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ESSAYS
ON
NATURAL HISTORY,

CHIEFLY
Ornithology.

BY
CHARLES WATERTON, ESQ.
Author of "Wanderings in South America."

SECOND SERIES:
WITH A CONTINUATION OF
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR.

THIRD EDITION.

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PREFACE.

HAPPY the man, say the Spaniards, who has written no more than one book. Important remark! when we consider the frailty of the pen, the toil of composition, the clashing of interests, and the sting of criticism.

Having been long ago impressed with the truth of the remark above quoted, I had awful fears within me, when the late Mr. Loudon requested me to write a few papers which might enable him to make up a little book of Essays; for I saw the danger of disregarding the wholesome remark of my Spanish monitors, and I felt apprehensive, lest the tiny reputation which I had formerly gained by the *Wanderings* might be lost for ever by the publication of his intended undertaking.

Great then indeed must be my anxiety on the present occasion, when I am rash enough to deviate another time from the Spanish line of certitude, into the mazes of chance and danger ; where the track which I am to pursue is ill defined and flinty, and may possibly lead me and my new little book into some quagmire or other ; there to perish without assistance ; the scorn of the critics, and the pity of disappointed friends. However, be this as it may, my die is cast, my steam is on, and I am already at the opposite bank of the Rubicon.

The volume which I now present to an indulgent public, is an unsolicited donation to the widow of my poor departed friend Mr. Loudon, whose vast labours in the cause of Science have insured to him an imperishable reputation. If this trifling present on my part shall be the medium of conveying one single drop of balm to the wound, which it has pleased Heaven lately to inflict on the heart of that excellent lady, my time will have been well employed, and my endeavours amply requited.

A part of its contents relates to the habits of birds ; and I wish to draw the attention of the young naturalist to it, because I have taken great pains in selecting the materials from actual observation in woods, and in swamps, and on plains, where the theories of the closet are unnecessary, and some of our new systems incompatible with the simplicity of Nature.

To those gentlemen who reviewed the volume of *Essays in Natural History* with a favourable eye, I return my grateful thanks. Although I have not the honour of their acquaintance, still their meed of approbation will not be lost upon me. To those critics who have thought fit to attack my puny offspring with their puny bodkins, I am happy to say, that their confederate thrusts have barely effected a slight puncture on its skin. I have it now again in my power to offer them half a day of occupation. They ought to be thankful for it, at a season when work is not always to be obtained.

Having been informed that Mr. (now I believe Professor) Macgillivray, in the first volume of his *Ornithology*, has compared me to the carrion crow, a bird acknowledged by the world at large, to be of bad character and filthy habits; I take this opportunity (as I have not the command of a press) to observe that I am not aware how I have procured the honour of such a distinguished attention; and at the same time to thank him for the store of tainted food which he has helped to place in the *Biography of Birds*, for the benefit of us needy ones of rapine and ill omen.

A word also of Mr. Swainson. He has accused me in the *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, edited by the unfortunate Doctor Lardner, of a “constant propensity to dress truth in the garb of fiction!” I need say no more if the reader will do me the favour to peruse a former letter of mine to Mr. Swainson. In justice to myself I have appended it to the present work.

Having begun the "Autobiography" in the first volume, there seems a kind of necessity to continue it in the second; although I have not yet made up my mind whether I did right or wrong to take the subject in hand at all. If I have erred in one instance, I equally err in another, and I must make up my mind to receive additional reproof. Cervantes says, "A nuevo pecado, penitencia nueva," For new sins, there must be a new penance.

Although I cannot expect that the description of what I saw in the cathedral at Naples will suit the taste of every English reader, I beg to state, that my account of the miracle which took place is most scrupulously true. I went thither with my sisters-in-law expressly from Rome to witness that, which has been the talk of the world for many centuries; and I took the journey, not so much to gratify my own curiosity as to have an opportunity of giving a faithful description of all that I should see

on that interesting occasion. “Causa viæ veritas.”

As this will be the last time that I shall appear before the public as an author (if indeed I merit that appellation), I close my short preface by taking a respectful leave of my readers, and by wishing them from my heart, the inestimable blessing from above of everlasting peace and plenty.

CHARLES WATERTON.

Walton Hall, Feb. 29. 1844.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Some Account of the Writer of the following Essays, by himself - - - - -	xi
<hr style="width: 20%; margin: auto;"/>	
Flower-gardens and Song Birds - - -	1
On destroying Vermin in small Gardens, and on relative Matters - - - - -	9
The Civetta, or Little Italian Owl - - -	15
The Powers of Vegetation - - - - -	22
Thunder Storm at Walton Hall - - - - -	24
The Roller called <i>Pica marina</i> in Italy - - -	26
The Holly - - - - -	32
The Squirrel - - - - -	40
Gigantic Raspberries - - - - -	44
The Cayman - - - - -	46
The Yew Tree - - - - -	60
The Ivy - - - - -	68
The New Chimney-sweeping Act - - - - -	79
Anecdote of a Combat betwixt Two Hares - - -	87
The Wren, the Hedge-sparrow, and the Robin - - -	90
Waste Lands - - - - -	100

	Page
The Canada Goose - - - - -	106
The Domestic Swan - - - - -	120
The Windhover Hawk and the Oil-gland - - - - -	130
On the Food of Animals - - - - -	133
On Fresh Air - - - - -	145
On Beauty in Animal Creation - - - - -	156
On the Projected Banishment of the Rooks from Scot- land - - - - -	166
On Tight Shoes, Tight Stays, and Cravats - - - - -	174

SOME ACCOUNT
OF
THE WRITER OF THE FOLLOWING ESSAYS,
BY HIMSELF.

(Continued from Vol. I. p. lxxxiii.)

“ Barbiton hic paries habebit.”

THIS beautiful line from Horace is the last in the last page of the former Essays. When I laid down the pen on the 30th of December, 1837, I thought that I should never take it up again. But it has only slumbered for a few short years; and the reader will see in the preface to this second little volume, what “has called it from the bed of rest.” My adventurous bark is once more rash enough to try its fortune on the high sea of public opinion, where many a stouter vessel, better rigged and better manned, has met an awful and untimely fate.

The first volume of Essays had not been much more than a year on the "world's wide stage," when I began to sigh for the comforts of a warmer sun; and I should have left these realms of "Boreas, blustering railer," to those who are fonder of his sway than I am, and have gone to the South, had not a letter from my friend Mr. Ord, the accomplished biographer of poor Wilson, informed me that he was on his way from Philadelphia, to pass the summer with us.

Upon the receipt of it, I gave up all thoughts of Italy and her lovely sky; and set about putting a finishing hand to my out-buildings, the repairs of which had been begun in 1834, and carried on at intervals.

They are an immense pile, composing an oblong square of forty-five yards in length, and thirty-six in breadth, independent of the dog-kennel, fowl-house, sheds, and potato-vaults. They had been erected by my forefathers at different periods, when taxation was comparatively in its infancy, and good old English hospitality better understood than it is at the present day. These buildings were gradually going to ruin, through length of time and inat-

tention to them during my absence ; but they are now in thorough repair. Every department, from the sty to the stable, has been paved, and the pavement joined with Roman cement. In front of them there is a spacious area all of stone, and behind them a stone walk equally done with cement. The entire drainage consists of one master drain and two smaller ones tributary to it, and their mouths are secured by an iron grate, moveable at pleasure.

I have been particular in this description, from no other motive, but that the reader might know by what process I have been able to banish the Hanoverian rat, for ever I trust, from these premises, where their boldness had surpassed that of the famished wolf, and their depredations in the long run had exceeded those of Cacus, who was known to have stolen all the milch cows of Hercules. The rats have made themselves so remarkably scarce, that if I were to offer twenty pounds sterling money for the capture of a single individual, in or about any part of the premises, not one could be procured. History informs us that Hercules sent the Harpies neck and crop into Stymphalus ; and that Ferdinand and Isabella of

Spain drove all the Moors back into Africa, and in our times we see thousands of poor Englishmen forced into exile by the cruel workings of Dutch William's national debt. When I am gone to dust, if my ghost should hover o'er the mansion, it will rejoice to hear the remark, that Charles Waterton, in the year of Grace 1839, effectually cleared the premises at Walton Hall of every Hanoverian rat, young and old.

The time had now arrived when my two sisters-in-law, my little boy, and myself, were to wend our way to the delicious realms of Southern Europe. But I stop to narrate a circumstance which took place before our departure. It may probably be of considerable value in future cases of hydrophobia.

As a police officer, by name Phelps, was going his night rounds in the town of Nottingham, he heard a dog barking in a hole which had been dug for the foundation of a weighing machine. His well-known humanity led him down to the place; and as he was lifting the dog up a little ladder which he had brought with him for the purpose of descent, he received from the animal a bite upon his upper

lip and nose. The dog on being delivered from his prison, ran away with speed, and was never heard of from that time. He must have belonged to some gentleman; for he was a pointer, and in too good condition to be the property of a gamekeeper.

The wound which poor Phelps had received, was dressed by a neighbouring surgeon; and nature did the rest. But some six or seven weeks after this, the officer began to feel that there was something wrong within him. He became better and worse alternately for two days; and then his disease showed itself with every mark of virulence. He said to those around him that he was going mad, and that it was all over with him: and then he let fall a tear as he mentioned his poor wife and children. After this, according to the minute account which was drawn out by Doctor Williams of Nottingham, he proceeded to the watch-house, and packed up his books which lay there; and turning to his companions, "Good-bye," said he to them; "I shall never come here again." And then he went to Mr. Davison for medical aid. Mr. Davison took him into his surgery, and on the poor officer getting sight of running

water, he was seized with convulsions. All was done that could be done. The faculty of Nottingham, consisting of Doctor Williams, Doctor Percy, Mr. Attenburrow, Mr. Sibson, and Mr. Davison, had soon arrived ; and they put in practice whatever their well known knowledge of medicine could suggest, or their pharmacy offer, to save this useful and respected man from an untimely grave. But all in vain. The terrible disease, with its concomitant horrors of spasmodic affection, baffled all their skill, and set their united science at utter defiance ; for death was hurrying their patient with unrelenting fierceness to his last resting-place.

Whilst things were in this deplorable state, an express was sent off to me late in the evening, and I proceeded to Nottingham without any loss of time, in hopes that the application of the Wourali poison might be the means of rescuing poor Phelps from the fate, which nothing in the practice of modern medicine seemed able to avert. When I had reached Nottingham with my friend Sir Arnold Knight, who had joined me at Sheffield, the unfortunate police officer was no more. I saw him in his

own house, lying on his back in bed, with his family weeping over his remains. Death had not changed his countenance, which had a serenity diffused throughout it, not to have been looked for in the features of one who had suffered so much. Poor Phelps was an honour and a credit to his employers, and I heard it remarked that the corporation of Nottingham would experience a great loss in being deprived of his trusty services. Indeed, there must have been something "more than common in him," as my Uncle Toby said of poor Le Fevre, for every body in Nottingham seemed "concerned for him."

Ere I left the town, I told the medical gentlemen present that I had business at home just then, which called me back; but that I would return in a day or two: and that, if in the mean time they would muster their scientific friends in Nottingham, and from the country round, I would be ready with the Wourali poison, and then we might see by experiment, if it could be used with safety in case of hydrophobia and locked jaw.

I revisited Nottingham on the day appointed; and we all went to the medical school, where

the Wourali poison was used before a crowded audience. The process tried was nearly the same as that which I have described in the *Wanderings*, when the ass (which was called Wouralia ever after) was operated upon until it was apparently dead, and then restored—after which it lived at Walton Hall for four and twenty years in excellent health.

On this occasion in Nottingham, two asses received the poisoned spike in the shoulder; and after yielding under the pressure of its destructive powers, they were both restored by the process of artificial respiration. The first trial was a very long one; and the operator, my worthy friend Mr. Sibson, exerted himself in a manner that astonished all the company. The artificial respiration was kept up for seven hours, before the prostrate animal exhibited the least symptom of returning motion; and that was first observed in a momentary quiver of the eyelid. This ass died I think on the third day after the experiment. But circumstances had intervened, to the influence of which, its death might in part be attributed. The second case occupied a much shorter space of time, and was quite successful. The ass is still alive.

Every person present seemed convinced that the virulence of the Wourali poison was completely under the command of the operator ; and that, by this artificial process, its malignant qualities could always be subdued. In a word, the company present came to the conclusion that it can be safely applied to a human being, labouring under hydrophobia, one of the most terrible and fatal of all the diseases that have ever afflicted mankind.

Mr. Sibson has most wonderfully improved the bellows, and thus rendered the process much less laborious. He has by him a fair store of the very poison which I brought from the forests of Guiana in 1812. See the *Wanderings*. I myself have also a good supply of it, as pure and as potent as it was on the day in which I procured it.

In case of need, an application, either to Mr. Sibson at the General Hospital in Nottingham, or to myself at Walton Hall near Wakefield, will be most punctually attended to ; and as railroad speed is now almost proverbial, a communication with every part of the country is put upon the easiest footing possible.

But I beg the reader in the most earnest

manner, to give his attention to the following remarks.

First, it is an acknowledged fact that the art of medicine has hitherto been unable to arrest the fatal progress of confirmed hydrophobia. This being the case, it is both wise and expedient to give the sufferer a chance of saving his life by the supposed, although as yet untried, efficacy of the Wourali poison; which, worst come to the worst, would, by its sedative and narcotic qualities, render death calm and composed, and free from pain; a circumstance not to be expected under the ordinary treatment, or no treatment at all, of this ungovernable and fatal malady.

Secondly, That as there can be no hope whatever from supposed remedies usually applied, the patient must by no means be allowed to take them, lest their pressure upon his constitution should neutralise or totally counteract the hoped-for good effects from the application of the Wourali poison.

Thirdly, The disease generally takes three days before it consigns its victim to the tomb, during which time the paroxysms only occur at intervals. Wherefore there will be time

enough to apply for the scientific assistance of Mr. Sibson, except, indeed, in cases of extreme distance. Until the arrival of this gentleman, the patient might be placed under proper restraint during the paroxysms, and after they had ceased, he might receive support and consolation from his friends.

I wish it to be particularly understood that I do not claim for myself the merit of this discovery, should it prove successful. I certainly paved the way to it by going in quest of the poison, which I acquired in its pure state at my own expense, and at the cost of my health. But to Professor Sewell of the Veterinary College in London, is due the merit of applying it in cases of hydrophobia. He was the first, I believe, who ever suggested the idea, and so certain was he of a favourable result, that I heard him declare before Sir Joseph Banks and a large company of scientific gentlemen, that were he unfortunate enough to be bitten by a mad dog and become infected with hydrophobia, he would not hesitate one moment in having the Wourali poison applied, as he felt confident that the application of it would prove successful.

When all had been arranged at Nottingham

relative to the application of the Wourali poison in case of hydrophobia, I took my leave of the gentlemen assembled, and returned home.

Spring passed rapidly away, and when summer had set in, I began to make arrangements of a domestic nature for a visit to the Eternal City, not having been there since the year 1818.

Whilst things were thus in progression, I had well nigh lost a servant by a singular accident. One of my swans having died by disease, and its mate by the horns of an unruly cow ; I had the offer of a noble pair from the good Jesuits at Stonyhurst to supply their place. My gamekeeper having gone to meet them on the way, his return was momentarily expected. The night was dark beyond precedent, and the servant hearing the noise of the vehicle, ran to the bridge in order to be of assistance. But he missed his way by about three yards from the inner gate, and went at full speed over the paved walk into the lake below. I was standing by the window at the time, and hearing a plunge which I could not account for, I sprang out of the window and hastened to the spot from whence the noise had proceeded. There

I heard a struggle in the water, and I instantly called out to the man and told him to make for the sound of my voice. He did so, and he managed, by exertions of his feet and hands, to reach the side of the wall, where I laid hold of him and pulled him up by main force. He was so confounded by the suddenness of the accident, that at first he knew not what was the matter with him. When he had come a little more to himself, he said that he had been out of his depth, and considered that all was over with him, when on hearing my voice, he turned to it, and got on his feet again by hard struggling. The rescue was effected by sound alone; for the dense and black clouds, together with the absence of the moon, had rendered the night as dark as it well could be.

Few are the incidents and uninteresting the adventures which generally occur in civilized life, especially to one who has formerly been engaged in forest roving, where ornithology was seen under every pleasing shape, and has yet far greater attractions for him than any other pursuit. The uniformity of Belgium, the flatness of Holland, the good cheer of Germany, the picturesqueness of Switzerland, and the

fine arts of Italy, have been already represented so voluminously to our view by different and indifferent English travellers, that there is scarcely any thing remaining in these countries from which a man may be enabled to glean a handful of information sufficiently interesting to be presented to a discerning public. With Mrs. Starke in one hand, and the accurate Murray in the other, who is there so untutored or so blind that cannot grope his way into every nook and corner where these indefatigable pioneers have been before him? Every part of their works bears evident proof of deep research. With their discoveries at our call, the fault lies at our own door if we get into bad quarters for the night, or are disappointed in the quality of food by day; for these useful writers have opened to us a safe and a savoury store of good things in almost every section of continental Europe.

There is one part, however, of modern information from the pens of some of our English travellers, any thing but pleasing or satisfactory to about one third of her gracious Majesty's subjects; and on this point I would wish to lay a little stress. I allude to the Catholic religion.

Scarcely a book of theirs is handed from the press, that does not contain some unbecoming sneer or unfounded calumny against the faith of our ancestors. Hence it follows that I invariably take up books of travels with suspicion, and too often have to discard them with marks of disgust. I could name writers whose self-sufficiency on this topic can only be surpassed by their arrogance, and their arrogance by their ignorance. Indeed, it is a difficult task to decide whether their real want of information, or their aversion to obtain it, is most to be complained of. But should individuals professing our faith, engage in a work intimately connected with it, their literary labours experience very little kindness and attention at the hands of our dissenting brethren. Thus, on the appearance of Lord Shrewsbury's pamphlet, after he had undertaken a journey into the Tyrol purposely to see the two holy virgins, the fame of whose sanctity had spread far and near, his little work was received with abundant scoffs, whilst those who gave vent to them, neglected to advance one single proof condemnatory, either of inaccuracy or of falsehood. Now I am forced to agree with Lord Shrewsbury in every part of

his statement ; because I have had interviews with eye-witnesses, whose unimpeachable testimony fully corroborates it, and I have by me just now the most minute particulars concerning these virgins, written equally by eye-witnesses whose characters are quite above suspicion, and whose piety has not the slightest tinge of fanaticism in it.

Certainly it would not be difficult to ferret out sufficient cause why it has pleased Omnipotence to withhold from England in these latter ages, a frequency of those supernatural occurrences which history, both native and foreign, does assure us, in the most positive terms, did take place in this island during the long period previous to what is generally termed the reformation.

When our press teemed with remarks concerning the Prince of Hohenlohe, at the time that Almighty God, through his prayers and those of the Church, had restored the arm of a nun at New Hall, from the last stage of loathsome disease, to one of perfect health and soundness, I determined to travel into Bavaria in order to gain indubitable information concerning the astonishing cures which were said

to have taken place there, and also in many other parts of the Continent.

As I passed through Ghent, I saw two females who had been cured during the mass appointed by the prince, to be said in Belgium, whilst he himself should be performing the same sacred rite in Bamberg. One of these was a young lady, by name Van Pettenghen, the daughter of a wine merchant. She was so grateful to Heaven for the cure, that she dedicated herself to serve the poor in the hospital of St. John for the remainder of her days. Thither I went to see her, and there I introduced to her Sir Charles Rowley, and his nephew, a Post-Captain in the Navy, in order that they might receive the account of her miraculous cure from her own mouth, and at the same time have an opportunity of asking what questions they thought fit.

On my arrival at Huttenheim, the virtuous secretary of the Prince of Hohenlohe showed me piles upon piles of original documents, containing authenticated accounts of cures performed. One from America, upon Miss Mattingly, the daughter of a mayor, was peculiarly interesting to me; for I had arrived in the

United States when the event was still talked over in the coffee-houses, and in private society. I passed a week at the house of the secretary, and during that time I had free access to the room which contained the accounts; and I spent much of my time in perusing them, with the scrutinous eye of a lawyer on a brief. So clear were the statements, and so respectably attested, that conviction flashed on my mind at the conclusion of every page. These original papers were copious enough to have formed many volumes; they contained the most satisfactory proofs of individuals being cured, at all periods of age, from the beggar to the prince. I was particularly struck with the cure of the Princess Schwartzenburg, and that of a French lady, who had been stone blind, and who had come all the way from the heart of France to Bamberg, where Prince Hohenlohe then resided. She attended at the mass, and no cure took place; a second mass was said on the following day, with no better effect; and then the prince told her to be resigned, as it seemed to be the will of God that she should remain in darkness. Still her hope did not abandon her, and she earnestly requested the prayers of

the prince for a third time ; he complied with her request : he said mass for her the day after, and her full sight was restored to her during the performance of it.

On my road to Huttenheim through Ghent, an English gentleman, a total stranger to me at the time, came up whilst I was standing at the door of the Hôtel Royal, Place d'Armes, and after apologising for taking me aside, he said, he had been informed that I was going on a visit to the Prince of Hohenlohe's secretary ; and upon that, he drew a paper from his side-pocket, containing an account of a sick relative of his, wishing for the prayers of the prince. She was prayed for accordingly ; and it pleased God Almighty that she should die. I presented another case, which had been confided to me in England. It was of a young woman who had been dismissed from the hospital as incurable ; she was afflicted with a deep-rooted cancer, which had made terrible ravages in her face. She was prayed for, and she received a perfect cure.

Many of my good dissenting brethren will, no doubt, read this with a smile of incredulity on their countenance ; but if they will consider

the affair with calmness, they will find upon reflection, that there is nothing new in the custom of praying to Heaven for a cure, through the prayers of the Church. When one of their own congregation is confined to bed by sickness, the clergyman requests the people to join him in prayer, that the invalid may obtain relief from Heaven. The people would not do this, unless they had a firm faith that a supernatural cure may be obtained by prayer, when earthly assistance cannot prevail. The Prince of Hohenlohe does no more than this.

But to return from this digression to the intended trip to Italy. When I had finished the arrangement of my domestic affairs, I called up the gamekeeper, and made him promise, as he valued his place, that he would protect all hawks, crows, herons, jays and magpies, within the precinct of the park during my absence. He promised me faithfully that he would do so; and then, wishing him a good time of it, I handed my two sisters-in-law, the Miss Edmonstones into the carriage; I placed myself and my little boy by them; the two servants mounted aloft, and in this order we proceeded to Hull, there to catch the steamer for Rotterdam.

I had a little adventure at Hull scarcely worth recounting, saving for its singularity. As I was standing at the window of the hotel, I saw an old and weather-beaten tar, ruminating on the quay which flanks the Humber; and as I had nothing to do at the time, I thought I would go and have a little chat with him; and so, I took my hat and went to the place where he was standing. "This is nearly the spot, my honest tar," said I to him, "where I first embarked for Spain in the brig *Industry* of this port. It is just now forty years ago, and a rough passage we had of it to Cadiz; we were all but ashore, one dark night at Cape St. Vincent. The captain's name was Lettus; but he must be dead and buried long ago, for he was then apparently quite at his best; and what with so long a war, and so many perils of the sea, no doubt he is safely stowed away in Davy's locker." "I saw him, Sir," said the tar, "no later than yesterday morning." "And where is he," said I? "He is safely moored in the house for poor decayed sea-captains, and he is as well and as happy as is possible for a man of his years to be."

I bade my informer good-bye, and having

stepped into the inn for my umbrella, as the weather threatened rain, I went down the street in quest of my old commander. I found him sitting on a bench facing the south, with a pipe in his mouth, and I recognised him at first sight, although disappointment, time, and poverty, had made deep furrows in his face. On asking him if he remembered the interesting affair he had with a brig bound to Vigo, about forty years ago; his eye brightened up, and he went through the whole story with wonderful minuteness. I then gave him a brief account of the many gales I had weathered since I bade him farewell at the sally-port in Cadiz; and he, on his part, told me that our mate, Mr. Davis, had got drowned in the Baltic; and that he himself had continued to buffet the waves for a mere livelihood, till at last, old age and poverty had dismasted him; but that he was now safe in dock, thanks to the generous people of Hull; and that he would be comfortable there, in a good snug berth, with plenty of excellent food, till death should break his crazy vessel into pieces.

Having settled the little demands against us at the Victoria Hotel, we went on board the Seahorse, and steamed for Rotterdam.

Beautiful, indeed, is the former sedgy marsh of Holland, and rich the people who have drained and fertilised it. There is a placidity and frankness in the Hollanders which at once gain the good will of the traveller, on his first appearance amongst them. The uniformity of their country, and the even tenor of their tempers, appear as though the one had been made for the other. You may walk the streets of Rotterdam from light to dark without encountering any thing in the shape of mockery or of rudeness. I could see nobody pressing forward with a hurried pace up the street, as though the town were on fire behind him; nor a single soul whose haughty looks would give me to understand that I must keep at a respectful distance from him. No bird ever preened its plumage with more assiduity than the housemaid in Holland removes every particle of dust and dirt from the façade of her neat and pretty dwelling. It seemed to me that she was at work with her water-pail and broom from the beginning of the week till late on Saturday night.

Had the sun shone with sufficient warmth and brightness, I could have fancied myself in

the cultivated parts of Demerara, — a country once the pride of Holland, ere we broke in upon it during the revolutionary war with France, and changed the face of all that she had done before us. Our raising immense taxes, and the profligate expenditure of them, did neither suit the means nor the notions of these frugal colonists; whilst our overbearing demeanour as conquerors soon gave them to understand that it was time for them to go elsewhere. In 1824, when I last visited the wilds of Guiana, scarcely a Dutchman could be seen either in Demerara or in Essequibo. Numbers of my former foreign friends had sunk into the grave; and numbers had gone to join their brethren in Surinam, the last remaining colony of Holland, on the *terra firma* of South America.

The stork, whose shape and habits at once announce him to be a lover of swamps and quagmires, is carefully protected in Holland. The natives know his value; and so good an understanding exists betwixt themselves and this bird, that he appears in the heart of their towns without the slightest symptoms of fear; and he builds his huge nest upon the flat of their

chimney tops. Would but our country gentlemen put a stop to the indiscriminate slaughter of birds by their ruthless gamekeepers, we should not have to visit Holland in order to see the true habits of the stork, nor roam through Germany to enjoy the soaring of the kite, — a bird once very common in this part of Yorkshire, but now a total stranger to it.

There is a bird-merchant in Rotterdam (I have forgotten his name, but the attentive Monsieur Walter, of the Hôtel des Pays Bas can give it) who has always a good collection of living water-fowl on hand for sale. He is moderate in his charges, and he appeared to me to have a very fair practical knowledge of the economy of those birds in which he dealt. But he staggered me not a little (and I saw he read my astonishment in my face) when he informed me that the widgeon makes its nest in Holland. He was positive. So I thought it would be wrong in me to refuse assent to his asseveration, as I was ignorant of the locality where he had made this important discovery. From him I purchased the unfortunate ducks and geese mentioned in my history of the

Canada goose, and which had the unlucky adventure through the rough streets of Hull, when they were arbitrarily ordered to the Customhouse by the ignorance of one officer, and peremptorily sent out of it by the ill-humour of another.

The Japan monsters, shown in the museum at the Hague, are clumsy fabrications. I could make better work with my left hand. The moth has perforated them to a great extent. Tis time, indeed, that they were cast out of the way. One of them put me in mind of Ovid's *Famine*, —

“ Hirtus erat crinis, cava lumina, pallor in ore,
Labra incana situ, scabræ rubigine fauces.”

But a sight of Potter's bull repays one for the penance done in examining these mouldering imitations of what may be termed death alive.

Celebrated as the museum at Leyden is in most of its departments, that of zoology, as far as preparation goes, is wretched in the extreme. It is as bad as our own in London; and we might fancy that Swainson had been there with his own taxidermy, marring every form and every feature. It is lamentable, indeed, that such celebrated naturalists as

those of Leyden, do not see their error in adhering to the old way of preparing specimens, or, seeing it, do not try to improve it. Their own knowledge of nature, and their innate powers of perception, ought to give them strong hints that the usual way of mounting specimens in zoology is unsound, and ought to be abandoned; and that some other plan must absolutely be adopted, ere a single sample can be produced that would stand the test of scientific examination. The bird with fresh-looking feathers on a shrunk and shapeless pinion; the quadruped whose nose is dwindled into half its size, and the serpent wrong at every fold, had far better be exhibited as mere skins, than be presented to public view bereft of every feature they possessed in life. As skins, at all events, we could look upon them with composure, and leave the room without disappointment.

The change of religion in Holland threw its magnificent churches sadly into the background, and there they have remained ever since. Nothing can exceed the nudity and gloom of the great church in Haerlem, where the famous organ, that paragon of melody, is said to surpass every other organ in the known

world. Whilst I was listening to its varied sounds, I thought of a nightingale pouring forth its own sweet song in an unfrequented hayloft. There is not a single pious ornament left in this church. The walls seemed damp and mouldy; and a ship or two in miniature, probably mementos of some great naval victory, are seen suspended in the vast and vaulted void.

But whatever may be the notions of these honest people concerning the value of holy objects to assist the mind of man during the time of his devotions, they have done every thing for the comfort of the body throughout the whole extent of their country. Hence we see in Holland as fine country-houses, as lovely gardens, as well regulated hotels, and as comfortable cottages, as any flesh and blood on earth can possibly wish for. I like the Dutch. I know of no country in Europe where human institutions appear to be upon a better footing.

We ephemeral travellers, in passing through a country like butterflies on a sunny day, merely flutter over this flowery bank, or sip a drop of nectar on that lily at the side of the

road ; but I am persuaded, if we tarried in Holland for a sufficient length of time, and became acquainted with the chiefs of the land, we should have spacious stores of information opened to our view. The zoological treasures of private individuals from Java, and Sumatra, and Surinam, must be very valuable ; and the personal adventures of the Dutch in those remote countries are no doubt replete with instruction. Surinam, so famous for its far extending forests, its rivers, plains, and swamps, is still possessed by Holland, as I have remarked above. I conceive she is keeping an anxious eye on the working of the new system forced upon her lost daughter Demerara. Should philanthropists of Holland loudly call for negro-emancipation, methinks they ought to have it, with this proviso, however, — that those who demand the freedom of the slave, should be saddled with the expenses attending it. When our own benevolents were urging the consummation of this affair in England, our minister, in justice to the nation at large, ought to have remarked : “ I will grant negro emancipation so soon as you yourselves, and your supporters shall have produced from your own purses, a sum sufficient to cover the

costs. At present I can do nothing for you in the way of money ; I am already eight hundred millions in debt. I must not rob Peter to pay Paul."

Although Holland offers every comfort to the weary traveller, and every luxury to the epicure, we scarcely find an Englishman, not in commerce, who is resident in any part of this country ; whilst in Belgium, just at the other side of the ditch, a country so like unto Holland that it might be taken for Holland itself, English families swarm like congregated swallows towards the close of September.

Our countrymen are fond of what they call seeing sights ; and there is undoubtedly a greater sphere for this in Belgium than there is in Holland, for Holland contracted hers considerably by gutting her churches and shutting their doors six days out of seven ; whereas the Belgians have preserved their religious ornaments, and they keep their churches open throughout the whole week. If we may judge by the crowds of Englishmen who are for ever sauntering up and down these Belgian churches, we must come to the conclusion that they are pleased with what they see. And still it can only

be a feast for their eyes, as they know little or nothing of the ceremonies which are performed, or of the instruction which is imparted through the medium of pictorial representations. “How have you got over your time, to-day?” said I, one afternoon to an acquaintance, who, like Mr. Noddy’s eldest son in Sterne, was travelling through Europe at a prodigious speed, and had very little spare time on his hands. He said that he had knocked off thirteen churches that very morning!

Whilst myself and sisters-in-law were at Amsterdam admiring some of the pictures which form part of the immense treasures produced by the Dutch artists, my eye was rivetted to the spot by one which will be gazed upon in after times with extreme interest. The spectator will see represented, with great fidelity, an act of self-devotedness noways inferior to that which has rendered famous the name of a Roman light-horseman, who mounted his steed and rode it headlong into a yawning abyss in the Forum, by way of appeasing the wrath of the immortal gods. The name of this modern Curtius was Van Spek, commander of a brig of war in the Batavian service. During the late

insurrectionary conflict with Belgium, this intrepid seaman, perceiving that all was lost, and that he could no longer command his vessel under his own national colours, he determined to blow it up and perish in the wreck. He disclosed his resolution to the crew, and told them to retire from danger when he should give the signal. Having invited as many Belgians as possible on board his devoted man-of-war, he made the promised signal to his men, and then went down below. There he struck a light, and applied it to the train which he had already prepared. In an instant the man-of-war blew up, and Van Spek and his enemies perished in the ruins. However pagan history may sanction dismal facts like this, Christianity shudders at the very thought of them. Whilst we admire the determined courage of the Dutch commander, we lament that his patriotism should be stained by the commission of so foul a deed.

Now that so many of our own swamps have been drained, and their winged inhabitants forced to disappear through hunger, or have fallen before the gun of the insatiate fowler, we must go to the morasses of Holland, if we wish to improve our knowledge of water-fowl in

their native haunts; for Holland is still very rich in water-fowl, and the naturalist may obtain his wished-for information there, in an enjoyable manner, and on easy terms.

I saw much in Holland to put me in mind of Demerara at every step. The mildness, and urbanity, and good humour of the inhabitants, had gained so much upon my feelings, that I felt a gloom come over me when I had arranged all to go to Antwerp — a fine old city, but not much to my taste, notwithstanding the excellent cheer, and cleanliness, and moderate demands at the Hôtel d'Angleterre. I had formerly known Monsieur Kats the naturalist; and on the morning after my arrival, I went down the Rue du Convent to shake him by the hand, and to have an hour or two in his museum. He had succeeded admirably in breeding and rearing the summer duck of Carolina. He told me that he seldom failed of success, if he placed the eggs under a domestic hen; but that if he allowed the duck to sit on her own eggs, it was always a failure, for the newly hatched birds were too delicate to go amongst the herbage with her, in this cold and variable climate. He showed me a huge

baboon from the coast of Africa. This apparently half-reasoning brute, would lay hold of a broom-staff, and manage to bring within his reach a crust of bread, which had purposely been placed beyond the range of his chain.

As the time of our departure for Bruges was close at hand, I thanked Monsieur Kats for his civilities to me; and then I bade him farewell.

What is it that makes the Catholic town of Bruges so attractive to English families, many of whom have so unfavourable an opinion of the faith of their ancestors?

“ Will the stork intending rest,
On the billows build its nest?
Does the bee derive its store,
From the bleak and barren shore?”

No. Bruges then, must have that within it which can afford the comfort and convenience denied to these good families in their own country; otherwise they would never think of leaving old England, to take up a permanent abode in this place.

To me Bruges has charms inexhaustible; and did my habits allow me to prefer streets to woods and green fields, I could retire to Bruges

and there end my days. Our second Charles was fond of Bruges. He became a member of its ancient society of archers, which still flourishes in its pristine vigour; and you may see the portrait of this regal profligate in the hall of the establishment, which you enter from the Rue des Carmes.

In the same street is the renowned convent of English nuns, under the spiritual direction of the Patriot Abbé de Foere, whose charities and talents are an honour to Belgium, and of vast advantage to the inhabitants of this fine old city. Would that some of the boarding schools in our own country could turn to their profit the example of the watchful ladies in this holy establishment. Difference in faith need be no obstacle to scholastic arrangements. Into this convent no love-letters can ever gain admittance; nor has a scheming adventurer the smallest chance of coming at wealth, by laying plans to inveigle the unsuspecting victim into his snares. The generous nuns are unwearied in their exertions to prepare those entrusted to their charge, both for this life and for the next. There are members of my family, one, alas no more, who have reason to bless the day in

which they entered this elegant retreat of plenty, peace, and piety.

The church of the convent is worthy of the name in every point of view ; and its marble altar, originally from Rome, is a master-piece of ornamental architecture. On the wall over the grate in the audience room for visitors, there hangs a picture of a boy laughing at his own performance on the fiddle. So true is this to nature, that you can never keep your eyes from gazing on it whilst you are sitting there. Were thieving innocent, and the act injurious to none, I would set my brains at work how to purloin this fascinating picture ; and then if I succeeded in adding to it the representation of a dead bittern suspended by the leg in the Academy of Arts, I would consider myself owner of two paintings, at which you might gaze and gaze again, and come again and gaze, and never feel fatigued with gazing at them.

At the fatal period of the suppression of monasteries in Belgium, when Joseph II. had plundered their treasures and dispersed the monks ; his government was so fearful of public execration and of the consequences arising from a proceeding so unjust, that it actually

hired wretches from the lowest of the people, and clothed them in the habits of the exiled religious. Under this scandalous disguise, they were made drunk, and went up and down the streets as monks, to show the people how glad they were to be released from their religious vows.

At Ghent there is a splendid show of osteology in the museum under the scientific direction of Monsieur de Duyts, whose urbanity and knowledge of natural history, enable his visitors to pass many a pleasant hour in the apartments.

When the monks flourished in this city, there was a huge chaldron called St. Peter's pot. Above half an ox with the requisite vegetables was boiled in it every day, and distributed gratis to the poor of that district. When a couple were to be married, the curate never inquired what means they had of support, if they assured him that they had access to St. Peter's pot. Times are altered. Pikes and halberds now glitter on the spot, where once this savoury chaldron used to boil.

— “ Fugère pudor, verumque, fidesque,
In quorum subiêre locum, fraudesque dolique.”

In Ghent, too, is the *Béguinage*; a convention of females who assemble for public prayer every day in a handsome church belonging to the establishment. They are not recluses, nor under the observance of perpetual vows. It is a kind of partial retirement for them from the disgust or fascinations of a cheating world. They pass their time in doing good works and in holy prayer; far removed from the caustic gossip of the tea-table, or from the dissipations of nocturnal gadding. It was a *Béguine* who attended Corporal Trim so charitably, after he had got wounded in the knee at the battle of Lauden.

But it is time to travel onwards. Were I to tarry long in the different abodes of art and science in this interesting country, I should terrify the reader by the apparition of two large volumes at least: whereas, it is only my intention to present him with one of small extent, like the song of the stormcock in the month of December.

