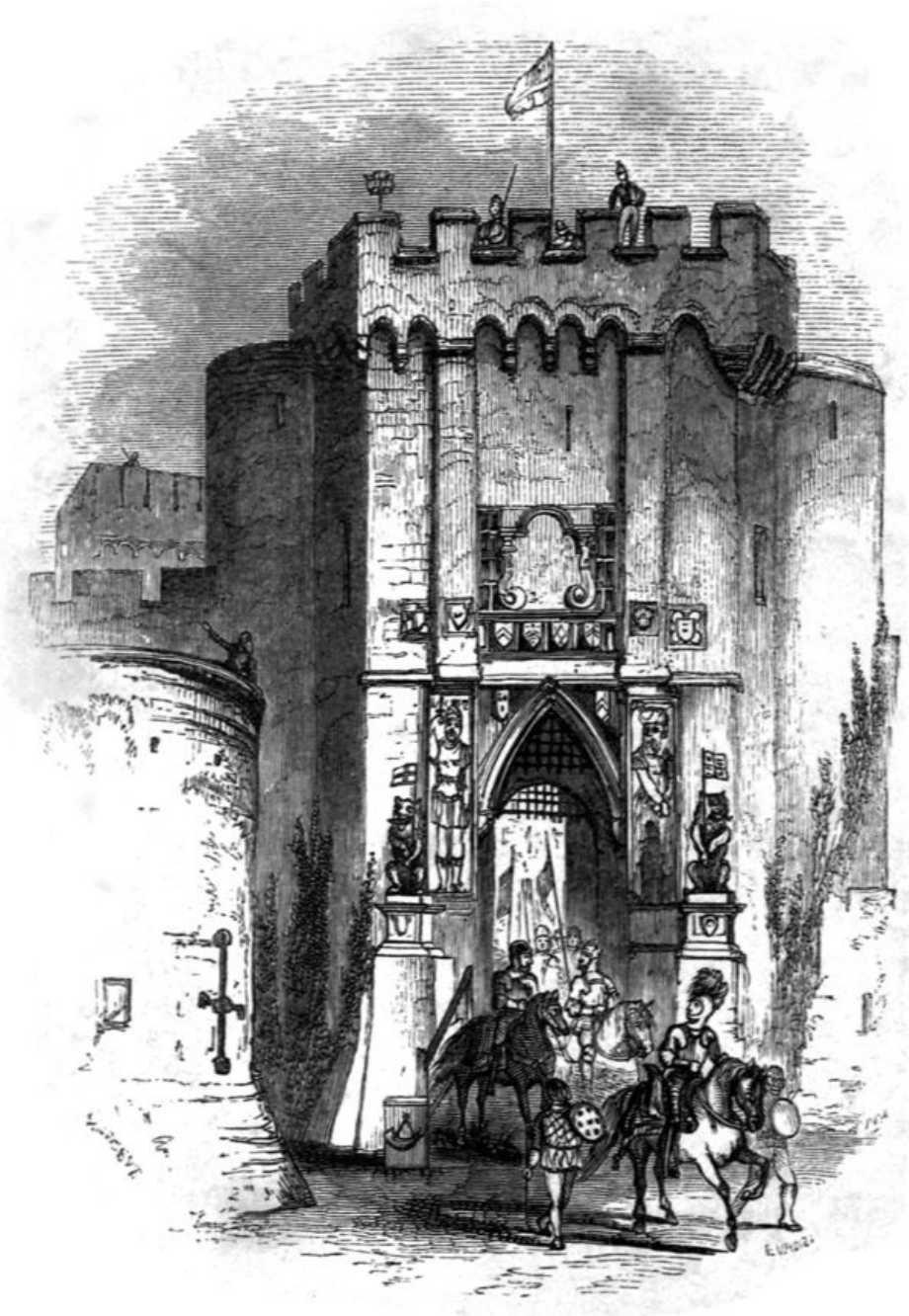
Title: Glimpses of Nature, and Objects of Interest Described, During a Visit to the Isle of Wight

Author: Mrs. Loudon

Release date: February 6, 2015 [EBook #48183]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Chris Curnow, David Maranhao and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net (This file was produced from images generously made available by The Internet Archive)



SOUTHAMPTON BAR IN THE OLDEN TIME.

GLIMPSES OF NATURE,

AND

OBJECTS OF INTEREST DESCRIBED,

DURING

A VISIT TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

DESIGNED TO ASSIST AND ENCOURAGE YOUNG PERSONS IN FORMING HABITS OF OBSERVATION.

BY MRS. LOUDON,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LADIES' COMPANION TO THE FLOWER GARDEN,"
"FACTS FROM THE WORLD OF NATURE," ETC.

Second Edition

WITH ADDITIONS AND FORTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON:
GRANT AND GRIFFITH,
SUCCESSORS TO
JOHN HARRIS, CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

M.DCCC.XLVIII.

PREFACE.

On the 21st of August, 1843, Mr. Loudon, my little daughter Agnes, and myself, set out, from Bayswater, to make the tour through the Isle of Wight which is recorded in the following pages.

