

## DREAMS.

What are dreams? To me they appear like the echo of memory, thought's illumined shade, the magic glass of distant, faded scenes which have not yet become realities, and the apparition of events which have risen and operated on the mind in our waking hours. I have often reflected on the nature of a dream that is capable of affording to the imagination so much variety. Methinks it is a privilege to dream—to wander back to the blissful scenes of childhood, retread the path of early life, and enjoy again, in the hours of repose, those parted blessings which length of life to the awakened senses can never restore. Dreams, regardless of distance, enable us to see and converse with absent friends from whom we have been long separated, restore bloom to the cheek, brightness to the eye, animation to the form and language to the lips of those who have long slumbered in the tomb. O how have I been disappointed when exchanging the promises of a dream for the sober reality of reason! How oft are love's vows repeated, friendships revived, joys awakened and hopes excited in dreams, and how contradictory may be the next slumber! One brings back to imagination scenes we can never again in reality enjoy, restore the absent, brings back the dead, causing us to forget they are not of earth, and the next may transport the friend who is now with us to the extremity of the globe, while death is laying his icy finger on another. How much of our time is carried away with extravagant ideas! How many hopes bloom in slumber which wither in the morning light! O what have dreams made me? The possessor of immense wealth, the paragon of wit and beauty, the vogue of fashion, the exulting rival, the idol of affection, the decorated bride, and, again, the victim of death, discontent, pain, poverty, slander, fear and anxiety. And where has not the illusion carried me? To the last struggle with death and all its excitements—to the cold tenements of earth, anon conducting me to the paradise of perfection, far within the blue borders of outer heaven—left me on the broad bosom of ocean, to plead with the waves for life—led me through secret caverns, amid the ruins of desolated abbeys or haunted castles, till the imagination has become so excited as to break the bands of slumber. And I have always observed that dreams, whether pleasant or otherwise, leave upon the mind a corresponding sensation for some time after the illusion has ceased.—*Mary L. Horton.*

**ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE LIFE.**—We cannot take even a cursory survey of the host of living beings profusely spread over every portion of the globe, without a feeling of profound astonishment at the inconceivable variety of forms and constructions, to which animation has been imparted by creative Power. What can be more calculated to excite our wonder, than the diversity exhibited among insects, all of which, amidst endless modifications of shape, still preserve their conformity to one general plan of construction. The number of distinct species of insects already known and described, cannot be estimated at less than 100,000; and every day is adding to the catalogue. Of the comparatively large animals which live on land, how splendid is the field of observation that lies open to the naturalist! What variety is conspicuous in the tribes of quadrupeds and of reptiles; and what endless diversity exists in their habits, pursuits, and characters! How extensive is the study of birds alone; and how ingeniously, if we may so express it, has Nature interwoven in their construction every profitable variation, compatible with an adherence to the same general model of design, and the same ultimate reference to the capacity for motion through the light element of air. What profusion of being is displayed in the wide expanse of the ocean, through which are scattered such various and unknown multitudes of animals! Of fishes alone the varieties, as to conformation and endowments, are endless. Still more curious and anomalous, both in their external form and their internal economy, are the numerous orders of living beings that occupy the lower divisions of the animal scale; some swimming in countless myriads near the surface, some dwelling in the inaccessible depths of the ocean; some attached to shells, or other solid structures, the productions of their own bodies, and which, in process of time, form, by their accumulation, enormous submarine mountains, rising often from unfathomable depths to the surface. What sublime views of the magnificence of the creation have been disclosed by the microscope, in the world of infinite minuteness, peopled by countless multitudes of atomic beings, which animate almost every fluid in nature! Of these a vast variety of species has been discovered, each animalcule being provided with appropriate organs, endowed with spontaneous powers of motion, and giving unequivocal signs of individual vitality.

