’ of which our domestic cats are fancied to be the descendants and varieties. The domestic cat is an original native of warmer climates than our own; as, perhaps, is partly evinced by puss’s extreme shyness of cold, and extreme fondness for sun-shine and a fire-side!”

“ No tigers in Africa,” reiterated the still incredulous Richard?

“ No,” continued Mr. Hartley; “ and to make you still wiser, I must tell you, that the tiger belongs chiefly to India and China, and, at all events, is not to be found to the westward of the river Indus. It is a native of Asia only, and of only the eastern part of

Asia. One of my proofs is, that in ancient Rome, to which all ferocious beasts were eagerly carried, to make their fights the entertainment of the people, the tiger (in spite of early Roman knowledge of much that belonged to Africa) was never seen till toward the latter days of the Roman empire, when, and not till when, Rome had opened a communication with India. The truth is, that all the animals of the cat kind (if, indeed, the tiger is properly a *cat*) are vulgarly spoken of together. Neither travellers nor naturalists take notice, that of these animals, some (to advert to no other distinction) are striped, and some spotted. Now, it is the striped that are the tigers—a distinction which, in part, justifies the application, to the common wild cat, of the name of tiger-cat;—for the cat, as we all see, is more striped than spotted. But the tiger is separated from the spotted animals of the cat kind by a distinction added to that of his stripes. He cannot climb a tree, which is the privilege of every thing really *cattish*, and in his deficiency of which he shares with the lion. There is, in truth, a plain affinity between the tiger and the lion; and, as to my private opinion, I hesitate at placing either of those animals among the species of *cats*.

“And what, then, sir,” said Richard, “are the spotted animals of the *cat* kind?”

“Speaking of the old world exclusively,” answered Mr. Hartley, “they are the panther, leopard, and hunting or smaller leopard, called, in Persia (of which country the language is radically the same as our own), *chittah*, *chetah*, *kittah*, *kitty*, *kit*, or *cat*. The *panther* is a native of Africa, and not, as I suspect (I speak advisedly), of any other country in the world; and the *leopard* is a native of western Asia, with, as I also suspect, equal

exclusiveness of country. In short, though even the traveller whom I have quoted to you, and upon whom I rely for so many other particulars, tells us that there are in Africa, not only tigers and leopards, but also *wolves*, I do not believe that the country contains either a tiger, a leopard, or a wolf. I am of opinion, that in Africa, the place of the tiger is filled by the lion; that of the leopard, by the panther; and that of the wolf, by the hyæna; and in corroboration, I may remark, that even this very traveller, who, in prefacing the natural history of his work, candidly declares himself no naturalist;—even this traveller, though, in the natural history of his work, he gives the names of tiger, leopard, and wolf, yet, in his actual travels (while he speaks of the panther and the hyæna as seen by himself, and as hunted or dreaded by the natives), never finds occasion to speak either of tiger, leopard, or wolf. The geography of animals, indeed, as well as of plants, is a subject very little understood. I believe that something, however, has been already intimated, at least, to the world in relation to it, from a quarter whence, perhaps, we may one day hear something more.”

“Our best natural histories seem to be still defective?”

“Assuredly they are.”

“But the fishes in the Central African rivers,” said Richard?

“As to the rivers,” resumed his instructor, “they are filled with fish, and are thickly inhabited by crocodiles; which latter remark, I believe, is as good as to tell you, that they have none of those hippopotami, or river-horses, that are numerous at the Cape, and in Upper Egypt and Nubia; but nowhere, I think, in company with the crocodile. The whole country, from

Badagry to Soccatoo, is in considerable dread of those amphibious reptiles, and the people set crocodile-eggs upon the tops of their houses, as charms to keep them and all other evil things, (including the 'evil eye,') from their dwellings; just as, in Europe, we place horse-shoes against our doors, as preservatives from witches, and, of course, from the 'evil eye,' and from all other evil things. Crocodiles of twenty-four feet in length are spoken of; but I never saw one exceeding fourteen, or eighteen at the utmost. By the way, the crocodile, having seized its prey upon the land, goes into the water to eat it; and physiologists have remarked a peculiar structure in its gullet, consisting in a valve, which, while it is chewing its food, can totally close the passage, so as to prevent the spontaneous entrance of water, by means of which the animal would otherwise be drowned. The voice of the crocodile is a hollow roar, which, like the croaking of frogs, in Europe, is to be heard along the banks of the rivers at evening. The crocodiles smell strongly of musk, and thus scent the places where they are; and this, among other uses, affords an additional warning of their presence.—If I compare the use of the crocodile's eggs in Africa with that of the horse-shoes in Europe, it is because I remember that the horse was once as sacred in Europe, as the crocodile either in modern Africa, or in ancient Egypt."

"You speak much of the beauty of the vegetable kingdom in Africa," observed Mr. Paulett?

"And beautiful it is," said Mr. Hartley; "but I am so bad a botanist, that I could give you few particulars. I propose, now, however, to hasten toward a close of my sketch, though not without omitting a multitude of

things which might interest you; and after bringing the Negro natives once more, and chiefly in agreeable aspects, before you, to conclude by touching upon some of the darker dyes of their history.

“The traveller whom I so much quote gives a striking account of a series of occurrences within the space of twenty-four hours, at Coolfo, in Nyffee, where the population is partly Pagan and partly Mohammedan; in which we have, first, the drunkenness and corresponding excesses, common, in all rude countries, to the celebration of a religious festival; then, the calamities of a tornado; and, then, the benevolent zeal of the late drunkards and revellers, to mitigate the afflictions of the sufferers by the storm! The festival of the New Moon is kept alike by Pagans and Mohammedans; and, upon the occasion referred to, a flourish of trumpets having announced the appearance, and proclaimed the holiday, thousands of both sexes, from the neighbouring towns and villages, flocked into the city the next morning, to share in the devotions and festivities. Men and boys, old women and young maidens, slave and free, Mohammedan and Pagan, forgot all distinctions of rank, age, and worship; and, joining in the song and dance, drank palm-wine and other country liquors, and, before the morning was well over, became universally more than moderately tipsy. In the afternoon, groups might be seen, rambling from one end of the city to the other, dancing, capering, tumbling, and hallooing; and others scarcely able to stand, or even totally insensible: some flung into the river by their boisterous companions, and dragged out again half drowned; some smiting their breasts, and calling upon the name of the Prophet; others hurrying

about in every direction, fighting, praying, laughing, weeping; but all, from the governor and his ladies, to the meanest bondmen and slaves;—all drunk, in a greater or less degree! But, while the revels were thus proceeding, the atmosphere gradually changed: not a breath of air was to be felt, and the intensity of the sun's rays threatened conflagration to the tenantless huts of the people. About five or six o'clock, a sultry haze obscured the firmament. After an hour or two, this dispersed, and was succeeded by a solemn fearful calm; the revellers still enjoying their frolic, and loud bursts of merriment resounding from every quarter of the town. At length, in the eastern horizon, a small black cloud discovered itself, slowly rising toward the zenith. No sooner, however, had it been seen, than faint flashes of lightning, and distant peals of thunder, following in a rapid succession, declared the approach of the tornado. The people, at last, became sensible of their danger; and, in a moment, all was confusion and flight. The music and dancing suddenly ceased; the drunken became sober; a deep, wild, thrilling cry was raised by the women, and answered by screams of affright from the children and young persons. Meanwhile, the peals of thunder incessantly grew louder and more appalling, and the lightning more intolerably vivid. The clouds in the east momentarily rolled onward in wider and heavier masses; a large portion of the heavens was presently clothed in almost midnight darkness; and, now, the western horizon suddenly opened, and what seemed a sea of liquid fire, streaming from that point, added a sterner and yet more dreadful grandeur to the firmament; exposing by its yellowish glare all the blackness and horror of the general scene. The sable curtain, which overhung

their heads, was rent asunder, shortly after, with a frightful explosion; while the shuddering war-cry, and the tumult and wailings of the multitude, mingled with the hollow blast of the tempest, produced an indescribable effect, and awoke exalted but painful and even fearful emotions of the soul. At the same instant, the town of Bali, at a short distance from Coolfo, and containing about eleven hundred houses, burst into flames, beneath the touch of the electric fluid; and now, multitudes that had hitherto remained in their houses at that place, rushed toward Coolfo; while the piercing cries of the terrified fugitives, penetrating dismally into the city, and re-echoed by thousands of human voices, produced a union of sounds which caused even the domestic animals to shrink with apprehension.

“The storm at length subsided; the fury of the elements became spent; the voices of the people ceased; and the remainder of the night was passed in peace and silence. In the morning, the purified air was more than usually fresh and pleasant; but the earth was covered with the relics of the victims of the evening's commotion. Superb trees, through the trunks of which, if hollowed, coaches might have been driven, lay torn up by their roots, and their gigantic branches shivered into splinters; while others, still standing, were blackened by the lightning, and stripped of all their leaves. Fragments and roofs of huts, many of them still smoking, were scattered in every direction; and here and there lay the dead body of a bird or a beast which had perished in the storm.

“But, through the midst of all these ruins of the works of man and nature, proceeded a band of sufferers still more capable of appealing (and not in vain, even in Africa, and to Pagans and to Mohammedans),

to the strings of human sympathy. The inhabitants of Bali came to Coolfo, to tell their tale of distress, and to solicit the assistance of their neighbours. Among other pitiable incidents, they related that several of their towns-women had been overtaken and destroyed by the flames, while in the act of running from them with their children upon their backs; and it was thought that many men, also, not since heard of, had perished in the same tender office. One aged individual, hurrying from the threatened destruction, snatched up a little boy, who, with shrieks of terror, ran across his path; but, just as he had reached the outskirts of the burning town, and was congratulating himself and his charge with their mutual escape, a blazing mass, driven by the wind, dashed both of them to the earth, and scorched them to death, in sight of their distracted friends. All that the people of Bali had to say, those of Coolfo listened to with tears; and help was given to them with benevolence and zeal. Very speedily, the huts of Bali were re-erected, over the ruins of those which had been destroyed; and, within a month or two, the people, by their general merriment and vivacity, might seem to have forgotten, and to be able to make every one else forget, that any misfortune had happened in the place! The skies were not more returned to their calmness, than the people to their mirth. What was even better than this, it had been shown that the festivals of the New Moon were never celebrated without religious effect; that whatever human infirmities may seem to disgrace them—that whatever occasional excesses may furnish food for sour observations upon thier merits, substantial religious duties are upheld by the worship to which they belong; and that to the eye of an all-see-

ing Divinity, if the worshipper, at one moment, disgraces his faith by an unseemly irregularity; at the next, he can adorn it with all the lustre of a heavenly compassion! But it is thus that, through universal nature, storm and sunshine, suffering and peace, vice and virtue, incessantly alternate; while, as a whole, that whole is always found worthy of an ever-wise and ever-merciful Creator;—always one predominating, though never an unbroken scene,—of peace, of beauty, and of virtue!'

CHAP. XII.

What are the stars? There is the sun, the sun,
And the most patient brilliance of the moon;
And stars by thousands? BYSCHE SHELLEY.

THOUGH, during the week past, I had sometimes ventured into Mr. Gubbins's garden, and even sometimes peeped in at his door, not forgetting the kind words of his daughter, who, still more than the rest, besought me, when I was about to receive my liberty, to be sure to come again, and not to be frightened, nor think that I was in any further danger at their house; still I confess that I felt a little shy of all the premises, and had not yet been able to overcome, either the disagreeable recollections of my captivities, nor some feeling of apprehension which clung close to me, and governed me. I went, as I have said, and I looked in, and I had full confidence in every one but Mr. Gubbins; yet the whole

place was now no longer, in my eye, that hospitable and "ancient dwelling," where, as the song beautifully says,

" — the weary traveller loves to call ;"

so, that I approached it almost tremblingly, and left it very soon.

In proportion, however, as the occurrences to which I had been subjected, estranged me from the mansion of the school, so the accident of my introduction to the farm-house, even by the hands of Mr. Gubbins, led me insensibly into the new resort which that dwelling-place opened to me, and had made assisting to my comfort ; for, whether for good or for evil, we easily become familiar with what we know, and attached to that with which we become familiar. It may seem wayward and contradictory, perhaps, that even the frequent visits of Mr. Gubbins, and by turns, of all the Gubbinses, to my pleasant haunt, the abode of their especial friends, did not discourage the arrangement, or that I could willingly meet abroad, those whom I partially shrunk from at their home ; but I felt, no doubt, a secret sense of security from the protection of Mowbray's house ; and, though without examining my own thoughts, considered that the latter was neutral ground, and that, even if the strangers had been enemies, I now met them beneath the shelter of another's roof !

From this cause, then, though surrounded by fresh scenery, I had often still before me Mr. Gubbins, as the principal actor in the tragedy or comedy, or serious or sentimental drama ; or the orations, instructive or amusing, of every passing day. There existed, at the moment of which I am speaking, a marvellous alarm, throughout the village, from the predicted

appearance of that rare kind of celestial visitant, a Comet; and the same, as I learned from all the village gossip, was prevalent, more or less, throughout the kingdom, town and country both together. A farmer, it was reported, a leaseholder in a neighbouring county, apprehensive that the *whole globe* was about to be destroyed, had wisely taken ship for *America*, as a place of security; and one or two of the children of Farmer Mowbray, full of their own projected voyage into the other hemisphere, and full, also, of the frights and fancies which they heard of from every neighbour, and discussed with all their fellows of the National and Sunday Schools; partly rejoiced in the similar means of safety which lay before themselves, and partly forsook all other topics and diversions, to question their father and mother, and still more Mr. Gubbins, about the time, the manner, and the certainty of the world's being drowned, or burned alive, or driven out of the reach of the sun, or split into a thousand pieces, by the force, or fire, or other disturbance by land or water, or by war, disease, or poverty, through the power of the approaching Comet. The reader, in commencing the pages of my history, has hardly expected to learn from me any thing descriptive of the Stars or Comets; but it was always my plan to set before him, not merely the humble adventures which affected myself, but every thing remarkable which, in the interval embraced, came to my eyes or ears, and promised to help in the way of pleasure, or of virtue, or of wisdom; and the learning of the skies is that to which the thread of my narrative now leads. It was introduced at the farm-house by the anxious looks and eager speech of the farmer's second son, who, upon this occasion, came home at the mid-day hour

of twelve, aghast with the intelligence which he had just heard, as he drove the team at plough.

“Father,” said panting Tom, “I am very glad that we are going to a foreign country; for I am sure that there is no hope left in England, now that the Comet is coming!”

“Yes!” cried out, now, even the rosy Peggy; “and blind Rachel told me, last half-holiday, that the *comic* would be sure to set all the world on fire!”

“How foolish, Peggy,” hastily interrupted the white-haired Jack, from the opposite side of the warm and spacious chimney; “how foolish, Peggy, to say that the *comic* will set the world on fire, when every body knows that it will drown it all dead with water!” —For, here, as at Burford Cottage, each child was apt to imagine itself much wiser than the other!

“I don’t believe a word,” resumed Tom, “about the Comet’s drowning or burning the world; but it is *certain* that it will cause the poor folk to starve, and bloody battles to be fought, and a great plague, which will kill man and beast. So, I am very glad that we are going beyond the sea, for there is trouble enough, already, among us, and the poor can hardly live, and you know, father that you and all of us are in trouble; and the people are sick, and don’t want the plague, to make them die faster than they do!”

“But, if either Peggy’s story, or Jack’s,” said Farmer Mowbray (smiling at the credulity of the infants, and quite as much so at that of their elder brother, Tom); “if either of those stories is the true one to believe; or, if the Comet is every where to knock down man and beast; in that case, it will be of no use, I am afraid, John, to quit England upon account of the Comet; for Van Diemen’s Land, it is probable,

would be drowned or burnt along with the rest of the world!"

"O yes, father," resumed John; "I know that well enough, and I only talked of the water, as just such another silly story as Peggy's about fire. But very sensible people really say that the Comet will do nothing but sink wages, and blight the crops, and breed famine and sickness, and make every body miserable; and, besides all that, that it will bring war, and spread trouble all over the country: and that is the reason why I think it a good thing that we are going away!"

"Depend upon it, my good Tom," interrupted Mr. Gubbins, "that the whole of what you have said is just as foolish, or pretty nearly so, as either of the stories about fire and water; so that I won't have my pretty little Peggy's nice story, about the world on fire, too hastily put aside, only to make way for others about war and famine! The appearance of a Comet, my good Tom, would most likely give occasion to more of these stories, but that it happens so seldom, and so irregularly (as far as we have yet been able to observe), and is therefore so little understood, both as to its causes and consequences."

"But tell us, Master Ephraim," said Farmer Mowbray, "what you really think yourself about the *consequences* of the appearance of a Comet? Mind, I don't ask you, now, what you think about the *causes*, or even about the *nature*, of those 'blazing stars.'"

"Then," replied Mr. Gubbins, "there is but one thing which seems to me certain; and that is, that the consequence of the approach of a Comet, other circumstances equal, must be an increase of the warmth of the season. We derive heat from the moon, the planets, and

even the fixed stars, as well as from the sun; and, no doubt, the presence of a Comet in our part of the heavens must increase the heat of our atmosphere. But this increase of heat, in some seasons and circumstances, may happen to be an evil; and I should add, that the Comet's heat, by increasing evaporation, may have its effect upon the quantity of rain: and thus far, a Comet may either threaten or comfort us with the promise of either fire or water. During a considerable cometary appearance which I remember, there was no other consequence or accompaniment, that I am even yet aware of, than the production of a remarkably warm and fine autumn."

"Do they not say, Mr. Gubbins," inquired the farmer's wife, "that we are to have *two* Comets this year?"

"They do," answered Mr. Gubbins; "one, which they call the Comet of Encke (that is, of the astronomer of that name, who discovered its former appearance); but which is not expected, however, to be seen from this Northern Hemisphere of the earth; and another, called, for a reason like the former, the Comet of Biela, and which, it is true, is expected, from the calculations, to make, at its nearest point, an extraordinarily near approach, *not to the earth itself*, but only to its orbit, or road upon which it travels; and even this no nearer than fifty millions of miles: and, to form some idea of the extent of that distance (though, at last, a poor one), you may recollect, that the whole diameter of the earth (or length of a line drawn through the globe, from one of its sides to the other), is reckoned at no more than eight thousand miles, or less, by a fifth, than the hundredth part of a million; or, that this distance of fifty millions of miles, stretched

out into universal space, is equal to *eight millions two hundred and fifty thousand times* the whole length or breadth of the earth! It is true that, after all, we may be said to form no idea whatever of such distances, intervals, or spaces, because they can scarcely be compared with any thing that we know; and it is also true, that consequently we are in some degree unable to judge of the distance at which a Comet may or may not exercise an influence upon the temperature of our atmosphere and earth; but, at least, this computation of distance may serve to remove every fear that the Comet of Biela will touch our planet. You see that, when it is nearest to the earth, it will be distant almost eight millions and a quarter of times the length of the whole earth itself, from one pole to the other, as the crow would fly, or a ship sail!"

"By the way," continued Mr. Gubbins, "(and the knowledge of the frequency and regularity of Comets is a great remover of our terrors) it is at present understood, that upon an average of years, there are two cometary appearances in our system in each year; though for want of earlier observation and instruments, only five hundred are recorded since the Christian era; or, little more than one-fourth of the estimated number of so long a period."

"But the times of their appearance," said Mrs. Mowbray, "are still thought uncertain?"

"Quite so," answered Mr. Gubbins; "unless, indeed, there should be reason for the calculation which has been attempted concerning the most remarkable Comet of modern history; that of the year 1680."

"Pray," said Mrs. Mowbray, "what is the calculation?"

"There was a remarkable Comet," returned her

informant, "in the year of the assassination of Julius Cæsar; that is, in the year 43 before the Christian era. There was another in the year 531 of that era; a third in the year 1106; and a fourth, as I have said, in the year 1680. Now, from the year 43 before the Christian era, to the year 531 after it, is five hundred and seventy-four years; from the year 531, to the year 1106, is five hundred and seventy-five years; and from the year 1106 to the year 1680, is five hundred and seventy-four years: so that, supposing all these appearances to have been reappearances of the same Comet, we should thus ascertain, that one, and that the largest Comet of our system, or that which, in the course of its revolution, approaches the nearest to us, and has always been the especial subject of alarm,—that this Comet performs that revolution, or goes from us and returns to us, once in about five hundred and seventy-five years; a period nineteen times as long as that of the revolution of the planet Saturn, and nearly seven times that of the great and distant planet Uranus, or Georgium Sidus; a period, in short, which, if admitted, leaves us no room to expect the return of the Comet of 1680 (sometimes called Halley's Comet, and that which was the occasion of the bringing forth the two wild theories of Whiston and Halley respectively), nor of that of any other very remarkable or alarming Comet (so to call it) till about the year 2255; and, for a degree of further present comfort, it may be as well, before we go on, to make mention, that the Comet of Encke, which according to elaborate calculations, is said to be the particular Comet likely, after an almost endless succession of revolutions (always coming nearer and nearer), to make this fatal visit to our earth;—this

most terrible visit of all visits,—the only one of the kind, the date of which astronomers are in any degree able to anticipate, and—as the equal result of the same calculations, this cannot happen, as they themselves say, before the end of the next *two hundred and nineteen millions of years*; a distant evil, and which itself is never likely to arrive, if the calculation I have mentioned is well-founded; and which would prove, from the uniformity of the periods of cometary evolutions, that they keep uniformly to their ancient, though eccentric orbits, neither expanding nor contracting their limits, nor changing their direction! But it may possibly, in the meantime, be worth our while to note, that this assumed average cometary period, of five hundred and seventy-five years, differs but little from the famous Babylonish cycle of six hundred!—I vouch not for the truth of any of the calculations; but, supposing that this last Comet, or that one, or that several of the Comets of our system, make revolutions of so great a length of time, while, in reality, two Comets, upon an average, become annually visible, how many in number must not the Comets of our system be!”

“They must far out-number,” said one of the company, “the whole of all our planets!”

“Very far, indeed,” added Mr. Gubbins; “even at the most moderate reckoning; and notwithstanding that, at present, we reckon eleven planets, instead of the five of even modern astronomy, and the seven of ancient; six having been added to the catalogue since the year 1780*. The supposition, in the

* Herschel’s discovery, or that of his sister, of the first of these six, was made upon the 18th of March, 1781.

meantime, of so great a number of Comets in our system, all moving round the sun in eccentric orbits (that is, in paths or orbits which cross the paths or orbits of the planets), and yet striking against no planet; offers a fresh and most magnificent testimony to the amazing order, or refined organization, amid which the system of the universe performs its work: for, under this notion, how much greater than otherwise would be the number of chances (if chance had the least share in the question) that some Comet or other should cross the path or orbit of a planet, at the very moment when the planet was in that precise point of its orbit! Again, if it be really true, that any one of the Comets of our system makes a revolution of nearly six hundred of our years, as to duration of time; what must be the extent of that revolution as to space; or, into space, how far must not that Comet travel from our sun, yet belonging, all the while, to its system, and never approaching so near to any other fixed star or sun, as to fall into its attraction, and be prevented from returning to the point whence it set out? If it is to be believed (as is asserted by the philosophy of our day), that *light* is a body, and travels at the rate of more than four hundred miles in a second of time; and if you listen also to what is described concerning the velocity of the motion of a Comet, tell me, I beseech you, how many miles would a Comet run into space, in a period of three hundred of our years, or about the time required for its journey out; and, to assist, at least in a small degree, the powers of your imagination upon so vast a subject, it will be well to remember, in company with the foregoing, that some astronomers estimate the distance of space, between the earth and the most conspicuous

(and, therefore, as they say, the nearest) of the fixed stars, as being equivalent to (if not exceeding) two hundred thousand times the diameter of the earth; and that, taking, in round numbers, this diameter at eight thousand miles, the most moderate calculation makes the distance of such a star, one thousand six hundred millions of miles; or, nearly thirty thousand times the distance of the moon. Many other questions, however, concerning Comets, appear to me to be suggested by this last; but with none of these will I now trouble you."

"But let us suppose, for an instant," said Mowbray, "the possibility of the earth's receiving a blow from a Comet; and, in such an event, what would you imagine to be the consequence?"

"The consequence, or consequences, in that case," said Mr. Gubbins, "would much depend both upon the size and the material in which a Comet really consists. If the Comet which should strike the earth were much smaller than itself, I need not say, that the effect of the blow might be proportionably small; but if it were as large, or even larger, and yet not so hard nor so heavy as the earth, still the effect of the blow would be proportionably small. Many estimates and calculations of these effects have been made upon the supposition that the density of the body of a Comet is equal to the density of the body of the earth; notwithstanding that astronomers are generally agreed that the real densities are by no means equal; and that in truth, the body of a Comet consists in some very thin or rare substance. Now, you know, that if a ball of wool were struck against a much smaller ball of lead, the ball of lead would neither be split, nor flattened, nor show any mark or impression upon its surface,

nor even be put out of its place; unless the impelling force of the ball of wool exceeded the resisting force which had previously kept the leaden ball where it stood. I mean, that the impelling force of a Comet could make no alteration in the figure, place or motion of the earth, unless its substance were harder and more dense, than the substance of the earth, and its force greater than the force with which the present place and motions of the earth are maintained;—truths from which I am disposed to infer, that in the absence of any thing like real knowledge upon those subjects, modern astronomy, in its speculations upon the horrors of the imagined catastrophe, is almost as childish as the ancient, when, from the appearance of a Comet, even without supposing a blow, it yet trembled for a variety of evils!”

“I think so, too,” said Mowbray; “and, though the mind will be busy, at times, and invent we know not what unfounded notions, to explain the past, the present, or the future; yet I see neither use nor ground for the contemplation of these imaginary disasters from the operation of Comets, any more than from the other bodies in the heavens! What think you, neighbour Gubbins; whether it is not a great deal more likely that Comets have been made to sustain things, than to destroy them?”