That tour has since acquired a melancholy importance in my eyes, from being the last I ever took with my poor husband, whose danger I was quite unconscious of when I wrote the book, though his death took place in less than a month from the day of its publication. This circumstance made the book painful to me, and I never looked at it again till now I have been reading it over for revision; and it is impossible to describe the vivid interest with which I recall every incident that took place, and every word that was uttered.

In preparing this second edition, I have added a chapter on shells and sea-weed, but in other respects I have made no alteration, save a few verbal corrections; as the principal object I had in view, in writing down all we saw and heard during this excursion, was to show how much may be observed and learnt while travelling, even through a well-known country and under ordinary circumstances. I think it of the utmost importance to cultivate habits of observation in childhood; as a great deal of the happiness of life depends upon having our attention excited by what passes around us. I remember, when I was a child, reading a tale called “Eyes and No Eyes,” which made a deep impression on my mind; and which has been the means of procuring me many sources of enjoyment during my passage through life. That little tale related to two boys, both of whom had been allowed half a day’s holiday. The first boy went out to take a walk, and he saw a variety of objects that interested him; and from which he afterwards derived considerable instruction, when he talked about them with his tutor. The second, a little later, took the same walk; but, when his tutor questioned him as to how he liked it, he said he had thought it very dull, for he had seen nothing; though the same objects were still there that had delighted his companion. I was so much struck with the contrast between the two boys, that I determined to imitate the first; and I have found so much advantage from this determination, that I can earnestly recommend my young readers to follow my example. The use of travelling is, that it affords us more opportunities of observation than we could have at home; but, if we do not avail ourselves of these opportunities, we may travel over the whole globe without reaping any advantage. I trust the young people who may read these pages will so far profit by them as to notice all they see, and, particularly, to look for objects of natural history in their walks, whether at home or by the sea-side; and, in return, I promise them that they will find a thousand sources of amusement that before they had no idea of.

J. W. L.

Bayswater,
March 9, 1848.

CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

GLIMPSES OF NATURE;

OR,

A VISIT TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

INTRODUCTION.

Agnes Merton was one day sitting in rather a melancholy mood on the swing in her garden, without swinging, and apparently lost in thought. It was a very odd place for meditation, but little girls do choose strange places sometimes; and Agnes at this moment felt very sad and uncomfortable on various accounts. Her papa had been in a bad state of health for some time, and Mrs. Merton's attention had been so entirely occupied by him, that Agnes had been comparatively neglected by her mother. Her papa also could not be troubled with her, although he was very fond of her when he was well; sick people cannot bear the fatigue of children. Agnes had no sisters, and only a daily governess, who stayed with her but a short time, so that during the greater part of the day the poor child was left entirely to her own resources, and children so young as Agnes cannot always be reading. Agnes was at this time particularly unfortunate, as even her favourite cat, Sandy, had gone away about three weeks before, and nobody knew what had become of him. In this state of things every amusement seemed to have lost its zest, and after swinging a short time with the air of a person who was performing a task, rather than one who was enjoying a pleasure, Agnes sat, as we have before said, on her swing, apparently quite lost in thought, and, indeed, so absorbed that she started when her mother laid her hand upon her shoulder, and asked her if she would like to go to the Isle of Wight?

It is impossible to describe what a change these few words produced in the feelings of the little girl, and she replied with her countenance beaming with delight, "Oh yes, mamma, very much indeed!"

"Your papa," resumed Mrs. Merton, "has been ordered to try change of air for the benefit of his health, and he has determined to go to the Isle of Wight for a week. At first he intended leaving you at home, but at my earnest desire he has consented to take you with us, upon condition of your giving no trouble."

"Oh, mamma," interrupted Agnes, "I will not give any trouble at all."

"Perhaps you are hardly aware of what you are promising," said Mrs. Merton, smiling; "your papa has determined on taking no servant with him, so that you must dress and undress yourself, and take care of your own clothes."

"But, mamma," said Agnes, "shall we not have poor little Susan?"

"No," replied Mrs. Merton; "there will only be your papa, besides you and me: and as my time will be principally occupied in attending on him, you must contrive to take care of yourself."

Agnes laughed; "I think I am quite old enough to do that," said she.

"We shall see," replied her mother. "You must also dine and take all your meals with us; as it will probably not be convenient for us to stay to take any refreshment at the time you have been used to dine."

This, so far from being a hardship, Agnes thought the most delightful part of the whole, as she had long considered dining at six o'clock as one of the great desiderata of life; but Mrs. Merton continued: "You must also never complain of being hungry or thirsty; but act as much as possible as if you were really a woman, since we are going to treat you like one."

"I am afraid, mamma," said Agnes, "that will be very hard."

"If you do not think you can undertake to do all I wish, you must stay at home; and I have no doubt your aunt Jane will be so kind as to take care of you while we are away. But I think you are quite capable of all that will be required of you. You are now ten years old, and you knew how to pack up a trunk when you were only seven. You shall have a pretty little black portmanteau entirely to yourself, and you shall have a list of everything that is put into it, so that you may know when all your things are right."