Thus, if we review every region of the globe, from the scorching sands of the equator to the icy realms of the poles, or from the lofty mountain-summits to the dark abysses of the deep; if we penetrate into the shades of the forest, or into the caverns and secret recesses of the earth; nay, if we take up the minutest portion of stagnant water, we still meet with life in some new and unexpected form, well adapted to the circumstances of its situation. Wherever life can be sustained, we find life produced. It would almost seem as if Nature had been thus

lavish and sportive in her productions, with the intent to demonstrate to man the fertility of her resources, and the inexhaustible fund from which she has so prodigally drawn forth the means requisite for the maintenance of all these diversified combinations, for their repetition in endless perpetuity, and for their subordination to one harmonious scheme of general good.

The vegetable world is no less prolific in wonders than the animal. In this, as in all other parts of creation, ample scope is found for the exercise of the reasoning faculties, and abundant sources are supplied of intellectual enjoyment. To discriminate the different characters of plants, amidst the infinite diversity of shape, of colour, and of structure, which they offer to our observation, is the laborious, yet fascinating, occupation of the botanist. Here, also, we are lost in admiration at the never-ending variety of forms successively displayed to view in the innumerable species which compose this kingdom of nature, and at the energy of that vegetative power, which, amidst such great differences of situation, sustains the modified life of each individual plant, and which continues its species in endless perpetuity. Wherever circumstances are compatible with vegetable existence, we there find plants arise. It is well known that, in all places where vegetation has been established, the germs are so intermingled with the soil, that whenever the earth is turned up, even from considerable depths, and exposed to the air, plants are soon observed to spring, as if they had been recently sown, in consequence of the germination of seeds which had remained latent and inactive during the lapse of perhaps many centuries. Islands formed by coral-reefs, which have arisen above the level of the sea, become, in a short time, covered with verdure. From the materials of the most sterile rock, and even from the yet recent cinders and lava of the volcano, Nature prepares the way for vegetable existence. The slightest crevice or inequality is sufficient to arrest the invisible germs that are always floating in the air, and affords the means of sustenance to diminutive races of lichens and mosses. These soon overspread the surface, and are followed, in the course of a few years, by successive tribes of plants of gradually-increasing size and strength; till at length the island, or other favoured spot, is converted into a natural and luxuriant garden, of which the productions, rising from grasses to shrubs and trees, present all the varieties of the fertile meadow, the tangled thicket, and the widely-spreading forest. Even in the desert plains of the torrid zone, the eye of the traveller is often refreshed by the appearance of a few hardy plants, which find sufficient materials for their growth in these arid regions: and in the realms of perpetual snow which surround the poles, the navigator is occasionally startled at the prospect of fields of a scarlet hue, the result of a wide expanse of microscopic vegetation.—*ROGET'S Bridgewater Treatise.*

**EARLY FLOWERS OF SPRING.**—The love of flowers seems a naturally-implanted passion, without any alloy or debasing object as a motive: the cottage has its pink, its rose, its polyanthus: the villa, its geranium, its dahlia, and its clematis: we cherish them in youth, we admire them in declining days; but, perhaps, it is the early flowers of spring that always bring with them the greatest degree of pleasure and our affections seem immediately to expand at the sight of the first opening blossom under the sunny wall, or sheltered bank, however humble its race may be. In the long and sombre months of winter, our love of nature, like the buds of vegetation, seems closed and torpid; but like them, it unfolds and reanimates with the opening year, and we welcome our long-lost associates with a cordiality, that no other season can excite, as friends in a foreign clime. The violet of autumn is greeted with none of the love with which we hail the violet of spring; it is unseasonable; perhaps it brings with it rather a thought of melancholy than of joy; we view it with curiosity, not affection; and thus the late is not like the early rose. It is not intrinsic beauty or splendour that so charms us, for the fair maids of spring cannot compete with the grander matrons of the advanced year; they would be unheeded, perhaps lost, in the rosy bowers of summer and of autumn; no it is our first meeting with a long-lost friend, the reviving glow of a natural affection, that so warms us at this season: to maturity they give pleasure, as a harbinger of the renewal of life, a signal of awakening nature, or of a higher promise: to youth, they are expanding beings, opening years, hilarity and joy; and the child let loose from the house, riots in the flowery mead, and is

“Monarch of all he surveys.”

