

was kept up and a very sensible deficiency was soon apparent in the bacon. At the end of a fortnight John made his appearance to know whether or no the smoking operation had been completed, and this alone brought the reckless fellows to a stand. He was informed that a couple of days more would be required to finish off. But what was now to be done: the bacon was very much diminished in size, and should the fact reach the ears of Sir James, Mr. Borthwick would lose him as a customer, and as a consequence they themselves would be paid off. The matter was taken into serious consideration, and even the boldest of the wights had some misgivings as to the final result of their knavery. Necessity is ever the mother of invention. A plan was devised which seemed very feasible, and it at once met a hearty approval, and they went away to their respective benches, with their minds a little eased, being quite satisfied that they would escape the impending mischief when their plan was fully developed.

On the forenoon of the following day the apprentices was set to work to sweep the shop and collect together all the shavings and rubbish that could be got, and pile it in the chimney. Having done so a light was applied, and in a few minutes the melting bacon was trickling down amongst the flames, helping to increase their fury. By and by the chimney took fire, and their object was accomplished. It blazed away for some time without any effort to check it till a shout was made from without that the house was on fire. All now was bustle and confusion, seemingly with a view to quench the flames. The police were on the alert, and a fire engine was speedily on the ground, but it did not require to play. When the fire was totally subdued they set themselves to work to clear out the fireplace, when lo! and behold! the stiches having melted down so much as to have lost their hold of the nails by which they were suspended, had fallen into the fire, and here they lay as nicely done as Ching-ping's roast pig, with this only difference, that it was roast bacon.

The scheme was complete. It was impossible for any one to have said what kind of form the bacon had prior to the blaze, for it was pretty much used up. Mr. Borthwick was in the emergency summoned to the scene of action, and having wisely gazed upon the roasted bacon, enquired minutely into the affair; but could not be made to understand how it was that the men did not take down the bacon when they required so large a fire to heat their cauls, rather than run the risk of burning it. He would rather have paid the value of it twenty times than by any possibility have offended Sir James; but of course this did not make matters a whit better.

A hurried note was sent off by the clerk expressing the deep regret of Mr. Borthwick at the untoward circumstance, and stating that he had some friends in the country to whom he would immediately apply to have the loss made up. He hoped that his Lordship would not take offence, as the incident was altogether beyond his power to foresee, or to have prevented. To corroborate the statements a messenger was despatched with the fragments in a bag that the parties interested might see the remains of the offering made to Bacchus.

This was the most sincere part of the whole proceeding, and Sir James declared himself satisfied that whoever was to blame it was not Mr. Borthwick, although it was as likely as not, that he might have about his establishment some reckless fellows whose carelessness alone had been the cause of the loss. He could not listen

to the proposal however of Mr. Borthwick supplying the place, as he had no hand in the matter, and it was through favour that it was there.

The messenger was told to take back the fragments and give them to the dog, and when he reached the shop he was received with a general shout. Four pots of ale and some biscuits were immediately sent for, and the bacchannals were revived. The burnt crust was pared off the blackened fragments, and they toasted their king and country, over what they declared the most exquisite rasher they had ever tasted, and they left it as a standing memorial that to ensure so delicate a treat from the hog, the preferable way was to fire the chimney. This was the introduction of smoked bacon into Edinburgh so far as is known to

PALEMON.

MR. KIRBY THE NATURALIST

The popular fame of Mr. Kirby rests upon the *Introduction to Entomology*, a work (partly written by him) full of interesting facts respecting the economy of the insect world. Amongst the scientific, his reputation depends on a variety of elaborate papers which he wrote for learned societies on subjects connected with natural history. For sixty years previous to the conclusion of his long life in 1850, he had devoted the leisure of a parsonage to that delightful study, and being a diligent and accurate observer, and an elegant and entertaining writer, he had attained the highest rank amongst the British naturalists of his day. It appears, from a memoir just published, that Mr. Kirby was born in 1769, and settled in 1782 in the cure of Barham, near Ipswich, where he was ultimately rector, and which he only left for his last long home sixty-eight years thereafter. In an age of sluggish theology, he was an earnest minister and zealous controversialist, all the time that he was cultivating a taste for natural objects. This is equally unexpected and creditable. And yet it does not appear that his personal conduct was characterized by anything like rigour, for, as an example, we find, from the journal of an entomological excursion in 1797, that it was commenced on a Sunday afternoon, and involved one other Sunday of constant travelling. A reference of the dates to an almanac enables us to establish this fact, so unlike the spirit of a zealous man in our times.