Agnes was delighted with the idea of taking care of her own trunk; particularly as her mamma consented, at her earnest request, to leave the choice of what clothes she would take entirely to herself. Agnes was very fond of managing, and of giving directions to her maid, Susan, who was called immediately; for as this was Saturday, and they were to set out on Monday, there was no time to be lost. Susan was almost as much delighted as her little mistress with the task; and both felt of extraordinary importance when they found themselves alone with the open portmanteau before them, and close to the wardrobe from which it was to be filled. Both Susan and her young mistress were, however, soon very much puzzled to know what to decide on. Agnes at first had looked out nearly all the clothes she had, but it was soon found that the pretty little black

portmanteau would not hold half the things that had been laid out. A fresh selection was therefore necessary, and several of the pretty frocks were put back into the drawer.

“Oh, I must have that, Susan,” said Agnes, stretching out her hands after her favourite blue, which was being taken away.

“Very well, miss,” said Susan. “Then suppose you take that, and leave this,” laying down the blue and taking up an equally favourite pale pink.

“Oh no,” cried Agnes; “I must have that, it is so prettily made.” 6

“Suppose you take all your coloured frocks,” said Susan, “and leave your white ones?”

“But, mamma says she always likes me best in white,” said Agnes.

“Well, then, we will take the whites,” said Susan, “and leave the coloured ones.”

Agnes sighed deeply. “Oh dear,” cried she, after a short pause; “I wish mamma were here to decide for me. I thought it would be so delightful to have everything my own way, but now the time is come I do not like it at all. I see it saves a great deal of trouble to have some one to direct, and to tell one what to do. I am sure I wish mamma would come and tell me, for I am quite tired of being my own mistress;” and as she spoke Mrs. Merton entered the room; for she had been in an adjoining apartment, and, overhearing the wishes of her little daughter, had come to her assistance. Under Mrs. Merton’s directions the box was soon packed, and Agnes was astonished to see how rapidly her difficulties had vanished.

“I cannot think how it is, mamma,” said she, “that you have been able to arrange in a moment what gave me so much trouble and vexation. You have done everything just as I wished, and as I would have done it myself, if I could have made up my mind; and yet my governess often tells me that I am self-willed, and like to have my own way; now, it appears to me that I actually did not know what my own way was, till you came and showed me.” 7

“The reason you had so much difficulty in deciding,” said Mrs. Merton, “was that your judgment required to be guided by experience, a quality in which young people are necessarily deficient. When you are as old as I am, and have travelled as much, you will be able to decide as rapidly as I did in this matter; as you will know by experience what things are likely to be most useful.”

8

CHAPTER I.

Terminus of the Southampton Railroad at Vauxhall.—Truth and Falsehood.—Reaping flint in straw.—The river Mole.—The Wey.—Canals and Locks.—Poppies and Opium.—Limestone and Chalk.—Gleaners.—Ruins at Basingstoke.—Southampton.—The Bar.—Sir Bevis and the Giant Ascabart.

On Monday morning Agnes did not fail to awake in time, and after an early breakfast the party proceeded to the railroad. It was a very long ride from Bayswater to the station at Nine Elms, and Agnes thought it longer than it really was. At length, however, they arrived, and Agnes watched with considerable anxiety her black leather portmanteau taken off the carriage with the rest of the luggage. She was once going to tell the porter to take particular care of it, but observing that her mother did not speak she also remained silent, and followed Mrs. Merton into a large room, in which a man stood behind a kind of counter, receiving money and giving tickets. When it was Mrs. Merton's turn, the man fixed his eyes on Agnes, and said abruptly, "How old are you?" 9

"I was ten last October," replied Agnes, very much surprised at this question. Mrs. Merton then laid three sovereigns on the counter, which the man took up, giving her three tickets in return, with which she walked away in silence, and joining Mr. Merton they both walked to the railway carriages followed by Agnes, who could not at all understand the meaning of what had taken place. She did not like to ask any questions, as she had promised not to be troublesome, but she could not help thinking of the man's strange behaviour; and when her mamma, who saw her puzzled look, asked what she was thinking about, she ventured to inquire what the man meant by speaking to her only, and why he took any interest in knowing her age. "I suppose," said she, "he must have some little girls of his own, and that he wanted to know if I were the same age; but I wonder whether he thought me short or tall." Mrs. Merton smiled, and replied that she really believed the man had never thought about it.

"Why did he ask my age, then?" inquired Agnes, rather vexed at her mamma's indifference. 10

"To know how much you were to pay for your place," replied Mrs. Merton. "If you had been under ten, I should have paid only half price for you."

"But why did he not ask you such a question as that?"

"He was probably afraid that I should not tell him the truth."

"But surely, mamma," cried Agnes, her face flushing, and her eyes sparkling with indignation, "the man could never think you would demean yourself so much as to tell a falsehood for the sake of ten shillings."

"If he had known me," replied Mrs. Merton quietly, "I hope he would not have suspected me of telling a falsehood for the sake of any sum."

