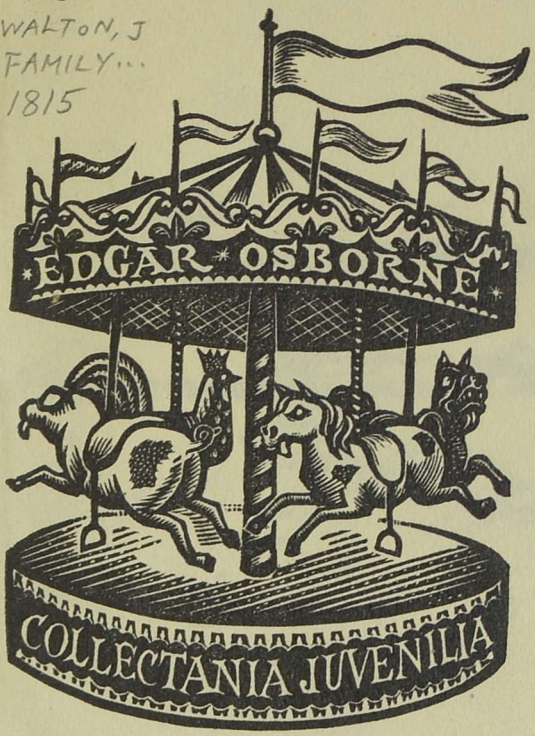
Emily Gibernes

the gift of

Henry Gibernes

her dear

brother



See page 76.

Emily Gibbons

FAMILY WALKS,

IN THE

FOUR SEASONS.

INTERSPERSED WITH

CONVERSATIONS ON NATURAL HISTORY,

AND

Descriptions of Local Scenery.

BY J. WALTON.

"Nature is but the name for an effect,
"Whose cause is God."

COWPER.

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PERSONS

ENGAGED IN THE CONVERSATION.

AMELIA, a Widow at the age of Thirty Years, returned to her Father's house in *Hampshire*, superintending the Education of her younger Sisters, ANNE and LUCY; with their little Brother CHARLES, aged Seven.

SPRING.

WALK I.

Amelia.

THE evening is so fine, that I suppose we shall all wish to walk after tea. I will, if your lessons are all perfectly done by five o'clock, order it early, that we may have a long ramble. I propose to go through South Wood, and to return over High Down and Mill Mead; but remember, that at half-past five you must all be prepared; and those who are not then ready to start, will be left at home. The sun sets at half-past seven, and we must be at home by eight.

All. Thank you. You may be sure we shall all be quite ready.

Am. Well, I am glad to see you have so well kept your engagement. I see what can be done when the will goes with the work. Anne, have you the little straw basket, that we may bring home the plants we collect?

Anne. Here it is, sister, and Charles has brought his trowel to take up some roots of cowslips for his garden.

Am. Why really, Charles, I think you will fill your garden too full.

Charles. O, no! the violets are out of bloom, and I have taken them up, as you know we can always get more in Moss-Lane bank, and I must spare a seat for pretty Miss Cowslip, with her bashful face hanging down, and hiding her golden eye.

Am. The air is most delightful;

and see how beautifully the beeches are putting on their new foliage. I say *new*, because the young and sheltered trees retain their old leaves, till the new ones come and fairly push them off. The horn-beam is called hedge beech; its leaves are more notched. It makes a warm fence, as it has always either a green leaf or a dead one on it. *White*, our naturalist of Selborne, says, "The beech is the most elegant of our forest trees, whether we consider its white smooth rind, its upright shape, or its glossy foliage, and graceful pendulous boughs."

Charles. Pendulous, what is that, sister?

Am. It means *hanging*. You see how elegantly the light, new-formed leaves bend towards the ground. The

oak stretches its arms out horizontally. It is not yet in its beauty; but when it has on all its leafy honors, I think it is the noblest tree we have. And in the autumn, don't you recollect how beautifully its varied tints appeared from the study window, when the beeches were turned to a uniform brown? Even in old age the oak has a majestic appearance.—When George returns from Malta, he has promised to take us to see the great oak in Holt Forest. Its age is said to be seven hundred years, and it is thirty feet in girth.

Lucy. But I wonder who knows that? I thought a hundred was a great age for any tree: that they would *grow* for that *long* time, and that the timber would last another hundred before it decays.

Am. If you mean that in buildings it will last one hundred years, you are very safe in your calculation, because there are oak beams and rafters in many of our churches, certainly built many years before the reformation. How long ago is that, Lucy?

Lucy. More than two hundred years. For if we reckon only from the time of Elizabeth, who came to the throne in 1558, (and it began in her father's time, Henry the VIIIth) it is still longer.

Anne. Yes; but you know that although the good Prince Edward the VIth nearly perfected that great and glorious work, Queen Mary gave way to the Pope's influence, and our country again, in a great measure, returned to popish superstitions. But happily her reign was short, and Eli-

zabeth restored the Protestant faith, or was more properly the honored instrument of Providence in establishing the reformation. The *chesnut* is also a very durable wood, and formerly must have grown to a vast size, as the timbers of some of our oldest buildings are composed of it. At Minsted, in Essex, the walls or sides of the parish church are of that tree; and it is said to have been erected before the conquest. When was the conquest by William of Normandy?

Lucy. In the eleventh century.

Am. Thus you see it is very possible the great oak in Holt Forest may be seven hundred years old. We will take a sketch of it, before it is levelled with the dust; for it is a venerable and picturesque object.

Anne. Hark! as we approach South

Wood, how the nightingales are chaunting their evening songs. Charles I wish we could persuade you to hold your tongue. We like very well to hear you talk sometimes; but how can you imagine we should prefer your *prattle* now, to such strains as these?

Am. You perceive there is a great difference in the pipes of these little songsters; some are much more full and rich in their melody than others. Stand still: there is one on her nest, a very delicate creature. What a bright eye she has! and how she watches us.

Charles. Let us go away, for fear we should make her leave her eggs.

Am. No birds that either reside with us, or that visit us every spring, have so great a variety in their notes.

The lark is very sprightly; the blackbird's mellow lay across our meadow is very rich; but we must give the palm to Philomel. Do you remember *Strada's* nightingale, how she swelled her little tuneful throat to emulate the flute of the lover, till she fell down dead at her feet?

In vain th' indignant artist strove,
In all the plaintive strains of love,
His utmost skill he tried;
Still Philomel's sweet notes excel,
Till in th' harmonious strife she fell,—
The sweet musician died.

Charles. O! how sorry I should have been. I should have broken my flute in pieces to think I had caused the death of that sweet bird.

Am. Now is the time to find the sweet-scented vernal grass. See if you can collect some.

Lucy. Here it is, I think, just

beginning to flower. O, how sweet! it is like the Tonquin bean. Take a bunch of it, Amelia, for papa.

Am. Yes; it is called by Linnæus *anthoxantham odorata*, and it is this chiefly that gives such delicate fragrance to our hay. Horses prefer the pasture where it abounds, not that it is the most nourishing grass, but because of its flavour.

"The fair Oxantha o'er the meads,
Sweetly scents the vernal gale."

MRS. SMITH'S *Sonnets.*

You will find plenty of it where the wood has been cut down, for it loves dry, airy situations. The shade of beech is unfavorable to grass, and few shrubs, except *holly*, grow well under it. Hence we get such good walks in Beechen Wood.

Charles. See here, just at the skirt

of the wood, I found this pale, sickly looking plant, and one of a greenish brown. They are not so handsome as those in our mead.

Am. No; but they are both curious plants: the first is the *orchis bifolia.* It is remarkable for having very little scent during the hours of day, but is very sweet in the evening. Smell it.

Charles. Delicious! it is like the honeysuckle.

Am. Now go, and find another of the greenish brown, and dig up the root very carefully with your trowel. You see this has a *bunch of roots* round it, and is not a *bulb* like the other. It is called the *bird's nest Ophrys:* it is much like an orchis, but you see the flowers do not terminate in an *awl*-shaped heel, like the

orchis tribe. In another month we shall find the *fly* and the *bee-ophry*. They are not blown yet. Still later are the *orchis pyrimidalis*, and the *conopsea*, both of a beautiful crimson, or purple colour. The common sort, now blown in the meadows, is the *maculata*, or spotted-leaved *orchis*. Where, Anne, did you get that elegant plant? It is the *convallaria multiflora*, or Solomon's seal. See, how the flowers hang along the bending stalk, beneath the large fine-pointed leaves.—*Multiflora* means, having many flowers.

Charles. Then, I suppose, multitude is from the Latin also, and Flora, you know, was the goddess of flowers.

Am. It well deserves a place in your garden, Charles. How beauti-

ful are these large, single hawthorns, in full bloom, scattered over Sir Charles Bright's park. But how many families are now in town, losing the enjoyment of their parks and plantations, when nature is just become gay, and this sweet season is past, before they return. The

> "Hypericum
> All bloom, so thick, that scarce a leaf appears."

The laburnum, hanging its golden tassels over the glossy laurels—the bird-cherry—the *viburnum* (guelder rose)—the lilac, in gay attire of blue, red, and white, and the Portugal laurel, are all now in high beauty, while many only see them covered with dust, in their morning rides round London. Could you wish to leave this delightful walk (and on so sweet

an evening), for noisy streets and crowded rooms, in a city?

All. Oh! no.

Am. But see—

"There the scar'd owl, on pinions grey,
Breaks from the rustling boughs;
And through the lone vale sails away,
To shades of deep repose."

BEATTIE.

This warns us that it is time to return. Charles, you must not linger. Your basket is as full now as it will hold. The dews begin to fall. You have a cough, Lucy, and it is unsafe, after a warm day, to be longer out. Remember what you read lately—

"The dews of the evening most carefully shun,
They're the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

And your father remarked, that this was both elegantly and philosophi-

cally expressed; for the exhalations from the earth, caused by a powerful sun during the day, being condensed by the cold of the evening, when the influence of the sun is withdrawn, fall in drops of dew: and thus generally the hottest days produce the heaviest dews at night. Do you comprehend this, Anne?

Anne. Perfectly: I think the lines were in Lord Chesterfield's receipt for health, written to a lady of a very delicate constitution. It begins with—

"Grown old, and grown stupid, you just think me fit,
To transcribe from my grandmother's book a receipt."

Am. It is so. I wish that elegant writer had always written on so good a subject; for when he attempted to

polish the manners of his awkward son, he certainly did it at the expence of the noblest feelings of the heart.

Lucy. See, the shepherd is driving his flock from High-down to the fold, already pitched for them on that fallow. Poor old man! he walks as if tired with his day's work, and he must rise by five to-morrow morning. His faithful dog relieves him much; Keeper collects all the stragglers, and he will stand by the fold till every sheep is in, and his master has fastened the hurdle, which you see now stands open to receive them. Sometimes he says, when he is very busy, he sends Keeper a full mile off, to fetch home the sheep from the downs. The dog's voice is so well known to the flock, that they obey his orders, and come home as orderly as if the

shepherd were behind them. Then the shepherd always gives Keeper a crust for his services.

MORNING—Walk II.

Charles. Come, Anne, get ready, for we are going to the hop grounds before breakfast, this fine morning.

Anne. What a clamour the rooks are making! Surely there is something more than common going forward.

Charles. Yes; I heard Peter say several others were to meet him this morning to go rook shooting.

Lucy. How cruel it is to destroy their young, and thus distress the poor parent birds.

Am. I find, my dear, they must do it every spring, or the increase of these large birds would be too great for the farmers to bear. To a certain degree they are the farmer's friend. They destroy an incalculable number of grubs and worms, and follow the ploughs to find the chafer grub (a very destructive race); but if rooks were suffered to multiply too much, they would deprive us of the corn we want. Otherwise it seems hard to destroy them, as they evidently seek the protection of man, by coming near houses to build and rear their young. If no rookery is at hand, they will come to large elm-trees, in the middle of a town, as they do in the City of Bath. After their young can shift for themselves, they forsake the rookery and lodge in distant

woods. The families reared on each farm, coming there to feed every day, and returning to their lodging places in the evening. In the morning they assemble and seem to hold a council about their movements, when they separate in flocks, and frequently go seven miles to feed, returning with perfect regularity in the evening. At a farm near Overton, there was a *white rook* that came daily with his sable brethren to feed. At last it was supposed that its colour cost it its life. A hawk pounced upon it, as a pigeon, and it was killed. On the same farm a hawk, which had been very destructive to the chickens, one day darted swiftly in at the top of a hen coop, when the servant seeing it, went and secured the ruffian before he could get out. They exposed him to the

insults of the enraged cocks and hens in the yard, which did not cease their rage and scoldings till he was killed.

Anne. I suppose they were upbraiding him with the murder of their children.

Am. I can tell you another curious instance of the sagacity of rooks. Not far from Winchester is a rookery, one tree of which is over a *gravel pit.* If any one of them dare to build its nest on that tree, the rest soon set to work and pull it to pieces, as if aware of the risk their young would incur of being dashed to pieces by a fall. The provision so bountifully made for these numerous flocks of large heavy birds, is pointed out to us as a peculiar instance of the kind providence of God to his creatures, and to encourage man to trust in Him who

" careth for the ravens." " They have (says our Lord) neither store house nor barn, and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." To which the divine teacher adds this affectionate expostulation, " Are ye not much better than they?"—" Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of *these*." This is supposed to allude to that beautiful flower, with us called the Guernsey Lily, (*Amaryllis Japonica*). This bulbous plant was said to come from the east, where most charming flowers grow in the fields, superior far to any we can raise in our gardens, because of the coldness of our climate. This flower, when placed in the sun, seems

to sparkle with gold-dust, and is, in its structure and colour, altogether magnificent; yet, no doubt, very inferior with us, to those found in their native clime. Repeat, Lucy, what Thompson says on this passage of the New Testament.