“Much more likely, certainly; but this notion, of one heavenly body striking against another, and thereby occasioning fractures and disruptions, is a favourite with modern astronomy; and I recollect one particular theory of the kind, offered with a basis of mathematical demonstration, and so beautiful as taken by itself, and so easily separable from the more particular notion of such celestial catastrophes

as those of which we have been speaking, that I will not omit to mention it; and in truth, I shall be disappointed, if the suggestion of it does not afford as much pleasure to you, as it does, and has afforded to me. You are aware that the planets of our system, of which the earth is one, are very unequal, both in their magnitudes, and in their distances from the sun; in the degree that seems to invite an idea of the absence of all symmetry, and, if I may so say, of all method, in their formation and disposition; leaving it to be conceived that they are severally held in their places, and enabled to perform their evolutions, only because it *so happens* that they are so formed, and so arranged, as to effect those objects. But the astronomer to whom I refer, suggests, and offers what he considers mathematical demonstration of the truth of his theory, that the magnitudes and distances in question are such, that these actual magnitudes and distances, and no other, could give the solar system its completeness and operation; going so far as to insist that the masses or magnitudes of the numerous small planets only lately discovered to exist, and to belong to the system, amount collectively to the precise quantity and weight of matter, and fill the precise point of space, in which ought, upon theory, to be found, either a very large planet, or else many small ones, composing, together, a mass, exactly equivalent to that imaginary planet, and to the collective masses of the small planets really and recently discovered. The small planets actually existing, my astronomer is speedily tempted to derive from an assumed breaking into fragments of the ideal planet which he supposes, but the place and office of which they thoroughly supply; because, collectively, they still amount to the same mass, and travel in the

same orbit, that is, move at the same indispensable distances from the sun, and from their sister planets, as those assigned to their vastly larger original. Buffon, before this philosopher, had already imagined that our own planet might have been anciently no more than an irregular fragment, struck off from the body of the sun, and rolled into roundness by the mere effect of the motion in which it has ever since been kept. But, without lending ourselves too readily to this description of hypothesis, by which the shattering of old worlds, and the structure of new ones from their broken pieces, is so familiarly and readily explained; what I stop at is, the beautiful *order* which the first part of the astronomer's theory infers, in the composition and arrangement of the solar system, in place of that *disorder* which, as I have remarked, the apparently irregular magnitudes, both of the planets and their orbits, might suggest upon slighter inspection; an order and a beauty of which the system is thus made to display a new example, among the myriads which the whole universe, in every part, presents; and of which examples the universe itself is only the most stupendous!"

Mr. Gubbins's astronomy, sublime as was the speculation upon which he had now entered, fell by no means in waste upon his company; for, with the help of a few marbles, a few peas, and a morsel of chalk, he readily erected a planetarium sufficient for the assistance of the eye; and besides, his efforts were powerfully helped by that general eagerness for knowledge which is so common to the human mind, in persons gifted with their portion of mind, whatever be their age or their condition; by the intelligent curiosity so early springing to life in by far the greater part of children; and by a share of that affecting eagerness so often dis-

played by persons poorer and less taught than any of those now present, when any transient opportunity presents itself for gathering even a crumb of that information, from feasting upon which their state precludes and has precluded them.

“ And now,” resumed Mr. Gubbins, “ having left behind us the question of splitting the planets into pieces, by means of the shock of Comets, we may spend a hasty thought upon the other mischiefs which these bodies have been thought to inflict; either, as our young friends have heard it reported, the setting the world on fire, or else the drowning it with water. These latter conceits, like those previously mentioned, and, indeed, like most others, in all branches of human inquiry, begin in the schools of the philosophers, however low they may be found at last, among what are commonly held the ‘untaught’ people; but the people without doors only repeat, at second or at fiftieth hand, what has been first said within. Now, the philosophers, in imagining such powerful effects from the attractive forces, or from the comparative nearness of visible Comets, have made no proper account of even their own calculations of their velocities. Whatever might be the mass and density of matter contained in the body and tail of a Comet (in proportion to which, if at rest, or at comparative rest, should be its power of attraction), the immense velocity with which it is known to move is an answer to all the fears which may be conjured up from this part of a Comet’s history. To give effect to the power of attraction, the attracting and attracted bodies must always remain for at least some minute space of time in the required contiguity with each other. Take, for example, a common loadstone and some steel-filings; and if you move the load-

stone past the filings with extreme velocity, the former will exercise no part of its attractive influence upon the latter; for the velocity countervails the attraction. From the same cause, a Comet, to exercise an attractive power upon any point of the sea or earth which form the surface of our globe, it ought to hang over, or be poised above that point, with exact perpendicularity, like a hawk or a kingfisher over their prey, for some given space of time; for time, as well as matter, is essential, as we have seen, to the result. Now, a Comet, moving with the velocity or swiftness which is always observable in its progress, can never remain perpendicularly or vertically over any one point of the earth or sea for a single instant; and, with respect to all other points than that over which it is actually passing, its position is more or less oblique or slanting to those points, and its influence upon them, therefore, nearly, if not absolutely nothing."

"I think we can understand that, my worthy friend," said Farmer Mowbray.

"Dismissing, then, the question of attraction, to which belongs that, also, of a Comet's drowning the world, or any part of it, by raising the sea, in the manner in which the tides are caused by the moon—a planet, by the way, which, if it is inconceivably smaller than a Comet, is at the same time, so much nearer to us, and so much longer over every given point;—dismissing, I say, the question of *attraction*, as we had before dismissed the question of *collision*, let us next (and to make a finish), attack what we may call the question of *ignition*—that is, the possibility of a Comet's firing the earth, not by actual touch, but by simple communication of its heat. We will allow, then, to raise the argument, that the efflux of cometary heat, or heat

which a Comet sends from itself, might be amply sufficient, even at the immense distance at which alone, it has hitherto been seen to move, to produce the burning or combustion of our planet; but, here, as before, the velocity of the motion interferes, and removes the danger; because *time* is necessary for the influence of heat and cold, as well as for that of the attractive power. If I take a heated poker, and hold it, for a certain *time* (which we will suppose to be very short), at a certain distance from your skin, or from your clothes, I shall, perhaps, burn the one, or kindle flames in the other; but if, on the contrary, I pass the heated poker, with extreme, or even with moderate velocity or rapidity, at the same distance from your clothes, or your skin, I shall do no injury to either; and this because no point upon the surface of the poker is sufficiently long in a direct line with any point of your clothes or skin, to cause them to receive the communicable occasion of heat. What is true, too, of heated bodies, is true of cold ones; and, indeed, of all bodies possessing (and which are without them?) communicable qualities. Observe with what eagerness an individual labouring under the sensation of faintness seizes upon, and holds, for a continuance, to his nostrils, any odorous substance presented by a bystander, and attempted to be hastily withdrawn! *Time*, in this instance, as in the others, is needful for the production of the desired effect. But, again, the prolonged continuance of the same substance becomes, at length, offensive; for *time*, which, at the first, was needful to enable it to exercise any power at all, goes on to confer an excess of power which is oppressive! But we may learn, in this manner, from familiar examples, some of the laws which regulate planets and Comets;

and, in the instance before us, enough of them to release our minds from the apprehension, that this globe is likely to be destroyed by the fire of even a 'blazing star.'

"And yet, still," said Farmer Mowbray, "do you think it utterly impossible that a Comet may have some sort of connection with such occurrences as wars, commotions, famine, or disease?"

"By no means," proceeded Mr. Gubbins; "man, like every thing else upon the earth, is in so much subjection to the 'skiey influences;' he lives in so much physical subjection to all the heavenly bodies; and physical causes are so capable of producing moral effects; that, after admitting what may chance to be the physical effect of a Comet, I am bound to make admission of its moral possibilities as well. In truth, it is the real physical influence of the stars upon our earth, which, though very differently to be explained than as it is ignorantly set forth, is the foundation of the whole fanciful pretensions of *astrology*, or of that astrology, at least, which, for distinction-sake, is called *judicial*, as supposed, though most erroneously, to enable its professors to *judge* of many future events with which there is no real relation; and it is, in general terms, the certain proposition, that human crimes and sorrows, and all other human circumstances, may be the real effect, though in a physical manner only, of physical or natural causes, that has procured, both for astrology, and for the particular superstitions concerning blazing stars, their long-established and long-lingering footing with mankind; for a natural phenomenon, though it is not (what superstition esteems it) the mere sign or omen, or else the wilful and immediate author of a moral event,—may yet be its absolute

and natural cause. If a Comet, for example, or any other natural body, by influencing the meteorology of the earth, become the cause of a sickly or unfruitful season, such an event will have its ulterior effects upon the reasoning and temper of a people, and may thus become productive of various human acts, in respect of which, the only error of the superstitious will be, to mistake (as is very common) the cause for the effect, and the effect for cause. We spoke, a little while ago, of the Comet which appeared in the year of the death of Julius Cæsar. Now, that Comet was neither, as it has been described, the sign that Cæsar was to be assassinated, nor the publication of the event, nor the menace of divine revenge; but it is very possible, nevertheless, that the Comet was the *cause* of Cæsar's death, or that, but for the Comet, Cæsar would not have been assassinated! The year of Cæsar's death was distinguished, not only by the appearance of a Comet, but by a cold, wet summer; a faint sun; a watery or sickly sky; and, what was the natural end of those misfortunes,—a bad harvest, and, perhaps, an unhealthy season. But these things, upon the principles which we have admitted, may have had for their cause the Comet; and, these things, however caused, would be attended, as is so usual, by public discontent, and by public ill will toward those that had the administration of affairs;—so that, this supposed, the steel of Brutus, either lifted under a share of that public feeling, or emboldened by its existence, may have struck at the same Cæsar, who, but for the appearance of the Comet, might never have been assassinated. The Roman people, through the effect of the Comet, might be sufferers in food and health; and nothing is more common than for nations,

either to ascribe the evils under which they suffer from Nature, to the faults of their governors or governments; or, at the least, to be induced by their sufferings to look with peculiar severity upon all those faults, and to indulge in excesses, or at least in scrutiny, from that sole cause. But, what I chiefly flatter myself with is this; that by bringing before you the now acknowledged and established fact, that (small or great, and visible or invisible to the naked eye) two appearances of Comets, upon an average, occur in our heavens annually, and that, by analogy, there have been nearly four thousand since the commencement of the Christian era, and four thousand, also, in every previous two thousand years; what, I say, I chiefly flatter myself with, is this; that, from these facts you see sufficient reason to conclude, that the appearances of Comets, which are no more than ordinary events, neither fore-run, nor have any other connexion with any of the moral events of the earth upon which we live. It is, indeed, in this tendency of the study of Nature, to deliver human life from the agonies and burdens of unfounded fears, that so much of the value of this study, and of its artificial helps consists; for, as the poet has it, knowledge, of the nature, either of men or things, is the great remover of all prodigies:—

‘ Nature well known, no prodigies remain :
COMETS are regular, and Wharton plain ! ’ ”

CHAP. XIII.

I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth. WORDSWORTH.

It was no longer after this, than the very day that followed, when, much to my surprise, and a little, at the first, to my alarm, who should I spy, as a visitor at Burford Cottage, but my very familiar acquaintance, Mr. Gubbins; whose name, from one cause or other, thus appears in almost every chapter of my book! Happily, however, and as it very soon appeared, I had nothing to fear from him upon this occasion; while, upon the other hand, my vanity was indulged by hearing myself the subject of much discourse between the schoolmaster and his kind and polished neighbour.

The success of Mr. Gubbins's experiment, to see whether I could find my way home from Cobbler Dykes's, was still the wonder of the more curious part of the village; and when first I heard the voice that had become rather too familiar to me, it was employed in answering some questions from Mr. Paulett, as to the management of the affair.

Mr. Paulett observed, "that he should never have entertained a doubt concerning a Red-breast's returning to its native haunts over the space of a small number of miles; for, besides other reasons," said he, "though not a bird of passage, in the largest sense of the phrase

(and especially as to its habits in England*), is still capable of roaming for considerable distances, in search of food, and for change of climate. But, as to its haste to return *home* (half domesticated as it makes itself in this country), I should not wonder if, besides its love of what it has been removed from, and besides its means of recovering the road, there is a *fear*, also, in a strange situation, which drives it quickly back again."

"I am not sure, sir," said Mr. Gubbins, "that I know what you allude to as the *fear*?"

"That birds and beasts of the same species," answered Mr. Paulett, "are far from being cordial with each other, if they are in any manner rendered mutually strange, is a fact well known; and I think it very probable that their feelings of this sort may make them the enemies of such as are found in a strange district or portion of country, to the degree, that a stranger, forced into such a situation, would fly, through *fear*, to his own district or country, with the least possible delay. It is observed of dogs, that in the streets and squares of Constantinople, where, as in other cities, towns, and villages of Asia, Africa, and Europe, they live in large numbers, by public encouragement, but without particular masters or homes; that those animals, upon some principle or mutual understanding wholly undiscoverable by their human neighbours, they divide the city and its suburbs into districts among themselves; and are never known to pass out of their own district into any district of others: "The dogs of Constantinople (as is related by a modern English traveller) belong to everybody and to nobody. The streets are their homes; they are littered

* See Keeper's Travels, chap. xx.

and reared in the streets. As they subsist entirely on charity, and what they pick up, *instinct* teaches them a division of labour; and therefore, in the same manner as a well regulated society of beggars has separate walks for its members; they divide the city and its suburbs into districts. *Were a dog found in a strange quarter, he would infallibly be torn to pieces by the resident dogs*; and so well are they aware of this, that no argument—not even a bone of roast meat,—will induce a dog to follow a person beyond his district; a singular and well-authenticated fact. We caressed, for experiment, one of these animals, whose post, with many others, was near the Meleri Khan; we daily fed him, till he became fat and sleek, and carried his tail high, and was no longer to be recognised for his former self. With his physical, his moral qualities improved. He lost his curishness, and when his patrons approached, expressed gratitude by licking their hands, &c.; yet he would never follow them beyond an *imaginary limit*, either way, where he would stop, wag his tail, and look wistfully after them till they were out of sight, and then return to his post. Once only I saw him overstep his limit; he was very hungry, and we were alluring him with tempting food; but he had not exceeded twenty yards *when he recollected himself*, and ran hastily back*! Now I think it probable," continued Mr. Paulett, "that in a wild state, all animals observe distinctions of place of a similar kind †. It is an *instinct* (if we are so to call it, and not more properly a practice from *experience*), which may be needful for their preservation;

* Slade's Travels in Turkey, &c.

† The same distribution into districts is observed among the Wild Dogs at this moment originating and multiplying in Van Diemen's Land.

first, as in the case of these Constantinopolitan dogs, in keeping to themselves (that is, to the brethren of the same community) that supply of food which the place affords; and secondly, in securing their bodies against violence, to which the same consideration of food, and even of lodging and shelter, would expose them from foreign invaders. The flocks, or rather clouds of gannets, *sea-pelicans*, or Solan geese, which, in the summer season, inhabit the great insular rock of Ailsa in the Frith of Clyde, while they dwell and migrate, in general terms, always together; yet, though their rock, or place of lodging and shelter, is so large as to rise eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea, and to be much more than three thousand feet in length, and two thousand feet in breadth; and though the ocean all around them, and its shoals of silver herrings (still less capable of being counted than the gannets, and than they and all their fellow-feeders upon herrings), are open to them for food; they still preserve inviolably a separation of communities; arrive in the spring in separate though large parties; depart in the autumn in separate though large parties; live and build upon the rock in the same separate parties, and on separate parts; and if, by the arrival of a boat, a general alarm is given to the whole feathered population, they take to their wings in separate clouds or parties; each party, as it wheels and screams around and above the rock, in whiteness and in multitude most like a snow-storm, occupies only its own *district* (so to call it) in the air, above or below its fellows, and never intermixes; just like the dogs of Constantinople and elsewhere. I suspect, too, that there is the same *natural instinct* in mankind, or the same *natural habit*, from whatever source arising; first as to families, and

then as to tribes, races, neighbourhoods, and communities; and such as only gives way, or becomes softened and regulated, under the influence of civilization, when the motives to the previous practice have lost their force. It has often been observed, that in savage and barbarous stages of society, to be a *stranger*, is to be considered an *enemy*, and that only a *neighbour* is a *friend*: in truth, these are the very meanings of the words in question. I could say much, in proof of the truth of what I assume, by showing, that it is against this *natural instinct*, or this *primitive habit* in man, that moralists and lawgivers have expressly laboured, in insisting upon the rights of *hospitality*, which is the virtue directly opposite to the vice referred to; and in the general inculcation of *philanthropy*, or of the love of our fellow-creatures far and near. But the real corrective of the vice, or at least of the habit, is civilization, and the protection and resources which it gives to those who enjoy it; thus removing their *fears* as to the violence of strangers, or as to the failure of food, or lodging, or shelter, from the presence and the wants of strangers. The *fear* of which I speak, makes every nation jealous of the incursion of foreigners within its frontier; makes it regard every such incursion as an invasion; and makes it resent every such invasion by force of arms. I think, then, that animals act by their species as men act by their species, and through the same motives and necessities; and that what I speak of is really a *natural instinct*, or rather an *experimental principle*, in men as well as in the inferior animals, is, as I think, further proved, by the fact, that the human imagination has even ascribed a similar jealousy, and similar inhospitality toward strangers, to the *fairies*, *genii*, gods, or

spirits, which it has also supposed to inhabit, though invisibly, the same countries and districts as mankind. In Ireland, a tempest is sometimes ascribed to the conflicts of the respective armies of fairies, invading and repelling the invasions of each other, from different provinces, counties, baronies, and townlands; and this quite consistently with what has every where been imagined of those imaginary personages, and with what Shakspeare has put into the mouth of Oberon, when that fairy complains, that the wranglings between himself and his Titania had oppressed the swains with winds and floods, and loss of harvests, and every other misfortune of inverted and destructive seasons. By the superstition thus observed in Ireland, the same instinct is attributed to fairies, as that which, in my view, is implanted in men; and it is here that we have the *natural* explanation (in addition to all other) of the violence and barbarity with which the Irish peasantry treat the *foreigners* or strangers who attempt to settle among them; that is, to hold lands, or in any other manner to divide the means of subsistence with them; and to the same *instinct* we are to refer the *clannish* devotion and exclusiveness of the Highland Scotch. I conclude, therefore, that your Robin was too unsafe, even from his own species, while in a strange *district*, not to make all the haste home that he possibly could!"

"I doubt not but that you are right in this particular," said Mr. Gubbins; "and yet I am perplexed that you appear to allow so little to *instinct*, that wonderful, and that incomprehensible guide of the inferior animals?"

"I allow little or nothing more to instinct, in the inferior animals, than in men. I think that they are

guided, first by their sensations, and next by their experience, just like men. It is certain that they can change their habits and practices with a change of circumstances and situation, just like men. It is true that they can change them only to a certain extent; and this, also, is just like men. Instincts are impulses and aptitudes operating without previous suggestion either of experience or reason. Now instincts, thus defined, have place in men, no less than in the inferior animals; and in the inferior animals no more than in mankind; but the immeasurable advantages of the latter, under all other aspects, and as compared with even the most sagacious of their inferiors, enables them to raise so vast a superstructure upon their instincts, and as it were, to throw them so much out of sight; that, at last, they are prone to forget, both that they have themselves any instincts at all, and that the inferior animals have any thing in addition."

Mr. Paulett having thus explained himself a little, as to his notions of instinct, and of its equal distribution, and no more, among men and the inferior animals; afterward mentioned, in the course of the conversation as it followed, several anecdotes of such animals (birds, beasts, fishes, and even reptiles), as examples of the truths of which he professed himself the advocate.

"The capacity observable in numerous species of animals," said he, "to receive new ideas, and to adopt new modes of conduct, from their experience of and with mankind, are conspicuous proofs (among many others) of the respectable amount of their understanding. Of examples of these kinds, in the horse and dog, and in nearly all the several kinds of game, every sportsman is able to furnish us with the most striking,

and those in considerable numbers; but the list is capable of being extended, so as to include many animals with which we have no ordinary intercourse, and which yet readily mould themselves to it, when, through some singular circumstance, they and men are brought together. There must assuredly be a latent sympathy subsisting between all living creatures whatever; though brought, for the most part, so rarely into view!"

"Speculations," said Mr. Gubbins, "have sometimes been entertained, as to the ideas which the inferior animals form to themselves of mankind, and of the causes of that confession of superiority which they plainly make in our favour. It is no uncommon opinion, that the eyes of the horse and dog are so constructed, that men appear to them much larger than they really are; and that hence we are to account for the readiness of their obedience?"

"I have heard that story," replied Mr. Paulett, "not only from children, but from men engaged in the care of animals, and therefore familiar with their ways; but I am ashamed to think that any thing so silly should ever have entered the human mind. The horse and dog have acute or intense powers of vision; this has been observed by their human superiors; and many curious fables, relating to both species of animal (but of which, at present, I shall say no more), have been founded upon the distinction; but that, though they see piercingly, they see things no larger than we see them ourselves, is what the slightest reflection, and the slightest observation, ought to convince us of! How could a man and a horse or dog live and act together, if objects appeared to the man and the beast of different sizes? In what predicament would be the

man, with his horse or dog, if the smallest gap in a hedge or paling, or the lowest gateway of a building, appeared to either of the latter a spacious or lofty opening? On horseback, how often would not the man be jammed between two friendly posts, which his horse esteemed to stand some yards apart; or stunned by the blow of his head against the lintel of a door, which, to his horse, seemed elevated to the chimneys? Or, putting the man out of the question, what mistakes should we not see dogs and horses daily commit, if their eyes showed them things differently and larger than our own; to-day, the horse attempting to enter the door of a dog-kennel, or of a hen-roost, as freely as that of his stable; and, to-morrow, a dog preparing to swim over a rill, all the water of which were scarcely sufficient for him to lap! But fantastic explanations, such as these to which we are referring, are all to be ascribed to one common error; that of refusing to allow to animals their real powers, and then supposing them to have imaginary ones! Depend upon it, that at least the dog and horse, and a large proportion of other animals, see things as we see them ourselves, though with various intensities of vision; and are affected by them in the same manner. But, this admitted, it is the *intelligence*, and not the *corporeal bulk*, which they see, and of which they feel the mental effect, in the eye and carriage of the human species, which subdues and even wins them; just as, with ourselves, it is the eye and general physiognomy and deportment of a man or inferior animal which mentally affects us, far more than the dimensions of the body."

"You are in the right, sir," said Mr. Gubbins.

"And this brings me," continued Mr. Paulett, "to

the notions which animals may entertain of men. I suppose them to see, in all men, animals that are intellectually, and therefore substantially and effectually, their superiors; and animals, also, which, from the additional force of the general sympathies, gain, under different circumstances, their confidence and fear, and love."

"The ancient story, therefore, may be a true one," said Mr. Gubbins, "of the lion which came to the slave, to have a thorn taken out of his foot?"

"Yes; and that also," returned Mr. Paulett, "of the lioness which, in the woods of Africa, came to the sailor, to recover her cub from the ape."

"I am unacquainted with this latter story," said Mr. Gubbins?

"A seaman belonging to the wood-party of a ship upon the coast of Africa, had straggled with his companions, and was using his axe freely in the woods, when a large lioness approached him, face to face. The man, for the first moments, gave himself up for lost; but, very soon afterward, he began to perceive that the manner and expression of countenance of the lioness was mild, and even mournful, and that he had no danger to apprehend from her. She looked at him, and then behind her, and upward into the trees; and went a few steps from him, upon the path by which she came; and then returned, and then went again; and acted, in short, much as a dog would act, that wished you to follow him. The seaman yielded to her obvious desire; and she led him some little distance, till, near the foot of a tall tree, she stopped, and looked up, with plaintive cries, into its branches. The seaman, directed by her eyes and gestures, looked upward also, and soon discovered, at a considerable height, an

ape, dandling and playing with a cub lion, which he had carried thither for his amusement. The wants and wishes of the lioness were now easily understood. The lion species, though usually reckoned among the species of cat, differ absolutely from it in this, as in many other particulars, that it cannot ascend a tree; a distinction, by the way, which ought to satisfy us, at once, of the error of those who talk to us of lions in America, where, in reality, there is no lion; and where the puma and jaguar, which they call lions, so readily ascend a tree. But equally in vain would it have been for the sailor to climb after the cub; for the ape, at the best, would have enjoyed the frolic of leaping, with his plaything, from branch to branch, or from tree to tree, as he approached. The only chance, therefore, was to fell the tree, before the ape, seated near its top, should have the sagacity to provide against the effect of the strokes of the axe at its bottom. To work, therefore, he went; the lioness, which had seen other trees fallen by the axe of the stranger, standing by, and impatiently waiting the event. The ape kept his seat till the tree fell, and then fell with it; and the lioness, the moment the robber reached the ground, sprang upon him with the swiftness and sureness of a cat springing upon a mouse; killed him; and, then, taking her cub in her mouth, walked contentedly away from the benefactor to whose skill and friendly assistance she had made her sorrowful appeal!"

"I can so much the more readily," observed Mr. Gubbins, "believe that even wild animals should put faith in the skill and helping disposition of mankind; as I have myself met with a few striking examples of that faith and expectation in domesticated species, to

whose observation, however, the human arts and powers must be more familiar. A short time since, I was riding over a common, at some distance from any house, when a pig, which, in the course of feeding, had so twisted the triangular yoke upon his neck, that the narrow portion of it pinched his throat, and threatened him with suffocation, no sooner saw me, than he came as near as to the fore feet of my horse, foaming at the mouth, and struggling to overcome his difficulty. That he believed in the power of a man to assist him was evident; but he had also his fears of that human power, as possibly more dangerous to his throat than all the pressure of his inverted yoke; so, that whenever I alighted from my horse, with the design of helping him, he ran away, and yet, as soon as I was again seated, he returned, continuing to travel with me, close to the horse's fore feet, or as near to my own person as he was able; his mouth still foaming, and his efforts to escape suffocation still prolonged. In the end, seeing a farm-house a little upon one side of my road, I pulled my bridle that way, the pig still accompanying me; till, reaching the yard gate, I called to some of the people, and apprized them of the pig's presence and misfortune, as my best means of promoting his relief."