I must skip from Ghent to Aix la Chapelle, and just remark as I am going on, that the valley of the Meuse on a fine warm day in July, appears as rich, and beautiful, and romantic,

as any valley can well be on this side of ancient paradise.

And still I must not leave Dendermond behind me, without a few words on the most feeling and pathetic story ever told by the tongue of man. Who can halt in Dendermond, and not bethink him of my uncle Toby in England, when he took his purse out of his bureau, and went to befriend Lieutenant Lefevre, who was sick at the inn? Or who can fancy this dying soldier, casting his last look upon his weeping boy, without taking out his handkerchief to dry his own eyes? Or who, in fine, can be unmoved, when he sees the poor orphan youth receiving his late father's sword from the hand of his kind benefactor? How forcibly all this speaks to the soul! and "how beautifully it shows the heart of one, in whose looks, and voice, and manner superadded, there was something which eternally beckoned to the unfortunate to come and take shelter under him."

Aix-la-Chapelle stands unrivalled in the efficacy of its medicinal waters. I say unrivalled; for although fashion and interest may extol the great advantages to be derived from

other spas in Germany, I am satisfied that every one of these advantages are to be found at Aix-la-Chapelle; and that they would be reaped most abundantly, were it not that their salutary effect is neutralised by the dainty cheer, prepared with an unsparing hand, in every hotel of note, in this much-frequented town.

Here it is that we see people of dilapidated frame, sitting down to a dinner which might vie with Ovid's description of Chaos in its materials, and in the nature of them.

“ *Frigida pugnabant calidis, humantia siccis,
Mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus.*”

As the partaker of this heterogeneous display of aliment has to pay for admission to it, he considers that he is entitled to value for value; and under this impression, his jaws belabour his stomach so unmercifully, that all advantage to be derived from the medicinal waters is completely lost; and his constitution gains nothing in the end, for the trouble and expense of a visit to Aix-la-Chapelle. Physicians may write what they please, and prescribe any mode they choose; but until they can compel their patients to be moderate on plain diet, there will be little or nothing effected in the way of a permanent cure.

Every body is asking, Where do they give the best dinners? Where are the choicest wines? I myself always go to the Hôtel du Dragon d'Or, where the good widow Van Gulpen enables her company to counteract the salutary effect of the waters, by as fine a display of cookery as is to be found in the town. I have sat there, lost in astonishment, at the enormous quantity of food consumed by those who had come expressly to Aix-la-Chapelle for the benefit of their health.

Still the superabundant dainties of the table are not the only obstacles to the good which ought to be derived from the waters at this celebrated spa. We know that in curing diseases of the body, the mind, as in poetry, must not be ruffled :

“ Carmina proveniunt, animo deducta sereno.”

But man's evil genius has formed an establishment here, in which he has too often causé to exclaim with the bard :

“ Me mare, me venti, me fera jactat hyems.”

This is no other than a gambling table in full operation three times a day. Here, invalids

assemble and try their luck, after which they go to a sumptuous dinner, and then return to gamble ; and, after tea and coffee, have another spell at the seductive table. This splendid hall of ruin is under the immediate care and protection of his Prussian Majesty's Government. Every stranger has the gracious privilege of breaking his fortune to pieces ; but not the heads of his assistants ; for on losing his temper, should he become unruly, there is an efficient police close at hand to curb his impetuosity.

As I am fond of reading a man's actions in the various changes of his face, upon which I place more reliance than upon the tongue itself ; and as I have scrupulously followed the advice of the good fathers of the Society of Jesus, never to engage in any kind of gambling, I can enter this saloon of danger, without the fear of getting entangled in its meshes. Wherefore, I have no difficulty in making my appearance there. But how shall I attempt a brief description of countenances engaged in play at the insidious tables of this frequented room ? Some bear their losses with a kind of silent fortitude, leaving their last penny in the bank, and their unlucky chair to the next occupier. Others

show in their sullen features, the awful workings of despair within them: whilst others break out in ungovernable fury. I was told of an English officer who lost his all, and would have beaten out his brains against a stove, had the bystanders not interfered: and another officer informed me, that he had thrown a mace at the head of one of the croupiers with such force, that it made a deep indentation in the plaster of the wall behind him. I once assisted in forcing away to Dusseldorf a young naval officer, from the hotel where he was staying, in order to prevent him from risking the remnant of his money at his favourite table of rouge et noir.

Ladies, even ladies, are far from being shy in trying their fortune at these delusive boards. It is melancholy to see how the rose and the lily take possession of their countenances by turns, as the dice or ball shows in their favour or against them.

As I was standing a silent spectator at one of the tables, I saw a youth take the chair of one who had just contributed largely to the support of the bank. He was dressed in the height of fashion; and as I took a nearer view

of him, I knew at once who he was by the striking resemblance which he bore to both his parents. He sported gold in abundance. Piece disappeared after piece, till at last, his stock was probably reduced to one; for, on taking a Frederick out of his pocket, he asked for change in silver;—and having lost that, he left the room. As I followed him with my eye to the door, I whispered to myself, *Aurifer atque hilaris, venisti huc; moestus abibis.* Thinking that he might possibly return in the evening, I determined to give him the meeting, and to make myself known to him; and to put him in mind, that a burnt child ought to dread the fire. But he appeared no more.

What a sad exhibition is all this of the folly and the frailty of human nature! Kind Providence has afforded us an inexhaustible flow of salubrious water at Aix-la-Chapelle, so easily to be approached, and of such transcendent virtue, that if we will only do it justice, we are sure to reap the full benefit of it. But in lieu of a corresponding effort on our part, we counteract every expected advantage, by resorting to the *salle à manger*, and there partaking of all the luxuries from the cornucopia of Epicurus,

Bacchus, and Ceres; after which we put the last impediment to the restoration of health, by destroying the peace of the mind at the gambling table; there to be flayed alive by courteous butchers, to whom the government, and the inhabitants, and the visiters themselves, give every encouragement in the exercise of their terrible and cruel calling. There they are, and there they will continue by the united consent and countenance of all parties concerned; and there they will ease thousands of their last farthing, by a process so pleasing, so engaging, and at the same time so treacherous, that neither youth nor age, nor sex, nor character, can show fortitude enough to make an effectual stand against it.

Nothing can be more charming in warm and sunny weather, than the rural walks on the wooded hill of Louisberg just above the town. When you are sitting on the bench at the top near the column, and casting your eye on the surrounding scenery, you will say, that as a whole, there cannot be a finer or a richer sight. The Ardennes appear to great advantage. At my last visit to the Louisberg, a pair of ravens came and soared over my head, and exercised

their various aerial evolutions for more than an hour; and then winged their flight towards the Ardennes. As I watched their risings and their lowerings, home rushed on my imagination, and I bethought me of the rascally cobbler who desecrated the Sunday morning by robbing the last raven's nest in this vicinity. A willow wren, larger, and of brighter colours than our own, sang sweetly, although the season was far advanced; and the black redstart was for ever flitting from stone to stone on the ruined walls of the hotel, which had been consumed by fire during the preceding year.

The sun had now descended into the southern world; whilst the winds of autumn drove the falling leaves before them, and showed us that it was time to leave the cloudy atmosphere of Rhenish Prussia. The Rhine too, had but few of its summer beauties left, although we found at Strasburg a warmer sun than what we had expected. Indeed, it was here that old Boreas gave up the pursuit; for, had it not been that we encountered a keen and cutting wind as we approached the summit of the Splugen, we should have enjoyed, all the way from Strasburg, the genial warmth of a mild and sunny autumn.

At Freyburg, where we passed a couple of days, the climate was truly delicious; and as the vintage had only just commenced on the day of our arrival there, all was joy, festivity, and mirth. There was a German waiter at the hotel, of extraordinary talent for acquiring languages; he said, he had never been in England, nor much amongst Englishmen, but that he had written a description in English poetry of their own cathedral. On saying this, he offered me a little pamphlet, containing an excellent engraving of that superb edifice, by way of frontispiece. As I looked over the pages, I found in their contents, matter much superior to any thing that I could have expected from the pen of a German waiter at an inn. Having complimented him on the successful study of a language, by no means of easy acquisition even to a native, I paid him the price which he had asked for his work, and I put it in my portmanteau, for future investigation; but it now lies in the wreck of the Pollux, at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea.

I had expected to have a sight of some of our rarer European birds in my passage across

the Alps; and in order to have a better chance of success, I got out of the carriage and travelled onwards on foot. But I saw none; the earth appeared one huge barren waste, and the heavens produced not a single inhabitant of air to break the dull monotony around us.

Charming is the descent down the southern side of the Alps; every day brought us a warmer climate with it, and gave us a foretaste of the delightful temperature to be enjoyed in the delicious air of an Italian autumn. As we were advancing slowly up a little ascent in the road, my sister-in-law, Miss Helen Edmonstone, who had just been looking out of the window of the carriage, remarked with a considerable archness of countenance, "I am sure that we are in Italy now." Thinking that there was something more than common, by the way in which this remark had been uttered, I cast my eye along the road behind us, and there I saw a matronly looking woman, with her fingers in full chase amid the long black hair of a young damsel, apparently her daughter. "I agree with you, Miss Helen," said I. "We are in Italy, there can be no doubt of it; probably in parts of this country, combs are not

so plentiful as they are with us. They must have been scarce in the time of Horace, for he remarks of Canidia, ‘*crines et incomptum caput.*’”

I am never prone to find fault with the modes and customs of those countries through which I travel; always bearing in mind, that if we here in England have the supposed comforts of life in a superior style, we pay in a superior manner for them. However, I do think in one instance, that the Italians would confer a vast benefit on society, if they would depose more fertilising matter in their fields, and less in their streets; or, in case the first is not considered necessary, they might imitate the excellent example of the good people of Edinburgh in the olden time, when they had a man clothed in an ample surtout, crying up and down the streets at night, “Wha wants me?” At a distance, the appearance of the Italian towns and villages, surrounded by olive groves and cypress trees, is perfectly enchanting; but on a near approach to them, every favourable idea vanishes at once, and the traveller cannot walk the streets with comfort, unless he has his lavender-water with him.

There was nothing in any of the museums which I visited, to show that an advancement had been made in the art of preserving specimens for natural history; in that of Bologna, I saw two male turkeys with a very thick and long tuft of feathers on their heads; their necks were bare. I was informed that these strange looking birds were mere varieties of the tribe, and that they had been reared from the egg in the immediate vicinity.

At Florence, my old friend Professor Nesti showed us through the well-stored apartments of the public museum; we had not seen each other for more than twenty years: as I looked at him, I could perceive that age had traced his brow with furrows; and he, no doubt, must have observed that Time's unerring hand had been employed upon my own for a similar purpose. Professor Nesti first introduced me to the celebrated sculptor Bartolini of Florence. On calling at his studio after an absence of twenty years, I found him at work on a classic group, which he had composed with great taste, and was finishing in the first style of elaborate sculpture. The group consisted of Andromache in the imploring attitude of utter despair,

whilst the unfeeling conquerors of Troy were in the act of throwing her poor boy Astyanax over the battlements!

“Mittitur Astyanax, illis de turribus, unde,” &c.

I was invited to see in Florence a bird, a mouse, and a piece of heart and liver, which by a chemical process (only known to the inventor) had become as hard as stone. I had been given to understand, that I should find the bird and mouse as perfect in their form as when alive; but upon examination, the anatomy appeared shrunk and injured; the plumage of the bird and the fur of the mouse were wrong at all points, so that I left the room with disappointment in my looks. Probably corrosive sublimate had been the chief agent in causing these substances to become so very hard.

Although I was much on the watch for birds from Florence to Rome, I saw very few indeed; some dozens of coots on the waters, a heron or two rising from the marshes, with here and there a noisy blackbird rushing from the bush on the road-side, and a scanty show of hooded crows passing from tree to tree, were nearly all

there was to tell us that animated nature had not entirely abandoned the parts through which we were travelling.

I had a little adventure on the road from Baccano to Rome not worth relating, but which I deem necessary to be introduced here in order that some of my friends in the latter city, and others in England, may not give me credit for an affair which deserves no credit at all. These good friends had got it into their heads that I had reached Rome after walking bare-foot for nearly twenty miles, in order to show my respect and reverence for the sacred capital of the Christian world. Would that my motive had been as pure as represented! The sanctity of the churches, the remains of holy martyrs which enrich them, the relics of canonised saints placed in such profusion throughout them, might well induce a Catholic traveller to adopt this easy and simple mode of showing his religious feeling. But unfortunately, the idea never entered my mind at the time; I had no other motives than those of easy walking and of self-enjoyment. The affair which caused the talk, took place as follows.

We had arrived at Baccano in the evening,

and whilst we were at tea, I proposed to our excellent friend Mr. Fletcher, who had joined us at Cologne, that we should leave the inn at four the next morning on foot for Rome, and secure lodgings for the ladies, who would follow us in the carriage after a nine o'clock breakfast. Having been accustomed to go without shoes month after month in the rugged forests of Guiana, I took it for granted that I could do the same on the pavement of his Holiness Pope Gregory the Sixteenth, never once reflecting that some fifteen years had elapsed from the time that I could go bare-footed with comfort and impunity; during the interval, however, the sequel will show that the soles of my feet had undergone a considerable alteration.

We rose at three the morning after, and having put a shoe and a sock or half-stock-
ing into each pocket of my coat, we left the inn at Baccano for Rome just as the hands of our watches pointed to the hour of four. Mr. Fletcher having been born in North Britain, ran no risk of injuring his feet by an act of imprudence. The sky was cloudless and the morning frosty, and the planet Venus shone

upon us as though she had been a little moon. Whether the severity of the frost which was more than commonly keen, or the hardness of the pavement, or perhaps both conjoined, had deprived my feet of sensibility, I had no means of ascertaining; but this is certain, I went on merrily for several miles without a suspicion of any thing being wrong, until we halted to admire more particularly the transcendent splendour of the morning planet, and then I saw blood on the pavement: my right foot was bleeding apace, and on turning the sole uppermost, I perceived a piece of jagged flesh hanging by a string; seeing that there would be no chance of replacing the damaged part with success, I twisted it off, and then took a survey of the foot by the light which the stars afforded. Mr. Fletcher horror-struck at what he saw, proposed immediately that I should sit down by the side of the road, and there wait for the carriage, or take advantage of any vehicle which might come up. Aware that the pain would be excessive so soon as the lacerated parts would become stiff by inaction, I resolved at once to push on to Rome; wherefore, putting one shoe on the sound foot, which, by the way, had two

unbroken blisters on it, I forced the wounded one into the other, and off we started for Rome, which we reached after a very uncomfortable walk. The injured foot had two months' confinement to the sofa before the damage was repaired. It was this unfortunate adventure which gave rise to the story of my walking barefooted into Rome, and which gained me a reputation by no means merited on my part.

When we left the shores of England, we determined to spend two years in Rome, reserving to ourselves the privilege of retiring from it when the unwholesome season would cause a longer stay there, neither safe nor any ways agreeable. We set apart this period for a visit to Naples, as it would be a good opportunity to see the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, a prodigy which has given rise, almost time out of mind, to every possible conjecture throughout the whole of civilised Europe. But of this more hereafter; sufficient to say for the present, that we went to Naples and witnessed the liquefaction.

Rome, immortal Rome, replete with every thing that can instruct and please, is the resort of travellers from all parts of the known world.

They have so deluged the press with accounts of its economy, its treasures, and antiquities, that there seems nothing left for future tourists whereon to exercise their pens. For my own part, having seen most of the curiosities full twenty years ago, I did not feel much inclined on this occasion to renew my acquaintance with many of them, especially as I found the temperature of the galleries and palaces any thing but genial. Still I got a sight of some things which have made a lasting impression on me; one of these was the titulus which was fixed over the head of our dying Saviour; a most learned rabbi of our days has proved its authenticity, if any new proof were wanting; for the historical records at the time of its being brought to Rome are so clear and positive, that no one who has any faith at all in history, can doubt that this identical piece of wood is the same that was used on the cross, when our blessed Lord suffered for the sins of the world. The wood itself is sycamore, and the words appear as though they had been cut hastily into it by some sharp-pointed instrument.

I fear the world will rebuke me when I tell it, that instead of ferreting out antiquities and

visiting modern schools of sculpture and of painting, I passed a considerable portion of my time in the extensive bird-market of Rome. I must however remark, that the studio of Val-lati, the renowned painter of wild boars, had great attractions for me; and I have now at home, a wild boar done by him in so masterly a style, and finished so exquisitely, that it obtains unqualified approbation from all who inspect it.

The bird-market of Rome is held in the environs of the Rotunda, formerly the Pantheon. Nothing astonished me more than the quantities of birds which were daily exposed for sale during the season; I could often count above four hundred thrushes and blackbirds, and often a hundred robin red-breasts in one quarter of it; with twice as many larks, and other small birds in vast profusion. In the course of one day, seventeen thousand quails have passed the Roman custom-house; these pretty vernal and autumnal travellers are taken in nets of prodigious extent on the shores of the Mediterranean. In the spring of the year and at the close of summer, cartloads of ringdoves arrive at the stalls near the Rotunda. At first the

venders were shy with me ; but as we got better acquainted, nothing could surpass their civility, and their wishes to impart every information to me ; and when they had procured a fine and rare specimen, they always put it in a drawer apart for me. These birdmen outwardly had the appearance of Italian banditti, but it was all outside and nothing more ; they were good men notwithstanding their uncouth looks, and good Christians too, for I could see them waiting at the door of the church of the Jesuits, by half-past four o'clock on a winter's morning, to be ready for the first mass.

I preserved eighty birds, a porcupine, a badger, some shell-fish, and a dozen land tortoises, whilst I was in Rome ; and these escaped the shipwreck by having been forwarded to Leghorn, some time previous to our embarking at Cività Vecchia for that port.

Whilst we were viewing the lofty fragment of a wall which towers amid the surrounding ruins of Caracalla's baths, I saw a hole in it which is frequented by the large eagle owl of Europe. A fearless adventurer had managed to get a young one out of it the year before, and he had sold it to the gardener at the

Colonna palace, who kept it alive in the pleasure-grounds; and there I paid it a visit generally once a week. Another pair of these noble wanderers of night is said to inhabit the enormous outworks at the top of St. Peter's. These birds are very scarce in this part of Italy.

As you enter Rome at the Porta del Popolo a little on your right, is the great slaughter-house, with a fine stream of water running through it. It is probably inferior to none in Italy for an extensive plan, and for judicious arrangements. Here some seven or eight hundred pigs are killed on every Friday during the winter season. Nothing can exceed the dexterity with which they are despatched. About thirty of these large and fat black pigs are driven into a commodious pen, followed by three or four men, each with a sharp skewer in his hand, bent at one end, in order that it may be used with advantage. On entering the pen these performers, who put you vastly in mind of assassins, make a rush at the hogs, each seizing one by the leg, amid a general yell of horror on the part of the victims. Whilst the hog and the man are struggling on the ground,

the latter, with the rapidity of thought, pushes his skewer betwixt the fore leg and the body, quite into the heart, and there gives it a turn or two. The pig can rise no more, but screams for a minute or so, and then expires. This process is continued till they are all despatched, the brutes sometimes rolling over the butchers, and sometimes the butchers over the brutes, with a yelling enough to stun one's ears. In the mean time, the screams become fainter and fainter, and then all is silence on the death of the last pig. A cart is in attendance; the carcasses are lifted into it, and it proceeds through the street, leaving one or more dead hogs at the doors of the different pork shops. No blood appears outwardly, nor is the internal hemorrhage prejudicial to the meat, for Rome cannot be surpassed in the flavour of her bacon, or in the soundness of her hams.

A day or two after our arrival in the Eternal City, Fathers Glover and Esmonde, of the Professed House of the Society of Jesus, came to see me. We had been school-fellows together, some forty years before, at Stonyhurst in England, and our meeting was joyous in the ex-

treme. Nothing could exceed the disinterested friendship which these two learned and pious disciples of St. Ignatius showed to us during our stay in Rome. Father Glover became our spiritual director. The care which he took to form the mind of my little boy, and the kind offices which we were perpetually receiving at his hands, can only be repaid, on our part, by fervent prayers to Heaven that the Almighty may crown the labours of our beloved foster-parent, with the invaluable reward of a happy death. When my foot had got well, after a long and tedious confinement, Father Glover introduced me to the present General of the Society of Jesus. He is a native of Holland; so engaging is his deportment, so mild is the expression of his countenance, and so dignified is his address, that it was impossible not to perceive immediately that I was in the presence of one eminently qualified to be commander-in-chief of the celebrated order, the discerning members of which had unanimously placed him at their head.

I had long looked for the arrival of the day in which the Roman beasts of burden receive a public benediction. Notwithstanding the

ridicule thrown upon this annual ceremony by many a thoughtless and censorious traveller, I had figured in my own mind a ceremony holy in itself, and of no small importance to the people at large. "Benedicite, omnes bestiæ et pecora, Domino!" I conceived that the blessing would insure to these poor dumb animals a better treatment at the hands of man than they might otherwise receive; and the calling upon our kind Creator to give his benediction to a horse, which, by one false step, or an unruly movement, might endanger the life of its rider, appeared to me an act replete with Christian prudence. I recalled to my mind the incessant and horrible curses which our village urchins vent against their hauling horses on the banks of the Barnsley canal. This aqueous line of commerce passes close by my porter's lodges; and as the first lock is only a short distance from them, the horrid din of curses commences there, and is kept up by these young devils incarnate from week to week (Sundays not excepted) with the most perfect impunity.

At last the day arrived on which the beasts of draught and burden were to receive a benediction from the hand of a priest at the door of

St. Anthony's church. The sun shone brightly, and the scene was truly exhilarating. Every horse, and mule, and ass, was decked out in splendid colours, and in trappings corresponding with the means of their owners, whose faces bespoke the joy of their hearts, and whose orderly conduct, at once proclaimed the religious feeling which had brought them to the place. When the animals had received the benediction, they passed onwards with their masters, to make room for those behind them; and this was the order of the day, until the last blessing upon the last animal brought the exhibition to a close.

As this scene of primeval piety was going on, an English gentleman, with whom I had a slight acquaintance, and who was standing by my side, remarked that he was tired with looking at such a scene of superstitious folly. "If it be folly," said I, in answer to his remark, "to give a blessing to an animal in one shape, it is certainly folly to pronounce a benediction upon an animal under another. And still we all do this in England, and in every other Christian country. Where is the well-regulated family which, on sitting down to a leg of boiled mutton

and caper sauce, does not beg the blessing of Almighty God upon it, through the mouth of the master of the house, or by the ministry of a clergyman, if present? ‘Benedicite, omnia opera Domini, Domino!’ Who ever thinks of cutting up a young roasting-pig, immersed in delicious gravy, and hot from the kitchen, without asking a blessing on it?—‘Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts!’”

When the returning warmth of summer has filled the upper air in the streets of Rome with multitudes of swifts and house-martins, the idling boys manage to capture these useful visitors by a process at once surprisingly simple and efficacious. They procure a silken line of sufficient length to reach above the eaves of the houses. To one end of this they attach a small curled feather or two, and behind these is formed a running noose. This apparatus is taken up into the air by the current of wind blowing through the street; and as the poor birds are on the look out for materials wherewith to line their nests, they strike at the floating feathers, and get their necks into the fatal snare, and are taken to the bird-market at the Rotunda for sale. This ornithological amusement is often carried on in

the street of the Propaganda during the months of May and June.

After the benediction by the sovereign pontiff from the portico of St. Peter's has given the world to understand that all the ceremonies of holy week are over, the strangers take their departure from Rome with a precipitation as though the pestilence had shown itself within her walls. We, however, determined to prolong our stay, wishing to be present at the services during the month of May, the whole of which delightful time is dedicated to devotions in honour of the blessed Virgin. It is called in Rome, "the month of Mary;" and these devotions are performed in the church of the Jesuits with a magnificence worthy of the occasion. The beautifully arranged blaze of innumerable candles on the high altar; the heavenly music; the fervent prayers of the people, and the profound attention of the officiating Fathers, all tended to make a deep and a lasting impression on my mind.

Our prolonged stay gave me an opportunity of collecting specimens of those birds of passage so rarely to be seen in our own land, and scarcely ever acquired in a state fit for pre-

paration. We had the golden oriole, the roller, the bee-eater, the spotted gallinule, the least of the water-rails, the African redstart, the hoopoe, the egrette, the shrikes, and several varieties of the quail, and I procured an adult pair of the partridge of the Apennines in superb plumage.

Thus did time glide on, every day producing something new to engage the attention of my indefatigable sisters-in-law, and to give me sufficient occupation in ornithology, so that we felt somewhat low in spirits when the day arrived on which we were to take our departure for Naples. I saw more birds on the route from Rome to Naples than I had observed in the whole of the journey from England. Kites and common buzzards, sparrow-hawks and windhovers, were ever on the wing in the azure vault above us.

As we were resting our horses at a little inn on the side of the road, I had a fine opportunity of getting close to a very large herd of Italian buffaloes. These wild-looking animals have got a bad name for supposed ferocity, and when I expressed my determination to approach them, I was warned by the Italians not to do so, as the buffaloes were wicked brutes, and

would gore me to death. Having singled out a tree or two of easy ascent where the herd was grazing, I advanced close up to it, calculating that one or other of the trees would be a protection to me, in case the brutes should prove unruly. They all ceased eating, and stared at me as though they had never seen a man before. Upon this, I immediately threw my body, arms, and legs, into all kinds of antic movements, grumbling loudly at the same time; and the whole herd, bulls, cows, and calves, took off, as fast as ever they could pelt, leaving me to return sound and whole to the inn, with a hearty laugh against the Italians.

After I had seen the ram of Apulia in Naples, I no longer considered Homer's story of Ulysses with the sheep of Polyphemus so very much out of the way.

The days passed swiftly over in Naples. What with our visits to the wonderful places in the neighbourhood, and the interesting sights in "*otiosa Neapolis*" itself, we could scarcely believe that the 19th of September had actually dawned upon us. On this day is celebrated the festival of St. Januarius, bishop and martyr; and we had come from Rome to Naples expressly to

witness the liquefaction of his blood. I will not trouble the reader with any preliminary remarks on this astonishing prodigy, but merely observe that Sir William Hamilton, our former ambassador at Naples, wrote to Lord Morton, the President of the Royal Society, on the 29th of December, in 1767, in the following words:—
“ It is well attested here that the eruption of Vesuvius ceased the moment St. Januarius’s head came in sight of the mountain.”

We had the very best letters of introduction to Naples; so that these procured for us most convenient situations to witness whatever might take place. On the 19th of September, then, in the year 1840, accompanied by my two sisters-in-law, Miss Edmonstone and Miss Helen Edmonstone, and my little boy, we arrived at the Cathedral, and entered it just as the great clock was striking a quarter past eight of the morning. Through the kindness of Father Sorentino, of the Society of Jesus, and through that of the learned Abbé Bianchi, we were shown into most advantageous places.

A short time before the phial which contains the blood of St. Januarius was taken out of the chapel dedicated to him, in order to be placed

upon the high altar in the cathedral, all the people joined in repeating the Litany of the blessed Virgin, and in reciting aloud several other prayers. When these were finished, the silver bust of the saint was taken from the chapel in solemn and imposing procession, and was put upon the high altar. High Mass was then performed, whilst the entire cathedral was densely filled with people. At the termination of High Mass, the phial containing the blood was carried by one of the canons into the body of the cathedral, in order that every person present might have an opportunity of inspecting the blood and of kissing the phial, should he feel inclined to do so. There were two phials, a large one containing the blood as it had flowed from the wounds of the martyr at his execution, and a smaller one containing his blood mixed with sand, just as it had been taken from the ground on which it had fallen. These two phials were enclosed in a very strong and beautifully ornamented case of silver and glass. I kissed this case, and had a most satisfactory opportunity of seeing the blood in its solid state. Thousands of people, in all ranks of life, from the prince to the beggar, had the same oppor-

tunity with myself of witnessing the blood in its solid state; and the canon who held the case as I was looking most intently at it, turned it over and over many times, to prove to us that the blood was not liquid; and as he did this, he only touched the case with the extremities of his fingers.

I ought to have mentioned above, that so soon as High Mass had terminated, a number of females were admitted into the sanctuary. This was a kind of hereditary right, claimed and possessed by their families time out of mind, on account of their connection with that of St. Januarius. These privileged women recited aloud the Litany of the blessed Virgin; and they sent up other fervent prayers to Heaven, accompanied with the most extraordinary gesticulations that can possibly be conceived. Strangers who know little or nothing of the Italian language, and who do not enter into the fervour occasioned by a scene like this, have sometimes taken it into their heads that these females are actually abusing the saint for not allowing his blood to liquefy so soon as they could wish. But this is a false surmise on their part. I was close to the females at the time

that they were praying most fervently, and I heard neither threat nor abuse; all appeared excessive devotional fervour on their parts.

At one o'clock, P. M. by my watch, no symptoms whatever of a change in the blood had occurred. A vast number of people had already left the cathedral, so that I found the temperature of the place considerably lowered.

Precisely at a quarter before two in the afternoon the blood suddenly and entirely liquefied. The canon who held the case passed close by me, and afforded me a most favourable opportunity of accompanying him close up to the high altar, where I kissed the phial, and joined my humble prayers to those of the multitude who were blessing and praising Almighty God for this signal mark of his favour in the stupendous miracle which had just taken place.

I kissed the phial again an hour after this, and again at the expiration of another hour, and so on, making in all five times, an hour always intervening betwixt each devotional salutation. By means of these repeated inspections of the blood, I saw that it remained in its liquid state without any apparent tendency to congelation, although the temperature of the

cathedral had abated much by five o'clock in the evening, at which hour I kissed the phial for the last time that day. I had been in the cathedral for more than eight hours without once leaving it; and I had watched with intense interest every thing that had taken place on the occasion. This was on the 19th of September; and on the 23d of the same month I visited the cathedral again, betwixt the hours of nine and ten in the morning, just after high mass had been performed at the altar in the chapel of St. Januarius. I examined the blood most minutely; it formed one solid lump, and was quite immovable, as the canon turned the reliquary up and down and sideways before my face. There was no favour shown. The poorest man in the cathedral had an equal opportunity of approaching the relic, and of inspecting it, with the Queen Dowager herself, who was there. The blood liquefied a few minutes before ten o'clock, and I examined it repeatedly in its liquid state with the same attention which I had shown to it in the afternoon of the 19th.

Nothing in the whole course of my life has struck me so forcibly as this occurrence. Every

thing else in the shape of adventures now appears to me to be trivial and of no amount. I here state, in the most unqualified manner, my firm conviction that the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius is miraculous beyond the shadow of a doubt. Were I to conceal this my conviction, from the public eye, I should question the soundness of both my head and heart, and charge my pen with arrant cowardice.

During our sojourn in gay, but noisy Naples, we had an adventure, as absurd as it was unexpected; and it was so mixed up with affected cleanliness, attempted extortion, and natural history, that I cannot refrain from giving a short description of it.

I had a letter of introduction to the superior at the beautiful convent of San Martino, situated on the lofty hill where stands St. Elmo's stately fortress. One afternoon, whilst we were enjoying a drive up to this well-guarded citadel, I took the opportunity of delivering my letter of introduction to the convent; and, as ladies are forbidden by the law to enter such establishments, it was arranged betwixt us that they should continue their drive to the gates of the fort, and saunter there until my return

from the monastery. It seems that the son of Bellona, who commands at the fort of St. Elmo, has his organs of sight and smell so particularly refined, that he cannot tolerate the least impurity on the road that leads to his domain; and thus every coachman is obliged to remove, without delay, what may drop accidentally from the caudal extremity of his horses, or pay a fine to a soldier for doing the important work for him.

When I had inspected the convent, and enjoyed the magnificent view from its corridors, I joined the ladies; and to my surprise I found them and our Roman coachman, and the coach itself, and the horses, all under military arrest. The coachman was in a prodigious fury with the sentinel, and the sentinel was loud in his demand for work accomplished.

“By the Pope,” said our coachman, “I wo’n’t pay a single baiocco.”

“You shall pay in full,” said the irritated sentinel, “or I’ll keep you all here till morning.”

“What is there to do, Pasquale?” said I.

“Signore,” said he, “they have falsely accused my horses of uncleanness, and they want

me to pay the soldier for removing the pretended nuisance. Now, I will do no such thing," continued he, "for my horses *non sono andati di corpo*, have not had one single motion, this afternoon, from the time that they left the stable; and the young ladies who are sitting there in the carriage can bear witness to the truth of what I affirm."

"Your horses have committed the offence," said a soldier standing close to the sentinel, "for I myself removed what fell, and put it over the wall there, and I will be paid for my trouble."

"Not by me," said our coachman, wrathfully, whilst fire flashed from his coal-black eyes.

"Pray, friend," said I to the soldier who had just been speaking, "did you actually see the horses commit the fault?"

"No, Signore," said he; "but I removed what had dropped from them whilst it was still warm, and there has been no other carriage on the road to the fort this afternoon."

Now I saw clearly that I had the whip-hand of these extortioners; for, just as I left the ladies in order to deliver my letter at the convent, I observed a jackass going quietly on the

road before us ; and it was evidently this unfortunate beast of burden which had been under the necessity of breaking the rules of the place. Wherefore, putting on a look of ferocity, I told the sentinel sternly that nothing should be paid, and that he might keep us under arrest all night long, if he thought fit to do so ; and then I ordered him peremptorily to send for the officer on duty.

Whilst we were thus hotly engaged, a handsome young officer made his appearance from the fort, and, stepping up to the side of the carriage, he begged to know the cause of the uproar. We each of us told our story ; and, as the officer had no other clue to go by but the asseverations of both parties, there was not much appearance that things would go off to our satisfaction.

“ The dispute can be settled in a minute,” said I to the polite young officer, “ if we repair to the place where the soldier has deposited what has caused our arrest. I have the greatest confidence in the veracity of my coachman ; and, moreover, as I am pretty well versed in natural history, it will be no difficult task for me to prove, by the size of the nuisance, that

our horses have been basely calumniated. *Mon officier,*” said I, “ I saw a moderately sized jackass, with my own eyes, trot along the road before our carriage, just as I left it to go to the convent; and I am sure I shall be able to show, by admeasurement of the component parts of the guano, that the ass alone must have been the sinner in this unexpected and unpleasant affair.”

The officer saw immediately that his soldier’s claim was groundless. He rebuked the sentinel for having stopped the carriage, and then, making a bow, with a look full of good-humour, to the ladies, he requested that they would continue their drive. Pasquale moved onwards, growling like a bear with a scalded head, and declaring, as his horses started, that such an act of tyranny as this was just fitted for Naples, but never could have taken place at any fort in the papal states, or in any other country.

Having fully succeeded in the object of our visit to Naples, we took the advantage of a fine steamer for Sicily, but not with any intention of staying there, as our projected return to Rome would merely admit of a transient visit to that renowned island. I had long

wished for an opportunity to see Scylla and Charybdis ; the first, so notorious formerly for the howling of her dogs under water, —

“ Scylla rapax canibus, Siculo latrare profundo ; ”

the second, terrible for its hostility to ships, —

“ Ratibusque inimica Charybdis.”

Stromboli's smoking crater, not unknown at Guildhall in the affair of Captain Booty, was seen in the distance, as we were advancing to these famous straits. But I was sadly disappointed with their appearance, for they showed nothing of that tremendous agitation so forcibly described by the ancients. I concluded at last, that either the poets had availed themselves of the licence which has always been accorded to those who drink the waters of Helicon, or that these two ferocious whirlpool genii had left their favourite residence and gone elsewhere. Indeed, I soon found to my cost that they had settled in the passport offices of Sicily, for I was all but worried alive there. The hungry inmates had found a flaw in my Neapolitan passport. It consisted merely of the omission of the word “ return.” This was a windfall for their insatiate cravings ; and I had either to administer to their

appetites, or to give up all thoughts of leaving the island, as the negligence of the authorities in Naples had subjected me to take out a new passport in Sicily. Thus I had first to pay at one office and then at another; to wait here, and to expostulate there; so that, what with the heat of the sun, and the roughness of the pavement, and the payment of fees, I could not have been much worse off had I been sucked into the vortex of the old straits themselves. In a word, there was no helping myself, and no mercy shown, although I cried out most feelingly —

“ *Solvere quassatæ parcite membra ratis.* ”

The vexations at the passport offices deduct considerably from the pleasure of a tour through the insular dominions of his Neapolitan majesty.

I can fancy that Sicily must afford a magnificent treat to the votaries of ornithology both early in April and at the close of September, as the European birds of passage, in coming to the north, and in retiring from it, are known to pass in great quantities through this island. A person with a good telescope, and in a favourable situation, would have it in his power to mark down the many different

species of birds which wing their way to this quarter; and I can conceive that the family of hawks, especially the windhover, would be very numerous.

I got considerable information concerning the nautilus in the Sicilian seas from an excellent gentleman who accompanied me in the steamer, and to whom I had been introduced in Naples the day before we sailed. His name was Larkins, and he was a clergyman of the Established Church. I shall long remember his attentions to us in Messina. We corresponded for some time after my return to Rome; but as he was much out of health, and did not answer my last letter, I cannot divest myself of the fear that he is now no more.

In Sicily we saw an exhibition, the recollection of which haunted me like a spectre for many a week afterwards. It might be termed a melancholy parade of death decked out in a profusion of gay and splendid colours. I could not comprehend by what species of philosophy these islanders had brought themselves to the contemplation of objects once so dear to them, but now shrunk into hideous deformity, and seeming, as it were, to ask for a removal from

a situation which ill befits them, and which has robbed the grave of its just and long-acknowledged perquisite. This abhorrent spectacle is no other than that of the dead brought from what ought to be their last resting-place, where the dryness of the climate has preserved their flesh from rotting. They were decked out in magnificent attire; but death had slain their beauty; their godlike form was gone, and the worm had left upon them disgusting traces of its ravages.

