

of their architecture to a person who had never seen one of those beautiful and commodious habitations, which even a stonish and excite the amazement of children.

The different orders of birds exhibit great variety in the materials and structure of their nests. Those of the rapacious tribes are in general rude, and composed of coarse materials, as dried twigs, bents, &c. But they are often lined with soft substances. They build in elevated rocks, ruinous and sequestered castles and towers, and in other solitary retirements.—The airy or nest of the eagle is quite flat, and not hollow, like those of other birds.—The male and female commonly place their nest between two rocks, in a dry and inaccessible situation. The same nest, it is said, serves the eagle during life. The structure is so considerable, and composed of such solid materials, that it may last many years. Its form resembles that of a floor. Its basis consists of sticks about five or six feet in length, which are supported at each end, and these are covered with several layers of rushes and heath. An eagle's nest was found in the Peak of Derbyshire, which Willoughby describes in the following manner: 'it was made of great sticks, resting one end on the edge of a rock, the other on a birch tree. Upon these was a layer of rushes, and over them a layer of heath, and on the heath rushes again; upon which lay one young, and an addle egg; and by them a lamb, a hare, and three heath pouls. The nest was about two yards square, and had no hollow in it.' But the butcher birds, or shrikes, which are less rapacious than eagles and hawks, build their habitations in scrubs and bushes, and employ moss, wool, and other soft materials.

The birds belonging to the order of Pies in Mr. Pennant's Genera of birds, are extremely irregular in constructing their nests. The common magpies build their nests in trees, and their structure is admirably contrived for affording warmth and protection to the young. The nest is not open at top; it is covered, in the most dexterous manner, with an arch or dome, and a small opening in the side of it is left, to give the parents an opportunity of passing in and out at their pleasure. To protect their eggs and young from the attacks of other animals, the magpies place, all round the external surface of their nest, sharp briars and thorns. The long tailed titmouse, or ox-eye, builds nearly like the wren, but with still greater art. With the same materials as the rest of the structure, the titmouse builds an arch over the top of the nest, which resembles an egg, e-

rected upon one end, and leaves a small hole in the side for a passage. Both eggs and young, by this contrivance, are defended from the injuries of the air, rain, cold, &c. That the young may have a soft and warm bed, she lines the inside of the nest with feathers, down, and cobwebs. The sides and roof are composed of moss and wool interwoven in the most curious and artificial manner.

Many small birds suspend their nests on tender twigs of trees, to prevent them from being destroyed by monkeys.—In Europe, there are only three birds which build pensile nests, namely, the common oriole, the *parus pendulinus*, or hang-nest titmouse; and another pensile nest, belonging to some unknown bird, was lately discovered by Mr. Pennant, near the house of Blair in Athole, in the north of Scotland. 'In a spruce fir tree,' Mr. Pennant remarks, 'was a hang-nest of some unknown bird, suspended at the four corners to the boughs. It was open at top, an inch and a half diameter, and two deep; the sides and bottom thick; the materials moss, worsted, and birch bark, lined with feathers.'

It is a singular, though a well attested fact, that the cuckow makes no nest, and neither hatches nor feeds her own young. 'The hedge sparrow,' says Mr. Willoughby, 'is the cuckow's nurse, but not the hedge-sparrow only, but also ring doves, larks, finches. I myself, with many others, have seen a wag-tail feeding a young cuckow. The cuckow herself builds no nest; but having found the nest of some little bird, she either devours or destroys the eggs she there finds, and, in the room thereof, lays one of her own, and so forsakes it. The silly bird returning, sits on this egg, hatches it, and, with a great deal of care and toil, broods, feeds, and cherishes the young cuckow for her own, until it be grown up and able to fly and shift for itself. Which thing seems so strange, monstrous, and absurd, that for my part I cannot sufficiently wonder there should be such an example in Nature; nor could I ever have been induced to believe that such a thing had been done by Nature's instinct, had I not with my own eyes seen it. For Nature, in other things, is wont constantly to observe one and the same law and order, agreeable to the highest reason and prudence; which in this case is, that the dams make nests for themselves, if need be, sit upon their own eggs, and bring up their own young after they are hatched. This economy, in the history of the cuckow, is not only singular, but seems to contradict one of the most universal laws established among