"You had doubtless a fair example, here, of the disposition of animals to apply for human aid," said Mr. Paulett; "a disposition which is checked only by their opposing fears."

"I had another example," resumed the school-master, "only a few evenings since. In the brook which runs before my dwelling, four ducks and a drake, the property of my neighbour, are accustomed to swim. Heavy rains had swelled the brook, which

was still rising; and across it, near to my door, is a low arching of brick, which causes it to pass, for some dozen feet, or so, as through a tunnel. Upon the evening to which I allude, just as the light was departing, I heard the drake squall in a most vehement manner, and in tones so far perfectly intelligible, that I made this profound observation, in reference to them, to myself, while they were uttering: 'There is this, and this only difference between the drake and I. He is perplexed, but he knows what it is about; and I know, from his voice, that he is perplexed, but am perplexed as to the cause.' For the little else that I thought about it, it seemed to me probable, that he and his ducks wanted to get home to bed, and that the yard door had not been opened so early as usual, to let them in; for, that he was addressing himself, and that vehemently, to human creatures, and not to ducks, was plainly to be understood. But the noise ceased, and, for an hour or two, I forgot it; after which, upon inquiry, I received this full confirmation of the main notion I had formed. The drake had really been calling for human aid, but upon an affair more urgent than I had imagined. From the rapid rising of the brook, one of the ducks had been surprised under the archway that I have mentioned, in such a manner that she could by no means get out, and that neither the drake nor the other ducks had any power to help her; and it was in this extremity, and as the next natural resource, that the drake had called so violently for human help; which help had been given, and the duck saved!"

"All these stories," said Mr. Paulett, "have the advantage of showing us, more and more, how nearly animals, according to their means and situations, ob-

serve, and act, and reason like ourselves; and, as to their looking for aid, either to man, or to their fellows, when the occasion surpasses their own powers, I remember a recent instance of the latter kind, which we may as well add to our present store of examples. A ewe and her lamb were browsing, last autumn, among some bramble bushes; into the long and prickly and interlacing branches of one of which the lamb at length penetrated so far, that, his wool being caught, and his legs more and more fettered at every motion, he was wholly unable to get back again. Making, then, his complaints to his mother, she, upon her part, tried, in vain, for a considerable portion of time, to deliver from the pertinacious branches her poor bleating lamb. But, wearied at last, and wholly despairing of her means, she suddenly ceased to make any effort; and, almost as suddenly, ran away across the common, and went completely out of sight; leaving, as I was ignorant enough to think, the lambkin to his hapless fate. While I was musing upon so extraordinary, and as it seemed to me, so unnatural a proceeding, the ewe re-appeared, and with herself the ram, both hastening over the common at a rapid pace. She had been to fetch him; and she had employed some means or other, in her possession, to make him acquainted with the nature of the misfortune of herself and lamb. Both came galloping to the bramble-bush, which they had no sooner reached, than the ram, applying the vigour of his legs and horns, tore away the branches, one after the other, till the lamb became free, and was able to leave the spot with his father and mother, bounding and bleating gaily as he went!"

Mr. Paulett and his visitor had yielded thus far to their mutual taste for the observation of the habits

and capabilities of the lower ranks of animated nature ; but the real occasion of Mr. Gubbins's visit and reception was of more immediate and pressing interest and importance. He had been joined, both by Mr. Paulett and Farmer Mowbray, in consultation upon the means of restoring the latter to his former ease and welfare upon his farm, and of removing the serious alternative of an emigration to Van Diemen's Land ; and Mr. Paulett had sent for him this morning, to hear the conclusion of his own exertions to that end, and to convey the news, whatever it might be, to the anxious family at the farm. In reality, the news was the most agreeable. Mr. Paulett's neighbourly endeavours had been entirely successful. Every thing was arranged. Farmer Mowbray was placed wholly out of difficulty, and was left free to bring up his children under the dews of their native skies. Mr. Gubbins learned the particulars with transport, and had no sooner made himself able, clearly and confidently, to communicate them ; than, after warmly and affectionately thanking Mr. Paulett, in the name of his friend, and as to the more immediate object of the service rendered, he hastened from the cottage to the farmhouse, to reveal the tidings.

CHAP. XIV.

And vex with curious toil my infant eye,
To count the gems that stud the midnight sky;
Or think, as playful fancy wandered far,
How sweet it were to dance from star to star!

LEYDEN.

As it was now near to Farmer Mowbray's dinner-hour, and as I was willing to share the pleasure of seeing so many happy human faces, and of listening to so many cries of human joy, as Mr. Gubbins's news would be sure to occasion in and about the large and ancient chimney at the farm-house, I flew from post to paling, and from eave to eave, and from hedge to hedge, out-travelling the worthy schoolmaster; so, that I was in time to see his almost dancing feet arrive upon the stone floor, and hear his blithe and rapid story of all that he learned from Mr. Paulett; to the lightening of the bosoms, but to the springing of fresh, but gladsome tears, from the eyes of those whom he addressed. He had stopped at his own gate, where, after uttering one word of assurance that all was well, he bade his wife and daughter follow him to the farmer's; a summons which Mrs. Gubbins obeyed to the letter, but at which Mary, without her bonnet, came at a leap into the street, and ran like a mad-girl before her father, whose coming and good news she proclaimed while he had yet a hundred yards to traverse. A syllable, or two or three syllables at most, were sufficient to tell her

errand and its complexion; but, having kissed Mrs. Mowbray and the children with rapture, her spirits then failed her, and she sank into a chair, sobbing aloud while her father explained the particulars of all that to her was matter of delirium; and, while her mother, now congratulated her neighbours, and now called upon her daughter to dry her cheeks, and to still her heaving bosom, I had entered the kitchen-door; and, amid the occupation of all present with the subject of their pleasure, had found confidence enough to pass from picking a few crumbs upon the floor, to settle upon the top of a tall and old carved press, whence I beheld and listened to the whole affecting scene!

The kitchen at the farm-house became, from this day forward, so cheerful a place of resort; the door was so commonly open, and the fire so commonly blazing; and the events that had occurred in it, and the familiar figures of its occupants and guests, had grown into so many sources of strong attraction to me, that I frequented it more than ever. I was at Burford Cottage every morning, and I slept and sung my evening song every night in its garden; but at mid-day, and till nearly sun-set, I was usually at Farmer Mowbray's; where, as I observed, Mr. Gubbins and his wife and daughter were now more customary guests, than even before the happy changes in the farmer's plans.

It followed, too, that because the minds of all the company were now so much at ease, and because a comfortable chair was so constantly at the service of Mr. Gubbins, that his accounts of the starry heavens, first solicited and listened to from that vague idea of their relation to the afflictions of the earth, so com-

mon with such as are at once unhappy and untaught; it followed that their conclusion was now asked for, and most willingly accorded, amid calmer feelings and serener countenances; and where the lights and movements of the skies could now be contemplated with a delight, mingled indeed with wonder and with awe, but without terror. The children returned to their natural and commendable inquisitiveness concerning that mysterious round of ever-moving glories, which, high above our heads, and detached from all the world that we inhabit, has commanded in so irresistible a manner the attention of all countries and ages; and which, the more it is considered, so much the more attractive, and the more mysterious, it hourly becomes! Mr. Gubbins encouraged even their wildest and most fantastical inquiries; and incessantly allowed them to interrupt his more methodical course of instruction, to satisfy even their smallest doubts, or indulge, and then dissolve, their idlest speculations!

“Reverting for a moment,” said he (while he hoped thereby to remove even the latest lingering alarm from the minds of his hearers), “to what we have said of the Earth’s being injured through the *attraction* of the mass of the body of a Comet, I shall give you two instances, in which (thanks to the prodigious facilities afforded by human art, and the patient attention of astronomical observers*) the courses of two Comets have already been watched as they passed very near to other planets than our own; and where, through

* The patience required of practical astronomers, especially under so cloudy a sky as that of England, may be partly understood from an observation of Herschel, that a year which afforded ninety, or, at most, a hundred nights adapted to observation, was to be thought a year highly favourable to the astronomer!

all the passage, no disaster has ever happened. Only a year or two ago, this Comet of Biela passed by the orbit of the Earth, and, crossing the orbits of Venus and Mercury, then peacefully buried its almost indistinguishable form within the circle of the solar rays. More remarkable and conclusive phenomena, however, were witnessed in the year 1770, when a Comet passed through the system of Jupiter;—that is, crossed the several orbits of that planet and of its four moons,—that is, held its impetuous and undeviating course between all those bodies, and across their paths—without disturbing, even by its attractive force, the motion or condition of any one among them; and when also the same Comet passed close enough to the Earth to have shortened the length of its year, had the mass of the Comet been sufficiently great, or the velocity of its motion sufficiently small, to admit of the production of such an effect.”

“ But now, Master Gubbins,” said Farmer Mowbray, “ that you have given us reasons for letting go so many old opinions concerning the operation of these Comets, can you tell us any thing about what you think they were really made for? You know, that when we have begun to think about any thing, we are apt to be restless till we have fixed upon some opinion or other concerning it; and you know, too, that nothing is made in vain; so that Comets must have some office to perform in the skies, whether good or bad, or great or small !”

“ We will not say ‘ good or bad,’ if thee pleasest,” returned Mr. Gubbins, “ nor even ‘ great or small ;’ because we will not permit ourselves to imagine the possibility that their office is either evil or unimportant; but, as to my own thoughts of the uses of Comets, I

will give thee the best answer that I am able, only wishing thee to understand, as we go, that, for two reasons, I speak diffidently upon the subject; the first, that I am not sure of having any thing altogether new to say; and the second, that if what I shall say is really new, I advance it with proportionable caution. Comets, instead of travelling, like the planets, in circles, or in orbits that are nearly circles, travel in long ellipses, or long ovals, of which no more than one of the extremities pass partly round the sun, while the other stretches into the opposite regions of space, to different distances in the different Comets, and in some of them beyond the orbits of the most distant of the planets of our system. Now, philosophers have said something about the probability, that Comets, at their perihelion, or time of passing partly round the sun, acquire, from that luminary, stores of the matter of heat, which, through all the remainder of their course, they are destined to spread abroad again, for the advantage of the planets; and if, by this language, it is meant, that Comets, and their motions, are resources of nature for diffusing a certain degree of warmth throughout, and even beyond, that portion of space which is occupied by the sun and its planets; then, I do not know that I have any thing left to do, but to concur in their opinions. It may very well be, that if the space occupied by a solar system, and even the space by which that space is surrounded, were without the warming aid of Comets, the watery atmospheres of those planets which enjoy it would be condensed; the surfaces of all of them be frozen; and vegetation and animal life entirely extinguished. There are other parts of the natural economy, in which, as I think,

corresponding arrangements, for corresponding purposes, are plainly to be observed ; but perhaps, I have now said enough upon this particular instance, if it be such, as constituting the real office of Comets. The velocity of their movements in their orbits (so far surpassing, as it does, the velocities of the movements of the planets), will be seen to answer, under my hypothesis, very important ends. The rapid motion will greatly contribute to the comparative warmth of the ethereal space ; and will, at the same time, transport, with a requisite saving of time, the heated body from one to the other of its most distant points of traverse ; thus parting with the smallest expedient portion of the heat which it acquires from the sun, during its passage to and from the opposite ends of its course*. Or, a Comet may derive no heat from the sun, but rather communicate that temperament to the space about the sun, its heat and light being the consequences only of its own velocity ; for I have never heard that a Comet has appeared more fiery at its departure from the sun, than at its approach to it."

"But," said Farmer Mowbray, "there must surely have been some reason why our forefathers were so fearful of the appearance of a Comet ; always expecting from it, not good, but evil?"

"I attribute the fearfulness," answered Mr. Gubbins, "first to the general, and not quite unreasonable dis-

* The author of these pages has long since announced his intention to print a tract, entitled, "The Circulation of the Sea, upon the Line of the Meridian," in which he proposes to argue the probability of an effect produced by the sea upon the surface of the earth, corresponding with this suggested as produced in space by the action of Comets ; a third instance of similar design and agency appearing to him to discover itself, at the same time, in the phenomenon of the Polar Lights.

position of the inexperienced, rather to fear than to hope, from the effects of all things new and rarely occurring; and next to the aggravated reasonings and fancies of many of those who have attempted to be eminently wise, but who, upon this, as upon many other occasions, have only outrun the multitude in error and in folly. It is, however, the tails, or atmospheric appendages of the Comets, with their fiery substance, and their prodigious lengths, that have been the special subjects of dismay. The tail of the Comet of 1680 was reckoned at a hundred and twenty-three millions of miles in length; and the extreme end of all this 'horrid hair,' as a poet has called it, might have touched (it has been argued) and mingled itself with the atmosphere of our planet; might have inoculated it with foreign materials; and might, thus altering its composition, and 'shake' into the element we breathe, the seeds of pestilence and war! But why that odious and undemanded fancy? Why might not the atmosphere of a Comet (supposing it to really touch and mingle with the atmosphere of the Earth), correct and improve it, warm it, and purify it, rather than communicate any thing malignant? For what reason should we think that a Comet comes to poison the Earth, and not rather (if there must be poison) that the Earth should give poison to the Comet; and for what reason, also, should we suppose a Comet to be that contradiction to all the other things of nature, a destroyer more than a restorer; and a production, not by occasion, but by fixed design, malignant and destructive? Thunder and lightning are things assuredly more terrible than Comets, of which latter the motions are so regular, and the appearance is so

serenely beautiful; and yet how rarely does even partial mischief follow from the occurrence of thunder and lightning? In truth, all the fears that are anywhere entertained of Comets are traditionary prejudices, derived from times when the regularity of their laws was neither known nor thought of. The ordinary course of nature, too (as ought to be sufficiently apparent to us), does not occupy herself in preparing great and frightful catastrophes that overwhelm, at once, a world; but all her greater operations are performed with a slowness and tranquillity that neither alarm nor do violence to any thing. The magnetic poles, for example, are continually in progressive change of situation, on the east and west of the poles of the earth alternately; the sea is retiring largely from certain shores, and gaining largely upon others; and even the paths of the earth around the sun, and of the moon around the earth, have alternate changes and restorations of their figures, attained, or sometimes only supposed to be attained during the lapse of immense intervals of time; and which, if they really effect, backward and forward, any considerable changes upon our earth, effect them so slowly, and, as it were, so gently, that, like the changes of place of the fingers of a clock, the changes discover themselves to human sense, not while they are performing, but only after they have been performed. It is said, that in the course of some countless ages, the orbit of the moon, in its revolutions about the earth, varies and re-varies from a figure approaching to an oval or ellipsis, to a figure approaching a true circle; and that the orbit of the earth about the sun has similar periodical variations, by one series receding from, and by another

returning to, its first figure. Now, the variations of the figures of the orbits of the earth and moon, by changing the measure of their respective distances, in the first instance from the sun, and in the second from the earth, ought to vary all our meteorological phenomena (the seasons, heat and cold, and moist and dry, and all the rest); the times and strength of light and dark, and the heights and periods of the tides. But, if these changes, as we must infer, do really happen, their progress is so gradual, that nothing very plainly results to the human apprehension, at least while the changes are actually effecting; and that, as to the general and permanent economy of nature, so many compensations are established, for the meeting and moderating all evils, we may remark the beautiful coincidence, that it is precisely when the earth is receding from the strongest light and heat of the sun, that the moon is bringing its strongest light and heat to the earth! At this very time that we are now speaking, the orbit of the earth is said to be concluding its period of change from an ellipsis to a circle, thence to change again from a circle to an ellipsis; a movement which should now be reducing the earth, for part of its annual evolution, to its furthest distance from the sun, and lowest share of light and heat; and, at this very time, also, it is equally said, that the orbit of the moon, from being in its progress from a circle to an ellipsis, is making, for a similar part of the moon's evolution, her nearest approach to the earth, with all her light and heat. Newton observed, in one direction, this change in the figure of the orbit of the moon, and thought, that with the progress of time, the derangement must become so great, as to require the immediate intervention of the divine Creator, for restoring the previous

condition ; an event which might have been expected to discover itself by some fearful shock of nature. But the French astronomer, Laplace, has shown, that these approaches and recessions, in whatever lengths of periods, are alternate, like the movements of a pendulum, and already provided for in the established order of things."

"Yet, it is *always* the fear of evil, and never the hope of good," said Mrs. Mowbray, "in which the superstitious indulge, on the appearance of a Comet?"

"Perhaps, not *always*," returned Mr. Gubbins. "A Comet, says the poet of the superstitions which concern the class,

————— ' with fear of *change*
Perplexes monarchs ;'

and it is, perhaps, rather a *change* of some sort, than a certain change for evil, that is so idly looked for upon these occasions ; add to which, that those changes which some think for the worse, are commonly thought by others for the better. It is curious, in the mean time, that the recent astronomical calculations upon a cometary appearance were coeval with certain popular forebodings of great changes, indulged in in different parts of the world. In Ceylon, some Buddhist priests, upon the pretended authority of a letter from heaven, seemed to announce, for the very year of the Comet, the year of the Millennium ; while, in England, this latter occurrence is still prophesied of as only two or three years distant. In another channel, the writings of Pastorini, the Italian, have promised the complete restoration of the Romish church in Ireland in the year 1835 ; while those of Fleming, the Scotch divine, fix upon the year 1837 for that of the total overthrow of

the papacy. An error of the press, in a modern edition of Pastorini, which made his year 1835 to be 1825, occasioned some excitement in Ireland in the latter year; as the error, also of the press, in France, as to Laplace's calculation of the Comet's nearest approach to the earth, produced an agitation in that country, which required the government's aid for its removal; while, as to the 'pestilence and war,' and 'fear of change,' the ideas of which have been thus connected by the author of the *Night Thoughts* with the idea of a cometary appearance; I believe that they afford no more than a specimen of the manner in which particular historical circumstances and coincidences can be converted into false foundations for general rules. His allusions seem to be to the era of the fourteenth century, when the Black Plague, like an apparent similar calamity in our own times, ravaged Asia and Europe; when the latter quarter of the globe saw the war of the Helvetic Confederacy, and the 'change' of the Swiss dominion from out of the hands of the 'monarchs' of the house of Austria; and when both of these events were preceded by the appearance of a great Comet—the last a phenomenon which the superstition of the age did not fail to unite, in its imagination, with the revolutions and afflictions that were current!"

"We shall never let you desist, I believe," said, again, one of the company; "but I think that when you expressed your opinion, that the use and intention of Comets were those of warming the ethereal space throughout, and even to the exterior of the limits of the Solar System; you added, that you had some notion of correspondent arrangements, in other parts of the economy of nature?"

"It appears to me," returned Mr. Gubbins, "that

the distribution and equalization of heat throughout the precincts of creation, is one of the most important functions to the discharge of which the laws of nature are directed; and that the means employed, for that great end, are to be observed both in the heavens and upon the earth. To this end, not only the sun, and all the motions of the planets, but the existence of the moons or secondary planets, and the ring of Saturn, and perhaps the belts of Jupiter; but also the oblique position of the axis of the earth. To this end, the currents of the electric and magnetic fluids, and the action of the Polar Lights*. To this end, also (as there

* It could not be true, however, that the action of the Polar Lights (*Auroræ Boreales* and *Australes*) could have relation to the general system of the earth, if, as from day to day, in all our books, is so ignorantly repeated, the *Aurora Borealis* only began to exist in the year 1715! The original proposition, and the daily repetition, of that most extravagant absurdity, is, nevertheless, in perfect keeping with a large share of at least all our historical science. Nothing is more certain, not only in a physical or philosophical view, but from the authority of ancient literature, than that, in the first place, the *Aurora Borealis* has been known for thousands of years; and in the second, that this phenomenon is as old as the phenomena of nature generally; as thunder and lightning, hail, and rain, and sunshine, and the rest; and yet it is but two years ago that (not to cite additional examples) a writer in the *Quarterly Review* has this amazing passage, at once re-echoing the tale of their *modern origin*, and helping out the continuance of superstitious interpretations in its regard, similar in nature to those that have been indulged in upon the head of Comets!—"When the Northern Lights," says the eminent critic, "were first exhibited to our ancestors, they regarded them as an army of spiritual beings, marshalled in prophetic array, to warn them of approaching strife. In their indefinite outline they recognised the forms of their departed heroes;—in the meteoric play of their lights, they saw the glancing of contending arms; and in the slow and rapid movements of the aerial columns, they shadowed forth the evolutions of battle; while the crimson tints of the electric light painted to their imaginations the torrents of the blood-stained field. The [now!] frequent occurrence of these phenomena *has now deprived them of their influence over the mind*; but *even we* remember the awe

may be reason to believe), an action of the sea, distinct from its tides and local currents, and not hitherto observed*. But time draws on; and, to explain myself further, I should be obliged to enter into a new and extensive subject of discourse. Let us part, therefore, for the present; and leave the rest, if ever, to a future day!"

which they inspired, when they were seen accompanying and following the Revolutionary Wars of the last century." *Quarterly Review*, December, 1832.—Now, there is not a word in this whole paragraph, which, to prevent its plunging its reader into error, would not require a commentary! The Aurora Borealis was not first created in the year 1715, as alluded to and repeated by the critic; its appearance is not more frequent at the present day than at any former one; and the imaginations of the "Northern seers," attempted to be pictured by the critic, ought to be further and somewhat differently explained. More than all, the influence of the phenomena "over the mind" remains exactly as it was, however the individual critic may have outgrown it, since the lapse of the "last century!" Within these two years, for example, the appearances of the Aurora Borealis have been viewed, in the North of England, in just the same political aspect as those of the "last century," referred to by the critic.—But the whole secret, in the mean time, of the pretended recentness of the beginning of Northern Lights, consists, first,—in their more general *northerly* appearance, while our literature and our science (and especially what is old in either) have had a *southerly* origin and cultivation; and secondly, in the public stir which was made about them in Scotland and England, at the beginning of the *eighteenth* century, upon account of their contemporaneousness with the Scotch rebellion; just as the Comet of the *fourteenth* century has given rise to so many hideous stories of Comets, only because that particular Comet, appearing in that particular century, was coeval with so many natural and civil miseries and calamities!

For a description of a remarkable appearance of the Aurora Borealis in London, and for some of the laws of these phenomena, as deducible from the records of their appearances; see an *Account of an Appearance of the Aurora Borealis, in London, on the Night of the 27th of September, 1827, &c. &c.* By Edward Augustus Kendall, Esq. F. S. A.; printed in the *Journal of Science of the Royal Institution*, London, 1827.

* See the note above, p. 190.

CHAP. XV.

Among the swains to show my book-learned skill.

GOLDSMITH.

THE pleasure which Mr. Gubbins's auditors derived from all that he told them at their former meeting, induced them, shortly afterward, to lead him once more into similar communications; but, this time, he took up a branch of knowledge entirely new to those about him, and which they found as enchanting as it was new.

“Within the ordinary and more anciently-established scope of astronomical study,” said he, “our thoughts are arrested, first by the solar system, with its sun, and its primary and secondary planets, and comets, of all which latter our lists are continually increasing; and if, after this, we consider the fixed stars, with their groupings into constellations, and entertain some vague idea of the milky way, or whitish vein, which, separating itself into two branches, runs through so large a portion of the heavens;—after this, our notions of all that astronomy has to disclose may seem to be complete. But not so to the really enlightened, and especially to the more modern astronomical student; to him who has listened to the three Herschels, to South, and to Von Struve. These have cultivated what they teach us to call *sidereal* astronomy; a department of their own creation; and of which the truths carry us into a universe of magnitude and glory, such as all the disclosures of the elder schools bear but small comparison with in amount.”

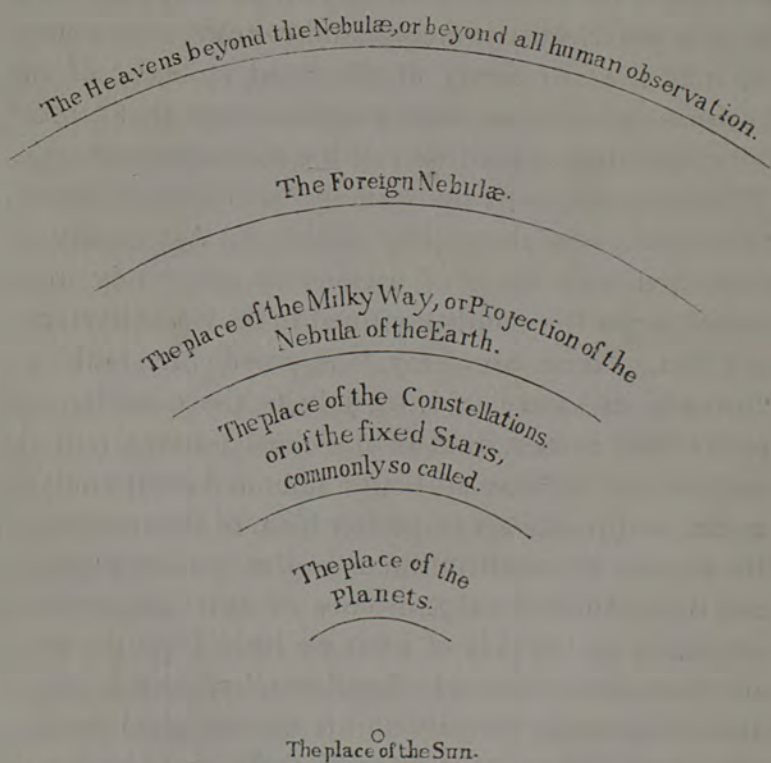
“But what, then, is the meaning of *sidereal* astronomy,” said Mrs. Mowbray; “for, when I was at school, they taught me astronomy, as well as geography, and a great many other things; but I never heard, before to-day, of this *sidereal* astronomy?”