An old gentleman who was their fellow-traveller, was very much amused at Agnes's indignation, and began to tease her by telling her that her mamma was in the habit of telling stories every day; and when Agnes indignantly denied his assertion, he asked her if she thought her mamma had never written "your humble servant" at the end of a letter, without meaning that she was ready to act as a servant to the person she addressed; and whether she did not often say she was glad or sorry to hear some particular piece of news, when she did not, in fact, care much about it. Agnes began to look puzzled, and Mrs. Merton, not liking this mocking style of conversation, as she knew the necessity of keeping a strict line in a child's mind between truth and falsehood, tried to turn her daughter's attention to the objects they were passing. It is very strange that sensible and well-informed men should often take as much pleasure in confusing the thoughts of a poor innocent child, as vicious boys do in tormenting a harmless dog. This gentleman, whose name they afterwards found was Mr. Bevan, was a well-intentioned, good-hearted man, who would have been shocked at the thought of hurting Agnes by treading on her foot, or pushing her down; and yet, while he would have shrunk from wilfully inflicting on her a trifling bodily hurt which could only have caused a temporary suffering, he had no hesitation in doing a serious injury to her mind. It is true he only wished to amuse himself by watching the play of her countenance, without thinking of the consequences; and that if she had been his child he would have been the first to correct her for telling a falsehood: but his mocking strain roused the first doubt that had ever crossed the mind of Agnes as to whether it was possible to tell a falsehood without meaning any harm. Hitherto she had been truth itself, and still nothing would have induced her to tell a falsehood wilfully: but she was puzzled, as she was not old enough to distinguish between positive assertions, and mere conventional phrases, to which nobody attaches any precise meaning; and that perfect confidence in the holiness and power of truth, which is so beautiful a feature in the youthful mind, was shaken. Mrs. Merton wished to prevent her daughter's mind from dwelling on the subject, and pointing to a corn-field, she asked Agnes, if she knew what corn it was. Before, however, the child could answer, a young man who sat opposite told her with a patronizing air, that it was wheat. 11 12

"You may know it," continued he; "by its close heads. Barley and rye have long bristles, and oats have loose heads."

Agnes now began to be interested in the wheat-fields they were passing; and her mamma made her observe the curious curved knife called a sickle, which is used in reaping corn; and the manner in which the corn was tied up in sheaves after it was cut, and the sheaves afterwards placed together in shocks, with their heads leaning towards each other, and a sheaf reversed over the top to keep the grain dry. 13

"But why do women reap?" asked Agnes; "you told me mowing was too difficult for them, and surely it is nobler to cut corn than grass."

"Reaping requires less strength than mowing, as the sickle is neither so heavy nor so cumbrous as the scythe."

“What part of the wheat produces the flour?”

“Can you not guess?”

Agnes hesitated, and then said, timidly and blushing, “I am not quite sure, but I think it is the seed.”

“Right,” cried Mr. Merton, who, being an excellent botanist himself, was always glad to turn his daughter’s attention to the peculiarities of plants. “Now tell me if you know any thing particular about the straw.”

“I believe it is hollow and jointed.”

“It is; and, what is more, it is not composed entirely of vegetable matter, but partly of stone; for every wheat straw contains enough flint to make a glass bead.” 14

“Oh, papa,” cried Agnes, “now you must be joking.”

“Indeed I am not. If a wheat straw be held in the flame of a candle, it will first turn to white ashes; and, if these ashes be still exposed to the flame, they will gradually melt into an imperfect sort of glass. When hay-ricks are burnt, there is always left a mass of dark, flinty matter, which closely resembles the dross sometimes thrown out of a glass-house.”

“How very curious!” cried Agnes.

“Did you ever see wheat in flower, my dear,” asked Mr. Bevan.

“Never, sir,” replied Agnes; and then, turning to her father, she said: “I suppose the gentleman wishes to make game of me; for wheat has no flowers,—has it papa?”

“Certainly, it has flowers, for it has perfect seeds; and all plants that have perfect seeds must have flowers. The flowers of the wheat are, however, inconspicuous, as they have no petals.”

While this conversation was passing, the train had kept whirling on, and Mrs. Merton had remarked two or three things that she thought worthy of the notice of her little daughter: she now called her attention to the windings of the river Mole, which has received its strange name from the manner in which it creeps along, and occasionally appears to bury itself under ground, as its waters are absorbed by the spongy and porous soil through which it flows. Agnes was very anxious to hear more of this curious river. 15

“It is remarkable,” said Mrs. Merton, “that it is not navigable in any part of its long course of forty-two miles; and that occasionally when the weather has been dry a long time, it disappears altogether. At the foot of Box-Hill, near Dorking, with regard to this phenomenon, it is supposed that there are cavities, or hollow places, under ground, which communicate with the bed of the river, and which are filled with water in ordinary seasons, but, in times of drought, become empty, and absorb the water from the river to refill them. When this is the case, the bed of the river becomes dry, and Burford bridge often presents the odd appearance of a bridge over land dry enough to be walked on. The river, however, always rises again about Letherhead, and suffers no further interruption in its course.” 16

While Mrs. Merton was speaking, the train had continued whirling on, and they had long passed the sluggish Mole, and had caught a glance of the more useful Wey; a river of about the same length as the Mole, but which has the advantage of being navigable for a great part of its course; and Agnes had watched the inhabitants of the little cottages which bordered the line of the railway trimming their gardens, and spreading their seeds out to dry in the sun. She had been amused, in one place, observing the careful manner in which a stack of faggots had been thatched, to keep it from the rain; and, in another, by observing the delight of a number of pigs, which had been turned into a stubble field, from which the corn had just been carried; and which ran about, grunting and capering, in a manner which none but pigs could ever accomplish. The train now passed another stream; and Agnes asked what river it was. “It is not a river,” said Mrs. Merton, “but the Basingstoke canal.”

