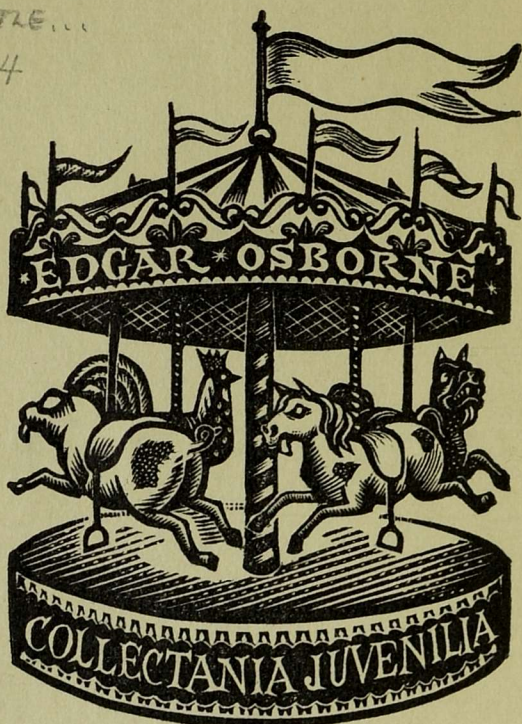


LITTLE ENQUIRERS

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1824



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The Thatcher.

London, Published by Harvey & Darton, Gracechurch Street, 18th Sep. 1824.

THE
LITTLE ENQUIRERS;

OR,

OBSERVATIONS DURING A WALK,

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

ANIMAL, VEGETABLE, AND MINERAL
KINGDOMS.

INTENDED FOR CHILDREN.



London:

PRINTED FOR HARVEY AND DARTON,
GRACECHURCH-STREET.

1824.

THE

LITTLE ENQUIRERS.



IT was the middle of summer. The trees and hedges were in full leaf, and the flowers ornamented the banks by the road-side: the fragrant woodbine curled about the hedges, and the large white cups of the bindweed were scattered among its bright green leaves. All nature seemed in perfection.

Few children who reside in the country but have felt the joy and animation inspired by the delightful scenery of a summer morning! Few children but have rejoiced to welcome the unfolding

of every fresh flower, as an emblem of that lovely season; or to listen to the little warblers of the grove, as they sing songs of praise and gratitude.

Frederic and Laura were two *such* children. They lived in a charming spot in the north of England, and had, from their earliest years, been accustomed to rejoice at the return of summer. Their little hearts bounded with gladness, as they listened to the young birds chaunting their cheerful songs, or rolled among the new-made hay upon the lawn before their father's house. They had, one day, been amusing themselves in this manner for some time, when Frederic, a lively fellow about seven years of age, suddenly jumped up, exclaiming: "Mamma desired me to gather two or three tulips for her, to put in the basket in the hall. So she did. I will go directly."

No sooner spoken than done. The active boy was, in a few moments, at the tulip-bed, just at the bottom of the lawn, and almost as soon by his sister's side again.

“ Laura! Laura!” said he, “ did you ever peep into a tulip? See, here are six little columns in it, each of which is crowned with a little dusty tuft.”

“ A *dusty tuft*!” said Frederic's mother, who at this instant turned the corner of the walk that led to Laura's seat, in quest of her tulips: “ what are you talking about?”

Frederic was so intent upon his discovery, that he either did not hear his mamma's voice, or paid no regard to it; but began to pull the petals off his tulip. By the *petals*, we mean those beautiful red and yellow leaves,

which form the chief part of the flower. So that the six little columns were presently left alone; and these, with boyish play, he began to rub down his sister's white muslin frock, striping it with streaks of yellow dust. No sooner was the yellow tulip served in this manner, than a red tulip and a brown tulip, whose "dusty tufts" were black instead of yellow, underwent the same process; so that before Laura, who was twining some roses into a garland for her straw-hat, was aware of it, her frock was literally striped with streaks of black and yellow.

"Frederic! Frederic! what are you doing?" exclaimed she, turning round and discovering the mischief. Oh, mamma, look what Frederic has been about."

"Frederic might have employed his time in a more *useful* manner," said

Mrs. Foley, smiling. "Did you ever observe the busy bees, my dear, collecting the farina from different flowers?" continued she: "did you ever notice the bee, as she 'sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet?'"

"What do you mean, mamma?—what do you mean by farina, or by the bee 'extracting liquid sweet?'"

