

and the peaceful lake with its

“ Sister Isles

Beneath the oak’s umbrageous covert, sown
With lilies of the valley like a field.”

Even such a small thing as the wild duck’s nest, which all our sportsmen have seen, has a wonderful beauty of its own,

“ The imperial consort of the Fairy-king
Owns not a sylvan bower or gorgeous cell
With emerald floored, and with purpureal shell,
Ceilinged and roofed, that is so fair a thing
As this low structure, for the tasks of Spring
Prepared by one who loves the buoyant swell
Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to dwell,
And spreads in steadfast peace her brooding wing.”

Thus have we the beauties of Inanimate Nature. Animate Nature also has its beauties. The lithe, agile panther, the majestic lion, the intelligent elephant. From the great whale with its spoutings like enormous fountains, and the sword-fish with its strong weapon, down to the pearly-hued shell of the nautilus of the Mediterranean, and the coral builders of the Pacific, though perhaps their beauty lies rather in the reef than in the builder.

Who does not know the glorious, powerful beauty of the king of the air, the golden eagle, and the gorgeous beauty of the smallest of birds, the humming-bird, with its brilliant tropical plumage. And the swan, too, of our English lakes.

“ Fair is the swan, whose majesty, prevailing
O’er breezeless waters on Locarno’s lake,
Bears him on, while, proudly sailing
He leaves behind a moon-illumined wake.
Behold ! the mantling spirit of reserve
Fashions his neck into a goodly curve ;
An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings
Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs.
To which, on some unruffled morning, clings
A flaky weight of winter’s purest snows.”