Lucy. "Behold—and look away your low despair,
See the light tenants of the barren air;
To them no store, nor granary belong;
Nought but the woodland and the pleasing song;
Yet your kind heav'nly Father bends his eye
To the least wing that flits along the sky;
To HIM they sing, when summer strews the plain,
To HIM they cry in winter's pinching reign,
Nor is their music, or their plaint in vain.
He hears each gay, and each distressful call,
And with unsparing bounty feeds them all."

Charles. I think it should be

"*are* their music or their plaint in vain."

Am. Then, Charles, you are mistaken—*or* is the disjunctive copulative; if it had been *and* instead of *or*, you would have been right.

Charles. What corn is this so newly sprung up? is it wheat?

Am. No, it is barley; *wheat* is sown in the autumn, *barley* and *oats* in the spring; or they would not endure our frosts. But there is a *spring wheat*, not much used in this county, where the people are accustomed to have the best and whitest flour. The beans, which you saw the poor women and girls dibbling a few weeks ago, are come up in rows, and will, when blown, yield us a delicious scent.

"While wafted by the gales of spring,
The fields their morning *incense* bring.
The wearied spirits to relieve,
The meads their *incense* breathe at eve."

WARTON.

Anne. What crop is this? it looks like peas.

Am. It is a small pulse of the pea kind, called *tares* or *vetches*: it is usually cut up *green* for the cart horses during summer. It is more cooling food for them than dry hay. *Lucerne* is another succulent good grass, cut *green* for the same purpose, and may be cut five or six times in the course of a summer, if we have showers. It is a Persian grass, and does best upon rich deep soils. There is a still larger sort brought from Brazil, which will grow three or four feet high.

Charles. Now we come to the hop grounds; what are the men doing?

Am. The men are at what they call *beeking*. The *beek* is a heavy iron instrument with a strong handle. One side of the head you see is like a prong, the other has a sharp but strong point; with this they break the surface of the ground, and clear away the shoots that are of no use. The remaining shoots, or *bine*, the women tie up the poles, three or four times, with withered rushes or flags, till the bine having twisted itself round the pole, no longer requires tying. It is curious to observe that the hop twines itself round its support in the direction of the sun's course; and the French bean just the contrary way. You know the bine is cut down every year, close to the old root. Vines in

the south of France are cut down nearly as low, and they spring again so as to produce both branch and fruit the same year. In England, it is generally from the former year's wood that we expect fruit. The hop is peculiarly liable to blight, because it produces in great abundance, that juice which is the proper food of the *aphis*, or blight insect. A long winged fly first comes and pierces the young leaves; from this puncture the juice issues, which supports their young (a little green insect often covered with froth). You see the same on rose trees. If you see an *ant* creeping up the plant, you may be sure *aphides** are there. That industrious insect is their great enemy. No one can tell if there will be

* The plural of aphis.

a crop of hops till the autumn, for they often disappoint the hopes and labours of the planter.

Anne. I hope there will be a crop this year. The poor women and children depend much upon it. Our gardener's wife and family earned seven pounds by hop-picking, last year, in a fortnight.

Charles. Yes, I remember the boys had new hats and shoes, and round frocks, and went to Wey-Hill Fair, where the hops were carried on three waggons to be sold. How proud they were of their jaunt, and had such wonders to tell of what they saw there! Hop pockets, sheep, cart-horses, and cheese, *oceans* and *oceans*,* they said.

* A Hampshire phrase for vast numbers of every thing.

Anne. Aye, and their aunt went with them to see them home safe in the waggons, and she "*zee'd* outlandish *bastes*," and heard the "*vinest* music in the world."

Am. True; and there their father bought cheese at the best rate, enough to last them the year round; for the west country graziers bring their cheese there and load back with hops, and a great deal of useful business is done at this fair. It is not merely for idleness and revelling like a village wake.—Here is the wood sorrel, (*oxalis acetosa*). Observe its pale green leaves, and the flower most delicately penciled. It is a fine acid, and will make what the chemists call the oxalic acid.

Lucy. See the swallows, how busy

they are over the Mill Pond, and the Moor.

Am. Yes, they know that most gnats rise from these watery places, and there they first seek their English food.

Charles. Why do you say *English*, Amelia?

Am. Because, my dear, they are said to come across the English Channel every spring from warmer climates, and we know that in September they generally assemble in flocks; and soon after this *congregating*, they disappear. They are a wonderfully industrious race, and often raise two broods in the season; keeping on the wing from morning to night, to catch insects for the support of their infant families. We are

much obliged to them for destroying millions of gnats every year, which otherwise would be very troublesome. I suppose we should hardly open our mouths to breathe out of doors in summer, if it were not for these friendly visitors.

Lucy. Don't you recollect, Charles, the little poem we read on the swallow? It ends thus,

Sweet bird! how pleasant are thy ways,
How bright thy skies appear!
No pinching want attends thy days,
No winter in thy year.

Lend me, gay bird, thy dashing wing,
We'll spurn all cold and care:
In warmer climes we'll seek a spring,
Or find a summer there.

Am. This wish, I suppose, was formed by some boy like you, Charles, very fond of roving. I suppose you

think of what George wrote from Lisbon; that he left Falmouth with the ground covered with snow, and in five days found himself walking amidst groves of oranges and lemons in flower, in a climate like our summer evenings. Now, I think, all the varieties of our seasons have charms enough for me to make me quite content with England. I once saw written in an alcove these lines,

To us alike all seasons suit,
The spring has cheering flowers:
The summer sun, the autumn fruit,
The winter social hours.

Lucy. We must now begin to wear our straw hats; the sun gets very powerful.

Charles. The straw is so much lighter that it never makes my headache.

Am. This is not all, Charles; it is from its *colour* much cooler.

Charles. How do you know that, sister?

Am. I will *tell* you now; but you cannot *prove* it till next winter, in the way I wish. Ask the taylor for three bits of cloth—one *white*, one *drab* colour, and the third *black*. Lay them on the snow in the forenoon, when the sun shines, (as it often does very clear after a heavy fall of snow) in an hour, go out and take up these patterns, and you will find the *black* has sunk deep in the snow from the action of the sun upon it, the *drab colour* will have sunk a little, but the *white* scarcely at all. Now, do you think this proves the influence of the sun on colours?

Charles. Certainly. I will for the

present take your word for it, and wear my straw hat next time we walk out.

EVENING—Walk III.

Am. Peter is to get the boat out, and row us over the Stour. It is too soon to find the white water lily blown, or the flowering rush. The latter is the *butomus* or *gladiole*, a very elegant flower, growing high above the water. See what a leap that salmon took just now! They come up this stream to spawn, which they always do in fresh water, and they are now returning to the sea. You see yonder the Stour and the Avon unite, and form what is called

an *estuary*; that is, a very wide stream running into the sea. Farther on, the channel opens finely between Christ-Church Head to the Needles Rocks, at the Isle of Wight. These are chalk-rocks, and shine like silver in the evening sun. That abrupt cliff is the western extremity of the island; it is said to be five hundred feet high; there the puffins build in very great numbers, and one would suppose in safety; but the Islanders venture their lives by being let down from the summit with ropes, to get their eggs. These they sell for a good price, at Portsmouth, Lymington, &c. as they are esteemed a delicacy. Now we are landed in this meadow, we will follow the brook; it is a trout stream.

Charles. What is that trout doing? How he jumps, and seems to have something in pursuit.

Peter. Perhaps, you will hardly believe me, but I assure you they often do it. He is trying to drown a frog, that he may then eat him at his leisure. As often as the frog rises to take a mouthful of fresh air, the cunning rogue jumps up and falls on him to keep him down. There he is again! as the frog is too large to be eaten whole, he designs to have a wing or a ham for supper to night. Master Charles, give me your prawn net, I may catch him when he lies still. I have sometimes caught them in their haunts, with a noose fixed to the end of a rod, and jerked them up at once. Poachers know how to put even their hands under them and

tickle them (as the weeds to) and then catch hold of them.

Charles. What little fools they must be! I thought Mr. Trout had been too cunning for that, as he is so expert a hunter. I remember, Peter, you told me of a cunning bird that you used to hunt on Southampton water. What was it?

Peter. A large water fowl we call a *kurr*. When we pursue it in a boat, it dives, and rises again at some distance; we follow it as fast as we can, and it continues diving, till it is so spent that it can go no farther. We then lose sight of it, and those who do not know this same Mr. Kurr, think he is gone; but we, who are acquainted with his tricks, know where to find him; and that is,

perched on the helm board of the boat, where he sits snug and quiet, while his pursuers are looking for him any where, but where he is. We then seize the rogue.

Charles. What a cunning fellow he is! I should not have had the wit to contrive so well.

Am. Now you see the *ichneumon-fly*, rising from the water. The egg is deposited in little cases of hollow sticks or straws, which lie at the bottom of the river. When the time for the insect's change to the fly state is near at hand, they rise to the surface, and as soon as the sun beams have awakened them perfectly, they quit their little floating arks, and on gay wings glistening in the sun, they soar away. It is said they live only till the next evening. These and the

may-fly form a fine treat for the fishes now coming in season.

Lucy. I think we lately read of the beetle tribe, called *scarabeus.* They have an outer wing or hard coating to secure those with which they fly; and protect them from injury in their hiding places and crevices, where they creep for food or shelter. When they take wing, they unfold their fine gauze sails with all their curious plaits of most delicate texture; and when they rest, these curious foldings all resume their former positions without injury.

Am. It is one of the wonderful contrivances and provisions of the God of nature, extending to the minutest animals of his creation.

" He gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
And builds his throne upon the rolling worlds."

Charles. Do you call a beetle an animal?

Am. Yes, surely: what should it be? Buffon divides nature into three kingdoms, the animal, vegetable, and mineral. Now, pray in which of these would you place the beetle?

Anne. O! certainly in the first of these classes.

Am. See, Charles, how this little stream winds in the meadow. Here it forms a perfect peninsula, that is, *almost* an island; being joined to the main land only by a narrow neck. That neck is called an *Isthmus.* This is only comparing *great* things with *small,* to shew you what they are. Great Britain, with all its dependent islands, is thought very small by the Emperor of China, whose kingdom is said to contain three hun-

dred millions of people. One of our poets, however, justly remarks, that though many climes produce finer flowers and fruits,

"*Man* is the nobler growth our realms supply,
And *souls* are ripen'd in our northern sky."

Here is plenty of the bog-bean in this meadow. It is the *menyanthus trifoliata*, and *Withering* says it is the most beautiful of our native flowers. Observe how fine a red and white! and how curiously the petals are fringed. Charlotte Smith says in one of her sonnets—

"There lovely Menyanthus hides
Her fairy fringed flower."

Peter is waiting in the boat, and we must return, or your papa will be uneasy about us.

MORNING—Walk IV.

Am. We have now an hour before breakfast, and we can walk to the Common. There is a cuckoo on that old birch tree. There she flies! her wings and shape are something like a small hawk. The village children love to hear her note, as it tells of the approach of summer, and they can more easily imitate his two-syllable song, than that of any other bird.

Charles. I wonder where they come from every spring.

Am. They cross the channel from France, with other birds of passage. But Captains who have been much used to the channel service, say they

do not, in the spring and autumn, observe such flocks of swallows and martins, as to account for the disappearance of the great number we have every year in England; when our great naturalist, *White*, says he was puzzled to account for this curious circumstance, we may well hesitate about it. He rather apprehends many of them go into a dormant state, during the winter, and come out again in spring. A cliff near Brighton falling down one winter, many were found asleep. When brought to the fire they began to shew signs of life. Yet the few instances of this kind did not satisfy that sagacious enquirer into the economy of nature, for speaking of the *swifts* that were darting round Selborne Church tower, he says,

"Amusive birds! say where your hid retreats,
When the storm rages, and the tempest beats:
Whence your return, by such nice instinct led,
When spring, soft season, lifts her bloomy head?
Such curious searches mock man's prying pride,
The God of Nature is their secret guide."

Mary. Here is John Barnes's cottage, which George took a drawing of before he went abroad, as a perfect picture of a Hampshire cottage. The bay tree is cut up so as to cover all one side of it you see, just letting the only chamber window there is, peep out.

Charles. How green and sweet it looks! Then there is a fine sweet briar at the door; a range of wall-flowers and stocks under the lower window; a yew arbour at the end of the garden; and four hives of bees, with good crops of cabbage, beans,

and potatoes. Well done, John Barnes—you deserve a garden.

Mary. And here is a sow in the stye with ten pigs; how clean and pretty they look, Charles. Then see, how well the cow-house is covered with turf cut from the forest, and three sides of it hurdled and made warm with furze from the common, where their cow is kept all the summer. Then there is a little paddock, where they cut hay enough to serve her through the winter.

Am. Well, Dame Barnes, how much butter do you make this fine spring from your cow?

Dame Barnes. Why just now, Ma'am, nine pounds a week. But then you know we never use any cream, and the skim milk keeps the sow, with our bacon and cabbage

liquor, and what she gets on the common; and so we do mighty well, Ma'am, I thank you, and your good father, who let us have this sow when a pig for ten shillings, when we must have given a guinea for one at the market.