"I know what mamma means," exclaimed Laura. "Bees make honey, you know; that is, they collect honey from different flowers, a little from one and a little from another; and then they carry it to the hives and put it into the honey-comb; and so, when the bee is putting its little trunk, or proboscis as mamma calls it, into a flower, to get out the honey, it 'sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet.' Have you never tasted honey, Frederic?"

"Yes," replied her brother; "I tasted

some one day at my aunt's. But what has all this to do with the dusty tufts in the tulips?"

"It has a great deal to do with them," said Mrs. Foley; "but instead of calling them *dusty tufts*, my dear, you must call them *anthers*: the little columns which support them are called *stamens*; and the yellow or black dust which it sprinkled over the anthers, is called *farina*. Laura has told you that the bees collect honey from different flowers; but she either did not know, or omitted to say, that they make the cells which contain the honey of this very *farina*."

"Ha! ha! is that true? Is honeycomb really made of the yellow, and black, and scarlet dust that we see on the stamens in different flowers? I never thought about this before. I never knew that the bees made

the honey-comb as well as the honey."

"Why, who did you think made it for them?" said Laura, laughing. "I am sure that it would be just as impossible for a man to make a honey-comb, as for a boy to make a bird's nest."

Frederic thought so too; for he recollected, as his sister spoke, that he had, early in the spring, collected some moss, and down, and horse-hair, with the intention of making a nest; and had actually spent an hour and a half, in the arbour at the bottom of the garden, in trying to make a similar one to that which had been built by a linnet in the box-tree just by. He remembered how he had exerted his skill to no purpose: how he had twisted the horse-hair, and picked the moss into little bits and woven it together, now this way and now that, but in vain! and how he had,

at last, given up the attempt as useless, when his father had convinced him that it was absolutely impossible for a little boy to make a nest.

When Frederic was reminded of his nest, he saw that it would be equally impossible for him, or any one else, to make a honey-comb. "I wonder how the bees manage to make it," said he. "They have not reason, you know, mamma; and it is reason that teaches us to do things. I know very well that a man could not build a house, or make a hay-rick, if he were without reason: papa says so; and I really never knew, before, that bees were reasonable creatures."

"You do right to *reason* in this way, at all events, my dear boy," said his mother. "Bees certainly are not reasonable creatures; but instead of this valuable faculty, which is considered to

belong to mankind alone, they possess a feeling called *instinct*, which takes the place of knowledge and understanding, and enables them to know how to do those things which contribute to their happiness and comfort. For instance, bees make honey-combs, birds build nests: birds that are fond of water build their nests among reeds and rushes, in fenny or marshy places; and birds that are fond of society build their nests under the eaves of houses, or in some snug spot in their neighbourhood; as the linnet did in the box-tree, or the house-sparrow under the roof of the gardener's cottage, in spring. *Instinct* taught them to do so."

"But in what way is instinct different from reason, mamma?" enquired Frederic.

"Animals are led by necessity rather than choice," said Mrs. Foley: "hence

their works are always uniform and invariable. For instance, all bees frame their cells in the same manner; that is, in the form of an hexagon; and they have done so from time immemorial: linnets build their nests in the same manner, of the same materials, and in the same places, year after year; and all other animals follow the same plan, that of acting in the same manner as others of their own species have done before them. Now, you know, my dear, that if they were capable of inventing fresh things, they would not be limited to one unalterable plan: reason would show itself by new efforts: the linnet would build a different sort of nest, and try to improve upon that of last year: the bee would change the mode of constructing its cell, and its industry would be exerted in different methods. It is only in the human bosom that the power of

producing different effects is fixed ; and it is to mankind alone that we must look for variety of invention.

Now do you understand the difference between instinct and reason ?”

“ I believe I do, mamma. One man will build a house in one way, and another man will build a house in another way ; but all the bees in the world make their cells just in the *same* manner ; because, as they are without reason, so they are without invention. Creatures that possess *instinct*, do every thing in the same manner year after year : creatures who possess *reason*, vary the mode in which they do things.”

“ Very well explained,” said Frederic’s mother.

“ I have learned something in consequence of the tulips, however, mamma.

But I wish you would show us a beehive, and let us see the busy bees at work."

"Well," said Mrs. Foley, who was ever willing to gratify laudable curiosity, "we will walk to old Mrs. Holloway's, who will, I am sure, be pleased to show you her hives."

"Let us go directly!" said Laura, jumping up from among the hay, where she had been so long seated. There, my garland is finished, and I will wear it, if you please mamma, to Dame Holloway's."

"If you like it, my dear," said her mother.

Laura's little hand was presently clasped within that of her mother, and they set out on their way to the white-washed cottage of the good-natured old woman, who lived upwards of a mile from their house.