“Literally interpreted,” answered Mr. Gubbins, “the two words would involve what must seem a senseless repetition; for as the word ‘astronomy’ signifies what belongs to the *stars*, so also does the word ‘sidereal.’ But the *stars* are here intended to be spoken of emphatically; that is, the fixed stars, to the exclusion of the other heavenly bodies, as the planets and the comets; so, that sidereal astronomy is the astronomy of the fixed stars, in the same manner that we may also particularize *planetary* astronomy, and *cometary* astronomy; or, it is the astronomy of the fixed stars, or of the universal heavens, as distinguishable from that minute portion of them which we call the solar system.”

“I can now readily understand,” said Mrs. Mowbray, “the vastness of the objects of Sidereal Astronomy, as compared with those of astronomy commonly interpreted, or as frequently confined to the Solar System.”

“But, Dame Mowbray,” rejoined Mr. Gubbins, “even if, as I have said, we join to the consideration of the solar system, that of the constellations and the milky way; we have still but a faint and comparatively mean, and positively imperfect idea, of the immensity, the variety, the multitudinous bodies, and the gorgeous and inexhaustible magnificence of universal creation, as placed by the side of what we learn from the study of sidereal astronomy! Lend me,” cried the schoolmaster, growing warm with his astronomical recollections; “Lend me that piece of chalk, and observe the figure which I shall draw of the number and places of the classes of the heavenly objects, such as they are

multiplied and exhibited to us by this comprehensive science; for, here, instead of stopping at the constellations, we must ascend from the sun to the planets; from the planets to the constellations; from the constellations to the milky way, or boundary of the nebula of the earth, or exterior limit of all our known and *native* constellations;—from the milky way to the foreign nebulae; and from the foreign nebulae to the heavens beyond the nebulae, or beyond all human observation;—and, saying this, he drew, in corresponding order, a series of segments of concentric circles, to stand for these divisions of the heavens, and wrote over each the description that belonged to it:



“But this term, *nebula*,” said Mrs. Mowbray, “is as new to me as that of Sidereal Astronomy?”

“And equally so, no doubt,” returned Mr. Gubbins, “the idea which the name imports. The truth is, that in all this branch of astronomy to which the name belongs, the discoveries, for which we are originally indebted to Sir William Herschel and his sister, were lightly thought of (as is so commonly the case) during the lives of the discoverers, and are only now advancing in repute. I must therefore explain to you, both what is meant by this term nebula, or ‘cloud’ of stars, so far outstripping the idea of a constellation or group of stars; and to what a vast hypothesis, or general scheme, of astronomical natural history, the term essentially belongs.” But, as he spoke these words, Mr. Gubbins put himself in order to deliver his knowledge with due solemnity; and all the company, at the same time, in silence, and with deep attention, looked alternately at the speaker, and at the chalk figure which he had drawn and superscribed, and to which he occasionally pointed.

I. THE NEBULÆ.

“The hypothesis advances,” resumed Mr. Gubbins, “that the heavens are filled with stars, the whole of which are every where distributed into *nebulæ* or clouds; that is into masses or bodies with intervals between; and the idea of which *nebulæ* is to be confounded, neither with that of constellations nor that of systems; for a nebula contains many constellations, and a constellation many systems. These *nebulæ*, in short, are cloud or vapour-like appearances, of a brilliant whiteness, in this manner distinguished from the ground of the dark heavens; are seen with telescopes of moderate powers; are ascertained to be more distant from us than our constellations; are what, assisted

by telescopes of higher powers, the eye resolves into clouds of stars—as clouds of dust are resolvable into particles. These nebulæ are supposed to be millions in number; some near enough to display to us their individual stars, while others, at greater distances, betray, through the glasses of the best instruments yet made, only masses of unbroken light; the spaces between their systems and constellations escaping even all our most assisted powers of vision. But each nebula, it is said, must have, not only its own exclusive constellations, systems, or whole starry heaven, but its own milky way as well, exhibiting the projection of the nebula upon the body of the etherial space; and again, from each of the systems, and from each planet of each system, the appearance of the heaven of that nebula must vary; its several constellations changing their apparent forms to the view of every system, and distinguishing themselves by different degrees of lustre, both according to the position of the system in the nebula, and to its distance from the constellation. We subsist, it is argued, within the circumference of one of these nebulæ. Our sun, or fixed star, belongs to one of these nebulæ; and all the scattered or distinct stars which are visible, either to our naked eye, or through our telescopes, and make up our constellations, are luminaries of no more than our own nebula. It is *behind* our constellations, or beyond the limits of our nebula, and of the space surrounding it, that the foreign nebulæ are placed; and through the spaces between our stars, that we discover them. But, to convey to you some account of what these nebulæ are supposed to contain, I will now describe the nebula of the earth, or that *cloud* of stars among which is our sun, the star upon which we more immediately depend!

II. THE NEBULA OF THE EARTH.

“The nebula of the earth,” continued he, “is now taken to comprehend all and more than we see with the naked eye of the whole heaven; or, in other words, the whole portion, and even more, that we see, with the naked eye, of the whole heaven; or, that which we commonly call the whole heaven or heavens, is held to be included within the single nebula of the earth! This nebula includes every star, either commonly or only telescopically visible, but which is scattered, —separated from other stars,—or, in other words, distinguishable as a *star*; and within the circumference of this nebula are to be measured all those prodigious distances, the names and figures of which confound all our ideas of measure; for it is only beyond this nebula that begins the space containing other nebulae, and those distances with respect to which we enter into no calculation! This nebula of the earth, then, contains all the fixed stars with which we are acquainted, or which we commonly so call; all the constellations to which we give names; and (minute in the estimate of things and bodies so vast and so transcendent) that particular fixed star which is our sun, with all its planets and its comets! Sir William Herschel ventured to think that he had ascertained the figure of the mundane nebula, or nebula of the earth; and also the position of our sun, or of our solar system, within the nebula.

III. THE GALAXY, OR MILKY WAY.

“The galaxy, or milky way,” still continued Mr. Gubbins, “which, at one time, was thought only a meteoric light, and at another, a vast nebula, or bed,

or stratum of fixed stars, is now held to be the projection of our nebula, or of our cloud, or mass of light, in the heavens. It was through examining the milky way, that Sir William Herschel became encouraged to turn his telescope toward the nebulæ.

IV. THE FOREIGN NEBULÆ.

“ The foreign nebulæ (for it is by this name that I venture to distinguish the other nebulæ of the heavens from our own nebula of the earth) may now be better understood. Their composition is held to resemble that of the nebula of the earth. They have their stars, their constellations, their planetary systems; but all apart from ours. We see our own portion of the heavens; the foreign nebulæ afford to *their* inhabitants the sight of other portions. We see none of their constellations, and much less their systems of suns and planets and comets, and they see none of our systems nor constellations. At what distances these foreign nebulæ are placed from the nebula of the earth; at what distances they are placed from each other; at what distances stand their constellations, and revolve their systems, their suns, their planets, and their comets, is only to be imagined from analogies that we possess nearer home. The nearest of the stars belonging to our nebula, to the earth our habitation, is sometimes said to be distant 32,000,000,000,000 miles; a space over which a cannon-ball, moving throughout the way with the velocity at which it leaves the cannon's mouth, could not travel in seven millions of years. Or, the distances of all (even the nearest) of the fixed stars of our nebula are considered as immeasurable; and yet all these distances, measur-

able and immeasurable from the earth (which, supposing this latter to be placed in the centre of the nebula, would make the furthest of them no more than half of its diameter), are to be included within the magnitude of our single nebula! Go on, then, to imagine the universe comprising myriads of these nebulæ, separated from each other by spaces still more enormous, and possessing, within themselves, spaces of such magnitude, with their several stars or systems, and their several constellations or congregations of systems, as the comparison with our own may faintly help us to conceive; think of each of these nebulæ as of a brilliant dew-drop, or as one of those drops of water which the microscope discovers to us filled with millions of insects; think of these semblances to the microscopic insects, not as the men, or other living creatures of these nebulæ; not as their planets; not as their suns only; but as the mingled lustres of their systems, of their groups of suns and planets, and therefore only as the bodies upon which move their men, or other living creatures! Think of this (if it is possible for you to think of it; if it is possible for you to form any idea of the figure of such a spectacle); and then feel the sentiment (if the sentiment can be adequately entertained by the heart of man) of the immensity of space, of the magnitude and beauty of its forms, and of their prodigious and incalculable number—‘in number numberless!’ But you will scarcely believe what I am saying; you will fancy that I am giving you, not science, but romance;—listen, therefore, to a part of what Sir William Herschel has written upon the subject:—

“ ‘The nebulæ,’ says that distinguished astronomer, ‘are arranged into strata, and run on to a great length;

and some of them I have been able to pursue, and to guess pretty well at their form and direction. It is probable enough, that they may surround the whole starry sphere of the heavens, not unlike the milky way, which undoubtedly is nothing but a stratum of fixed stars; and as this immense starry bed is not of equal lustre in every part, nor runs in one straight direction, but is curved, and even divided into two streams along a very considerable proportion of it; we may likewise expect the greatest variety in the strata of the clusters of the stars and nebulæ. One of these nebulous beds is so rich, that in passing through a section of it in the time of only thirty-six minutes, I have detected no less than thirty-one nebulæ, all distinctly visible upon a fine blue sky. Their situation, and shape, as well as condition, seem to denote the greatest variety imaginable. In another stratum, or perhaps a different branch of the former, I have often seen double and treble nebulæ, variously arranged; large ones, with exceedingly small attendants; narrow, but much extended lucid nebulæ, or bright dashes; some of the shape of a fan, resembling an electric brush, issuing from a lucid point; others of the cometic shape, with a seeming nucleus in the centre, or like cloudy stars, surrounded with a nebulous atmosphere; a different sort of orb again, containing a nebulosity of the milky kind, like those wonderful inexplicable phenomena about Orionis; while others shine with a fainter, mottled kind of light, which denotes their being resolvable into stars.' Add to this account by Sir William Herschel, that Huygens, speaking of the view which he had been able to obtain of one of these nebulous appearances, compares it to the rising of a curtain behind which the beholder should see an ocean

of light, tossing in varied waves! Sir William Herschel thought that he had himself examined twenty-five hundred of these *nebulæ*!”

V. THE HEAVENS BEYOND THE NEBULÆ, OR BEYOND ALL HUMAN OBSERVATION.

“But, as you have extended our view beyond the constellations,” said one of the company; “what have you now to tell us, Mr. Gubbins, of the heavens beyond the *nebulæ*?”

“Beyond the visible, that is, beyond the telescopic *nebulæ*, you mean?” returned Mr. Gubbins; “and I am free to give you this reply, approved of, as I should imagine, by every astronomer, and by every reflecting person. You will have observed that Sir William Herschel describes his telescopic *nebulæ* as showing a fine blue sky between them; and also, that either the naked eye or the telescope discovers these visible *nebulæ* in the blue sky between the fixed stars of the mundane nebula: now, I conclude, that in the fine blue sky which separates Sir William’s *nebulæ*, there are still other *nebulæ*,—*nebulæ* after *nebulæ*,—of some of which future astronomers, with still superior telescopes to any that have yet been made, will one day or other obtain a sight; while of those further,—and still further,—created eye will never have the vision! We live in a universe infinite in space, as in all other attributes; and of which, however deeply we penetrate the recesses, our feet are but still upon the immeasurable threshold! The universe is an orb without a bound; a circumference without a centre! It begins everywhere, it ends nowhere!”

At the thought of infinite creation, and under the attempt to figure to the imagination that by which all

imagination is overwhelmed and paralysed—a space; and a succession of celestial bodies, never to be measured nor counted, nor more than in part seen; the older members, among all present, were plunged, for minutes, into an unbroken silence! But, at the close of that speechless interval, which, in itself, did homage to the majesty of the thought, and even to that of the stupendous universe which the thought concentrated, Mrs. Mowbray inquired of Mr. Gubbins, how it happened, that discoveries so transcendent, and chapters in the science of astronomy which carry the student so far above its ordinary heights, were still comparatively unheard of, even among those who cultivate it, or admire it?

“I might justly answer, perhaps,” said Mr. Gubbins, “by showing, that among other causes, its want of value for professional purposes, whether of practice or of teaching, cannot but have impeded the progress of its diffusion in England, where little learning, except that which is professional, or conducive to place or profit, is in any considerable degree of request; but, without indulging in that view of the subject, it may be sufficient that I should mention, first, that these great discoveries are comparatively recent, and that most great discoveries require time for becoming popularly known; and secondly, that, as I have before intimated, the great discoverer, like so many other great discoverers, saw his labours, if not ridiculed, at least neglected, all the period of his life! Newton, upon the promulgation of his researches, was met, not indeed with neglect, but with so much captious and acrimonious opposition, that there were times when he lamented he had ever let their secret escape his bosom; and that it was only with reluctance and long delay that he ultimately published, or consented to

see published, his two great works, the *Optics* and the *Principia*. But Herschel was more unfavourably circumstanced than even Newton. The latter did but follow out a path which others had entered long before; but Herschel trod where all was novel;—where nobody knew any thing but himself,—and where no previous adventurer had prepared even philosophical curiosity;—and what he said, therefore, was either disbelieved, or held of small account. I should not do wrong, perhaps, if I even added, that the discoveries and fame of Newton, established as, by Herschel's time, they fully were, impeded the progress to reputation of the new astronomer. The Newtonian philosophy, and the sole exposition, of the Solar System, to which join the accounts of the Constellations, so greatly fill the minds of ordinary students, that these latter have scarcely room for any thing more, and scarcely believe that any thing more is to be added."

"And you do not confine Sidereal Astronomy to the doctrine of the *Nebulæ*?" said, again, Mrs. Mowbray, to Mr. Gubbins?

"By no means," was his answer. "Sidereal Astronomy is the doctrine of the fixed stars at large; which it contemplates, first as they are composed into *nebulæ*, and next as each is in itself a particular star, and subject for contemplation. It is but since the year 1816, that extraordinary additions have been made to this branch of science, principally through the labours of Sir John Herschel and Sir James South, in England; and of Von Struve, in Germany; and it is to prosecute it under the Southern Hemisphere (where none but a new heaven of stars presents itself to Northern eyes), that Sir John Herschel has lately sailed for the Cape of Good Hope."

“ But I have heard you say, Mr. Gubbins, when I was at school with you,” interrupted Farmer Mowbray’s eldest son, “ that the fixed stars, although so called, are not absolutely such, but have, to a certain extent, their motions?”

“ Milton,” replied Mr. Gubbins, “ describes the fixed stars as

‘ —fixed in their orb that flies;’

that is, as if they kept perfectly permanent places in the heaven, the latter moving only, or rather, the earth moving in its midst; and it being always understood, in the mean time, that the fixed stars, like the planets, revolve on their own axes. For example, we know that the fixed star, our sun, revolves upon its axis, because we see the movement of its spots; and we reckon the period of its revolution at twenty-five days and ten hours of our time; that is, that the *day* of the sun is nearly twenty-six times as long as the *day* of the earth.

“ But though the fixed stars, unlike the planets,” continued Mr. Gubbins, “ keep their places with respect to the earth, and are so far really *fixed*, according to the meaning of our term; that is, though, night after night, they always reappear in the same quarters of the heavens, and in the same order, and at the same apparent distances from each other; still, besides their revolutions upon their axes, they have motions in the heavens, and with respect to each other, which we omit to bring into the account, only because, at our immense distance from them, they effect, to our eyes, no perceptible variations of appearance. According to Sir William Herschel, our fixed star or sun, with all its planets, or all our solar system, is at this time revolving within the circumference of the nebula of

the earth, in the direction of the constellation Hercules; and, if so, the constellation itself must likewise be supposed to move.

“Again,” pursued the village astronomer, “there are motions reported of the *double stars*, such as are wholly new to those who have thought only of our solar system. The double stars attract a large share of the attention of our modern labourers. They are held, of course, as double solar systems; but what amazes us is, that, besides moving upon their axes, and along with their constellations and nebulæ, some, at least, of these solar systems are said to revolve round others; that is, of the double stars, one round the other; and this, in long but very various periods. One of the stars, or solar systems, of Castor, revolves round the other in a period of forty-two of our solar years; a small star, or solar system, in Leonis, round another solar system in twelve hundred of the same years; a star in Boötes, in sixteen hundred and eighty-one years; another, in Serpentes, in three hundred and seventy-five years; and another, in Virgo, in seven hundred and eight years.”

“I confess,” said Mrs. Mowbray, “that after all, I am sometimes at a loss for the proofs of what astronomers say of the stars. Why should they not be, what more ignorant people have believed them, merely lights in the sky?”

“Judging of all the heavenly bodies by means of those which are nearest to us, the sun and planets show us, by their own phenomena, that the *stars* also are globular, solid, and have systematic motions.”

“But how do you prove that they are more distant than the planets?”

“ The planets, in their evolutions, are seen to hide them, or, in other words, to pass in front of them.”

“ Why must they be larger than the earth?”

“ Because, at the distance at which they are, if they were smaller than the earth, they would be invisible.”

“ How are you made certain that they have any light of their own, and do not shine, like the planets, with reflected light?”

“ Because, being more distant than the planets, they appear much smaller than them, and yet shine more brightly.”

To these answers Mr. Gubbins added several observations upon the variety of colour, figure, brightness, and apparent magnitude, as well as numbers of the stars, and the explanations proposed; spoke of the six degrees of magnitude established by astronomers; of the different velocities of the stars upon their axes, and of the alleged appearance of new stars, and disappearance of old ones; and, upon being asked what is the number of fixed stars, or of those distinct stars which shine in what is now called our own heaven, or within our own nebula, replied; that the number of those which are visible to the naked eye, however numberless it may appear to us, does not really exceed a thousand; while, if we add to these what are discovered by the telescope, the total number is three thousand.

“ And now,” concluded Mr. Gubbins, “ let us finish our inquiries concerning the stars with a reflection, and with a comparison which the former may excuse, and seem even to invite! We may contemplate the heavenly bodies, their vastness, and the multitude and beauty, as well as magnitude and inexhaustible series

of their appearance, till we begin to think that in these alone consisted the substance and glory of creation; and that, as to the objects, animate and inanimate, which may be presumed to cover the surfaces, as well as fill the interiors of all these shining objects, they are insignificant in the great account! But how different from such a conclusion is the truth; and with what hesitation must we not pronounce, even at last, between the wonders of the heavens, and those of only the globe which we inhabit! Are the heavens, for example, filled with myriads of stars? Is their space immeasurable, and are even the stars themselves of magnitudes which we can scarcely bring into our comprehension? But, if so, is all this more amazing, than that upon the earth we tread, there should exist (to say nothing of mankind, and of myriads of conspicuous plants and animals), not merely from inch to inch, but from line to line, and from point to point, myriads of plants and living creatures, all exquisitely formed, and as to the latter, all endowed with sense and motion; and that all exceed the powers of the microscope, just as the greatness of the heavens bids defiance to the telescope? I will mention a small and solitary example, the counterpart of endless others!

“ ‘ In the course of last winter,’ says a curious employer of the microscope, ‘ having observed, on a dry and frozen gravel walk, a variety of small hollows, of a greenish colour, it occurred to me that the tint might have been occasioned by the *scum* upon water during the summer rains; and if so, that it would probably contain animalculæ. I accordingly scraped off a little of the frozen surface, and mixed it with water that had been boiled, and in which I had previously ascertained

that there were no animalculæ. In a few hours, I examined a drop of this water, and found as yet no animalculæ; but I discovered a number of minute fibres, apparently vegetable, and to the existence of which the green tint I had at first remarked was probably owing. I found these fibres transparent; and, when viewed in a certain degree of shade, I observed them to be marked, throughout their whole length, in the most delicate and regular manner, with divisions like globules in a hollow tube, each of which was separated from another by a space of exactly similar dimensions. In the course of a day or two, I again examined the water, and found in it a variety of animalculæ, some of which were the most minute I had ever observed; except, perhaps, those found in an infusion of pepper. The highest powers of a good microscope gave me no information as to their form or structure, except that they were of an oval form, and moved about with considerable activity. Having near me, at the time, some sea-sand, which I had been examining, I put a few grains of it into the drop, with the view of forming some idea of the comparative size of these minute creatures. I found, *that instead of many thousands only, there were from one to three millions* of these animalculæ necessary, to make up the size of a single grain of sand! But, in this calculation itself, I had by no means taken the smallest of the animalculæ discernible in the fluid. Many were much smaller than those from which I had made my estimate; so, that I had thus a simple means of proving to demonstration, the existence of *animated beings from one to three millions of times less than a grain of sea-sand!*

“It is thus,” added, finally, Mr. Gubbins, “that in the examination of Nature, we pass alternately through

‘—all forms,
The vast, and the minute;’

and are for ever at a loss upon which to bestow the greater share of admiration! In the course of what we have been now saying, at one moment we have had before us millions upon millions of clouds of stars, or clouds of solar systems, forming as it were globules in the heavens, each of so great a magnitude that millions upon millions of miles go for nothing in their immeasurable measurement; and each comprising within itself thousands upon thousands of solar systems, and millions upon millions of habitable worlds, with all their plants and animals*! But, again, throwing down our eyes upon the pathway under our feet, we find plants and animals contained in particles of compound matter so small as themselves to escape human observation, except in the philosophic mood;—we find, I say, in those small particles, millions of millions of animals so small as scarcely to form, in their united bulk, the equivalent of a grain of sea-sand; and as imperfectly to be discovered and counted, through the microscope, as the *stars* through the other instrument!”

* The reader has seen, in the preceding chapter, that the comet of 1680, which, belonging to the solar system, could not quit its bounds, carried a tail, therefore, within those bounds, of a hundred and eighty-three millions of miles in length; a length which, at the same time, cannot be supposed more than insignificant, as compared with the space occupied by the system, and by the system only. But we have at least three thousand solar systems (three thousand single and double stars), as it appears, visible within our nebula, and in our Northern Hemisphere of that nebula alone! Suppose, therefore, only six thousand solar systems, with all the spaces which they occupy, and all the spaces intervening, in the sole confines only of one single nebula,—one nebula among the millions upon millions!

CHAP. XVI.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,
Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive.

WORDSWORTH.

FROM the beginning, as I have before remarked, it has been the plan of all my narrative, to give an account, not merely of my own adventures and pains and pleasures, and denials and enjoyments, during the period which it comprises; but also (like a traveller who is treating of a region not his own) to put upon record so much of the thoughts and sentiments, the knowledge, manners, and customs of mankind, as fell within my observation during the same portion of my life. I trusted that by this means, which, as the reader has seen, I have thus far so fully adopted, I should make my book superior to what it might have hoped for, if confined only to the fortunes of my humble self; and add to that force and sum of instruction which I seek to unite with entertainment. My project, up to this chapter, has displayed itself, as I anxiously hope, very greatly to the satisfaction of my reader, and so as to make him look forward, to all that remains, with lively confidence and expectation. I frame no sentence but with the deliberate purpose, either to please, or to inform, or to otherwise instruct him; and to that execution of my labours I have only to add the wish, that what I have designed to make acceptable, may be found such by my judges!

The allurements at the farm-house had now, for some days, shortened my visits at Burford Cottage; where, besides, the very wintry weather which temporarily prevailed, had, for the same succession of days, induced its more luxurious inhabitants to keep their windows closer shut than hitherto; while, at Farmer Mowbray's kitchen, the door was commonly open, the walls heated, and the bustle, and the clatter of tongues, so general, that believing myself neither heard nor seen, I could often make bold to enter, and to lodge myself for hours together. But, the clouds being once more dissipated, and the sun shining, though but mildly, upon shrub and parterre; the accustomed window was again so freely unhasped, and remained so long unclosed, that I could spend an agreeable hour in watching the motions, and listening to the talk, of the breakfast-company; joining, at times, a song or two of my own, to the sound of the cheerful conversation. Indeed, the hour was cheerful without-doors, as well as within; for the blackbird and the thrush, and now and then the jay, added notes loud and sharp to the chatter of the chaffinches, and twitter of the titmouse; which, mixed with my own flute-like song, gave to the moist air, and naked trees, a spring-like moment, not unaided by the view of the soft flowers and yet verdant grass, and of even some budding boughs.

Besides the persons whose names I have already mentioned, I found, at this time, among my estimable friends, upon a visit to Mrs. Paulett, Miss Belinda Wainfleet; a young lady, of whom, that she was to be the possessor of a considerable fortune, was the least of her recommendations. Endowed by nature with quickness and clearness of apprehension, and with the kindest dispositions, and finest moral and intellectual

qualities; and enjoying, through cultivation, a fund of elegant and useful knowledge, and a strongly retentive memory, with the addition of beauty of face and person; in Miss Wainfleet was completed one of those examples which are sometimes witnessed, of all that crown, in the composition of a single individual, at once the elements of human being, and the proudest of the improvements of society. If it is wise, and even just, either for homage, or for emulation, sometimes to consider human creatures one by one, and each according to his individual rank, as well as at other times to consider all as upon the single level of the crowd; then, the spectacle of this female stranger at Burford Cottage was not unworthy, as it seems to me, of that distinction, nor without the value which belongs to any thing that has the power of teaching an exalted lesson. Miss Wainfleet owed much to nature, much to fortune, much to the care of others, much to the influence, and capabilities, and stores, of the society and country in which she had been born and bred; but she owed likewise much to an understanding continually employed in improving and strengthening itself; and to a heart continually directed, elevated, purified, and softened, by the force and justness of her understanding. All without would have been useless, except for all within. She was making *herself*, while other things made *her*; and here it was that she was capable of being copied. As there was nothing dull, so also there was nothing evil in her countenance, but the reverse; and this was the beauty-paramount among her several beauties. There is, in the single species of humanity, and upon the surface of whatever is essential, universal, and deeper seated, so complete an assemblage of all the various characteristics of all the

species of the lower animal creation; humanity sinks so often into every thing that we call brutish, as well as rises so often into every thing that we call angelic; it is sometimes deformed with so many hideous vices and low desires, as well as sometimes beautified with so many splendid virtues and noble aspirations; it displays within itself the motley group of swine, and ape, and antelope; of tiger, wolf, and lamb; of eagle, ostrich, and jackdaw; of bee, and ant, and hornet, wasp, and butterfly; that every member of the large and ductile family is called upon by nature, early and late, and late and early in the course of his progress, to declare and to fashion himself according to his will, as to the animal figure which, morally speaking, he most desires to resemble! His comeliness and his majesty of aspect are thus at his own mercy;—truths which are well and strongly expressed in the image of the Eastern fable, where the spirit of a bad man, being met and terrified by the meeting of a spirit deformed and ferocious in countenance and figure, hears from the latter this afflicting news: “I was your own genius during your lifetime. I was beautiful when I was given to you, and while you were sensible and innocent; and it is but to your folly, and to your crimes, that I owe it to have become ugly!”