Of the sister sciences of nature, botany first attracted Mr. Kirby's regards. This is pursued in no hasty or superficial manner, but with the greatest perseverance and research. It was not enough for him to know a plant by sight, and to ascertain its proper name, but he compared the minutest parts of inflorescence and fructification; he sought for the most trifling differences in those nearly allied, and studied with a keen but generous criticism the various theories of writers on the science, from the earliest age to the time of the immortal Linnæus. Of every plant he met with, even to the daisy and primrose, the whole physiological structure was thoroughly investigated; he discovered, or rather observed, what it was which enabled some plants to endure great changes of temperature, while others perished;—the formation which enabled some to live in water, while others flourished in the most dry and arid sands; he carefully marked the causes which combined to clothe even rocks with verdure, in consequence of the wonderful structure of the plants inhabiting them, enabling them to live as it were by the suction of their numerous mouths, rather than by nourishment transmitted by a root in contact with that which would fer-

see to yield the ordinary food of plants. And as he thus remarked all these peculiar adaptations of plants to their respective situations, his mind was by a constant train of thought directed from the beauty and wondrous mechanism of the creature, to contemplate the supreme and incalculable glory of the Creator.

With a mind so predisposed and so filled for the study of entomology, a casual occurrence of a trivial nature was sufficient to awaken and give it direction. Observing accidentally, one morning, a very beautiful golden bug creeping on the sill of my window, I took it up to examine it, and finding its wings were of a more yellow hue than was common to my observation of these insects before, I was anxious carefully to examine any other of its peculiarities; and finding that it had twenty-two beautiful clear black spots upon its back, my captured animal was imprisoned in a bottle of gin, for the purpose, as I supposed, of killing him. On the following morning, anxious to pursue my observation, I took it again from the gin, and laid it on the window-sill to dry, thinking it dead; but the warmth of the sun very soon revived it: and hence commenced my further pursuit of this branch of natural history.

A Dr. Gwyn of Ipswich was his preceptor in this study. Though now in his seventy-fifth year, so much was the good old doctor interested in the pursuit of his friend, that he would frequently walk over to Barham, a distance of five miles, to see what had been the success of recent perambulations. The parsonage-house was then approached by a narrow wicket, with posts higher than the gate, and often, while working in his garden, or sitting in his parlour, Mr. Kirby would look up and see, to his great delight, the slave's hat of his lucid friend adorning one post, and the cumbersome wig and appertaining pig tail ornamenting the other. And soon the kind old man would walk in with his bald head, as he used to say, cool and ready for the investigation. These visits were always hailed with pleasure, the doughs of which were still fresh in the memory of Mr. Kirby, and would call forth expressions of affectionate gratitude, even when nearly half a century had elapsed, after his friend and Mæcenas, as he loved to call him, had gone to his rest.

There seems no room to doubt, that his studies tended not merely to the happiness of Mr. Kirby's life, but to its duration. It is at the same time abundantly evident, that much hard work was undergone. He carried on a most laborious correspondence with other naturalists, often extending a letter to the dimensions of a pamphlet: this altogether over and above his practical researches and his published writings. He took good-humoured views of most things, and was not easily put out of temper. A slight dash of absence of mind increased that quaintness of character so often found in zealous students. On an entomological excursion with two friends, Mr. Marsham and Mr. Macleay, it happened on their arriving at an old-fashioned wayside inn, that there was only one large room for them, with three beds in it. The arrangement having been made for the night, according to the custom of the time, three nightcaps were laid upon the dressing-table. Mr. Kirby retired before his companions, and was soon sound asleep. Perceiving no caps ready for them, his friends inquired for what they considered the due attentances of the pillow: they were assured by the hostess that three nightcaps were laid upon the table, but they stoutly averred they had not seen them; and the landlady no less stoutly maintaining her side of the question. What actually passed in her own mind did not transpire, but she ap-