Just as they got through the garden-gate, Frederic, who had walked for some minutes in silence, exclaimed, "Is not *every thing* useful, in some way or other, mamma?"

"I believe there are few productions of nature but may be applied to some purpose or other," said Mrs. Foley. "The goodness of our Heavenly Father is very apparent in the variety of his productions: some are adapted for our food, some for our pleasure, some for our clothing, and others for our convenience. But why did you ask this question?"

"Because I was thinking how wonderful it is, that even the very dust in a tulip is of use. Who would have thought of such a thing, if they had not been told that honey-comb is really made of the dust which the bees collect from different flowers. What do you call that

dust, mamma—farina? Oh, yes, *farina*! Well, I will now try to think of the different uses to which different trees and plants are applied.”

“ Things that *grow*, as trees, shrubs, and flowers, are called *vegetable productions*,” said Frederic’s mother. “ And now, my dear boy, exert your thoughts, exercise your understanding, and name some of the purposes to which vegetable productions are applied.”

“ What shall I begin with ?” said Frederic, taking his mother’s hand. “ Straw, mamma, straw ! Look at the man who is thatching that cottage down in the lane ! Straw is a vegetable production ; the stalks of wheat and barley are called straw ; and straw is used for thatching houses, and barns, and cottages ; and for cows to eat in the winter, and for horses to lie upon.

Papa's Dobbin lies upon nice warm straw when he is in the stable.

"Straw is useful in another way, of which Frederic has not thought," said Laura. "My bonnet is made of straw: is it not, mamma? And this little reticule, that my uncle Tom gave me, and which I brought to put flowers in, is made of straw."

"You have mentioned several useful purposes to which straw is applied," said Mrs. Foley; "but you have omitted to mention the wheat, the grain, the barley—vegetable productions assuredly much more essential to our comfort than straw itself."

"Right, mamma. Wheat produces flour: flour is only wheat ground into powder at the mill. I wish you would prevail upon papa to take us to see a mill. I should like to know how

they manage to grind wheat into flour."

"Your father will take you, if you ask him to do so, I have no doubt," said Mrs. Foley. "You will see the wheat in a great open box, called the *hopper*, from which it is made to pass between two very large stones, called the mill-stones. The under stone is fixed; but the upper one turns round very quickly, and presses so heavily upon it, as to bruise and grind the wheat to powder; and this powder, when properly sifted, is *flour*. Flour is one of the most necessary articles of life: bread is made of flour, and without bread we should be very badly off. In some countries the poor people live chiefly on potatoes instead of bread. In Ireland, for instance, the lower classes are extremely poor, and live in little wretched cabins, depending for sustenance on potatoes and

butter-milk. You have heard of the distress of the poor Irish some time ago. You have heard of their being in a state of starvation, destitute of food, and destitute of sustenance. You know how much of your papa's time was taken up, with that of other gentlemen, in endeavouring to alleviate the misery of their condition, and to provide means for supplying them with food and nourishment. Their extreme misery arose in consequence of having lost their supply of potatoes. The usual mode of preserving these roots, during the winter, is in large pits, dug for the purpose; thus providing a store for the future. On opening the pits in the spring, however, to their great dismay, it was found that they had generally decayed in the ground, and were totally unfit for use. This circumstance, together with the failure of the crops the following year,

produced that extreme want, bordering on famine, which called forth pity in the heart of every friend to humanity; and was happily relieved by the exertions that were made throughout England.

“And now, if you please, we will return to our subject. Frederic, my dear, can you mention any other purpose to which barley is applied?”

Frederick reflected for a few moments, but he could not think of any thing excepting bread for poor people.

“Malt is made of barley,” said Mrs. Foley; “and beer is made of malt. Thus barley and wheat supply us with beer and bread, two of the chief supports of human life.”

As Mrs. Foley spoke they entered a small wood, through which they had to pass on their way to old Mrs. Holloway’s.

Here new subjects presented themselves—fresh objects awakened the attention of Frederic and his sister. The wood was just in its beauty. The young trees were clothed with leaves of a bright emerald green, while those which were more advanced in years, and which age had rendered venerable, had ivy creeping around their trunks, thus supplying the absence of that verdure of which age had deprived them. The silvery foliage of the white poplar, or abele tree, was intermingled with that of the elm, the beech, and the hazel; and the feathery birch-tree flung its shade on the grass beneath :

“ Its mossy leaf and its silvery stem,
Oh ! who would not love to look upon them.”

