

THOUGHTS ABOUT TERNS AND THINGS.

"THE tern is a small gull-like bird with mandibles coterminal,"
So standeth the dictum sonorous the king of the book-case,
That dread composition, called in all book-makers' catalogues a dictionary,
The tern that I love most of all is the black-capped '*Sterna hirundo*.'

When the sea struggles fiercely and lashes the shores into fragments,
Spray rising in torn sheets intertwined with the be-draggled storm-clouds,—

Then, with coterminal mandibles agape, from some sheltered position
of vantage,
Watch the tern, the king of the storm, defiantly, joyfully speeding.

Again, when the sea is asleep, and the balmiest, soothing sea-breezes
Waft over its mirror-like surface the essence of ocean,
Come with me, and visit the seaweedy flats of the sand-hills,
When the terns, our shapely "hirundos," are frolicing over their
supper.

Each ubiquitous bird is a host in itself,—earth and heaven
Are obscured in a flutter of wings; you forget your companions;
Your properly dignified notions all vanish instantem,
And you scream with the terns, as you twist through their endless
gyrations.

They who know have declared that true sportsmen with masculine
instincts,
Find keenest delight in destroying, like ruthless barbarians,
The flourishes God has supplied to the hard lines of nature
While ladies—not women—monopolize ornamentation.

"To dress it and keep it," was God's gre it commandment to Adam;
Not *dress her*, regardless of slaughter and anguish, and *keep her*,
By tricking her out in dead peltries to make her attractive,
While widowed ones weep o'er their wounds, and their young sterve
untended.