But, if the reader asks, what were those means, of Miss Wainfleet’s own employment, to which I have alluded and which had for their effect the strengthening of her natural understanding, the enlarging of her accidental knowledge, and the dulcifying of her natural sweetness of heart; these were,—reflection, without which opportunity produces nothing; application, without which nothing is acquired; attention, without

which nothing is remembered, nor even heard nor seen; and above all, that self-devotion to the due claims of others; that prostration of self before the honest interests of our neighbours; that tenderness for the feelings; that respect for the merits; that forbearance from the injury, including the humiliation, of all about us; and that ardoür to oblige, to serve, to gratify, and to make happy all we can reach, and that good-nature which is more yielding and more officious than even servility; which serves but to please, and flatters but to enliven and encourage: these were the means and arts through which Miss Wainfleet had become, and was daily becoming, more excellent in herself, more admirable in the view of others; more wise, more happy, more lovable, more beloved, and even more lovely, than, without the efforts of her own, either nature, culture, friends, or country could have made her!

It falls not, however, within my province, to bring this beautiful figure into conspicuous action! A little Robin might be charmed with the aspect of its features, and be an observer of its familiar motions; but it can belong only to eyes and hearts of grander structure and susceptibilities than mine, to penetrate and to appreciate it in the higher walks of its deportment! After drawing Miss Wainfleet's likeness, I have nothing to relate of her; or nothing but what assorts with the faintest lines and softest colours in the picture! I know her only as a kind and laughing girl; the intelligent companion of Mrs. Paulett; and the amusing teacher, and the jocund playmate, of Emily and Richard.

But she could join, too, with Mr. Paulett, in explor-

ing and recounting the charms and riches of the natural universe; for, besides her acquaintance with books of history, biography, poetry, and travel, she was skilled, like the rest of the modern world, in botany, zoology, chemistry, and the kindred sciences; or knew enough of them, at least, to listen with interest and enjoyment, and communicate with pleasure and propriety, the incessant details which hourly diffusion and research are making matters of elegant, attractive, and instructive conversation. It was hence that many of those topics of inquiry which had hitherto been favourites at the cottage, still continued such after the arrival of Miss Wainfleet; and, as for me, my attention was peculiarly to be caught, when, as now, and as upon former occasions, the remarks made, however widely they ranged before they were finished, had their beginning in some reference to myself, or to my species!

While I was hopping over the carpet, as had become frequent with me, Emily, first looking with unusual scrutiny at the colour of my breast, observed to Miss Wainfleet, that either all Red-breasts were not alike, or else some of the poets whom they had read together were strangely in the wrong; for some had called their breasts *rosy*, and others *crimson*, while their Robin's, she was sure, was neither one nor the other? But, to this, Miss Wainfleet replied, that our breasts, as Emily might rest assured, were all of the same colour; and that the poets, in seeking to avoid the common and comprehensive epithet of *red*, only involved themselves in difficulties from which there was no escape: "The name of *red*," said she, "embraces the description of so great a variety of *reds*, that it cannot but include the real *red* of the pretty Robin's breast; but how to describe that *red* particularly, by the name of

any hue of *red*, or by comparison with any thing *red*, besides itself, is more, than I, for one, can tell you. Certainly, it is neither rose-colour, nor crimson, nor even fire-colour, nor orange, which two latter make nearer approaches to the truth; but this is all that I can say upon the subject."

"And that reminds me, papa," said Richard, "of a mistake in a book of travels which I have been reading; where, though you have told us that there is no such thing as a Red-breast in America, the traveller says that he saw Robin-red-breasts, in that country?"

"That, my dear Richard," answered Mr. Paulett, "is only a fresh example of what I have often told you to beware of; namely, the habit of Europeans (Europeans either by birth or by descent) to call the new things which they meet with in foreign countries, by the names of the old things which they have left at home; some slight resemblance of the one to the other, being all that can be alleged in the way of apology for the confused nomenclature thus introduced into natural history. In the present case, however, there has been a further temptation for the use of the name of 'Red-breast,' and one of which the influence has been very wide in human language. To say only that a bird has a 'red breast,' is to give it a description so very general, that it may as easily apply to many birds as to one; and it is because, at their roots, all names or words usually signify no more than general qualities, that, in much more extensive examples than this, the same name, or at least the same radical word, has been made applicable to numerous objects that, under many important aspects, have no kind of likeness to each other. Now, in North America, there is a bird with a *red* breast, and it is called by the Eng-

lish name; but it is a species of *thrush*; it is larger than our English *thrush*; and the *red* upon the breast is indeed a kind of *crimson*;—a dull crimson, something like the *red* upon an English *red-pole*. It has neither the figure nor the habits of the European Red-breast. But this confusion, in common, or, as the naturalists sometimes call them, *vulgar* names, makes it highly useful, for precision, to resort to the *scientific* names, by which the identity of the object is at once ascertained. Thus, the scientific name of the Red-breast (or, even in English ornithology, the Red-breast, or Red-breasted Warbler), as affixed to it by Linnæus, is *Sylvia Rubecula*; while the corresponding name for the American bird is wholly different.

The striking circumstance, in the meantime, being recalled to observation, that upon the continent of Europe, as far as relates to the countries south of the Baltic sea, the Red-breast migrates, in winter, to the southward of those parts which it inhabits in the summer; while, in the northern countries of Sweden and Norway, and in the northern island of Britain, it defies the frosts and snows; Mr. Paulett, after remarking that its want of strength of wing, to cross either the English Channel or the Cattegat seemed the indisputable reason of the difference of habits, added, that this explanation, if the true one, opened a variety of further considerations, both as to the history of the bird, and as to the geological history of our island.

“If,” said he, “the Red-breast is properly a bird of passage, remaining in the colder countries only during their summer season, then their resort to our houses during the winter, and the frequency of their probable perishing where they are not helped by that relief, paint them as southern strangers, shut up from their

natural place of refuge during the hard weather; denied the benefit of their natural habit of migration; and thus thrown, in a peculiar manner, upon our hospitality.

“But,” continued he, “if their winter’s residence in Great Britain is compulsory, and only so because they cannot cross the sea to Spain, or Portugal, or France; in what manner did they ever arrive among us? Was Great Britain, at any time (as is usually believed) a part of the European continent? Did the Red-breasts establish themselves here before the German Ocean had wrought its way into the Atlantic, and before, therefore, Great Britain was an island; and have been left here, and cut off from that continent, by the separation? Again; is it because of the separation of America by the sea, both upon its European and Asiatic sides, and this even at its nearest approaches to the opposite shores, that the Red-breast has never found its way into the New World? If so, too, was America separated from Asia more early than Great Britain from France; or, was the cold climate, or the high latitude of the Americo-Asiatic junction, if ever existing, the more impervious obstacle to Robin-red-breast immigration?”

From the weak wings of the Red-breasts, the Burford philosophers passed to the strong ones of the swallows; and, here, Mr. Paulett referred to a new and late account of the disappearance of those birds in autumn, corroborative of the idea which has been sometimes entertained, that while they actually cross the sea in their flights to and from this island, the reason that they are never seen on their passages, unless in instances where disaster might seem to have

overtaken them, is to be found in the extreme height at which it is their natural habit to fly. Before entering upon the new account, he added, that this extreme height, besides affording to their powerful vision a wide survey of the horizon, and thus, perhaps, one aid for the direction of their course, would raise them into an atmosphere so thin as to be unfit, with respect to many animals, for breathing; but which, at the same time, would offer so much the less resistance to their wings and bodies. The adaptation, also, of their lungs to a peculiarly thin and unburdened atmosphere, was also, he said, notorious, and had been matter for remark to the poet, where he speaks of the " temple-haunting martlet:"

" I have observed, that ever where he builds,
The air is delicate."

Mr. Paulett took occasion, at the same time, to remark upon the long and lofty flights of butterflies, and of some of the smaller beetles; as, of that kind called the lady-bird, the most prodigious swarms of which have sometimes been seen alighted upon the dome of St. Paul's, in London; and upon the snowy heights of the Rocky Mountains, in North America. As to the migration of swallows, he stated, that a gentleman lately travelling near Yealm Bridge, in Devonshire, had his attention suddenly drawn to an unusual number of those birds, careering round him at the height of from forty to fifty feet. He remarked to his companions, that there was assuredly something more than commonly extraordinary in their movements; and, that they were certainly not seeking their food, but training themselves for the day of migration. In an instant after, and as if by word of command, all

the stragglers gathered into a narrower space; and then, the whole body, forming themselves into a close compact phalanx, with the greatest celerity, and with the ascending motion of the skylark, mounted perpendicularly into the higher regions of the air! The time was three o'clock, on a bright sunny afternoon of the first day of October; and, the atmosphere being very clear, the swallows were traced in their ascension to an immense height, and till, finally, they were lost to the eye. The wind was in the north-east, and the moon wanted only three days of her full. The gentleman thought, that the object of the swallows, in rising at once to so great a height, was to throw themselves into a stratum of air which, to their instinctive knowledge, was then running to the southward*. Other and earlier relations have been given, of the gathering of large flocks of swallows upon the sea-coasts, in evident preparation for departure, and upon evenings which promised a clear moonlight night †; but no observer, till the present instance, is recorded as having been so fortunate as to witness the moment of their actual disappearance in the skies! That, after days of preparation, the swallows always suddenly disappear completely, is certain; and it seems equally so, that they prefer to travel upon moonlight nights.

The question of the migration of birds, and, still more, the occasional departures from their habits, in this, and in other particulars, led, irresistibly, once more, to that of the sagacity of animals, for which, and for the consequent suppression of much of the

* Letter of the Rev. C. Trelawny Collins, *Literary Gazette*, October 26, 1833.

† See White's *Natural History of Selborne*, &c. &c.

doctrine of instincts, Mr. Paulett, as the reader knows, was a considerable stickler. He admitted, however, upon this occasion, that animals, under the circumstances of their accidental situation, were often guilty of such errors as might fairly expose them, especially at first sight, to the common imputation of having no more than a blind instinct for their guide; but this, he still contended, was only when they were *put out of their way* by the intervention of works of human art, for mastering of which they were naturally unprepared, either by their want of experience, or by the more unconquerable difficulties of their bodily conformation. Under the former head, he allowed, that amid all which could be said for the sagacity of the horse, it was a mortifying example of the contrary, that one of those noble animals, being in a stable of which the door was a-jar, put forward his head between the door and the jamb, and finding the door still close upon his neck, in this situation took fright, and pulled his head so constantly and so violently backward, as to kill himself by strangulation; while, if he had only walked forward but a step or two, the door would have given him not the slightest resistance, but suffered him freely to leave the stable!

At this admission of Mr. Paulett, Mr. Hartley was ready with a whimsical story of the instinctive industry of a young tame beaver, which he had seen at the house of a family residing upon the banks of the river Kennebec, in North America. The little animal was so far weaned from his wild habits, and so far accustomed to those of his human master and associates, that he was suffered to frequent the river at his pleasure, coming out, and returning home, when called upon to be fed or housed. But he was lodged in a

sort of out-building, or appendage to the kitchen, where, among a very few articles of furniture, one was a slight wooden chair. Upon occasion of heavy rains, the beavers have always reason to fear, that the waters of the lakes or rivers which they confine with their extended dams, will rise, and break through these latter, in some or other of their weaker or more assaulted parts, a mischief which it behoves them to lose the least possible time in repairing. With this foresight, in the midst of rains of such a description, they prepare branches and trunks of trees, by cutting them into lengths, and laying them ready for use, when either an accident shall become palpable from its effects, or find detection upon minute survey. Upon this service, too, they early employ their young, teaching them what is to be done, and scolding and beating them if they are negligent or awkward. Now, it happened one night, after the young beaver had been shut into his out-house, that there fell a heavy rain, the noise of which would necessarily be loud upon the wooden shingles of its roof. In the morning, all was fair again, and the door of the out-house was opened for family use, and to set the young beaver at his liberty. But behold, the thoughtful and industrious little creature, having heard the sound of the falling rain, had remembered what might be needful for the beaver-dams; and, for lack of growing timber in his night's lodging-place, had made no ceremony with the wooden chair, but, with his sharp and powerful teeth, diligently cut it all to pieces; the whole in convenient lengths for use and carriage!"

"You thoroughly believe, sir," said Miss Wainfleet, "the truth of that story?"

"I was told it," answered Mr. Hartley, "in the

house where the event was said to have happened, and by the owner of the house and beaver. But besides all this, the story, though whimsical from the domestic circumstances surrounding it, is scarcely a remarkable story, in relation to what is common among beavers. The Indians, from the marvellous appearances of reason which their habits display, insist, either jestingly or in earnest, that they are a race of creatures who were originally men, but who have been lowered into beavers for their sins!"

"They are extraordinary creatures, certainly," said Miss Wainfleet.

"All their habits," continued Mr. Hartley, "are marked with the show of reason, but none more so than those which concern those articles of their first necessity, their dams. They build them exactly upon the same principle of security with our own; that is, sloping with the current; and the activity and skill with which they proceed to a prudential survey after any rise or violence of the waters, is one of the most striking of their displays, to those who have an opportunity of witnessing them. They form them of wooden piles, and of cross and intervening sticks and timbers, and make their thickness of an embankment of earth or mud, which they fetch up from the bottom, and dispose with those natural trowels, their flat and skinny tails. But the skill and foresight with which they fell the trees (some of them of respectable girth), for these purposes, and for the building of their houses, are not the least of their surprising peculiarities. In every case, they wish to have the tree as near the water as possible, both for use and carriage; but, to that end, not only they find, if practicable, suitable trees at short distances from the edge of the water, but they con-

sider, also, the difference of space arising from a tree's falling toward the water, or away from it. Upon this account, like any human workman, they begin the cutting of the trunk upon the side opposite to the water, and this rule they inculcate upon their young, who, thoughtless or inexperienced, however, not unfrequently neglect it. When this happens, they beat, or snarl, or snap, at the heedless youths, who, perhaps, have blundered through playing instead of working, and thus forgot their lesson; and, if the tree is so far bitten through, that, if finished in the felling, it could only fall in the contrary direction to that of the water, they put an end to the operation, and go to another tree. On the contrary, if a tree is properly felled, then, as soon as it reaches the earth or water, a competent number of beavers assemble about it, nipping off its branches, and reducing these and its whole trunk into the customary lengths. It is asserted that trees, partially cut through near their roots, and which have been abandoned by the elder beavers, because of the error of the younger, in cutting upon the wrong side, are of no uncommon occurrence upon any of the beaver-grounds."

"The old beavers seem to be very severe with the poor young ones," said Richard?

"Only when they neglect their duty," returned Mr. Hartley, "or when they heedlessly forget their lesson. At other times, they are as playful with them as cats are with their kittens. The difference is, that kittens have nothing to perform, except to catch what they want to eat, and to wash their hands and faces; but young beavers must do all this, and also attend to wood-cutting and building, and laying up stores of food; the two former cares for the safety of their fathers' house, and

of the dams that are of the last importance to the whole community."

"I should have thought," continued Richard, "that the young beaver upon the Kennebec went into the river to catch fish to feed himself; but you say, that he was called out of it to be fed?"

"I know very well," answered Mr. Hartley, "that there are writers who tell you a great deal about the voraciousness of beavers for fish; but this is only another of the many errors which you may always learn from books. There never was a beaver that ate a single fish in his life; those who say the contrary confound the *beaver* with the *otter*; and in natural history, as well as in poetry, nothing is more frequent than to confound one animal with another. The food of beavers is entirely vegetable, like that of hares, rabbits, squirrels, and marmots, to which order of animals they belong; that is, to Cuvier's order of rodentia, rongeurs, or gnawers; and not to that of his carnivora, carnassiers, or flesh-eaters*."

"Are there no beavers in England," said Emily, "except in the Regent's Park?"

"For many centuries past," said Mr. Hartley, "there have been no beavers in England, except when brought from other countries for a show. Anciently, however, there were many; and they still abound in the northern and desert parts of Europe and Asia. There was anciently, in Asia, a larger species of beaver, by one fifth, at least, than any at present known. The fossil remains of one have been found upon the sandy banks of the Sea of Azof; and it has been named, after M. Cuvier, *Trogontherium Cuvieri*. By

* Le Règne Animal distribué d'après son Organization. Par M. le Baron Cuvier. Nouvelle édition. Paris, 1829.

nature, they belong to all the northern parts of all the Northern Hemisphere. In England, the name of Beverly, which belongs to an ancient town in Yorkshire, is one of the memorials of the ancient prevalence of beavers; for it signifies a 'bever,' or 'beaver *ley*,' or 'lea,' or 'meadow.' "

"But how came they, then," said Emily, "to be so cruel as to kill all the beavers in England, that were such wonderful creatures, and did no harm, but lived upon vegetables; and were not like the wolves, of the extermination of which in all our country I am very glad?"

"There were many things which caused the killing of beavers, and which tended, besides, to their total destruction. Their flesh is very acceptable for eating; their skins, fur, and *castoreum*, are valuable; and above all, men and beavers cannot live in the same neighbourhood. This vegetable food, which you think so harmless, costs many square miles of drowned land for its production. All their vegetable food is aquatic; as, the bark and younger shoots of birch and willow-trees, and the fleshy roots of certain aquatic plants. It is to cultivate or promote the growth of these, that they build dams, to stop the outlets of small lakes, or arrest the courses of small rivers; so as to make shallow artificial lakes and swamps, often of miles in breadth, where, otherwise, the waters would run off, and leave fruitful grass. This, though not to the stay of so great a depth of water, is just what men do in rice-grounds, and in water-meadows, for the growth of rice and grass; and it is hence that 'beaver-meadows' are artificial levels, or grounds more or less level, but not through art of man, being levelled by the beds of water which the beavers only have anciently made to lie upon them.

But, as men multiply in the same countries, these either kill the beavers, or else break down their dams, in places the best adapted to let off the waters; and thus the beavers vanish, and the lands are drained. In the new settlements, and even further still, in the interior of North America, it is common to see extensive grass-grown beaver-dams, winding in their course, and varying in their height from their base, according to the levels of the soil; just as elsewhere we trace the ditches of Roman camps, and the walls of ancient cities; or, as, in North America, they mark the mounds which have been thrown up by ancient nations of the country! But the destruction of beavers proceeds so fast, in the hands of the hunter, the merchant, and the manufacturer; that, even in the Indian territories of North America, where no cultivation lends its aid, the beaver, though originally hunted upon the banks of the Saint Lawrence, is now scarcely to be met with short of two thousand miles to the north-westward of Montreal*. For the rest, it does not live in the extreme north; and, to the southward, not only it gradually disappears, but its fur grows thinner and shorter, and consequently less valuable.

“The ancient Greeks,” concluded Mr. Hartley, “might seem to have known as little of the true nature and habits of the beaver as the modern natives of

* Much interesting information, concerning the beaver countries, the hunters, and the traders, is to be found in a book entitled “Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, by Alexander Henry, Esq.,” printed in New York, and written in that city, by the author of these pages, from the notes communicated in Montreal, by Mr. Henry, who was one of the very earliest adventurers into that part of North America, after the conquest of Canada by the English.

Western Europe; at least if Æsop's fable of the Beaver and the Hunters is an example. From that fable, there is room to suppose, that they chiefly knew it by name, and as the animal which yielded the *castoreum*, a secretion in the nature of musk and civet, and which, if they were without those latter perfumes and medicaments, they might the more esteem. But, when Æsop makes his beaver bite off the cist or bag which contains the *castoreum*, or odorous secretion of the *castor*, or beaver, to free himself from the pursuit of the dogs, he represents the chase (so to call it) of the animal in a form very different from what has been seen in North America, and perhaps elsewhere. It is not absolutely impossible, that upon the Old Continent, the beaver, like the badger and otter, may have been hunted with dogs; but the American Indians take it either in traps, which they bait with the roots of aquatic plants, and with cuttings of the birch and willow, or with springes set in the beaver-paths; or else by breaking into the earthen roofs of the beaver-houses, and then killing and possessing themselves of as many members of the several families contained in them as they can prevent from escaping, either from above, or by the water-way below. As to the odorous secretion of the beaver, it appears to be given it both for a dressing for its coat, like the oil in water-birds, to enable it to pursue its amphibious life, and also as a means of defence (like the ejections of the polecats and badgers) against its enemies. This, at least, is certain, that the crocodile and alligator, also frequenters of the water, are largely provided with a musky secretion; and that the animal nearest of kin to the beaver (though, like other rats, partly a flesh-eater),

is a rat secreting musk, and therefore called the musk-rat*.”

It was thus that the traveller at Burford Cottage brought to an end his anecdotes and partial account of the beaver species, to which all present, but especially Richard and Emily, had listened with the liveliest regard; and Mr. and Mrs. Paulett, as the reader has long seen, were always pleased when these latter had the opportunity of adding to their stock of the knowledge of nature, among other branches of information. Neither Richard nor Emily were in any danger, therefore, of furnishing such an anecdote of either, as that recently related by Sir James South, in one of his lectures, concerning a great boy in St. James's Park, upon the subject of the ducks swimming in the water of the plantation.

A friend of Sir James was one day walking through that spot, when he happened to overhear a little boy, about eight years old, saying to his brother, a lad about eighteen, “How is it, John, that the ducks' feathers do not get wet?”—“Oh! I can't tell,” was the ignorant and impatient reply of the brother John. Upon this, Sir James's friend said to the younger boy, “It is because the ducks continually anoint their feathers, with their bills, from little bags of oil which they have under their wings.”

“Ah!” cried, then, the youth of eighteen years of age; “and who finds the ducks in oil? *The proprietors*, I suppose?”

* For the description and habits of the musk-rat, and the Indian fiction founded upon the latter, see the fable of the Great Hare and the Musk-rat, in “Algonquin or Indian Fables, from the Woods of North America;” by the author of these pages.

CHAP. XVII.

A German philosopher once proposed to scale the heavens, for the purpose of ascertaining the fact, or the falsehood, that there was a Man in the Moon, armed with a lunar reaping-hook. He certainly would have prosecuted his design, but that he could not hit upon the means of making the necessary ascent. ANON.

WHAT Mr. Hartley had said, of the sagacity and habits of the beaver, had become the occasion of Miss Wainfleet's opening her Scrap-book, in which, as usual, were a mingled rout of drawings, prints, and written and printed passages in poetry and prose. Her immediate object had been that of showing to Emily and Richard the figure of a beaver, very skilfully drawn upon one of its pages, and concerning which, as may be easily believed, they had grown singularly curious; and which, as shown in Miss Wainfleet's book, left them nothing to wish beyond, only that they would have liked a precise picture of the young beaver of the Kennebec, all alone in his outhouse upon the night of the heavy rain, and in the very act of cutting up, for repairs of his beaver-dam, the new wooden chair. But the leaves of the Scrap-book once opened, Miss Wainfleet could not soon withdraw them from attention; particularly as Mr. Hartley became silent at their sight, and earnestly begged, that for so great a length of time as his travels and voyages had torn him from the regions of European genius and taste, he might be permitted to see some parts of a collection, in which,

beside the merits that might be intrinsic, there was the stamp of Miss Wainfleet's choice, or, at the least, of her toleration: "We expect," said he, "and I am sure that in this instance we cannot be disappointed, that what a lady collects, or even permits, in an assemblage like this, should bear relation to what she herself produces, or is capable of producing, either with the pen or with the pencil; for," added he, as a great master of polite criticism has said before me, the

'—next to what you write is what you read.'

But this criticism upon Scrap-books almost increased Miss Wainfleet's diffidence as to letting her own be seen: "In truth," said she, "this book is partly an Album, and in part only a Scrap-book; for some of my friends have written upon pages which they have found blank; and, besides, a Scrap-book itself is somewhat like one's mind, and should not be too readily displayed to outward observation. We have our transient and our silly thoughts, with which, though harmless, we might be ashamed to be fixed with the fame of entertaining; and so, sometimes, we collect, from transient and silly motives of esteem, and even sometimes as specimens, not of what we admire or venerate, but expressly what we condemn or ridicule, and from motives of criticism, instead of approbation. Now, to a stranger's eye, the real nature of our inducements—the precise degree of liking—or, perhaps, personal or private reason by which we are influenced, or the direct spirit of contradiction—in which we thus collect, can rarely be discoverable or made clear; so that, with the identification, too, of reading and writing which you propose—there is often danger, in such a

book, to the good report of our taste, our opinions, or our sentiments. But, trusting, nevertheless, to your candour, if it should be needed, I say nothing more, in the way of apology, for any thing which you may find ill-chosen, or ill-obtruded, in my humble Scrap-book."

Mr. Hartley, thus indulged, turned over the leaves with a respectful and even tender curiosity; for it was still impossible that he could look upon each successive *scrap*, except (as he had himself premised, and Miss Wainfleet had even directly insisted) as taking each for some visible expression of the *mind* of its fair possessor; though, in truth, and as Miss Wainfleet had said, much of its contents comprised, not copies or transcriptions of things chosen or selected, but *originals*, rendered as offerings to increase the heap; while some were *relics*—the precious things of friendship; the mere hand-writing, or the incidental sentiments—of individuals loved or known: "And how valuable," said Mr. Hartley, "are often not such relics! How estimable when they extend, for example, to whole letters; and, from the words in which they are conveyed, present memorials of virtues and affections of our friends, or traits of their talent or good sense, or of their esteem and kindness for ourselves, such as had faded from our memory, and which only those *relics*, after long years, recall!"