“ I can answer your questions now, mamma,” said Frederic, running for-

ward ; “ for here are *vegetable productions* in plenty. There, there is an oak. Shall I repeat those lines on “ the Oak,” which I learned the other day ? they will give you a better description of the oak than I can do in my own words.”

“ You may, my dear ; but at the same time I wish you to understand that I like you to accustom yourself to express your ideas in words of your own ; to accustom yourself to explain what you mean clearly and distinctly, and not to depend upon others for a mode of expression. We should pay great attention to this important art. When you are older, you will find that conversation is one of the grand charms of life ; and that, unless we know how to express ourselves with distinctness and propriety, we deprive ourselves of the enjoyment of it.”

Frederic repeats :

“ ‘ The oak, for grandeur, strength, and noble size,
 Excels all trees that in the forest grow ;
 From acorn small that trunk, those branches rise,
 To which such signal benefits we owe.

“ ‘ Behold what shelter in its ample shade,
 From noon-tide sun, or from the drenching rain ;
 And of its timber staunch, vast ships are made,
 To bear rich cargoes o’er the watery main.’

“ Now, mamma, I will try to tell you, in plain prose, something about the oak. The acorns, in the first place, are very useful : squirrels and other little animals lay up acorns for their winter store. I have heard that those little balls which grow upon the leaves, and which we call oak-apples, are used in making ink. And then the uses of the wood—the timber : the verse describes that, mamma. It is used for ships, and floors, and doors, and tables,

and waggons, and a great many more things. I have now told you all I know about the oak."

"The bark of the oak is very valuable," said Mrs. Foley. "By the bark, I mean that rough outside or outer covering, which you may observe upon the trunks of most forest-trees. Do you observe those men yonder, who are employed in stripping the timber that lies on the ground?"

"Yes, mamma. I was just going to ask you what they are about."

"They are collecting oak-bark, for the purpose of tanning leather. It possesses what is called an *astringent* property: you will understand the meaning of this word better when you are older; it implies binding, or contracting the parts of a body closer together. Before the bark is used it is ground to powder, and is then put into pits full of

water, and called *ooze*. The hides are soaked in this infusion ; and when the leather is well saturated with it, it will resist moisture, and is fit for the various purposes to which it is generally applied. Cork is the bark of a particular kind of oak, which grows in the south of France. You know very well what cork is ?”

“Cork ! cork ! Oh ! yes, mamma. You know, in ‘Early Lessons,’ Frank tried to make a shuttlecock of cork ; and then, just as he had finished it, good-natured little fellow ! he gave it to his cousins, because they wanted a burnt cork to black their eye-brows with, when they were at play. Oh, mamma, we could not make shuttlecocks of that kind, if there were no such thing as cork !” continued Frederic.

‘Cork is applied to other purposes,

as well as that of making shuttlecocks for little boys," said Mrs. Foley, smiling. "We use cork to stop bottles and prevent the air from penetrating them, or the wine they contain from escaping. Then there are cork-soled shoes for men, and cork-waistcoats for sailors, and cork——"

Mrs. Foley was prevented from saying what she had intended to say, by Laura's exclaiming, "Mamma! mamma! there are two or three old women down in that little glen, very busy in cutting down the fern, and laying it in bundles upon the ground. What do you think they are getting it for?"

"They are procuring it for the potteries, no doubt," said Laura's mother.

"For the potteries, mamma: what do you mean by that?"

“ Let us go and speak to them,” said Mrs. Foley.

Laura clasped her mother's hand, and they advanced towards a good-natured looking old woman, who had on a large, broad-brimmed straw hat, and a green plaid petticoat ; and who held a knife in her hand, of a very singular shape. She appeared somewhat fatigued, and had seated herself on a bundle of faggots, apparently to rest herself.

“ Well, my good woman, you seem almost overdone : I suppose you have been working very hard. My children wish to know to what purpose you apply the fern.”

“ Yes, an' please you, ma'am : it gangs to the potteries,” said the good-natured old woman.

“ To the potteries,” said Frederic.

“ Yes, sir ; to the potteries,” re-echoed the old dame.

“But what is it sent there for?” repeated the little enquirer.

“Oh! an’ please you, sir, it is sent there for the wares, that they may gang safe to other places.”

Frederic was ready to laugh; but a significant look from his mother repressed the inclination, and the old woman continued:

“Why, sir, an’ please you, when it’s dry we send it to Stafford; an’ it’s used there to put the wares in, and to send them to other distant places. Some gangs frae thence to Scotland, sir; and when it’s there, we light our ingles with it. It makes our wee bit ingles blink sae bonnily when we come hame frae our labour; and we quite forget our carking cares, the while our bairns are toddlin round our bonny fern ingle.”