There is not a prettier emblem of spring than an infant sporting in the sunny field, with its osier basket wreathed with butter-cups, orchises, and daisies. With summer flowers we seem to live as with our neighbours, in harmony and good-will: but spring flowers are cherished as private friendships.—*Journal of a Naturalist.*

**ANECDOTE OF ROBERT BURNS.**—The following is a striking, and we believe, original anecdote of Burns:—“I well remember (says the Rev. Henry Duncan, in his ‘Philosophy of the Seasons’) with what delight I listened to an interesting conversation which, while yet a schoolboy, I

enjoyed an opportunity of hearing in my father's manse between the poet Burns and another poet, my near relative the amiable Blacklock. The subject was the fidelity of a dog. Burns took up the question with all the ardour and kindly feeling with which the conversation of that extraordinary man was so remarkably imbued. It was a subject well suited to call forth his powers; and, when handled by such a man, not less suited to interest the youthful listener.

The anecdotes by which it was illustrated have long escaped my memory; but there was one sentiment expressed by Burns with his own characteristic enthusiasm, which as it threw a new light into my mind, I shall never forget. ‘Man,’ said he, ‘is the god of the dog. He knows no other he can understand no other; and see how he worships him! With what reverence he crouches at his feet, what love he savours upon him, with what dependence looks up to him, and with what cheerful alacrity he obeys him! His whole soul is wrapped up in his god: all powers and faculties of his nature are devoted to service; and these powers and faculties are amenable to the intercourse. Divines tell us that it ought just to be with the Christian; but the dogs put the Christian to shame.’

**FORMATION OF COAL AND IRON.**—The impetus of coal and iron in administering to the supply of our daily wants, gives to every individual amongst us almost every moment of our lives, a personal concern of which few are conscious, in the geological events of those distant eras. We are all brought into immediate connection with all the vegetation that clothed the earth before one-half of its actual surface had yet been formed. The trees of the primeval forests have not, like modern trees, undergone decay, yielding back their elements to the earth and atmosphere, by which they are nourished; but treasured up in subterranean storehouses, have been transformed into enduring beds of coal, which, in these latter ages, have become the sources of heat, light, and wealth. My fire now burns with fuel, and my lamp is now shining with the light of gas, derived from that has been buried, for countless ages, in the deep dark recesses of the earth. We prepare our food, maintain our forges, and the extraordinary power of steam-engines, with the remains of plants of ancient and extinct species, which were swept from the earth at the formation of the transition of strata was completed. Our instruments of cutlery, the tools of our mechanics, and the countless machines which are constructed by the infinitely varied applications of iron, are derived from a fuel, by the aid of which we reduce it to its metallic state, and apply it to innumerable uses in the economy of life. Thus, from the wreck of forests that waved on the surface of the primeval lands, and from ferruginous matter that was lodged at the bottom of the primeval water, we derive our chief supplies of coal and iron—those two fundamental elements of art and industry, which contribute more than any other mineral productions of the earth to increase the riches, and multiply the comforts, and ameliorate the condition of mankind.—*Buckland's Bridgewater Treatise.*

## THE PEARL.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 1837.

**OUR FIRST APPEARANCE.**—At length we are seated at the Editor's table. Before us, scattered in chaotic confusion, are books and papers of almost every form and description under heaven—in the midst of this vast mass of folly and wisdom is a beautiful bronze mirror, and the jetty fluid which it contains, shining in the rays of the sun, seems to invite our attention and our regard.—And now the finishing stroke has been put to our grey goose quill and its polished nib appears to prove the virtues of the liquid they are destined to and to control. But let us at once invoke all our powers and summon up all our courage, in order to make a first appearance. To your profound stoics, alike terrified by fear or love, we make not our sympathetic appeal; your men of real modesty, we ask to conceive our situation at the present moment,—studying ease and good humor while every pulse of our heart throbs with anxiety—smiling with all the pleasantry of the gay, filled with all the dread of the hypochondriac—trembling with the terrors of the tribunal before which we are to appear, and yet putting on the appearance of a frigid insensibility. O the rich enjoyment of a first appearance in editorial columns! Gentle reader, and we fully accord to you this appellation, for we doubtless are touched at our manifold distresses; we assume no small task, for the first time to make a graceful print. We know not what it is to make a man