“*Matres, atque viri, defunctaque corpora vitâ.*”

We saw what once had been fine young ladies, and elderly matrons, and fathers of families, in dresses fit for a convivial dance; and we might have imagined that they were enjoying an hour of repose till the arrival of the festive time. But when our eyes caught the parts not veiled by the gorgeous raiment, oh, Heavens! there, indeed, appeared death in all his grisly terrors. I had never seen any sight in my life, before this, so incongruous, so mournful, so dismal, and so horrifying. These shrunk and withered remnants of former bloom and beauty brought to my mind the exhibitions of stuffed monkeys which we see in our own

museums, with this difference only, that the monkeys have glass eyes most unnaturally starting from their sockets, whilst the hollow sockets of the Sicilian mummies contain a withered substance, discoloured and deprived of all the loveliness that life had once imparted to it.

The churches in this delicious island surpass even those of Rome in the variety of rare and costly marble ornaments.

The horns of the cattle are of surprising length. By the merest mishap in the world, I lost the opportunity of purchasing a pair of these, which would have deserved a place of distinction in any museum of England.

We left Sicily under the full impression that we ought to have remained there for three or four months; but this could not be accomplished; so, on our return to Naples, having paid a farewell visit to Virgil's tomb, we left this laughing, noisy, merry city on a fine and sunny morning, to enjoy, for eight or nine months more, the soothing quiet of the Roman capital.

To ourselves, as Catholics, a prolonged sojourn in the eternal city was of infinite value. The venerable Cardinal Frasoni had been un-

remitting in his attentions to us ; whilst his pious secretary, il Signore Canonico Natanaele Fucili, showed a friendship for us as though our acquaintance had been of very long standing. My little boy was so fond of this amiable gentleman, and so devoted to His Eminence, that he would be in the Propaganda whenever an opportunity offered. The friendly offices, too, of Dr. Wiseman and Dr. Baggs, of the English College, added much to our enjoyment.

But the church of the Gesù was the chief place of our daily resort. My little boy might be said to have lived in the convent. Its professed fathers and its lay brothers were unbounded in their acts of friendship to him, and in imparting to him instructions the most invaluable and important at his tender time of life. The "English angelino," as these good religious called him, never appeared to such advantage as when engaged in the sacred ceremonies at the church of the Jesuits. The decorum which is punctually observed in this splendid edifice renders it a place of universal resort, whilst the punctuality in the daily performance of divine service is beyond all praise. The doors are opened precisely at five o'clock

of every morning in the year, but many masses are said before that hour.

One Sunday, during the celebration of high mass, when this church was densely crowded, Miss Edmonstone had to witness a most appalling accident, very near to the place where she was kneeling. A man who was in the habit of lighting the uppermost candles which ornament the lofty cornice, had been ordered to discontinue his services on account of a dizziness which had recently attacked him. Notwithstanding this injunction, he had the temerity to ascend that very morning, and down he came into the body of the church, mortally wounded himself, and mortally wounding a poor old woman, who was in fervent prayer upon her knees below. They both died in the course of the week.

I would often in the morning, whilst waiting for the opening of the church doors, ask some of the good souls assembled there, what it was that made the Jesuits such universal favourites with the people. I invariably received for answer that, although the other religious orders were very good and attentive to them, yet the fervour, and charity, and attendance, of these

fathers were carried to a still higher degree ; and that, during the cholera, their exertions were beyond all praise, for they were seen in the most infected parts of the city, both day and night, performing acts of charity and piety in every shape imaginable.

As casual conversation is more easily entered into by the light of the moon or the lamp, than under the broad face of day, I was ever and anon exchanging words with those who were wont to assemble at the porch of the Gesù ere the morning light had dawned. A person in very comfortable circumstances, if I might judge by the neat appearance of his raiment, and apparently not far from eighty years of age, would often be pacing to and fro in front of the church full half an hour before the doors were opened. One morning I thought I would ask him if he had ever seen Benedict Joseph Labre, the unknown and humble beggar who had died at Rome in the odour of sanctity, on the 16th of April 1783. He told me that he had often observed this pattern of humility and self-denial both in the streets and in the churches ; but that he had never conversed with Benedict, for that this poor follower of Jesus Christ was never seen

loitering in the streets through which he passed from one church to another, where he spent nearly the whole of the day, either standing in profound recollection, or on his knees absorbed in prayer. He added, that he saw all Rome in motion on the day in which Benedict died, and that on the following days, all ranks of people, from the highest to the lowest, were incessantly flocking to the church of Santa' Maria dei Monti, where the body lay, in order that they might have an opportunity of showing their respect for it.

Benedict was a Frenchman, born of very respectable parents in the diocese of Boulogne-sur-Mer. His family knew not that he existed, having lost all trace of him from the time that he wrote his last letter to them on his way to Rome, where he passed the remainder of his life, a voluntary beggar, unknown and unnoticed, in the exercise of every Christian virtue. He lies buried on the epistle side of the high altar in the church of Santa Maria dei Monti, with a slab of white marble over his grave, mentioning his name, and age, and death, and the day of his interment. Benedict will probably be canonised ere long, as the process of his beatification has already commenced.

On festival days, the superb temple of the Gesù is ornamented in splendid style with a vast profusion of very rich gold fringe which hangs at the cornice throughout its whole extent. The preservation of this costly treasure from the hands of plunder on a former occasion was so unique that I cannot help relating the circumstance, if I can do so without trenching on the very nervous sensibility of modern decorum. I will try my best.

When the French had got to Rome, and were making professions on all sides of Fraternité, Egalité, and Liberté, the Romans found out too late that these were merely words used as a cloak to conceal depravity in its worst of forms. A rumour had got abroad that these newly arrived Gallic brothers had expressed their astonishment at the prodigious show of gold fringe in the celebrated church of the Gesù. This caused the good fathers to turn pale, for they clearly foresaw that they were to be honoured by a visit on the part of those whose swords had hitherto generally been employed as chief agents in adjusting affairs of *meum et tuum*. To attempt a concealment of the treasure within their walls would be futile, as their scrutinising

visitors were known to have the eyes of lynxes. To send it out would be running fully an equal risk. In this uncertainty the good lay brother who had charge of the fringe requested leave that he might try to save it; and his plan was such as would have done honour to the brains of Annibal himself.

Having collected the immense mass of golden fringe, he threw it negligently into an unfrequented room, and covered it with a heap of bedclothes ready for the washing-tub. He then went into the street with a couple of buckets in his hands; and having procured enough of what in London would never be found exposed to the open air, he conveyed it to the unoccupied apartment mentioned above, where he had already taken the precaution to place a certain number of nocturnal crockery conveniences. Into these he discharged from his buckets a fair proportion of his imported guano. He then shut the window, and having closed the door without locking it, he returned to the performance of his ordinary occupations. In a day or two a detachment of French troops paid their visit to the Gesù, and were so taken with the appearance of it, that they expressed

a wish to see through the different parts of the enclosure. The door of the room in question was opened by one of their perambulating companions. In an instant out rushed the incarcerated vapours, "quâ data porta ruunt;" and, what with the sight and the odour together, the visiters deemed it time to retreat, disgusted with the filthiness of a convent where they had hoped to reap a golden harvest.

Formerly the church of the Jesuits possessed many fine paintings by masters of the first celebrity, but barbarity and injustice deprived the fathers of these inestimable treasures. The cause of their disappearance from the corridors of the Gesù does honour to the heart of man. They were sold for the maintenance of the aged Portuguese and Spanish missionaries who had been most cruelly deprived of every means of support, and driven into exile, by D'Aranda and Pombal, the infidel tools of the infidel philosophers, who had it all their own way at that eventful period.

From the time of our return to Rome to that of our departure for Cività Vecchia in June 1841, things went smoothly on, whilst every day was productive of information and con-

tentment. My sisters passed their time as usual, and much of mine own was spent in the bird-market and in its environs, and in preparing the specimens which I had procured. I obtained a fine gobbo, or white-headed duck, the only one in the market during the two seasons of my stay in Rome. I also got a very handsome red-crested duck with a red beak, equally as scarce.

The large bat, "altivolans," is abundant in Rome. You may see it issuing from the lofty edifices at sunset, and proceeding with surprising velocity to its favourite haunts afar off. The Roman lizard is beautiful in form and colour. After dissection, which is very difficult and tedious at the tail, I could restore its anatomy perfectly; but the brilliant green and yellow colours of its body soon began to fade, and at last they totally disappeared, the specimen gradually assuming a tint composed of grey and blue. The fresh-water tortoise, with a tail considerably longer than that of the one which lives on land, is well worth the trouble of dissection.

Rome seems to have vast attractions for the English nation. Protestants as well as Catholics

flock to it in multitudes, and apparently pass the winter season there with considerable satisfaction. But we Catholics have opportunities of seeing things which I fancy will never be accessible to our dissenting brethren, so long as they exhibit such want of decorum during their visits to the sacred temples. Would that they could be convinced how much they lose by conduct so unworthy of those who bear the name of Christian! Certainly great allowances must be made; and I am willing to believe that the scandalous deportment of many, may be attributed more to early prejudice than to absolute impiety; for who is there amongst them, of fifty years' standing, who has not been cautioned times out of number against the devil, the pope, and the pretender? and although they are informed by history that the last of this redoubtable trio is dead, and cannot rise again to claim his stolen crown, still they are aware that the remaining two are yet on earth. The devil, however, if we may judge by the frightful increase of magistrates and prisons in England, has no spare time to be in Rome; but the pope is always there; and the firm belief of the misinformed English visiters that

this kindest and best of pontiffs is really the man of sin, who gets drunk on the blood of nations, may have a wonderful effect in producing that bad behaviour so notorious during the performance of the annual ceremonies. Indeed, when I reflect on the horrible wickedness of England's coronation oath, I cannot bring my mind to be hard upon those of our own nation who conduct themselves so unbecomingly, and distract us so seriously during the celebration of the adorable sacrifice of the Mass.

If English Protestants, so amiable in society, so well informed on most subjects except the religion of their ancestors, and who are known to be so charitable to people in distress, would place less confidence in the fanatical ravings of hired declaimers, and determine to procure instruction from a purer source, their mode of conduct in our churches would improve, in proportion as the knowledge of the real state of things brought salutary conviction to their minds. How many a lovely face have I seen disfigured by a sarcastic smile at the very foot of the altar! How many a profane remark has caught my ear from the mouths of passing

strangers whilst we were all in silent adoration on bended knees before the real presence in the consecrated host !

I may here observe that British families, on their arrival in Italy, cannot be too cautious in the selection of what is called "Laquais de place," or man to show the curiosities. Too many of these gentry are first-rate scamps, with information ready concocted to suit the tempers of those who hire them. Rome and Venice, and Florence and Naples, abound in these characters. A murder as old as the hills, dressed up anew; a sacerdotal intrigue which never took place; barbarous conventual cruelties, such as those which Maria Monk has manufactured, are topics which these accommodating renegades expatiate upon, according to circumstances. Half of the calumnies against our faith, from the pens of English people abroad, have their origin in this polluted source. The last time I was in Florence, whilst we were viewing with our guide the upper outworks of its magnificent cathedral, the fellow overshot the mark, sadly to his loss. In pointing to the localities of the former convents, he remarked that their suppression was a benefit. "They

ought never to appear again," said he; "the town is much better without them." I let him go on for a while, after which I informed him that I had been educated by a religious order. All was changed in a moment: his countenance sank; he begged a thousand pardons; he thought he had been with English Protestants. And once, when I was in Venice, a sleek, well-dressed wretch of this description came up, just as I was passing over one of the bridges leading to the square of St. Mark. It was nearly dark, and he whispered in my ear, that he had got something good in store. "Bestia infernale," said I, "is this thy work on a Sunday afternoon?" Away he ran, and I pursued him over another bridge, where I lost him. My friend Captain Alexander of the navy, will remember this adventure.

The Museum of Natural History at the Sapienza in Rome, is a discredit to the name of the establishment, and I could see nothing in the department of zoology worthy of the least attention. The gentleman who showed me through it was very polite, and well-informed, but I have forgot his name. It went to the bottom of the sea, with the rest of my papers.

Rome is certainly the most quiet city I ever visited. That foul play and stiletto experiments do occasionally occur, is probable enough, when we consider the extent of the city, and the vast influx of strangers from all parts of the world. Still I witnessed no desperate acts of violence. Yet, methinks, I must have seen some, and perhaps have felt them too, had they been of ordinary occurrence, for I had occasion to be in the streets every morning a little after four o'clock. Sometimes a houseless dog, which had secured its night's lodgings in the open air, would snarl at me; but, on my pretending to take up a stone, it fled immediately. I saw nothing in the shape of man to cause suspicion, either when the moon shone brightly, or when her light was partially supplied by the flickerings of the distant lamp. But I had often occasion to observe both men and women, kneeling in fervent prayer at the little oratories so common in the streets, especially at that of the "Madonna del Archetto," so well known in the year 1796, and so incessantly resorted to since that interesting period.

I was not aware until chance put me up to it, how careful the Roman government is in

providing for the spiritual wants of the soul. Having mistaken the hour of rising, I was in the street at half-past three in the morning; and seeing a man with a gun in his hand, and a couple of dogs by his side, I pushed up, in order to have a word or two with him. On my remarking that it was somewhat early to go in quest of game, he replied that his chase lay a good way off; and that he had just come from the three o'clock mass, which is always said at that hour for the accommodation of those who indulge in the sports of the field.

He who has leisure on hand to examine into the nature of religious establishments, cannot help being convinced of their utility. In Rome it is at once apparent. There, no man ever need complain of the want of a meal, for he is sure to find it at the charitable convent door, where, every day in the year, food is distributed to all who come for it. An English gentleman, who had resided fifteen years in Rome, once told me that he had never known a single instance of any person dying through want. It would be wrong in me to withhold this small tribute of praise due to the monasteries, as I am thoroughly convinced of their

great benefit to all ranks of people. The time of the inmates is spent either in salutary advice at the confessional, or in offering up prayers for the nation, or in attending at stated hours to the wants of the poor and the distressed. The good monks may be seen taking the fresh air in the evening, for the preservation of their health, in some favourite quarter of the town, but they all retire to the convent before it is dark; the "Ave Maria," or short form of prayer to implore the intercession of the blessed Virgin for the welfare of the city, announcing that the time of returning within their enclosures has already arrived.

There was a lay-brother from the convent of San Pietro in Montorio; who often came to see us. I do not recollect, in the course of my travels, ever to have met a person more kind, more affable, or more engaging, than this excellent man. He had always some little treat of choice fruit from the garden of his convent for our acceptance. We did not hesitate to receive it, seeing the frankness with which he offered this small tribute of his regard for us. His name was Frà Francesco; and he esteemed us as much as we esteemed him; for when he heard of our

disastrous shipwreck he burst into tears, and fell upon his knees to thank Heaven for its mercy in having spared our lives.

There are many things in Rome which offend our English feelings, although the natives do not seem to be at all affected by them. Thus all the spouts send down torrents of water from the eaves of the houses into the streets below, inflicting a deluge on those who have not learned the art of threading their way successfully through the spaces which intervene betwixt the descending torrents. Many a time have I received on my shoulders this annoying fall of water. The streets, too, are abominably filthy with offensive matter, causing a nuisance which would not be tolerated for a single day in an English town; and within the entrance door of many of their dwellings there may be seen a pool which loudly calls for the mop, if the purity of ladies' flounces be an object worthy of attention. Again; the kitchens of these Italians appear as though they had never once been white-washed since the days of Ancient Rome; whilst their cooking utensils are, at times, none of the most cleanly. A friend of mine had ordered an omelet for supper. His

servant, on going accidentally into the kitchen, saw the cook preparing it in a kind of thing which I dare not exactly describe. But the reader will understand me when I inform him that the filthy rascal, not having a proper kitchen-pan at hand, had actually been up into the bed-room for a substitute. Our English maid, once expressing a wish for a culinary utensil in order to pour some broth into it, the Italian servant had one in her eye which would just suit. She went and brought the brass pan in which we regularly washed our feet. But these, and others of a similar nature, are mere trifles, when compared with the pleasure which we enjoyed, and with the instruction which was imparted to us during our long residence in Rome.

At last, however, the tide set in against us. It is a long lane that has no turning. Cervantes has told us that there is nothing certain in this life; "No hay cosa segura en esta vida:" and that, where you least expect it, up jumps the hare; "Adonde menos se piensa, se levanta la liebre." All this we found to be very true, after our departure from Rome in

order to reach England before the close of summer.

I had been above a year and a half in southern Italy with my sisters-in-law Miss Edmonstone and Miss Helen Edmonstone, and my son Edmund, a youth of eleven years of age.

We left Rome with our two servants on the 16th of June, 1841; and the next day, at four o'clock in the afternoon, we went on board the Pollux steamer of two-hundred-horse power, at Cività Vecchia, and shaped our course for Leghorn. The weather was charmingly serene; scarcely a ripple could be perceived upon old ocean's surface; and when the night set in, although there was no moon, the brilliancy of the stars made ample amends for her non-appearance. I soon remarked a want of nautical discipline on board the Pollux; and ere the sun went down, I had observed to a gentleman standing by me, that in all my life I had never been on board of a vessel where unseamanlike conduct was more apparent.

After making choice of a convenient part of the deck, I laid me down in my travelling cloak to pass the night there, having Mr. Macintosh's life-preserver in my pocket. He had made me

a present of this preserver some twenty years ago, and I have never gone to sea without it. Contrary to their usual custom, my sisters preferred to sleep that night on deck on account of the serenity of the weather; and as our two servants followed their example, none of our party went below, for my son Edmund had already chosen his spot of retirement near to the place where I was reposing. We had the great awning above us. It had been left expanded apparently more through neglect than with an intention to accommodate the passengers.

Suddenly, our sleep was broken by a tremendous crash, which at first I took to be the bursting of the boiler. But I was soon undeceived; for, on looking around, I saw a huge steamer aboard of us, nearly amid-ships. It proved to be the *Monjibello*, of 240 horse power, from Leghorn to Cività Vecchia. She had come into us a little abaft the paddle-wheels, with such force that her cutwater had actually penetrated into our after-cabin. In all probability she would have cut us in two, had not her bowsprit fortunately come in contact with our funnel, which was smashed in

pieces, and driven overboard by the shock. The *Pollux* instantly became a wreck, with her parts amid-ships stove in; and it was evident that she had but a very little time to float.

I found my family all around me; and having slipped on and inflated my life-preserver, I entreated them to be cool and temperate, and they all obeyed me most implicitly. My little boy had gone down on his knees, and was praying fervently to the blessed Virgin to take us under her protection, whilst Miss Edmonstone kept crying out in a tone of deep anxiety, "Oh, save the poor boy, and never mind me!"

Sad and woeful was the scene around us. The rush to get into the *Monjibello*, which, thanks to Charles Bonaparte (Prince Canino) was still alongside of us, caused unutterable confusion. Some were pulled up on deck by the passengers and crew of the *Monjibello*; others managed to get on board of her without help; and others ran to and fro, bereft of all self-command; whilst our damaged vessel herself was sinking deeper and deeper every minute into her watery grave.

Confiding in my valuable life-preserver, I remained on board the *Pollux* till nearly all

had left her. I had managed to keep possession of my favourite travelling cloak, and should have saved it ultimately, but for the following misadventure. A fine young German woman, with a child under her arm, and apparently terrified out of her senses, seized fast hold of me by her hand that was free, just as I was in the act of trying to get into the Monjibello. Her convulsive grasp held me so completely fast, that I could neither advance nor retreat. I begged of her in French for the love of God to let go her hold, as we should both of us inevitably perish. But she was unconscious of what I said; and with her mouth half open, and with her eyes fixed steadfastly on me, she continued to grasp me close under the ribs, with fearful desperation. I now abandoned my cloak to its fate; and then, having both hands free, I succeeded in tearing myself from her grasp, and got up the side of the Monjibello by means of a rope which was hanging there.

We were all saved except one man. He was a respectable ship-captain from Naples, and was on his way to Leghorn, in order to purchase a vessel. In talking over his death the morning after, it was surmised that he had

all his money in gold sewed up in a belt around his body, — a thing common in these countries ; and to this might be attributed his untimely end, for I heard one of the Monjibello sailors say, that he had got hold of the captain's hand after he had fallen into the sea, but that the weight was too much for him ; and so the poor captain sank to the bottom and perished there.

Mr. Frederick Massey, first engineer on board of the Pollux, performed an act of courage which ought to be made known to the public. He had effected his escape from the sinking vessel into the Monjibello, but reflecting that the boiler of the former might explode and cause additional horrors, he went back to her, and eased the safety-valve, at the time when the engine-room was filling fast with water. Having performed this eminent service, the gallant fellow got safely back again on board the Monjibello.

The two steamers were now at a short distance from each other. I kept a steadfast eye on the shattered Pollux, knowing that her final catastrophe must be close at hand. She went down stern foremost, but she hesitated a while in the act of sinking, as though unwilling to disappear for ever. This momentary and unex-

pected pause gave us some hopes that she might remain waterlogged; and I said to a gentleman standing by me, I do not despair of seeing her at to-morrow's dawn. But she tarried only for a few minutes. Her forepart then appeared to rise up perpendicularly. She sank gradually lower and lower. We saw her last light extinguished in the water; and then all was still, for there was no wind in the heavens; and so easy was her descent into the "chambers of the deep," that it caused no apparent temporary whirlpool on the place which she had just occupied. Thus foundered the Pollux steamer, with all her goods and property on board. Not a spar, not a plank, not a remnant of any thing was left behind her. Many were of opinion that she floated not more than ten minutes from the time that she received her death blow; others again conjectured that she remained a short half hour: probably, some sixteen or eighteen minutes will not be far from the mark.

All our hopes of safety now depended upon the Monjibello. But the worst was apprehended, knowing that she herself must have received a tremendous shock at the time that she ran the

Pollux on board. The general perturbation was much increased by a sudden report that the *Monjibello* was actually sinking, and a demand was immediately made by the passengers to be put on shore at the nearest point of land.

Prince Canino (Charles Bonaparte) had come passenger in the *Monjibello* from Leghorn; and his exertions to save us were beyond all praise. The fatal collision had taken place some five miles from the Island of Elba. The prince immediately offered his services to go to Portolongoni, in order to obtain permission for us to land there. Indeed, under Heaven, we already owed our lives to Prince Canino, for when the *Monjibello* had backed out from the wreck of the *Pollux*, and was in the act of sheering off from alongside of us, he, with the characteristic judgment of his uncle Napoleon in the hour of need, ran to the helm, and, knocking the steersman aside, took hold of it himself, and placed the *Monjibello* in a situation to enable us to pass on board of her from the sinking *Pollux*. Had the prince not done this, the loss of life would have been terrible, for we had been deprived of our boat. three people

having made off with it to save their own lives, at the time when all was in confusion.

The prince having reached Portolongoni in one of the Monjibello's boats, he begged permission of the officer in command that he might be allowed to land. But all his entreaties were of no avail. Nothing could mollify the man's iron heart. He peremptorily refused the favour which the prince had asked, adding, by way of excuse for his diabolical conduct, that he was bound to obey the law, which did not allow of our landing under existing circumstances. Finding all remonstrance of no avail, and seeing that the heart of this savage was too obdurate to be worked upon by any further recital of the horrors of our situation, Prince Canino left Portolongoni in disgust, and returned to the Monjibello, where he announced to us, in terms of high indignation, the utter failure of his mission.

We lay-to during the remainder of the night, got up our steam at early dawn, and reached the port of Leghorn, where we came to an anchor. Here, again, Prince Canino was a real benefactor to us. The wisemen of Leghorn met in consultation, and gravely decreed that

we must perform a quarantine of twenty days, because we had no bill of health to show. Now these Solons knew full well that the *Monjibello* had left their own harbour, in due form, only the evening before; and they were told that the people whom the *Monjibello* had received on board, had equally left *Cività Vecchia* in due form; but that these people could not possibly produce a bill of health, because that bill of health was unfortunately at the bottom of the sea in the foundered *Pollux*. Still the collected wisdom of Leghorn insisted on the performance of quarantine. The law ordained it, and the dead letter of the law was to be their only guide.

Prince Canino pleaded our cause with uncommon fervour. He informed them that we had had nothing to eat that morning, as the *Monjibello* had only taken provisions on board to last till she reached *Cività Vecchia*. He described the absolute state of nudity to which many of the sufferers had been reduced, he urged the total loss of our property, and he described in feeling terms the bruises and wounds which had been received at the collision. In fine, he entreated his auditors to

accompany him alongside of the *Monjibello*, where they would see with their own eyes the sufferings which he had just described.

——— “*quid facundia posset,
Re patuit.*”

The council of Leghorn relented, and graciously allowed us to go ashore, after we had been kept for above two hours in suspense as to our destiny.

We landed, in appearance something like Falstaff's regiment. My ladies had lost their bonnets, and I my hat. Others were without stockings, coats, and shoes. I saw two worthy priests standing on the deck of the *Monjibello* with only one shoe each. I recommended them to cast lots for a shoe, so that one of them at least might walk comfortably up the uneven streets of Leghorn. They smiled as I said this, and no doubt they thought my levity out of season.

A survey was immediately made on the *Monjibello*, and on finding that she had not suffered materially during the concussion, she was pronounced to be sea-worthy.

Having lost our all, we determined to return to Rome in the same vessel which had run us

down. Wherefore, after thanking Mrs. M'Bean and her two excellent sons for their attention to us during the day which we had spent in Leghorn, we went once more on board the *Monjibello*, repassed over the place where the *Pollux* had sunk for ever, and landed at *Cività Vecchia*, whence we posted it to Rome.

At the Roman custom-house they knew how to feel for those in distress. We had purchased in Leghorn all the materials necessary to replace our lost wardrobe; these were liable to a heavy duty in the Roman States, but the officers of the customs let every article pass duty free, remarking at the same time, that our forlorn situation demanded all the assistance in their power. Neither would the Roman police make any charge for the renewal of our "*carta di sicurezza*;" and on our leaving Rome for England a second time, nothing was demanded by any of the different consuls for signing our passport; imitating in this, the disinterestedness of Mr. Barton, the British consul at *Cività Vecchia*, who refused to take his fee, and was unwearied in his attention to us the day after our disaster. But, I must add, that when I went to the English consul of Leghorn

for a new passport, he charged the full price for it, verifying the old saying, "Quærenda pecunia primum est."

And now a word or two more on the dismal scenes which took place at the collision, and after our vessel had foundered.

In the hour of danger several of the crew of the *Pollux* abandoned us to our fate, and saved themselves by getting into the other vessel. Our brave captain and his mate, in lieu of keeping alternate watch on deck, were both fast asleep in their berths below, when the *Monjibello* ran on board of us. The captain was so scared, that he forgot to put on his trousers, and his shirt was his only covering when he reached the *Monjibello*.

At the very time that our boat would have been of the utmost service to us, I have already mentioned that three persons got into it, and rowed away for the land. A gentleman, by name Armstrong, had a narrow escape. He was struck and knocked down by the *Monjibello* as she entered us; and he was kept where he fell, by the falling fragments. He was sadly wounded, and he only just extricated himself in time to save his life.

A Spanish duchess, who was sleeping below at the time of the accident, lost her senses completely. She persisted in remaining in bed, and no entreaties could move her to leave it. She was dragged upon deck by main force, and taken into the Monjibello with nothing but her shift on. She had not re-gained her self-possession on the following day, for she hesitated at the door of the hotel in Leghorn, and would not pass the threshold until her attendants had shown her that it would not give way under her feet.

After we had got safe into the Monjibello, and the terror had somewhat abated, I went down into one of her cabins to see how things were going on. At the farthest corner of it, I saw, by the light of a lamp, a venerable looking priest dripping wet, and apparently in much pain. He informed me, that he had fallen into the sea, and he believed that he had broken his arm, for that his sufferings were almost intolerable. I ripped up his coat with my penknife, and found his shoulder dislocated. With the help of three young English engineers, I replaced the bone in its socket, and then took off his wet clothes, and gave them in charge to my servant,

that he might dry them in the following morning's sun. A good Samaritan, who was standing by, furnished a shirt for him. Having made him as comfortable as circumstances would permit, I got him some water to drink, and promised that I would be with him every now and then to see that all was right.

The people took me for a surgeon, and they requested that I would bleed the captain of the late Pollux, for that he was apparently in a dying state. This dastardly sansculotte was on the floor in horrible despair, sighing, sobbing, and heaving like a broken-winded horse. Having felt his pulse, I recommended that he should be taken on deck, and drenched well with seawater, adding that this would be a much safer process than drawing his precious blood; and that a mouthful or two of salt water, with a little fresh air, would tend to collect his scattered senses.

The whole blame of this shipwreck must be thrown on the captains and the mates of the respective vessels. All four of these worthless seamen were fast asleep at the time of the accident, in lieu of attending to their duty. Hence the total loss of the beautiful steamer

Pollux, at the very time when the absence of every thing that could retard her progress, or cause alarm for her safety, made us sure of a prosperous passage to Leghorn.

Our own individual losses were heavy. The costly wardrobe of my sisters, the objects of art which had been purchased in Rome, our books, our writings, our money, our Palmerston passport, and our letter of credit, — all went to the bottom with the foundered steamer. Miss Helen Edmonstone lost an ivory crucifix of rare value. It had been sculptured by some first-rate artist of the 15th century, and its loss can never be replaced. My little boy was deprived of a relic of great estimation. It consisted of a *corpo santo* from the catacombs, and was expected to be placed in our chapel. He had received it as a present from the hands of the learned and virtuous Cardinal Frasoni.

In most towns of Italy, a book lies on the table of the hotel, for travellers to enter their names, and in it they sometimes pen down a remark or two. In passing through the town of Novi, on our return to England, a book of this description was presented to me by the waiter. After entering our names, I gave

the following brief account of our recent disaster:—

The Pollux, once so fine,
No longer cleaves the wave,
For now she lies supine,
Deep in her wat'ry grave.

When she received her blow,
The captain and his mate
Were both asleep below,
Snoring in breechless state.

If I the power possess'd,
I'd hang them by the neck,
As warning to the rest,
How they desert the deck.

Our treasures, and our clothes,
With all we had, were lost.
The shock that caused our woes
Took place on Elba's coast.

Cervantes, who had studied the rise and fall of human affairs in all their different bearings, exclaims on one occasion, "Thou art welcome, Evil, if thou comest alone." Had my disasters ended with the shipwreck, all would have soon gone right again; for the soothing hand of time seldom or ever fails to pour balm into the wounds which we are exposed to receive. But it pleased Almighty God not to stay the chas-

tising rod, so justly due to me, for my many transgressions against his divine law. A fever attacked me, and although it yielded to strength of constitution, it seemed to have sown the seed of future ailment; for in a few days after its disappearance a thirst came on, as intense as any I had experienced on the other side of the tropic. This was an awful warning. A dysentery at last made its appearance, and it harassed me cruelly all the way through Italy and the intervening countries to Ostend, at which port I embarked for London, and thence took steam to Walton Hall, where the disorder visibly increased.

The time had now arrived when duty called upon me to place my poor boy under other tuition; and sick as I was, I determined to accompany him to the place selected for his education.

Ere we set off, I put the *Wanderings* and *Essays* into his hand, with short instructions written by myself on a few blank pages in the first. Perhaps the reader will not refuse to cast his eye over them. I have nothing else to show him, how much I love my darling boy;

and how deep an interest I take in his future welfare.



A. M. D. G.

TO MY DEAR EDMUND.

——— “Aspice vultus
Ecce meos. Utinamque oculos in pectora posses
Inserere, et patrias intus deprendere curas.”

OVID.

You are now, my dear boy, about to enter into a college conducted by professors famed far and near for their learning, for their sanctity, and for their paternal care of those who are intrusted to their charge. This college will either be a paradise or a purgatory to you. If you love God above all things, if you revere your superiors, if you give good example to your equals, and attend to your studies, happy indeed will be your hours and your days. But if, on the contrary, you neglect to perform your duty to God and man, there will then be no comfort for you, and you will be annoyed by brambles and by thorns at every

step as you advance along. Now is the acceptable time. Never, never will you have such an opportunity of acquiring that knowledge, and those habits of virtue, which will infallibly insure your superiority on this side of the grave, and your salvation on the other.

Treat, then, with attention and with gratitude those good fathers who sacrifice their own comfort to lead you safely through the paths of innocence and knowledge. Should any of your companions try to alienate your affection from these superiors, by turning them into ridicule, oh! my dear boy, listen not for one moment to the observations of such heartless young fools. The youth who is in the habit of scoffing at his superiors, will never rank amongst the generous and the brave, when he shall enter into the world at large. Should any boy offer you a forbidden book to read, oh! request him not to approach you with a viper whose sting is mortal.

Never give an impertinent answer to any of your superiors. Love them, and obey them to the best of your power; and they will most amply repay you by their kindness to you, and by their solicitude for your present and

your future welfare. The scholar who reveres his superiors is sure to become well informed, and to acquire a large stock of virtue ; but he who takes a pleasure in thwarting them will probably be a dunce whilst he remains in the college, and become a vicious man after he shall have taken his departure from it.

Sometimes there are certain youths who find fault with every thing which their superiors recommend to their notice. Turn a deaf ear to the remarks of these empty-headed simpletons ; but treat them at the same time with gentleness and charity, and try to persuade them, by the progress which you yourself are making in virtue and in learning, how much they lose by running down the institutions of the college, and how much you gain by upholding them.

Believe me, my dear boy, I would never send you to Stonyhurst, were I not convinced, beyond all manner of doubt, that you cannot go to a better place for your education. I have the very highest opinion of it, and I hope that you will have the same. I am sorry that you should be separated from me ; but your welfare requires that we should part for a

while. In the meantime, you will find a parent at every step in the good fathers of Stonyhurst. O, love them then, my dear boy, and never do any thing that may cause to their hearts one single pang of sorrow for your sake, or of regret, that they should have taken you under their charge. You cannot show your affection for them better than by observing, to the best of your abilities, all the college rules. Take St. Aloysius for your model. Pray to this angelic servant of Jesus Christ with confidence, and he will not fail to intercede for you at the throne of Divine Grace.

In conclusion, let me advise you to be very punctual at rising in the morning. Acquire the habit of early rising when you are young, and you will never lose it in after-life.

“Early to bed, and early to rise,
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.”

So says Doctor Franklin. Take a part, with spirit and good nature, in all the public games, which are instituted by the college. Carefully avoid particular friendships. They will injure you whilst you are at college, and they will be of no manner of use to you when you shall have left it for good and all. Prepare your-

self with great assiduity to enter into the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin; and when you shall have had the happiness to become a member of it, make a resolution to say her office every day, until it shall please God to take you out of this world.

“ Ave Regina Cœlorum ;
 Ave Domina Angelorum,
 Salve Radix, salve Porta,
 Ex qua mundo lux est orta.”

Farewell, my dearest boy. I give you my blessing; and I promise you that you shall want for nothing, provided you perform your duty: and you cannot fail to do so, if you love and revere your superiors, and follow implicitly the holy and excellent instructions which you will receive at their hands.

I have one parting request to make to you. Say a short prayer for me, once a day, to St. Francis Xavier, the glorious apostle of the Indies.

Farewell again, my dearest boy, and believe me to remain, your ever affectionate father,

CHARLES WATERTON.

Walton Hall, Sept. 6. 1841.

On my return from Stonyhurst, the dysentery continued its ravages upon my iron frame with unabated fury. I now wrote to my invaluable friend, the justly celebrated Doctor Hobson of Leeds, and I explained to him how sadly all was going on. He was soon at Walton Hall; but such was the invincible composure of his countenance, that although my truly affectionate sisters-in-law and myself watched most narrowly his every look, not a single chance did he afford us by any unguarded change of features, to judge what might be the probable result of the alarming disorder.

The masterly arrangements of this renowned physician, ably put into execution by our worthy family surgeon, Mr. Bennett, at last arrested the complaint. This took place in September; but an act of imprudence some four or five months afterwards brought me back to the state from which I had so happily escaped. On one cold and frosty morning I had occasion to cut away the shoots from certain stumps of trees on the bank of a brook. My foot betrayed me, and I slipped into the water up to the middle. As this accident had placed me in a more commodious position to

trim the brambles on the sides of the brook, I remained in the water for upwards of an hour. The dysentery appeared again, and again Doctor Hobson triumphed.

In the summer following I had a request from Mr. Bennett to accompany him to York, on an urgent family affair. Whilst I was in the Minster a shivering fit came on with such severity that I could have fancied I had fallen in with my old foe the tertian ague, so formidable in the unwholesome swamps of Guiana. But it turned out to be the harbinger of a third attack of dysentery, and a third time Doctor Hobson proved his consummate knowledge by counteracting its advances. In fact he not only arrested its progress, but beat it so completely, that it never rallied. After this, my strength returned apace, and I am now in the finest state of health that any man can possibly wish to enjoy. Thanks, under Heaven, to the skill of my medical adviser and to his accomplished lady, whose kind attentions to me during the period in which life and death were struggling for superiority, have for ever rendered me her grateful and devoted debtor.

I have little or nothing more to add by way of memoir, except that the severe attacks of dysentery, and the former indispositions caused by remaining in unwholesome climates, and by exposure to the weather, seem to have made no inroad into my constitution; for, although life's index points at sixty-two, I am a stranger to all sexagenarian disabilities, and can mount to the top of a tree with my wonted steadiness and pleasure. As I am confident that I owe this vigorous state of frame to a total abstinence from all strong liquors, I would fain say a parting word or two to my young reader on this important subject.

If he is determined to walk through life's chequered path with ease to himself, and with satisfaction to those who take an interest in his welfare, he will have every chance in his favour, provided he makes a firm resolution never once to run the risk of losing his reason through an act of intemperance: for the preservation of his reason will always insure to him the fulfilment of his resolution, and his resolution will seldom fail to crown his efforts with success. The position of an irrational ass, cropping thistles on the village common, is infinitely

more enviable than that of a rational man under the influence of excessive drinking. Instinct teaches the first to avoid the place of danger, whilst intemperance drives the last headlong into the midst of it. To me there is no sight in civilised society more horribly disgusting than that of a human being in a state of intoxication. The good Jesuit, who, six and forty years ago, advised me never to allow strong liquors to approach my lips, conferred a greater benefit on me than if he had put the mines of Potosi at my immediate disposal.