Am. I hope, Dame, you also thank GOD for all the comforts you enjoy, for they seem to be many. And when I saw last winter, in London, in what poor confined houses many industrious people are obliged to live *there*, I often thought what a blessing it was to possess such a cottage as your's, by the side of this fine common, with the advantages you enjoy.

Dame Barnes. Well, Ma'am, so our Ned said, when he came home last Whitsuntide. He and his wife live by keeping a mangle in a *stived-*

up court, and it almost broke my heart when I let his little Nanny go home with him to see her mother last time, for our John said she would not have a mouthful of fresh air, but once a week.

Anne. Look, Charles, what nice arbours the sheep have made under the thorn bushes on the common, where they get shade in the heat of the day, and shelter in the storms. Sheep are called silly, but I think they are as wise as their neighbours.

Am. Yes; for when we were in Sussex last year, a gentleman's shepherd told us, that he has often found, by a ewe's coming to him and bleating, that something was the matter; when following her, he has discovered her lamb tangled in a bush, and that his help was wanted to extricate

it; when she thanked him as well as she could, by bleating in a very different note to the former lamentation. A farmer near Beechy Head also told us, that his sheep often left the down in hot days to get the shade of the cliff. In those rocks there are springs of fresh water trickling down them; which lose themselves in the sand of the beach, and thus, without some contrivance, the sheep cannot quench their thirst. To accomplish this, they watch the little rill as it falls, and stamp with their feet till they form a basin in the sand to receive it, waiting till it falls, and then they drink.

Charles. That is clever indeed. I could never have imagined a sheep to be so wise an animal.

Lucy. And you saw when our

Carlo barked at the flock we passed just now, how they formed themselves in a thick phalanx; keeping close together, with their faces all turned one way to face their enemy.

Am. By this act of union, and the courage they derive from each other's company, they dismay the dog. If once they separate, the smallest cur can drive them where he pleases. Thus you see the benefit of friendship in society, and the courage and strength derived from mutual confidence.

Charles. What fine large bird is that, with green and yellow feathers, striking the tree with his bill?

Am. It is the great woodpecker; he does this to try if the tree is decayed or not, which he knows by the sound. The insects he seeks for his

food, are to be found in decayed or rotten wood. After he has thus made a hole with his bill and finds his prey, he darts forth his tongue, which is much longer than his bill, and has a horned point, and draws out the insects at its tip.* A wonderful contrivance of the Creator, in the formation of this bird's bill and tongue for this peculiar purpose!

Anne. I took this small twining plant from a furze bush. It seems to have no root, nor did it touch the ground.

Am. It is a curious *parasitical* plant. That is, it draws its nourishment from the plant on which it hangs, without

* This tongue has two strong strings, which dividing at the root, are fixed into two elastic muscles in the breast, whence he can strike with great force.

touching the earth at all; it is the *cuscuta*, called dodder. In the west of England it is so abundant as sometimes to obstruct the growth of beans, round which it twines, but as it has not roots all up the stalk, like ivy, it seems wonderful how it draws sufficient nurture from such a dry shrub as the gorse, to support itself.

Charles. What is gorse?

Am. The furze of our heaths and commons. The common heath with the smallest purple blossom, is the *ling*. The bell-heath is a much finer plant, almost a crimson, and sometimes a white; but the *erica* (heaths) are a very numerous tribe, and some of those brought from Africa are extremely beautiful.

Charles. There is old Ruth Woods, sitting at her door this fine morning,

knitting, and her little grand children playing round her with bunches of cowslips, hare-bells, and butter cups. Ruth, have you heard the cuckoo this spring yet?

Ruth. I thought, Master Charles, I did hear it once; but *I be so dunny* that I can hardly tell. I could once ramble over the common as brisk as you, with your rosy cheeks, but old age will come on us all. I am glad to see you all look so well this morning, and so happy! I hope your good father is well too.

Lucy. Indeed we hope so, but we came out so early this morning, that we did not see him. You see we have hands full of flowers, to shew him where we have been this morning. Good bye, Dame; I wish you could walk as well as we can, and

enjoy the fields. We shall see you at dinner on Sunday after church, I hope. Good bye.

Ruth. Thank you, Miss Lucy. Aye, I am old indeed, but Heaven is still good to me, and bestows on me many comforts.

Am. " And not the least a thankful heart,
To taste those gifts with joy."
ADDISON.

Now, my dears, before we leave this fine eminence, commanding so rich a view of wood, water, pasture, and corn-fields, cheered by the great luminary of day, let us repeat the first part of Adam's morning hymn, from Milton. I will begin,

" These are thy glorious works, Parent of good !
Almighty !——— *(a pause)*

Lucy. ———Thine this universal frame,

Thus wond'rous fair; Thyself, how wond'rous
then!
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.

Anne. Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of
light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs,
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing: ye in Heaven.

Am. On Earth join all ye creatures, to extol
Him *first*, Him *last*, Him *midst*, and without
end."

At Midsummer we are to go on a visit to Aunt Burleigh, in the New Forest. She will take us some delightful rides about Beaulieu, and Lyndhurst. You must be very diligent at your books, that we may not have to regret the time we spend there. We know our kind Aunt will endeavour to make our excursions both pleasant, and instructive.

SUMMER.

WALK I.

JOURNEY TO BEAU-LIEU GROVE.

Amelia.

HOW rich are these forest views! In that green glen, winding between the woods, see what a herd of deer are grazing. It is now the time for the keeper's call. Hark! it is a pleasing sound; the deer know it well; and see, they follow the man, and nibble the green boughs he carries on his shoulder, though they seem so much afraid of us. We will alight, and walk up Castle Malwood;

there is a fine shade for us, and we shall thus make it easier for the horses.

Charles. There is a herd of forest colts. I wish I had one. How they scamper off, with their long manes and tails waving in the wind. But what is that old mare doing, paving there?

Am. I'll tell you, Charles. She wants to eat the tenderest shoots of the young gorse, but cannot well manage it, because of its prickly points. To effect her purpose, she bruises them first, by pounding them well with the hoof of her fore feet, and then both she and her foal can eat them well.

Charles. A cunning hussy! That is your scheme, is it?

Am. Yes; the forest horses have

learnt that art for many generations, I assure you. There is a large pond hard by, that we must walk to, and Peter must stop for us. It is always worth seeing.

Lucy, Oh, what beauties!

Am. Here you see hundreds of the *nymphea alba* (the white water lily), in full bloom. What a fine plant it is—its dark green leaves floating on the water, and its beautiful white cup opening to the sun: and how rich a colour are their golden anthers. The petals are as large as a tulip, but of a more elegant shape, being finely pointed. We have a jar in the carriage, which we will fill with water, and carry to Aunt Burleigh. Round the banks you will find the sweet yellow asphodel, and in that low, marshy spot, the sundew (*rosa solis*

rotunda folio). See from every little hair in the cup-shaped leaf, there is a small globule, which shines like drops of dew; it opens only in the sun. This dew is a glutinous substance, by which the little insects that settle on it are caught. In the evening it closes, and the insects are killed. Here is also the *anagalis*, the bog-pimpernel. It is a minute, but very elegant flower, of pink and white, which, contrasted with the green moss, through which it peeps, is highly ornamental. Its leaf, too, is elegant, of pale, soft green. It is rarely we meet with it, and seldom is a minute plant so beautiful. Here is also the *sfagnum*, or bog moss. This moss is used for packing plants, sent to the Indies, and keeps them alive by its moisture. But we shall

scarcely have time enough now to go round by Rufus's stone, and reach Beaulieu by three o'clock. Now we have gained the summit: there we have a fine view of Southampton, and its noble river, with the island for a back ground, and beneath us, is the richly wooded bosom of the forest.

AUNT BURLEIGH'S.

Aunt. My dear children, I am glad to see you. It was very kind in your father to spare you all for a few days; but I wished to see you in one groupe, under my old oaks at Beaulieu.

Am. Indeed, Aunt, I was afraid we should be past dinner-time; but we stopped at Cadenham, to find out the

Christmas oak, and by the help of a civil old turf-cutter, we found it.

Aunt. Aye, but it is sadly disfigured by the number of people who come every winter to pluck the boughs that have green leaves on them; for, in the coldest weather, it always puts forth some.

Anne. Why, it is surely a miracle!

Am. No; it is only *a curious variety*: you know we have oaks and beeches too, which become green several weeks before others do, when, perhaps, the very next tree is quite bare. Some horse chesnuts will be in leaf a month before others. The *Glastonbury thorn* is another singular variety; but it is only the superstitious who regard it as *miraculous*, though it blows in winter. The tra-

dition is, that it first sprung from Joseph of Arimathea's staff, which he is said to have left sticking in the ground there, when he visited Britain; and I suppose the monks of Glastonbury once made a gain of this pretended miracle.

Charles. I hope we shall come and see you, Aunt, and the Christmas oak, next winter.

Aunt. Oh! Oh! my dear little fellow, you mean, *first* the Christmas oak, and *then* Aunt, do you not?

Charles. Certainly, because you know it lies in the way to your house. Else we should visit you first, to be sure. But I must tell you, if we are past your dinner hour now, it is my fault, for I kept them waiting, while I copied the inscription Lord Delaware, the late ranger (who lived at Boldre-

wood Lodge), put on Rufus's stone, to preserve the memory of the King's death, on that spot.

Lucy. It is said, William the Conqueror destroyed a great many villages, to make the forest open for his sports; and his son being so soon slain in it, after the death of his father, caused people to say it was a judgment for dispossessing the inhabitants, to make room for his bucks and does.

Aunt. We must not be forward to speak of *judgments*, my dear. People speak rashly, too often, on such points. The death of Rufus seems to have been accident. It was in the evening, and the western sun comes down that glen in such a manner as to render it difficult for a marksman to take his aim well. Sir Walter Tyrrell appears to have shot up the

glen, and his arrow, it is said, glanced against a tree, and from thence it bounded against the King, and killed him. The supposed depopulation of the country, in order to make the forest, seems unfounded; because, in Dooms'-day Book (the oldest British record we have) there are as many villages found, as it now contains.

Lucy. Thank you, Aunt, for this information; it is then, it seems, a vulgar error, taken up and continued without examination.

Anne. Just so. It is supposed that the King's hunting seat was at the top of Castle Malwood, a noble eminence, looking both northward and southward over the forest. The spot called Stoney Cross, was then called *Lady Cross*; doubtless from a cross

with an image of the Virgin in it; and a spot near it is yet called *King's-garn* (or garden), for garn is often used in this part of Hampshire as a contraction of garden.

Anne. What ruins are those we see from the window?

Aunt. The remains of a monastery, from whence there is a winding tide river through the woods that opens to the channel.

Lucy. I think the Monks of Beaulieu had some taste when they fixed their residence here. I suppose, Charles, you would have no objection to be a young Monk, if you were allowed to catch the fish you were to eat on every fast day in the week?

Charles. O, no. I should like it of all things.

Anne. Well, I think Aunt you

had better make your house a nunnery, then we will be the Nuns, and you shall be Lady Abbess.

Am. I am afraid, Anne, your scheme would not do long; for remember, that if you take the veil you must see no friends but those of your own sex, any farther than the iron grating. So your Father, Brothers, and Cousins, must be all abandoned for the seclusion you have chosen.

Anne. Indeed! I believe then I should soon recant, and wish my veil wafted into the sea yonder. But what was the reason for all this strictness, I wonder.

Aunt. A false notion, my dear, that in order to live a life devoted to God, we must be secluded from the world, where so much vice prevails. But the Holy Founder of our faith,

prayed not that his followers should be "taken out of the world;" but that they should be "kept from the evils that are in the world." They were to live a life of purity and virtue *in society*, and to benefit others by their example; to "let their light so shine *before men*, that others *seeing their good works* might glorify our Father, who is in Heaven." But, however, this happens not to be a fast day, and so we will, if you please, walk into the dining-room, and leave all monkish and nunnish projects for the present; only I promise you, when I am Lady Abbess, that you shall be the first Nuns I receive.

Charles. With all my heart, Aunt, for after our ride and ramble, I am as hungry as Rufus, the hunter, when he was returning to Lady Cross.

Lucy. Come along, then; and I hope you will meet with no Sir Walter in the passage to spoil your appetite.

EVENING—Walk II.

Am. Now the tide is up, and the boat is ready for us to go down Beaulieu River. Charles, give me your hand, you are too thoughtless to go down a tide-river six feet deep in mud. Mind! you are to sit between me and your Aunt, and not stir till we land again.

Lucy. How finely the oaks hang their wide-stretched arms over the water; and how beautifully they are

reflected far on before us. How smooth the water, and calm the air!

Am. Most serene and delightful. Yonder the sea opens on us to the high-lands of Vecta, (the Roman name for the Isle of Wight) while the setting sun gilds with its last rays the Needles Rock, and Hurst Castle. Charles, there is a man of war in full sail, just coming round the Needles.

Anne. How majestic a sight! The top sail and pendant just catch the parting smile of Phœbus.

Charles. What do you mean by Phœbus, Amelia? I wish you would talk so that one could understand you.

Lucy. Don't you recollect whose chariot it was the rash young Phæton wanted to drive, and did prevail on his too easy father to let him?

Charles. O! I know now, the chariot of the *Sun.* Aye, and if Jupiter, seeing the danger, had not hurled a thunderbolt at him, and sent him to the shades, he would have burnt up the world.