“How do you know it is a canal, mamma?” asked Agnes.

“Its banks are straight and regular,” said Mrs. Merton, “which shows that they have been formed artificially; and the water is as deep close to the bank as it is in the centre: whereas, in rivers, the banks are generally irregular, and the water is shallower near them. Besides, there can be no doubt about this being a canal, for there, you see, is a lock.” 17

“Now, mamma,” said Agnes, “you have told me a great many things that I do not understand. I thought a canal had been only to supply the place of a river; and, if that is the case, I do not see why its banks should be different; and I do not know what you mean by a lock.”

“It is true,” said Mrs. Merton, “that a canal is intended to supply the place of a river, in as far as it is useful for carrying boats; but most rivers are only deep enough in the centre for this purpose, and a great deal of ground is lost on both sides: but, when a canal is dug, it is an object to save as much ground as possible; and, therefore, the trench that is dug is equally deep in all its parts, and perfectly level at the bottom. Now, when a country is hilly, the only way in which the canal can be kept level at the bottom is, by having it in two or more parts, of different levels, each one distinct from the other; as, otherwise, all the water from the high part would run into the low part: and these little canals are joined together by means of what are called locks. Each lock is a kind of oblong well, with a pair of strong, water-tight gates at each end; the lock being just the same depth as the difference between the higher and lower parts of the canal. When a boat comes along the higher part of the canal, the gates at that end of the lock are opened, and a sufficient quantity of water flows in, to allow the boat to float in at the same level. As soon as the boat is completely within the lock, the upper gates are closed, and the gates which communicate with the lower level of the canal are opened, when the water flows out, and the boat sinks gradually down to the lower level.” 18

“See, mamma,” cried Agnes, “there is a boat coming close to a lock; but it is in the lower part of the canal: what will they do now?”

“They will open the lower gates of the lock till the water has descended to the level of that part of the canal which contains the boat, which will then float in; and, I suppose, you can guess what will then take place.”

“Oh yes,” said Agnes, “the lower gates will be closed as soon as the boat is completely within the lock, and the upper ones opened.” 19

“You are quite right,” said her mother: “and, in this way the boat will be raised to the higher level of the canal.”

“I do declare, they are opening the gate now,” cried Agnes, leaning out of the window of the railway carriage as far as she possibly could. “How I do wish the train would stop a moment, and let me see the boat float in.”

But it was of no use: the train whirled on; and poor Agnes, instead of watching the machinery of the lock, was obliged to sit down, and listen to a lecture from her mamma, on the impropriety of hanging out at the windows of any carriage, and of those belonging to rail-roads more particularly. Some time passed almost in silence, till at last Mr. Bevan asked Agnes if she did not admire the pretty flowers in the corn-fields they were passing.

“Those poppies are very pretty, certainly,” said Agnes; “and I should admire them very much in a garden; but I do not like them in a corn field, because papa says they are a proof of bad farming.”

The old gentleman laughed at this, and asked Agnes if she knew the use of poppies, and that opium was made from them. 20

“Not from that kind, I believe, sir,” said Agnes. “It is the white poppy, is it not, mamma, that produces the opium?”

“Yes,” returned Mrs. Merton; “and it requires a hotter and drier climate than that of England to produce it in perfection. The best opium,” continued Mrs. Merton, “is obtained from Turkey; and, in that country, there are whole fields covered with poppies; and there are people whose principal business it is to watch when the petals of the flowers are falling, and then to wound the unripe capsule of each flower with a double-bladed lancet, so that the milky juice may exude. This milky juice becomes candied by the heat of the sun; and, being scraped off the following morning, forms what is called opium.”

They now passed through a deep cutting of a grey, partially-shining rock, which Mrs. Merton told Agnes was limestone. A little further the rocks became chalky, with narrow rows of flints embedded in them; which looked as though the high bank had been originally a chalk wall, with a row of broken bottles along the top, on which other chalk walls of a similar description had been built. Farther on, the banks of the cutting were formed of more crumbly materials, and appeared to consist entirely of loose sand and powdered chalk. 21

“What a variety of soils we are going through!” said Agnes.

“Not so great as you imagine,” returned her mother. “Chalk is but another form of limestone, and flint but another form of sand; and these two earths are almost always found together.”

They had now reached the Basingstoke station; and, while some of the passengers were getting down, Agnes amused herself in counting the number of gleaners in a field from which the corn had just been carried.

“There are eighty-two,” said she, after a short pause.

“Eighty-two what?” asked her mother.

