

retiring ocean grow fainter and fainter, began to sustain such vegetation as the Lord thought fit. A thousand years are to Him but as yesterday, and we cannot tell how long it took to do all this; but new elements were wanting to make it available for man, so soon to appear in his majesty, and new elements were forthcoming. The internal fires so long imprisoned beneath the weight of the incumbent earth, having done their duty in raising the continent began to find vent in every weak spot caused by its elevation, and broke out with wild fury pouring streams of lava far and wide, and desolating the land with volcanoes, but only that it might grow greener and richer than ever, with a new and hitherto unknown fertility; for new soil was formed from the fire-tried elements of the old, producing that diversity of scene which now gladdens the eye of man.

Abounding everywhere, and full of interest are the the birds we meet with; in the deep solitudes of the woods, the lugubrious cawing of the Crow grates upon the ear with hollow voice, which has for ages been an object of evil omen to the credulous and ignorant;—the monotonous sound of the distant Woodpecker, "tapping the hollow beech tree," or making the woods resound with his notes of laughter, takes up the tale; the Blue-bird, the Titmouse, the Finch tribe, with their never-ceasing song, make the very copse alive with melody; whilst the Bobolink on the wing, surveying the grassy plains below him, chants forth a jingling melody of short variable notes, with such confusion and rapidity, that it appears as if a whole colony of birds were tuning their notes for some great gathering in Nature's concert-hall. Here and there a Lark soared from his feeding-place in the grass soars up, bubbling forth his melody in globules of silvery sound, and settles upon some tall tree, and waves his wings, and sinks to the swaying twigs. We hear too a Quail piping from the meadow fence, and another trilling his answering whistle from the hills. Nearer by, a tyrant King-bird is poised on the topmost branch of a veteran tree, who now and then dashes down assassin-like upon some home-bound, honey-laden Bee, and then, with a smack of his bill, resumes his predatory watch. Over the pool, the Swifts, and Martins, and Swallows seem to vie with each other in acrobatic flight,—now skimming the surface of the water,—now making, with a touch of their wing, a scarcely perceptible ripple. When seen on their first arrival in Spring, thus hovering so near the surface of the pool, we may readily understand how that theory originated, and for years attained credence, that Swallows spent their winters safely ensconced in mud at the bottom of ponds, or in similar agreeable situations, emerging with the first warm rays of the vernal sun.

Besides the Birds, flicker and flit hither and thither the Butterflies, small and large, white, grave, and gay; Grasshoppers are noisy beside long stretches of green paths—improvident fellows who sing all through the livelong Summer day, unmindful and heedless of coming storms, or Winter's cold: and who would think, when looking on the painted Butterfly, flashing its gaudy colors in the sunlight, that a few weeks ago it was a grovelling worm,—an emblem of destruction—a Caterpillar? How wonderful the change; how beautiful the transformation!

How typical of the spirit of man, which fettered to the earth in the flesh, shall one day emerge from the chrysalis of death, and wing its flight to the bowers of Eden!

Bounding through the highest tree-tops in fearless leaps, light and graceful in form, with bright black eyes and nimbleness in its every movement, the Squirrel enlivens the scene, who after scrutinizing round some moss-grown branch for the disturber of his haunts, hies away from our gaze, to his nest in some hollow limb, where his booty of acorns, and chestnuts, and hickory-nuts is stored for Winter use; and we think how some of our own species might relieve our Charitable Societies of many of their cares, if they would only take this little provident fellow as an example.

But the lengthening shadows warn us to retrace our steps, ere the dark pull of night settles over mountain, valley, tree, and stream. The fogs are rising in the meadows,—a thin white line of vapor marks, with well defined outline, the course of the stream flowing through them. Long before we reach home the curtain is raised that concealed the celestial host,—those fires that glow forever, and yet are not quenched. There they move, as they moved and shone when the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy. It was the same blue spangled dome on high, above old Rome, when she rioted in all her magnificence and luxury. The shepherds who watched "their flocks by night," were warned to study that living page, for a light to guide them to the expected Messiah: the Arab as he travelled the boundless fields of sand trusted to those burning orbs, for they alone were his chart and compass. Beyond the grasp of poor frail man, they light him from the cradle to the sepulcher. Their beams are shed upon his monument, until that too is crumbled away, and no token remains to point the spot where his ashes lie. Could a voice be heard from their blue home, doubtless it would speak of a race that passed from this continent, long ere the canvass of Columbus was furled upon these shores; a race that preceded the Indian—a people whose remains are yet among us, but whose history lies deep in oblivion! All on earth has changed; but the glorious heavens remain unchanged; sun, moon, planet and satellite, star and constellation, galaxy and nebula still bear witness to the power, the wisdom, and the love which placed them of old, and still sustains them where they are!

And now our ramble over, we feel we have associated ourselves more closely with Nature, and her mighty Master—God. The materials with which that Eternal Power writes his name may vary, but the style of the hand-writing is the same. And whether in illuminated characters he paints it in the field, or in the starry alphabet, bids it flame forth from the face of the firmament; whether He works in the curious mosaic of a shell, or inscribes it in Hebrew letters on tables of stone; devotion recognises its Heavenly Father's hand, and admires, with reverence, His matchless autograph.

We purpose in our next issue commencing a series of Papers on 'the Natural History of this Continent, from the pen of Mr. Small.—The total absence of an accurate specification of American Animals only, is a want much felt, and it is our intention that these Papers shall be pleasing to all our readers.