Mr. Hartley's eye, however, was first attracted by an original and impromptu quatrain upon a public topic—the death of the hero Nelson—in which the writer makes use of the anecdote of Cræsus and Solon, and which he read as follows:

ON

THE DEATH OF ADMIRAL LORD NELSON,

IN THE VICTORIOUS CONFLICT OF TRAFALGAR.

CALL no man (thus the sage his counsel gives),
 Call no man fortunate while yet he lives:
 How happy, NELSON, fled thy generous breath,
 A victor living, victor still in death!

These were the lines of an Englishman, written, indeed, in a far and foreign country, but at the moment of the arrival of the news of the great naval victory referred to, and of the death, in the midst of victory, of the long-victorious victor!

But Mr. Hartley's next selection was a moral ditty, which he begged permission to read aloud, for the especial use of Emily and Richard. It was the rendering of a Persian thought, designed to add one to the many slaps against the neglectors of Early Rising:

CHANTICLEER.

A THOUGHT FROM THE PERSIAN.

Dost thou know why the Bird of the Morning complains?
 Dost thou know what he says, in his sharp-chiding strains?
 He says, that 'tis shown, in the mirror of day,
 A whole night of thy life hath unseen passed away,
 Whilst thou on the soft couch of indolence lay!

After this, Mr. Hartley read, in succession, two or three longer poems, such as, like the shorter ones preceding, had hardly seen the light, except when Miss Wainfleet's Scrap-book was unlocked; but all were what the French call "Vers de Soci t ," or what, in English, may be called Verses of the Moment, or among Friends; and not, therefore, to be visited with any

heavy criticism. The first, as Miss Wainfleet observed, was a memorial of a beloved schoolfellow of hers, now in India :

IN MISS B*****'S ALBUM.

A CHEERFUL and a guileless heart
 (No sweeter gift from heaven!)
 Is here, to join its earthly part,
 To GEORGIANA given!

Stamped with the seal of Innocence,
 And lit with Genius' ray;
 Like sounds she breathes—like flowers she paints—
 Is bright and glad her way!

This *book's* fair pages copy well
 Her spotlessness of Youth;
 And Time, on both, shall fix the marks
 Of Friendship, Love, and Truth!

Feb. 14, 1831.

Of the second there was a longer history; but (with no small good fortune), while the poem was solely sportive, the history was instructive. It was entitled, "The Man in the Moon," and had full reference to that celebrated personage, though not to every thing which might be said concerning him. It seems that the author of the stanzas had composed them by injunction, as a penance, or an *amende honorable*, for having questioned even any part of the word of a lady, as to the *facts* of the history in question. The Man in the Moon having been mentioned, and inquiries made as to the possible origin of so strange a fancy, the lady mentioned the tale of her nursery, that the Man was an offending Israelite, whom Moses had condemned to death, and to the Moon, for breach of the sabbath; and that the whole story was related plainly in the Bible. To the author, this account

appeared so inadmissible, that he rashly ventured upon the position, that the Bible contained no particle of the relation! This incredulity, boldly, though modestly expressed, the lady would hear of no decision but from the Bible itself, in some part of which, and doubtless in one of the first five books, she believed (because he had heard so) the history extant. Research was instantly to be made. The lady was quick and persevering, and a second lady (called Pallas in the poem), producing two large Family Bibles, volunteered also to follow the text in one copy, while her friend did the same duty in the other. Imagine, then, the peril of the too hardy disputant! Fancy the hardihood, or else fancy the state of trepidation, in which he awaited the event! The Pentateuch is long; but too soon did it incontestably appear, that in the camp in the wilderness, a certain Israelite, though not sent by Moses to the Moon, was really put to death (that is to say, stoned), for gathering sticks upon the sabbath! It is these "sticks," then (and these "sticks" only), that have served to connect the history of the Israelite with the history of the Man in the Moon; for who knows not that the Man in the Moon is the bearer of a bundle of "sticks?" The case, then, stood as follows: the author of the lines-that-were-to-be was left in quiet possession of his main ground, that word about the Man in the Moon, the Bible contained none; but Mira (the "Angelical Doctor" of the poem) had at least obtained the establishment of this point, that Moses did *put to death* an Israelite for gathering "sticks" (and, perhaps, a "bundle" of them) upon the sabbath; and it was with the author of the lines, as it is with the defendant in a lawsuit, that since even a part of the verdict went against him, therefore he

was not himself to go "scot free." But, ladies, again, are sometimes as merciful as they are just; and hence it happened that his sole punishment became the too light one of writing the "Man in the Moon," in which, as will be perceived, he artfully contrives to take the opportunity of suggesting much in his excuse:

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

THERE'S a Man in the Moon, as 'tis very well known,
And he carries a bundle of sticks;
So, all that we're puzzled at, is to be told,
How the *Man* in the *Moon* came to fix?

Says MIRA, 'tis he, so the legend declares,
That gathered his sticks upon Sunday;
So, was first stoned to death, and then sent to the *Moon*,
At the camp of the Israelites one day!

Alas! I disputed with MIRA the text,
Disbelieved that they stoned the old woodman;
And (far worse than dunce!) I rejected the tale,
Calling Moses too much of a good man!

But MIRA, as wise as she's fair, had been named
(Had she lived once) Angelical Doctor;
And I, in disputing her biblical lore,
Might seem (shameless wight!) to have mocked her!

Well! the leaves are unfolded, the Israelite law
Is read in my obstinate ears;
And, by PALLAS assisted, just as she had said,
All the sticking and stoning appears!

Ah! fair ones, the wreaths of your victory take,
But in justice remember your arms;
And how easy the conquest was certain to prove,
Where your knowledge was joined to your charms!

As to the phrase, "Angelical Doctor," it was explained, that besides the poet's allowance to bestow a

title like that upon a *lady of learning*, it contained an allusion to its use in the middle ages, when gray-beard schoolmen were accustomed to bestow such, and even more exquisite appellations upon each other, if they happened not to be quarrelling, and therefore loading each other with abuse; and that, as to this title of "Angelical Doctor" (Doctor Angelicus), invented to express prodigious admiration of the attainments of a certain learned man of the times, this had been followed by an attempt to go beyond it; "Seraphic Doctor" having been the complimentary addition bestowed, either in return, or in contemplation of still higher merit! The phrase, "Doctor Angelicus," in the mean time, has become proverbial; and in this manner appears in a couplet of one of the minor English poets of the first half of the eighteenth century:

"Lelius would be the *Angelic* of a school;
Kneels down a wit, and rises up a fool!"

As to the rest, Mr. Paulett hinted his opinion, that the fanciful and wide-spread history of the Man in the Moon was susceptible of a truer and more extensive statement and explanation than it had ever yet received, and one which would account for all his accompaniments; his bundle of "sticks," so called; his bill-hook, or his reaping-hook; his lanthorn, and his dog. The conversation closed with some allusions and recitals, extolling the humorous tale of the Irishman's flight to the Moon, upon the back of the obliging Eagle; of the freedom which he took with the Man in the Moon's reaping-hook, or bill-hook; and of all his acquaintance with the region round; and finally with a reference to the speculations pursued upon the

subject of the Man in the Moon, by a certain German philosopher.

“ But why is it,” said Mr. Hartley, at this stage of the discourse; “ why is it that the name of ‘ German ’ occurs for ever, either in truth or in fiction, upon all fanciful, mysterious, or (shall I say it) *dreaming* occasions? Why must it be a ‘ *German* philosopher’ that is to perplex himself about the Man in the Moon, and to project the means of reaching him?”

“ I need not tell you,” replied Mr. Paulett, “ that the Germans, as a nation, are more devoted to the indulgence, sometimes of high, but sometimes of fantastical imaginings, than most other Europeans; and this, as I believe, must be the answer to your question. There is no doubt, that if we compare together the French, the English, and the Germans, it is the first which (whether for good or for bad) are the least given to intellectual and imaginative cultivation of the three; and the third that is the most so, while the English fill the middle place, in nature, as in the list. Whether, in the mean time, it is the predominating Celtic origin of the French, and the predominating Teutonic origin of the Germans, with the mixed Celtic and Teutonic blood of the English, which produce these several results; or, whether causes different from these—causes civil, political, commercial, or all of these combined, which have stamped the respective characters, I presume not to determine; but certain it is, that at the present day, and as between Englishmen and Germans, the studies of the first are eminent only as to things physical, bodily, or corporeal; and the studies of the second, only as to things intellectual and imaginative; and it is with this reference that an

enlightened Frenchman has recently thus addressed himself to his countrymen:—‘ We (the French) constantly imitate England in all that concerns *outward life*, the mechanical arts, and physical refinements; why, then, should we blush to borrow something from kind, honest, pious, learned Germany, in what regards *inward life*, and the nurture of the soul*?’ ”

But Mr. Hartley had gone only a little further, through the leaves of Miss Wainfleet’s Scrap-book, before he found the lines which I shall next repeat, and which had been addressed to herself, upon her coming of age. Miss Wainfleet had the less difficulty in hearing them now read, because they were without compliments, and contained nothing but good wishes, joined with moral warnings of the uncertainties of all states of human life, and sole certainty of the happiness of virtue:—

TO MISS B. W.

ON HER ATTAINING HER TWENTY-FIRST YEAR.

BELINDA, if the Twelfth of May
 Could ever yet inspire my lay,
 How deeper still its hours engage,
 Now that it sees thee “ come of age !”

Launched fully on the expanded sea,
 What is the course that waits on thee?
 What gentle, or what bounding wave,
 Shall thy gay ship, blithe rippling, lave?
 What gales, or soft or strong, shall blow,
 To bid thee on thy voyage go?
 For now (no more the haven-port
 Of springing life thy sole resort),

* M. Victor Cousin, on Education in Prussia; who is here quoted, however, without any wish to promote the objects of the modern teachers of “ State Education.”

Before thee all things open wide,
 And call thee to the glittering tide!
 Uncertain tide! that shines to-day—
 Its green depths, and its silver spray;—
 Tide, on whose smooth and tranquil breast,
 The trusting halcyon builds her nest;
 Yet, that, to-morrow, whirls on high
 Its raging billows through the sky;
 Or spreads, along the dreary shore,
 Its dark dull wave, and sullen roar!

But thee, BELINDA, be thy lot
 (Oh be it bright!) or bright or not;
 Thee, thy sound sense, and purest heart,
 Shall guide with the best pilot's art;
 And, whether sunshine gild thy way,
 Or clouds obscure, at times, the day;
 Thee, those thy guides shall still befriend,
 And all thy various track attend;
 Shape thy just path o'er every sea,
 And bless thee—e'en as wished by me!
 Thee, whether pleasant breezes blow,
 The white surge dancing round thy prow;
 Whether through calms thy galley move,
 All bright below, all bright above;
 Or, whether, now, the vessel drive,
 And with the winds and currents strive;
 Thee, either lot shall surely grace,
 And joy enhance, or grief efface;
 No chequered chance the meed shall foil,
 But ease give bliss, or honour toil:
 If ease, then Pleasure's myrtle thine;
 If toil, the Laurel-wreath divine!

Confiding, speed then, on life's venturous way;
 Thy sails are set—thy launch, the Twelfth of May!

London, May 12, 1832.

CHAP. XVIII.

Moloch, bloody king! MILTON.

FOR several succeeding mornings, I still found the African traveller to be one of the party at the Cottage, and still continued to hear him make those comments upon what he had heard and seen, which contributed to maintain his favourite position, that the manners and customs of all nations are essentially and in principle alike; so as to leave little room for variety, except in the rudeness or the polish under which they are displayed. He was fond of this view of human history, "which united," he said, "in the ideas of such as contemplated it, the generations and families of mankind, and simplified so much of what they had to learn concerning their species, as creatures scattered over so many countries, speaking so many languages, and living through so many ages; by showing that this species, like the species of the inferior animals, has *specific habits*, to which, from its own nature, and from the nature of the things around it, it naturally, and therefore constantly and uniformly yields."

"If we instance," said he, upon one of those occasions when I listened to him the longest; "if we instance the love of music and dancing, and the manner and seasons of their practice, we find all as widely and as passionately followed in Africa as elsewhere; and elsewhere as passionately and as widely, as among

the Negro nations of Africa! It would be as difficult to detach singing and dancing from the habits of the Negro, as to change the colour of his skin. I do not think that he could live a single week in his own country, without the enjoyment of those recreations. In every rank, also, of African society, from the monarch to the slave, he is passionately fond of instrumental music in particular; so, that if the poet Goldsmith was able to travel through France and the rest of Europe, depending, quite or almost, for his bread upon the admiration of his flute; in like manner, a European fiddler, without any extraordinary pretension to talent, and destitute of a single *cowry* (provided he were not *blind*, for, in that case, through the most distressing superstition, he would be regarded as a wicked and punished person), would meet, from every Negro people, with the freest supply of food, and of every other necessary. The Negroes learn with eagerness and facility the music of foreigners; and many of the newest and popular English airs, that now or lately have been heard in the streets of our towns and villages, are now also singing, with Negro voices, in the towns and villages of Africa. Once, in an inland city, when I and my companions were returning, by moonlight, to our cabin, and sighing at the delay which still kept us in that foreign region, our ears (as if to make us feel the more deeply our misfortune) were saluted by the strains of a native singer, pouring forth the English air of 'Home, sweet home*!' As to dancing, pursued as a social amuse-

* The words of this favourite little song are by Mr. John Howard Payne, the American author of *Brutus*, *Clari*, and many other highly popular dramatic pieces.

ment, all these nations indulge in it at the same seasons, and with the same vivacity, as ourselves. Often have I witnessed their evening diversions in this way, continued, beneath a spreading tree, sometimes till the approach of morning; and as often (I shall take the opportunity to add) have I been delighted with the contemplation of the perfect harmony and kindly feeling that prevailed among the dancers. A pleasing and romantic effect is produced by the silvery light of the moon, blended with the ruddiness of the flames of the fires lighted to keep away wild beasts, thrown upon the sable countenances of the happy group; along with the wide spread shadow of the majestic tree, darkening the ground, and with the moving figures, gaily crossing and recrossing it. During the intervals of dance and song, the party are employed in eating or drinking, or else in renewing the deadened fires; after either of which employments, they begin again with a fresh ardour. Their songs, of which the words usually refer to the circumstances of the moment, are composed extempore by one of the party, who recites it to his or her companions, while each of these is catching up the words, and joining in the tune. How similar, all this, to the manners of our own country? The elegant Rogers sings thus of our English villagers:

‘ Twilight’s soft dew’s steal o’er the village green,
 With magic tints to harmonize the scene:
 Stilled is the hum that through the hamlet broke,
 When round the ruins of their *ancient oak*,
 The peasants flocked to hear the minstrel play,
 And games and carols closed the busy day!’

And Campbell (though I greatly doubt the local propriety of the picture) paints a similar scene among the English settlers at *his* Wyoming:

‘ Delightful Wyoming, beneath thy skies
 The happy shepherd-swains had nought to do,
 But feed their flocks on green declivities,
 Or skim, perchance, the lake with light canoe,
 From morn till evening’s sweeter pastime grew :
 With timbrel when beneath the forests brown,
 Thy lovely maidens would the *dance* renew ;
 And aye those sunny mountains, half way down,
 Would echo flageolet from some romantic town !’

“ I call this *Mr. Campbell’s* Wyoming, and receive the picture as one from his native *Scotland*; for romance, and ‘romantic towns,’ have little to do with the English settlements in America; and American history and observation would rather place ‘rum-carriers,’ or fur-traders, at ‘fair Wyoming,’ than ‘shepherd-swains,’ and ‘timbrel’ and ‘flageolet,’ at the era of which *Mr. Campbell* writes. The poet places his ‘Wyoming’ upon ‘Pennsylvania’s shore,—

‘ On Susquehannah’s side, fair Wyoming ;’

but the Pennsylvanians profess to discover but little in his beautiful poem, to remind them, of the manners, at least, of their still beautiful abode !

“ But when, from the English settlements in the new world, we get back to any ancient country of the old, it is then that in verity the same scenes perpetually recur; and, whether in Africa, in Greece, in Italy, or other regions, we see and hear, at every step, the song, the dance, the *improvising*—

‘ The umbrage of the wood, so cool and dim,
 The moving figures—’

a ‘ pipe’ too, and a ‘ drum ;’—but I am quoting Lord Byron, who, in an entire stanza, gives us an account of a dance in Greece, which, abating the complexions

of the dancers, you will find the exact similitude of a dance in Negroland :—

‘ And, further on, a group of Grecian girls
(The first and tallest her white kerchief waving)
Were strung together like a row of pearls ;
Linked hand in hand, and dancing ; each, too, having
Down her white neck long floating auburn curls—
The least of which would set ten poets raving :
Their leader sang—and bounded to her song,
With choral step and voice, the virgin throng.’

“ As to the charms, in the mean time,” continued Mr. Hartley, “ of the Negro vocal music, when, upon other occasions than these, it is heard at a distance, in the midst of solitary woods, it has the most plaintive and pleasing effect, equalling in softness any that I have heard in more civilized countries. I and others have lain awake in our tents, at night, for hours together, listening to its mild and melancholy tones. Once, at the visit of a chief, accompanied by about fifty of his wives, and the party stationing themselves at a short distance from us, the women struck up a native tune, which they sung loudly and with much feeling ; indeed, with a solemnity and pathos that reminded all of us of the most impressive sacred music of our native Europe. As soon as the voices of the females had ceased, an instrumental band played a lively air, in which, again, the former, were occasionally joined ; but, though the Negroes are as fond, or even more so, of instrumental, than of vocal music, I must acknowledge that they have no native instruments, except very vile ones.”

“ These are pleasing pictures, I confess,” said Mr. Paulett, “ of Negro life in Africa ; and, as vocal music, in man, as in the birds, depends only upon

natural capacities, it ought not, perhaps, so much to surprise us, to discover, that, in truth, it begins among the rudest nations, and only descends from them to the more refined. I have always heard (I think) the voices of the women, among the American Indians, the South Sea Islanders, and every people like them, exceedingly extolled. But have the Negroes other arts, in any degree of excellence?"

"In this respect, you must distinguish the Negro nations from many others in Africa, which latter are properly pastoral nations, and very ignorant of the arts. But the Negroes live in cities, towns, and villages; build temples and bridges; cultivate the earth, hold markets, and pursue traffic; and among these are several useful, as well as even elegant arts. They tan, dye, and work in iron; their smiths are surprisingly skilful in their profession; but, though hundreds of these latter are scattered over the country, it is still evidence that their art is far from common, that they are held in distinguished respect, and treated with the utmost deference by every rank. These *ironsmiths* of Africa, like the goldsmiths of the East, execute the finest and most curious works with great celerity; and with so few and such clumsy tools and conveniences, as leaves a European in amazement at their success. But thus it has been in all these ancient countries, from the most ancient times."

"Their smiths, then, are their most able artisans?" inquired Mr. Paulett.

"By no means," returned his friend: "their leather is tanned and dressed, as well, if not much better, than leather of English manufacture. The variety of their dyes, and the exquisite colours which they give to their cottons, have always been the subjects of

remark; and they have saddlers, shoemakers, and tailors, who, for ingenuity in their trades, are to be excelled by few. As to fine arts, their skill in painting is little or none; but in carving or sculpture (a fine art which appears to be of earlier growth than painting), they produce specimens which merit extreme praise. With Pagan Africa, as with Pagan Greece and Rome and other countries, sculpture is an art invited and cultivated by the voice and under the protection of religion. The fashioning of idols occasions a constant demand, and demands even a pious solicitude for excellence; and, accordingly, the Negro sculptors bring forth figures of men, crocodiles, snakes, and other objects, either detached, or carved in bas-relief; which, especially contrasting the rudeness of the instruments used, with the fineness and delicacy of some of the indentions, excite admiration for their persevering industry, and most ingenious labour."

"I am considerably astonished," interrupted Mr. Paulett; "but what you say of the Negro idols renews the impatience which I have long felt, to hear something of their religious faith and worship, and of the inside of those feteesh-huts of which you have spoken?"

"You shall hear, then," returned Mr. Hartley; "and those topics will naturally lead us to the more painful ones with which I have before threatened you. It is observable (to begin), that while the form of the huts in which these nations dwell is always circular, the form of their feteesh-huts, or houses of their gods, is always square. The large but solitary feteesh-hut, which I mentioned as standing near the entrance of the town of Bookhar, in the empire of Yariba, has a number of figures upon the exterior of its walls, carved

in bas-relief, in various attitudes; some kneeling, some recumbent; and to these, as well as to those within, the people pay adoration, and ascribe miraculous performances. But the royal feteesh-hut in Catunga is, perhaps, the largest and most richly ornamented of any in the interior of Africa. Like others, it is a perfectly square building; but the length of each of its sides is more than sixty feet. Immediately opposite the entrance is a gigantic human figure, carved in wood, and bearing the figure of a lion upon its head; all beautifully executed. Twenty-six or twenty-seven other figures, carved in bas-relief, occupy the adjacent sides of the hut; but all in a kneeling posture, and with their faces turned toward the larger and principal figure, to which they are obviously in the act of paying their devotions. Upon the heads of all the smaller figures, corresponding with that upon the head of the principal figure, are figures of animals, one to each; as, panthers, hyænas, snakes, and crocodiles, exquisitely carved, and painted, or rather stained, with a variety of colours*. The floor is stained of a crimson colour, and very highly polished. Hither the king, accompanied by his nobility or chiefs, is accustomed to repair, at times either of ordinary or extraordinary devotion; and here to offer praises in prosperity, or prayers and humiliations in adversity. Upon entering the temple, the king instantly uncovers his head, and prostrates himself upon the floor; an example which is as instantly followed by those who wait upon him.

* A similar usage, of placing upon the heads of the idols figures of the animals that are their emblems, appears to have prevailed among the ancient Saxons, our own ancestors, as well as among other nations; and armorial *crests* may be thought in some shape of this origin, considering the close relationship of *heraldry* to the religion of its day.

In this posture all remain, sometimes for an hour or more, expressing themselves aloud, or else in an under tone; and either lamenting, exulting, extolling, or beseeching. Into this particular sanctuary, none of the lower classes of the people are permitted to enter; with the exception of a poor old woman, whose business it is to keep it clean, and who remains without whenever the king is within the temple. Only around the external walls of this building, the common people prostrate themselves and pray; but there are fifty other feteesh-huts in Catunga, upon smaller and less beautiful scales, which are open to every one; in all of which public worship is performed before sunrise; and to which individuals can always repair throughout the day, upon any movement of individual devotion—of individual hope or fear, desire or enjoyment—sorrow or delight. To every feteesh-hut belongs one or more feteesh-man or priest.

“The feteesh-huts in Negroland, like the churches in Europe, are sometimes rather profaned, by employment for temporal uses, as merely large buildings, for the moment, happen to be needed; and sometimes, exactly like the churches of ancient Europe, they are used for objects partly temporal and partly spiritual, that is, as courts of justice. In Africa still, as anciently in Europe, the ordeal of bitter water, and other forms of divine judgment, are occasionally resorted to; and, in these cases, the ordeal, or feteesh, is performed in a feteesh-hut, and administered by a feteesh-man, or priest. There are, perhaps, feteesh-huts expressly for this latter purpose; since, in Badagry, I have seen one which is used only for ordeals, and the walls of which are disfigured with human skulls and bones, whitened by time, and as if placed there for emblems of the

vengeance of offended justice, and for the terror of evil-doers.

“In Africa, as anciently in Europe, the administration of criminal justice, as also, indeed, the whole administration of public affairs, is intimately connected with the religious ritual. If the African feteesh-huts are courts of law and of justice, so, also, were our own churches, thence denominated ‘basilics;’ and if, in Africa, the priesthood supplies the lawyers and judges; so, also, did it anciently among ourselves; where, as a further coincidence, we may remark, every diocess has its bishop’s court, for adjudication upon offences against religion, and for other matters of ecclesiastical law, and which was anciently held in a church or chapel, as in the instance of the chapel of “Our Lady,” adjoining the church of the Holy Saviour, at London, and pertaining to the diocess of Winchester. In the cathedral at Exeter, and probably in other similar edifices throughout the kingdom, and through Europe, there is preserved, and shown to visitors, the skeleton or anatomy of one or more murderers; thus deposited, and thus displayed, as need not be doubted, from following of ancient usage, and for aiding to impress beholders with the dread of crime and of its reward. Criminal ordeals, or trials, but under religious forms, were anciently held, in England, and in all the other parts of Europe, in churches, as now, in Africa, in feteesh-houses; and, in the former countries, the bishops and inferior clergy presided at those trials, as now the priests in Africa.

“Thus far, then,” continued Mr. Hartley, “the religious worship, though Pagan, of these people, may seem to you not less innocent, and even not less becoming, than any other of the least objectionable of

the practices which I have resembled to them; but I must plunge you, without further preface, amid the horrors of very different rites, performed, not in the *feteesh-huts*, but at the *feteesh-tree*.