“Gleaners,” said Agnes, directing her mother’s attention to the field, which, indeed, was nearly filled with people. The attention of the other passengers was now turned towards the field; and they all agreed that the corn must have been carried in a very careless manner to have left so many ears behind. 22

“It is a good thing for the poor people in the neighbourhood,” said Mr. Bevan.

“But,” said Mr. Merton, “it is hard for the farmer, who has been at the expense of ploughing and manuring, harrowing and sowing, and who is now deprived of his just profits by the negligence of his servants.”

The train soon moved on a little, and Agnes’s attention being attracted by the ruins of a church which stood on a little eminence near the road, she eagerly asked what it was.

“Those,” said the old gentleman, “are the ruins of a chapel, dedicated to the Holy Ghost, which is said to have been erected in the reign of Edward IV., and to which a school was formerly attached; but the school was shut up during the Civil Wars, and the building reduced to the state in which you now see it.”

“It is a fine ruin,” said Mrs. Merton.

“Yes,” returned the old gentleman; “and there is some fine carving about it, (if you were near enough to see it,) which was added in the reign of Henry VIII.” 23

“Was it not at Basingstoke,” asked Mr. Merton, “that Basing-House stood, so celebrated for its defence against Cromwell?”

“That was at Old Basing,” replied Mr. Bevan, “which was formerly a town, and a larger place than this: the word stoke signifying a hamlet. But things are reversed now; for Old Basing has become a hamlet, and Basingstoke a town.”

Agnes was very much interested in this conversation; as she had seen Mr. Charles Landseer’s beautiful painting of the taking of Basing house; and she now found how much a little knowledge of the subject adds to the interest you feel in a picture.

“Is the population of Basingstoke large?” asked Mr. Merton.

“There are about four thousand inhabitants, I think,” said the old gentleman, “rather less than more.” He then added, “I believe we are now only about thirty miles from Southampton.”

“Only thirty!” The distance is nothing on a rail-road,—an affair of about an hour or so; but how

different it would be to a feeble mother, carrying a heavy child! How different to an exhausted wanderer, struggling to reach his longed-for home! Then, indeed, a distance of thirty miles would seem an undertaking almost heart-breaking, and scarcely to be accomplished; but time and space are always relative, and, in measuring them, we are apt to judge by our feelings, rather than by the reality.

After leaving Basingstoke, the train proceeded with great rapidity. Andover was the next station; and here numerous carriages were waiting to convey passengers to Salisbury, Exeter, and all the intermediate towns. Winchester next appeared in sight; and soon that ancient city, with its fine cathedral and antique cross, lay below them. Then they reached, and passed, the river Itchen, which winds backwards and forwards, like a broad riband floating in the wind. They were now within a few miles of Southampton; and, as they rapidly advanced, they began to feel the fresh breeze from the water. They still hurried on, and soon the masts of the shipping appeared in sight. The train now stopped, that the passengers might give up their tickets. This was soon done; and the train whirled on again to Southampton. They descended at the terminus; and having their luggage conveyed to the pier, they had it placed on board one of the steam-packets, which, they were told, would sail in about an hour. Having finished this business, Mr. Merton sat down on one of the seats on the pier, while Mrs. Merton and Agnes walked back to take a glance at the town.

The town of Southampton consists principally of one long, broad street, which ascends from the sea up a hill. This street is divided nearly in the middle by a curious old gate, called the bar; and which was, in fact, one of the gates of the ancient town. Towards this monument of antiquity, Mrs. Merton and Agnes bent their steps; and Mrs. Merton explained to her daughter, that bar was the Saxon name of gate.

“Oh, yes,” cried Agnes, “you know we say Temple Bar; and I remember that the gates in York are called bars: but mamma, what are those curious figures in front?”

“They are said to be the figures of a knight, renowned in romance, called Sir Bevis, of Hampton, and of Ascabart, a giant whom he slew.”

“This giant was mighty, and he was strong,
And feet full thirty was he long;
His lips were great, and hung aside;
His eyes were hollow, his mouth was wide:
Loathly he was to look upon,
And liker a demon than a man:
His staff was a young and torn-up oak;
And hard and heavy was his stroke.”

“The giant Ascabart is alluded to in the first canto of Scott’s *Lady of the Lake*; and many legends are told of his conqueror Sir Bevis, who appears to have resided near Southampton, at a place still called Sir Bevis’s Mount.”

“I suppose these figures below are Sir Bevis’s arms,” said Agnes; “if there ever was such a person.”

“I do not wonder that you have not full faith in Sir Bevis,” said Mrs. Merton, smiling; “but for my own part, I believe that all the heroes of romance we hear about in different places are real personages, though their deeds have been so exaggerated as to make us doubt their existence.”

“But the arms, mamma,” repeated Agnes,—“whose do you think they are?”

“Most of them are probably those of the persons who have repaired the gate, at different times; and I think those of Queen Elizabeth are in the centre. The queer-looking animals that sit below, however, most probably belonged to Sir Bevis, as they appear of the same date as his figure.”

They now took a rapid glance at the very handsome shops which lined the High-street on both sides, and returned to the pier, where they found the steam-packet just ready to start.