I might fill a large volume with the account of miseries and deaths which I could distinctly trace to the pernicious practice of inebriety. I have seen manly strength, and female beauty, and old age itself, in ruins under the fatal pressure of this degrading vice. The knave thrives on the follies of the drunkard, and whole families may trace the commencement of their decay to the dire allurements of the public-house. Father Mathew has done more for Great Britain by his divine suit of Sobriety *versus* Sot, than all her parliaments and

potentates put together, from the days of Old Harry down to the present time.

If the reader be not already tired with a biography little interesting to any but the writer of it, I would solicit his attention to a few remarks on our new mode of travelling.

Steam is now in general use, both on land and water. It transports us with such velocity from place to place, that we may actually fancy ourselves in full possession of the long-wished-for wings of Dædalus.

————— “*Geminas opifex libravit in alas
Ipse suum corpus.*”

Let us, however, always bear in mind, that this far-famed aerial rover taught mischievous movements to his child, — “*damnosas erudit artes;*” and that our own invention, if not worked with consummate skill and prudence, may burst asunder when we least expect it, and leave us dead on the road, or, like Icarus of old, to perish in the water.

When every hope of life has fled, how we should hail with ecstasy the arrival of a potent friend to save us! This friend is Macintosh’s

life-preserver, one of the most safe and simple assistants ever offered to man in his hour of need. Its price is trivial, and its size so small, that it will easily go into the pocket of a coat; and it can be inflated in less than half a minute. I put mine on (a present long ago from the late Mr. Macintosh himself) when our vessel was in the act of foundering near the Isle of Elba; and thus I was enabled to act with great coolness, for I knew it would prevent my sinking. This inestimable little belt is admirably manufactured by Messrs. Charles Macintosh & Co., and sold at the establishment No. 58. Charing Cross, London, for the small sum of nine shillings. What lives are lost on rivers, how many sink when close in shore, and all for want of such a friend as this!

Fifty years ago umbrellas were uncommon things. Now these useful protectors from the rain are in the hands of every body, from the duke to the delver; and they are not considered as encumbrances. Neither do walking-sticks nor travelling-caps incommode us; and, in countries abroad, we perpetually see smokers carrying their tobacco-pouches and half a dozen

long German pipes tied up together. Let us then not despair of seeing the day arrive, when parties in pleasure-boats, and travellers by steam on the ocean, and those who bathe in rivers, shall have a Macintosh round their waists, uninflated till the time of danger: and, without the shoulder-straps, which are not essential to its success, the belt would merely have the appearance of a sash; and it would not be more inconvenient than that central ligature in our military uniforms. What a treasure it would prove, when the cramp comes on in bathing, or when the boat capsizes, or when the steamer founders!

Although sudden gusts of wind from the wooded hills render sailing extremely perilous here inland, I have never any fears for my only boy when he is in the boat with hoisted sail, provided I see that Macintosh's life-preserver is round his waist. Happen what may, I know that he must always float in perfect safety.

And now a parting word on Natural History.

An extensive preserve for every kind of British bird which may choose to take advan-

tage of it, has afforded me excellent opportunities of making ornithological notes with tolerable exactness, and the observations of former years have occasionally been corrected by others in after-times. Still I recommend that what I have given to the public on the nature of our birds should be received with a certain degree of reservation, as their habits are apt to vary in proportion as location varies. Thus, the windhover, or kestrel, at this place, abstains from killing birds during its abode amongst us; but, after it has left us on the approach of autumn, it is known to feed upon them during the winter months, as Mr. Bury has satisfactorily proved in the 17th number of that clever and instructive periodical the *Zoologist*. The sea-gulls, which not unfrequently resort to this inland sheet of water, pass the whole of their time in procuring fish; but I have seen the same species, on our eastern coast, following the farmer's plough, like rooks, in quest of worms. Mr. Wighton's squirrels will consume carnal food when in confinement, whilst mine, in liberty, are never known to touch it; and, in Scotland, Sir William Jardine's barn-

owl is known to hoot ; but here, in Yorkshire, this species of owl can do no such thing. I myself can eat boiled snails in southern Italy, but I am not quite certain that I would dine on them at Walton Hall, with a sirloin of roast beef on the table before me. At sea, too, I have eagerly consumed decayed biscuit, the very sight of which would be abhorrent to my eyes on the shelves of a baker's shop. In a word, who knows but that the Hanoverian rat, which is so voracious in this appetite-creating climate of England, might be more moderate in the country from which it originally came, were it happily endowed with qualities wherewith to perform a periodical migration across the water.

I have now been full thirty years in striving to improve the defective mode of preserving specimens for museums. The method which I have invented (as I have observed elsewhere) cannot be attained through the medium of instructions committed to paper. Nothing, indeed, short of personal demonstration on my part, in a process of three weeks' duration, will suffice ; but, as there is no probability that

I shall enter into such a course, I foresee that this novel method will sink down into oblivion with him who has produced it.

But it is time to say farewell, and to bid adieu to Natural History, as far as the press is concerned. I trust that the account of my adventures will not disedify the reader, nor cause a frown upon his face, which it has been my ardent endeavour to brighten up with merriment. In casting my mind's eye over the two and sixty years of my existence, the time appears like the falling of a leaf in autumn, a mere "sunbeam on a winter's day, a passing cloud in a tempestuous sky,"—sure monitors to put us in mind, "that we are here now and gone in a moment!" I cannot divest myself of fear, when I consider how little I have done hitherto, and how much I might have done in preparation for that eventful day, when

" Mors stupebit et Natura,
Cum resurget Creatura,
Judicanti responsura ;"

that truly awful day, in which a cup of cold water, given to the thirsty, in the name of our

dear Redeemer, will be of infinitely more value to us than all our multifarious labours to please a captious and seductive world.

“ Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.”

CHARLES WATERTON.

Walton Hall, May 26. 1844.

ESSAYS
ON
NATURAL HISTORY.

ESSAYS
ON
NATURAL HISTORY,
&c. &c.

FLOWER-GARDENS AND SONG BIRDS.

“Inutilesque falce ramos amputans,
Felicioris inscrit.” HORACE.

With pruning-knife, the useless branch he cuts,
And in its place a graft prolific puts.

How I prize the gardener! He is Nature's
primest jeweller; and he has the power of
placing within our reach all that is nutritive,
and luscious, and lovely in the enchanting
domains of Flora and Pomona. Without his
assistance, Nature would soon run out into
uncurbed luxuriance; the flowery lawn would
disappear, and ere long the hemlock and the

bramble, with a train of noxious attendants, would lord it all around. To the industry, then, of the gardener we are indebted for scenes of rural beauty quite unparalleled; and to his science we owe the possession of every wholesome fruit and root. In times too, now long gone by, ere the ruthless Reformation smote this land, the gardener's nomenclature was truly Christian; for scarcely a flower, or shrub, or root was known, the name of which did not tend to put us in mind of future happiness in the realms of eternal bliss. Hence the gardener is my friend; and wherever I have an opportunity of surveying lands which bear marks of his interesting labours, I wish him well from my heart, and I hope that he may not fail to receive a remunerating return for his many useful services to us.

Were I asked my opinion of a highly-cultivated English flower-garden, I should say that it is the loveliest sight in rural nature; and, moreover, that if it afforded me an opportunity of listening to the song of birds, I should pronounce it little short of absolute perfection. But, in general, the charming melody of birds is of rare occurrence in the modern flower-

garden; and I fear that any observations which I may make on this head will not have sufficient weight with them to attract attention to it on the part of the horticulturist. Nevertheless I will venture for once to offer a remark or two on a subject which always interests me; and, if what I shall say does not meet with general approbation, may I hope that my readers will give me credit for good intentions. I wish not to appear dictatorial. A few brief observations, penned down without the least intention on my part to be considered in the light of an innovator, will, I trust, not be wholly lost.

To me, whom kind Providence has destined to spend the best part of my time in the open air, the song of birds is soothing beyond expression; and whilst I am admiring the beauty of the rising flowers around me, I know no greater addition to my gratification than that of listening to it. How enchanting is it to inspect the early snowdrops, those "fair maids of February," whilst the stormcock is pouring forth his newly acquired notes from the top of a neighbouring elm! and how delightful it is to hear cock-robin's carol on the thorn that

affords a shelter to the humble primrose! The lily of the valley, too, sweet, lovely, lowly daughter of May, how I gaze in ecstasy on its virgin whiteness, whilst the stranger cuckoo's note sounds through the dell, and insures me the return of warmer weather! The chaffinch, too, and the whitethroat, and the thrush, and the blackbird, with pretty jenny-wren, and the hedge-sparrow, all add charms inexpressible, by their sweet voices, to the rising flowers of the dale. And this brings me to another bird not seen now in this country, but interesting to us on account of the place which it occupies in Holy Writ. Its history is but little known to the world at large, and its identity is exposed to be called in question, on account of the name which it erroneously bears. The bird to which I allude is the *Passer solitarius*; in English, the solitary sparrow; and in Italian, *passera solitaria*. Would my readers lend a patient ear for a short time, they shall have both the history and the true name of this bird placed in a proper light.

The royal psalmist, whilst bending down in penitential prayer before his offended Maker, exclaims, “*Vigilavi, et factus sum sicut passer*

solitarius in tecto." " I have watched, and am become as a sparrow all alone upon the house-top." I have often wondered what bird this could be ; knowing, by daily experience, that it could not actually be the house-sparrow ; for the house-sparrow is not solitary in its habits. I despaired of being able to trace its character satisfactorily, and I should probably have long remained in ignorance of it, had I not visited the southern parts of Europe.

My arrival in Rome let me at once into the secret. The bird to which the repentant king of Israel compared himself in the seven penitential psalms is a real thrush in size, in shape, in habits, and in song ; with this difference from the rest of the tribe, that it is remarkable throughout all the East for sitting solitary on the habitations of man.

The first time I ever saw this lonely plaintive songster was in going to hear mass in the magnificent church of the Jesuits at Rome. The dawn was just appearing, and the bird passed over my head, in its transit from the roof of the Palace Odescalchi to the belfry of the Church of the Twelve Apostles, singing as it flew. I thought it had been the Italian black-

bird, with notes somewhat different from those of our own ; for its song was partly that of the blackbird, and partly that of the stormcock, but not so loud as the last, nor so varied as the first. I found out my mistake in due time ; and, on seeing that the bird was the true solitary thrush, I paid particular attention to its habits.

It is indeed a solitary bird, for it never associates with any other, and only with its own mate in breeding time ; and even then it is often seen quite alone upon the house-top, where it warbles in sweet and plaintive strains, and continues its song as it moves in easy flight from roof to roof. The traveller who is fond of ornithology may often see this bird on the remains of the Temple of Peace, and occasionally in the Villa Borghese, but much more frequently on the stupendous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, where it breeds in holes of the walls, and always on the Colosseum, where it likewise makes its nest ; and, in fine, at one time or other of the day, on the tops of most of the churches, monasteries, and convents, within and without the walls of the eternal city.

It lays five eggs of a very pale blue. They

much resemble those of our starling. The bird itself is blue, with black wings and tail; the blue of the body becoming lighter when placed in different attitudes.

Whilst I lodged in the Palazzo di Gregorio, this solitary songster had its nest in the roof of the celebrated Propaganda, across the street "dei due Macelli," and only a few yards from my window. I longed to get at it, but knowing that the Romans would not understand my scaling the walls of the Propaganda, in order to propagate the history of the solitary thrush, and seeing, at the same time, that the hole at which the bird entered was very difficult of access, I deemed it most prudent to keep clear of the Propaganda, and to try to procure the nest from some other quarter.

The many promises which Roman sportsmen had given me of a nest and eggs of the solitary thrush having entirely failed, and I myself not being able to go in quest of them, on account of an attack of dysentery, which bore heavy on me, I despaired of obtaining the object of my wishes, and I should have left Italy without either nest or eggs, had not the Rev. Mr. Cowie, vice-president of the Scotch College in Rome,

exerted himself, as he had already often done, in the cause of natural history. This learned and worthy gentleman sent expressly for a nest to the vineyard of his college. It was found in the roof of the house, and had four eggs in it. The lad who took it had succeeded in capturing the female bird. Having examined the poor captive as minutely as though I had been a custom-house officer, I turned it loose into the world again, and as it flew away I hoped it would have better luck for the time to come. I sent the nest and eggs to England by a different route from that which I myself pursued. Had I taken them with me, they would have gone to the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, for, in the night of the 16th of June, 1841, my sisters-in-law, Miss Edmonstone and Miss Helen Edmonstone, my little boy, my servants, and myself, were wrecked off the Island of Elba. We had only fifteen minutes to save our lives before the vessel foundered, and we lost every thing except the clothes on our backs.

The solitary thrush is seen in all the countries of the East, up to Syria and Egypt, and probably much farther on. This bird is solitary to the fullest extent of the word. It being an

assiduous frequenter of the habitations of man, I cannot have a doubt but that it was the same bird which King David saw on the house-top before him, and to which he listened as it poured forth its sweet and plaintive song. Moved by its melody, and comparing its lonely habits with his own, he exclaimed in the fulness of an afflicted heart, “Vigilavi, et factus sum sicut passer solitarius in tecto.” “I have watched, and am become as a *thrush*, all alone upon the house-top.”

ON DESTROYING VERMIN IN SMALL GARDENS, AND ON RELATIVE MATTERS.

In reply to a letter from Mr. Loudon.

You say, “you will send to a gardener in the country for a weasel.” You must send for two, male and female. A bachelor weasel, or a spinster weasel, would not tarry four and twenty hours in your garden. Either of them

would go a sweethearting, and would not return.

You remark that your "hedgehogs soon disappeared." No doubt: unless confined by a wall, they would wander far away, and try to get back to their old haunts. You request me "to suggest some place of shelter for them, to which they might have recourse when attacked by the cats?" I cannot believe that hedgehogs are ever attacked by cats. A garden, well fenced by a wall high enough to keep dogs out, is a capital place for hedgehogs. But there ought always to be two, man and wife.

Your "frogs and toads disappeared in a very short time, notwithstanding a small cistern of water which was open to them." They would have preferred a pond or ditch. No doubt they left you in search of more agreeable situations.

"Were it not for the cats we should have plenty of birds." Granted. Cats amongst birds are like the devil amongst us; they go up and down seeking whom they may devour. You must absolutely chase them away for good and all, otherwise there will be

no peace for your birds. A small quantity of arsenic, about as much as the point of your penknife will contain, rubbed into a bit of meat either cooked or raw, will do their business effectually.

“ I have often thought of suggesting to the Board of Woods and Forests the idea of feeding the birds, or rather of putting down the different kinds of food proper for the different kinds of singing-birds, in Kensington Gardens.” This would not be necessary. All our soft-billed summer birds of passage, and those soft-billed birds that remain with us the year throughout, live on insects; and insects abound during the period when these birds are in song. But if you could prevail upon the Board to prevent idle boys from chasing them, and gunners from killing them, and bird-merchants from catching them, all would be right; and almost every bush and tree would have its chorister.

“ If you could give any hints as to the next best quadruped to the weasel for keeping in gardens, or, in fact, anything relative to keeping down insects, it would be of very great use.” — I know of no other quadruped. The

barn owl is a great consumer of slugs ; and the lapwing will clear a garden of worms. Our singing-birds are the best for destroying soft-winged insects. The windhover hawk is excellent for killing beetles, and also for consuming slugs and snails : cats dare not attack him, wherefore he is very fit for a garden, and is very easy to be obtained, I could send you a dozen any season.

Were I now a writer in the *Magazine of Natural History*, I would not agree with a Master Charles Coward in his paper on "The carnivorous Propensities of the Squirrel." (See the *Magazine* for 1839, p. 311.) And so this keen observer has found out at last, that squirrels in confinement are occasionally carnivorous animals. Indeed ! And so are my hens in confinement : they will kill and swallow a mouse in the twinkling of an eye, and a tame parrot will perform the same feat. All our granivorous birds in confinement will eat raw and cooked meat. My black cat "Tom," which is fed and pampered by my sisters, will often turn up his nose at a piece of good roasted mutton, and immediately after will eat greedily of dry bread. What would you

think of me were I to write for you a paper in which I would state that the cat is occasionally an animal that is very fond of bread? You cannot judge of the real habits of an animal when it is in captivity. The want of exercise, the change of economy, the change of food, and the change of habit altogether, tend wofully to change the very nature of the stomach, and cause it to accommodate itself to aliment which it would never touch in a wild state. We see people out of health eating chalk; and we see others again, who spend their lives in sedentary employments, loathing food which is very palatable to him who passes the day in the open air. Thus, the ploughman will bolt fat bacon by the cubic inch, whilst the tender young milliner will turn sick at the very taste of it. I myself cannot bear melted butter; but I can and do often thrive, by preference, on a hard crust of bread. Still this would not be the case with one of your London aldermen, who would turn up his nose at the gifts of Ceres, unless those of Nimrod and Bacchus appeared on the same festive board.

The squirrel, in the state of liberty, lives on

nuts and seeds, and on the tender bark of the lime tree, &c. : but rest assured that it never touches flesh, or kills birds, or sucks eggs. The shepherds of Wiltshire who have backed Master Charles in his important discovery deserve a birch rod. These rural sinners, both young and old, would swear that the moon was made of Jones's lucifers, if you would give them a quart of ale apiece. All my labourers believe that the heron thrusts its legs through the nest during incubation; and they will all tell you that the cuckoo becomes scabbed at the close of summer. "As scabbed as a cuckoo." This, by the way, comes from the mottled appearance which the plumage of the bird puts on at that time of the year. It is caused by the growth of the adult feathers amongst the chicken feathers. I pity the poor squirrels from my heart. Our country squires will now consign them over to the tender mercy of their gamekeepers, and we shall hear of squirrels shot by the dozen. The squirrel is a most harmless animal, except in a nut orchard, from which he ought to be expelled without loss of time, as the damage which he does there is incalculable; but I would trust him

for ever in a butcher's shop, provided he were allowed to go and take his breakfast and dinner in the neighbouring woods. I can see the squirrel here just now, living entirely on the seeds of the cones of the spruce firs; I can see him in the very trees which contain nests of ringdoves, thrushes, chaffinches, and black-birds. Still the owners of these nests betray no fears on his approach; and he himself shows no inclination for raw eggs, or for young or old birds, whereon to make a meal.

THE CIVETTA, OR LITTLE ITALIAN OWL.*

THIS diminutive rover of the night is much prized by the gardeners of Italy for its uncommon ability in destroying insects, snails, slugs, reptiles, and mice. There is scarcely an out-house in the gardens and vineyards of that country which is not tenanted by the civetta. It is often brought up tame from the nest;

* See a correct description of this bird in the *Ornithologia Toscana*, vol. i. p. 76., by Professor Paolo Savi.

and in the month of September is sold for a dollar to sportsmen, who take it with them in their excursions through the country, to look for larks and other small birds. Perched on the top of a pole, it attracts their notice and draws them within the fatal range of gunshot by its most singular gestures; for, standing bolt upright, it curtsies incessantly, with its head somewhat inclined forwards, whilst it keeps its eyes fixed on the approaching object. This odd movement is peculiar to the civetta alone. By it, the birds of the neighbourhood are decoyed to their destruction. Hence its value to the ranging sportsman. Often and anon, as the inhabitants of Rome pass through the bird-market at the Pantheon, they stop, and look, and laugh at this pretty little captive owl, whilst it is performing its ridiculous gesticulations.

Its flesh is relished by the natives of Italy. You may see the civetta, plucked and ready trussed for the spit, on the same stall at which hawks, crows, jackdaws, jays, magpies, hedgehogs, frogs, snails, and buzzards are offered for sale to the passing *conoscenti*, who frequent the bird-market in quest of carnal delicacies.

The inhabitants of this country are apparently blessed with stomachs as keen and strong as that of my old black friend Daddy Quasshi, who could fatten on the grubs of hornets, and on stinking fish. Indeed, it would appear from what I have seen, that scarcely any thing which has had life in it comes amiss to the Italians in the way of food, except the Hanoverian rat, for I could often see this voracious and needy intruder lying dead in the streets, and trodden under foot.

Thinking that the civetta would be peculiarly useful to the British horticulturist, not, by the way, in his kitchen, but in his kitchen-garden, I determined to import a dozen of these birds into our own country. And still, said I to myself, the world will say it was a strange whim in me, to have brought owls all the way from Italy to England; seeing that owls, ay and hawks too, are by no means scarce in our palaces, and in parliament, and on the magisterial benches. Be this as it may, I agreed with a bird-vender in the market at the Pantheon for a dozen young civettas; and, having provided a commodious cage for the journey,

we left the Eternal City on the 20th of July, 1842, for the land that gave me birth.

At Genoa, the custom-house officers appeared inclined to make me pay duty for my owls. "Gentlemen," said I, "these birds are not for traffic; neither are they foreigners: they are from your own dear country, *la bellissima Italia*, and I have already strong reason to believe that they are common in Genoa, so that they can well be spared." The custom-house officers smiled as I said this, and then they graciously allowed me and my owls to proceed to the hôtel, without abstracting a single farthing from my pocket.

We passed through the sunny regions of Piedmont with delight, and over the snowy summit of Mount St. Gothard without any loss, and thence we proceeded northward, through Lucerne to Basle. Here, Monsieur Passavant, the banker, a wormwood-looking money-monger, seemed determined that myself and my owls, and the rest of my family, should advance no farther. Having lost my letter of credit in the late shipwreck, and there not having been time, after my return to Rome and my short stay there, to receive another

from London, I was furnished, by the bank of Prince Torlonia, with a very warm and complimentary letter of introduction to Passavant of Basle, in case I might fall short of money on my way home ; and Prince Canino (Charles Bonaparte), whom I accidentally met in Genoa, gave me another of the same tenour. But all would not do. I only wanted 12*l.*, which, with what I had by me, would have enabled me to reach Cologne, where I could have got any supply of money from the good landlord of the Hôtel du Rhin. Passavant, to whom I had presented the two letters, and to whom I had given a full account of the unfortunate shipwreck, could not possibly comprehend how I could have the temerity to travel without a regular letter of credit. I offered him my draught on Denison of London. He refused to take it. Would he accept my watch worth forty guineas, in pledge, till my bill should be honoured? No. He looked at me, and then at the letters, and then at me again ; and said there was something equivocal in the one from Prince Torlonia's bank. He would not advance me a single sous. On making my retiring bow, I told him that, as I was in the

habit of writing occasionally on natural history, I would make honourable mention of his great liberality in my next publication, and that, in the meantime, I would send Torlonia a full account of our interview.*

I should have stuck fast for money in Basle, had not Lord Brougham's brother (William Brougham, Esq.) luckily arrived in the town that very day. He immediately advanced me an ample supply.

All went well after this, until we reached Aix-la-Chapelle. Here, an act of rashness on my part caused a serious diminution in the family. A long journey, and wet weather, had tended to soil the plumage of the little owls; and I deemed it necessary, that they, as well as their master, should have the benefit of a warm bath. Five of them died of cold the same night. A sixth got its thigh broke, I don't know how; and a seventh breathed its last, without any previous symptoms of indisposition, about a fortnight after we had arrived at Walton Hall.

The remaining five have surmounted all ca-

* Prince Torlonia, on receiving my letter, made Passavant smart severely for his conduct.

sualties, having been well taken care of for eight months. On the 10th of May, in the year of our Lord 1842, there being abundance of snails, slugs, and beetles on the ground, I released them from their long confinement.

Just opposite to the flower-garden, there is a dense plantation of spruce fir trees. Under these, at intervals, by way of greater security, I placed the separated parts of two dozen newly killed rabbits, as a temporary supply of food; and at 7 o'clock in the evening, the weather being serene and warm, I opened the door of the cage. The five owls stepped out to try their fortunes in this wicked world. As they retired into the adjacent thicket, I bade them be of good heart; and although the whole world was now open to them, "where to choose their place of residence," I said, if they would stop in my park, I would be glad of their company; and would always be a friend and benefactor to them.

THE POWERS OF VEGETATION.

IN those good days of old, when there were no corn-factors in England to counteract that part of our Redeemer's prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," by hoarding up vast stores of grain, until mouldiness and vermin have rendered it unfit for the use of man, there stood at Walton Hall a water-mill, for the interest of the proprietor and the good of the country round. Time, the great annihilator of all human inventions, saving taxation and the national debt, laid this fabric low in ruins some sixty years ago; and nothing now remains to show the place where it once stood except a massive millstone, which measures full 17 ft. in circumference. The ground where the mill stood having been converted into meadow, this stone lay there unnoticed and unknown (save by the passing hay-maker) from the period of the mill's dissolution to the autumn of the year 1813, when one of our nut-eating wild animals, probably by way of a winter store, deposited a few nuts under its protecting cover. In the

course of the following summer, a single nut having escaped the teeth of the destroyer, sent up its verdant shoot through the hole in the centre of the procumbent millstone.

One day I pointed out this rising tree to a gentleman who was standing by; and I said, "If this young plant escape destruction, some time or other it will support the millstone, and raise it from the ground." He seemed to doubt this.

In order, however, that the plant might have a fair chance of success, I directed that it should be defended from accident and harm by means of a wooden paling. Year after year it increased in size and beauty; and when its expansion had entirely filled the hole in the centre of the millstone, it gradually began to raise up the millstone itself from the seat of its long repose. This huge mass of stone is now 8 in. above the ground, and is entirely supported by the stem of the nut tree, which has risen to the height of 25 ft. and bears excellent fruit.

Strangers often inspect this original curiosity. When I meet a visitor whose mild physiognomy informs me that his soul is proof against the stormy winds of politics, which now-a-days

set all the world in a ferment, I venture a small attempt at pleasantry, and say, that I never pass this tree and millstone without thinking of poor old Mr. Bull, with a weight of eight hundred millions of pounds round his galled neck;—fruitful source of speculation to a Machiavel, but of sorrow to a Washington.

THUNDER STORM AT WALTON HALL.

ON the 10th of August, 1842, during a terrible storm of thunder and lightning, the poplar tree depicted in the engraving prefixed to the first series of these *Essays* was struck and sadly rent. I had passed the day at Leeds with our celebrated Doctor Hobson. Having had an early dinner I felt a great inclination to get home, and repeatedly requested that the carriage might be brought to the door. To this the doctor obstinately objected, but, finding me unceasing in my entreaties, he at last consented, and off we drove. You must know that every body, rich

and poor, has permission to fish at Walton Hall, from the first of April till the first of October. Having reached home, I saw that the thunder storm was just going to burst over us; the rain having begun to fall. Seven of the fishermen had collected under the poplar tree; and on seeing them there, I ran out of the house, and warned them of their danger, and desired them to repair, without loss of time, to the saddle-room, where they would get shelter from the impending storm; forbidding them, at the same time, to stay for a moment under any of the large trees on their way thither, as the consequences might be fatal to them. Scarcely had they reached the saddle-room when the lightning struck the poplar tree, and sent fragments of it in all directions. It may well be supposed that we were not long in thanking God Almighty, on bended knee, for the escape from death of those who had intended to remain under the shelter of the poplar tree, until the storm should have passed over.

My father brought it, a plantling, in his pocket from a gentleman's house near Doncaster, and planted it where it now stands, the year in which he came of age. It has

grown surprisingly, and is, perhaps, the largest Lombardy poplar in this neighbourhood. Amongst those who had taken shelter under its foliage was a fine handsome recruiting sergeant. He has been to fish again to-day; and he told me only an hour or so ago, that he had determined to wait under the tree until the storm should have passed away; adding, at the same time, how grateful he was to Almighty God for his preservation. He said he had only just got into the saddle-room, when the thunder storm burst over us.

THE ROLLER CALLED PICA MARINA IN
ITALY.

“ I love to see the little goldfinch pluck
The groundsel's feather'd seed, and twit and twit;
And then, in bower of apple blossoms perch'd,
Trim his gay suit, and pay us with a song.
I would not hold him prisoner for the world.”

HURDIS.

I KNOW nothing in the environs of Rome half so grand and charming as the ornamented grounds of the beautiful villa Pamphili Doria,

the gates of which are always opened to the public. A blessing be upon the head of its princely owner, for this prized permission to the world at large! May his liberality never suffer by the hand of wanton mischief, nor ever be checked by the presence of a rude intruder! Many a time, when fairly tired with the never-ending scenes of painting and of sculpture within the walls of the Eternal City, have I resorted to this enchanting spot, here to enjoy an hour or two of rural quiet, and of purer air: and, could I have had a few British gardeners by my side, the enjoyment would have been more complete; for gardeners in general are choice observers; to them

——— “ Not a tree,
A plant, a leaf, a blossom, but contains
A folio volume. ”

The marble fountains of Pamphili Doria, its lofty trees, its waterfalls, its terraces, its shrubs and flowers and wooded winding-paths, delight the soul of man, and clearly prove what magic scenes can be produced, when studied art goes hand in hand with nature. The walk, canopied by evergreens of ancient growth, and at the end of which a distant view of St. Peter's co-

lossal temple bursts upon the sight, has so much truth and judgment in its plan, that I question whether its parallel can be found in the annals of horticultural design. When St. Peter's dome is illuminated, whilst standing under the wooded archway of this walk, you may fancy yourself on the confines of Elysium.

As an additional charm to the beauties of Pamphili Doria, the birds are here protected, so that not one of them which comes within its precincts is ever transported to the bird market at the Pantheon in Rome, where individuals of every species known in Italy, from the wren to the raven, may be had, ready trussed for the spit. I myself, in the course of the season, have seen and examined the following list of good things on the stalls, to regale natives and foreigners in Rome.* Towards the close of

* Wild boars, roebucks, red deer, hares, rabbits, pheasants, frogs, common partridges and two other species, quails, water rails, godwits, snipes, woodcocks, dabchicks, coots, wild ducks, wild geese, golden plovers, green plovers, sand-pipers, wigeons, teal, gargany, brown-headed ducks, sheldrakes, tufted Grecian ducks, green linnets, goldfinches, brown linnets, grosbeaks, land tortoises, ringdoves, rock pigeons, fancy pigeons, wagtails, robin redbreasts, common buntings, grey buntings, cirl buntings, bluecap titmouse, oxeye titmouse, long-tailed titmouse, blackcap titmouse, cole titmouse, blackcap sylvia, song thrush,

April, the walks of Pamphili Doria resound with the sweet notes of the nightingale both day and night; and, from February to mid-July, the thrush and blackbird pour forth incessant strains of melody.

There stands in this inclosure a magnificent

blackbird, blue thrush, jays, magpies, rooks, hooded crows, hedge sparrows, hawks, siskins, common larks, black-throated larks, titlarks, smaller larks, judcocks, land rails, combs from the heads of cocks, fowl and turkey legs and feet, buzzards, curlews, small stints, redwings, pochards, falcons, civetta owls, whinchats, windhover hawks, kites, stone curlews, jackdaws, shoveler ducks, gobbo ducks, hedgehogs, water hens, spotted water hens, bitterns, mergansers, stormcocks, porcupines, foxes, goats, kids, yellow wagtails, fieldfares, hooting owls, horned owls, barn owls, wheatears, redstarts, three species, nightingales, yellow-breasted chats, stonechats, brown-headed shrikes, common shrikes, little terns, gulls, Guinea fowls, goatsuckers, eggs from the ovarium of all sizes, wind eggs, larger white egret, common heron, turkeys, guts of turkeys and common fowls, swifts, swallows, starlings, little bitterns, white-winged bitterns, large bitterns, bullfinches, chaffinches, water tortoises, turtle doves, water rails, shags, red-throated mergansers, badgers, lesser spotted woodpeckers, smallest woodpeckers, green woodpeckers, small white-throated mergansers, common wrens, common gold-crested wrens, splendid-golden crested wrens, house sparrows, mountain sparrows, mountain sparrows with yellow speck on the throat, olive-throated bunting, crested grebes, Canary birds, hoopoes, rollers, bee-eaters, golden orioles. Add to this list butcher's meat of all descriptions, and the finest fruits and vegetables, and flowers.

N. B. If a man cannot get fat in this city at a very moderate expense, it must be his own fault.

grove of stone pines, vast in their dimensions, and towering in their height. Here the harmless jackdaw nestles, here the hooded crow is seen, here the starling breeds in numbers, and here the roller, decked in all the brilliant plumage of the tropics, comes to seek his daily fare. But, as far as I could perceive, after two seasons of observation, he does not make his nest in the trees. Holes in lofty walls, and in stately ruins, are the favourite places for his nidification. The cradle plumage of his young displays the metallic colours of after-life; hence, there is no perceptible difference in the appearance of the adult male and female. After passing the summer months in Europe, he returns to Africa at the autumnal equinox.

The aerial movements of this bird put one in mind of our own rook, when in the act of shooting downwards from on high. He rises perpendicularly, and then descends in rapid zig-zag evolutions, during which process, if you get betwixt the sun and him, you have a magnificent view of his lovely plumage. His voice has something in it of the united notes of the jay and magpie.

Innovations in modern ornithology, so prolific

of scientific confusion and unimportant distinctions, have removed this bird from the family of Pie, where it had had a place from time immemorial; thus rendering useless its most ancient name of *Pica marina*.

It was known in the time of the Romans. "Picus in auspiciis avis observata Latinis;" and it was also admitted into heathen mythology. Virgil alludes to the beautiful colours in its wing; and above two thousand years ago, when the gods used to change men into other animals, just as easily as we nowadays change our acts of parliament, the *Pica marina* was both king and horsebreaker, "equum domitor." He was married to the celebrated Circe, an enchantress of the first order; she who changed the sailors of Ulysses into swine. The royal horsebreaker had unfortunately shown a partiality for a young woman in his own neighbourhood, a thing not altogether unknown in our days. This so enraged his wife, that with her magic rod, far more potent than finger nails, she transformed him into a bird; and, at the same time, bespangled his wings with beautiful colours.

"Fecit avem Circe, sparsitque coloribus alas."

THE HOLLY.

“ See, Winter comes to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train,
Vapours, and clouds, and storms.” THOMSON.

I AM very partial to the holly, the yew, and the ivy. They give both food and shelter to the birds; whilst their charming green foliage makes us almost forget that winter has set in. The holly claims my preference; for, in addition to food and shelter, it affords an impenetrable retreat to those birds which take up their quarters on its branches for the night.

Our ancestors knew and felt the value of the holly hedge, when the wintry blast whistled through the naked hawthorn. Hence they raised it as a barrier against the north; and, on the breaking of the clouds at noon, they would resort to the protection which it offered, and there enjoy the sun's delightful presence. But modern innovation, which, in nine times out of ten, does more harm than good, seems to have condemned the holly hedge as a thing of stiff unsightly form, and in its vacant place has in-

roduced a scanty sprinkling of isolated plants. I own that I am for the warm arboreous plan of ancient days; and thus I never pass a garden where yew and holly hedges grow, without stopping to admire them, and then I proceed onwards with favourable notions of the owner's taste.

But, to the holly in particular. I am so convinced of its utility both to men and birds, that I have spared no pains in rearing it as a shelter from the cold, when Boreas, sure har-binger of storms, sweeps over the dreary waste.

The deeper and richer the soil, so much the better for the holly. Still, this favourite plant of mine will thrive almost in any soil, and even amongst the clefts of rocks, where there is scarcely any soil at all. Neither can any of the four rude winds of heaven affect the perpendicular growth of the holly tree, although they make an impression upon the sturdy oak itself. Thus, in this neighbourhood, whilst we see the elm and the beech leaning towards the east by the over-bearing pressure of the western blast, we find that the holly has not given way to its impetuosity. Indeed, keep the roots of the holly clear of stagnant water, and you have little

more to do, for it forms its own defence ; and, moreover, it has one advantage over most other plants, namely, it can push its way successfully up amid surrounding shade and pressure. Its lateral branches, too, will take root, so soon as they come in contact with the soft soil beneath them.

If you place a young holly plant in a full-grown hawthorn hedge, it will vegetate in that incommodious site ; and will manage, at last, to raise its head aloft, and flourish clear of all opposition. Thus, driven from his native home, perhaps through scarcity of wheat and whiskey, I have known a hardy son of Caledonia, although put in a situation apparently hostile to advancement either in fame or in fortune, maintain himself under fearful trials of adversity. In process of time, his perseverance and honesty were crowned by complete success. He took kindly to it, where you thought there would be no chance of ever getting on ; but, by carefully watching his hour of advance, in the death of this competitor or in the negligence of that, this frugal, careful, steady emigrator from the North, moved slowly onwards, till, in due good time, he passed through all surrounding diffi-

culties: and, having got at last into the full sunshine of good fortune, he there took the lead on the high road to long expected wealth and honours.

He whose nerves would be affected at the sight of a straight holly hedge, might prevent their irritation by forming a crescent; say a segment of a circle to a radius of sixty yards. This would present a fine appearance to the eye, whilst it shut out both the north-west and the north-east winds of winter. Hollies, too, may be planted in a clump, with very pleasing effect to the beholder. I consider a regularly formed clump of hollies to be the perfection of beauty, in grouped arboreal design. One single tree of mountain ash in the centre of this would add another charm to it, and would be of use to the ornithologist at the close of summer. When the holly trees are in full bearing, and the berries ripe, we may roam a long while through the whole extent of British botany, before we find a sight more charming to the eye than the intermixture of bright red and green which this lovely plant produces.

I have a fine circular clump of hollies here, under which the pheasants are fed; and to

which, throughout the whole of the winter, a vast number of sparrows, green linnets, buntings, blackbirds, and some starlings resort, to take their nocturnal repose in peace and quiet. The holly sheds a large proportion of its leaves after the summer has set in. These remain on the ground in thick profusion. So formidable are their hard and pointed spikes to the feet of prowling quadrupeds, that neither the cat, nor the weasel, nor the founart, nor the fox, nor even the ever-hungry Hanoverian rat, dare invade the well-defended territory. Hence the birds, which in yew trees and in ivy would be exposed to inevitable destruction from the attacks of these merciless foes, are safe from danger in the holly bush.

People generally imagine that the holly is of tardy growth. It may be so in ordinary cases; but means may be adopted to make this plant increase with such effect as to repay us amply for all our extra labour and expense. Thus, let us dig the ground to a full yard in depth, and plant the hollies during the last week of May, taking care to puddle their roots well into the pulverised soil. We shall find, by the end of September, that many of the plants will have

shot nearly a foot in length, and that not one of them has failed, let the summer have been ever so dry. Small plants, bought in a nursery, and placed in your own garden for a couple of years, will be admirably adapted for the process of transplanting. Had I been aware in early life of this encouraging growth of the holly, it should have formed all my fences in lieu of hawthorn, which, after arriving at full maturity, suddenly turns brown in summer, and dies in a few weeks, without having given any other previous notice of near approaching decay.

