

[Written for the *Maple Leaf*.

THE SILENT AND INVISIBLE ARCHITECTS.

BY S. E. H.



HE world is so accustomed to noise and display, that the power of an unseen, silent cause, is seldom appreciated. We find it very difficult to realize, or even to comprehend the power of a silent, though steady working in any of the departments of nature. It is far easier for us to understand the destruction produced by an earthquake or a volcano, than to realize the mighty changes going on around us by the constant operation of any powerful, though silent cause. The effects in the latter case are evident to our senses, but as they are brought about little by little, we fail to be impressed with them, and still more fail to refer them to the working of a powerful agency. Yet, it is by the silent operation of natural laws that all mighty changes are effected, whether they be sudden or gradual. It is so in the operation of the laws of attraction, of light, and in fact of all physical laws. The sun in his daily round, sounds no trumpet before him, yet his rays penetrate the coldest clime, imparting life and warmth to the most inclement region.

And as a general rule, we may say, that the most effective working is also the most silent.

As an illustration of what may be accomplished by unremitting toil, we may point to the quiet builders in Torrid seas—the coral architects, whose labors, in a few short years, have wonderfully changed the face of the globe, increasing its habitable parts, and obstructing the safe navigation of tropical waters. When looking at the results of their labors, we should expect that the builders of structures so vast, would themselves be large and mighty. But if we attempt an examination of them, we shall find each builder to be a minute insect, having little definite form, seeming so frail as to be utterly unable to support its own life, much less to fashion the abode of so superior a being as man.

But navigators of those tropic seas, tell us of hundreds of miles of coral reef, which have been constructed by these minute insects. The coral insect belongs to one of the lowest orders of