Aunt. Yes, so says the fable. But Phæton was not the only *spoiled boy,* nor Apollo the only weak father that ever lived.

Charles. Who ever did so besides, Aunt, I wonder?

Aunt. Why not just so, Charles; but as it will shew that boys often ask what a wise parent should never grant, I will tell you, as a lesson that may be of service to you, though I know your father is much too wise a man ever to be persuaded or wheedled into a dangerous indulgence to his children: still you have daily and

continual proofs that he wishes to do all in his power to promote your happiness. A gentleman, who lived at Pilewell, (that beautiful place you see yonder by the water side) had his eldest son, about thirteen, at home one summer holidays; and his cousin, two years older, who had been out only six months with Sir Harry Neale, was on a visit there. Frederick S. persuaded his father to let him have the pleasure boat to come up this river, saying that his Cousin Ned, who had been *so long at sea, must* know how to manage the sails, as his mother said she had no doubt but he would one day be an Admiral. The father at first refused, alledging that if they did not observe the tide, they would be left on the mud; that sometimes such sudden squalls came

through the glens of the forest, and between the trees, that great skill was required in tacking, &c. To all these objections the young sailor had prepared Frederick with ready-made answers; and the boat was ordered out, with directions that an old experienced fisherman should attend them, who was to be paid well for his time. When they came to the Ferry House, they persuaded the fisherman to wait there, and have as much drink as he liked, saying that Mr. S. would pay him just the same as if he went with them, and that they chose to go by themselves. They set off with a delightful breeze, went up the river with safety, and were returning, when they furled the sail to stop and see the men on the mud with their *mud pattens*, getting periwinkles. "That's

fine sport," said Frederick; "Ned, let us go and have a dash at it." "With all my heart," said Ned, "you know I never flinch; if I did, I should be kicked down the hold when on board." "Here, old man," says Frederick, "here's half a crown for you, if you'll come and mind the boat, and get us two pair of mud pattens, and you shall have all the *winkles* we get." The old man gladly brought the desired pattens, (two pieces of flat boards, fastened by leather thongs round the feet, on which they slide along the mud without sinking). "Here's fun alive!" said Ned. "Bravo!" said Fred, "here's for ye, my boy! how I slide along like the first skaiter in Cambridge! Look there, what a figure I have cut in the mud—why it is the *line of beauty*.

How we shall make them laugh at supper, when we come to tell them the wonders of our voyage!" He had just finished this fine oration, when coming to a place where a spring ran into the river, the mud was not of a consistence to bear him: the man left in the boat was too distant to caution him, and in he went up to his arm pits. Ned, now, who never flinched from danger, was afraid to approach him, for fear of being swallowed up quite, but bawled to the old man to bring the boat up. "Aye, Sir," said the man, "I told you to take care; but you never heeded a word I said. You must come into the boat, and I will take a rope with me, and throw to the young gentleman—his arms will keep him from sinking any farther, and if he can put the rope

under him, I may then perhaps pull him out, for not a man in all the country will venture to go in where he now is." So saying, he resumed his pattens. Frederick luckily caught the rope and fastened it round him, and the old man pulled him out. They got safe to the boat at the nearest point; the old man, after he had washed him, lent him his shirt, trowsers, and jacket, and calling to a woodman on shore, he sent home for more clothes. But misfortunes did not end here—the time all this business had taken up was such, that the tide was running out rapidly; night came on, and in turning the last point, to get within as short a walk as they could to Pilewell, the boat stuck fast, and was immovable in the mud. Servants were now sent out along the

border of the river to look after them, and at last they heard them, "Halloo there!—who is it?" "William, Sir." "My master and all the family are very uneasy about you, and we are sent out to find you."—"Well, here we are then safe enough," returned Fred,

"Sle sla slud,
Stuck in the mud."

And so you may go home and tell them that the tide has left us twenty feet on this side the water, and you see it is quite impossible for us to reach the shore, and so here we must wait till morning, when the tide rises; we have nothing to eat and nothing we can get, and so you may tell them we *proclaim a fast* till nine o'clock to-morrow." William sent another servant home with the tidings, and

waited all night on shore, now and then calling watch, to know if they were safe. Here they passed a dismal night, though it happened not to rain. Now and then the gulls screamed and waked them from their slumbers, and every hour William called out, "*All well?*" When, half, angry, they replied, "*Well as can.*" Mrs. S. was in hysterics—the family were up the whole night—this brought on the gout with Mr. S. and their visit to the Island was necessarily put off, till Frederick went to Cambridge again, and thus ended the voyage to Beaulieu. Now we must land and walk home, as the tide will not serve for our return by water.

Am. Now we have gained the seat placed for a look-out to sea, we have a fine view of the Island, the high

ground of St. Catherine with its tower—Cowes Harbour, with the ornamented seat, built like a castle, by Lord Henry Seymour—Calshot Castle, at the end of Southampton river, and vessels passing up and down the Channel. Anne and Charles, is not this a treat?

Anne. Most delightful! I wish papa was but here to enjoy it; but he said he could not leave home till he had seen his hay got in.

Aunt. Now observe, Charles, how you cross this forest brook; the bridge you see is only the old trunk of an oak, with very picturesque rustic railing made of the boughs. Look at that heron, who is standing up the stream yonder, as upright as a post: his oily golden-coloured legs are half hidden by the water; as soon as he feels the

fish touch them, down he darts his long bill and gobbles them up. But see, he has got one in his bill, and away he soars to the heronry, I suppose to feed the young herons. How fine his white wings appear stretched out against the dark shade of the forest.

Lucy. Observe how richly the walls of the ruins are covered with ivy. The leaves are much larger than those that grow farther inland.

Aunt. This south coast is warm, and the broad-leaved myrtle and pomegranate do well through the winter at the front of my house; and the *magnolias*, you see, grow quite up to the chimnies. It is no wonder, then, that ivy should flourish well here. The ancients devoted the ivy to Bacchus, as its berries were said to have

an intoxicating effect, and his thyrsus was encircled with ivy and vine leaves; we will not, therefore, crown you with ivy, Charles, hoping you will never be a Bacchanal.

Charles: I suppose when Bacchus rode on a panther, the beast must have been made drunk too, or he never would have kept pace with the ass of that old laughing sot Silenus, as we see in our Pantheon.

Aunt. Well said, Charles! You should only remember such things to laugh at them.

MORNING—Walk III.

Am. Here comes Charles, with his rosy cheeks. Peter has been with

him to the beach, to bathe this fine morning. Charles, did you enjoy your dip?

Charles. Don't tell me of dips now; I have been learning to swim, and Peter says I shall be a good swimmer, if I practise every morning, before we return home.

Am. I understand any one may swim, who is not afraid to lie flat on the water, and gently strike with his arms and legs.

Charles. Here are crabs and prawns for you.

Am. The crabs are too small to be eaten, and by catching them you may have deprived some poor people of a good meal, when they were grown to their full size. We will put them in water, and you may take them back again to-morrow.

Charles. Here are three sorts of sea weeds.

Am. Yes; this is a *fucus*, having little bladders, containing a jelly-like pulp; when made into a poultice, they are excellent in the cure of tumours on the glands of the neck. This is a *conferva*, of a dull green. There are many sorts of both these families of the class of *cryptogamia*. This is another *conferva*, called *coralina*; now it is fresh it is a fine scarlet, but its beauty goes off when quite dry. Come, we will go round the pasture into the shrubbery, where we are to breakfast in the root house, this warm morning.

Charles. Look here at this knowing old cow, what a nice shelter she has chosen for herself; I should not have found her ladyship out if she

had not whisked her tail in the water, to drive the teazing flies away. She is under a thick hazel, in a deep rivulet, well shaded from the sun, with plenty of weeds on the banks, and some that she is eating out of the stream.

Am. Yes; it is the water-ranunculus. In the Avon, near Ringwood, it grows in great abundance, and the poor people, who have not in dry summers grass enough for a cow, go and get it in boat loads, and bring home. In the streams it waves in long feathery strings; but where the water does not cover it, its leaves are curled like the ranunculus of the gardens.

Charles. But how well this cow is off, compared with those I saw at Smithfield last winter, when papa took me to the cattle show. Poor

beasts, they were tied by their horns to the posts and rails, covered with mud, and the drovers bawling and knocking them about. Yes, old cow, I wish I could make you but sensible of the difference, and I hope you will never go to Smithfield.

Am. Cows can *feel* the difference no doubt, Charles; but it is only rational creatures, like us, that can *compare* and *feel* the delightful sensations of gratitude, heightened by the consideration of that goodness, whose "mercy is over all his works."—I see John coming with the tea-urn to the root house; it is thatched with reeds, and honey-suckles are twisted round its rustic supports. There are Aunt and your sisters ready to receive us. How delightful a repast will this be!

Aunt. Yes, we will be thankful to "Him who gives us all;" and this reminds me of the piece Anne has copied from Cowper's works; she shall read it after breakfast. When you recollect that those men and women in the hay-field ate their breakfast in haste at five o'clock this morning, to go and work for us till twelve, before they have their dinners; that many poor artificers' families have taken their's in dirty narrow lanes and alleys, in crowded cities,

"Where scarce the breath of Heaven has leave to blow;"

That instead of our rich cream, they have only had milk, half water, with some rank salt butter—what have we not to be thankful for? "What shall we render to the Lord for all his bene-

fits? O! that men would praise Him for all his goodness, and for his great loving kindness!"

"He sends the balmy breeze that blows,
And wafts us odour from the rose.
He still commands his sun to rise,
And gild with glory earth and skies;
Bids harmony awake the grove,
And tell his goodness, pow'r, and love.
Shall we not then our offerings bring,
And of his matchless mercy sing?
From morn to morn his love declare,
And nightly breathe the heartfelt pray'r?
When beauty clothes the smiling land,
When fruits and flowers their stores expand,
Let us more deep devotion feel,
More humbly bow, more thankful kneel.
Do his high will on earth below,
And taste the joys that angels know."

Charles. See that fine blackbird, with his yellow bill, frisking on the grass. Now he has taken a worm, and is gone under the laurels with it.

Aunt. Yes; he has a nest, I suppose, at hand, knowing well that there is a fine cherry tree near, on which he has been feasting himself and his mate for some time. I suppose they serve for a desert after the first course of worms is served up. I cannot bear to have them taken, for they repay me well for my fruit, by their songs every morning and evening. At the end of the shrubbery is a goat-sucker's nest too; one comes by my bow window every evening, in search of moths and gnats; with his enormous wide mouth, he would swallow an *emperor** or a *bee-tiger*, if they come in his way. Now, Anne, you will please to read your copy of

* Two large flies of the papilio tribe.

THE DOG AND THE WATER LILY.

ANNE READS.

The noon was shady, and soft airs
Swept Ouse's silent tide;
When, 'scaped from literary cares,
I wander'd on its side.

My dog, the prettiest of his race,
And high in pedigree,
(Two nymphs, adorn'd with every grace,
That spaniel found for me)

Now wanton'd, lost in flags and reeds,
Now starting into sight,
Pursued the swallows o'er the mead,
With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse display'd
His lilies, newly blown;
Their beauties I, intent, survey'd,
And one I wish'd my own.

With cane extended far I sought
To steer it close to land;
But still the prize, when nearly caught,
Escap'd my eager hand.

Beau mark'd my unsuccessful pains,
With fix'd, considerate face;
And, puzzling, set his puppy brains
To comprehend the case.

But with a chirrup shrill and strong,
Dispersing all his dream,
I thence withdrew, and follow'd long
The windings of the stream.

My ramble ended, I return'd;
Beau, trotting far before,
The floating wreath again discern'd,
And plunging left the shore.

I saw him, with that lily cropt,
Impatient swim to meet
My quick approach, and soon he dropt
The treasure at my feet.

Charm'd with the sight, the world I cried
Shall hear of this thy deed:
My dog shall mortify the pride
Of man's *superior* breed.

But chief *myself* I will enjoin,
(Awake at duty's call)
To shew a love as prompt as thine,
To HIM who gives us all.

EVENING—Walk IV.

Am. The bee with loaded thigh has brought
His store, the waxen cell is wrought;
Faint grows the hum, they cease their toil,
Till morn renews the flow'ry spoil.

Charles. How do these little creatures learn to find their home again, when they wander so far to suck the flowers? Surely they cannot see their hives at the distance they go?

Aunt. I must refer you, my dear boy, to the words of Mr. White, again,

"The God of Nature is their secret guide."

It is impossible they should see their hives, or even the trees that shelter my garden, for in order to know my

own bees, I have powdered some of them with flour, as they came out in the morning, and have discovered them on the forest sucking the bell-heath, at least two miles from home. That they should never seek any hives but their own is truly astonishing; but is it more so than their knowing how to make their cells in such exact angles as to fill up their hives with such perfect regularity? The kingdom of nature is full of wonders!

Lucy. Take care, Charles, here comes the old cock swan, ploughing the stream most nobly; but if you go so near the bank with your whip he will attack you, and his pinions are strong enough to break your arm. On the little island yonder, the hen bird is sitting, and he will suffer no

one to approach, or disturb her, in this important occupation. Some time ago my Aunt had a lamb that had lost its dam, and it was kept on the lawn, and fed every day. It sometimes dared to go near the bank of the stream, when this old swan used to fly at it most unmercifully; so that the gardener was at last obliged to tie him by the leg with a long rope, to the alder on the island, to prevent his killing the poor lamb.