Birds in general are not fond of holly berries; but many sorts will feed upon them when driven by "necessity's supreme command." Thus, during the time that the fields are clad in snow, and the heps and the haws have already been consumed, then it is that the red-wing, the blackbird, the fieldfare, and the stormcock, numbed by the cold, and bold through want of food, come to the berry-bearing holly close to your house, and there too often fall a prey to the gun of the designing fowler.

In these days of phantom schemes and national extravagance, when work is scarce and penury fast increasing, the holly tree is doomed

to suffer from the lawless pilferer's hand. When least expected, you find it arrested in its growth. Its smaller branches by degrees lose their vitality, and, by the end of the following year, one half of the tree appears as though it had received a blast from the passing thunderstorm. This declining aspect of the holly has been occasioned by the hand of sordid mischief. It is well known that birdlime is produced from its bark. In the spring of the year, at earliest dawn of day, our finest holly trees in this neighbourhood are stripped of large pieces of their bark by strolling vagabonds, who sell it to the nearest druggist. So common has this act of depredation been in this vicinity, that I should be at a loss to find a single holly tree, in any hedge outside of the park wall, that has escaped the knife of these unthinking spoilers.

Some six or seven years ago, there stood in the ornamented grounds of my baronet neighbour a variegated holly of magnificent growth, and it bore abundant crops of berries; a circumstance not very frequent in hollies of this kind. Many a half hour have I stood to admire this fine production of nature; for it was unparalleled, in this part of Yorkshire, in beauty,

size, and vigour. But, at last, it was doomed to perish by a plundering and an unknown hand; one morning in spring I found the whole of its bark stripped off the bole, for full two feet in length. Notwithstanding this disaster, the berries became ripe in due time; whilst its leaves apparently retained their wonted verdure upon the greater branches. Even the year following it was alive, and put forth new leaves and blossoms: but the leaves were of a stunted growth, and the berries did not attain their usual size. During the course of the third year from the day of its misfortune, the whole of the foliage fell to the ground; and then the tree itself became, like our giant debt, a dead unsightly weight upon the land.

THE SQUIRREL.

[This paper was written in answer to one by Mr. Wighton in the *Gardener's Magazine* for March, 1843, in which it was asserted that squirrels sometimes feed on birds.]

HORTICULTURE and zoology are contiguous provinces. Surely, then, no one in these days of liberality can find fault with Mr. Wighton for straying a little out of bounds. Let him not fear the apparition of a birch rod.

If squirrels injure the shoots of my spruce firs, which they are known to frequent, trivial indeed must be the damage, and quick the reparation by old Dame Nature, for the trees bear no marks of aggression.

Had the squirrel been wild, in the wild woods, at the time that Mr. Wighton saw it eat the birds, I should not hesitate to pronounce that individual squirrel to be carnivorous, because I believe that Mr. Wighton would only state what he conceived to be "correct." Still, we must allow that there are exceptions to all rules. Don Quixote put Sancho Panza in mind that summer did not always set in with the appearance of the first swallow. Sir William Jardine

shot a barn owl in the very act of hooting. Probably, neither the baronet, nor any body else, will ever perform a similar feat, for barn owls do not hoot.

I gather from Mr. Wighton's communication that his squirrel was *in captivity* when it partook of a carnal repast. This single fact at once precludes the possibility of the squirrel family being raised to the rank of carnivorous animals. The incarceration only of "a few days" might have injured the prisoner seriously, either in his nervous system, or in his gastric powers, or in his olfactory sensibilities. Now, a sudden derangement in all, or even in any one, of these component parts of a squirrel's frame, might have affected his health sufficiently to have induced him to try a change of larder; and, should this have been the case, I don't know a nicer morsel for the alterative system than a tender and a well-fed swallow. Under existing circumstances (loss of liberty, to wit), I am not at all astonished that Mr. Wighton's squirrel should dine on bird, raw or roasted we are not informed; even though the said squirrel were well supplied, on the same table, "with his favourite kind of food."

I wish we knew more than we do of the carnivorous propensities, or the want of them, in certain animals. We might then be able to account tolerably well for many strange occurrences, which every now and then puzzle us so much, in the workings of zoological gastronomy. So unaccountable, indeed, are sometimes the actions both of man and beast, not only in the eating department, but also in domestic arrangements, that we might really fancy the performers not to be quite right in their heads.

Whilst I am actually writing this, there are two geese on the lawn before me. One of them is a Canada goose, the other a barnacle gander. The latter is about half the size of the former. Notwithstanding this disparity, the old fool of a goose has taken the insignificant little fellow into connubial favour, although there are four and twenty others of the Canada species here, from which she has it fully in her power to make a more profitable choice. Singular to tell, this is the third year that these infatuated simpletons have paired, and the goose laid eggs, without any chance of a progeny. And, in high quarters, sometimes unions take place, where the husband is ignorant of the

language of his wife, and the wife of that of her husband.

How capricious, then, is the taste, not only of Mr. Wighton's captive squirrels, but also of geese, and eke of man himself! By only "a few days" loss of liberty, I have shown that Mr. Wighton's pretty squirrel preferred the flesh of birds to its own "favourite kind of food."

My tom-cat, apparently an excellent mouser, will sometimes prefer dry biscuit to a mutton chop. Sterne's ass seemed to relish macaroon. Did all asses relish macaroon, we might doubt the fitness of the Spanish proverb, "La miel no es para la boca del asno:" Honey is not made for the mouth of the ass. Parrots in cages will pull off their own feathers, and eat them by the dozen. Blackbirds, although on very short allowance, caused by the frosty weather, would not touch their favourite ivy berries, which were thrown down in abundance for them in the garden of my friend, Mr. Loudon of Bayswater. I knew a healthy old owl who took her confinement so much to heart that she refused all kind of food, and died at last for want of it. And, when I was in the Mediterranean Sea, I saw a brute in the shape of man, swallow pieces

of raw fowl (which he had torn asunder, feathers and all,) with as much avidity as Sir Robert Peel devours our incomes.

Should Mr. Wighton read this paper, he cannot fail to perceive that I have many serious obstacles to overcome, before I can arrive at the very important conclusion, that the family of squirrel is carnivorous in its own native haunts.

GIGANTIC RASPBERRIES

WHEN I altered Walton Hall, I destroyed the finest garden, for its size, in Yorkshire. But there was no help for it. I was absolutely forced to turn Vandal, and blot it out from the face of the earth. The raspberries in it always grew to the height of fourteen feet. Situation caused this growth. I once, in my rambles in Lancashire, fell in with a like situation, and there I found wild raspberries growing fully as high. To obtain this luxuriant growth, the situation must be low and rich; and the rasp-

berry plants must be shielded from the noonday sun by trees, or a high wall. Trees, I should say, would be better. We had always wooden steps on purpose to reach the fruit. My father sent plants of these raspberries to his friends in Yorkshire, and in the county of Nottingham, but they answered not the expectations which had been formed of them. When I destroyed the garden, I saved a sufficient quantity of plants to be cultivated elsewhere. They are still in existence, and their puny growth informs me that I must never more expect to see them in their former luxuriance. When I removed the soil on which they had flourished so suprisingly, I found stony fragments at the bottom, through which there ran a stream of water which got vent from the mouth of a drain at the opposite side of the garden.

THE CAYMAN.

“The crocodile, in fact, is only dangerous when in the water. Upon land it is a slow-paced and even timid animal ; so that an active boy armed with a small hatchet might easily dispatch one. There is no great prowess therefore required to ride on the back of a poor cayman after it has been secured or perhaps wounded ; and a modern writer might well have spared the recital of his feats in this way upon the cayman of Guiana, had he not been influenced in this and numberless other instances, by the greatest possible love of the marvellous, and a constant propensity to dress truth in the garb of fiction.”—*Extract from Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopaedia ; Fishes, vol. ii. p. 111.*

SWAINSON, wholesale dealer in closet-zoology, was never in the wilds of Guiana, where the book of *Wanderings* was written. Hence any comment on the above extract were loss of labour and of time.

His erroneous account of the cayman at once shows me that he never saw this animal in its native haunts.

I stop not here to tell the world how I came to incur the hostility of this morbid and presumptuous man. Suffice it to say, that formerly, in friendship (for I personally knew his worthy father), I used to give him ornitholo-

gical information. But his behaviour was such that I found myself under the absolute necessity of discontinuing my correspondence with him : and this laid the foundation of that animosity which at last has induced him publicly to call in question my veracity, without fortifying his rash act with any proof whatever. Let me here inform this dealer in unsound Zoology, that my veracity is the only article upon which I feel that I have a positive right to plume myself, in the two small volumes which I have presented to the world. And now for the cayman ; first apologising to the reader for this disagreeable though necessary prologue.

Those who have had no opportunity of examining the crocodile and cayman in the regions where they are found, may form a tolerably correct notion of them (making a due allowance for size) by an inspection of the little lizard which inhabits the warmer parts of Europe. And should they not have it in their power to travel out of England, they may still acquire a competent idea of these animals by looking at the newt, which is common in most of our gardens : for, notwithstanding the

frivolous objections which Swainson has offered to the contrary, I consider these monsters of tropical climates neither more nor less than lizards of an extraordinary size, and in this the Spaniards agree with me;—for on their first arrival in the New World, seeing that the cayman was an overgrown lizard, both in form and habits, they called it “una lagarta,” which is the Spanish name for a lizard.

The British, in course of time, having seized on the settlements formed by the Spaniards, soon became acquainted with the cayman, and on hearing the Spaniards exclaim “una lagarta” when this animal made its appearance, they, in their turn, called it an alligator; for so the two Spanish words, “una lagarta,” sounded in the English ear. I got this information many years ago from a periodical of which I remember not the name.

The little lizard which darts at a fly on the sunny banks along the roads of Southern Europe, gives the spectator an excellent idea of the cayman in the act of taking its prey in the tropics; and whilst he views the pretty green creature turning sharply and quickly on the ground before him, he may see in ima-

gination, the movements of the cayman on the banks of the Essequibo, after the dry season has set in.

I once fell in with a fry of young caymans on dry land near the river Essequibo. They were about a foot in length, and they twisted and turned in all directions with the agility of rabbits. One of them got entangled in the weeds. It fought fiercely before we succeeded in capturing it, and Daddy Quashi had it for his supper.

Crocodile is the eastern name, and cayman or alligator the western name for this huge lizard.

It is now high time to reject the many fabulous accounts of the crocodile. Their shedding tears, and their devouring the young ones as soon as hatched, are inventions only for the nursery fire-side.

Master Swainson's assertion that the crocodile "conveys its food to some hole at the edge of the water, where it is suffered to putrefy before it is devoured," may suit an infant school, but it will be rejected with a smile of contempt by any one who has paid the least attention to the anatomy of the crocodile's head. The

dissector would see that the mouth of this reptile is completely formed for snatch and swallow. Now any common observer of the habits of animals with a mouth so formed must know, at first sight, that these animals never eject food which has once entered the mouth. Down the throat it goes immediately, unless there be some impediment, as in the case of a stag's horns. Supposing for an instant (but no one except a second Master Swainson could suppose such a manifest absurdity) that the crocodile does really place his food in a hole until putridity commences; pray how is the animal to secure it from his ravenous fellow crocodiles?—or by what process is he to curb his own hunger until the lardered morsel be ready for deglutition?

The old hackneyed account of crocodiles devouring their own young when newly hatched is really unworthy of refutation. Depend upon it, no such unnatural banquet takes place; for the crocodiles are never reduced to so abhorrent a necessity. The rivers which they inhabit abound with fish, both large and small: and on these the crocodiles feed, as well as on fresh-water turtle. And as to the vultures watching

individuals of the family of crocodile until they have laid their eggs, and then devouring them, it is an ancient fable, which, like Don Quixote's library of romances, ought to be thrown to the fire in the court-yard, and there burnt with the rest of the trash. I can positively affirm that neither in the Essequibo nor in the Oro-noque did I see one single solitary attempt of a vulture to invade the spot where a cayman had deposited her eggs. The cayman, in fact, may perform her task with impunity, whilst hundreds of vultures are standing motionless on the branches of a tree hard by, where they remain till hunger bids them be stirring, and then they all take wing and fly away in quest of carrion. Had they been watching the cayman's treasures, they would have descended from the tree, and not have ascended in aërial flight.

The cayman not unfrequently lays its eggs in a heap of dry leaves. The eggs afford good nourishment to man. They are about the size of those of a turkey, perhaps somewhat larger. The outside of the shell is rough, and of a dirty white colour. Probably it is quite white when first deposited.

This formidable animal, being able to exist either in water or on the land, may be styled amphibious to the fullest extent of the word. Master Swainson, notwithstanding his "compassion for the poor animals," and his interested wish to make his readers believe that they are of a timid nature, would have found himself awkwardly situated had he been in my position when I attacked the cayman mentioned in the *Wanderings*; — the Indians positively refusing to drag it out of the water, until I had placed myself betwixt them and danger.

I once saw a cayman in the Oronoque thirty feet in length, and another of the same size in the Essequibo. This animal is an inhabitant of the fresh waters, although occasionally he may be found in the mouths of rivers where the water is salt; but when this occurs we may conclude to a certainty, that he has been carried down the descending flood against his will.

Whilst I was in Guiana a cayman was killed in the salt water of the Essequibo, just opposite to the island of Waakenham.

We formerly learned from our nursery books that animals of the crocodile family have skins hard enough to turn a musket-ball. This

requires explanation. No part of the cayman's body is absolutely proof against a musket-ball. Let it be recollected, that in shooting at one of these reptiles, we stand invariably above it, so that the ball from our gun, after striking the animal obliquely, flies off, and merely leaves a contusion. Although the back is very hard, the sides are comparatively tender, and can be easily pierced through with an ordinary pen-knife. The tail is not near so hard as the back, and, singular to tell, the tail of the smaller kind, about five feet in length, is much stronger than that of the larger species.

In a creek up the river Demerara, I could any day see an adult cayman of this smaller species. It had chosen for its place of abode a kind of recess amongst the flooded trees bordering on the creek; and it was so awake to danger, that I could not get a shot at it. After trying various and unsuccessful schemes to capture it, I took a curial at last just large enough to hold two people. I squatted in the prow, and Daddy Quashi steered it without making any stir in the water. Having cocked my gun, and placed it against my shoulder in a position ready to fire, the curial was allowed

to drift silently down the stream, when, just as we got opposite the place where the cayman was lurking, I pulled the trigger and shot it. The whole of the afternoon was spent in dissecting it, and I found it fully as tenacious of life as the land tortoise itself.

The mouth of the cayman is furnished with a most formidable row of teeth in each jaw, but they are peculiarly shaped for snatch and swallow. He has no grinders; hence no laceration of the food can take place in the mouth. But a contest will often ensue amongst the congregated reptiles, when the morsel is too large for deglutition; and then each individual snatches at what it can get, and pulls away the piece. The nose of the cayman forms a pretty rotund figure. This, together with the rough protuberance which guards the eye from above, may be modelled by my new process, and rendered as elevated as it appeared during the life of the animal. When Swainson tells us that the snout of crocodiles and caymans is unusually depressed, I know immediately that he has been at his wonted employment of examining a dried skin.

In dissecting a cayman for preservation, you

may separate the tail at every other joint. This division renders the process extremely easy. The head also may be divided from the body, and replaced afterwards with great success. After the whole of the dissection is finished, you steep the skin for about a quarter of an hour in the solution of corrosive sublimate, and then, by means of sand, you proceed to restore the form and feature which the animal possessed in life.

An adept in this new mode of preparing zoological specimens for Museums (see the *Essays*) would be enabled to bring home an alligator very superior indeed to those hung up in apothecaries' shops during the life of Shakspeare — "An alligator stuffed." My cayman is now in as good condition as it was on the day in which I dissected it; and it will set decay at defiance for centuries to come, provided no accident befall it.

I have mentioned briefly in the *Wanderings*, an account which the governor of Angustura gave me of the boldness and ferocity of the cayman. I may here repeat the story somewhat more at length.

In the year 1808, I carried Lord Colling-

wood's despatches up the Oronoque to the city of Angustura, where the Spanish governor, Don Felipe de Ynciarté, resided. I corresponded with him for some time afterwards. He was a soldier, of vast information in the Natural History of the country; and had been a great explorer in his time. He showed me a large map of Spanish Guiana, having made it from his own personal survey of those regions in early life. On the breaking out of the revolutionary war, which, according to Canning's rambling speculation, was to give rise to a thousand republics, this true Spaniard fought for King Ferdinand VII. But fortune having declared against him he left the Oronoque, and retired to the island of Santa Cruz, where death closed his mortal career.

The Spaniards, who have more of pleasure than of puritanism in their composition, think it no harm, after they have performed the sacred duties of the day, to enjoy a fine Sunday evening, in gay attire, on the Alameda or public walk, where there is generally a band of music. I had resorted to the walk attached to Angustura, and was in company with Governor Ynciarté, when he stopped on reaching a certain

place, and begged my attention to what he was going to relate. "Don Carlos," said he to me, "mark the opening which leads to the Oro-noque. I was on this very spot, a great number of the inhabitants being present, when there suddenly came out of the river an enormous cayman. It seized a man close by me, and carried him off to the water, where it sank with him to appear no more. The attack was so sudden, and the animal so tremendous, that none of us had either time or courage to go to the unfortunate man's rescue."

This certainly could not have been one of Master Swainson's "slow-paced and even timid animals," which "an active boy armed with a small hatchet" might easily have despatched.

In 1824, I read in one of the newspapers at New York, a detailed account of the death of one of our consul's sons. The youth would bathe in the river Madalena, in opposition to all that the Spaniards could say against so rash an act, on account of the numbers and ferocity of the caymans there. He had not fairly entered the water, when he was seized by a cayman and disappeared for ever.

How these dismal exhibitions of cayman

ferocity throw utter discredit upon what has been supplied to Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, on Fishes, vol. ii. p. 111., by Swainson! Had he ever seen anything of the habits of the cayman, surely he would have paused before he informed his readers in Lardner, "We often met with them [caymans] in the same country as Mr. Waterton, [How comes this? Swainson was never either in Spanish or in Dutch Guiana, in which territories only I fell in with the cayman.] but they were so timid that had we been disposed to perform such ridiculous feats as that traveller narrates, our compassion for the poor animals would have prevented us."

I have now given, as far as I am able, a true history of the cayman, without any exaggeration, quite free from Swainson's base accusation of my "constant propensity to dress truth in the garb of fiction;" and I stake what little honour and credit I have hitherto gained with the public on the correctness of it.

Should the reader believe me on my word, and then compare my account of the cayman with that which Swainson wrote for Lardner, he must evidently come to the following conclusion, viz.—that Swainson, when he wrote

his account of this reptile, was either totally unacquainted with its habits and economy, or that he wilfully perverted them, and made out the cayman to be a "slow-paced and even timid animal," in order to be revenged on me, who had described it as swift, and one of extraordinary ferocity: for, be it known, that in 1837, I found myself under the necessity of writing to Swainson a very pungent ornithological letter, which was printed. He never answered this letter, and I thought that I had done with him altogether, till in 1839, whilst I was in Italy, out came Lardner's volume on Fishes, containing the sweeping extract which I have transcribed at the head of this paper. Swainson was then about to take his final departure to New Zealand. Steam will soon convey to him a copy of this. I call upon him to contradict the statements which it contains,—or to acknowledge the truth and the propriety of them.

THE YEW TREE.

I NEVER cast my eyes on the mouldering fabrics which once adorned this land, without renewing my veneration for the memory of the holy and useful monks who have gone before us. There is still enough left of the falling walls to show how much these faithful friends of the poor and needy must have been esteemed through the whole extent of the nation: and when I sit me down under the dark foliage of some ancient yew tree, which has escaped the fury of the destroying Vandals, and think of the miserable state to which the sons of poverty are now reduced, I cannot help heaving a sigh, whilst my very heart itself seems to sink within me.

I am extremely partial to the yew tree. It has already repaid me for the pains which I have taken in its cultivation; and when I resort to my usual evening stand, in order to watch the flocks of sparrows, finches, and starlings, whilst they are dropping in upon the neighbouring hollies, I feel not the wintry blast; as

the yew trees, which are close at hand, are to me a shield against its fury; and, in fact, they offer me a protection little inferior to that of the house itself.

I have not been sparing in the arrangement of ornamental yew trees. Just sixty yards from the bridge which joins the island to the main, there is a yew tree crescent, three hundred feet in extent; and not far from this, there are some fine clumps of the same plant, producing a very pleasing effect. Should he, who will succeed to them when I am low in dust, have the philosophy to set at naught the modern disapprobation of ornamental planting in lines and circles, he will always command the sweet warbling of unnumbered songsters, from earliest spring to latest summer: for the yew tree is a kind friend to the feathered race; and the wren and the hedge-sparrow will sing sweetly amidst its foliage throughout the autumn, and even after the winter season has set in.

The cultivation of the yew tree is sure and simple. It will thrive in any soil that is clear of swamp: but, the richer the soil, the richer is the appearance of its foliage; and if the planter will trench his ground from two to

three feet deep, throwing back into the bottom the worst of what has been removed, and reserving the best for the upper stratum, he is sure to be handsomely requited by a rapid growth of the trees.

Although the yew tree is a hardy plant, and fond of cold regions (“*amantes frigora taxi*”), still it will be much more vigorous in the sheltered valley, than on the bleak hill exposed to the wintry blast. Our western gales here in Yorkshire press far too keenly on its foliage, and render the side which is exposed to their fury as thin and wretched in appearance, as the face of a metropolitan alderman would be on Easter Sunday morning, after having struggled through forty long days of unmitigated fasting. Provided you do not care about having your yew tree in all the exuberance of uncurbed vegetation, you may apply the pruning-knife and shears with a safe and an unsparing hand; for the yew tree will submit to curtailment with good effect, and without any apparent diminution of vitality. If we clip its southern side in imitation of a wall, and allow that which faces the north to flourish in its natural state, we shall have from the same line

of trees a walk impervious to the blast of Boreas for ourselves, and a provision of berries for the birds, at a time when their more ordinary supply of food is considerably on the decrease.

Charming is the appearance of the yew tree after the sun has passed the autumnal equinox. The delicate crimson of its fruit, with the dark green leaves behind it, produces an effect so pleasing to the view, that it can scarcely be surpassed by any thing which the southern forests present to the lover of botany, as he wanders through their mazes.

The bole of this tree possesses the power of effectually reproducing a supply of main branches, after the original ones have been severed from it by the axe of the woodman. At Lupset Hall, the residence of our former honest member for Wakefield, Daniel Gaskell, Esq., there stands a lordly yew, by far the most gigantic of any in this neighbourhood. At some period of time, now long gone by, all its larger branches have been cut away from the stem. Others now supply their place; and by the present healthy aspect of the tree, we may conclude that, at some future day, this second series of

main branches will have attained a growth and vigour equal to what the original ones would have presented to us, had they been allowed to remain on the tree.

Ere the combined force of charcoal and saltpetre had enabled us to blow ourselves up instantaneously, we followed the slower process of destroying life by means of the bow made from the yew tree: and this, to men of moderately sanguinary habits, must, I think, have been sufficiently expeditious: for we learn, at the hunting-fray of Chevy Chase, that,

“ The English archers bent their bows,
Their hearts were good and true;
At the first flight of arrows sent,
Full threescore Scots they slew.”

The bow from the yew tree was in use by private sportsmen as well as by warriors. In the very old song of the *Sow and the Tailor*, the latter cries out,

“ Wyfe, wyfe, bring me my yewen bow,
That I maye shoot the carrion crow.”

Some people are of opinion, that the yew tree was planted close to the churches by way

of protection, in order that there might always be a good supply of bows in case of war. The Catholic church, which was founded to preach peace on earth to men of good will, never could have patronised botany for sanguinary purposes. No doubt whatever, the yew tree was planted near the church for the facility of obtaining sprigs and branches to be used during the processions. Religious processions were in high request amongst our pious ancestors. They were an admirable mode of imparting a knowledge of the sacred mysteries of religion to all ranks of people. Terrible indeed has been the loss to our nation by their suppression.

Selborne's immortal naturalist cautions us not to let our cattle feed upon the foliage of the yew; and he gives us an instance of its deadly effects. Hence, I have taken the precaution to fence my clumps of yew trees round with an impenetrable hedge of hollies. Sprigs newly taken from the growing yew tree are said not to be poisonous; but in the course of three or four days, a change takes place in them, and then their noxious quality prevails. But the ripe berries of the yew tree are certainly not deleterious, as I myself can prove by frequent

personal trial. Indeed, nothing is more common in this neighbourhood, when autumn has set in, than to see the village lads idling under yew trees, and partaking plentifully of the fruit, which they appositely call snottle-berries.

Ovid considered the appearance of the yew tree sufficiently lugubrious to give it a place on the hill-side which led down to the infernal regions, — “*funesta nubila taxo.*” And we learn from Julius Cæsar, that it proved fatal to the human species; for King Cativolcus, after heartily cursing his ally Ambiorix, for having brought him into an irretrievable scrape, had recourse to the yew tree, in order to bid this wicked world adieu for ever:—“*Taxo, cujus magna in Gallia, Germaniaque copia est, se exanimavit.*”

The Spaniards, in the days of Cervantes, applied sprigs of yew to mournful purposes, as we gather from the story of Chrysostomo. This unhappy swain fell into languor, and died for the love of the shepherdess Marcela; and his friend performed his obsequies with wreaths of yew and cypress; “*Eran, qual de texo, y qual de Cypres.*” But, here in England, the yew sprig, far from being thought an emblem of

grief, is chosen to be the harbinger of merriment and joy. Scarcely has the sun's full stop at the Tropic of Capricorn announced to us the dawn of the shortest day, ere the housemaid begins to set her rooms in order; and the gardener is desired to prepare his sprigs of holly, box, and yew, as ornaments for every window, on the eve of the annual commemoration of that long promised day, when the eternal Son of God was born of the Blessed Virgin in a stable at Bethlehem for sinful man's redemption.

If the leaves of the yew tree were armed with sharp spikes like those of the holly, we should have a treasure of a tree for the protection of the feathered tribe during the stormy nights of winter. But the want of these repellent appendages renders the yew tree highly perilous to the birds which resort to its inviting foliage for sleep or shelter, as the cat, the stoat, the weasel, and the foomart can pervade its branches with the utmost impunity: whilst the Hanoverian rat, so notorious for self and pelf, is ever prying amongst them, and fleecing their inmates with a perseverance scarcely to be imagined.

THE IVY.

WE live to learn. I was not sufficiently aware of the value of ivy for the protection of the feathered race, until I had seen the pheasant-preserve of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in the year 1817. It is called the Cascini, and it is a kind of Hyde Park for the inhabitants of Florence in their evening recreations.

At the grove of the Cascini, you see the ivy growing in all its lofty pride and beauty. As I gazed on its astonishing luxuriance, I could not help entertaining a high opinion of the person, be he alive or dead, through whose care and foresight such an effectual protection had been afforded to the wild birds of heaven, in the very midst of the "busy haunts of men." The trees in this ornamented grove are loaded with a profusion of ivy, from their lowest to their topmost branches; and although crowds of fashionable carriages were rolling along the road which surrounds this preserve, I saw our common pheasant roving through its walks,

with a confidence little inferior to that of our own domestic poultry. As the evening closed in upon us, I observed multitudes of the smaller birds resorting to the "ivy-mantled" trees, in order to enjoy the proffered convenience of nocturnal rest and safety.

I have profited by what I saw in Tuscany,—for, on my return to my native place, I began the cultivation of ivy with an unsparing hand.

There are two sorts of this ever-verdant plant. The one is denominated English, the other Irish ivy. Both are exceedingly graceful in their foliage; but the first is by far the better bearer of fruit. They will grow on any soil, save that of swamp. Whilst the plant is on the ground, you have only to cover its long runners with a little earth at intervals of four or five inches, and you will soon have an abundant supply of ivy for ornament; and for use, as far as the birds are concerned. This is a surer way of obtaining plants, than by cutting them at once from the climbing ivy.

Ivy can only attain its greatest perfection, through the intervention of foreign bodies. It travels onward in a lowly state upon the ground until it reaches some inclined or perpendicular

object, up which it ascends. In due time it then puts out lateral branches, and obtains a bole, as though it were a forest tree itself. Ivy derives no nutriment from the timber tree to which it adheres. It merely makes use of a tree or wall, as we ourselves do of a walking-stick, when old age or infirmities tell us that we cannot do without it. Should an ancient wall and ivy come in contact, they are of great assistance to each other. Dyer observed this on Grongar hill: —

“ Whose aged walls the ivy creeps,
And with her arms from falling keeps:
So, both a safety from the wind
In mutual dependence find.”

There can be no doubt as to the real source from whence ivy draws life and vigour: from the ground alone its maintenance proceeds. To be convinced of this, we have only to inspect it narrowly on a living tree, and then pay the same attention to it upon a dead one, or upon any stump deprived of vitality. Be our eye as keen as that of the lynx, we shall not be able to perceive that the one plant is more healthy, more vigorous, or more verdant than the other; and if we cut through the stock of the ivy in

either situation, we shall see that its upper parts will wither and die, down to the place through which the knife has passed.

Some few years ago, a tall sycamore tree stood on this island, in a row with four others. A remnant of its once fine bole still occupies the place which the tree adorned in the days of its prosperity. An unexpected appearance of fungus showed that all was not right within ; and, ere long, a gale of wind cut the tree nearly in two, sending its head and all its branches (saving one), with a colony of young jackdaws, down into the lake below. The remaining portion of the tree, spared by the gale, put out new shoots from every part of its circumference. But scarcely had these vegetated for four succeeding summers, when another immense fungus made its appearance about two yards from the truncated top, and all vegetation ceased that year, down to the part where the fungus had come out. Below this, the trunk was still alive ; but another fungus, of equal dimensions with the last, showed itself about five feet from the ground, and deprived the bole of all vegetation upwards.

At length this sickly remnant of the sycamore

more tree received its final doom; for, last summer, a vast profusion of fungus pushed up its circular cakes even from below the surface of the ground; and on their coming to maturity all the living powers within this ill-treated tree expired. The bole now stands a dead and unproductive stump. Any day, a north-west wind, sweeping across the water, may lay it low for ever. Did the ivy, which I had planted at the base many years ago, depend upon this bole for succour, it would now be dead and withered; but, on the contrary, that remaining part of it, free from mutilation when the different portions of the tree fell down, is now in verdure, and in primest vigour; but as it has no longer an opportunity of creeping upwards, on account of the misfortunes which have befallen the tree, it has assumed the form of a bush, with dense and widely spreading foliage.

An opinion prevails, that ivy not only deforms the branch to which it adheres, but that it is injurious to the growth of the timber itself. My wish for the preservation and maintenance of birds urges me on to attempt the defence of my favourite plant on these two important points.

The ivy which I planted many years ago has now obtained a most luxuriant growth ; and, if I may judge by what I see before my eyes, I must conclude that ivy is noways detrimental to the tree which has lent it a support. Having given ivy to many trees and refused it to others in the immediate vicinity, and on the same soil, in order to have a good opportunity of making a fair examination, I find, upon minute inspection of these several trees, that they are all of fine growth, and in a most healthy state ; those with ivy on them, and those without it, not varying from each other in appearance more than ordinary groups of forest trees are wont to do. Neither is this to be wondered at when we reflect that the ivy has its roots in the ground itself, and that it does not ascend in spiral progress round the bole and branches of the tree ; its leading shoot is perpendicular. Hence it is not in a position to compress injuriously the expansive powers of the tree, proportionally stronger than its own. Thus we find that the ivy gradually gives way before them ; so that, on removing the network (if it may be so called) which the ivy has formed on the bole of the tree, we find no indentations there.

But woodbine acts the reverse of this. Its process is spiral, and it becomes, as it were, an immovable hoop on the plant which it has embraced. As the woodbine, by its circumambient position cannot give way, the plant must consequently protrude wherever it is not compressed, till at last the woodbine becomes nearly buried in it. Thus we account for the fantastic form of walking-sticks, which are often to be seen at the shop doors of curious venders. The spiral hollows in these sticks are always formed by the woodbine, never by the ivy.

Having the workings of the ivy, and those of the woodbine, daily before my eyes, I venture, without wishing to impugn the opinion of others, to assert, that the latter is injurious, and the former not injurious to the plant which it has embraced; and this, by position alone; for, both having their own roots in the ground, their nutriment is amply supplied from that quarter.

Ivy, when planted on the eastern part of a tree which grows in a high and very exposed situation, can scarcely ever reach the opposite portion of it, on account of the resistance which it meets from the western blast. But it will

grow well, when placed on the western side itself; for in this position the west wind presses it to the bark of the tree, and thus becomes its friend. I have a fair example of this in my own park. On a bleak brow, there stands the hollow remnant of an oak, which, in the days of its prosperity, measured full twenty feet in circumference. Fourteen years ago, I planted ivy on its eastern side. But to this day, that portion of the bole facing the west remains uncovered by the ivy, which, in its annual attempt to surmount the difficulty, is arrested in its course, and ultimately driven back by the fury of the western gales.

If we wish to see ivy growing in all the luxuriance of health and beauty, we must plant it at the root of some tall Scotch fir, in a low and sheltered situation. Nothing can be more charming or lovely to the sight, than the widely-extending mass of verdure with which it will clothe the bole of the tree. I have a Scotch fir here with ivy round it quite worthy the inspection of poor Charley Stuart himself, were he still amongst us. The ivy sends its horizontal branches out from the bole to a distance of six or seven feet in vast profusion, and its

verdure is so perfectly in unison with the foliage of the fir, that, when you are standing at a little distance, you will be charmed with the additional beauty which it confers upon its stately supporter.

He who may chance to read these essays will see that I have cultivated with great success my three favourite evergreens, the yew, the holly, and the ivy. They give food and shelter to many species of British birds, which are so sadly persecuted by gardeners and gamekeepers throughout the whole extent of the land. I consider the ivy more serviceable than the other two, as its berries ripen at a season of the year when the ordinary food of the fields is far from being plentiful. The berries of the holly are abundant at the same time, but the birds are not nearly so fond of them.

Without these ever-verdant auxiliaries close at hand, I should have but a poor chance of observing the habits of our birds with satisfaction to myself. Writers on ornithology may consult volume after volume of other writers on ornithology who have gone before them; and they may extract from the pages that which

in their judgment may appear the best — but unless they themselves have spent years in the field, and those consulted have done the same, it is to be feared, that their labours will fall short of their wishes. Errors unintentional, and false surmises, and rash speculations will creep into their works, in spite of every precaution to avoid them. Their production, in truth, will be, —

“ *similis voluceri, — non vera volucris.* ”

Probably, my statement that ivy is not injurious to the tree which has lent it a support may be at variance with the opinion of those who are learned in botany. If so, I beg to say that I have living forest trees, of all ages and descriptions, to bear me out in what I have advanced.

In conclusion, I wish to say a word or two of mutual indentation produced by the union of two forest trees. Near the walk which leads to the flower-garden may be seen an English elm and a Scotch fir growing in close embrace. They are now fifteen feet in height, and one foot ten inches in circumference at the base. By twisting the leading shoot of one tree an-

nally round that of the other, the trees have become deeply embedded in each other's folds. The elm being of stronger vegetation than the spruce, I have taken the precaution of curtailing the lateral branches of the former, lest it should prove too much for its weaker partner.

This firmly attached couple of vegetable nature attracts considerable notice from passing visitors. When I chance to get hold of some facetious Tory, whose mellowness of countenance assures me that there is little or no acidity within, I tap him gently on the back and say, whilst pointing to the trees: "See there, your Church and State with a witness: a thrifty, keen, and loving couple! I have their everlasting separation much at heart, and would be happy to pronounce their immediate divorce, without any fee or reward whatever."

THE NEW CHIMNEY-SWEEPING ACT.

“ Pellitur, paternos in sinu ferens deos,
Et vir et uxor, sordidosque natos.” HORACE.

WE shall be driven out of the house covered with soot. Matthews, immortal mimic, in taking off our western brother Jonathan, used to make him exclaim, “ This is a free country, forsooth, and they won’t let a man flog his own nigger.” Were Matthews here now, he might remark, with equal justness, “ This is a land of liberty, and a man can’t go up his own chimney by law till he be of age.”

Our philanthropy of the present day too often appears in a questionable shape; whilst those in power, who support its pretensions, do as much mischief to the public weal, as a troop of monkeys would do to a fruit garden in the month of October. Witness the Act in question, which our assembled Solons have passed at the entreaty of certain incurable philanthropists.

Whip me those members of both Houses of Parliament, who have doomed us to the smoky

horrors of a half-swept chimney. Had I old Circe's power of witchcraft, when she changed the sailors of Ulysses into swine, I would transform every one of them into a goose; and they should be condemned to pass down our chimneys once a month, in order to do the needful with their wings and beaks.

England is a land of chimneys. She cannot possibly do without them. There is scarcely anything in the whole routine of our domestic economy, that requires more consideration than the state of our chimneys. A chimney that answers well the end for which it was built is a treasure of no small value; whereas a defective chimney is productive of so much annoyance, that it has very aptly been placed in the catalogue of miseries brought into a house by the tongue of a scolding wife.

There are some placid people in England who are for ever on the look out for objects whereon to exercise their philanthropy. Did the imprudent interference of these good people bring expense and inconvenience on themselves alone, nobody would care to complain; but when every householder in Great Britain suffers both in purse and person, through their

unnecessary interference, then it is that one feels authorised to take up the pen and show how philanthropy may sometimes cause mischief in its workings. Witness the late unfortunate expedition* up the river Niger. Witness the subject of the present memoir.

It makes one sick at stomach oneself, to see people straining dismally at a gnat in the shape of a little chimney-sweep, and then to perceive them swallowing, with great ease, a camel, under the figure of a poor and unhealthy operative employed in the factory.