All this was quite unintelligible to Frederic: he looked at his mother for



The Fern Cutter.

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an explanation. She gave him another look, as much as to say, "a little patience, my dear: I will tell you, presently."

After some further conversation with the old woman, they pursued their walk. As soon as they had turned the corner of the path that led to the 'valley of fern,' Frederic looked up at his mother with a very significant countenance. "Now, mamma," said he, "do tell me what that curious old woman meant, by saying that the fern 'gangs to the potteries.'"

"She is a Scotch woman," said Mrs. Foley, "and this may account for the singularity of her conversation; at least what you consider as such, because you are not accustomed to hear any thing of the sort. The fern which they are collecting is, when dry, sent to the potte-

ries, or earthen-ware manufactories, in order to be used for packing the earthen-ware that has to be sent to distant parts of the country; as it is considered better than hay, in preserving it from injury. In some countries, cottages are thatched with fern-leaves; for if cut down when fully grown, and properly dried, they make a thatch more durable than any kind of straw."

"I will beg papa to have the moss-house thatched with fern," said Frederic; "for you know, mamma, he sometimes says that straw does not do very well."

"A very good idea!" said Mrs. Foley. "We will talk to your papa about it. You see, my dear, that even the beautiful fern, which you have so often admired, is of use."

"Yes, mamma, and I am glad of it. I like the old Scotch woman very much :

‘an’ please you, ma’am,’ I mean to tell papa all about it, when we get home. But, mother, what did she mean by a ‘bonny fern ingle?’”

“A good fire, my love. The poor people sometimes use the stumps of the fern for firing, which supply the place of wood; and this is what the old woman meant.”

“Thank you, mamma. I will talk to you more about it when we get home; but I now want to hear what you were going to say about cork. We were talking of cork when Laura interrupted us.”

“It is so long since,” said Mrs. Foley, “that I have quite forgotten what I was going to say about cork. But I believe I had intended to ask you to what purposes the wood of the beech, the elm, and the hazel are applied.”

Frederic was at a loss. “Indeed,

mamma," said he, "I do not know. Will you tell me?"

"Read and you will know," said Mrs. Foley. "I will not tell you to what uses the wood of these trees are applied, my dear boy, because I think you will have more pleasure in reading the account yourself. If you will remind me of it when we get home, I will show you a book, called the 'Woodland Companion,' where you may read a description of each of the trees we have seen in this wood; and which contains also an engraving of each of the principal trees, which I think you will like to copy, when you are older and rather more expert with your pencil."

Our little party had reached the confines of the wood, almost before they were aware of it; so busily had they been employed in conversing upon the

different topics which had presented themselves. Our time generally seems to pass quickly when we are employed. People who wish to be happy should never be idle. Those who, like Frederic and Laura, are desirous of obtaining knowledge and information, cannot well fail of being happy. Their thoughts are ever on the alert: their observation is constantly excited—their curiosity is always awake: some new idea continually presents itself—some fresh discovery is perpetually made.

Let us, in early youth, endeavour to store our minds with useful information. For, what is it to which we are indebted for all the advantages resulting from science and art? What is it that distinguishes civilized from savage life? What is it that conduces so essentially to our own happiness, and enables us

at the same time to promote the comfort of our fellow-creatures ?

‘ ’Tis knowledge : knowledge to the soul
Is power, and liberty, and peace ;
And, while celestial ages roll,
The joys of knowledge shall increase.’ ”

“ Nature has bestowed her favours upon every nation and every clime,” said Mrs. Foley. “ The native of the burning plains of Africa reposes under the shade of the spreading palm ; and the inhabitant of the flowery fields of Italy reclines at his ease in groves of orange-trees, whose fragrant blossoms scent the air ; while the native of the sultry climates in the torrid zone, sits under the shade of the palmyra, whose fan-like leaves shelter him from the scorching rays of the sun. To some vegetable productions we are indebted for food and sustenance, to others for clothing

and covering, and to others for the comforts and conveniences of life. All come in to supply our wants in one way or another; and we ought, I think, to be very grateful to that good Being who has so wisely provided for us all we can desire. But it is not to *vegetable* productions alone that we are indebted for the many comforts we possess. There is another class of productions, which are called mineral productions, and which are as essential to our wants as those we have been considering."

"Minerals, mamma, minerals?" said Laura.