“ Religion has always had for its objects, or for its single object, the combined worship of the divinity, and the maintenance of the peace and order of human life, which is the practical worship; so, that among the Negro nations at present, as among those of Europe formerly, religious festivals combine both sacrifice and civil and criminal justice, an original to which, in reality, we owe, in our own country, the institution of the four terms of our courts of law, our quarter-sessions of the peace, and other quarterly arrangements, answering to the four principal religious festivals of the year, the seasons at which, among other things, all public justice, criminal and civil, was anciently administered* ; so, that, at least if the practice of ourselves and our ancestors be a recommendation, it is not of the principle, thus recognised, perhaps, by all nations, but of the barbarity displayed in the practice, as still preserved among the Negro nations, that we have reason to complain. These religious festivals, which, in Africa, include anniversaries of the deaths of ancestors, are called ‘Customs,’ and take place at least monthly and annually, at periods determined by the lunar motions, and by the luni-solar year. I must add, that in Badagry, the slaves who are brought thither for sale, and remain unsold, are frequently drowned by their owners, to

* We are probably to find in these traditionary usages, the origin of the Assize-balls, shows, and general carnival of our half-yearly Assizes. The balls are doubtless the remains of sacrificial dances.

save further cost and trouble; but, as to numerous thieves, and other public offenders, along with the remnant of unpurchased slaves, not drowned with their companions in misfortune, these are reserved by the Badagrians to be slaughtered, either at the monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly 'Customs.' Prisoners of war, also, are put to death upon the same occasions; and what I am about to state includes a picture of part of the odious usages attendant upon these acts. The respective victims, or such at least as are prisoners of war, being conducted, one after the other, to the feteesh-tree, have a flask of rum given them to drink; which, while they are in the act of enjoying, an executioner steals imperceptibly behind them, and, with a heavy club, inflicts a violent blow upon the back part of the head, so as often to dash out the brains at once, and make a second blow unnecessary. This done, the body is carried to the feteesh-hut, where, a gourd-shell, or a calabash, being provided to receive the blood, the head is cut off with an axe; and other hands are next engaged in opening the breast, so as to extract the heart, which, the same instant, warm and quivering with life, is presented, to the king first, and afterward to his wives and warriors; and all of these having made an incision in it with their teeth, and partaken of the foamy blood, which is at the same time presented, the heart is afterward displayed to the entire multitude, upon the point of a tall spear. From the commencement of the proceedings under the tree, the chiefs raise a song or chaunt, the king's wives, and the nearest spectators, joining in the choruses, and only cease when the heart is carried from the spot. As it proceeds, the strain is successively

repeated by the whole multitude; and the words, that are thus sung or chaunted, express the most vindictive and sanguinary fury.

“From the feteesh-tree, and back, each heart, together with the calabash of blood and headless body, is paraded through the town, followed by hundreds of spearmen and a thick crowd of people. Whoever expresses a wish to bite the heart, or drink the blood, has either of them immediately presented to him for that purpose; the multitude breaking out, at such a moment, into fresh songs and dances. What, at length, remains of the heart, is given to the dogs; while the remainder of the body, cut into quarters, is hung upon the feteesh-tree, where it is left to swing in the air, or to fall decayed upon the ground, and to be devoured either by the birds or beasts of prey.

“I shall take an opportunity,” concluded Mr. Hartley, “of telling you what relationship I imagine to subsist between this feteesh-tree and its bloody rites, and the divinity, whose presence in it is supposed to make it *feteesh*, or holy; with the ‘bloody’ Moloch of Phœnician history; still with our Druidical sacrifices and punishments; and with all our existing notions of divine and human justice. In the meantime, I must let you know, that I think this divinity the very same with that of whom Milton speaks elsewhere so agreeably:

‘ ——— I am the Power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower;’

and who is, again, the ‘Sylvan’ of his *Il Pensieroso*, where he talks of

‘ ——— Shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak.’ ”

CHAP. XIX.

The warbled complaint of the suffering grove.

SONG.

THE season, though not cold, was now considerably advanced. The trees were bare, and the waters swollen. There was much wind and rain; but, in the fields, the daisies, and on the banks, and in the woods, the primroses, were springing; and in the gardens, though the dahlias had long since been cut down, and consigned, even in their enduring bloom, to the fate of all the gardener's sweepings, they were succeeded by chrysanthemums, pink, yellow, white, and orange; and along with these there were still flowering the China-roses and the three-coloured and inodorous violet, or little common heart's-ease; a flower which was even succeeded by a temporary show of crocuses and snow-drops. At intervals the skies were dark and heavy; but at other intervals bright and gay; and though, now, both myself and my mate were glad to pass more of our time than lately within the palings of the village gardens, and especially within the enclosures of Burford Cottage; yet there I mingled cheerfully my songs, at noon, and night, and morning, with those of the wren, and with the twitter of the tit or twit-mouse. One only day the calm of our lives was interrupted by a moment of terror, not proceeding, indeed, from the hand of man, but at least as overwhelming as any that men could have occasioned us!

In the woods, we had to fear the weazels and pole-cats, those creeping, sly, but fierce and sanguinary hunters, whose leap is capture, and whose bite and suction death; but in the gardens, and upon the commons, sometimes, though more rarely, the hovering hawk, or the keen gliding glead or kite, filled us with the deadliest alarms, and sometimes snatched away, before our eyes, the most painted and most tuneful of our neighbours; extinguishing, at an instant, the light of its beauty, and the music of its song! To-day, it was our own turn to be threatened with the beak of a bird of prey; for a hovering hawk, with his piercing eye, had marked us from above, as we were picking and flitting here and there across the lawn; and, after poising for some moments in the air, he suddenly dropped, as it were like a stone, and with an aim taken to a hair's-breadth, and directed against my beloved and olive-coloured mate!

What, then, could have saved my mate, and how could she have escaped the descent of the hawk, itself a living arrow, feathered at once in wings and tail, barbed with a sure and penetrating beak, directed through all its flight by an unerring eye, and winged by the force of a ravening will, and weight of bone and muscle; what, but the happy misdirection of Emily's battledore, which, handled at some distance, but which yet, by means of a strong but unskilful blow, suddenly drove the shuttlecock, which she and her brother were beating to and fro in the air, almost to where we were feeding; though, a moment before, we had not believed any one near us! The white feathers of the shuttlecock danced like lightning in our eyes, and we fled like lightning from the spot; the one this way, and the other that. Moment of horror and dismay,

but still an event that saved and not destroyed us! The danger, however, was not yet at an end.

The hawk himself had been somewhat disconcerted by the curve described by the white shuttlecock, but still more by the direction in which it had driven my mate, so as wholly to defeat his aim. Wheeling, however, more quick than thought, and piercing the too-yielding air with whatever nicety he chose to dart his way, he followed my poor mate with a swiftness which, first for one moment, and then another, seemed to forbid all expectation of escape! Scared myself beyond description, and the whole occurrence hardly occupying an instant of time, I should have been ignorant, while it lasted, of the peril of my beloved; but that by one faint and gasping scream, which she uttered as she flew, I was made to know her and her danger by the sound of her voice, and to feel the misery of our misfortune! But, the next moment, she had flown into the close though naked branches of a lilac-bush, which gave no passage to the hawk's outstretched wings, even though he turned them obliquely, as, at the first, he seemed resolved to follow her; and she, after two or three times experiencing the shelter of the coverts, and as often becoming exposed again in the open spaces, at length flew breathless through some small open rails, and into the adjoining plantation; upon which the hawk gave up the pursuit, and flew into the sky! All was, to me, still confused and doubtful. Had he carried my mate with him in his beak? I had reason to believe, indeed, that he had not; for, in that case, his flight would probably have been only to some neighbouring tree, where, upon the first branch that offered, he would have devoured her! A minute after, my best hopes were satisfied, and all my

fears dispelled, when, from beyond the narrow railing, I heard her weak but reassuring voice! I joined her on the instant; and we sat for some time upon the slender and secluded twigs, leaving nature to recompose our spirits, and to still the boisterous throbbings of our hearts! And nature did its office; we grew calm, and recovered our vivacity; though without so far forgetting our peril, as not to live and move with more caution and circumspection (not to say timidity) than even at any time before!

But the season of Christmas was now approaching; and with it, if mirth became more frequent at Burford Cottage, tranquillity suffered in proportion. Besides the occasional stay of Mr. Hartley, there had now appeared, as I have before related, Miss Wainfleet, the niece of Mrs. Paulett, who came to spend the holidays, and who added much to the enjoyments of the family, particularly those of her aunt and little Emily; and, through her talents, cheerfulness, and sweetness of disposition, the house was now enlivened and embellished with successive hours of singing, dancing, reading, and drawing, and the performance of many amiable actions and estimable duties; and in the recollection of the former of which I cannot omit to mention the kindness habitually manifested by Miss Wainfleet, both in words and deeds, toward Robin-Red-breast and his mate!

The weather, as I have already given reason to suppose, was still generally fine enough to allow every one to appear in the garden and plantation, and to enjoy walks and drives abroad; so that I had each in frequent view, and could often listen to their pleasing conversation. At other times, during at least

the early parts of the day, the mild temperature of the south-westerly winds, and the soft gilding of even a December's sun, encouraged the opening of at least one window of the apartment in which the family sat; and thus, from the adjacent clump of trees and shrubs, I continued to hear both the prattle of the children, and the discourse, either grave or cheerful, of those of riper years. As usual, too, the sound of my song brought back (as I was not unwilling) the thoughts of the company to me and my species; and, whenever any thing was said upon either of those subjects, the reader may be sure that I did not lose a syllable, at least with my own consent. As to what, however, I am more immediately about to mention, it afforded me more pain than pleasure; for I was rather sorry to find that anybody knew so much as, from Miss Wainfleet's account it was plain they did, concerning Red-breasts' nests and hiding-places!

One morning, when my song, and the talk it occasioned, had reminded Miss Wainfleet of a little poem she had lately copied into her Scrap-book, and when she had vainly attempted to repeat a part of it to her young friends from memory, she fetched, at length, the book itself, and read the whole to her audience; but observing, that it was by no means new, and that she was chiefly led to produce it by the applicableness of its title to the case of their present songster. It was a poem, "On the Singing of a Red-breast late in Autumn:"

"DEAR harmless bird! that still, with sprightly lay,
Dost chase sad silence from the drooping grove,
And cheer my lonely walk at close of day,
As pensive through the rustling copse I rove:

“ Long since, the sportive songsters of the spring
Have ceased their strains, and trembling now deplore
The approach of winter, or with active wing
Speed their swift flight to seek some milder shore.

“ But thou, contented, still delight’st to live
Within thy native clime, still pour thy song,
Though winter frown, from morn to latest eve,
And spring’s gay music through the year prolong.

“ Dear harmless bird ! how bright in thee displayed,
Friendship unbiased and sincere we view ;
Which still, when wealth and short-lived honours fade,
’Mid Fortune’s chilling frowns continues true !”

But the reading of this little poem in compliment to my species (for I could not take it as peculiarly addressed to myself) was only a signal for the recollection and reading of more, till the list almost as much surprised as flattered me ; showing, as it did, a new page in our history, or painting in still stronger colours than I had before seen it, the warm and tender interest which such numbers of the human race (including those distinguished for sentiment and genius) have taken in the charms and ways of little birds so humble as ourselves ! Richard, Emily, Mr. and Mrs. Paulett, could each, either from memory, or by bringing forward great or little books, add something to this store ; and now, for the first time, I began to admire the songs of men and women, nearly as warmly as they admire ours ! In one particular, above all, they reflected as much honour upon the singers, as they imparted pleasure to my bosom, and might have been the songs of angels, rather than of men, or even of birds ; for all were songs of mercy ; all spoke of tenderness and love, directing, as they likewise did, that virtue, and that emotion, to the regard and welfare of us

Robin-red-breasts! The following, from this cause, was not the least of my favourites in the collection:

“ODE TO THE RED-BREAST.

“O THOU! that with thy sweetly warbling song
Cheer'st the dull hours when other tribes are fled
To nooks and holes, and every tuneful tongue
Is mute; where hid'st thou now thy pretty head?

“While northern blasts with bitter chillness blow,
And groves around are clad in stiffened snow;
How dost thou, meekest, loveliest minstrel, bear,
Winter's dire cold, and penury severe?

“Hither, thy flight, oh! hither, fearless wing;
I'll cherish thee, and feed thee, till the Spring,
Her smiles resuming, calls thee hence away,
O'er hills, dales, woods, and open fields to stray*!”

In the course, however, of these readings and recitals, it chanced, that in not one of the best, but one beginning with this promising line—

“Hark at the little Robin's *double note*,”

the poet had ventured upon a stanza descriptive of a Red-breast's nest:

“And, mark! when Spring enamels the bright scene
With boundless carpet of enlivening green;
When flowers, eye-pleasing, rear their showy heads,
And odoriferous scents through ether spreads;
Then does the Robin build in neighbouring *tree*,
And cheerful breeds a helpless progeny.”

But Richard interrupted the reading of the poem, to observe, that he had never been able, till then, to hear where the Red-breasts built their nests!

“Ah, Richard,” said Miss Wainfleet, “and, even

* “From the Latin of H. F. Cary.”

now, you have heard what is not true! You must not believe every thing which you hear read out of a book, but often wait till you see whether or not some other book, or other authority, does not contradict it; and if this latter case should happen, then you must inquire still further, and find out which of the two stories may be trusted! As to poetry, it ought to be the depository of truth upon all subjects, for it is the proper voice of learning and philosophy, as well as of sentiment and imagination; but poets, like other writers, are sometimes deficient in knowledge, and the present is one of the examples. I find, from writings of more particularity and credit upon such a subject, that the Red-breast, no more than the lark, ever builds in trees, but always upon or near the ground."

"Oh tell me," said a playmate visitor, "how to find a Red-breast's nest upon the ground; for that would be so much easier than to climb a tree!"

"I have no wish," said Miss Wainfleet, "to enable you to find one; and, fortunately, these birds themselves take so much pains to conceal the spot, and to prevent your suspecting their retreat, were you ever so near to it, that I can tell you all I know about it, and yet be free from any fear of leading you to the discovery. The Red-breasts somewhat vary the situation of their nests, according to the opportunities of concealment which particular places afford to them; but, in England, they usually build by the roots of trees, in some snug situation near the ground; or else in the crevice of some mossy bank, or at the foot of a hawthorn in hedge-rows, or in a tuft of strong grass, or where they can hide beneath the covert of the closest woods."

"But, Miss Wainfleet," said Emily, "I think that

nests about the roots of trees, or in the crevices of banks, or in tufts of grass, must be very easy to find out?"

"Not so, my dear," replied Miss Wainfleet; "because, besides their other precautions, these little birds have many ingenious ways of contriving the path to their nest to be so obscure, and to have so little the appearance of what it really is, that they commonly deceive all strangers, and that even nothing but an extreme mischance is likely to discover it.

"The pretty creatures," said Emily, "I shall now love them more than ever, from thinking of their ingenuity and carefulness! But pray tell us what they do?"

"Where the situation," answered Miss Wainfleet, "is less naturally secure than usual, they often cover both the nest, and a long winding entrance to it, with leaves; so that the whole seems an accidental little heap, under which they find their way through an opening too small to be taken notice of by any but themselves!"

"Is it possible!" cried Mrs. Paulett, in admiration. "Are these birds to be thus added to the number of those ingenious contrivers and mechanics with which animated nature so extensively abounds!"

"It is said so, I assure you," replied Miss Wainfleet, who was about to continue in her own way, but yet yielded to the impatience of Emily, who begged to know of what material the nest was made?

"Of dried leaves, my dearest Emily," answered Miss Wainfleet, "for its outermost shell; but, within this, of moss and the hair of cattle; and lastly, of feathers plucked from the breasts of the parent birds themselves."

“And how many eggs are there in a nest,” demanded the bird’s-nesting neighbour; “and what are their marks and colours?”

“The eggs,” said Miss Wainfleet, “are said to be commonly from five to seven; so that the Red-breast has a large brood, for so small a bird; and they are of a gray or dullish white colour, with reddish streaks.”

“It is plain, then,” said Mrs. Paulett, recurring to what had been said about the coverings of leaves, “that the Red-breast has the habit of making these coverings; and it is in this manner that may have originated that general tradition of their burial of the dead beneath a pall of leaves, upon which the famous and tender incident in the ballad of the Babes in the Wood appears to have been founded *?”

“Yes,” said Mr. Paulett; “and it would not surprise me, if, besides covering their nests with leaves, it is really their habit to cover in the same manner the dead bodies of their species; if such, in some few instances, should fall in their way. It has lately been discovered, that the common mouse actually buries its dead!”

“Pray tell us of this discovery,” said Miss Wainfleet; “let me have it in my memory, to add to my small acquaintance with the economy of nature?”

“The story,” said Mr. Paulett, “will display the ingenuity of mice under more views than one. It lately happened, in a warehouse, at one of our custom-houses, that a bag of corn was sought to be deposited in such a manner as to be safe from rats and mice; and, for this purpose, it was hung upon the beam of a pair of scales, which beam itself depended from the

* See Keeper’s Travels, chap. xx.

middle of the ceiling. After a time, the bag was to be removed; and it was then found, very contrary to the expectations of those who, as they thought, had hit upon so infallible a contrivance, that a swarm of mice had not only found their way into it, to feed upon its nourishing contents, but even to establish their abode! A general rout and slaughter was the immediate consequence. The bag was removed; and some of the mice escaped, but many were killed, and left dead upon the floor. Within a few hours afterward, the warehouseman returned, proposing to himself to sweep away the dead mice. To his surprise, however, not a single mouse remained; and he found himself obliged to account, in the best manner that he could, for the clearance that had been made. A day or two now elapsed, at the end of which it became necessary to make another removal near at hand, and this last was of a pile of reams of paper; but, in so doing, the bodies of the dead mice were found in small spaces between the reams; each body carefully—or as some would say, decently—covered, with small pieces of paper, nibbled from the reams!"

"Well!" cried Miss Wainfleet, "who could have believed so much?"

"If we reflect, for a moment," returned Mr. Paulett, "upon some of the many other practices, of all, or of particular species of animals, I think that there will remain nothing to amaze us in the discovery that mice practise the burial of their dead. But, the fact, at the same time, may be the more curious to the inquirers after knowledge, in as much as, at least by one profound and philosophical writer, this burial of the dead has been pitched upon as *one* of only *three* distinguishing and universal usages, attributes, or practices of

mankind! An Italian writer of critical history has the criterion to which I refer: 'All nations,' says he, 'whether barbarous or civilized, and however far removed from each other, have been constant to three things: they are found to possess some kind of religion, to contract marriages, and to bury their dead*.' I make one more remark," added Mr. Paulett, "and it is this; that it affords an interesting topic of research, to trace to how very wide an extent, all the practices or usages, and all the arts and contrivances and inventions, at any time resorted to or devised collectively among mankind, exist and have previously existed, though but scattered here and there, among the various species of inferior animals!"

"I know," said Miss Wainfleet, "that many examples have been mentioned; as, of building, weaving, sailing, and such arts; and that mankind have been said to be indebted for the same arts to the force of imitation!"

"I do not believe," said Mr. Paulett, "in our dependance upon imitation in these cases. I think that men, through their various necessities and wishes, and through their comprehensive reason, have been the inventors, for themselves, of the same things with which the inferior animals have been able to supply their limited necessities respectively. It is marvellous, in the mean time, to see, how, day by day, we discover that almost every work of human art has been anticipated in nature, either animate or inanimate!"

* *Principi di Scienza Nuova*, di Giambattista Vico. Vico was born in Naples, in the year 1670; and it is observable that his scheme of historical writing is no other, and no better, and no better pursued, than that of the *historical transcendentalism* which, at the passing moment, is the folly of so many living writers in France!

“Make us understand this the better, my dear,” said Mrs. Paulett, “by giving us an instance, and a new one; for we have heard again and again of the arts and ways of the nautilus, the bee, the wasp, the ant, and a hundred more?”

“I may mention, then,” said Mr. Paulett, “a late account of the most striking description, belonging to a water-insect, observed at the head of a little stream which falls down the side of a mountain in Ireland; and displaying, in the water, the entire contrivance of one of our balloons or parachutes, intended for the air. This insect provides for itself, in its worm or caterpillar state, a covering or dwelling similar in principle to that of the membrane in which the chrysalis of the silkworm is lodged beneath a ball of silk; but with the difference, that, instead of having, like the latter, no opening whatever, it has a small opening to the water, upon the undermost side, as a parachute has a large one to the air, though for a wholly different purpose. The paper membrane, or bag, is shaped exactly like a Florence oil-flask, or with only a shorter neck; is composed of a delicate, opaque, and cream-white skin; and is about two inches in length, and one in diameter. It is suspended, mouth downward, in the current of the water, by means of a most perfect silken network, of a gray colour; which is thrown over it exactly as the network over a balloon, but of which the lower cords or lines, three or four in number, and about an inch in length, instead of being drawn together at the bottom, to hold a car, or other single weight, are each attached by the insect to as many little stones, by way of anchors! The balloon, in this manner (itself containing only the insect and air), is held effectually buoyant, at a safe distance from the

bottom of the stream. If it were in still water, it would float upright; but, in the running stream, it is kept dancing in an inclined direction; and this, in the instance observed*, was at an angle of about forty-five degrees, and about two inches below the surface. The current, in driving the closed and globular head of the bag in its own direction, and in thus giving to the whole bag a slanting position, causes the mouth or lower extremity of this balloon, or parachute, or flask, to stand invitingly open to whatever minute objects come down the stream; and, within this floating or diving bell (for it has the principle of the diving-bell, as well as of the balloon) sits the caterpillar, concealed like a spider at the head of his web; and ready, like that land-insect, to devour the prey which comes within his reach! But this water-caterpillar, as, in the article of food and other things, he has higher wants than a chrysalis or grub, so he has higher capabilities, and more power over his paper bag. Staying within it, he can compress it, so as to exclude the air, or whatever else he chooses to reject, or let it open, and take its full bulk and form; or, at his own pleasure also, he can leave the bag, and return to it again. If the bag be taken out of the water, the caterpillar comes quickly from its inside, and shows itself to be of about an inch in length, a dark brown colour, and a soft smooth skin; its head large, polished, and divided into two lobes, and moved with a strong appearance of voracity. The particular balloon, and its inhabitant, the examination of which supplies me this description, was found, with nine or ten others, arranged, or moored, like so many fishing-boats

* At Grumley's Well, by R. Williams, Jun. Esq. of Drumcondra.

(another similitude!) across a branch of the main stream, and beneath the shelter of an overhanging stone (other resemblances to human wisdom!) which seemed to break the force of the water that brought to them their prey; thus at once diminishing their danger of being carried from their moorings, and detaining the objects of their research for better chance of capture! If the balloon is touched in the stream, the caterpillar betrays its emotion by *spitting*, or by sudden jets from the mouth."

The company, when Mr. Paulett had thus finished, were unanimously of opinion, that few examples of the powers, contrivances, and sagacity of the inferior animal creation could be adduced, to surpass what had appeared in this account of a water-caterpillar; and Mr. Paulett, as upon former occasions, observed, that attractive and useful as was such knowledge as this, for persons of all ages, he was particularly pleased when it fell in the way of children: "No other," said he, "affords them as much delight; and, at every word, it teaches them both to admire creation itself for its works, and to feel that respect for its creatures; that is, for their powers; upon which is to be founded so large a share of their due esteem, and of their considerate treatment. Admiration," he continued, "is the source of love, and love of tenderness; and it is only as we admire and respect the animal world, that we shall ever be merciful to it!"

CHAP. XX.

I grant, that from some moss-grown idol-oak,
In double rhymes, our Thor and Woden spoke.

ROSCOMMON.

“THESE Negro nations, then, “ said Mr. Paulett, the next day, are absolutely nations of sanguinary monsters!”

“ Under our present aspect,” replied Mr. Hartley, “ assuredly they are; and yet travellers, even in the same breath with which they relate such things as those of which I am speaking, dwell, with even an affectionate regard, upon the general mildness of the national character, and quote abundant instances in proof! But this is only one of the many features, of man and the whole world, which the ignorant hastily call inconsistencies, but which the wise know to be entirely consistent with that many-coloured order of things amid which we live; and which, in respect of man in particular, has induced the poet to say, that ‘ the thread of our life is a mingled yarn,’ and that ‘ our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipt them not!’ Barbarous nations are confessedly barbarous, all in their several degrees; but the presence of barbarism under certain aspects, is never inconsistent with the presence of many virtues under others; and so, also, the presence of many virtues is rarely inconsistent with the equal presence of much barbarism! Above all things, too, we are to remember, that there is a wide distinction to be taken between principles

and manners; and that among nations, as among individuals, principles are often good, and yield their fruits accordingly, where the manners are coarse, and even hideous, and sustain, in their own way, the most revolting practices. The real history of all nations is, that having set out with barbarism, though yet with many virtuous principles, and many kind affections, they advance, afterward, but little in point of principles and affections, but much in regard to manners; and that, consequently, in all civilized nations, while we see great improvements as to manners, and as to usages, yet we usually likewise see, that they retain, not only the principles and affections of their ancestors, but, in a greater or less degree, and however partially softened, their usages and manners also. But the history of the English nation resembles what I have said to be the history of all; and it follows, that while the manners and usages of England are confessedly more mild at the present day than heretofore, there yet remain, in both, traces which, while they do not shock us as belonging to what is English, are plainly derived to us from the very same sources as the things which, in their earlier and more frightful form, still shock us so reasonably as African! If, for a moment, we look at the scenes that I have described, under their single view of criminal executions, we may easily remark, in a similar view, the remains of corresponding practices among ourselves; such as, the hanging in chains, the beheading, quartering, and disembowelling of traitors, and even the holding up of their bleeding hearts to the eyes of the multitude, by the hands of the executioner; add to which, the exposure of the several parts of their dead bodies upon poles, gibbets, and the gates and

walls of cities, every circumstance of all which is immediately derived to ourselves from our ancient English usages, the usages of the modern Negro nations, and, in one age or another, the usages of all mankind! It has not even escaped the more modern lawgivers of England and Europe, to describe the gallows, or gallow-trees, as *feteesh*, or holy trees; the holy instruments of the punishment of wrong, and of the preservation of the rights of the innocent and peaceable; the very character which, doubtless, the gallows and the cross received among us, when, as was formely the case, criminal executions, the same in principle, and similar in mode, were performed in England, in the name of her offended gods (whether Celtic Bel, or Teutonic Thor or Woden), as now in the name of those of Africa; and all including whatever belongs to idol-oaks, or feteesh, or holy trees: a fact which, at the same time, explains or apologises for much of the sanguinary character usually attributed to the Druidical worship in Britain and elsewhere, along with that of Africa; while, with equal truth, it leaves to each, all that belongs to them besides, of blood and barbarism!"