Benevolence is certainly a heavenly feeling. A generous heart will always rejoice to see it operate in alleviation of real misery and oppression. Being doomed by Omnipotence, through the original sin of Adam, to gain our daily bread by the sweat of our brow, it requires considerable reflection, ere we set about to alter the long-established customs of our country; lest, by an ill-judged interference, we do more

* I was consulted on the probable issue of that lamentable undertaking. I used every argument in my power to prevent its taking place. On seeing that my arguments were of no avail, I said: "If you are determined that the experiment shall be tried, go yourself, in person, and then you will have the melancholy satisfaction of falling with the other victims."

harm than good. *Tantum ne noceas, &c.* Let us remember that we are all creatures of habit ; and that custom has been pronounced our second nature. He who has been well trained to labour, feels neither irksomeness nor pain in the performance of his ordinary task ; although the spectator who has been brought up in a different manner, might fancy him to be both weary and miserable.

We are too often misled by appearances, and too apt to judge of another person's feelings by our own. I know one, who, both in winter and in summer, rises at half-past three o'clock in the morning. He takes his nightly repose in a room not over and above replete with dormitory comforts ; and I have heard him say, that this custom is neither hard nor unpleasant to him. Still, another person, who studies personal comfort, and who likes his feather-bed, would consider it to be any thing but comfortable. So it is with the little chimney-sweep. He has been pitied for imaginary hardships ; and at last driven, by Act of Parliament, out of employment, for supposed miseries to which he had been a stranger.

To see, begrimed with soot, a pretty face, on

which there ought to be the rose and lily : — to meet a tattered urchin riding on a donkey, with his soot bag for a saddle ; or perhaps trudging barefoot along the road ; all this impresses on a philanthropist the idea, that the lot of this youth is miserable, and that it must be amended. Let us take a nearer view of this little son of soot. See the beauty of the rogue's teeth ! — they are as white as ivory, for the soot has polished and preserved them, whilst our own are discoloured and some of them gone to decay in spite of old Rowland's Odonto. His back too is as straight as a lance, and his limbs of the finest proportions. His voice informs you that he knows not sorrow ; for he whistles as he goes along ; and every now and then, beguiles the length of the road by some favourite ditty. And when he has performed his task up to the chimney's top, he crows there, like the morning cock, to tell us all is right, and that we ourselves ought to be stirring.

The little sweep is the gnat, to which I alluded in the beginning of this paper. I meddle not with the camel. The celebrated Mr. Ferrand has already taken it in hand. But is there no danger nor difficulty in ascending a

chimney? No: none at all for a minor, but much for an adult. Still our enlightened senators allow the ascent to an adult, but deny it to a minor. Sapient distinction! worthy of the present march of intellect. Its nullity with regard to adults, puts one in mind of Matthews, in his military review of American conscripts. "Shoulder arms:—those who have umbrellas may use them; those who have none, need not." Sweep the chimneys;—those, who can get up them,—must not:—those, who cannot,—may.

But then, a flue may be too strait, and little Blacky will perish in it. Granted. The case is of very rare occurrence. Still it may take place. Are we to cease going to sea, because some crazy vessel has consigned her crew to the roaring waves? Having few or no coaches left on the highways, are we to stay at home, because the monopolising railroad every now and then makes minced meat of our bodies?

But the climbing boy may have a sordid and a cruel master. Even so. Public opinion would tend to make the tyrant mend his manners, and the law would pull him up. Bad masters may be found in other places, as well as in the chimney-nook. I am no politician; still, if I

may judge of Whig and Tory by their own mutual recriminations in the Senate House, I should say, that poor Britannia is worse off for bad masters than any young sweep in the land. He may get redress, but she cannot; for her rulers, like the Hanoverian rat, have got possession of the land; and there is no chance of driving them away, or of curbing their love of plunder.

I am not one of those who see much hardship in the healthy profession of a chimney-sweep; I had rather be one than be a village tailor, or a cloacina-man, or a tax-gatherer. When I was a lad in the nursery, had I been allowed, I should have liked no better fun, than to have had an occasional spree with the little black fellow up the chimney.

Let us now look at the new Chimney-sweeping Act in its immediate bearings upon society at large.

Young master sweep, no longer allowed by law to follow up his wonted profession, is put to his shifts, in order to gain his daily bread. He tries the factory; there, he certainly exchanges his shining black face for a pale and

livid white one. A crowded room, and an over-heated atmosphere throw him off his food.

No longer he breathes the fresh air, or hears the skylark's morning carol. Feeble and un-nerved, he abandons his new trade, and seeks some other service. Cloacina's nightly agent engages him; and the poor lad is doomed to work hard in a line of business, as low and abhorrent as his former one was high and agreeable. Not relishing this (and no wonder), he sighs for the purer air of his former calling. But an act of Parliament prevents his being engaged. In despair, he turns vagabond. At last, the constable introduces him to the magistrate, and the magistrate to the treadmill for three months.

Our houses already begin to suffer for the loss of their late useful and healthy little climbers. The new sweeping apparatus is found to be utterly inefficient, and even detrimental in its operation; for, on reaching the chimney-top, it is apt to knock off the pot, and will sometimes bring a lot of bricks down the chimney.

Chimney-tops at best are generally in bad order. There seems to be an everlasting

struggle betwixt the hot and cold air to injure the work of the mason. Some years ago, I had a fair opportunity in London of viewing the chimney-tops, from the elevated place where I stood ; and I perceived them to be much out of repair as far as the eye could reach.

The round form of the new sweeping machine renders it unfit to come in contact with the angles of the chimney. Hence the soot will remain in them ; and on the weather being damp, especially when there is a high wind and no fire in the grate, an extraordinary and disagreeable smell will pervade the apartment.

Under the existing Act of Parliament, there will be no remedy but patience for this unnecessary nuisance, which mistaken philanthropy has most unfortunately inflicted upon us.

To be sure, some courageous souls might escape it by causing their chimneys to be swept in the same manner in which our worthy ancestors had caused theirs to be swept for centuries long gone by. But then, the Act and its penalties are staring them in the face, and it is perilous in the extreme to transgress an Act of Parliament, be it ever so preposterous in its nature, when many hungry beings are interested

in the transgression. Woe to him who allows a minor sweep to ascend his chimney. The informer is on the look out with an eye as sharp as that of the lynx. The magistrate's clerk has his pen already in the inkstand. The constable is itching to serve the warrant, whilst the town's attorney makes sure of a job, which will enable him to sweep away the contents of our breeches pockets with surprising skill and accuracy.

ANECDOTE OF A COMBAT BETWIXT TWO HARES.

“ At last the two stout *hares* did meet
Like *quarry* of great might,
Like lions moved, they laid on load,
And made a cruel fight.”

Chevy Chace.

ON Easter Sunday, in the afternoon, as I was proceeding with my brother-in-law, Mr. Carr, to look at a wild-duck's nest in an adjacent wood, we saw two hares fighting with inconceivable fury on the open ground, about a hundred and fifty yards distant from us.

They stood on their hinder legs like two bulldogs resolutely bent on destruction.

Having watched them for about a quarter of an hour, we then entered the wood ; — I observing to Mr. Carr that we should find them engaged on our return.

We staid in the wood some ten minutes, and on leaving it, we saw the hares still in desperate battle. They had moved along the hill side, and the grass was strongly marked with their down for a space of twenty yards. At last, one of the sylvan warriors fell on its side, and never got upon its legs again. Its antagonist then retreated for a yard or so, — stood still for a minute, as if in contemplation, and then rushed vengefully on the fallen foe. This retreat and advance was performed many times ; — the conqueror striking its prostrate adversary with its fore feet, and clearing off great quantities of down with them.

In the mean time, the vanquished hare rolled over and over again, but could not recover the use of its legs, although it made several attempts to do so. Its movements put you in mind of a drunken man trying to get up from the floor, after a hard night in the ale-house. It now lay still on the ground, effectually subdued ;

whilst the other continued its attacks upon it, with the fury of a little demon. Seeing that the fight was over, we approached the scene of action,—the conqueror hare retiring as we drew near.

I took up the fallen combatant just as it was breathing its last. Both its sides had been completely bared of fur, and large patches of down had been torn from its back and belly. It was a well-conditioned buck hare, weighing, I should suppose, some seven or eight pounds.

Mr. Carr's groom was standing by the stable door, as I came up with the hare in my hand. Here, John, said I, take this to your own house, and get your wife to dress it for your family ;—it is none the worse for being killed on Easter Sunday :—and then I told him how it had come into my possession. He thanked me kindly for it ; and I learnt from Mr. Carr at the end of the week, that John's wife had made it into a pie, with the addition of a few rashers of bacon ;—that it proved to be uncommonly good ;—and that they would all remember, for many years to come, the fight betwixt the two hares in the park at Walton Hall, on Easter Sunday afternoon, the 16th of April, 1843.

THE WREN, THE HEDGE-SPARROW, AND
THE ROBIN.

THE song of these three well-known warblers may be termed perennial. Formerly it was very rare for me to hear the notes of the second, whilst the storms of winter raged through this little valley. But now, it is otherwise; for the yew shrubs, which have grown up into a spacious cover, seem to be more congenial to the habits of the hedge-sparrow than any other evergreen; and it may be seen perched near the top of these, and warbling there, from time to time, in every month of the year.

As I am not yet a convert to the necessity or advantage of giving to many of our British birds the new and jaw-breaking names which appear on the page of modern ornithology, I will content myself with the old nomenclature, so well-known to every village lad throughout the land.

There is a problem to be solved in the economy of these three soft-billed little birds, before we can safely come to the conclusion,

that severity of climate, and want of food, are the real causes why our summer birds of passage leave us shortly after the sun has gone down into the southern hemisphere. Like them, the wren, the hedge-sparrow, and the robin, are insectivorous, and they differ not in the texture of their plumage; still, they do not accompany their departing congeners, but prefer to remain in this cold and stormy quarter of the world, throughout the whole of the year. They may certainly suffer more or less, during the chilling period of frost and snow; nevertheless, their breed is always kept up; and we find, on the return of spring, that they have not suffered more than others which are apparently better suited to brave the rigour of an English winter than they are.

There is yet another point which wants settling in the habits of these birds. I allude to their song. When we are informed that incubation is the main inducement to melody in the feathered tribe, we have only to step out after sunrise into the surrounding evergreens, and there we are sure to hear either the wren, the hedge-sparrow, or the robin, in fine song, although not a single twig has been laid, or a

piece of moss produced in furtherance of a nest, wherein to raise their future young. Certainly, in this case, neither love nor warmth could have had any hand in tuning the winter lyre of these little sons of Orpheus.

It now and then happens that we are led astray by our own feelings when we pronounce judgment on the actions of irrational animals. There is a pretty good proof of this in the story which we have of the American Polecat.— On being told that this ill-scented animal discharges a “fluid given him by Nature as a defence,” I cannot refrain from asking, by what power of intuition the polecat is convinced that a smell, naturally agreeable to itself, is absolutely intolerable to man? Did birds and beasts speak an intelligible language, as they are said to have done in the days of Ovid, we should get at their true history with greater ease; and our ornithology would be much more free from the romance which at present pervades it.

The wren is at once distinguished in appearance from our smaller British songsters by the erect position of its tail. Its restlessness, too, renders it particularly conspicuous; for,

when we look at it, we find it so perpetually on the move, that I cannot recollect to have observed this diminutive rover at rest on a branch for three minutes in continuation. Its habits are solitary to the fullest extent of the word; and it seems to bear hard weather better than either the hedge-sparrow or the robin; for whilst these two birds approach our habitations in quest of food and shelter, with their plumage raised as indicative of cold, the wren may be seen in ordinary pursuit, amid icicles which hang from the bare roots of shrubs and trees, on the banks of the neighbouring rivulets; and amongst these roots, it is particularly fond of building its oval nest.

The ancients called the wren, *Troglodytes*; but it is now honoured with the high-sounding name of *Anorthura*; alleging for a reason, that the ancients were quite mistaken in their supposition that this bird was an inhabitant of caves, as it is never to be seen within them. Methinks that the ancients were quite right, — and that our modern masters in ornithology are quite wrong. If we only for a moment reflect, that the nest of the wren is spherical, and is of itself, as it were, a little cave, we can easily

imagine that the ancients, on seeing the bird going in and out of this artificial cave, considered the word Troglodytes an appropriate appellation.

The habits of the hedge-sparrow are not quite so solitary as those of the wren. It will approach the window in cold weather, and there pick up a scanty meal with the robin, the chaffinch and the house-sparrow. Still, we very rarely see three hedge-sparrows in company. As these birds inhabit low shrubs and the bottoms of hawthorn fences, and are ever on the stir amid old pieces of wood and lumber, put apart for the use of the farm yard, we cannot be surprised that they, as well as the robin and the wren, which are fond of such localities, should fall an easy prey to the cat, the weasel, the fougart, and Hanoverian rat, which last all the world knows to be uncommonly ravenous. To these plunderers, we may possibly attribute the cause why, from year to year, there is no apparent increase in the number of these lowly winter-songsters, be the protection afforded them ever so great.

I have a Tom-cat here of surprising size and beauty. He would have swung long ago, on

account of his well-known depredations amongst these birds, had it not been that he is an universal favourite with the household, and particularly caressed by the ladies for his engaging manners. It is supposed, and with too much reason, that he murdered two fine cock pheasants only a week ago. Indeed, I had no doubt in my own mind but that he was the real culprit, although a stranger cat was taken up at the time, and hanged for the offence. My conscience rebuked me for partiality on that occasion; and I felt that I had done wrong. But it was only an affair with a cat: and I trust that the public will overlook it, when we reflect that, only the other day, in Dublin, a high dignitary of the law did exhibit such palpable partiality in a cause of "*Victoria versus Repeal*," that he ought to have been unwigged there and then, and banished for ever from that arena of marked injustice to poor ould Ireland, and her patriot sons.

We are still in uncertainty, and probably must ever remain so, concerning the story of the newly hatched cuckoo in the nest of the hedge-sparrow.

It is an undisputed fact in natural history

that the cuckoo, like some of our own species, has a clever knack at freeing itself from the duty of providing for its own offspring. This bird is notoriously partial to the homestead of the hedge-sparrow; and thus many a poor hedge-sparrow is saddled with the care and expense of rearing the young of an alien, whose manners and customs are totally different from those of her own tribe. We learn from the story in question, that a young cuckoo, the day after it was hatched, contrived to get a young hedge-sparrow (which was in the same nest with itself) on its back, and proceeded with it, stern foremost, up the side of the nest; and, on arriving at the summit, jerked its load into the hedge below. The performance of such a feat is impossible. At that period of existence, the legs of the young cuckoo could not support the weight of its own body, to say nothing of the additional load of another upon that body. Again, the supposed act was quite contrary to any instinct with which the young cuckoo might have been endowed; for, had not the old bird been frightened away, she would have been sitting on the two young ones at the time in which the feat was said to have

taken place; and her covering them would have totally prevented such a movement on the part of either of them. The whole narrative is confused, and wants explanation.

The last of this sweetly warbling trio, whose habits I am attempting to describe, is pretty cock-robin, the delight of our childhood, and an object of protection in our riper years. Wherever there is plenty of shelter for him, his song may be heard throughout the entire year, even in the midst of frost and snow. In the whole catalogue of British birds, cock-robin is the only one, which in his wild state can be really considered familiar with man. Others are rendered tame by famine and cold weather, and will cautiously approach the spot where food is thrown for them; but the robin will actually alight upon your table, and pick up crumbs on your own plate. When I have been digging in the pleasure-ground, he has come and sat upon my spade; and by every gesture proved his confidence. You cannot halt for any moderate time in the wood, but cock-robin is sure to approach, and cheer you with an inward note or two; and on such occasions he has more than once alighted on my foot. This

familiarity is inherent in him, and not acquired. I am not acquainted with any other wild bird that possesses it.

In Italy this social disposition of his does not guarantee him from destruction by the hand of man. At the bird-market near the Rotunda in Rome, I have counted more than fifty robin-redbreasts lying dead on one stall. "Is it possible," said I to the vender, "that you can kill and eat these pretty songsters?" "Yes," said he, with a grin; "and if you will take a dozen of them home for your dinner to-day, you will come back for two dozen to-morrow."

It is the innocent familiarity of this sweet warbler which causes it to be such a favourite with all ranks of people in England. Nobody ever thinks of doing it an injury. "That's poor cock-robin! — don't hurt poor cock-robin," says the nursery maid, when her infant charge would wish to capture it. Mrs. Barbauld has introduced cock-robin into her plaintive story of *Pity*; and when we study the habits of this bird, and see that his intimacy with us far surpasses that of any other known wild one, we no longer wonder that the author of that pathetic ballad *The Children in the Wood* should

have singled out the red-breast amongst all the feathered tribe, to do them the last sad act of kindness. They had been barbarously left to perish, and had died of cold and want. Cock-robin found them; and he is described as bringing leaves in his mouth, and covering their dead bodies with them.

“ Their pretty lips with black-berries
Were all besmeared and dyed ;
And when they saw the darksome night,
They laid them down and cried.

“ No burial these pretty babes
Of any man receives,
Till robin-redbreast, painfully,
Did cover them with leaves.”

This ballad has something in it peculiarly calculated to touch the finest feelings of the human heart. Perhaps, there is not a village or hamlet in England that has not heard what befel the babes in the wood; and how poor cock-robin did all in his power for them when death had closed their eyes. I wish it were in my power to do only half as much in favour of some other birds, as this well-known ballad of *The Children in the Wood* has done for poor cock-robin.

WASTE LANDS.

ORNITHOLOGY, when divested of hard names and a crabbed system, is an easy and a pleasant study. Formerly, there were abundant opportunities of enjoying this fascinating pursuit on the common lands which our provident ancestors had set apart for the use of the public in every town and village of England. As these common lands, by a most ill-judged policy, became private property, the field naturalist was robbed of his rights with the rest of his fellow-townsmen. If the present rage for enclosures shall continue to receive the countenance of our Parliament, we may soon bid adieu for ever to the valuable privileges which the waste lands of England have hitherto afforded to the public.

In my own immediate neighbourhood there still remains a spacious common for the public good. It is beautiful in nature's wildest charms. On the lower part of it there is a noble extent of gorse or whins, not "unprofitably gay" to the ardent naturalist; for he has it in his power to come hither and enjoy the sight of

many species of British birds, some of which are not to be found in the enclosed lands of the neighbourhood. As there is now a plan on foot to procure an Act of Parliament for the enclosure of this sweet common, I have caused to be printed, and to be distributed gratis, a few observations to put the public on their guard. The good people of Wakefield have expressed themselves highly satisfied with my feeble attempt to serve their cause.

As natural history is too much interested not to put her veto to the proposed enclosure, I make bold to offer to the public at large my recent little publication, with a faint hope that it may operate in some degree to retard the enclosure of the few commons which still remain to us. Every enclosure of such lands is a serious loss to the field naturalist, who has no land of his own whereon to correct the errors which he will unavoidably imbibe in his researches for information within the precincts of his own closet.

“HEATH COMMON.

“Wakefield,—once Merry Wakefield!—why art thou so no longer? What envious hand

hath smote thee, and changed thy garland of roses into one of rue and wormwood? Formerly thy fair face must have beamed with many smiles; for thou wert known throughout the land, by the name of ‘Merry Wakefield.’

“And very merry must have been thy days: for thy merchants were prosperous, thy people happy, and thy prison empty; ay, so empty, that time was when not one single captive could be found within its walls. There was Westgate Common open to thy people and to all the world besides, and the Outwood too; and here it was that thy merry sons and daughters came to dance, and sing, and to drive dull care away. But these once-famed rural haunts for mirth and glee are now no longer thine: the iron hand of private interest fell heavy on them; and they were lost to thee for ever. Oh, how cruel and unjust it was, to sever from thee those delightful walks which the foresight and good sense of our ancestors had apportioned for thy welfare and left at thy command!

“All, all is now changed for the worse: and sad and sorrowful have the scenes become, which were once so bright and joyous: and

woful is the appearance of the avenues which lead to once Merry Wakefield.

“ On one of them there frowns a Bastile so huge and terrible, and so appalling with solitary cells, that in viewing it the soul of man recoils within him, and he begins to doubt if he is in a Christian country. Things were not so in the gone-by days of once Merry Wakefield.

“ On another is seen a widely spreading structure, peopled by those whom sorrow, and misfortune, and want, and wretchedness, have deprived of the choicest gift of Heaven to man. We read in their countenances the mournful history of their sad destiny, and we fancy that we can hear them say, ‘ You would have seen no sights so sorrowful as these in the gone-by days of once merry Wakefield.’

“ On a third avenue we behold unsightly piles of buildings, — granaries high and spacious, — but the workings of which are diametrically the reverse of those erected by benevolent Joseph in ancient Egypt. And in passing over Calder’s Bridge, we see a gem of olden architecture, now mouldering into dust, unheeded and untenanted, and with its windows broken. ’Tis said to have been endowed for mass, for the

souls of the slain at the great battle in the neighbourhood. Some years ago it served as a counting-house; but probably the pressure of the times drove the buyers and sellers from its polluted walls, which were kept so pure and bright in the gone-by days of once Merry Wakefield.

“ Wakefield, — once Merry Wakefield! — these sad innovations too plainly tell us that all is not right within thee. But thy cup of sorrow is not yet filled up; another bereavement still awaits thee, and it will be a final blow to the few remaining rural sports which are now within thy reach. Heath Common is to be enclosed! Then adieu, a long and last adieu, to thy delightful walks, and rides, and manly games, on the ever-enchancing wilds of Heath Common; thy unrestricted, undisturbed sojourn, time out of mind. And when the fatal day of its enclosure shall have dawned upon thee, say, once Merry Wakefield say, what is to become of thy fifteen thousand people, who will not have a yard of public land remaining, whereon to recover that health of frame, and vigour of the mind, so apt to be enfeebled when debarred from the advantage of rural air and

pastime? I myself will join thee in thy lamentations on the near approach of this great and unexpected event; for many a walk do I take on Heath Common, to hear the wild notes of birds which are strangers to my own domain; and it is on Heath Common that I always expect to hear the first song of the cuckoo, sweet harbinger of returning spring.

“Were I a Senator,—which God forbid, whilst Peel’s Oath stares me in the face!—I would stand up and fight thy battle to the last.

“Wakefield,—once Merry Wakefield!—fare thee well! I would not have a hand in the projected enclosure of Heath Common, even though poor Charley Stuart himself could come back, and were to give his royal sanction to it.”*

* Wakefield had acquired the association with its name of “Merry” at an early period, and it may be that the exhibition of these very pageantries may have had much to do with the origin of the expression which is put by Fuller amongst the provincial expressions of Yorkshire, “Merry Wakefield.” (See preface, p. xvi., to the *Towneley Mysteries*, published in London by J. B. Nichols and Son, Parliament Street, and William Pickering, Chancery Lane.

THE CANADA OR CRAVAT GOOSE.

“ Mopso Nisa datur, quid non speremus amantes ? ”

VIRGIL.

THE fine proportions of this stately foreigner, its voice, and flavour of its flesh, are strong inducements for us all to hope that, ere long, it will become a naturalised bird throughout the whole of Great Britain. I stop not to give a detailed description of its plumage; that has already been performed by many able hands. Suffice it then to say, that its beautiful black neck and white cheeks render it so particularly conspicuous, that those who have seen it once will never be at a loss to recognise it, when viewed amongst all other species of the goose tribe.

Towards the close of the last century, thirteen of these birds were to be seen on this sheet of water. My father had taken the precaution to have them pinioned, in order to insure their permanent stay with him; and they were known by no other name than that of Spanish Geese. After my father's death, and during my absence

in America, some hungry quadruped, or nocturnal plunderer in the shape of man, thinned down their number to a solitary goose; and at last, this remaining favourite fell a prey to the fox, ere all entrance into my park had been effectually debarred to that wily villain by the interposition of a wall, from nine to ten feet in height.

No more Canada geese were seen at this place for many years, until one day, when Mr. Ord, of Philadelphia, the elegant biographer of poor Wilson the ornithologist, observed a pair of them to alight on a distant part of the lake. I shall never forget with what joy and enthusiasm this worthy friend announced to me his important discovery of the long-looked-for strangers. But they only tarried for a day or two, and then they went away, and returned no more.

In the winter of the following year, I was agreeably surprised one morning by seeing a flock of four-and-twenty Canada geese on the water. Having never heard that so large a number had been observed on any of the waters in this neighbourhood, I concluded that these birds must have come from a distance. Be this

as it may, they seemed satisfied with the security which the place afforded; and they took up their permanent abode amongst us, reserving to themselves, however, the privilege of making excursionary visits to the several ornamental pools of water in the surrounding district. One of these geese seems not to be thoroughly bred, as it wants the jet black collar on the neck; and it has not that well-defined portion of white on the cheeks, so conspicuous in the others. It appears more suspicious than the rest of the flock; for, on a too near approach of the spectator, it is invariably the first to give mouth, and the first to rise on the wing.

When I reflect on the numbers of enemies, bipeds as well as quadrupeds, with which birds of this description are beset, I often marvel how it is possible that they are able to perform their repeated aërial wanderings, without falling a prey to the dangers which must continually await them. I know to a certainty that this flock has been shot at by prowlers in the neighbourhood, but hitherto without success.

In the breeding season, two or three pairs will remain here. The rest take themselves off, and are seen no more till the return of

autumn, when they re-appear, without any addition to the flock, or diminution of it. This is much to be wondered at; and I would fain hazard a conjecture that their young may possibly be captured in the place where they have been hatched, and then pinioned to prevent escape. But, after all, this is mere speculation. We know nothing of the habits of our birds of passage when they are absent from us; and we cannot account how it comes to pass that the birds just mentioned invariably return to this country without any perceptible increase of numbers; or, if the original birds die or are destroyed, why it is that the successors arrive here in the same numbers as their predecessors.

Geese and swans may be taken without any difficulty about a fortnight after the sun has entered the tropic of Cancer. At that period, the large feathers of the wing drop off, and a month must elapse before the new ones arrive at a state of sufficient maturity to bear away the bird in flight. Two years ago, six of my Canadians, having determined to stay here during the summer, I watched them narrowly at the time of moulting; but they seemed so aware of their helpless state, that they never

strayed far enough from the water's edge to allow us to place ourselves betwixt it and them. At length I effected my purpose by a stratagem, and secured them.

There can be nothing more enlivening to rural solitude than the trumpet-sounding notes of the Canada Goose. They may be heard here at most hours of the day, and often during the night. But spring is the time at which these birds are most vociferous. Then it is that they are on the wing, moving in aërial circles round the mansion, — now rising aloft, now dropping into the water, with such notes of apparent joy and revelry as cannot fail to attract the attention of those who feel an interest in contemplating Nature's wildest scenery.

Somehow or other it has unfortunately been my lot through life to pay smartly for my little researches in Natural History, when business or inclination have brought me back to the shores of my native country. The former zeal-subduing affair at Liverpool will not be unknown to those who shall have read the *Wanderings*; and latterly at Hull, through the pig-headedness of a subaltern Custom-House officer, and the haughty demeanour of another

in a higher station of the same establishment, my ornithological views were frustrated, and I may say, I lost at one go, my time, my patience, and my money. You shall see how this happened. Having purchased two pairs of Bernacle geese, and four wigeons at Rotterdam, I got them put into a hamper, and I took them with me on board the vessel which steams weekly betwixt that town and the port of Hull. We had a charming passage, short and smooth; and on our arrival in the Humber, I informed the visiting Custom-House officer that I had four geese and four wigeons in the hamper which stood before him. "They must go to the Custom House," said he. "I know they must," said I, "if they were dead geese for the purpose of commerce. But they are living geese," continued I, "and of course exempt by law from such an unpleasant errand." "No matter," said he obstinately; "to the Custom House they must and shall go, alive or dead." And to the Custom House they went on a truck without springs, trotting all the way over the rough pavement into the heart of the town of Hull. On our arrival at the Custom House, another officer, in a harsh tone of voice, asked me why I had

brought living geese to that place. "By peremptory orders," said I, "from the visiting Custom-House officer in the river." "He is a booby," said this officer: "let these geese be removed, they don't pay duty." My geese and wigeons were instantly withdrawn from his haughty presence, and they had another jolting through the streets of Hull to the water side, with some fears on my part that they would not forget in a hurry their being jumbled together so rudely in the performance of a useless expedition.

We steamed up the Humber, and reached Walton Hall late that night. The Bernacle ganders had borne their journey well; but it was otherwise with the two geese and three of the wigeons. They appeared out of sorts, and died in the course of the following week.* The two surviving ganders, being bereft of their connubial comforters, seemed to take their misfortune sorely to heart for some time, till at last they began to make advances for permission to enter into the company of the Canadian geese. These good birds did not hesitate to receive them;

* Perhaps their death might have been accelerated by the act of pinioning them, although it seemed to have had no bad effect on the ganders.

and from that time to this the two very distinct species of geese (the one being only half the size of the other) have become one inseparable family. The two Bernacles, being pinioned, cannot of course accompany the Canadians in their wonted peregrinations through the country. But they remain in unalterable alliance and friendship with five other Canadians, which, with themselves, have undergone a similar process of losing part of the wing, to prevent their departure from home.

On my return from Italy in the autumn of 1841, the keeper informed me that, in the preceding spring, one of the little Bernacle ganders, accompanied by an old Canadian goose, had come on the island where the mansion stands, and formed a kind of nest on the border of a flower-bed near the boat-house; that the female had laid five eggs in it, and that all these eggs had turned out addle. I could easily comprehend the latter part of his information relative to the eggs: but had he told me that the income tax is a blessing, and that the national debt is an honour to the country, I could more readily have believed him, than that a Canada goose had been fool enough to unite herself

with a Bernacle gander. Nevertheless, the man persisted stoutly in what he had affirmed, and I told the story to others, and nobody believed me.

In the breeding season, however, of 1842, this diminutive gander and magnificent goose appeared on the island; and as the spot which they had occupied on the preceding year was very bleak and quite unsheltered, I thought that I could offer them a more commodious situation.

Just opposite the eastern windows of the sitting-room, and two-and-twenty yards distant from them, there is yet alive the remnant of a once superb and fertile blackheart cherry-tree. It was evidently past its prime in the days of my early youth; but I can well remember that it then bore ponderous loads of dainty cherries. This cherry-tree, like the hand that is now writing a description of it, appears the worse for wear; and the wintry blasts of more than half a century have too clearly proved that neither its internal vigour, nor the strength of its gigantic limbs, could make an effectual stand against the attacks of such sturdy antagonists. Its north-western and north-eastern parts have

gradually died away, and what remains alive of it to the southward can no longer produce fruit to be compared with that of gone-by periods. The bole, too, which measures full ten feet and five inches in circumference at the graft, seems to show signs of Time's hard usage. Perhaps in a few years more a south-western gale, which often does much damage here, may lay it low in ruins. Close to this venerable tree I made a hollow in the ground, about the size of an ordinary coal-basket, and filled it with hay. The geese soon took possession of it; and on the third day after they had occupied it, the female laid an egg in it. She ultimately sat on five, and they all proved addle.

Last year this incongruous though persevering couple visited the island again, and proceeded with the work of incubation in the same place, and upon hay which had been purposely renewed. Nothing could exceed the assiduity with which the little Bernacle stood guard, often on one leg, over his bulky partner, day after day, as she was performing her tedious task. If any body approached the place, his cackling was incessant: he would run at him with the fury of a turkey-cock; he would jump

up at his knees, and not desist in his aggressions until the intruder had retired. There was something so remarkably disproportionate betwixt this goose and gander, that I gave to this the name of Mopsus, and to that the name of Nisa; and I would sometimes ask the splendid Canadian Nisa, as she sat on her eggs, how she could possibly have lost her heart to so diminutive a little fellow as Bernacle Mopsus, when she had so many of her own comely species present, from which to choose a happy and efficient partner.

The whole affair appeared to be one of ridicule and bad taste; and I was quite prepared for a termination of it, similar to that of the two preceding years, when behold! to my utter astonishment, out came two young ones, the remainder of the five eggs being addle.

The vociferous gesticulations and strutting of little Mopsus were beyond endurance, when he first got sight of his long-looked-for progeny. He screamed aloud, whilst Nisa helped him to attack me with their united wings and hissings as I approached the nest in order to convey the little ones to the water; for the place at which the old birds were wont to get upon the

island lay at some distance, and I preferred to launch them close to the cherry-tree, which done, the parents immediately jumped down into the water below, and then swam off with them to the opposite shore. This loving couple, apparently so ill-assorted and disproportionate, has brought up the progeny with great care and success. It has now arrived at its full growth, and is in mature plumage.

These hybrids are elegantly shaped, but are not so large as the mother, nor so small as the father, their plumage partaking in colour with that of both parents. The white on their front is only half as much as that which is seen on the front of the gander, whilst their necks are brown in lieu of the coal-black colour which appears on the neck of the goose. Their breasts, too, are of a dusky colour, whilst the breast of the Bernacle is black, and that of the Canadian white; and throughout the whole of the remaining plumage, there may be seen an altered and modified colouring not to be traced in that of the parent birds.

I am writing this in the middle of February. In a fortnight or three weeks more, as the breeding season approaches, perhaps my little

Mopsus and his beauteous Nisa may try their luck once more, at the bole of the superannuated cherry-tree. I shall have all in readiness, and shall be glad to see them.

I certainly acted rashly, notwithstanding appearances, in holding this faithful couple up to the ridicule of visitors who accompanied me to the spot where the novel incubation was going on. I have had a salutary lesson, and shall be more guarded for the future in giving an opinion. Information is always desirable, and is doubly satisfactory when accompanied by a demonstration. Nine times out of ten, that, from the close is to be preferred to that from the closet. In the present instance, my speculation that a progeny could not be produced from the union of a Bernacle gander with a Canada goose has utterly failed. I stand convinced by a hybrid, reprimanded by a gander, and instructed by a goose.

THE DOMESTIC SWAN.

“ *Carmina jam moriens canit exequialia cygnus.*”

OVID.

IN the whole catalogue of British birds there is not one to be found more graceful and majestic than our common domestic swan. With me it is a particular favourite. Being quite out of harm's way, my swans become much tamer than they are wont to be at other places; and as every window of the house bears upon the water which flows around the island, there is the finest opportunity possible of observing the habits of these birds, whose movements are so ornamental to it, and so attractive to spectators.

The male and female are so alike in colour and in plumage, that were it not for a trifling difference in size, and in the red of the beak, it would be a difficult task to distinguish the one from the other. The snow-white feathers in the wing receive additional beauty by the muscular power which the swan possesses of raising them without extending the wing itself. The appearance of orange colour on the heads of

swans is merely accidental, and is acquired when the birds are searching for food with their heads under water at the roots of sedges. The impregnation is so strong that the feathers will retain the colour for months; and this has given rise to the erroneous conjecture of its being original.

Such is the power and size of the swan, that our golden eagle itself will not dare to attack it: much less chance, then, would the white-headed eagle of the United States have in a combat with it. If we can bring ourselves to believe the modern assertion that a swan spreads its legs in order to accelerate its flight, we can easily conceive that, by some magic or other, the eagle may be able to strike its talons into the swan's heart, notwithstanding the bone and the mass of muscle which obstruct access to that deeply-seated organ. The fact is, no bird in the world ever spreads its legs in order to increase the velocity of its flight. Such an act would have the very contrary effect. In flight, the legs of birds (with very few exceptions) come quite up to the body. In some the toes point forwards, in others backwards, for obvious reasons; and it is only when a bird

is about to alight on land, or on the water, that it stretches out its legs or spreads its webs; and this is done to check the descent in order that the body may escape from injury.

Many years ago I allowed one of my swans the full use of both its wings, and great was the gratification which its aërial evolutions afforded me. Its powers of flight were truly astonishing. It visited all the sheets of water for many miles around; and, being very tame, it would sometimes, on its return home, alight within a few yards of me, as I was standing near the margin of the water. On taking its excursions into the world at large, I would often say to it, in a kindly tone of voice as it flew over my head, “*Qui amat periculum, peribit in illo;*” as I too clearly foresaw that foes would lie in ambush for it. At last, I missed my rash and pretty favourite. It had taken wing to the westward one fine morning, and that morning was its last. I looked for its return in vain; and every day my hope grew weaker as my fears increased. Towards the close of the week I read in the Wakefield paper that a professional gentleman in the neighbouring town of Horbury, had succeeded in shooting a magnificent wild swan,

which had previously been observed in that quarter. This made me suspect that my poor swan had fallen by that identical shot, for I never saw it more.

Were wild swans less persecuted on their annual visit to the shores of Great Britain, we should see much more of their habits than we do at present. I once had a flock of fifty-two real wild swans here. They seemed aware of the protection afforded them, and they tarried with me above a month. Six years after this another flock sojourned on the lake for about a week.

There is a peculiarity in the nidification of the domestic swan too singular to be passed over without notice. At the time that it lays its first egg, the nest which it has prepared is of a very moderate size; but, as incubation proceeds, we see it increase vastly in height and breadth. Every soft material, such as pieces of grass and fragments of sedges, are laid hold of by the sitting swan as they float within her reach, and are added to the nest. This work of accumulation is performed by her during the entire period of incubation, be the weather wet or dry, settled or unsettled; and it is perfectly

astonishing to see with what assiduity she plies her work of aggrandisement to a nest already sufficient in strength and size to answer every end.

My swans generally form their nest on an island quite above the reach of a flood, and still the sitting bird never appears satisfied with the quantity of materials which we provide for her nest. I once gave her two huge bundles of oaten straw, and she performed her work of apparent supererogation by applying the whole of it to her nest, already very large, and not exposed to destruction, had the weather become ever so rainy. This singular propensity, amongst many others in the economy of birds, puts speculation on our part quite out of the question. We can no more account for this seemingly unnecessary anxiety in the sitting swan to augment the size of its nest, than we can explain why the little long-tailed titmouse invariably provides itself with a spherical nest, warm as a winter's coat; whilst a still more delicate bird of passage from the hot countries is content with one of hemispherical form, and so scantily supplied with materials whereon to lay its eggs, in this cold and changeable climate,

that it is little better in appearance than one of network composition.

