

ing it, "and I see you have given me a smartish dose. 'All these pills to be taken at bed time,' but so much the better, they will perform their required duty sooner. I have, ere now, mastered a leg of mutton; and some writers affirm the human stomach can digest a tenpenny nail, so here goes."

It was in vain Andrew assured him he had made a mistake in the directions, that one pill was sufficient; in vain he remonstrated with him on the danger of taking a larger dose; pill after pill disappeared from his alarmed view, while between every three or four, in the same equable and polite tone came, "I will thank you to prepare me another box, and compose yourself, Sir; I'm in no hurry." Who could the stranger be? Andrew was now at the very climax of alarm; the perspiration stood on his brow, and his hands trembled so as to render it almost impossible to reach down his jars without damaging them; strong doses he had certainly often prepared after a city feast for the attendants on it, but this outdid all. A man that could devour a leg of mutton, digest a tenpenny nail, and take a box of pills at a mouthful, had never entered his imagination, much less did he ever expect to see such a being in person, but be he who he may, he was again obliged to commence his labour. The stranger had now finished his box, and Andrew had no alternative but to commence again, or stare him in the face—the latter he could not do, as his imagination had now metamorphosed into something more or less than man; once more, therefore, did Andrew ply at the pestle, while the stranger, as if to beguile the tedium of waiting, began to grow more loquacious. Had Andrew ever sought after the Philosopher's Stone, the Universal Solvent, or the Elixir of Life? Did he put much faith in Solomon's Balm of Gilead, or Carrington's Pills, or did he believe in the Metempsychosis? In vain he assured him he studied nothing but the Edinburgh Dispensatory, that his shop bounded his researches; the stranger took it for granted he must be able to give or receive information, and question after question did he put, to which Andrew assented, without knowing their purport. At length he seemed to have exhausted all his subjects, sat himself on the chair, as if to compose himself to sleep, and in a short time gave unequivocal proofs of it. Andrew now began to breathe more freely, and ventured to cast his eyes towards his strange customer; and after all, there was nothing to be alarmed at in his appearance, except he noticed the breath from his nostrils appeared more like the steam of a tea-kettle than the breath of a human being—still there was nothing extraordinary in his appearance; he had a jovial English farmer's face, and a dress that well suited it; to be sure a smile, or rather grin, lurked in the corner of his mouth, even while asleep, as if he mocked poor Andrew's perplexity; he did not, however, allow much time for observation—he seemed to be intuitively aware Andrew had ceased his operations, and he awoke with his usual polite manner. "Oh, I see you have finished; have the goodness to prepare one box more; but let me pray you to take your leisure and compose yourself, for I am in no hurry." Andrew, who had fondly

hoped his labour was at an end, now found himself obliged to renew it again with vigour, while the stranger aroused himself, rose from his chair, yawned and shook himself—spoke of the comfortable nap he had enjoyed, was sorry he had kept Andrew up so late, or early rather, for it was now morning. Andrew, though internally wishing him any where but in his shop, yet constrained himself politely to answer, his commands gave him great pleasure. Again did he renew his toil. Box after box did he prepare without intermission, and the hours of one, two, and three, had been told in succession, by the market-clock; bitterly did he lament his destiny—long before this ought he to have been snug and comfortable in his warm bed. Anger now began to assume the place of fear, as he grew more accustomed to his visitor's company, and often did he determine in himself to refuse preparing more, still his courage was not yet at that pitch; probably his exertions, as I said before, may have injured his nerves—however, he could not rally himself enough to do it. The stranger, with his usual smile or grin, stood looking on, employing his time by beating the devil's tattoo on his boot, while at intervals came forth the usual phrase, "Another box, but don't hurry yourself."