Aunt. Our neighbour Styles at the mill, had a pair of swans; from some cause the hen after laying her eggs, was disturbed, and knowing, it is supposed, that they were so injured by cold, that her confinement in attempting to hatch them would be useless, she chose to take her pleasure, as other fashionable ladies do,

instead of regarding the duties of the nursery. Whether her reasons were good or not, her husband did not seem to understand or approve of this fashionable conduct in his wife, and used frequently to beat her, but all in vain, he could not make her sit on the cold eggs. The eggs were taken away, but, as if to shew his negligent spouse her duty, he sat on the nest himself for many days. They seem, up to this period, to have lived in great harmony, as *swan and wife*; but on this occasion the lady left him, and went to another mill up the stream. Whether grief had any share in it, I pretend not to determine, but she soon died, and the gentleman shortly married again.

Lucy. Well, it is curious, but I can tell you, Aunt, of another remark-

able event caused by separation in a pair of faithful birds. Two bullfinches were kept tame at a relation's of our's in Oxfordshire; when one was let out of the cage, and called the other, it had learnt the well-known ditty of Sterne's starling, and would cry, "I can't get out." At length one of the birds died, and the feathers of the other soon turned an *entire black*, as if going into mourning for the loss of its mate, and it soon after died also.

Aunt. Now see the hay-makers have raked up all the wind-rows into cocks, that the hay may take less dew to night. To-morrow they will open and spread them again, and if we have sun, it will, on the following day, be fit to carry. How beautiful a sight is a large meadow in cock,

with the fresh grass springing between, and here and there a single oak contrasting its dark shadow with the lighter green beneath. It is now a still and tranquilizing scene: tomorrow it will again be all animation, and the women, arrayed in various colours, will render it still more lively. In short, I scarcely know a more pleasant sight than a well-cropped hay-field, with a happy set of villagers in high spirits, *enjoying* their labours. The hedges are now ornamented with the briar rose; some white, others a fine pink colour. Observe how gracefully the branches bend to the grass, studded with their buds and full-blown roses.

Lucy. They are truly elegant! and how sweet the blossom of these lime trees are this evening! I observe

too, Aunt, that your large *acacia* is in bloom, and that it attracts the bees every morning near my window.

Aunt. We have scarcely a more elegant flowering tree, and how beautiful must the woods of America be, where they grow wild, with the rich *magnolia* beneath them! We have much natural beauty here, and much is added by cultivation. There nature is more rude, but magnificent in original grandeur. Their rich savannahs, their vast forests and lakes, are on a great and imposing scale, suited to a continent extending from the north pole nearly to the south, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Still I have heard a native American declare, that though he was partial to his country, and had seen much of the European Continent, our

blessed Island had, on the whole, superior advantages to any other country he had ever visited.

" England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."

COWPER.

Lucy. I am sorry that this is the last walk we shall have at Beaulieu this summer. We shall remember our visit with pleasure, and especially our pleasant *dejeune* in the root house this morning. We shall depend on seeing you, Aunt, in Autumn, and to spend part of the winter with us.

AUTUMN.

WALK I.

Amelia.

OUR walks at this season must be between ten or twelve in the morning, and before we take tea in the afternoon. The dews are too great to admit of traversing the fields early; and as the sun sets before six, and the twilight is short, we cannot walk much later.

Anne. Why is the twilight shorter than in the summer?

Am. The sun in our longer days

illuminates the whole northern pole, as I shewed you on the globe. Of course we, who are placed so far north as fifty-two degrees of latitude, must have then but very little real night. On the highest mountains of Scotland, one can see to read the whole of a clear summer's night. In Lapland they have no night at all during their summers. Within the tropics they have no twilight or evening. This is well described by Walter Scott.

"The eve of Tropic sun
No pale gradations quench his ray,
No twilight dews his wrath allay:
With disk, like battle-target red,
He rushes to his burning bed;
Dyes the wide wave with burning light,
Then sinks at once—and all is night."

Charles. Oh! how pleasant it must be to live in Lapland.

Am. But you'll remember that in their winters they have no day; when they live in their huts covered with snow, on the dried and salted venison and oil, which they have laid up during the summer. Now how would you like to resemble

"The full gorged savage at his nauseous feast,
Eat half your time, and then snore out the rest?"

Charles. Not at all. I say Old England for ever! still.

Lucy. How still the air is! how bright the sun after the solsticial rains! The paths through the harvest fields are now well beaten by the labourers and gleaners. There is Dame Oakley, with her sun-burnt children, at the stile. She has a

great burthen of gleaned wheat, and the children bundles, tied up in different sizes, according to their strength. They would make a good picture.

Am. Well, Dame, how much threshed wheat do you think your gleaning will produce?

Dame. I hope six bushels, Ma'am. But we must dry it in the sun before it will thresh well. We have worked early and late; but while a bushel of flour costs us a guinea, we must lease all we can. A bushel of flour just lasts us and five children a week, and would not hold out unless we had plenty of potatoes. You know, my good lady, we could not fat a pig last year, while barley meal was ten and sixpence a bushel, so we sold it lean at the market.

Am. I thought you had potatoes enough for your pig.

Dame. Yes; we could keep him on with them, but unless they have some corn feed at last, the fat is not solid; it boils out and wastes in the pot. This year, I hope, we shall do better.

Charles. How many of the stubbles are cleared since we came here last! There goes our keeper with the pointers, his gun, and game net.

Am. Hark! a partridge calling her young—see how they run along the furrow yonder—Rover scents them, and they all take wing. They are now safe over the hedge row. The keeper has shot in vain.

Keeper. Now observe if you please, ladies, the action of this little spaniel. You see a hare running for that gap

in the hedge; he knows he cannot overtake her across the field, but he is got through, and is waiting for her quietly on the other side of the gap, where he will *turn* her, that I may have a shot. He has often done this for me.

Lucy. Come, we have other game to mind now. Charles, where is your basket? Here are some fine nuts, quite brown and ripe—Give me your crook, the boughs are too high for you. There, is your basket full?

Am. See how finely the hedge is mantled with the wild *clematis*; the briony, with its scarlet berries, and the *solanum* or nightshade, of the hedges.

Anne. I thought the berries of the nightshade were poisonous?

Am. That is a very different plant;

It is not a creeper like this, requiring support; but a stately plant of a very different appearance; it grows from one to two feet high, has large pointed leaves, and its berries are a glossy black, as big as sloes. It is the *atropa belladona*; not very common, nor can I shew it you till we go near Upp Park, and Edesworth, where I have seen it in the banks. Here are two beautiful kinds of *gentiana*. The purple is the *gentiana amarylla*, the pink is very delicate, but a stronger bitter. Before the arrangement of Linnæus, it was called *fell terræ*, or gall of earth, and the country people (before hops were in plenty) used to gather bundles of it to bitter their beer. It is called *centory* also. Here is the wild marjoram, yet very fragrant.

Lucy. How gay the corner of that pasture is! What flower can it be?

Am. It is the *colchicam*, or *autumnal crocus*. White observes, that it is a singular appointment of Providence, that the vernal and autumnal crocus should bloom in seasons so different. He says,

"Say who commands amid surrounding snow,
Uncheck'd, the crocus' flamy bud to blow?
Say what retards, 'mid summer's fervid rays,
Th' *autumnal bulb*, till pale declining days?
The God of Nature! whose pervading pow'r,
Unveils the sun, or sends the fleecy show'r,
He bids each plant his quick'ning word obey,
Or to the ling'ring bloom enjoins delay."

HIST. OF SELBORNE.

Anne. Farmer Jones has cleared his last field; and the men have seated some boys on the load, carrying green boughs, and shouting Harvest Home.

Am. Before our people have their harvest supper, I wish you to teach the children at the Sunday School the hymn of our country-woman Sarah Newman,* called Harvest Home.

Lucy. Surely, sister, that poor woman must have had more than the usual opportunities of learning allotted to servants.

Am. She just learned to read and write when young; her subsequent acquirements were all her own, by living in a family who travelled in the summer; when, having access to her master's library, during his absence, she had both leisure and opportunity to improve herself. Of this advantage a servant of common taste would not have availed herself. I must say I

* Sarah Newman's poems were published in 1811, and sold by Hatchard in Piccadilly.

think some lines in her poems superior to any I have seen from the pens of the unlearned; and some that would not have disgraced Pope himself, to the honour of Hampshire be it spoken; for instance,

"Ere day's great Regent started from the goal,
And spread his lambent beams from pole to pole;
Ere thy full orb, fair Empress of the night!
Who rid'st majestic 'mid the stars of light,
In all its waning beauty was unfurl'd,
To sway the sceptre o'er the watery world,
Ere the glad globes were cheer'd the day to view,
Or face of morn was wet with orient dew.

AUTUMN—Walk II.

Lucy. Now we visit the hop-pickers in the ground on the slope

of South Hill. See in what fine festoons the branches hang from *pole to pole.*

Am. Very *great* surely in your description, Lucy. What would a stranger understand by this? We know you mean from one *hop pole* to another, and elegant they are, with the bright large hop hanging on them. *Bright hops* are distinguished from *brown*; the latter being turned what they call *foxy*, by the sun, or early frosts. Sometimes also they are much bruised by the wind. These you see are thrown into baskets by themselves, the *bright* only being picked into the cloth hung on the frame. See how Mary Hall's children work; they pick as many as their Mother and Aunt. Sometimes they must leave off by four o'clock, as they overstock the kiln;

for they are obliged to lay them a certain depth over the kiln, and keep them just long enough to become dry without injury to the colour. They are next put into long bags, called pockets, and stuffed in very hard with the feet, and an iron weight; then marked and excised, and they are ready for sale. How fragrant is that kiln at the end of the garden.

Charles. Delicious! But, Anne, you have stained your frock and tippet with the hops.

Am. We must get it out with mangonese and vitriol; no common washing will remove the hop stain. How happy the people all seem here. The pole-pullers have enough to do to cut the bine, draw up the poles with that lever which they call a *hop-dog*, and lay them on the frames.

You see the hop-dog has a strong iron hook jagged on the inside, which takes a firm hold in the poles. The overlooker cries out, "Pick out your leaves there—come and measure—there is your ticket. How many have you?" "Fifteen." "I have set it down. You have earned 2s. 6d. since dinner time." (Twopence per bushel is the common price; when the crop is indifferent, three-pence.) Now we return home by the down.

Lucy. Here is the *euphrasium*, or eye-bright, very thickly scattered on the down. It is a beautiful little flower, with its fringed leaves. The large red sort is not so handsome. I remember in Shenstone's School Mistress, he says (in the manner of Spenser)

Yet *euphrasye* must not remain unsung,
That gives dim eyes to wander leagues around;
Nor pungent *radish* biting infants' tongue,
Nor *plantain* ribb'd, that heals the reaper's wound,
Nor *marjorum* in shepherd's posie found!

Am. Hush! and observe that beautiful cock pheasant, just marching out of the copse in the wheat stubble. How stately he walks! how rich the varying colours of his neck, while his breast shines like gold!

Lucy. I think we have no bird equal to him in England; nor have I seen any foreign bird excel him, except the argus pheasant in the Liverpool Museum (now in Piccadilly) with his spreading circular tail, full of eyes like the peacock.

Am. On the south border of our county, and just within Sussex, are

immense numbers of pheasants; too many indeed for the farmer, for they devour a great deal of his corn. At Upp Park, near Hastings, when parties have been there in winter, they have shot five hundred in the course of a few days, mostly cocks. In their large covers are green alleys cut in various directions. They use no dogs, but the keepers, with some boys, go into the covers and drive them into the alleys, when the gentlemen shoot as many as they please. At Holycombe Cottage, and at Lord Robert Spencer's at Woolbeding, they call the pheasants in a morning out of the covers, and strew barley on the lawn before the house, when you may see a hundred of these beautiful creatures together, taking their breakfast in winter, and so tame are they, that

they will even come and feed within the door of the breakfast parlour on a fine morning. The ladies have a bird-call which the pheasants understand, and they can bring them out in troops.

Lucy. Now the geese in the stubbles fare well and get fat. The pigs go into the woods and find plenty of beech-mast, acorns, and ripe nuts, that are fallen on the ground. They also know how to delve out the *bunium*, or pig-nut, which we saw flowering in June. Withering says, they would form a good addition to our winter deserts, either raw, boiled, or roasted, being little inferior to the chesnut. Charles, try if you can dig some up—now scrape the coat off, and taste it.

Charles. It is very sweet and nice,

I will take some home and have them roasted.

Am. Now, as we descend to our plantations, you see the various tints of Autumn. The oaks are finely shaded, partly paler green, partly bronzed; the elms are a little turned off; the maple a bright yellow; the beech brown, with tinges of yellow and red; the plane, a soft fine green, distinguishable from every other; the weeping willow, by the canal, retains its colour perfectly, and remains so till it is nipped by frost, and then yields its honors almost the last of all. The *larch,** and the *diciduous cypress* are the only trees we have, of the fir kind, that shed their leaves;

* The wood of the larch was used by the ancient painters as the best and most durable. Pliny calls it the *immortal wood.*

they are now turned very pale, and will soon be quite yellow. The *eunonymus* has on its pink-coloured berry, in three divisions, which, contrasted with the green of its leaves, are very ornamental to our hedges. The butchers cut this wood to make their skewers. In our shrubbery you see the *shumac* makes a pleasing variety; it is a fine scarlet.