"Yes, my dear, minerals," said Mrs. Foley. The productions of nature are divided into three classes, generally called *kingdoms*. These are,

The vegetable kingdom,

The mineral kingdom, and

The animal kingdom.

“ I name them in the order in which we shall mention them. The different productions we have hitherto been talking about, belong to the first of these kingdoms. Trees, plants, herbs, shrubs, and flowers grow ; and *whatever grows out of the ground, belongs to the* VEGETABLE KINGDOM.”

“ I understand you, mamma,” said Laura. “ We have been talking about wheat and barley, and oaks, and elms, and hazels, and ferns, and palm-trees, and palmyra-trees which shade the poor Indian when the sun shines upon him. These all grow : so they all belong to the vegetable kingdom. And now we will try to find out what belongs to the mineral kingdom: mineral kingdom did you call it, mamma?”

“ Yes, mineral kingdom. Whatever is dug out of the earth is called *mineral*.”

While they were talking they passed a stone-quarry, in which several labourers were at work : some were hewing the stone from the rock ; others were putting it into wheelbarrows ; and others were wheeling it away, and placing it in a heap by the side of the quarry, where it was to remain until wanted for use. Our little party stopped a few minutes to observe the men who were so busily employed. Frederic looked up at his mother with an enquiring eye, and at length he said, “ I have been thinking, mamma, that stones belong to the mineral kingdom. Stones are very useful : our houses, and barns, and stables, and walls, are made of stone. I am sure I do not know what we should do without stone. Am I right, mother ? ”

“ Yes, my dear boy, you *are* right :

stones belong to the mineral kingdom."

"How very busy the men are," said Laura. "They go on with their work just as busily as if we were not looking at them. No time seems to be lost. See! those men without their coats yonder, are hewing the stone with great pick-axes; and those two men who have got great straw hats on their heads, (a little like the old Scotch woman's,) are putting it, with spades, into the barrows; and they contrive to fill them just as the men, who have been wheeling the stones to the outside of the quarry, return with the empty barrows: then they wheel the full ones away, and the men in the straw hats go on filling those they have brought back. It is very amusing to watch them. Do you know, mamma, it reminds me of our favourite story, the

‘Cherry Orchard.’ Do you remember how the children managed, when they were platting their straw at their old dame’s? One sorted the straw, another split it, another platted it, another sewed the plats together, another ironed it; and in this manner they got on a great deal faster than if they had each worked by themselves. You know they would not let that cross, disagreeable Owen help them, because he was so ill-tempered; and he did not get on nearly so fast as they did. He found what a disadvantage it was to him, to be so ill-tempered, and became good-humoured at last; and then his cousin Marianne, and the rest, assisted him in the same manner. Oh, mamma, I hope I shall always be good-tempered!”

“I hope you will, my dear little girl, and thus ensure the love of your

parents and friends. I am pleased with your allusion to the ‘Cherry Orchard:’ it had occurred to my recollection before you mentioned it. The men in this quarry are helping each other, in the same manner as the children at the old dame’s assisted one another in platting the straw. They save a great deal of time by so doing. If the same man were to hew the stone from the rock, to fill the barrow, and to wheel it to the heap on the outside of the quarry, much time must unavoidably be lost: no barrow would await his return; and his own barrow must, consequently, stand empty the while he dug and hewed some more stones to fill it. All such inconvenience is avoided by the mode the men have adopted, and this mode of working is called *division of labour*.

“And now, if you please, we will

go on; for I am afraid it will be rather late before we get to Mrs. Holloway's, and that we shall interfere with her dinner-hour."

"I have been thinking so much about other things, as almost to have forgotten where we are going," said Frederic. "I had almost forgotten the hives, and the bees, and the honey and the honey-comb, and the farina that was in the tulip, and which led us to think of going to see Dame Holloway's bees. Oh! mamma, how one subject springs out of another, as you say."

"It does, indeed," said Mrs. Foley. "Now that you have told me that *stones* are minerals, can you think of any thing else which may be classed in the mineral kingdom?"

Laura reflected and Frederic thought.

After some consideration, the latter exclaimed, "I have been thinking, mamma, that *coals* are minerals; for they are dug out of the earth. When we were at Birmingham, last summer, we saw some coal-pits. Oh, the black, dirty places! and there were several hundred men employed in digging and raising the coal. Do you remember it, Laura? The day that we went to Barr Beacon, we passed by the collieries; and we said to each other, that the men who had been working in the pits looked like chimney-sweepers, they were so very black. Do you recollect it?"