CHAPTER II.

Passengers down the River.—Sea-nettles.—Netley Abbey and Fort.—View of the Isle of Wight.—Adventure of the Portmanteau.—Landing at West Cowes.—Crossing the Medina.—Salt Works at East Cowes.

THE pier at Southampton has only been erected a few years, and it is called Victoria-pier, because it was opened by her present Majesty, shortly before her accession to the throne. Mrs. Merton and her daughter walked rapidly along it; for the bell had already rung, and the steam-packet was on the point of starting when they arrived. For a few minutes after they came on deck, they were too much hurried to observe anything particular, but Agnes had the pleasure of seeing that her dear little portmanteau was quite safe among the rest of the luggage. The day was fine, and the water sparkled in the sun-beams, as the steam-boat pursued its way rapidly down the river.

The first thing that attracted Agnes's attention, was the appearance of some workmen who were 29
taking up a few of the upright pieces of wood which supported the pier. These piles were bored through in several places; and Mrs. Merton asked her if she could tell the cause.

"The cause is the Pholas, or Stone-piercer," said Agnes. "I remember, mamma, you told me all about that curious shell-fish long ago; and that the piles are now obliged to be covered with nails driven into them, to prevent them from being bored through: but I never saw any of the piles before." She had not much time to look at them now; as, though the wind was against them, the steam-packet flew on as rapidly as the railway-train had done: and, as Mrs. Merton gave her arm to her husband, who was walking up and down the deck, Agnes knelt on the seat near the side of the vessel, to watch the little billows as they rose up rapidly, and broke against it. But her attention was soon engaged by some curious little animals which were seen in the water, and which appeared like fairy umbrellas, opening and shutting occasionally as they floated along. Some of these curious creatures were rather large, with a kind of fringe round the lower part; and others had what appeared to be a fleshy cross on their summit, which was of a bright purple. They were so 30
numerous that Agnes thought she should like to catch one or two, and she leant over for that purpose; but her little arms were not long enough to reach the water. A young man who saw her trouble was about to assist her, when the old gentleman who had been their fellow traveller by the rail-road stopped him. "You had better not touch them," said he; "they will sting you."

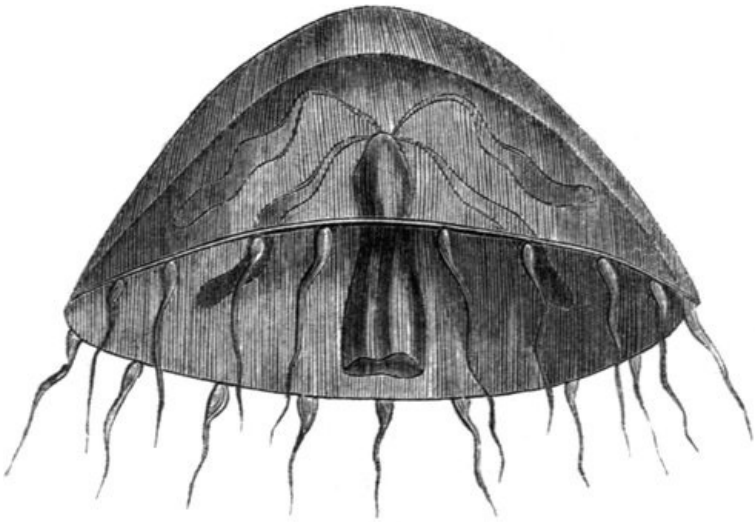


Fig. 1.

MEDUSA, OR SEA-NETTLE.

"Sting!" cried Agnes, "can such beautiful creatures sting?" 31

"Yes," replied Mr. Bevan, "if you were to take them into your hand, you would find an unpleasant tingling, which would be followed by heat and pain, like the smarting produced by the sting of a nettle."

"The vulgar people here, call them Chopped Ham," said a young man, with a book in his hand; "and they say that the sting is the mustard that is usually eaten with Ham. In the Legends of the Isle of Wight," continued he, glancing at his book, "this strange name is supposed to allude to a chieftain of the name of Ham, who was killed and chopped in pieces near Netley Abbey, and who has given his name, not only to Southampton, but to Hampshire."

"I should like to get some of these curious creatures in spite of their stinging," cried Agnes; "they are so beautiful. They look like fairy parasols, continually opening and shutting, but made of the finest gauze, and trimmed with long fringe; and see, there are some tinted with all the colours of the rainbow."

"Yes," said Mrs. Merton, "the poet says, 32

——‘There’s not a gem
Wrought by man’s art to be compared to them;
Soft, brilliant, tender, through the wave they glow,
And make the moonbeam brighter where they flow.’”

“How very pretty, mamma,” cried Agnes.

“These lines are very pretty,” said Mr. Merton, “and, moreover, they have a merit not very common in poetry, for they exactly describe the sea-nettles, as they are called, with which you are so much delighted.”

“Sea-nettles!” cried Agnes, “it seems a pity that they have not a prettier name.”