Where swans are kept on a moderately-sized sheet of water, the old ones, as spring approaches, begin to pursue their own brood with a ferocity scarcely conceivable. It is an unceasing pursuit, both night and day; till at last, the poor fugitives, worn out with exertion, betake themselves to the land, where the unnatural parents allow them to stay; and then desist from further persecution, until the young ones return to the water. To curb these rancorous proceedings on the part of the parent birds, I cut through the web of their feet; and this at once diminished their powers of speed. The young birds soon perceived the change in their favour, and profited by it; for, on finding that they could easily outswim their pursuing parents, they set their fury at naught, and kept out of their reach with very little exertion.

Where the domestic swan is free from every species of molestation, it becomes exceedingly tame, and passes by far the greater part of its time out of the water. Here no idle boys molest the swans; no petted dogs pursue them;

no guns alarm them, and no foxes prowl to pounce upon them. Hence they are seen walking to and fro in all parts of the park; and they will take the bread from your hand with a familiarity that at once bespeaks their unconsciousness of danger.

The supposed melody of the dying swan seems to be a fable of remote antiquity. I have long been anxious to find out upon what grounds the ancients could possibly attach melody to an expiring bird, which neither in youth nor in riper years ever shows itself gifted with the power of producing a single inflection of the voice that can be pronounced melodious.

Ovid, no doubt, was well skilled in real ornithology, for in every part of his *Metamorphoses* we can trace some of the true habits of birds, and often see their natural propensities through the mystic veil which his poetical fancy had so dexterously placed before them. Still the swan is an exception; for there is nothing whatever to be perceived in the entire economy of this bird that can, by any turning or twisting, justify Ovid's remark, that it will warble its own funereal song on the near approach of death.

The transformation of Cynus into a swan is very entertaining: —

When Phaeton, the well-known incendiary, had burnt down every corn-rick in mother Earth's farm-yard, and placed her own beloved person in danger of immediate suffocation,

———“ neque enim tolerare vaporem
Ulterius potuit,”

Jupiter felled him dead into the river Po; a somewhat milder punishment than if he had sent him to Norfolk Island for life. His poor sisters wept so intensely at having lost him for ever, that they became trees (probably weeping willows), and actually took root in the ground. His near relative, Cynus, too, was so stupefied at what had happened, that he could no longer perform the duties of his royal station. He left his throne and all its pleasures, and became a voluntary wanderer on the banks of that river into which the dead body of Phaeton had fallen. Its banks and its trees, some of which had so lately been Phaeton's own sisters, resounded far and near with his doleful lamentations. One morning, on awaking from sleep, he found that he had lost his usual voice, and that he could only squeak. Soon

after this, his neck became wonderfully stretched out; webs grew betwixt his fingers, and feathers sprouted out from beneath his flannel waistcoat. In a few minutes more, his mouth had all the appearance of a beak, and he actually became a swan; and to this day, he is seen to frequent swamps and lakes, as being places the most secure against fire, which had done such mischief to his family.

“ *Stagna colit, patulosque lacus; ignemque perosus,
Quæ colat, elegit contraria flumina flammis.*”

Once I had an opportunity, which rarely occurs, of being with a swan in its last illness. Although I gave no credence to the extravagant notion which antiquity had entertained of melody from the mouth of the dying swan, still I felt anxious to hear some plaintive sound or other, some soft inflection of the voice, which might tend to justify that notion in a small degree. But I was disappointed.

This poor swan was a great favourite, and had been the pride of the lake time out of mind. Those who spend their life in the country, and pay attention to the ordinary movements of birds, will easily observe a change in them, whenever their health is on the de-

cline. I perceived that the plumage of this swan put on a weather-beaten appearance, and that the bird itself no longer raised the feathers of his wings, as he passed through the water before me. Judging that he was unwell, I gave orders that he should be supplied with bread and boiled potatoes. Of these he ate sparingly, and in a day or two he changed his quarters, probably for want of sufficient shelter from the wind. Having found his way down to the stables, he got upon a small fishpond there, out of the reach of storms. From this time he never fended for food, but he continued to take a little white bread now and then from my hand. At last he refused this; and then he left the water for good and all, and sat down on the margin of the pond, with evident signs of near-approaching death. He soon became too weak to support his long neck in an upright position. He nodded, and then tried to recover himself, and then nodded again, and again held up his head; till at last, quite enfeebled and worn out, his head fell gently on the grass, his wings became expanded a trifle or so, and he died whilst I was looking on. This was in the afternoon, and I had every

facility of watching his departing hour, for I was attending the masons, some thirty yards from the pond to which the swan had retired. He never even uttered his wonted cry, nor so much as a sound, to indicate what he felt within.

The silence which this bird maintained to the last, tends to show that the dying song of the swan is nothing but a fable, the origin of which is lost in the shades of antiquity. Its repetition can be of no manner of use, save as a warning to ornithologists not to indulge in the extravagances of romance, — a propensity not altogether unknown in these our latter times.

THE WINDHOVER HAWK, AND THE OIL-GLAND.

ON my return from Belgium, in the middle of May, 1844, whilst perusing the seventeenth number of the *Zoologist*, my attention was particularly drawn to the excellent observations of Mr. Bury, relative to the habits of the kestrel, or windhover hawk. I feel myself

under great obligations to this courteous gentleman for the flattering manner in which he has introduced my name. May I entertain the hope that he will not be offended with me, if I venture to disagree with him on one point relative to what he has advanced on the habits of the bird in question?

He has quite satisfied me that the windhover will now and then make a meal on the smaller birds; and this information on his part is very acceptable to me, as I have no opportunity of observing the windhover during the winter months, for it leaves this immediate neighbourhood in October, and seldom returns before the first week in February.

The conclusion of Mr. Bury, as to the use of the oil-gland, is not quite so satisfactory. He says, "And I plainly saw the bird press the nipple with its beak, and rub the matter so expressed on its feathers." This assertion would have put the question at rest for ever in my own mind, and I should willingly have yielded the disputed palm to this intelligent gentleman, had he not subsequently remarked, "I do not mean to say I ever saw the matter expressed."

Now, he ought to have seen the matter expressed. The bird was on his finger, "under a strong light," and this position afforded him the very best opportunity of seeing the matter, which is an opaque and palpable substance, and could not possibly have escaped the notice of so keen an observer as Mr. Bury, had it really been rubbed on the feathers, and even transferred, as he says, from the feathers of the body to those of the head. I can assure him that I have witnessed a favourite parrot press its nipple scores of times, but I could never detect the least moisture on the sides of its bill, nor observe the smallest portion of matter on the feathers which the bird was preening; hence I came to the conclusion that the parrot had pressed the nipple, not to procure the substance which it contained, but merely to gratify itself by producing that pleasing sensation which we ourselves experience when we rub our dry hand over our face.

Again; in most waterfowl, the oil-gland is completely covered with a very thick tuft of down, not moveable at pleasure, like the true feathers. This tuft would prove an insurmountable obstacle to the transfer of matter

from the gland through the medium of the bill. In fine, there are some birds without any gland at all, as I have remarked elsewhere. Providence never does any thing by halves. If the matter from the oil-gland were for the purpose of lubricating the feathers, it would not have been granted by the Creator to one bird, and denied to another. Had such an act of partiality taken place, "it would have been putting one sadly over the head of another."

Some years ago, when I was in hot dispute on this subject with writers in Mr. Loudon's *Magazine of Natural History*, a thunderstorm provided me with the means of having a very satisfactory view of the oil-gland on the rump of a kestrel, or windhover. The poor hawk was sitting upon the branch of a sycamore tree, when the lightning struck it dead to the ground. It was a fine old male bird, and had no outward marks of damage on it. I carefully dissected the oil-gland. Around the base of it there was a circle of down. The shaft of the nipple was quite bare of down or feathers; but the orifice of the nipple was totally concealed by a very dense tuft of down, which had the exact appearance of a camel-hair brush.

Had this kestrel's intention been ever so ardent to lubricate its feathers with the contents of its own oil-gland, the thing would have been impossible, because the thick bunch of down, on the very extremity of the nipple, would have effectually impeded the transfer of the oil from the gland to the bill. Moreover, the oil would have disfigured the down, had it been expressed through the nipple; and Mr. Bury could not have failed to observe the change which the oil would have made in the appearance of the down itself. The tail and oil-gland of this kestrel are now on the table before me.

ON THE FOOD OF ANIMALS.

“ *Carne feræ sedant jejunia, nec tamen omnes :*

Quippe equus, et pecudes, armentaque, gramine vivunt.”

OVID.

ON passing the terrestrial animals in review before us, it would appear, that those which go in flocks, are known to live upon the fruits of the earth: and that those which shun the

society of their own species, contrive to maintain themselves by preying upon their fellow creatures. Men are omnivorous, although the old saying of "*fruges consumere nati*," seems to imply, that they would not do wrong in abstaining from carnal food. This arrangement is easily accounted for, seeing that the food of gregarious animals is plentiful, whilst that of solitary ones is comparatively scarce. Were lions to hunt in companies, the captured quarry would be insufficient for their appetites; they would fight for the slaughtered spoil ere they had torn it in pieces, and the strongest would be possessed of the prize.

We have all noticed the growling habits of the beasts of prey, when they approach too near each other at the time of feeding. Carnal food, by being confined to one particular spot, must always bring the consumers into contact. On the contrary, fruitage is widely spread, and offers abundant maintenance to the weak apart from the strong. Even hounds, whose nature is mollified by art, and which are brought by discipline to hunt in concert, cannot be prevented from fighting for their share of the dying fox; and were you to treat them in the

field to a dead horse, you would hear nothing but the yells of the bitten, and the snarls of others in possession of the food.

Thus, then, instinct points out to carnivorous animals the necessity of procuring subsistence by solitary effort. And this is well ordained, for the carcass of a deer would ill requite the united efforts of forty lions to secure it. Were they to try the experiment once, their mutual lacerations in the conflict for a morsel of it would teach them to adopt some more agreeable and more productive plan in future.

I consider the stories about wolves hunting in packs as mere inventions for the nursery, to keep cross children quiet. That these animals may join on the road, and arrive at the same point, is a casualty at best, and seldom to be witnessed; for their united voracious appetites would soon have the effect of rendering federal pursuit null and void, by the utter extermination of the object. A fructivorous flock, however numerous at first, would eventually fall a prey to a carnivorous one, as the last would always be on the look out to appease its hunger on the slaughter of the first; and both being inhabitants of the same district, they

could not fail to come in contact for obvious reasons, and then the weaker would be consumed; after which, if the carnivorous animals remained in company, mutual slaughter would be the consequence, or individual death through starvation. When the wolf has business at the sheepfold he goes alone. “*Incustoditum captat ovile lupus.*”

As food is evidently the staff of animal life, and its chief enjoyment, we ought not even to hazard a conjecture, that Providence would doom carnivorous animals, as we do our poor, to die for want of it; and which most assuredly would be their ultimate destiny, did they seek support in congregated packs. But, were carnal food as widely diffused, and as easy of access as is the herbaceous, we might possibly observe the phenomenon of carnivorous animals enjoying a hearty meal together, without a single growl or angry look.

Peaceable is the conduct of the bull, the ram, the horse, and the goat, when grazing on the flowery pasture. But widely different would be the demeanour of a wolf, a fox, a fougart, and a jackal, on the prostrate carcass of a wild boar. Still, the former have as much

spirit, and as many fighting propensities at a certain season of the year, as the latter. Scarcity of food then, and its circumscribed position, cause these to feed in strife, whilst its abundance and extended distribution enable those to graze in peace. In a word, harmony exists where Nature "*epulas sine cæde et sanguine præbet,*" — and discord, where "*sanguine sanguis alatur.*"

Food has a surprising effect on the animal system; and in its quality, use, and quantity, man — rational man, may take a salutary lesson from the irrational favourites which flock around his homestead. The Spaniards tell us, that other people's cares destroy the ass, — "*Quidados agenos matan al asno.*" But, putting aside harsh usage and too much work, how comes it that an ass, contented with his thistle in the hedge bottom of the highway, will live for twenty or thirty years without an apparent ailment; whilst a man labours under one kind of disease or other, more or less severe, during a considerable portion of his life? How is it, that through the effect of man's improvements in agriculture, the stag in his luxuriant park contracts a disease in the liver; whilst that on

the bleak mountain's top, is ever healthy and knows nothing of it? Our race-horses are always wanting the veterinary surgeon, and our dairy cattle the cow-doctor. Our sheep get the rot; our lapdogs the mange; and our poultry tumble down in apoplexy. Were these animals allowed to range at large through Nature's wild domain, free from the control of man, we should always see them brisk and vigorous, and as full of health, and as beautiful in their natural clothing for the season, as are their congeners roving independent of all his boasted improvements.

What a melancholy thing it is to reflect that rational man is perpetually indisposed, and subject to a multiplicity of disorders, which are seldom or ever to be observed in the wild and irrational animals! Flesh and blood, and all their component parts, are the same both in man and beast. Why then should man be doomed to such heavy demands from the doctor and apothecary, whilst the beast, in a state of Nature, can do so well without their aid? Had Providence doomed the flesh and blood of the inferior animals to the many maladies which haunt our own, there would certainly have been

prepared some efficient remedies for their restoration to health in the day of need. But this has not been the case; wherefore, we may conclude, that no such provision was necessary; and upon the strength of this, we may surmise with just reason, that we have brought our sicknesses upon ourselves by our own follies; for, as we are at the head of the creation, we cannot suppose for a moment that Heaven would introduce disease into its primest work, and allow its secondary product to be without it.

When we see that the brute creation thrives so admirably upon uniformity of food, and that man is observed to languish under a multiplicity of it, we are enabled, without much difficulty, to get at the source which gives rise to his innumerable infirmities. And this leads us straight into his kitchen; ay, his kitchen! that sweet enchanting tempter, but, at the same time, an inexorable foe to health, the best and truest friend of man.

On the day that Oliver Cromwell (there now wants two by all accounts) went to scour the Parliament House, and met Sir Harry Vane in the threshold, he cried out in horror, with uplifted hands, "The Lord deliver me from Sir

Harry Vane !” And I may say, in like manner, on viewing the kitchen, Oh, deliver me from the thralldom of that mortal enemy of my constitution ! It keeps gout under the dresser, and fever in the cupboard. It smiles, and smirks, and smells sweetly, and tempts me beyond my strength; and then, having overcome my philosophy, like Circé with the sailors of old, it turns me into a swine. There is no escaping from such an insidious destroyer. It puts its every resource in requisition, in order to effect my ruin. Say, ye stern moralists of the day, how can I resist roast beef with horse-radish? mutton with caper-sauce? and lamb with vernal salad? And when I have unfortunately eaten too much of these, up comes an omelet from the kitchen, smoking hot, and then a cranberry tart, with cheese and celery in the rear. After which, there are fruits and preserves, with a “ nunc est bibendum.”

“ Jolly mortals, fill your glasses.”

Ye powers of mastication ! what is to become of me? who can escape from such daily allurements? such beautiful manchineels? All, all are enticing me into the snare, and I am a slave past redemption. Would there were some

prudent doctor from Barataria to put his wand upon the treacherous dishes, and forbid me to touch their contents! But there are no such true friends now-a-days. All are lavish in the praise of the kitchen. I must give up to them my better judgment.

——— “*Video meliora, proboque ;
Deteriora sequor.*”

I am a victim to savoury smells and tempting cheer ; whilst some mellow mortal sings, —

“ O the joys, the charms of dinner !
O the scent divinely sweet !
He’s a base, unfeeling sinner
Who can shy this splendid treat.”

A very slight inspection of our alimentary system will give us too much reason to conjecture that the greater part of our bodily achings and ailments have their origin in an over-loaded stomach.

As I have not an opportunity of examining the interior of a dinner-fitted stomach, I will beg a seat in the hazel-nut chariot of Shakespeare’s Queen Mab, and take a drive through the gastric regions of a performer at the annual civic dinner, given by the first magistrate of the metropolis ; and where “ lords and dukes and noble princes,” and doctors in law, in

physic and divinity, strive their utmost to do credit to the festive board. What a mass of incongruous aliment is exposed to view! hard and soft, light and heavy, salt and sour, sweet and spicy, green and greasy, all floating in a pool of the choicest wines from France and Spain. The operator seems to have tried his grinders at game and fish, butcher's meat and poultry, and fruits and confectionery, until his jaw has refused to act.

What must be the state of a stomach so sensible and so delicately formed by Nature, under such an heterogeneous burden? How such a stomach would wish to be the property of a goose or an ass, in lieu of belonging to a rational being! and how the circumjacent vitals must be incommoded by its unnatural intrusion upon their own sphere of action. We now see clearly the immediate cause of headache and blue devils, and inflammation, with a long train of ruinous disorders, which bring the noble frame of man to dust long before its time. Well may we hail the improvements in surgery and in pharmacy, by which the machine is enabled to keep in motion at a time when we do every thing in our power to impede its motion.

In summary, then, we may rely upon it that the inventive powers of man, ever alive to his own gratification, are always at work to prepare an aliment for him, so tasty, so delicious, so nice and so seductive withal, that his fortitude and better judgment cannot make a stand against it, although he is aware that his frame of body will not do its duty under it. He has a daily lesson read to him by the free irrational animals around him; notwithstanding which, he and his family will go on to the end of time in its pernicious course, pretty well to-day, indisposed to-morrow, and a little better again the day after, and so on, a victim to his tyrant appetite, whilst his inferiors know not what sickness is, and pass a life of vigour and of joy. In fact, whole communities of men and women must submit to their fate with due resignation; and they may comfort themselves with the thought that by physic and physicians they can struggle on to a fair old age, whilst the beast of the field can arrive at the same, without the aid of either.

At the time that gout is destroying the symmetry of our originally fine form, and rheumatism arresting our inherent activity, we may

turn to the ass in the lane, and say to him in the sorrow of our hearts, "Poor beast, although thy disproportioned ears may excite our contempt, and thy braying our ridicule, nevertheless, when left to thine own resources, thou hast that within thee which directs thee to thy welfare. Thou hast a means from Providence, 'ut scias reprobare malum et eligere bonum : ' an advantage which we also possess from the same divine source, but which, when the kitchen is concerned, we have not fortitude to turn to our profit. The attractions of the shambles, the larder, and the oven, too often make us thy inferiors."

Were it not for the wonderful accommodation of Nature, we should have a very short time of it here below. But, luckily, she is a good friend to us; for, although she thinks proper to chastise us with incidental attacks of sickness and disease, she kindly habituates our bodies to surprising extremes of plenitude and poverty. Thus we read that Claudius Albinus could dispatch at one supper 500 figs, 100 peaches, 10 melons, 20 lb. of grapes, 100 ortolans, and 60 oysters. No doubt the glutton's constitution paid handsomely for this. To have borne

such a load, the fellow's stomach must have been as strong as Mr. Bull's back, saddled with 800 millions of debt, and Peel's income-tax to boot, by way of Mackintosh. I would not have slept in the same sty with this hog for the finest bird of Paradise from the woods of New Guinea.

As an opposite extreme, I may notice Cornaro of our own times. By never touching butcher's meat, and by extraordinary abstinence, he saved himself, at the age of thirty, from consumption, pronounced mortal by his physician; and he lived to somewhere above one hundred and five years, ever happy, well, and merry, and was blessed with the full use of all his faculties to the very last.

ON FRESH AIR.

“ Lucidus ac mundus, sit ritè habitabilis aër,
 Infectus neque sit, nec olens fœtore cloacæ.”

Schol. Sal.

Let your air be clear and pure,
 And free of odours from the sewer.

THIS super-excellent advice is almost lost on the present generation of this country, for our

congregated numbers, and the arrangement of our houses, seem to be diametrically opposed to it. Man acts strangely. Although a current of fresh air is the very life of his lungs, he seems indefatigable in the exercise of his inventive powers to deprive them of this heavenly blessing. Thus, he carefully closes every cranny of his bed-chamber against its entrance, and he prefers that his lungs should receive the mixed effluvium from his cellar and larder, and from a patent little modern Aquarius, in lieu of it.

Why should man be so terrified at the admission of night air into any of his apartments? It is Nature's ever-flowing current, and never carries the destroying angel with it.

See how soundly the delicate little wren and tender robin sleep under its full and immediate influence, and how fresh and vigorous and joyous they rise amid the surrounding dew-drops of the morning. Although exposed all night long to the air of Heaven, their lungs are never out of order, and this we know by the daily repetition of their song.

Look at the newly-born hare, without any nest to go to. It lives and thrives, and be-

comes strong and playful, under the unmitigated inclemency of the falling dews of night. I have here a fine male turkey, full eight years old, and he has not passed a single night in shelter. He roosts in a cherry-tree, and always is in primest health the year throughout. Three dunghill fowls, preferring this cherry-tree to the warm perches in the hen-house, took up their airy quarters with him early in October, and have never gone to any other roosting place. The cow and the horse sleep safely on the cold damp ground, and the roebuck lies down to rest in the heather on the dewy mountain's top. I myself can sleep all night long, bareheaded, under the full moon's watry beams, without any fear of danger, and pass the day in wet shoes without catching cold.

Coughs and colds are generally caught in the transition from an over-heated room to a cold apartment; but there would be no danger in this movement if ventilation were properly attended to, — a precaution little thought of now-a-days. We are subject to contract rheumatism by lying in damp places, and more especially on damp beds. Still many wild animals, whose flesh and blood is of the same nature as

our own, are much more abroad during the falling dews of night than under the warm sun of day, — the fox, the badger, and polecat, to wit; but we never find these animals out of sorts with achings or with pains.

He who takes a pleasure in ruminating on the varied habits of animated nature will soon learn the cause why man can bear so little, and the brute so much, whilst under exposure to the open air. Custom is allowed to be second nature. To custom, then, we apply for information on the present subject.

The ass goes without clothes, whilst man has a garment over him; but, were man deprived of this, he would tremble in the breeze which does not in the least affect his humble beast of burden. The custom, then, of wearing clothes has placed man in this inferiority; for those parts of his body free from covering, feel as little inconvenience in a storm as the ass itself. Thus the hands of the ploughman, by perpetual exposure to the weather, become as hardy as the hide of the horse which goes on before him; and the face of a stage-coachman (alas! this fine breed is nearly extinct) will bear the pelting of the north-east blast as

well as the stoutest bullock on Scotland's highest moors.

But, although civilisation has put it out of the power of man in general to bear the inclemency of the weather with full impunity, it ought not to follow on that account that he should render himself still more unfit, by so pertinaciously excluding the fresh air from his apartments. It is a pity that we cannot manage matters in such a manner as to enjoy ourselves within doors, and at the same time run no risk of catching cold when exposed to the vicissitudes of the weather without. This might easily be effected by a well regulated ventilation.

Here, let me remark, that he who first proposed the health-destroying window tax, ought to have been sent to the pillory once a month, during the remainder of his life: and that those who gave it their sanction, ought to have been condemned to work in the capacity of night-soilers for fourteen years at least.

Ventilation, however, would not always suit the nature of some of our factories; and where that is the case, the operatives must submit to disease in its foulest shape without repining, as

modern commerce is allowed to take precedence of health. "Quærenda pecunia primum est." God help the poor soul whom abject poverty forces into those colossal repositories of pestilential vapours where the direful effect of confinement puts one so much in mind of Sterne's "Captive:" "He saw him pale and feverish. For thirty years the western blast not once had fanned his blood."

Why should the farmer's boy be so rosy, blithe, and joyous the live-long day, whilst the poor fellow in the factory appears so broken up and jaded? they are both the sons of toil and labour, but the work of the first is in reality more fatiguing. The cause is obvious. A tainted atmosphere scathes all the vigour of the one, whilst the fresh air of heaven upholds the other in all the full luxuriance of health.

If we turn to a sick room, we are apt to surmise that the doctor in attendance never once takes the state of the lungs under his serious consideration, except in cases of apparent consumption. Although he has learned from anatomy that pure air is most essential to them, still he allows his patient to be in a tomb as it were, walled round with dense curtains,

where the wholesome breeze can gain no admittance, and where the foul vapours issue from the feverish mouth, and return to it, and from thence to the lungs, which are barely able to perform their duty. The windows are constantly shut, and the door most carefully closed; by which mischievous custom the lungs have no chance of receiving a fresh supply of air from without, and at last the patient sinks in death for want of it. If those in typhus fever were conveyed to an open shed, screened on one side against the blowing wind, with a sufficiency of clothes upon them, very little physic would be required, for the fresh air would soon subdue the virulence of the disease in nine cases out of ten.

When a person finds that he cannot sleep at night, if he would open the window and take a few turns up and down the room, there can be no doubt but that sweet sleep, "*placidissime somne Deorum,*" would return with him arm-in-arm to bed. Wonderful is the degree of heat which is generated by the human body when prostrate on a soft bed. Those parts of the sheets which do not come in contact with it, will of course retain their wonted coldness; and then,

if the person becomes restless in his sleep, and rolls over upon them, he runs a fair risk of contracting rheumatic pains scarcely ever to be removed. Should a man have the terrible misfortune to pass the night in a damp bed, he would be much worse off than if he had been condemned to lie on a pismire's nest. These little tormentors would merely blister him, perhaps even with salutary effect; but the humid bed would cause him damage often beyond the power of art or nature to repair.

Beds have vast attractions; beds, to wit, of down and roses. But we are not told who has slumbered there the night before. In fact, we never ask the question. Mine hostess assures us that they have been well-aired, but she does not mean that they have been aired by the noonday's healthy sunbeams. She gives you to understand, by saying that the bed has been well-aired, that in fact it has constantly been slept upon by a succession of travellers, of whose health, or the want of it, not the slightest mention is ever made. The last occupier may have been one whose

“ Form was fresher than the morning rose,
When the dew wets its leaves ; ”

“ The softest blush that Nature spreads,
Gave colour to her cheek : ”

or, on the contrary, the bed might have been occupied by a rough-skinned, pimpled victim to turtle soup and Curaçoa. He had been nearly a month at Harrowgate without benefit, and was on his way to the Continent, with his medical adviser, to try what the spas of Germany would do for him.

A person, on whose veracity I could depend, and who seemed to have scrutinised the general state of dormitories with a considerable degree of attention, once told me that he had not passed a single hour in bed for fourteen years. He said he was his own master in that respect, and could suit himself as he thought fit. He added that his aversion to enter a strange bed was extreme. He did not know who had been there before him, or what impurities might be lurking in the region of the feather bed, or whether it had been aired by Phœbus or by Bacchus; and that the possibility of getting into a damp bed acted upon his nerves more terribly than did the operation of Sir Robert Peel's income tax.

“ And how do you manage,” said I, “ without

a bed?" "Uncommonly well," said he. "My apprenticeship," continued he, "to the hard floor only cost me a fortnight, and after that all went right."

He then informed me that the advantages which he had acquired by abandoning the bed for ever, were incalculable. He said that so long as there was a current of fresh air in the place where he laid him down to rest, he was excellently accommodated for a fair spell of sleep. Travelling had no longer any nocturnal terrors for him. Whilst others were anxious about the paraphernalia of their bed-rooms, and peevish when things were not to their liking, he stood smiling on, pitying their distresses, and happy with the thought that he could stow himself away for the night in a moment, free from bad bugs, bad breaths, and bad bedding. "And will you never more sleep in a bed?" said I. "Never," said he, with a smile of contentment on his face. "Nature has accommodated herself to me, and I to Nature. What more can I wish?" He ceased on saying this. I entered fully into his feelings, and ere I retired to rest I thought if we had more of fortitude and less of self-love,

things would go better with us, both night and day, than they do at present.

From the remarks which I have hastily put together in this paper, I trust we may safely conclude, that when the soft and downy preparations for the repose of the night have been completed, we do wrong, very wrong indeed, to exclude the night air from our apartments. That we can absolutely do without it is certain; but that we should do better with it, is equally certain; and we draw this conclusion from an inspection of all animated nature, for we see the beasts of the earth, and the fowls of heaven, passing the whole of their life unprotected by artificial means, and thriving well, either in the noonday sun, or under the nocturnal dews, or exposed to the four rude winds of the sky, even when winter has set in.

Still civilised man will never change his usual habits, but will go snoring on from night to night, awake this hour, and dozing that, whilst his lungs, if they had the power of speech, would cry out and say: "Oh! we cannot stand this nasty atmosphere; we are obliged to work all night, and still you seem to have no pity for us. What with the unwholesome vapours,

arising from your own overloaded stomach, and what with the stagnant air in the room, we shall be overpowered at last, do what we can to keep our action up ; and then, for want of having your window an inch or two open (which would put every thing to rights in our department), when you least expect it, you will be called away to your long account by a fatal fit of apoplexy.

ON BEAUTY IN THE ANIMAL CREATION.

EVERY species in the great family of animated nature is perfect in its own way, and most admirably adapted to the sphere of life in which an all-ruling Providence has ordered it to move. Could we divest ourselves of the fear which we have of the serpent, and forget for a while the dislike which we invariably show to the toad, both these animals would appear beautiful in our eyes ; for, to say nothing of the brilliant colours which adorn the snake, there is wonderful grace and elegance in the gliding progress, wherein this reptile's symmetry appears to such great advantage.

The supposed horribly fascinating power, said to be possessed by the serpent, through the medium of the eye, has no foundation in truth. We give the snake credit for fixing his eye upon us, when in fact he can do no such thing; for his eye only moves with his body, and it has always the same appearance, and remains in the same position, whether the animal be roused by rage, or depressed by fear. It is shielded by an outward scale, which has no communication with it, and against which it cannot press; so that when we behold the eye of the serpent, represented by artists as starting out of the socket, we know that their delusive imagination has been at work, and that they are lamentably ignorant of the anatomy of this animal. If Mr. Swainson be an admirer of correctness in design, I would recommend him to revise and correct his overstrained eulogy on a certain overstrained performance which he terms, "mocking birds defending their nest from a rattle-snake."—(See *Biography of Birds*.)

The toad, that poor, despised, and harmless reptile, is admirable in its proportions, and has an eye of such transcendent beauty, that when

I find one, I place it on my hand, to view it more minutely. Its skin, too, so completely adapted to the subterraneous places into which it goes for shelter, is well worthy the attention of the philosopher. As this little animal is innocuous, I feel sorry when I see it trampled underfoot by inconsiderate people, who have learned from their grandmothers that it is full of venom ; and I wish from my heart, that the nineteenth century would produce something more satisfactory than that which we possess at present, relative to the true habits of toads and snakes. We have a large species of wasp in Demerara, called *Maribunta*, much more severe with its sting than our English wasp ; still, when I used to put down one of these to a toad which I had in a little out-house, the toad would come and swallow it alive, both with avidity and impunity.

Who can look without rapture on the beautiful proportions of the horse ? His mane hanging down a well-formed neck, seems a counterbalance to his long flowing tail as he moves along ; and we are all of us aware of what amazing advantage this last-mentioned appendage is to this noble beast, when a host

of flies are ready to devour him. In fact, there is no putting a sufficient value on this ornamental part; for, whilst he is left in the full possession of it, he can effectually scourge his tormentors, which never fail to attack those places extending beyond the reach of his mouth and hoofs. But man, wanton and unthinking man, the slave to fashion and caprice, has cruelly deprived his best and most useful friend amongst the quadrupeds, of this great advantage which Nature had so kindly given him; and now we see him, in summer, stung and tormented at every step by blood-thirsty insects, from which he cannot free himself by any process short of rolling on the ground.

What, in the name of form and feature, could ever have persuaded Englishmen, that the fine flowing mane of their horses was a nuisance which ought to be reduced; or that the appearance of these superb animals could be improved, by docking their tails to a stump some eleven inches long? Nay, I can well remember the time, when this destructive mania for improving the anatomy of the horse by subtraction, had arisen to such a height of absurdity, that both cart and carriage horses

were so entirely bereft of tail, as to present an exhibition disgusting in the extreme. Simple farmers and waggoners had been choused out of their common sense, and taught to believe that such a privation added strength to the general system; just as some unknowing ones of the present day fancy that the pruning knife produces additional growth in those branches which it spares. This docking pestilence (I allude to the custom of removing the whole of the tail) once raged throughout our island; and you would have thought that Dame Nature herself had taken smittle, as we say in Yorkshire; for I knew a farmer's mare in the county of Durham, about the year 1794, that produced three foals successively without any tail at all.

I once thought that I could befriend the valuable animal on which I am writing, by allowing him the full quantity of tail which nature had given to him; and having, at that time, two fine steeds only recently broken in, I gave orders that they should not be deprived of their tails. But I gained nothing in the end. People stared at me as I rode quietly along. One said, if he possessed that capital

horse, he would soon mend his looks by having his ugly long tail off. Others remarked, that the horse must be from foreign parts: they could tell it by its tail, for the outlandish people there were but poor hands at setting a horse off to advantage. A third would cry out, with a grin, "There goes Long-tail!" I bore all this with becoming fortitude, till at last, being obliged to ride to Leeds for mass on Sundays, either the servants of the inn, or the hangers-on in the stable-yard, made free with my horse's tail, in order to turn a penny by the hair; and they shortened it so much, that it neither appeared one thing nor another, and at last I was reduced to the necessity of calling in the aid of the docker to free myself from future annoyance. This happened three and twenty years ago.

Rational people now-a-days will scarcely believe that near the close of the last century Englishmen considered that the appearance of the horse would be considerably improved by depriving the poor beast of one half of his ears. Yet this was the case; and it was a common thing to see horses whose mid-parts were beautiful to behold, whilst each extremity pre-

sented a distressing picture of mutilation and deformity. It would be difficult to discover what could possibly have given rise to these needless acts of cruelty; for it is generally supposed that the outward part of the ear assists the entrance of sound into the cavity of it: thus we observe blind horses in particular with their ears perpetually pricked; and as the power of moving the ears at pleasure has not been given to ourselves, we are often seen to place our hand behind them, by way of introducing the coming sound to more advantage.

There is still another operation on the horse's tail, a torment of three weeks' duration at the least. To be in high beauty, he must have the remains of it (after docking has been performed) curved up permanently over his back. This superlative act of cruelty and bad taste drew down upon us a pleasant and sarcastic remark from the mouths of our Gallic neighbours:—"Quelle folie des Anglais! faire couper les oreilles aux chevaux, et tourner la queue en l'air."

What folly in these Englishmen appears!

They cock their horses' tails, and clip their ears.

The stinking polecat, shunned by most

people and persecuted by every body, presents to our view a symmetry of no ordinary beauty. The length of his body is wonderfully well adapted to that of his neck; and when he carries his prey, there is such a stateliness in his whole contour, that it is impossible not to be struck with the elegance of his motions.

The sloth again is astonishing in its anatomy, which is so peculiarly adapted to its habits that we cannot help pronouncing it a production perfect in every point of view. The strange stories which we have had of it, have been penned in the closet, not in the forest. I saw in the "Nation," an Irish newspaper, of last week, that we may shortly expect a living sloth in London. I am rejoiced at this, because the public will then find by actual observation that I had sure ground to go upon when I ventured to take a new view of this animal, whose economy, up to that time, had been marvellously misrepresented. But we live to learn, as the old woman said when her cat was too lazy to kill a mouse. The cat, by the way, is terribly elegant in its frolics over the captured mouse; and it exhibits such suppleness of body, and such elasticity in its springs, as can only be

equalled by those of the tiger itself. It were loss of time to adduce any more specimens of beauty and perfection in the animal world, every part of which teems with objects calculated to increase our thanks and gratitude to God. When we talk of this ugly animal, or of that deformed reptile, or of such a pernicious insect, the true solution of these remarks is, that we avoid the bear because he would hug us to death; that we dread the cayman because he would swallow us; and that we abhor the bug on account of its bite and unsavoury smell. Still, whilst we are examining these animals as they lie dead before us, we may remark, with the monster Nero, treading over his own prostrate mother, we did not think that they had been so handsome. In our rambles up and down this globe, when we fall in with animals whose shape appears to us either defective or deformed, and whose habits cannot be accounted for, we may lay it down to a certainty, that the work of our great Creator is perfect in all its parts; and that we are at a loss how to turn it to our profit, solely because we have not spent a sufficient time at school, in the instructive field of Nature.

I intended to have added here a few remarks on man, and to have glanced at the noble symmetry of his frame, and to have made an observation or two on the habits which he has acquired by being in a state of high civilisation : but as he is the prince of the Creation, and endowed with reason to make a selection of what is pleasing and profitable to him from Nature's giant storehouse, I will reserve a chapter for the purpose. Volumes have been written, and will still be written, on his virtues and his vices, his merits and defects, his customs and his follies. With this before my eyes, I scarcely know what to pen down on a small scrap of paper, that may be in the least worthy of the reader's attention. If I fail in my attempt either to amuse him or to instruct him, I trust that he will show me mercy, for I feel quite convinced that the subject is far too abstruse, refined, and lofty for an humble pen like mine.

ON THE PROJECTED BANISHMENT OF THE
ROOKS FROM SCOTLAND.

“ *Bella manu, lethumque gerat furialis Erinnyis.* ”

THE devil of discord, with an imp or two of his own family, seems to have been let loose upon this once unanimous nation. We have Peel and Repeal, Corn and Cobden, Buxton and Blackey, Kirk and Calvin, Pusey and Protestantism, all armed with pike and javelin; whilst poor old Mr. Bull, out at the elbows, and with scarcely a shoe to his foot, has got souse into debt, to the tune of eight hundred millions, and sees at last, with horror, that he is only just one single step from his palace to the poorhouse. In this boisterous and jarring state of things, Scotland, by way of pastime, has just commenced hostilities against that gregarious tribe of birds commonly known by the name of rooks.

In the nineteenth century, fruitful epoch of discovery, the Scottish farmers have found out that the rooks, so much prized by their ancestors, are a set of pilfering and plundering

thieves, and that they ought to be treated in no other light than that of rogues and vagabonds; wherefore they have now solemnly denounced their former black friends, and they have advised the country gentlemen, as they value their crops, to show no mercy to the rooks, but to kill them whenever an opportunity shall offer. J. M. Hog, Esq., of Newliston, Kirkliston, North Britain, cannot find in his heart to sacrifice his favourites; and he has written to me, to know what is my opinion of the rook, and he has requested from me a line or two upon the merits or demerits of these birds. He himself entertains a very good opinion of them, and he would not wish to lose their valuable services, by joining in the novel crusade against them; a crusade, at the best, of a somewhat doubtful nature, as to the good or the evil to be derived from it.

