

When dear silence reigns, and the heart-cheering din
Of labour, salutes us no more.

When with labour worn down, and shiv'ring with cold:
Faint, languid, fatigued, and unblest;
The body unable its course to uphold
Of toil, asks the blessings of rest.

Then how sweet to retire, to home—belov'd home
Where smiles and carress await
The father and husband untempted to roam
For pleasure, such smiles can create.

When the dark clouds of Evening's wintry gloom,
Has contracted the circle of light;
And Nature is wrapt in her sable costume,
By the shades of a moonless night.

How sweet, while the pitiless storm roars aloud,
With impetuous fearful sway.
To recount round the hearth to the list'ning crowd
The toils and fatigues of the day!

Or, with gratitude fir'd, the anthem to raise,
With simple harmonious tongue—
Tho' less lofty, the same as the chorus of praise,
By angel and seraphim sung.

"Let him who hath lov'd and wash'd with his blood
And blest us—for ever be blest—"
They sing—and commending themselves unto God,
In peace seek the comfort of rest.

Thus the pilgrim traveller enters his rest,
Worn down by the toils of the day;
To earth bids adieu—to the land of the blest,
Soars in rapt'rous transport away.

And there, where no wintry storms ever blow,
Nor hurricanes roar their alarm;
Nor sorrow, nor pain, the inhabitants know,
Secured from all possible harm.

There to stand in the ranks of yon countless host'
With honour and vict'ry crown'd;
Arrayed in the vestments which royal' boast,
While their brightness sheds glory around.

'Tis heaven on earth to anticipate this;
And, with fervour, already I long
To escape from this prison and share in the bliss
Of singing the Conqueror's song.

Then glide on ye periods, haste, haste, in your course
Ye slow moving minutes and hours,
And bear me to JESUS, the end and the course
Of the joy of your heavenly pow'rs.

THE BOOK OF NATURE LAID OPEN.

SHRUBS.

As much that has been already said respecting the utility of trees, may be applied in common to this order, I shall confine myself to the three particulars in which they may be said to differ most from the former; the first is their stature, the second their greater pliability, and the third the prickly armour by which many of them are covered.

Some shrubs, as the gooseberry, the rasp, and the currant bushes, so common in our gardens, gratify the palate, and temper the blood during the summer months with agreeable and cooling fruit; others, as the rose, delight and please the eye by the beauty of their flowers; or regale the olfactory nerves with the fragrance of their perfumes, as the sweet scented briar: but how could these several ends have been accomplished, if, by a more exalted exposure the fruit-bearing bushes had placed their treasures beyond our reach—every rose, with its back turned to us

had been "born to blush unseen"—and each aromatic shrub, removed far above the sense of swelling, had literally been left

"To waste its sweetness in the desert air."

With regard to that considerable share of pliant elasticity possessed by some of them, how easily does this admit the branches to be turned aside and to resume their former position, in the gathering of the fruit or flowers, and how serviceable does this property enable us to make some of them in the form of hoops, baskets, or wicker work of any description, while the sharp pointed prickles by which they are armed, serve only as weapons of defence for themselves, but furnish us with cheap and secure fences against the inroads of straggling cattle, and the unwelcome intrusion of the unprincipled vagrant.

HERBS.

Herbs in a special manner may be said to constitute the food of man and beast, as well as to yield their assistance in an infinity of ways;—and behold! in what profusion they spring forth; in what numerous bands they appear. Yonder a field of golden-eared wheat presents to the view a most prolific crop of what forms the chief part of the staff of life.—Here a few acres of long-bearded barley ripen, to provide us with our favourite beverage. On the right hand stand the tall growing and slender oats and flowering potatoes, to revive and keep alive the hopes of the poor; while, on the left, the heavy-laden bean, and low-creeping pea, in lengthened files vegetate to furnish provender for our horses; or the globular turnip increases its swelling bulk to lay up for our herds a supply of food when the softer herbage of the field is locked up by the congealing powers of winter.

But what a spontaneous crop of luxuriant herbage do our meadows present in the appointed season, and in what a profusion of wholesome pasture do the numerous flocks of sheep and cattle roam? Whether they frequent the solitary holm, beside the still waters, or range the pathless steep; still they are followed by the goodness of the Lord:—myriads of grassy tufts spring up on every side, and they are satisfied out of the treasures of providence.

But the herbaceous productions of the field are not universally calculated for the purposes of food.—In some places numerous groups of tall, thin, flexible plants make their appearance, whose filmy coats being properly manufactured, are converted into the most costly and delicate raiment; while others of a coarser texture furnish the mariner with wings to his vessel, cordage to tighten his masts, or the ponderous cable to stay his bark in midst of the fluctuating element.

But here their services do not end; for, when worn out in one shape they assume a new form, and not only furnish the material from which is formed the wrapper of the manufacturer, and the package of the merchant, but that invaluable article upon which I now write—upon which we are able to hold converse with friends at a distance—and by means of which, man transmits his thoughts to man, and generations unborn are enabled to hold converse with past ages!

By means of these pliant productions we are also supplied with a variety of seeds and oils, of much request in common life; and wherever dis-

ease is known, there, we have reason to believe, medical herbs spring up as antidotes; some communicating their healing virtues by the root, some by the stem or stalk, some by the leaves, and others by the flowers or seeds. A number of these, and many others of the greatest utility in medicine, come forth in various places of the globe without the aid of art, and are found growing wild among the herbs of the field;—but these are not the effects of chance.—They were originally planted by the hands of Omnipotence, at the suggestion of divine benevolence, prompted by Omniscience. It was the Lord who created medicines out of the earth: He foresaw the distresses of his creatures, and in pity to their calamities, not only commissioned the balm to spring up in Gilead for the healing of the eastern tribes, but has spread abroad that boundless variety of medical plants, which are to be found in every climate, suited to the diseases of those particular spots, where providence, all-wise, hath fixed the lot of their inhabitants.

What a beautiful variety of nutritious esculents, and exquisitely formed flowers do our gardens present!—Here the Parsley with her frizzled locks, the Celery with her outstretched arms, the Asparagus with his towering stem, the Artichoke with his turgid top, the Cauliflower with her milky dome, the Cabbage with her swelling form, a variety of greens with their curled leaves, and long files of peas and beans await in silence their masters's call to do homage at his table;—and here too is deposited, among a number of valuable and useful roots, that excellent farinaceous substitute for bread, the wholesome potatoe.

FLOWERS.

But for what purpose do these charming Flowers come forth? Is it merely to please our eyes with their brilliant colours, and regale the sense of smelling with their odoriferous perfumes, that they unfold their fascinating beauties and emit their pleasing fragrance? Or, is it to attract those numerous insects which swarm among them; and riot amid their liquid sweets?

That flowers were designed for both these purposes is apparent from the sensations we experience when we have leisure to visit those delightful spots, and the assiduous eagerness which the busy bee evinces in roaming from flower to flower, in order to extract their balmy juices.—But there is another, and that a most important use to which the flowery race may be made subservient:—

IN REASON'S EAR THEY BECOME PREACHERS.

The upright philosopher of the land of Uz, and that devout admirer of the works of nature, Israel's king, DAVID, both took occasion to compare the uncertain tenure of human life, to the frail and perishable state of a flower; The prophet ISAIAH represents the transient glory of the crown of pride as being like to one of these fading beauties, and our SAVIOUR has demonstrated that an important lesson may be learned against a too anxious care, and pride in dress, by a right consideration of these gay visitants: "Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that SOLOMON in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

It must, therefore, add much to the value of these short lived monitors, in the estimation of the wise, and make their peaceful abodes be sought after with the greater avidity by