Lucy. I think the turnip fields make a *pleasing variety* too, amongst the stubbles and fallows. They and the clovers

"Yet feast the eye with soul refreshing green."

Am. The redbreast is almost the only bird we hear sing: their autumnal note is plaintive, and tells us winter is approaching. They now come to the orchards and gardens: in summer we seldom see them:

towards winter they seek our habitations, and seem to ask the assistance of man.

Charles. I will scatter crumbs for them on the down every morning.

Am. Like Anacreon, I suppose, then you will be

> Well rewarded, if you spy,
> Pleasure in their glancing eye;
> See them, when they've peck'd their fill,
> Plume their breast and wipe their bill.

In this season the air has often a peculiar stillness and clearness: the mornings a little foggy, but the noon bright and enlivening: the evenings serene, but cool from the heavy falls of dew. The gossamer spiders weave their fine threads across whole fields, and from the top of a pole or post they dart off horizontally through the air; hence the webs are seen

floating far above our heads. There is a wonderful variety in this curious race of insects. To them and the swallow tribe we are indebted for having the fly family so reduced as to preserve our houses from a great and serious inconvenience. At present you know our kitchen windows swarm with them, so that the servants cannot eat their dinners unmolested. But we must return, the curtain of night is falling, and light only lingers on the hills.

WINTER.

WALK I.

Amelia.

THE morning is still and fine, although there has been a hoar frost. We must make use of the time, for after such a frost it often changes to rain. The mist and dews of the night, have been arrested by the cold, and cover the twigs and herbs with a beautiful white fret work. The seeds of the taller umbelliferous plants, are particularly elegant: every *umbel* is fringed with

the hoary covering, which yet sparkles in the sun; and what can be more elegant than the drooping branches of the birch-tree, shining like silver? The young beeches bend like the weeping willow, and the oak twigs are like white coral.

Lucy. There is a flock of wild ducks, with their long necks stretched out. I remember seeing them with their young, in the summer; they come into Lord Egremont's park to breed; but they leave that haunt in the autumn.

Am. The colder region, to which they then go with their broods, are now too cold for them, and they come more south again. Large flocks of field fares, also now visit us; and sometimes wild geese. The bustard, or wild turkey, is become rare

in these parts. Some are yet found on the Wiltshire downs—they shoot them by a stratagem: first, planting a turnip-green in a pot, they fix it on the down, and with the skreen of a stalking horse, they shoot the bustard, while feeding on the turnip.

Lucy. See what flocks of sparrows there are in this farm-yard, and round the barn door, where the men are threshing! We have a cat that will go and hide herself among the light straw, which the men have just thrown from the barn floor, and then spring out, like a tiger from his jungle, and seize the poor birds. The plough-boys go out in the evening, round the ricks and barns, with a net fixed to two long sticks, bent like cart whips: this they spread, pressed close to the ricks; another boy beats

the straw, and makes a noise: the birds come out into the net; it is then folded by means of the two sticks, and they are made prisoners. Thus the boys get sparrow puddings. This is called bat-folding: if bats are caught, I am sorry to say they are sadly tormented.

Am. How comfortable the cattle look in our farm-yards, wading leg deep, in good fodder, with cribs of clover hay besides. It is seldom they want housing in the south of England, except in the most severe weather.

Anne. It is twelve o'clock; and see the village children are just come out of school on the green, racing one after another. I dare say they'll be *sharp set* (as we say in Hampshire), for a dinner. The boys are sliding

on the pond; how rosy their cheeks look.

Am. They will have a bason of good beef broth when they get home, with plenty of turnips and carrots sliced in it. I distributed twenty pitchers full, before we came out.

Charles. There is a post chaise driving up the avenue, and see, papa is coming out of the hall door.

Lucy. O joy! joy! joy! It is brother George, come up from Portsmouth—the Mediterranean fleet was expected, and I dare say it is arrived.

Charles. Let us scamper home, with all our might. Captain Clement, and all his crew for ever!

EVENING.

George. How delightful it is to me to meet you all again. O how many times, after dark, have I walked the deck, and seemed to see you all at tea; the sofa drawn to the fire, the curtains let down, and the cheerful circle round the hearth: while I was listening to the roaring waves, and wrapping myself round with my watch coat.

Lucy. Now, papa, let us have the hymn you wrote out for us, against brother George's safe return.

HYMN.

He, who stills the raging wave,
Waft thee to us o'er the main;

He, that mighty is to save,
Bring the sailor home again.
When the mountain billows rise,
When the storms have rent the sail,
He can clear the angry skies,
He can calm the fiercest gale.
Rocks, to mariners unknown,
Barely cover'd by the deeps,
Safe from these, his hand alone,
Lifts them on the billowy heaps.
Thus through life a thousand snares,
Unseen, unknown, in ambush lie;
Dangers 'scap'd, without our cares,
Watch'd by Heav'n's unclosing eye.
All praise to Him, the storms have rav'd,
And the billows rag'd in vain.
The God that heareth pray'r hath sav'd,
And brought my sailor home again.

Am. Now, George, as your Aunt is come to see us, you should give us a little account of your voyage, since you left us in the spring. I think the coasts and islands of the Mediter-

ranean are peculiarly interesting, many parts being classic ground. You may begin, if you please, at Gibraltar, the ancient *Calpe*, one of the pillars of Hercules; the other pillar is, I think, Abyla, on the African side. Beyond these Streights, the ancients seldom sailed, even to the east, and we are certain they knew nothing of the western world.

Lucy. Aye, pray George, give us this gratification. Indeed, it is what we have a right to expect from you, when we stay at home and make shirts and handkerchiefs for you. I had no patience the other day, to sit and hear that stupid Lieutenant at Sir John Bright's, who, to all the questions put to him, could only say yes and no; and at last could tell little but the latitude and longitude of the

places they touched at, and what they found to eat and drink. If I had crossed to Guernsey or Jersey, in one of our Southampton packets, and did not give a better account of the places I saw, than he did, I would consent to have my lips sealed for seven years.

George. 'Till I went to Gibraltar, I had never heard much more of it, than that it was a garrison, built upon a huge rock; but I found the place singularly interesting, and the scenery most magnificent. The approach to the Streights is, indeed, one of the most striking views I ever beheld; and were it on the other side of the globe, it would be deemed a wonder. I suppose it is because it is so constantly visited by the British, that so little is said of it. It is supposed that by some convulsion of nature,

the waters of the Mediterranean found their way between those two stupendous rocks, into the Atlantic. To the right Abyla towers most majestically, above a double or triple row of mountains in Africa; while on the left, the noble Bay of Cadiz, and the cultivated shores of Spain, add beauty to this wonderful inlet to the Mediterranean Sea. Gibraltar is a singular peninsula: the eastern part of this wonderful rock, facing the Mediterranean, is nearly perpendicular, and quite inaccessible. The north side is also a mighty precipice, its summit overhanging its base, and a long level sand connects it with the coast. This side of the rock is fortified, having port-holes excavated in it, where heavy pieces of cannon are mounted, with coverings like those in

a ship; there is also a hall formed, where thirty or forty officers may dine. These batteries command the neutral ground, connecting Gibraltar with the Spanish main land. The town is on the west side, with other buildings, and well planted gardens. To the north, is the old harbour, or port; and adjoining this mole, are the fortifications, from whence the Spanish gun boats were destroyed during the last siege. Behind this mole and the arsenal, are spacious barracks, and the hospital, which have a fine appearance; and from thence, to the south point (called Europa Point), are other buildings and gardens. The top of the rock is divided into three hills, on which are erected watch and signal towers. From these hills is obtained one of the

grandest views you can imagine: there is Abyla, capped with snow, and skirted with verdure on its base; ridges of other mountains; Ceuta, and the adjacent country; the Streights, with the shipping, the beautiful Bay of Gibraltar, the town of Algeziras, the orange grove, St. Roche on an eminence, and vast mountains behind it. The verdure round the town, the plantations and walks, contrasted with the rugged precipices on which you stand, form an assemblage of objects that must delight the eye. Turning to the east, you have a view of a highly ornamented country, with cottages and vineyards scattered over it; and beyond it, the Mediterranean gives you both the beautiful and sublime in perfection. There are several caves

in this wonderful rock; but the most remarkable is that of St. Nicholas, on the west side of it: you enter an archway, not higher than the church door, and are soon astonished to find yourself in a vast dome, surrounded with petrifactions, where one imagines buildings, labyrinths, statues, animals, all formed by the droppings of petrifying water, by whose drippings and murmurs the awful stillness is alone disturbed. I shall now tell you, Charles, something to make you laugh, for I see you are lost in astonishment.

Am. Why indeed, George, I believe we all wonder that having heard of Gibraltar, as commonly as of the Needles, we should never have heard it described before, nor had we a con-

ception of any thing beautiful or grand about it.

George. One day I ascended the rock by a winding way cut into steps, and gained the summit on the south, when I was entertained by the antics played by the monkeys who abound there.

Charles. How I should have relished their droll tricks.

George. I believe you would not much relish some of them, for they choose sometimes to hurl pieces of the broken rock and stones down on the passengers, which you know is not the most pleasant cure for the head ach on a hot day. There was a smith's shop on the side of the hill, and these testy gentry (whether from disliking the smoke of poor Vulcan's

forge, or the noise of his anvil, I cannot say), so pelted the roof of the shop, that he was obliged to leave it, and fix himself elsewhere.

Charles. Saucy rogues, I would have shot them.

George. Not quite so easily as you think, for they can soon jump away and hide themselves in inaccessible precipices.—We went next to the Island of Minorca; and, in about a week, we passed Cape Pallos, and were close in with land about Alicant, which lies at the foot of an immense ridge of mountains stretching towards Carthagena. Alicant is a port of considerable trade; it exports wines, fruit, and some manufactures; and imports fish from the northern fisheries of Newfoundland, &c. for in Catholic countries, their numerous fast

days cause a great demand for salt fish in the inland towns. On our arrival at Minorca, we anchored at Port Daya. It has one of the best harbours in the world. It has a difficult entrance, but once within, you are safe from all winds and weathers. The Island is about one hundred miles in circuit. We went from Fort George to the neat little town of Mahon. The people are remarked for their industry and cleanliness. The higher parts of the Island are barren: but the vallies are complete gardens. Fruit arrives to great perfection, and vegetables grow as in a hot bed with us. The wastes produce fragrant herbs, whence the bees collect their sweets; and Minorca honey is highly esteemed. Their summers are very hot, but their winters, when the east

wind prevails, are severe, and agues are then very prevalent. Port Fornelo is a harbour, next in note to Mahon. The village is pleasant, and the inhabitants seem active and contented. The Mahometans do not seem so bigoted as the Papists, as they often mix with, and tolerate, other professions of religion. But it grows late, and I must cast anchor in the Mediterranean till to-morrow evening.

SECOND EVENING.

George. After encountering a smart gale of wind, we anchored in the great Bay of Cagliari, before Sardinia. The appearance of the town, from the

anchorage, is handsome. It rises from the shore, with good moles, well fortified. We then passed the gulph of Lyons, with a fine breeze, and soon made the high land of Toulon. As we passed gently along the shore, we had often a soft land breeze, which wafted to us the sweet perfumes of their extensive gardens: the coast was adorned with pleasant villages between the Hieres and the Var. The next morning we sailed by the Islands of St. Honore and St. Margaretta, situate in a beautiful Bay. Margaretta is finely adorned with trees, and a variety of buildings. The more barren and lofty points of St. Honore, formed a fine contrast. To the east, and near Italy, is the ancient port of Antibes, which seems to lie in the midst of a garden. It is of considerable extent,

with a castle. Twelve miles from Antibes, and in another beautiful Bay, is Villa Franca. It is situated on a fine declivity, with a range of mountains behind it. How I wished I could have taken a sketch of it, with all the beautiful colourings, which a fine sun-set gave to so delightful a picture. Near Villa Franca is the Var, which separates Italy from France. A continuation of the same kind of garden-like country, brought us to the neat and pleasant town of Nice. A few miles higher lies Monaco, known by an eminence flat at the top, which the seamen call Table Land. We passed by Oneglia, lying near two pleasant rivers, and so on to Cape Delle Melle, which terminates this part of the coast of Italy. This coast is rich in fruits, wine, and oil, and is

indeed clothed with beauty. Passing Delle Melle, the eye is again refreshed with noble and commanding views. The villages of Lican, Final, Orebo, and Noli, are ranged along a delightful Bay. From Cape Noli to Genoa, is another fine Bay, on which stands the ancient town of Savona. It is a handsome place; but sunk in consequence as Genoa rose, and the sand now obstructing its harbour, has almost removed commerce from it. Along the beautiful vallies of this country dwelt the Albigenses, or *Valleymen*, persecuted by the Papists, for their departure from Popery in the eighth century. In the neighbourhood are seen rising those stupendous mountains the Alps. Hence the valley is called Piedmont, from *pied*, foot, and *mont*, mountains. Many

of their majestic summits are white with perpetual snow; the effect of this on the mind, as well as the high mountains we had before seen off Grenada, is singular, while glowing with summer heat we passed along the coasts of the Mediterranean; and this perpetual varying of the scene, makes the voyage so pleasant compared with crossing the Atlantic. Genoa still retains much of its former magnificence and wealth, and some of the palaces have a noble appearance. It rises gradually from the gulph, in the form of an amphitheatre. There are two well-built moles, which form the harbour, and on one of them is an elegant light house, which adds to the beauty of the scenery. Before the discovery of a passage to India

by the Cape, Genoa had an amazing commerce, and had colonies, much exceeding the extent of its territories at home. Since trade has been turned into new channels, it has been on the decline. It is now under the dominion of France, which it well deserves for selling Corsica, when they could no longer subdue the spirit of freedom, by which the unhappy Corsicans so long defended themselves from their unjust oppressions. Its chief manufactures, are silks, velvet, and damask: they also export large quantities of fruit. Scarcely had we lost sight of Genoa, when we were gratified with a view of Leghorn, with its rich and beautiful dependencies. This interesting place rises majestically from the border of the Tuscan sea,

and is not excelled in navigation or commerce, by any port of Italy. Here is a free port and toleration.

