

POPULAR TALES.

Original.

THE PHILOSOPHER.

One beautiful day in June I took up my gun in order to amuse myself in a ramble through the forest. It was a day truly inviting to the lover of nature; for every thing seemed to have assumed an unusual gladness. Nature had put on her bridal robes and seemed to entice her admirer among her beauties. As I strolled along the plain, interspersed with groves, and prairies almost destitute of a tree, the music of the birds fell sweetly on my ear, and the flowers and shrubbery around me sent forth their perfume upon the glad and sunny air; myriads of insects were glittering in the beams of their common father, the sun—dancing in the mazy round of pleasure. The humming bird, the minutest and most beautiful of the feathered creation, was sipping the nectar from the cup of every delicate flower, and fitting in the pride of its beautiful colors o'er the sunny scene. I could almost imagine these beautiful little creatures in the richness of their changeable plumage of the ruby and sapphire tints, so many fairies, sporting in apparent happiness through the choicest of nature's beauties: This, said I to myself, perhaps was man's state in the garden of Eden ere knowledge cursed his race; ere we were doomed to know what we were. Ye little peris of the flowery world, doomed to sport away your life among such blissful scenes, pleasure is your end and aim—thy wealth the sweet lipped flower—thy bed its downy bottom! How different is the lot of the gifted son of reason! The exhilarating aspect of every thing; the loud melodious and continued warbling of the many colored minstrels of the new-blown woods, and the expansive richness of nature's green and odoriferous face, all joined to absorb my passions in admiration. I was unwilling to be the only being capable of disturbing the concord of nature's works. My gun with which I had intended to amuse myself by waging war against the feathered tribe, was slung behind me, and I sauntered on unmindful-whither, occupied only with contemplation and delight. At one time I would listen to the gentle courtship of the dove, cooing in melancholy strains among the dense foliage of the beech and sugar maple or to the loud and distant drumming of the tufted wood-pecker at the top of some old tree. Thus strolling along watching the scarlet bird and orange breast on the tops of the loftiest trees, flashing like diamonds, and singing to their sitting mates the song of joy and pleasure, I came to a beautiful stream, whose

golden sands and pure and limpid water over shadowed with willows here and there, and fringed with honey suckles, wild tulips and red cockades, added a new zest to my solitary but charming and romantic ramble. Near this silver-bosomed rivulet the wild vine clinging with luxuriant embrace round the snowy arms of the wild thorn, the plumb tree or the golden willow threw forth its exquisite odor, enrapturing the sense. It is impossible to imagine a finer perfume than is emitted from a large group of wild vines. Among these, thousands of bees were busily employed in storing up their honied treasures. I sat down beneath a willow, bending to the ground by the weight of the encircling vines, on a mossy rock half buried in the ground. In the clear stream that glided by me, the playful trout, unconscious of my presence, ever and anon turned up his speckled side to the sunny ray, jumped to catch a floating fly on the water's top. Every thing that I saw was at peace, pursuing pleasure and void of the fretful cares of man. It is thus, methought, with creation, and why should it not be so with us? Why, O man, should it fall to thy lot alone to pine? Does thy vanity tell thee that knowledge is a sufficient compensation for the absence of pleasure and happiness? If the end of knowledge is happiness, surely the untaught beings of creation possess it in a high degree. They know not discontent, the fitful sparks of nature's freaks; they are born unconscious of all but that they are—guided by the impulse of pleasure alone, they die heedless and unknowing whence they came or whither they go. And what art thou, O man? born a being of reason, yet ignorant of your primitive origin, or why you are what you are; capable of admiring nature, and of distinguishing between good and evil motives: yet surrounded with a dismal circle of uncertainty, and buried in a gulf of mysteries whose whispers call the soul to thought. Seated thus, the sleepy buzzing of the bees above my head and the stillness of every thing around, caused me involuntarily in the midst of such reveries, to drop into sleep.

As I lay in a vision, a maiden clothed in white, crowned with a chaplet of flowers and holding a garland of the same in her hand, appeared to stand before me. She gazed in silence on me as I seemed to recline on a bed of flowers. In the intensesness of her eye of azure blue, there seemed to rest a placid smile. The wind gently moved her deep black tresses and showed a cheek, before hidden, of the peach's velvet hue. She extended her hand to me as I gazed in unspeakable admiration at