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## ESSAY

ON THE FORESIGHT OF NATURE, IN PROVIDING  
FOR THE REPRODUCTION OF THE  
INSECT TRIBES.

BY EUGENE.

Among the innumerable manifestations of divine wisdom in the phenomena of nature, the unerring operation of those laws which provide for the reproduction of species, is pre-eminently worthy of our admiration. All bodies endowed with the principle of life, after having fulfilled their allotted duties in the area of creation, are doomed to perish in the unceasing progress of time; but not until the rudiments of a future generation are deposited, and the most perfect provision made for the development of a succeeding race, each after its kind. It is in the furtherance of this great end, that those astonishing instincts and varieties of form are observed to exert their utmost powers, and exhibit the strongest evidence of an omniscient Providence. From the minutest living thing that crawls beneath us, to animals holding the highest station in the scale, the same solicitude, the same wonderful sagacity is observable in attention to the wants of their individual offspring; and each may furnish indubitable proofs, were they wanting, of the existence of the Deity, as strong and irrefragable as the properties of the air we breathe, or the motions of a planet in its orbit. It is the intention, at present, to confine our remarks to the most interesting features in the history of Insect regeneration; and mention a few striking instances of that comprehensive wisdom which has adapted mechanical contrivance, and most marvellous intelligence, to the relative position and necessities of Insects, in reference to perpetuity of species.

The seeds of plants, wafted by the winds, or

dropped with the excrement of birds, are disseminated over the earth; and thus is the sterile rock, in the course of time, covered with vegetation, and the barren waste shaded with luxuriant foliage, affording protection and nourishment to innumerable tribes of tiny beings, possessing habits and appearance various as the plants upon which the greater portion take up their permanent abode. Every leaf is the nursery of a numerous colony, and yields subsistence to successive generations, of a species peculiar to the plant or tree of which they form a natural contingent. Besides being the temporary residence of *larvae*, that destroy, with unequalled voracity, the product of vegetation, before they assume that singular, intermediate state, which, with its subsequent phenomenon, has furnished that beautiful and poetic allegory of our corporeal dissolution, from whence the emancipated spirit wings his flight to the regions of immortality; and the intellectual Greeks, impressed with the forcible analogy, used to signify the soul and a butterfly the same word.

Insects, with few exceptions,\* undergo successive changes, (*metamorphoses*) from the grub, or larva, in which form they are excluded from the egg, and during which they attain their principal growth, and exhibit those amazing powers of vegetable consumption, of which our gardens may afford a sample. The next stage is denominated *Nympha* or *Aurelia*; in the former, the animal is still enabled to move about and take food, in the latter state, the usual functions of life appear to experience a temporary suspension, as the creature is enveloped in an impervious shroud, and remains torpid and inactive until it emerges from its prison as a perfect insect, (*Imago*;) and, as the

\* This rule does not apply to the flea, woodlouse, and spider, as they do not undergo any essential change after birth, except casting their skin; nor are they ranked with insects, properly.