Charles. What do you mean by *toleration*, is it good to eat?

George. It is only suffering you to live, if you do not believe and do as the Pope bids you—that is, worship images, and so forth.

Charles. Oh, is that all? No great favour I should think.

George. Indeed, in some parts of Italy, Spain, and Portugal, you would think so; for you dare not worship in any other way but as the Pope directs.

Charles. Then I am sure they are a bad set of people.

Am. They are a *mistaken* people, Charles; but we will not say they are all bad. In England it was the

same once; but since Henry the Eighth (happily for us), quarrelled with the Pope, the reformation has given us many blessings which our forefathers did not enjoy.

George. At Leghorn, Greeks, Jews, and Armenians, have their several places of worship. The Jews are numerous, and are become wealthy; the air is salubrious, and the soil fertile; corn, wine, and oil, are its produce, in abundance, besides silk. Lucca, famous for its oil, and Pisa for its leaning tower, are situate in a fine plain, not far from Leghorn. We here saw some majestic ruins of antiquity. We on our return, passed by Corsica. It is divided from Sardinia by a narrow and dangerous channel: it is a high, rocky island, above eighty-five miles long, and in some

parts fifty broad. We should hardly have landed on it, but because Paoli had struggled for liberty, and that Napoleon was born, on it. The inhabitants are temperate and patient in enduring hardships; they speak Italian. Bastia is an excellent harbour; Ajaccio and Calvi are the principal towns. I shall not describe Sicily as you have so lately read Brydone's tour; only you must not believe all that Mr. B. says, particularly what he relates of his conversation with the Abbe Spelonzoni; because the Abbe declares not only that he had not the conversation alluded to with that traveller, but that he never conversed with him at all. It is a fertile island, and reckoned the granary of Italy. Its winters are like spring; but storms are sometimes known in February and

March. Etna, in clear weather, can be descried thirty leagues at sea; it is computed to be ten thousand feet high, and twenty leagues in circumference at its base. Its irruption in 1783 is said to have exceeded in destruction all others, destroying, in its fiery showers, towns and villages, and forty thousand people are supposed to have perished, as the earthquake accompanying it, raised the sea so high as to overwhelm multitudes who crowded to the shores. Palermo is considered as the capital. The people are very superstitious; but they display such a mixture of devotion and bigotry, that people of plain English sense think very lightly of their understandings. Here are the extremes of pomp and poverty, luxury and wretchedness. The decent mid-

dle class of people which we have in England is wanting, and the mind turns with disgust from one extreme directly to the other. We next touched at Malta, where St. Paul suffered shipwreck. The character given of the Maltese in the "Acts of the Apostles," they have not yet lost. They are still kind, open hearted, and hospitable to strangers. Traditions of St. Paul are often rehearsed in the Island, and his memory is highly revered; but it is rather singular that the principal church in Valetta is dedicated to St. John. But I must leave further description till Aunt B. arrives, as she will expect to hear something of my voyage, and it would be tiresome, you know, to say all over again. Something new must be reserved for her. To-

morrow we go to Uncle Seymour's, and then we are to visit the Roman ruins at Silchester.

Father. As a conclusion to the interesting narrative which George has been giving us, I will repeat to you a copy of verses with which I was much pleased, on meeting with them lately in a miscellaneous work. George has mentioned the Alps; this is an

ODE WRITTEN AMID THE ALPS,

BY A LADY.

Creation's God! with thought elate,
Thy hand divine I see
Impress'd on scenes where all is great,
Where all is full of thee.

Where stern the Alpine mountains raise
Their heads of massive snow;
Whence on the rolling storm I gaze,
That hangs—how far below!

Where on some bold stupendous height,
The eagle sits alone;
Or soaring, wings his sullen flight
To haunts yet more his own.

Where the sharp rock the Chamois treads,
Or slippery summits scales;
Or where the whitening snow-bird spreads
Her plumes to icy gales.

Where the rude cliff's stern column glows
With morning tints of blue:
Or evening on the glacier throws
The rose's blushing hue.

Or where, by twilight's softer light,
The mountain shadow bends;
And sudden casts a partial night
As black its form descends.

Where the full ray of noon alone,
Down the deep valley falls;
Or where the sun-beam never shone
Between its rifted walls.

Where cloudless regions calm the soul,
Bid mortal cares be still;
Can passion's wayward wish controul,
And rectify the will.

Where, 'mid some vast expanse, the mind,
Which swelling virtue fires,
Forgets that earth it leaves behind,
And to its heaven aspires.

Where, far along the desert sphere
Resounds no creature's call;
And, undisturbing mortal ear,
The Avalanches* fall.

Where, rushing from their snowy source,
The daring torrents urge
The loud-toned water's headlong course,
And lift their feather'd surge.

Where swift the lines of light and shade,
Flit on the lucid lake:
Or the shrill winds its breast invade,
And its green billows wake.

Where on the slope, with speckled dye,
The pigmy herds I scan;
Or sooth'd, the scatter'd chalets† spy,
The last abodes of man.

* Immense masses of snow, which roll from the summits of the mountains with resistless impetuosity, into the valleys below.

† Little coverts for the shepherds or herdsmen.

Or where the flocks refuse to pass,
And the lone peasant mows
Fix'd on his knees, the pendent grass,
Which down the steep he throws.

Or where the dang'rous path-way leads,
High o'er the gulph profound;
From whence the shrinking eye recedes,
Nor finds repose around.

Where red the mountain-ash reclines
Along the clefted rock;
Where, firm the dark unbending pines,
The howling tempests mock.

Where level with the ice-ribb'd bound,
The yellow harvests glow;
Or vales with purple vines are crown'd
Beneath impending snow.

Where the rich minerals catch the ray,
With varying lustre bright;
And glittering fragments strew the way,
With sparks of liquid light.

Or where the moss forbears to creep,
Where loftier summits rear
Their untrod snows, and frozen sleep,
Locks all th' uncolour'd year.

In every scene, where every hour
Sheds some terrific grace;
In Nature's vast o'erwhelming power,
Thee, Thee, my God! I trace.

WALK II.

Charles. Uncle, what a delightful fine frosty morning. I hope we shall all go to Silchester.

Uncle. Well, I will see if I can contrive to get you all conveyed thither; but you must be content with a donkey.

Aunt. But what a party you will be! Farmer Keep* will think we are coming to storm his castle.

Am. I believe, Aunt, we should

* This intelligent guide, who occupied the farm, is since deceased.

all be glad to go on so fine a winter's day, but as I have seen the ruins, I beg I may stay to make room for some one who has not.

Aunt. You are very good, my dear, but I have some domestic business to attend to, besides some visits to the cottagers, which I must take the advantage of dry pathways to accomplish; and indispensable duties must prevent the pleasure I should have in accompanying you.

SILCHESTER.

Lucy. Dear, Uncle, I thought we were to see the ruins of a city. Here seems to be nothing but flat ploughed fields. O! yonder I see a long wall —was that the bound of the city!

Uncle. Certainly. You see it extends a great way, though it is broken in places, and trees are growing out of it; and there you see an angle of the wall yet perfect. This proves how durably the Romans constructed their works, for it is fourteen hundred years since they left Britain. In summer I find the different colour of the corn, yet shews the direction in which the streets once ran. This city was, by the Romans, called *Vindonum*, and the coins which are often ploughed up, corroborate various historical testimonies that it was once peopled. See here, just without the wall, was the amphitheatre, with the places of egress and regress for the spectators. It is now, you see, overgrown with trees, and the stones are taken away; but the form remains

perfect. The walls you may observe, are composed of flints of the country, with some layers of bricks, which the Romans taught the Britons to make, their houses being previously built of wattle and mud walls. The Roman Legions accomplished wonders in a short time, being a hardy and ingenious race of men. They made roads where none existed before, and evident remains of them are yet traced in Hampshire, leading to Winchester, &c. Their beautiful tesselated pavements, are still sometimes discovered in great perfection, both as to design and colouring. The Roman Bath lately discovered at Bignor, in Sussex, is a striking specimen. It was probably never finished. It was a Roman station, but they were sometimes obliged to

quit their works, and fly to encounter the inroads of the Britons. Thus this curious bath appears to have been covered over till they could find an opportunity of completing it. A place near it, whence the cattle come off the downs, is yet called the *Bostel*, from *Bos* or Ox, and *stelle* to drive. In one of the compartments of this pavement, is pourtrayed the figure of Ganymede, taken up to Jupiter by an Eagle. The bordering is extremely elegant, being Grecian, surrounded by the twisted Roman fillet. In another is a female figure; and in a third a dolphin. The *tesseræ* or small bricks, of various colours, are about the size of dice. There is a small *pedal*, or foot bath, entire of fine free stone, with a leaden pipe to carry off the water. In

the lapse of ages what wonderful changes occur! Here we see few stones left to tell where a city once stood, save its bare walls. Where now are Babylon and Nineveh?—where Tyre and Sidon? whose commerce was once so great!—where Thebes with its hundred gates? and Memphis, near which the Pyramids of Egypt were erected! Nothing remains stable on earth, but the mercy and goodness of that Omnipotent Being, who created man to glorify him here, and for ever in a higher state of existence.

Where change no more affects our joys,
Nor tempests rage, nor time destroys,
Where suns no longer need to rise,
Nor night's pale regent gild the skies;
No winter chills the balmy air,
Nor clouds o'ercast—no night is there.

WALK III.

Father. Now, boys, you must put on your boots, if you intend to walk with me to the *Priory*; your sisters cannot go, for the snow is very deep; but *men*, you know, can encounter every thing. I shall take my gun, though I seldom shoot, but now I may save a few birds from a lingering death, when they can get at no food in the fields. The *gaze hound* goes with us, he may probably catch a half-starved hare or two.

Charles. Do you mean our Swift?

Father. Yes, Charles, what you call the greyhound; but no doubt grey is here a corruption of gaze, as

they hunt by *sight*, not by *scent*, as beagles and spaniels do.

George. Do woodcocks ever breed in England?

Father. I believe but seldom; and from the few instances I have heard of, I suppose it is as rare an occurrence as swallows being found in winter. I have seen snipes in the breeding season, in the mountainous parts of Radnorshire, and found their nests in Crumlyn Bog, near Swansea, in Glamorganshire. Most kinds of insects have long retired to their different places of refuge, from the rigour of our climate. Ants construct their winter habitation at a considerable depth under ground, where they have deposited their winter stores. Well may the wise man say, in observing their skill and contrivance,

"Go to the ant thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise." Many lessons of industry, perseverance, and foresight, may be learnt from this diminutive race. I will tell you an anecdote or two which have come under the observation of my friend, Mr. Y. in Wales. Being in his garden, he noticed a great number of ants on a *tacamahac tree*, very busily employed in gathering something from the leaves, (the leaves have a gum-like substance in them, and the gardener often applies them to the cure of cuts that happen from the knife, or scythe.) Mr. Y. knew they must all pass up and down the stem of the tree, which was but small. By way of experiment, he took the gum from the buds of the tree and laid it on pretty thick round the stem, about an inch

in breadth. The first ants that attempted to pass, going hastily, fell in, and were be-mired. For a short time they were embarrassed, but after observing them a few minutes, he found that those which came from below brought up small pieces of earth in their forceps, and laid them on the gum, to make a bridge over it. After the first had deposited its load, the second stepped on it, and by that means laid his burthen further on. This they continued till they had completed the road, and thus liberated their companions which were up in the tree. This done, they set to work and brought up earth enough to cover that part of the stem which had been gummed, so as to have an uninterrupted passage up and down.

Charles. Well, this was admirable. Surely this must be *reason.*

Father. Animals do many things by instinct, that we do by reason: the boundaries of the two faculties have, however, never yet been accurately defined. Another time, Mr. Y. was clearing a piece of ground on the border of a wood, where there was a nest of the large species of ants. He cut away the brushwood, and dug up the ground pretty close to them, but was unwilling to destroy their habitation. Going next morning to the spot, he observed that the nest appeared less; and on more close examination, found a line of ants going further into the wood, each loaded with some part of the materials of the nest. He followed the track,

and found it led to another colony of the same species, and that, of course, these had given leave to the others to come and join their nest to their friends. They completed their removal in the course of the day, so as to leave no vestige of their former habitation. Mr. Y. noticed that the manner of their proceeding in the work, was by forming two regular lines, one for going and the other for returning; so that the comers and goers should not at all interrupt each other. The distance was about sixty feet. Both nests were large, and when joined, formed, he said, one of the largest he ever saw; and he has, for many years, been a very observant naturalist.

Charles. What bird is that, George,

which you have just shot; it looks like a pigeon, but the bill is longer?