"Yes," replied Laura; "I have not forgotten the delightful day that we spent at Barr Beacon. Some of us went in my uncle's poney-chaise, and some of us went on horseback. We took our dinner, you know, Frederic,

and dined in gipsy style, under the trees at the top of the hill. Oh, how pleasant it was! It was such a beautiful day, and there were such a number of pretty flowers growing upon the sides of the hill; and the flag was flying at the top of the high pole that was fixed on the top of the hill, among the tall fir-trees—the beacon, you know, Frederic; and my cousin Charles climbed up the ladder that led to the little gallery where the flag was hoisted, and which was almost as high as the fir-trees themselves. He told us, when he came down, that he had counted forty-two churches, and seen a great number of gentlemen's houses peeping among the green trees at a distance, and I know not how many spires and wind-mills. He wanted his sister Clara to go up the ladder also; but my aunt said that such an exploit was not fit

for a young lady, and that she must content herself with what she saw on *terra firma*. And then we ran round and round the tall fir-trees; and the wind was blowing, and the flowers were growing, and the sky was blue, and the little birds were singing, and I was so happy!" continued the lively Laura, quite regardless of either coal or coal-pits, in the midst of the agreeable train of ideas that were awakened by the mention of Barr Beacon.

But Frederic was not disposed to forget the coal-pits. "Is not coal a mineral, mamma?" said he.

"Yes, my dear; and it is called a *combustible* mineral. Combustible signifies what will burn. Coal will burn, therefore it is called combustible. Wood will burn, therefore it is called combustible."

What a dismal life the poor colliers must lead, down in those dark coal-pits! said Frederic; “and from day to day, and from week to week. Oh, how shocking it seems!”

“It is not only an arduous and unpleasant employ, but also a very dangerous one,” said Mrs. Foley; “and the poor men who are obliged to gain their livelihood in this manner, claim our commiseration and pity. Many have lost their lives in the coal-pits, from accidental causes; and thus their families have been deprived of their sole support. I will relate an anecdote respecting a poor boy, who lately lost his life from such a circumstance. By a sudden burst of water in one of the Newcastle collieries, thirty-five men and forty-one boys were driven into a distant part of the pit, from which it was impossible for them to

return, until the water should be drawn off. While this was being done, though every precaution was taken, the whole number gradually died from hunger or suffocation. When the bodies were drawn up, seven of the lads were discovered in a cavern away from the rest. Among these was one of a peculiarly serious disposition, who had been daily accustomed to read the sacred Scriptures to his poor widowed mother, when he came from his labour, and of whom she was dotingly fond. After his funeral, your papa went to visit her; and while the mother showed him, as a relic of her son's, his Bible, worn and soiled by constant perusal, he happened to cast his eyes on a candle-box, with which, as a miner, he had been furnished, and which had been brought up from the pit with him; and there

he discovered a very affecting record of the piety and filial affection of the poor boy. In the darkness of the suffocating pit, with a bit of pointed iron, he had engraven on the box his last message to his mother, in these words: ‘Weep not, my dear mother; for we were singing and praising God while we had time. Mother, follow God more than ever I did. Joseph, be a good lad to God and mother*.’

“Your papa was very much affected at this instance of early piety. Real piety alone could have supported the unfortunate sufferer at such a time, and in such a place.”

The children were much interested with this melancholy recital, and promised that they would never

* This circumstance is a fact.

forget how many poor creatures pass a wretched life in procuring comforts for us.

And here we would pause, and entreat our young readers to do so too; and to reflect, for a few moments, how much they are indebted to the exertions of those who are in an inferior class of life to themselves, and who, consequently, claim their gratitude, as well as their commiseration.

What should we do without the light, cheerful fire, that enlivens the long winter evenings? What should we do without cloth and flannel, and comfortable clothes to keep us warm? What should we do without bricks and stones to build our houses?—glass for the windows—slates for the roofs—carpets for the floors—cloth for the curtains? &c. And yet for all these com-

forts and conveniences, of which, were we destitute, we should think ourselves very badly off, we are indebted to the unwearied industry and labour of that class of our fellow-creatures, whom we are too apt to regard as beneath our notice, because they earn their livelihood by satisfying *our* wants.

Surely no little boy or girl will reflect on this subject, without making a resolution to do all in their power to assist and relieve the sufferings of the poor.

“We have now seen what are the productions of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms,” said Mrs. Foley; “and the animal kingdom alone remains for us to investigate. Linnæus, the greatest naturalist the world has ever produced, distinguished the three king-

doms of nature by saying, that stones *grow* ; plants *grow* and *live* ; and animals *grow, live, and feel*."

