

travellers, obliged to prosecute their journeys at that season," said Fleming. "You would likewise deprive mankind of the pleasure arising from the contemplation of some of the sublimest works of the Sovereign Creator. The rainbow, that beautiful type of the irrevocable promises of God, would no longer gladden our eyes, and re-assure our hopes amidst the storm; and the moon, constantly enveloped in clouds, would no longer cheer us with her beams, or shed that soft and shadowy light upon the repose of nature, which I have heard you so much admire."

"You would ruin the almanack makers, Sophy," said Mrs. Linhope."

"And the farmers," said Alice.

"And the votaries of pleasure," said old Mrs. Fleming, who was much amused by their argument, "who would petition you to allow them fine nights to visit the various places of amusement, which induces them to reverse the order of things, and turn the night into day."

"You would never be able to please all parties," said Fleming, "and still less to please yourself; and before the end of a week you would be heartily tired of your situation."

"And supposing, my dear Sophy," said Mrs. Fleming, "that you were able to regulate the weather to suit your own taste and convenience on this small spot of the great globe, what would you do for the rest of the habitable world?"

"I fear," said Sophy, "I should never give that a second thought."

"That last observation," returned Mrs. Fleming, "brings your argument to this conclusion. That God has wisely placed these things beyond the control of man, whose disposition is of that selfish nature, that he would confine that which was meant for an universal blessing, to suit his own pleasure. The Mighty Mover of the elements regards with an equal eye the interest and welfare of all his creatures, admirably adapting the inhabitants of every nation to the climate under which they were born. The infinite wisdom displayed by the supreme Governor of the Universe, in this one point, forms in itself a mine of mental recreation which all the wet days Sophy may ever live to witness, could never exhaust."

"You have said well, my honoured parent," said Fleming; "when man would exceed the power to which he is limited by nature he proves his own littleness, and the infinite greatness of that omnipotent being, who retains within himself life and all its wondrous faculties."

"And now, dear Sophy, I hope that you are convinced that to complain of the weather is but an idle waste of words," said Alice; "leave this watching so anxiously the progress of the clouds, over whose watery stores you have no control, and resume your pencil; or my good uncle will be dis-

appointed in the fire screens you promised to paint for him."

"And I will endeavour to divert your ennui," said Fleming, "by reading aloud to you."

"Oh! that will be delightful!" cried the volatile girl, taking her seat at the table, and arranging her drawing materials. Arthur took up Faust, and had scarcely translated the first page, before a carriage stopped at the door, and their quiet party was broken up by the announcement of Count de Roselt and Captain Ogilvie."

Alice cast an anxious glance at Sophy as the gentlemen entered their little parlour with the ease and familiarity of old friends. The listless air of languor, which had marked her sister's countenance for the last hour, vanished at the appearance of the strangers; though after having distantly returned their salutation, she continued her elegant employment, as if totally unconscious of their presence, and only intent upon grouping the beautiful bunch of exotics which she scattered upon the table before her. The Captain acted with a degree of finesse nearly equal to her own. He carefully avoided taking the chair near her, but seated himself at some distance from the family group, in a position where the elegance of his dress, and the graces of his person, might be contemplated to the best advantage. In these small artifices, a male coquet so nearly resembles a female one that the same spirit appears to animate the twain, and the difference of costume alone points out the sex.

The gentlemen had called purposely to enquire after the ladies' health, and to learn how they contrived to exist in such horrid weather. They hardly expected to find any of their neighbours in the land of the living, and the Captain declared "that if the rain continued a day longer, he should die of dulness, a complaint with which he was sure all country people must be afflicted."

To this assertion Sophy readily agreed, and entered with the Captain into a spirited detail of the dulness of a country life—while Fleming and Alice maintained that those persons who found their own company such a burden in the country, would be subject to the same malady in town, when the charms of novelty had subsided; and the mind, tired of a constant state of excitement, was again thrown upon itself and its own resources for amusement."

"That will seldom be the case," said the Captain, "when the metropolis presents so many objects to excite our interest, and call forth our admiration."

"I do not agree with you, Captain," said the Count; "use accustoms us to view with indifference the most splendid works of art, and the wonders of the great city cease to captivate when the mind has long been familiarized to them. This is not mere theory—I speak from painful experience."

"Most people are very captious in the choice