"The principle, then," said Mr. Paulett, "is not always so bad as the practice?"

"It is the state of manners, rather than the truth of principles, as I have already said," returned Mr. Hartley, "which is often in fault; for, putting what is cruel and loathsome out of the question, and supposing the punishments justly awarded, it may be allowed, in the words of an old writer, upon one of our own ancient practices of criminal law, that 'though the proceeding was barbarous, the judgment was commendable.' "

“ But these horrors,” rejoined Mr. Paulett, “ are not exclusively criminal executions?”

“ I have admitted this,” answered Mr. Hartley ; “ but, even if they were, they are still to be regarded as religious sacrifices. These ‘ Customs ’ are observed, partly in worship of the Supreme Being, and partly in that of the souls of the deceased ; and, in both cases, the existence of an anger—a feeling of revenge—a love of justice—is supposed, which all the slaughter is to appease. Is the divine justice angered ? Have crimes been committed ? Have the people suffered from their enemies ? In either of these cases, the slaughter of the offenders, and of the prisoners of war, is taken as an atonement and delight to the offended deity. But have deceased individuals suffered from the living ? Have they been injured by their countrymen, or were they killed by foreign enemies ? As to this second class, it is to appease the souls of the dead, or to render justice to their claims, that either domestic criminals, or foreign enemies, are thus exposed to slaughter. But, again, the earnest superstitious persuasion, that the souls of the persons upon these occasions slaughtered, can be made, or will be permitted, to follow, as servants or as defenders, as well as wives or friends, the souls of those departed ; it is this that has been the cause, that, at different periods, in Africa, as in all other countries, the living have embraced death, or been put to it, for the benefit of those dead already. In parts of Hindostan, the voluntary burning of widows upon the funeral piles of their husbands, is a small remainder of a usage, once, perhaps, universal ; and in Pagan or Heathen Africa, to this day, that superstition is still the motive for putting even innocent persons, and natives of the country, to death, at the cele-

bration of the 'Customs.' These victims are *devoted*; that is, the superstition teaches, that, in virtue of their being specially vowed or intended for the service or benefit of the particular souls departed, for whose sake it is the pleasure of the living to dispatch them, they will actually, in their spiritual state, reach, and become the servants or the associates of the souls to whom they are sent! The Negro nations make bloody sacrifices, also, from other motives, as for propitiation under any species of calamity; and this upon principles common to all mankind, and such as, in different ages, have every where been thought to justify the same description of excess."

"Amazing folly of mankind!" cried Mr. Paulett.

"Agreed," said Mr. Hartley; "but let us still, as we proceed, acknowledge what proofs continue, that all these things were once as familiar to our ancestors, as now to the Pagan Africans. Not only would it be easy to show, that these 'Customs,' in all their parts, are identical with the 'Customs,' in their ruder state, of every thing which we call Druidic, and were therefore practised, in former days, throughout the British Islands, the North and South of Europe, Mexico, the ancient Carthage, and elsewhere; but recollect, I pray you, how many phrases we still use, derived to us from the persons and the ages to which we are now referring, and from metaphors originating in identical institutions. Is it not that we still speak of '*sacrifices* to the laws;' of '*sacrifices* upon the *altar* of the laws;' of '*victims* to offended justice;' of '*falling a sacrifice* to grief;' of '*sacrificing* ourselves to others;' and many such particulars; and what but '*conquered enemy*' is the meaning of the word '*victim*,' as also of the word '*hostia*' ('*hostis*'), the '*host*' or '*sacrifice*?' "

“ I see, then,” said Mr. Paulett, “ that it is but because the Negroes are behind-hand with us in civilization, that their ‘ Customs ’ take these horrible forms ; and that, as in our own case, the phrases of barbarous ages survive the practice of the barbarities ? ”

“ Yes,” said Mr. Hartley ; “ and I repeat, that in respect of criminal justice, it is the gallows which is our own *feteesh-tree*. Even while we are speaking, it is returning, in England, to a closer resemblance than it has lately worn ; an idle and disgraceful Act of Parliament at once consigning the bodies of the poor and friendless to the violation of the dissector’s knife ; releasing that of the murderer from dissection ; and permitting this latter to be hung in chains ; a treatment which we must join with the quartering and the rest, as identified with the existing Negro usage. I believe that the preceding state of our law was, for every reason, better.”

“ These similitudes of usage are remarkable,” interrupted Mr. Paulett.

“ They are,” pursued Mr. Hartley ; “ but there are other similitudes which we reject. Pagan Athens did not infringe upon the sepulture of its poor and its unfriended ; and these, indeed, were the very persons to whom, in Pagan Athens, and in England, under its old and glorious common-law, the state (or the king, the representative of the state) was the especial friend ! In Pagan Athens there was a public officer, appointed to bury those of the dead to whom poverty or neglect refused the funeral rites ; and a law which gave money from the public treasury for the celebration of their funeral feasts ; or, for what, in Ireland and other countries, is now called the *waking* (‘ watching ’) of the dead ! Pagan Athens respected the feelings of the

living and the dead, and was so ignorant as even to prefer the interests of human nature to what are now called the interests of science! Pagan Athens could have sympathized with our own poet of the seventeenth century, when he sung—

‘ Pray harm him not! though he be dead,
He knows well who do love him;
And who with green turf rears his head,
And who do rudely move him!’

—Never would it have given the sanction of the law to the profanation of the dead; and will the new law of England even answer the purpose for which it has been made?”

“The new law, and its consequences,” said Mr. Paulett, “seem to be odious and despicable in very endless points of view.”

“The Badagrians,” resumed, once more, Mr. Hartley, “have still another and more solemn feteesh-tree, standing in an open space, in the midst of a wood, at the distance of a few miles from the city; and, here, a still greater sacrifice than any of those of the New Moons, and comprising hundreds of human victims, is celebrated once a year. Upon that occasion, the slaughtered bodies undergo a treatment the same as that already described; except that no part of them is removed and then brought back to the spot, but their quarters are hung upon the prodigious branches of that aged tree, and the skulls piled around its trunk, to bleach beneath the sun.

“‘By accident,’ adds an author, ‘I had an opportunity of seeing this much talked-of tree, only a day or two after the celebration of one of the grand yearly sacrifices; and it was the most ghastly and appalling object which I had ever beheld!’ Intending quite a

different route, he had left the city of Badagry, one morning, attended by two servants. 'The path winding through a thick wood,' he proceeds, 'we struck out of the right one into another; and journeyed onwards without discovering our error for some time afterwards. We had not advanced many miles into the country, before our noses were saluted with the most overpowering effluvia, like those exhaled from putrid substances; but, notwithstanding this warning, it did not occur to me at the time, that the feteesh-tree of the Badagrians lay in that direction. The air became more strongly impregnated, the further we proceeded; till, at length, it was wholly insupportable, and I was obliged to cover my mouth and nose with a thick handkerchief, which relieved, in some measure, its disagreeable effects. We had travelled in this manner, as nearly as I could guess, about half-way to the place of our destination, or seven miles from Badagry, when the so-much-dreaded feteesh-tree suddenly burst upon my sight; its enormous branches literally covered with fragments of human bodies, and its majestic trunk surrounded by irregular heaps of hideous skulls, which had been suffered to accumulate for many years previously. It was standing in the centre of a large space of open ground, in the heart of the forest; and was actually the largest tree I had ever seen. Thousands of vultures, which had been scared away by our unwelcome intrusion, were yet hovering round and over their disgusting food; and now and then pouncing fearlessly upon a half-devoured arm or leg. Although [in Africa] scenes of horror had become habitual to me, my feelings, nevertheless, were not entirely blunted; and I encountered a more violent shock, whilst staring at the overwhelming

scene, than I had ever before experienced. I stood as if fascinated to the spot, and stupidly gazed on the ghastly spectacle before me, without the power of withdrawing my sight to more agreeable objects, or even of moving hand or foot. The huge branches of the feteesh-tree, groaning beneath their burden of human flesh and bones, and sluggishly waving, in consequence of the hasty retreat of the birds of prey; the intense and almost insufferable heat of a vertical sun; the intolerable odour of the corrupt corpses; the heaps of human heads, many of them apparently staring at me from hollows which had once sparkled with living eyes; the awful stillness and solitude of the place, disturbed only by the sighing of the seemingly conscious wind through the sombre foliage, or, at intervals, by the frightful screaming of voracious vultures, as they flapped their sable wings almost in my face; all tended to overpower me. My heart sickened within my bosom; a dimness came over my eyes; an inexpressible quivering agitated my whole frame; my legs refused to support me; and, turning my head, I fell senseless into the arms of Jourdie, my faithful slave. Pasco assisted to bear me away from the scene of blood; and the two blacks, emptying on my head and face a calabash of water they had brought with them, I slowly revived, and after a slight refreshment, pursued my journey by another path*.”

“These accounts,” interrupted Mr. Paulett, “are perfectly frightful. What barbarians (again and again!) must not these Negro nations be?”

“You call them rightly,” rejoined Mr. Hartley:

* Lander's Records, &c.; to which, and to other works on Central Africa, the reader is referred for all the African facts adverted to in these chapters.

“ they are *barbarians*, and not savages. *Savages* are never found so cruel; that is, so systematically, so multitudinously bloody. There is nothing that approaches to this barbarity, among what are called the *savages of savage America*; but you find the whole repeated, in substance, among the *barbarians* whom the Spaniards subdued in *barbarian Mexico*. Savages are men in the wild or hunter state; but barbarism is a rude civilization, which, of all the conditions men can be placed in, appears the least favourable to manners.”

“ But I am quite at a loss,” continued Mr. Paulett, “ though after the several pictures you have drawn, to understand the nature of that Pagan worship which these nations follow?”

“ The Paganism of the Negro nations,” answered Mr. Hartley, “ is the same, in substance, with the Paganism of all the rest of the world, and of all ages. I have given you hints of my persuasion of the sameness of all the modern Negro practices, civil and religious, with all the ancient practices, equally civil and religious, of our own islands; and I could easily and endlessly multiply the several points of comparison. But, what I particularly venture to express my conviction of is this, that among the present Negro nations of Central Africa, we find, in their rude state, the very principles and fabric of that religious faith and worship which appears to us so abstruse, but so venerable, and so august, when domiciled in ancient Egypt; when cleansed of its odious practices by the progressive refinement of manners; and when administered and inculcated by a dignified and learned priesthood. In the feteesh-huts of the Negroes, I see, not the copies, but the originals, of the vast and marble temples of

Luxor and Syeneh; in the bas-reliefs, and figures of men and animals, within and without the walls of the feteesh-huts, I see the identities (and not the copies, but the originals) of the hieroglyphical sculptures within and without the ancient Egyptian temples; and, perhaps, of those figures, also, of animals, in burnt clay, modelled to resemble the life, which were to be seen upon the walls of edifices in ancient Babylon. Give to the Pagan faith of the present Negro nations, the subtlety of the ancient Egyptian metaphysics (and even of how much of these the Negro nations still possess we are uninformed); and take from the Paganism of the Negroes its bloody rites (as the learning and refinement of polished, adorned, though still deficient Egypt, must necessarily have taken); and I have little doubt but that by these processes we should arrive at a knowledge of the ancient Egyptian system more quickly than by any other. The Negro nations acknowledge two conflicting divinities, good and evil; and what are these but the Osiris and Typhon of ancient Egypt, as they are also the Orosmades and Ariman of ancient Persia? But the worship or propitiation of the principle of evil always leads, among rude nations, to barbarities like those of the feteesh-tree; while, as refinement overtakes a people, legislators, without disputing the foundation of the worship, get rid of its more odious forms. The Egypt of the Exodus, and of Homer, had no bloody sacrifices, but rather, as we may well believe, those of the odours of sweet woods and flowers; and the Budhists, in Ceylon, Siam, and China, burn gilt and silvered and tinned and coloured paper figures of animals and men, instead of real men and animals."

"An elegant and gentle revolution!" observed Mr. Paulett.

“Yes,” concurred with him his friend; “and the ancient religious affinities and intermixtures of the people of all those countries, is, at the same time, beyond a doubt. Those recumbent figures, upon the walls of the feteesh-huts, have they no relation to the recumbent Budha, whom we see in India and China, with the African Negro’s features, and with his woolly hair? Again, the vast, but rude and simple pyramids of Egypt (which have always appeared to me to belong to another race and other era, than those which gave to that country its gorgeous and elaborate temples) have no affinities with any thing else in Africa; but they are found again in Siam, in the pagodas of China, and in the pyramids of Mexico! An intelligent English traveller inquires whether the Hottentots are not of the race of the Chinese; and, if I recollect him rightly, of that of the ancient Egyptians also; and I think he has much reason. But the religion and institutions of ancient Egypt survive, in my opinion, more widely still in Africa; and subsist, in an especial manner, among all the Negro nations. As to the rest, the modes of sanguinary worship are and have been almost as numerous as the names bestowed upon their object; and what was Typhon in Egypt, and Ariman in Persia, was Moloch in Syria!”

“I perceive, Hartley,” said Mr. Paulett, “that you have read and thought much upon these matters, and I confess myself charmed with the wide views which they present and open; but, at this moment, I cannot yet deliver my mind from the impression of the horrible scenes at the feteesh-huts and trees, and from the thought that such things are still occurring, year after year, and month after month, in that barbarian part of Pagan Africa! Is it not frightful to think, that where

the bounty and beauty of nature are so conspicuous, the ignorance and cruelty of man should be so conspicuous also! Here is a noble forest; a delicious glade opening in its midst; a majestic tree, the monument of ages, in its centre; herbs and flowers at its feet, with a fragrance that might fill the air; birds of plumage and song ready to sit upon its boughs, and, wanting these, a holy solitude, and calm unbroken silence; a blue sky above; a resplendent sun by day; and a moon of molten silver all the night: and here is man, placed in such an Eden, exercising the little strength of his weak arm to reverse the whole scheme of nature; to disfigure that which was sightly; to empoison that which was sweet; to bring the vulture in the place of the dove; the screams of rapine in the place of the murmurs of love: to slaughter his fellow-creatures, and to destroy the works of his own Creator, only to hang their mutilated fragments upon the tree of the demon of evil!"

"I will not argue," said Mr. Hartley, "the consoling topics that should accompany even such and so just, though so mournful a review, but join you in lamenting what is observable upon a still wider scale; the deep contrast which is so often found to subsist, between the beauty and cheerfulness of the works of God, and the deformity and melancholy of the conceptions and consequent works of man! In nothing, perhaps, is the weakness of man, and the immeasurable space, between the mind of man and the mind of his Creator, made more manifest than in this. When we listen to the sickly sentiments, and the perverse opinions, of so many of our proffered guides in opinion and philosophy; when we observe how often the human imagination is employed in the production of a world, and the

creatures of a world, not more unlike the creatures and the world of God, than distinguished for putting all that is hideous in the place of all that is beautiful; all that is terrific, in the place of all that is alluring; all that is malign, in the place of all that is benignant; when we read of fanciful persons, and places, and situations, all so frightful, and all so much the opposite of every thing that men are decreed to meet, to visit, or to endure, it is impossible to avoid reflecting a little upon the doleful results that must have been produced, if man, instead of God;—if infinite littleness, instead of infinite power, drawing after it infinite goodness, and insuring infinite beauty;—if infinite littleness had been the maker of this infinite and lovely world! It is impossible, at such a moment of reflection, not to inquire, what description of monster, in such case, would have been given, to roam over the earth, instead of man, ‘the paragon of animals—in form and motion how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!’ I do not know whether a fair author, whom I could name, intended the illustration of this very contrast; but she achieved something approaching to it, when, venturing to suppose the possibility that science could actually afford the means of creating some sort of *man*, she made the creation of a *monster* only, the sole reward of all the labours of a ‘Frankenstein*!’ Nature, it is to be confessed, has its calamities, its terrors, and its sorrows; it has its

‘Moving accidents by fire and flood,’

and a thousand other ‘ills that flesh is heir to;’ but it is easy to remark how different and how much more mild,—how more consistent and in harmony with our

* See Frankenstein (the Novel and the Play).

prepared feelings and resources—are all these ills, at last, than those artificial griefs and terrors which human fancy conjures up, as tenants of the universe in which we live, and likely to transfix or crush us upon our path! Miserable achievements of poor *man's* creation :

‘ Most ugly shapes, and horrible aspects!’

What calumnies and libels, in short, are not these fancies, upon all the spirit of the works of Nature?

“ For the rest,” concluded Mr. Hartley, “ I have kept in a degree distinct the several classes of persons that, in this Negro kingdom, are put to death with forms so barbarous and hideous; and which, to a stranger’s eye, will be apt to appear one indiscriminating bloodshed. But I suspect that some of the particulars which I have mentioned apply only to the sacrifice of prisoners of war; and that, throughout the described slaughter, we are to distinguish three several descriptions of sufferers, suffering, no doubt, and also subsequently treated, in somewhat of three different modes. They consist, as I imagine, first, in criminals tried and executed; secondly, in sacrificial victims of war; and thirdly, in men purchased promiscuously for sacrifice, in the same manner as birds and beasts in other countries and ages. For the use of human sacrifices, in trading countries, and countries making and dealing in slaves, must inevitably draw after it even such a practice as this!”

CHAP. XXI.

Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind!
 Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
 With food at will: lodge them below the storm,
 And watch them strict.

—The labourer ox
 Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and now demands
 The fruit of all his toil. THOMSON.

CHRISTMAS was gone by, and the new year come in; and the days were lengthening fast, and the season, true to its ancient English character, and not varying from it, (as so many persons heedlessly imagine), was reaching the severest cold:

“As the day lengthens,
 So the cold strengthens,”

was the observation of English antiquity; and its truth continues to this time. The sun had passed the winter solstice, and had now entered, therefore, into the winter quarter; and the winds, which during the preceding division of his course, had so often blown tempestuously from the south-west, bringing with them torrents of rain, and warmth of temperature; now began to blow from the north-east, freezing every pond and stream, and causing fields, and woods, and houses to be covered with wide sheets of snow. The surface of the earth, too, after the long interval from the preceding summer, had now reached its coolest state; and thus had every circumstance arrived at

the annual combination for producing the completest change of the weather, and that long period of struggling heat and cold, and moist and dry, which, as usual, and as of yore, was to reach up to the summer solstice, and beyond; so that, as so commonly happens in England, and as it was written in England two hundred and fifty years ago—

“ Winter lingers in the lap of May.”

Long and severe frosts, in the meantime, in the autumnal quarter, or, as it is commonly called, “ before Christmas,” are and always have been *remarkable events* in England; and mild weather, at that season, though commonly called *unseasonable*, is what is really seasonable, or natural to the season. People incessantly expect both summer and winter before their *seasons*; or, in other words, the warm weather to us comes later, and departs later, than is every day recollected.

The utility, upon the other hand, of the frosts and snows, and the blessings which they bring upon all the creatures of the earth, are truths which admit of no dispute; and so, also, do the frosts and snows contribute, in themselves, to a thousand enjoyments for the strong and the well-provided; but alas for the feeble and the destitute! It is now, and not at any earlier period of all that is usually denominated winter, that the hand of hospitality is commonly extended, and chiefly requisite, in their behalf; for it is now that they are exposed to perish speedily, or to receive their sure though lingering death-wounds, even from cold alone, not less than if by famine, or by the sword, or by the burning winds of tropical and sandy deserts!

The month of January, in the year which belongs to

this my history, was more than ordinarily inclement. The waters, except at minute openings, caused by little falls in the brooks, were everywhere frozen throughout our neighbourhood; the ground, where, here and there, the keen winds had driven away the snow, was become impenetrable as iron; and the snow (to say nothing of the woes and desolations of the snow-storms!) either lay wide, and deep, and without variation, over the trackless soil; or was raised, from space to space, into high wreaths and hills, burying even the tallest herbage and the most bushy underwood. In the midst of all this griping cold, and of all this unmitigated barrenness, how many of my feathered fellow-creatures did I not see die from the weather or from hunger, or become the prey of the equally famishing foxes, pole-cats, martens, and wild-cats; and how many more did I not behold in the last extremes of suffering! Even in the fields and farm-yards, how many a dejected horse, or ox, or cow, or sheep (the snow upon their backs, and the icicles hanging from their nostrils), did I not see standing mournfully, in waiting for that human succour which was either negligently delayed, or beyond the power of their owners to afford! In the lanes, and by the sides of the commons, and even on the skirts and in the midst of the villages and towns, into how many cottages, and hovels, and dreary chambers did I not peep, where

—“the lone widow, and her orphans, pined
In starving solitude;”

where food, and fuel, and clothes, and covering, were alike deficient; and, by the way side, how many little children did I not meet, limping with their chilblains, and crying from the frost and pain! “Alas! then,” said I, “mankind have troubles, like to birds and

beasts; and birds and beasts, like to the members of mankind! And what a world of woe; what a condition of universal misery,"—was I about to add, when the sense of my ingratitude, the conviction of my injustice, smote me upon my bosom, and I became silent! But, recovering from my shame, and eager that my tongue should now make amends for its rashness,—“It is but upon a part alone, of any species,” I resumed, “that these afflictions, in their rigour, are poured out; and even from this part they are most frequently withdrawn without the infliction of deep or lasting injury. The means of avoiding them exist for all, or are denied only to the peculiar victims of indolence, or of carelessness, or of ill-fortune. Then, they last, too, but for a season, and that season the shortest of the year. The sun returns, and I shall see again these snowy wastes laughing with verdure and with flowers. Leaves and blossoms will wave on the branches that are now bending under snow, and weighed down with icicles. The imprisoned streams will be singing over their pebbles, or sparkling under the blue skies among their whispering reeds. The lark will be joyous in the heavens, and the groves a tumult with the music of innumerable songs. The cattle will feed and repose themselves in the meads, and the sheep and lambkins be bleating and bounding upon the hills. These cottages, these hovels, and these dreary chambers, will be gay with the rising and the setting sun; and with the flowers about their windows, and with the fruits upon their boards. These children will be dancing, leaping, and singing, in the lanes, and by the sides of the commons; or they will be gathering daisies in the fields, or nuts or berries in the woods, or on the sunny banks; or racing upon the turf, or dabbling and splashing in the waters! The

world, therefore, is not a world of woe, nor any season of life a condition of universal misery; though each is under exposure to hours of evil and to casualty. But, chiefly, it was my reflection, with what good cause, in this and in all kindred climates, every creature rejoiced in those epochs of the returning sun, which brought with them changes so immense, and of a value so indescribable; changes from the horrors, from the wants, and from the piercing sorrows of the gloomy season, to the beauties, the plenty, the delights, of the season of warmth and sunshine! Oh what songs of birds and grasshoppers, what lowings of cattle, what festivities of the winter solstice and vernal equinox, can sufficiently celebrate and acknowledge," said I, "the blessings of the opening year; and what summer and autumnal cries of gratitude can offer thanks sufficient for the gifts of the year advanced!" But the pleasures of this reverie were due to past and inward recollections, and not to any present and outward sight or feeling! All without me, and within me, saving the reverie alone, was dark, and heavy, and painful, with the desolateness and griefs of the actual season; unless as these were softened to myself, beneath such roofs as those of Burford Cottage, and of the adjacent hospitable homes! I had been attempting that which the poet seems to have thought half impossible;—to

— "wallow naked in December's snow,
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat!"

For me and my yet more timid mate, this was the time to draw nearer than ever to our constant benefactors at the Cottage, upon whom, indeed, we placed all our principal dependence; and where crumbs, and even cheese, were now freely scattered, at the wish of

Mr. and Mrs. Paulett, but chiefly by the hands of Emily and Richard, their good and pretty children. My mate was far too shy to enter the parlour, when, in spite of the weather, the window was opened for our welcome; or even to perch upon the cross-stick which had been duly set in front of the window for our encouragement. She staid at a warm exposure in the garden, where the wall-fruit trees were hung with matting, and the early strawberries and salading were nursing into forwardness; and thither, when I had swallowed a few of the smaller crumbs myself, it was my wont to seize one of the largest in my bill, and fly to carry it to her. A few such crumbs sufficed, for the children, now, threw large crumbs oftener than small; and when my mate was thus supplied, and my own hunger more than appeased, I had leisure to show my gratitude and contentment, either by saluting my entertainers with a song, or by staying to listen to their discourse.

On one of the most dismal of all the mornings of the season, when the air was dark and thick with the large flakes of snow which, hour after hour, continued to fall, I made, as I now punctually made, my visit to the windows of the Cottage, one of which was soon and as punctually opened for my reception; and here I found Mr. Paulett strongly engaged in giving encouragement to the minds of his children, in all their kindly thoughts of the duties to man and beast which so distressful a scene imposed upon such as had any help to give. My appearance, however, in some degree diverted the conversation. The melancholy state of the atmosphere had made me more forgetful even than usual of all doubt or ceremony upon entering the friendly parlour. The few insects, and few remaining seeds, which were still commonly to be found about

the cucumber and melon beds and glasses, or where the gardener was preparing his ranunculus-beds, or his pea-sticks, were quite denied to us upon this hapless morning; and I arrived breathless, drooping, and anxious, at the parlour, and entered it without a thought, excepting that of joy for my welcome and my food! Mr. Paulett observed this; and was led by it to bid his children recollect how justly the poet, whom here he quoted, had described the effects of weather such as they saw, especially as to its influence upon the Redbreast:

—“ The fowls of heaven,
Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The Red-breast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields, and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to *trusted* man
His annual visit. Half afraid,
He first against the window beats: then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is:
Till more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet.”

From birds, however, he passed to beasts; and talked at large of the consideration which the wisest and best of men have always entertained for those dumb copartners of mankind in half the good and evil of the universe! He remarked upon the special care of ancient moralists and lawgivers to insist upon the exercise of humanity toward those domesticated animals which men rear for profit, and the condition of whose lives so much depends upon the humane treatment they receive: “ It appeared,” he said, “ both from the example of these sages, and from the smallest share of reflection which we may bestow upon the