"*I grow, live, and feel!*" cried Frederic, giving a spring, and jumping down from the little bank by the side of the road, upon which he had been walking. "I grow, live, and feel!" continued he, capering round his mother; "so I belong to the animal kingdom! and you belong to it, and Laura belongs to it; and cows, and horses, and lambs, and sheep, and rabbits, and linnets, and bees; and, in short, whatever grows, lives, and moves, belongs to the animal kingdom!"

"Right," said Mrs. Foley; "whatever has the power of loco-motion belongs to that kingdom!"

"*Loco-motion*, mamma! What is that? I do not understand you.

“The faculty of loco-motion is the faculty of moving from one place to another,” replied Frederic’s mother: “consequently, whatever has the power of doing so, has the power of loco-motion.”

“I am an animal, belonging to the animal kingdom, mamma!” repeated Frederic. “I possess the delightful power of loco-motion! I am pretending to be a wild antelope, mamma; and I am going to skip about the banks by the side of the road, which I shall fancy are rocks and crags, like the rocks and crags in those countries where the goats and antelopes live and gambol about! Now, mamma, look at Frederic, and call him your wild little antelope!”

Away ran the lively boy, anxious to exert his loco-motive powers, and

to show with what adroitness he could act his *antelope-character*.

Mrs. Foley and her children presently reached the lane which led up to Dame Holloway's cottage. It was a pretty and retired lane. The hedges were almost covered with dog-roses, some of which were nearly white, and others were of a pinkish tinge: the wild cherry-tree was loaded with large bunches of blush-coloured blossoms; and the little brook, that ran purling along by the side of the path-way, was overgrown with reeds and rushes, and yellow flag-flowers. A little wicket-gate led to the old woman's garden; and a narrow walk, edged on each side with rows of a small flower called *thrift*, which grows wild in some parts of England, led to the door of the cottage. Mrs. Holloway



See page 52.

Dame Holloway's Cottage.

was very fond of her garden, and took great pains to keep it in order. She was nailing a bit of list, which supported a gillyflower against the wall, when Frederic opened the little gate; but she turned round on hearing the voice of the children, and came forward to meet them.

“Good morning to you, Mrs. Holloway,” said their mother.

“Good morning to you, ma’am,” said the old woman.

“Frederic and Laura wish to see your garden, and to watch the bees at work in your glass-hive, if you will have the goodness to let them do so,” continued the former.

“Yes, ma’am, and glad,” said Mrs. Holloway: “they are heartily welcome. This way, if you please, little Sir: the hive is at the back of the cottage.”

“What a neat little garden it is!” said Laura: “is it not, mamma? Look, there is a fine moss-rose tree. What beautiful roses! And there are white poppies and scarlet poppies—oriental poppies, mamma! There are also nice jessamines and woodbines! Oh, how I do like to see such neat little gardens! But those moss-roses are more beautiful than any I ever saw before!”

“Ay, Miss,” said the old woman, that is because I took such pains to kill the blight, by smoking tobacco under the trees, and by tying little bits of scarlet worsted round the stalks.”

Laura was going to ask Mrs. Holloway what she meant by saying that she tied scarlet worsted round the stalks of her rose-tree, to kill the

blight, when she was interrupted by Frederic's exclaiming, as they turned the corner of the path that led to the hive, "Oh, the busy, busy bees! Here they are, working so busily."

"This is 'division of labour,' indeed, mamma," said Laura. "All of the little creatures seem to be employed: not one of them is idle. Each is intent upon what it is about, without interfering with the others. Is not this what you call *division of labour*, mamma?"

"It is, my dear," said Mrs. Foley. "You have now been ten minutes looking at Mrs. Holloway's bees; and I think you should be much obliged to her, for her kindness in allowing you to see them. By the time we get home, I think dinner will be ready."

“We are much obliged to you, indeed, Mrs. Holloway,” said Frederic and Laura, in a breath.

The good-tempered and hospitable old woman would not allow her guests to return till they had partaken of some nice currants and strawberries, in the holly-arbour at the end of her garden.

When they were walking towards home, Laura said to her mother: “I have enjoyed our walk very much, mamma, because we have been usefully employed. Have we not? We have been gaining knowledge, and knowledge is useful. We have learned that every production of nature is classed either in the vegetable, the mineral, or the animal kingdom; and we have learned also, that every production of nature is useful, in one way or another.”



See page 56.

The Arbour.

“ I have enjoyed it too,” said Frederic ; “ and I see, mamma, that we may gain knowledge even from the farina—the little ‘ *dusty tuft*’ of a tulip.”

THE END.

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