George. No; you see the bill is of a bright orange colour, so are the feet. It is a rare bird on this coast, it is the oyster catcher. Observe, the bill is formed peculiarly to resist the gripe of the oyster when he shuts up his shell. It would resist a much greater force, being flattened at the sides. They watch the oysters at low water, on the rocks, and eat them up while opening to receive their nourishment.

Father. See, there is a fine stately Bittern.

Charles. A very handsome fellow indeed. See! he seems to set up a crest on his head—how finely marked with black streaks on his brown feathers!—Ah! he sees us, and is off.

I wish we could have carried him home to shew my sisters. Away he sails—it is all over.

George. Do you know the *hoopoo*, Charles?

Charles. No; only as I have it in my bird book, it has a fine crown of feathers spreading like a fan over its head; but that is not an English bird.

George. True, but yet they are sometimes found upon the south-downs in Sussex. It is supposed, being a light-bodied bird, they are sometimes, when flying over the sea, blown by strong south winds across the Channel, or so much nearer our coast, as to settle there. Sometimes two or three may be seen here in a summer, from the coast of France,

when the tropics are too hot for them.

Father. Here comes Betty Littlewort, driving her donkey, with a sack of corn to the mill, to be ground. I know she comes from Steventon. She works on the great farm there; always does a man's work, and receives men's wages. Well, Betty, have you not yet used up all your leasing?

Betty. Indeed, Sir, I had no time to lease this year; for, besides helping to get in my master's harvest, I had to get my own in, and this year I have (thank God) a little wheat rick, and some of it I *hopes* to sell, besides having enough for myself and my niece, who lives with me. I have no barn, Sir, and so I must make a rick, you know.

Father. Why, how much land can you have, Betty, to be able to make a rick?

Betty. I have three quarters of an acre, next my cottage. This year I sowed it with one sack of oats, and have threshed out nine sacks from the crop. Besides this, my good master lets me two acres and a quarter more. This I sowed with wheat, and am blessed with a good crop of that too.

George. Indeed, Betty! I did not know you were so great a farmer; but I wonder you don't lay some of it down in grass, and keep a cow: it would be less labour, and you are not now very young.

Betty. Aye, *bless'ee,* Sir, I *loves* work: besides, I *goes* out to work most of the year; and that, you

know, I could not do, nor my niece *nother*, if we must be at home morning and evening to milking, and to make butter too. I sometimes get help to plough and sow my land, but often *digs* it myself on spare days, and after working hours. In the main I do very well, Sir, and am content and thankful. This year I have also sold five pigs, besides keeping my old sow to fat, and this is a sack of peas, *gwaine* to mill to make meal for her. She is *getting on*, Sir. Good bye.

Charles. See how she trudges along, with her round frock and straw bonnet. What a notable woman she is.

Father. You might well say so, if you knew all the extraordinary things I have heard of her. I have seen her

thresh as well as a man could do it. I am told that some years since, she went to Sherborne, six miles off: there cut up and stacked a cord of root wood, and walked home in the evening; and this she did three days following. A cord of wood is eight feet long, four feet wide, and four feet high. Few men would have done so much after such a journey. One evening, after her day's work, she took her wheelbarrow, and drove a cask to her brother's (who had offered to brew her some beer), ten miles off. I think she drove it home the next morning. Her master told me, he was surprised to see her, one afternoon, in the harvest field (for she had been sent into Kent with the charge of some dogs). On asking her where she came from that day, she replied,

"Oh! I only stept down from London, Sir." She set out (to use her own expression), soon after *the turn of the night*, and on this side Basingstoke, meeting with a return chaise, she rode six or seven miles. The rest of the way (forty-seven miles), she walked, and feeling herself refreshed, thought she would turn out into the harvest field. So different is she to those described by Solomon, "who beg in harvest, and have nothing." It is only our knowledge of the family, for whom she has so long worked, that renders this account credible; but all this, and much more, has Betty Littlewort most certainly done.

Charles. There's a fine covey of partridges! Let fly at them, George.

George. No: a sportsman never shoots game in the snow; they might

soon be all destroyed, if this was not a law of honour.

"Honor, that noble tie, the law of Kings."

Father. Well said, George; but I wish this law had forbade the terrible shooting last winter on the Continent; for certainly, as Bishop Watson has observed, "if *Christian nations* were *nations of Christians*, we should have no wars in Europe." And we have now had them longer than the Punic war, which we used to read of with astonishment. But, to return to the law of honour, as to destroying birds: I recollect hearing, that in the Isle of Mauritius the crops were very much damaged by the prodigious increase of an insect of the locust kind, and none of the native birds seemed inclined to eat them. At length, the

inhabitants found it necessary to send for a few pairs of a species of *grakle*, a bird about the size of a starling, well known in many of the Indian islands, for its propensity to destroy such insects. When these birds were first imported, orders were given that none should kill or molest them, on pain of a severe penalty. In a few years they increased astonishingly, and soon freed the island of their pest; but when this was effected, they soon began to attack the corn and fruits; and at length were themselves considered such pests, that a reward was offered to destroy them.

George. There is a flock of wild geese: they come from the frozen north, to seek for food. There! they settle in the turnip field, where the

greens just peep above the snow. The shepherd's dog has frightened them, and they are off again.

Father. The great flocks of birds that visit us in winter, as houseless pensioners on Providence, seeking sustenance where it can be found, are guided by an instinct which gives them as unerring a rule for their course, as the stars and the compass afford to man. This often reminds me of the SAVIOUR's words: "Behold the fowls of the air, they sow not, neither do they reap, or gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them." Wherever they wander they have still their peculiar retreats, to which, guided by the same Divine Power, they return as their permanent abodes.—"The stork in the heavens," said the pro-

phet, "knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, *observe the time* of their coming."—Now we must hasten home, and dress for dinner. You hear the warning bell, and we have but twenty minutes for all this, my boys.

WALK IV.

Aunt B. What a change within this week! The air is still, sweet, and mild, like a spring morning.—See, the lilac buds are nearly bursting into leaf. The hedge sparrow sings, and a thrush on the high elm opposite my window, was piping for joy before I left my chamber. In a few weeks we shall observe vegetation

making its interesting progress. I recollect, in Gilpin's Treatise on Forest Scenery, he beautifully applies this renovation of the vegetable world to the illustration of a most important truth, "That God who, with the blast of winter, shrivels the tree, and with the breezes of spring restores it, offers it to thee as an emblem of thy hopes. The same God presides over the natural and moral world, and his works are uniform. The truths which nature teaches, as far as they go, are the truths of revelation also. It is written in both these books, that the power which revives the tree, will revive thee also, like it, with encreasing perfection."

Am. Several of the *ferns* and *polipodies* now begin to look lively, and will soon be in bloom. Very

curious and wonderful is the flowering of this tribe, when examined through a microscope. But what shall we say to the natives of a warmer region, blooming under the rigour of our northern sky so early as they sometimes do? I remember when I once visited St. Donat's Castle, in Glamorganshire, in the depth of winter, there was a narrow-leaved myrtle flowering in the open ground. If the weather prove mild in January and February, this curious shrub makes a very beautiful appearance. It is of great age, (perhaps more than three centuries); and though it has often been so far destroyed, as to be cut down to the ground, it shoots again, and preserves its original time of flowering. We are informed by travellers that some of the *lichens*

afford the last traces of vegetation in that inhospitable region, the Alps of Lapland. Now a mild winter with us, where the elevation is not so great, is, we may readily imagine, equal in warmth to their summers, so that it does not seem so extraordinary as we at first supposed, that some plants should flower so early in our climate.

Lucy. Thank you, sister, for making us sensible how happy we ought to be that we do not live in Lapland.

Charles. Attend a little to the wren there in the warm bank, how she sings this morning!

Aunt. Yes; they will sing through the winter, unless very severe indeed. They are interesting little creatures, and their nest is a model of perfection. Do you know, Charles, how it is, that the same kinds of birds always

build alike, and none ever vary in the family nest? You know they soon leave the old birds, and therefore are not likely to learn of them, and were too young when they left *the house of their fathers*, to know much of its structure.

Charles. Indeed, Aunt, I cannot imagine.

Aunt. I can only refer you, my dear boy, to the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, who has endowed all his creatures with faculties, and implanted in them habits exactly suited to their peculiar modes of life. But I like these little wrens the better, ever since I heard related an instance of their kind attention in rearing up a strange family of deserted orphans. A young lady at Bristol, purchased a nest of birds of a boy, whom she

met in the streets, purely from motives of compassion. She did not know of what species they were, but they proved to be the red-backed Shrike, (the *Lanius Collurio*); she put them in a cage, and exposed them at a window that opened in a large garden. The cries of the young family brought a number of birds about them, as if to enquire what was the matter, and among them a pair of wrens. The compassion of this diminutive couple was immediately excited, and they took upon them the office of parents. Great assiduity compensated for their defects in size and strength, and they actually brought up the whole family. When able to fly, they followed their foster parents about the garden. It was amusing to see birds of so large a size

gaping to receive a worm or an insect from a wren. Thus "He who hears the young ravens when they cry," in a thousand ways evinces his beneficence towards the creatures of his hand.

Am. The care of all animals over their young is an interesting part of natural history. Sometimes also the care of one animal over another of a distinct species, is very amusing. A curious instance of this occurred at Swansea, in a house where a friend of mine took a lodging last summer. The mistress received into her house a poor stray hen, who seemed to have no owner, and constantly walked into her shop door when she found it open. At length she became a cherished inmate in the good woman's little parlour. A kitten was,

after a time, brought up in the same house, and though not quite deserted by her mother, yet as the hen was more constantly its companion, a perfect familiarity took place between them, and the hen spread her wing over the kitten to warm and cherish it, as she would have done over her own brood. The cat, except when giving her young one suck, and licking it sometimes to keep it clean, gave up the office of nursing to the hen. In a few weeks the kitten learnt to skip after the hen, as if she were her own mother, and would imitate her habit of perching on the frame of an old-fashioned table, drawing her four feet together curiously to sit on the same perch, and in the same manner as the hen, so as to have the pleasure of keeping at

her side. It continued these habits till it was nearly grown up, and the intimacy might have lasted much longer, if the hen had not died.

Charles. Here comes little Jane Woods, with her basket of water cresses from the brook.

Aunt. Yes, and very fine ones they are. They are very acceptable to us, while other sallads are so scarce. They are always wholesome if gathered from clear running waters. They are then small leaved and brown. They are a fine anti-scorbutic, and I have known them very serviceable as an article of medical diet. A cheap, easy, and pleasant remedy.

Am. Here, Jane, take some to Betty Cook, and tell her from me to give you a luncheon of meat and bread.

Lucy. It must be mild indeed. Hear that lark singing in the air.

Am. Yes, it is the wood-lark. Observe, it remains long in one place, poised upon its wings, and does not wander in its rising like the sky-lark. We generally notice them late on fine summer evenings, when they chaunt their vespers most sweetly, and uninterrupted by other songsters. Now the bulfinches come about our gardens to look after the young buds on the fruit trees, which they are very apt to destroy. They are an imitative bird, having but little note of their own.

Lucy. This is the case with our gardener's starling. He imitates the cock's crowing, the hen's clucking, and the duck's quacking; but his

boy has taught a bulfinch to whistle several tunes delightfully.

Am. I suppose, Aunt, we must shorten our walk, for I see Mrs. Whirlley's chariot going up to the house. I suppose it may be the fifteenth or twentieth call she has made this morning, while we have had so fine a walk; so we may hope this will be last and least.

Aunt. I heartily wish the next generation may be so well taught, and so much interested by the beauties of nature and rational pursuits, as to know how to spend their mornings without breaking in upon that time which people, who know how to make use of their *talents*, can better employ. The worst of it is, too, that mornings now last till four

o'clock; so that between your friends who dine at three, and your acquaintance who dine at six, you are expected to have no time that you can call your own, after eleven or twelve o'clock; and all this because people do not know what to do with themselves; and thus to get rid of the burthen, they *kindly* call on their neighbours. However, we have enjoyed the morning. To-morrow I have promised to be at Winchester, and spend an evening with our late clergyman's widow in the Widow's College, an excellent charity left by Bishop Morley. In the summer I shall expect, if life and health be continued to us, to see you in the forest; when we may take some new excursions, and possibly go over to visit the back of the island, where I

know the scenery will give you more pleasure in a week, than gossipping at Southampton would afford in a month. I intend to take a house at that excellent bathing-place Mudiford, whence we can easily pass over to Yarmouth, and take the circuit of the Island. George must have a journal sent him of the excursion, to which you should all contribute, to cheer him in the West Indies, where, I suppose, he will be by that time; and I will add "the widow's mite."

No pale chagrin can groves and fields impart,
For Nature bears no hatred in her heart.
Pure are the pleasures of her sylvan reign,
They never weary, and they leave no stain.
The *Spring* awakes, new beauties deck the glades;
Summer's blue skies look lovely thro' the shades:
Autumn's rich stores to patient toil display
The promis'd comforts of the *Wintery* day.

In all the varying seasons, as they roll,
His goodness that ordain'd them, warms the soul;
He meets the well-taught heart in all his ways,
And tunes its finest chords to notes of praise.
Religion walks with science thro' the groves,
And points each lesson to the source she loves;
Smiles as Creation spreads its ample stores,
And while she smiles, contemplates, and adores.

FINIS.

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