On the 17th of March, 1844, I returned the answer below to this gentleman's polite communication. I place a copy of it in the second volume of *Essays*, in order that our own farmers may be put upon their guard in time, and thus escape the infection which is now raging in Scotland, and carrying off thousands of the

most useful birds that ever settled on the old oaks of that fair land, where, just nine-and-ninety years ago, poor Charley Stuart drew his ill-fated sword for the last time out of its patriot scabbard, to fight for the legitimate right of kings to the thrones of their ancestors.

“ To J. M. HOG, Esq.

“ Walton Hall, March 19. 1844.

“ Sir,

“ Your communication to Mr. Dickson is so much to the purpose, and contains such sound arguments, that I consider a report from myself would be nearly superfluous. However, at your desire, I will enter briefly into the subject, for I hold the rooks in great request.

“ We have innumerable quantities of these birds in this part of Yorkshire, and we consider them our friends. They appear in thousands upon our grass lands, and destroy myriads of insects. After they have done their work in these enclosures, you may pick up baskets full of grass plants all injured at the root by the gnawing insect. We prize the birds much for

this, and we pronounce them most useful guardians of our meadows and our pastures.

“Whenever we see the rooks in our turnip fields, we know then, to our sorrow, what is going on there; we are aware that grubs are destroying the turnips, and we hail with pleasure the arrival of the rooks, which alone can arrest their dreaded progress. I have never seen the least particle of turnip, or of turnip-top, in the craws of the rooks, either young or old. If these birds feed on Swedish turnips in Scotland, they abstain from such food here, so far as I can learn by enquiry: perhaps they may be taking insects at the time that they are seen perforating the turnip: dissection would soon set this doubt at rest for ever. No farmer in our neighbourhood ever complains that his Swedish turnips are injured by the rook.

“The services of the rook to our oak trees are positively beyond estimation. I do believe, if it were not for this bird, all the young leaves in our oaks would be consumed by the cockchafers.

“Whilst the ringdove is devouring the heart shoot of the rising clover, you may see the rook devouring insects in the same field.

“The flesh of the rook is excellent: I consider it as good as that of pigeon. People in this part of the country will go any distance for a dozen of young rooks, even at the risk of a penalty for trespass.

“In 1814, eight tailors and a tailor’s boy left Wakefield on a Saturday night to enjoy a fiddling party at a village called Himsworth, some six miles from hence. In returning home they were seized with a vehement desire of looking into my rookery. The keeper surprised them in the act of helping themselves, and as he knew the major part of them personally, they consented to appear before me. The fellow had a touch of wag in him, and he introduced them thus:— ‘If you please, Sir,’ said he, ‘I have catched eight tailors and a half stealing young rooks.’— ‘Well,’ said I, ‘after all this noise on Sunday morning you have not managed to bring me a full man, for we all know in Yorkshire that it requires nine tailors to make a man. Send them about their business; I can’t think of prosecuting eight ninths and a half of a man.’

“The faults of the rook in our imperfect eyes are as follows. It pulls up the young blade of

corn on its first appearance, in order to get at the seed-grain still at the root of it. The petty pilfering lasts about three weeks, and during this period we hire a boy at three-pence a day, sometimes sixpence, to scare the birds away. Some years we have no boy at all. Either way the crops are apparently the same in quantity every year. In winter the rook will attack the corn-stacks which have lost part of their thatch by a gale of wind. He is a slovenly farmer who does not repair the damaged roof immediately; and still we have farmers in Yorkshire of this description. The rook certainly is too fond of our walnuts, and it requires to be sharply looked after when the fruit is ripe. In breeding time it will twist off the uppermost twigs of the English and Dutch elms, and sometimes those of the oak in which its nest is built, for the purpose of increasing it. This practice gives the tops of the trees an unsightly appearance, and may injure their growth in the course of time. Sycamores, beeches, firs, and ashes, escape in great measure the spoliation.

“It ought to be generally known that, in former times the North American colonists

having banished the grakles (their rooks), the insects ate up the whole of their grass; and the people were obliged to get their stock of hay from Pennsylvania and from England: and in the island of Bourbon, the poor Eastern grakles disappeared under a similar persecution. The islanders suffered in their turn, for clouds of grasshoppers consumed every green blade; and the colonists were compelled to apply to Government for a fresh breed of grakles, and also for a law to protect them.

“ Thus, it appears from history that the sages of the East, and the wise men of the West, did wrong in destroying their grakles. They were severely punished for their temerity, by the loss of their crops. They repented, and repaired the damage; and, so far as I can learn, things have gone on well betwixt themselves and the grakles, and betwixt the grakles and their crops, ever since. In 1824, I saw immense flocks of these birds in the low meadows of the Delaware.

“ History, by the way, in our own species, presents a parallel to the war of extermination now raging against the rooks in Scotland. When Voltaire and his impious sophisters had

determined on the total destruction of Christianity, he remarked, that he must begin with the Jesuits. Chiefly by his own intrigues, and those of the kept mistresses in the different courts of Europe, the suppression of this celebrated order was effected. Very soon after this had taken place, the civilised Indians of America fell off rapidly from their improved state, and ultimately returned to their original wild habits, whilst vice and ignorance took the lead in the European settlements, and have retained it to this day. Frederick, the far-famed King of Prussia, foresaw the future evils of this suppression in their true colours, and he made the following remark in a letter to Voltaire:—‘ I have no reason to complain of Ganganelli; he has left me my dear Jesuits, who are the objects of universal persecution. I will preserve a seed of so precious and uncommon a plant, to furnish those who may wish to cultivate it hereafter.’ In our days, we have lately seen the people of South America applying to Rome for missionaries from the Society of Jesus.

“ I defend my sable friends the rooks here in England on account of their services to the

land. Should the adverse party effect their extirpation in Scotland, and then suffer by the ravages of the grub, I will, at any time, be happy to send you a fresh supply of these useful and interesting birds.

“ I remain, Sir,

“ Your most obedient

“ And humble servant,

“ CHARLES WATERTON ”

ON TIGHT SHOES, TIGHT STAYS, AND CRAVATS.

THE form of man is allowed by all writers, ancient and modern, to stand foremost in the ranks of animated nature. Man has it in his power to retain his fine symmetry with greater ease than any animal, because Omnipotence has endowed him with reason ; whereas it has only given instinct to those below him. Perhaps there is nothing more attractive in the living beauties of creation than the human figure, standing firmly on the right foot, with

the right arm elevated above the head in a curve to the heavens, and the inside of the half-closed hand towards the face; whilst the other out-stretched foot barely touches the earth with its extremity, forming as it were a graceful counterpoise below, to the elegant attitude above; and the remaining arm hanging loosely down, and at a little distance from the perpendicular line which is formed by the erect position of the body. With such a perfect form, replete with reason, health, and vigour, man acts strangely to his own disadvantage whenever he allows the foolish fashion of the day to injure his symmetry, or permits the gratification of his appetite to interfere with the arrangements for the preservation of his health.

It is but too true that the astonishing discoveries in the mode of preparing his food have disposed him to disease in many frightful shapes; whilst the unfitness of his attire to the true form of his body has been productive of so much mischief to his general symmetry, that there are doubts if he would not have been better off had he adhered to his original haunts, so admirably touched upon by Dryden:—

“When wild in woods the noble savage ran.”

Civilised man has certainly an 'undoubted right to put on clothes of any colour, or of any size and shape ; but then, the rest of the community ought not to be pointed at, nor turned into ridicule, if their own notions of raiment dissuade them from imitating his example. But how little is this liberality either practised or understood by man reclaimed from the forests ! Some royal spendthrift, supported by the public purse, some brainless son of fortune just entered into the possession of enormous wealth, sets the fashion ; and then all must adopt it, be their aversion to it ever so extreme. Fashion may be tolerable in some degree when it merely trims the purse, but it is utterly intolerable when it affects the person.

He was a cunning and a clever shoemaker who first succeeded in turning old Grandfather Squaretoes into ridicule, and in setting up young Sharpfoot as a pattern for universal imitation. What must have been poor old Dame Nature's surprise and vexation when she saw and felt the abominable change ? The toes have their duty to perform, when the frame of man is either placed erect, or put in

motion: shoes at best are a vast incumbrance to them; but when it happens that shoes are what is called a bad fit, then all goes wrong indeed, and corns and blisters soon oblige the wearer of them to wend his way

“ With faltering step and slow.”

When I see a man thus hobbling on, I condemn both his fortitude and folly: his fortitude, in undergoing a pedal martyrdom without necessity; and his folly, in wearing, for fashion's sake, a pair of shoes so ill adapted to his feet in size and shape. Corns are the undoubted offspring of tight shoes; and tight shoes the proper punishers of human vanity. If the rules of society require that I should imprison my toes, it does not follow that I should voluntarily force them on to the treadmill. The foot of man does not end in a point; its termination is nearly circular. Hence it is plain and obvious that a pointed shoe will have the effect of forcing the toes into so small a space that one will lie over the other for want of room. By having always worn shoes suited to the form of my foot, I have now at sixty-two the full use of my toes; and this is invaluable to me in ascending trees.

There is something very forbidding to my eye in a foot with a pointed shoe on; I always fancy that I can see there, comfort, and ease, and symmetry, all sacrificed at the tinsel shrine of fashion. Never be it forgotten, that tight shoes and tight garters are very successful agents in producing cold feet; and that cold feet are no friends to a warm heart. The foot of man is formed in Nature's finest mould: custom causes us to conceal it, and necessity to defend it from the asperities of the flinty path; but we never can improve its original shape, or add any thing to its natural means, in the performance of its important task.

It were well if our bodily miseries commenced and ended in our shoes; but there is something fearfully wrong in our wearing apparel at the other end of our body betwixt the head and shoulders.

What in the name of hemp and bleaching has a cravat to do with the throat of man, except at Tyburn? The throat is the great thoroughfare or highway for the departure and return of the blood from the heart to the head, and back again; and we all know that pressure on the vessels which contain this precious fluid

may be attended with distressing, and even fatal, consequences; so that, when a man falls down in a fit, the first attempt at relief on the part of the bystanders is to untie his cravat. Indeed, the windpipe, the veins, and the arteries located in the neck, may be considered as life's body-guards, which will not allow themselves to be too severely pressed upon with impunity.

When we consider how very near these main channels of life are to the surface of the throat, we wonder at the temerity of the man who first introduced the use of cravats as a protection against the weather, or as an ornament to the parts. When he was about this roguish business, why did he stop short at the neck? He might just as well have offered clothing to the nose and cheeks. If these last-mentioned parts of our mortal frame can safely accommodate themselves to the blasts of winter or the summer's sun, surely the throat might be allowed to try its fortune in the external air, especially when we see this important privilege conceded to females in every rank of life, and of the most delicate constitutions.

If any part of the human body be allowed

to be uncovered in these days of observation and improvement, certainly the throat of man has the best claim to exemption from the punishment which it undergoes at present.

However, we are not quite so outrageous now-a-days in some things as we were when I was a lad. I remember well the time when cravats of enormous height and thickness were all the go. 'Twas said that these jugular bolsters came into fashion on account of some unsightly rosebuds having made their appearance a little below the ears of a royal dandy. This may have been scandal for aught I know to the contrary; but certain it is, that the new invention spread like wildfire, and warmed the throats of all in high life. A connexion of ours placed so much stress upon the necessity of it, that he never considered himself sufficiently well dressed until he had circumvented his neck with seven cravats, — only two less in number than the aqueous folds which surrounded the body of Eurydice, when she was in the realms below, where

— “ Novies Styx interfusa coerctet :

“ Fate had fast bound her
With Styx nine times round her.”

My own cravat, although it had nothing extraordinary either in size or shape, had once very nearly been the death of me. One night, on going my rounds alone in an adjacent wood, I came up with two poachers: fortunately one of them fled, and I saw no more of him. I engaged the other; wrenched the knife out of his hand, after I had parried his blow, and then closed with him. We soon came to the ground together, he uppermost. In the struggle, he contrived to get his hand into my cravat, and twisted it till I was within an ace of being strangled. Just as all was apparently over with me, I made one last convulsive effort, and I sent my knees, as he lay upon me, full against his stomach, and threw him off. Away he went, carrying with him my hat, and leaving me his own, together with his knife and twenty wire snares.

I cannot possibly understand why we strong and healthy men should be doomed by fashion to bind up our necks like sheaves of corn, and thus keep our jugular veins in everlasting jeopardy. I know one philosopher in Sheffield who sets this execrable fashion nobly at defiance, and always appears without a cravat. How I

revere him for this ; and how I condemn myself for not having sufficient fortitude to follow his example ! The armadillo and land tortoise of Guiana, although encased in a nearly impenetrable armour, have their necks free. Indeed, man alone is the only being to be found in the whole range of animated nature who goes with a ligature on the throat.

Thus it would appear that fashion brings torment to our toes, and peril to our throats. But what a still more unfavourable opinion must we entertain of this inexorable goddess when we reflect that, by her invention of tight stays, she dooms thousands of young females to lose their health and symmetry, and to sink at last into the cold and dreary grave long before their time.

The crocodile, although sheathed in adamant both above and below, has his sides free for the expansion of his body ; and this most necessary provision has been kindly given to him by old Dame Nature, for the well working of his iron frame. Shall, then, our own thoughtless dames of fashion, with this example before their eyes, allow their still more thoughtless daughters to counteract the plan of Nature by

putting those parts into prison which, as they value their health, ought always to remain free ?

No sooner are the external parts sent in by the ligature of stays, than the internal parts begin to suffer from the unnatural pressure ; and then the heart, and lungs, and adjacent vitals, robbed of their means of full expansion by this ugly, bad, and cruel process, no longer can perform their duty as they once were wont to do. In the mean time, health sees closing in upon her a train of diseases, wan, and hideous, and terrible to think of. Irregular beatings of the heart, loss of appetite, loss of health, and loss of sleep, are the certain consequences, in a greater or a less degree, of circumventing the body with a pair of tight stays.

Nature must and will be free. If you press her on one part, she will protrude at another ; and there she will cause a permanent deformity, if you continue to torment her.

In Prussia and in Italy, nothing can exceed the horrible distortions brought upon the human frame by the use of swaddling clothes. In these countries may be seen the spine in every stage of deformity that the most vivid imagination can conceive, with a misshapen breast as a

counterpart to it. When the moralist shall have made his tour through these regions, where a most lamentable deficiency of common sense in the proper application of wearing apparel has exposed the frame of civilised man to all the horrors of spinal curvature and decrepitude, let him repair to the forests of Guiana, in which Nature has had her own way in training the human frame. During the whole of the time I spent in those interminable wilds, I never observed a female, either young or old, who was labouring under a complaint of the spine. These obedient children of good Dame Nature have never had their better judgment warped by the sophistry of the advocates of fashion, nor their vanity punished by deformity. Not a single pair of stays, nor any thing resembling them, did I see during my wanderings in that uncivilised part of the globe.

Oh, it makes an honest man's heart ache to see his fellow-creatures cheated out of their birthright by the intrigues of fashion. Can there be a sight in all nature more sad and melancholy than to behold the beauteous female form sinking gradually into the tomb through the indiscreet application of ligature to those

parts which Providence had formed so true in their proportions, and of such charming symmetry? That fine black eye, expressive of a noble soul within, has lost its wonted brightness; those feet no longer move with firmness; the frame can barely keep from drooping. In a few weeks more, a close confinement to the bedroom will shut out the last sweet carol of the nightingale and lark.

“ That face, alas! no more is fair;
Those lips have lost their red;
Those cheeks no longer roses bear,
And every charm is fled.”

NOTE.

[The following observations were received from Mr. WATERTON after the essay on the Domestic Swan (p. 120—130.) had been printed off.]

I AM not much versed in the anatomy of the human gullet ; but, if it can bear an operation of the dissecting knife with as much success as that of our domestic swan, there would not be any danger of a fatal result, by the stoppage of a fish-bone in its passage downwards.

Towards the close of last April, our favourite male swan swallowed a double eel-hook, to which was attached a shank of twisted wire about a foot in length. It had descended so low into the gullet, and fixed itself so firmly there, that I saw at once we had no chance whatever of extracting it by the mouth.

Knowing that death must inevitably ensue if the hook were not removed in due time, and distrusting my own operating powers on a living bird, I sent over to Wakefield, and requested the immediate attendance of Mr. Bennett, our scientific family-surgeon. He laid open the gullet to the extent of six inches, and we drew out the hook from this frightful aperture. The wound was then closed by suture, and, without any other application, the bird was turned loose upon its native element ; as we judged it would do better there, than if put into confinement.

The swan, on regaining its liberty, went to the upper part of the lake, far out of sight; and we saw nothing more of it till the following day at noon, when it returned to the house, and ate the bread which was offered to it. After this, it was in sight every day, and nobody could perceive that it suffered on account of the operation.

The place where its feathers had been cut away, in order to facilitate the working of the dissecting knife, is now replenished with new ones, and the swan appears in as prime health as it was before the instrument had been applied to its gullet.

Walton Hall, Sept. 23.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

AN ORNITHOLOGICAL LETTER TO WILLIAM SWAINSON, ESQ. F.R.S.

SIR,

I HAVE a crow to pluck with you. As we are both bird-men, the operation will cost us but little time and trouble.

A recent letter from Philadelphia refers me to your *History and Classification of Birds*. "By the by," says the writer of the letter, "this knight of the sublime theory of circles (alluding to you) speaks rather disparagingly of the Yorkshire squire, whom he terms an *Amateur*."

I have borrowed your book, and on looking into it I find that you have introduced the names of a vast number of those who have written on birds. Of all these you have made friendly — of mine alone unfriendly — mention.

I am, beyond doubt, the person alluded to in your complaint of *unjustifiable* personalities against Mr. Audubon; and I am the *Amateur* who went to Demerara merely to procure perfect skins; neglecting "all which could be truly beneficial to science." My invaluable prescription for the preservation of objects in Natural History has received a solemn anathema from your mouth. You tell the world that I seem to think it a "modern discovery;" but lest there should be any merit

due to it, you take care to introduce Sir James Smith, who, you say, strongly recommends it as a preservative against insects.

By the way, I have never in all my life read one single line from the pen of Sir James Smith.

Be all this as it may, the upshot is, that my unfortunate name is now stuck up by you, in the *Cyclopædia* of the celebrated Doctor Lardner, without one solitary epithet which might entitle it to a nod of approbation from your far-famed employer.—Better not have introduced it at all.

When a man who is not sufficiently well armed espies a lynx slumbering in the woods, he immediately takes himself off, as quickly and as quietly as possible, lest by approaching too near he may disturb the animal, and thus be treated to an awful exhibition of his teeth and claws.

Though from the place of my repose I have more than once seen you bewildered and lost in the quinary labyrinth of your fond conceit of Circles, and have had you completely in my power, still I have never thought of springing at you; because you did not appear to show symptoms of an attempt to break in upon my retreat.

But now, that you have not only aroused me from my slumber,—but have even been incautious enough to take me by the beard;—neither yourself nor your friends ought to be surprised if I lay a vengeful and a heavy paw upon you.

Pray, how can you venture to pronounce my personalities against Mr. Audubon *unjustifiable*? In the same volume in which you have read the personalities you must have seen that his infatuated admirers never hesitated to indulge in personalities against me.

Audubon having given to the public an incorrect ac-

count of himself, I had a full right to comment upon that account, in order to show to the readers, that the wilful inaccuracies which pervaded his autobiography ought to be a warning to them, how they put implicit confidence in the experiments which he says he made to prove the vulture's deficiency in the power of scent.* You tell us that he has silenced his opponents, and established in the most complete manner, the accuracy of his first assertion. How well he has succeeded, will be seen by the note below.

If by styling me "an Amateur" you wish your readers to understand that I present my zoological information gratuitously to the public—in contradistinction to yourself, who bring your own to the market;—then, indeed, the appellation might be received as a compliment; but, unfortunately, other passages in your work compel me to view it in no other light than that of a decided sneer.

Let me now take a cursory view of the Amateur

* "William Sharp MacLeay, Esq., a distinguished naturalist, and for the last ten years a resident in the Island of Cuba, is now in the United States on his way to London. Talking of the vulture, he said, in presence of Doctors Pickery, Griffiths, Mr. Titian Peale, and the writer of this, that 'Waterton is right, and Audubon is in error. The Aura (vulture) is as common in Cuba as a barn-door fowl, and I am intimately acquainted with its habits. It was a singular coincidence, that on the very day in which I was reading the controversy I had been examining some specimens of the large serpent named Python, and had thrown the carcasses, then in a state of putridity, into a remote part of the garden of my country residence, five miles from the Havanna, a spot so thickly shaded by mango bushes, that it would have been as possible for a vulture to *see through a wall* as to discover by sight the remains of the serpents; and yet, in so short a time, I beheld the vultures at a distance, sailing in the air, advancing towards the garden, where they alighted, and regaled themselves upon the stinking Pythons.'" — *Extract from a letter dated Philadelphia, May 18. 1836.*

Naturalist, and then of the trading Naturalist. The reader will not fail to perceive how much original information is to be acquired in the closet, and how much by ranging through the boundless fields of nature.

To say nothing of the zoological communications to be found in the *Wanderings*, I have presented to Mr. Loudon's invaluable *Magazine of Natural History* above sixty papers of original observations, made with the greatest care in Nature's lovely garden.

After years of attention to the economy of birds, I have succeeded in getting the barn-owl, the brown owl, the heron, the jackdaw, the magpie, the carrion crow, the mallard, the pheasant, the starling, the woodpecker, the ox-eye titmouse, the waterhen, the thrush, and the blackbird, to build their nests, and take away their young in safety, at a stone-throw of each other.

I have pointed out the duck and the drake clothed in the same plumage only for a very short time in summer. I have noted down the morning and the evening flight of the rook in this district, which evolution may be seen every day for six months in the year; and I have cleared up the mystery of the loss of feathers, which this useful bird experiences at the base of its bill. I have shown which birds cover their eggs, and which birds never cover their eggs at all, on leaving the nest. I have shown that one hawk never molests the feathered tribes; and that another (scarcely to be distinguished from this when on the wing) destroys them indiscriminately. I have shown that the wigeon feeds by day, eating grass like a goose; whilst its congener, the mallard, invariably refuses this food, and seeks for its sustenance by night. I have given to the public an entirely new method of preserving the eggs of birds for cabinets; and I have pointed out a process for preparing insects, so that they will never corrupt, or be exposed

to the depredations of the moth, or be affected by damp.

I have written on the landing, the career, and the depredations of the Hanoverian rat in this country. I formerly delivered in Leeds a very long lecture, to show the necessity of reform in Museums both at home and abroad; proving, at the same time, how specimens might be prepared on scientific principles. I have shown *how* a man ought to fight the feline, and *how* the canine, tribe of animals. All this, and much more, has been conveyed in language so plain and simple, that a school-boy in rudiments can understand it.

Now let us peep into the *Natural History and Classification of Birds* by the Market-Naturalist.

You have given us a series of Circles, which would puzzle Sir Isaac Newton himself; and which will tend to scare nine-tenths of the votaries of ornithology clear out of the field.

Your nomenclature has caused me the jaw-ache.

Gampsonyx Swainsonii, Lophophorus, Tachipetes, Pachycephala, Thamnophilinae, Dendrocolaptes, Myiagra rubiculoïdes, Cebilepyrinae, Ptilonorynchus, Opistholophus, Palæornis, Meliphagidæ, Eurylaimus, Phalacrocorax, and a host of others.

Your criticisms are really unpardonable.

What you have given us in the book before me, concerning Mr. Audubon, is utterly at variance with that which you gave on his first arrival amongst us.* You

* In July, 1828, Mr. Swainson tells us, that Audubon "drank of the pure stream of knowledge at its fountain head."—See his criticism appended at the end of Audubon's *Biography of Birds*. In 1836 Mr. Swainson tells us, that Audubon's "scientific descriptions are destitute of that precision and detail which might have been expected in these

have thought fit to laud one man exceedingly for his zoological acquirements, who, to my certain knowledge, paid other people for the letterpress and drawings which were to appear in his work. You raise expectations in your readers, that ornithological information from Demerara (information "passed over by the mere Amateur") will be procured ere long by an individual engaged in an exploring expedition up the country; when you ought to be aware that the very nature of an exploring expedition precludes the possibility of procuring satisfactory information of birds, whose economy is so varied, whose nidification is so mysterious, and whose plumage is so perpetually on the change.

I myself have passed years in the heart of that country; still I could never obtain the least insight into the incubation of the Chatterers; whilst the appearance of some birds, and the disappearance of others, without any visible cause, used to puzzle me beyond measure.

I have killed the large grey pelican on the coast of Paumaron, where it never breeds; but I was told that I should find its nest at the mouth of the Oronoque. The Indians there knew nothing of its nidification; and though the bird was plentiful at Antigua, not a soul could direct me to its breeding-place.

Under these apparently insurmountable embarrassments, I could never bring my mind to give to the public a general history of the Demerara birds.

You might have spared yourself the lamentation, that Demerara has only been visited by Amateurs, "*whose sole object seems to have been that of procuring perfect skins,*" had you but called to your recollection the con-

days." — See Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia, Natural History of Birds*; by William Swainson, Esq., vol. i. ALAS! POOR AUDUBON!

tents of one of your former letters to me. I had sent you some pages, replete with notices, on the habits of birds in Demerara. For this you returned me abundant thanks; and having highly complimented me on the extent of my ornithological knowledge, you begged hard for a fresh supply; adding at the time, that I should thus be of the utmost service to you, as you had a project in your head of writing the history of the Demerara birds.

Knowing that you had never been in that country, this piece of information so astounded me, and appeared to me so presumptuous withal, that I began to think it was high time to drop the correspondence.

By the way, when you and I did correspond, *that* was the proper time for you to have informed me that my solution of corrosive sublimate in alcohol had failed*; and then I would have gently pointed out to you the error into which you had fallen. But, after I had imparted the discovery to you, in so liberal and so friendly a manner, say, was it generous in you to have sealed

* "I made the following experiment with Mr. Waterton's composition when in Brazil. The ants which swarmed in a room I inhabited at Pernambuco had committed great devastation amongst the prepared insects and birds. Whilst preserving one of the latter, I cut off a piece of the flesh, and after saturating it with the composition, laid it on the path which led to one of their holes. The little creatures seemed at first to be somewhat suspicious of its wholesomeness; but after walking about and upon it, and examining it with their antennæ, they seemed to pronounce a favourable verdict, for one and all began dragging it away to the entrance of their nest, where it soon disappeared beneath the earthen floor. The experiment was repeated three times, and the same result followed. The mixture had been brought from England, and I had no reason to believe that it was defective in the preparation," &c.—See Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia, Natural Hist. of Birds*; by W. Swainson, Esq., vol. i.

up the supposed evidence of its failure in your vinegar-bottle, to be squirted at me, on some future day, through the medium of the Doctor's *Cyclopædia*?

Your theory on parts of the plumage of birds is very unsound.

In speaking of the vulture you remark, "But that those parts of the bird which come in contact with its offensive food should not be soiled and matted together; the whole of the head (and particularly a great part of the neck) is entirely destitute of feathers."

When you made this erudite discovery in Nature's economy, were you quite ignorant that the little feathery-footed bantam, whose plumage reaches beyond the toes, may be seen half-leg deep in dirty ditches, and at the mouths of the filthiest sewers?—Why, then, should careful Dame Nature deprive the vulture of a cravat lest it should be soiled by carrion; and at the same time supply the bantam with warm stockings, which she well knew would be encrusted with nastiness whenever there was an opportunity to walk into it? The Dame, too, ought to have deprived the rough-haired spaniel of his shaggy waistcoat; for she must have known that this brute would anoint himself with purulence from rotten carrion, as often as within his reach.

Your lucubration on the eyes of the owl comes next under consideration.

"The eyes of this bird," you say, "in the first place are of enormous size." Nobody doubts it. "But as if this was not sufficient," you continue, "they are surrounded with two large concave disks, generally composed of white and shining feathers, for the purpose of concentrating a greater extent of light, to be reflected upon the eye, which is placed in the centre. There can be little doubt on this being the true use of the facial

disk in owls, although the circumstance appears never yet to have been touched upon."

I should wonder if it had.

Supposing your theory to be true,—then, indeed, has Dame Nature most cruelly punished your "type," the barn-owl; for even in the month of June, she directs this bird to hunt for mice; and she shows it how to catch them when the sun is blazing in a cloudless sky.* This, I myself have seen repeatedly. To what intense pain must this poor bird be doomed if its feathery "facial disk" has the power of reflecting the burning rays of the sun upon its eye! If the "facial disk" could effect this, the barn-owl would assuredly be aware of it; and she would either, in common prudence, keep her room till night-fall, or borrow a parasol to protect her eyesight from the flaming luminary.

If the Dame judged it necessary to furnish your "type" with this "facial disk" in order to increase its power of nocturnal vision, we must lament that the bittern, the heron, the wild duck, and many others have been sadly neglected by her; for none of these birds have that which you term facial disk, still they all search for food in the darkest night, and wing their way in safety through the darkest sky.

If my humble opinion of your *Natural History and Classification of Birds* were asked, I should answer, without hesitation, that many parts of it would puzzle much clearer intellects than those contained in my own brain-pan; that other parts, are vastly overstrained, and that others are exceedingly erroneous. Indeed, on a close inspection of it, I could fancy that the whole has been compiled from books, and from dimensions taken from the dried skins of birds.

* "Owls of this group are *eminently* nocturnal."—SWAINSON.

Reviewers may pronounce it eminently scientific; but then they must only expect an assent to their decision from the mouths of the marines; for, "shiver my timbers," says Jack, "if the sailors will believe them."

I will now pass cursorily on to your "Process of Preservation."

I remember well the day on which your father (whom I much respected) invited me to spend an evening at his house in Wavertree, near Liverpool. "I have a son," said he to me, "who seems to have a great turn for natural history, and I should feel much indebted to you if you would come and spend the evening with us." "Most willingly, Sir," said I; and so I went to Wavertree.

On that evening, when I saw you for the first time, I imparted to you whatever I thought would be of service, as though you had been a valued and an old acquaintance. It was then that I strongly recommended to you, for your zoological preparations, the constant use of corrosive sublimate dissolved in alcohol.

When we met again, after a considerable period, you showed me a quantity of bird-skins which you had collected in Brazil. They were exceedingly bad; and on looking at them, I said to myself,—Ah! I see that I must have been beating on cold iron when I was imparting my instructions to Mr. William.

When you found, during your stay in Pernambuco, that the solution which you had carried out with you from England was of no avail against the thrice-repeated attacks of the ants, did you not suspect that you might possibly have got it made too weak? Had you stepped for a minute into the nearest chemist's shop, and procured a little more corrosive sublimate, your solution would then have done its duty in the most satisfactory

manner. When I was in the Brazilian towns and forests, the ants never injured my specimens in Natural History.

As you have introduced the name of Sir James Smith, apparently to deprive me of any little merit due to the discovery of applying this solution, tell me, candid Sir, had you then learned, or have you since learned, that Sir James, or any other person, had applied it to birds, to quadrupeds, to serpents, to fishes, to wood, to clothes, to hats, to insects, to the lining of carriages, to furs, and to ornamental feathers? To all which articles, I had been in the habit of applying it for many years before you received from me your first lesson, in your father's house at Wavertree.

If you have ascertained the fact, then, your paragraph in Doctor Lardner will be less objectionable; still, give you what credit I may, methinks you have ill-requited the former kindness of your disinterested Mentor.

You recommend the use of arsenic soap, "from long experience!" and a little after you prove its deficiency, by acknowledging that "a box, strongly impregnated by camphor, or the oven," must be used when you find it necessary to place your skins "in quarantine." Why in quarantine, Mr. Swainson? What!—have your skins got the plague of insects amongst them, after they have been smeared with your wonderful arsenic soap, which you recommend "from long experience?"

I have read over your "Process of Preservation," certainly with more attention than it deserves, and I find it wrong at every point. I am quite prepared to prove, that he who adopts it can never, by any chance, succeed in producing a specimen that will bear a scientific inspection. His preparations will be out of all shape

and proportion. If they should consist of birds, they will come out of his hands, a decided deformity. If of quadrupeds, they will represent hideous spectres, without any one feature remaining similar to those which they possessed in life.

By rejecting the solution of corrosive sublimate in alcohol, you have most effectually deprived the operator of a threefold and an essential advantage. By assuming the arsenic soap, you have exposed him to injure his own teeth; whilst the adhesion of the soap itself to the inside of the skin which he is preparing will indubitably frustrate every attempt to restore the original form and features.

Will you meet me in some public lecture-room, and argue this matter? I will produce proof, sufficient to satisfy the most incredulous person, that I am right in what I have just advanced: and, ere we leave the room, I trust that I shall be able to show how much I have gained by resorting to the field of Nature, and how much you have lost by retiring from it.

Perhaps nothing will operate so much against you, in your zoological career, as your unlucky encomiums on the drawings, and on the supposed writings, of Mr. Audubon. Of the first (talking of his publication), you remark, that it exhibits "a perfection in the higher attributes of zoological painting never before attempted." Of the last, you say, that his observations "are the corner stones of every attempt to discover the system of nature."

Let us peep at the drawing of the rattle-snake, in the act of attacking a mocking-bird's nest.

After having passed the most puerile praises on that of his Carolina doves, you exclaim: "The same poetic sentiment and masterly execution characterise this pic-

ture." Poetic — most assuredly. The whole group is a mockery of any thing that ought to represent a correct and faithful zoological fact. The snake is a fabulous Hydra, with its eyes starting out of their sockets; and only think! the fangs are actually turned *upwards*, instead of *downwards*.

Mr. Audubon tells us that he confined a rattle-snake for three years in a cage; that he was in the habit of feeding it; and that he measured it with accuracy. Hence we must deem him eminently qualified to describe correctly this well-known reptile. Mr. Swainson too, a learned doctor in zoology, who constantly refers us to his own works, has no slight pretensions, one would suppose, to speak authoritatively on such a subject.

But with this chimerical rattle-snake before us, what must we think of the *artist* who figured it? or of the *critic* who lauds it to the skies? With this thing of phantasy staring us in the face, what guarantee have we for the correctness of one single production from the crayon of John James Audubon, F. R. SS. L. & E.? or what pledge for the soundness of one line of criticism, from the pen of William Swainson, Esq. A. C. G. F. R. S. L. S.?

When you meet Mr. Audubon, you might just ask him whether this outrageous group of his was the effect of sheer ignorance, or whether he manufactured it through a mischievous inclination to play upon the inexperience of his customers? But no, that won't do; for your friend is acute enough in some things; and he may possibly put a similar question to yourself, on the score of ignorance, or of delinquency in criticism. This, you know, would throw you into a quandary. Ah, well-a-day, how cruelly has this American snake of Audu-

bon's bitten our wise men of London and of modern Athens!

I have always been of opinion that it was your hand (see Loudon's *Magazine of Natural History*, vol. vi. p. 550) which guided young Audubon's pen against me in the affair of the vulture's nose; and I have purposely introduced your unfortunate encounter with his father's rattle-snake by way of balancing the account.

Believe me, Sir, you have a vast deal to learn before you become an adept in ornithology. Fidelity and simplicity are all that is wanted to render this pleasing study attainable to every one. But you seem to think otherwise. However, let me tell you frankly that the admeasurement of ten thousand dried bird-skins with a subsequent and vastly complicated theory on what you conceive you have drawn from the scientific operation of your compasses will never raise your name to any permanent altitude. You seem, formerly, to have had a foresight of what I have just announced to you; for, in speaking of Wilson and Audubon, you exclaim, "Their writings will be consulted when our favourite theories shall have passed into oblivion." See your own review of Audubon, which he has appended to his first volume of the *Biography of Birds*.

But it is now full time to draw to a close, and to leave other errors for another day.

We are told that Nature is the best of guides. I believe it.

Climb then, with me, the loftiest trees; range the dreary swamp; pursue the wild beasts over hill and dale; repair to alluvial mud-flats; follow the windings of creeks, and of the sea-shore; and get yourself let down the tremendous precipice in quest of zoological knowledge. Worst come to the worst,—this will at

least gain you the appellation of "Amateur" from the pen of supercilious theorists,—an honour not to be sneezed at in these our latter times.

During your peregrinations, should you chance to fall in with your American friend,—who, you inform us, has pursued painting and the study of Nature "with a genius and an ardour of which, in their united effects, there is no parallel,"—do not fail to ask him how it came to pass that when he added so largely to the wing of his bird of Washington, he quite forgot to supply its tail with a proportional elongation.

If you find him communicative and in a good humour, you might have a chat with him about his great horned owl, which, "at the least noise, *erects* the tufts of its head." Our owls *depress* their tufts when disturbed. But, for the life of you, don't say one word about the multifarious group of wild beasts, which were present till after day-break at the great pigeon slaughter; where, he says, the noise was so deafening, that "even the reports of the guns were seldom heard." This would put him out of temper, and it might lead to "unjustifiable personalities," by seeming to question his veracity.

I trust you are now convinced that, when you feel averse to place a man's name in a favourable point of view, and at the same time have no absolute necessity for putting it in an unfavourable one, the safest plan to be pursued is to place it in no view at all. Had you not introduced me to Doctor Lardner in so unhandsome a manner, I should have been the last man in the world to interrupt you in your complicated theory of circles, and of types primary, types aberrant, types grallatorial, types tenuirostral, types rasorial, and types suctorial.

In truth, I should really consider it lost time in me were I to descant on the incomprehensibility of your

favourite theories, seeing that they have already heard the solemn proclamation of their death-warrant from your own lips. (*Vide* foregoing page of this Letter.)

I could wish to introduce a word or two here, on your want of knowledge concerning the habits and anatomy of the Toucan, but am obliged for the present to defer them.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

CHARLES WATERTON.

Walton-Hall, March 10. 1837.

THE END.

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" Elements of Agriculture	19
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" On the Domesticated Animals*	19
Thomson on Fattening Cattle, etc.	30

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Buckler's St. Alban's Abbey	7
Budge's Miner's Guide	7
Cartoons (The Prize)	8
Cresy's Encycl. of Civil Engineering	9
De Burtin on the Knowledge of Pictures	9
Gwilt's Encyclopædia of Architecture	13
Haydon's Lectures on Painting & Design	13
Holland's Manufactures in Metal	14
Lerebours On Photography	17
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Reid (Dr.) on Warming and Ventilating	25
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" Life of Wesley	28

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