At length mere inability to proceed any further, supplied the place of courage; his arms and sides ached to such a degree with his labor, as to cause the perspiration to stand on his brow in great drops, and he declared he could proceed no further. The alteration in the stranger's countenance told him he had better have left it unsaid, and his hands instinctively grasped the pestle with renewed vigour, but his repentance came too late; the stranger's hand was already across the counter, and in a second more had grasped Andrew's nose as firmly as if it had been in a vice. Andrew strove in vain to release himself—the stranger held him with more than human grasp; and his voice, instead of the polite tone he had before used, now sounded to his terrific ears what his imagination had pictured of the Indian yell. The pain of the gripe deprived him of voice to assure his tormentor he would compound for him as long as he would wish; still he contrived to make signs to that effect, by stretching his hands towards his mortar, imitating the action of grinding; but his tyrant was relentless—firmer did he close his fore-finger and thumb. Andrew could not shake him off; like a person afflicted with the night-mare he in vain essayed his strength, though agonized with the fear of losing his prominent feature in the struggle. The stranger, at length, as if endowed with supernatural strength, lifted him from the ground, balanced him in the air for a moment, gave him a three-fold twitch, drew him head foremost over the counter and let him fall. When he came to his senses he found himself lying outside his bed, his only injury a broken nose, from coming in contact with the floor in his fall.

#### Varieties.

FLOWER-CLOCK.—LINNÆUS proposed a Calendar of Flora, he also proposed a *Dial of Flora*, or Flower-Clock; and this was to consist as will readily be supposed, of plants,

which make certain hours of the day, by opening and shutting their flowers. Thus the day-lily (*hemerocallis fulva*) opens at five in the morning the *leontodon taraxacum*, or common dandelion, at five or six; the *hieracium latifolium* (hawk-weed) at seven; *hieracium pilosella*, at eight; the *calendula arvensis*, or marigold, at nine; the *mesembry anthemum neapolitanum*, at ten or eleven; and the closing of these and other flowers in the latter part of the day offers a similar system of hour marks.

Some of these plants are thus expanded in consequence of the stimulating action of the light and heat of the day, as appears by their changing their time, when these influences are changed; but others appear to be constant to the same hour, and independent of the impulse of such external circumstances. Other flowers by their opening and shutting prognosticate the weather. Plants of the latter kind are called by Linnæus *meteoric* flowers, as being regulated by atmospheric causes: those which change their hour of opening and shutting with the length of the day, he terms *tropical*; and the hours which they measure are, he observes, like Turkish hours, of varying length at different seasons, but there are other plants which he terms *equinoctial*; their vegetable days, like the days of the equator, being always of equal length; and these open, and close, at a fixed and positive hour of the day. Such plants clearly prove that the periodical character, and the period of the motions above described, do not depend altogether on external circumstances.

Some curious experiments on this subject were made by Decandolle. He kept certain plants in two cellars, one warmed by a stove and dark, the other lighted by lamps.

On some of the plants the artificial light appeared to have no influence, (*convolvulus arvensis*, *convolvulus encorum*, *silene fruticosa*,) and they still followed the clock hours in their opening and closing. The night-blowing plants appear somewhat disturbed, both by perpetual light and by perpetual darkness. In either condition they accelerated their *going* so much that in three days they had gained half a day, and thus exchanged night for day as their time of opening. Other flowers *went slower* in the artificial light (*convolvulus purpureus*)—In like manner those plants which fold and unfold their leaves were variously affected by this mode of treatment. The *oxalis stricta* and *oxalis incarnata* kept their habits, without regarding artificial light or heat.—The *mimosa leucocephala* folded and unfolded at the usual times, whether in light or in darkness, but the folding up was not so complete as in the open air. The *mimosa pudica*, (sensitive plant,) kept in darkness during the day time, and illuminated during the night, had in three days accommodated herself to the artificial state, opening in the evening, and closing in the morning; restored to the open air, she recovered her usual habits.

Tropical plants in general, as is remarked by our gardeners, suffer from the length of summer daylight; and it has been found necessary to shade them during a certain part of the day.