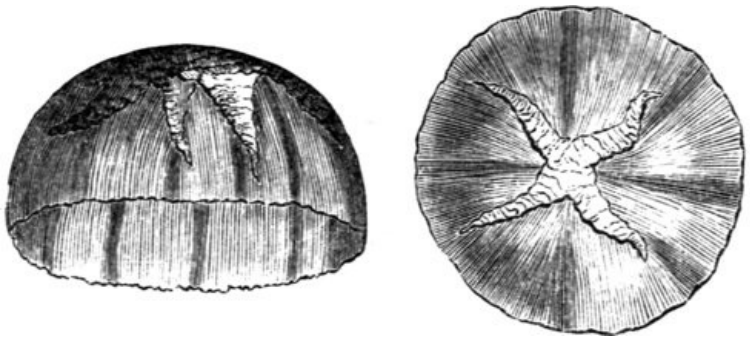


Fig. 2.

SEA-JELLIES (*Acalepha*).

“They are also called Medusæ, or jelly-fish,” said Mrs. Merton.

“Are they alive, mamma?” said Agnes. 33

“Yes,” said Mrs. Merton, “and they belong to the humblest class of animated nature, called Zoophytes, which form the connecting link between animals and plants. These creatures have no head, but only a mouth, which opens directly into the stomach, and the fringe that you observe consists of numerous slender arms with which they seize their prey and which are armed with small hooks, so fine as scarcely to be seen without a microscope. It is these hooks catching the flesh which occasion the pain that is felt when they are touched.”

“If you were to take one up in your hand,” said Mr. Bevan addressing Agnes, “you could not keep it long, for these creatures decay, and, in fact, melt into water as soon as they are dead. They are only seen on fine warm days like the present; for when the weather is cold, they sink to the bottom. They are very beautiful at night, when they become luminous, and appear like a host of small stars, rising to the surface, and again disappearing, as though dancing on the sea. There are a great many different kinds, and those of the tropical regions are very large and brilliant.”

They now came in sight of Netley Abbey, and there was a great rush to see it. Agnes, however, 34
was very much disappointed, as its appearance from the water was very different from what she had expected.

“I thought it would be something beautiful like Melrose Abbey,” said she, “and it is only like a common church.”

“What you see,” said Mrs. Merton, “is the Fort, and you cannot judge of the beautiful effect of the ruins of the Abbey unless you were on shore.”

“That fort, or castle,” said Mr. Bevan, “was erected by Henry VIII., after the spoliation of the abbey, which was built about 1238, and the name of Netley is a corruption of its old name of Lettely, which signified a pleasant place.”

“Are there many legends connected with the Abbey?” asked Agnes.

“Several,” returned the old gentleman. “Among other things it is said, that a carpenter of Southampton, named Taylor, had once bought the ruins, with a view of taking them down, and selling the materials; but a spirit appeared to him in a dream for three nights in succession, and warned him not to do so. He disregarded the warning, however, and had just taken a person to the 35
Abbey to make a bargain with him for the frame-work of one of the old windows, when a part of the ruin fell upon his head and killed him on the spot.”

“That is a very useful legend,” observed Mr. Merton, “as it has probably served to protect the ruins.”

“No doubt it has,” returned Mr. Bevan, “as it is firmly believed. There are several other stories of money being buried, and of the guardian spirit of the abbey appearing to protect its treasures whenever they are in any danger of being found.”

“These stories,” said Mr. Merton, “are common to most old monasteries; and they have probably arisen from the popular belief that much greater wealth was possessed by the abbots at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. than was found by the commissioners, and that consequently some of it must have been hidden.”

“The most remarkable story about Netley,” said the old gentleman, “I will relate to you if you like to hear it.”

The people all crowded round him eagerly, and he began as follows: “In the ancient times, when Netley was inhabited by a community of monks, there were certain underground passages, the 36
opening to which was only known to the abbot, the prior, and two of the oldest monks. When one of

these chanced to die, the entrance to these secret passages was confided to another; but it was never known to more than four at a time, and they took a solemn oath never to reveal it. What was contained in these mysterious passages was never known. Even the rough soldiers of Henry VIII., when they demolished the monastery, respected its secret; till, at length, in modern times, a gentleman of the town of Southampton was determined to explore the subterranean vaults of Netley, and having with great pain and difficulty cleared an opening, he entered with a lantern in his hand, and a lighted candle fixed at the end of a long stick. He and his light soon disappeared, and those who had followed him to the opening remained a long time watching for his return. At length they began to grow uneasy, and they were just debating whether they should follow him, when suddenly footsteps were heard rattling along the subterraneous passages, and the gentleman rushed out, crying, 'Block up the opening, block up the opening!' He gazed wildly for a moment and then fell down, and instantly expired, probably from the effects of the dangerous gas which is generally found in places that have been long closed up." 37

Mrs. Merton, who did not like the deep interest with which her little daughter had listened to this tale, now again directed her attention to the Medusæ.

"*We* call them Portuguese men-of-war," said one of the sailors as he passed by.

"That is curious enough," said the old gentleman, "for there is a kind of Zoophyte which is common in the West Indies, the proper English name of which is the Portuguese man-of-war; but it is very different from these. When seen floating on the water, it looks like a little weaver's shuttle; but it is in fact a bladder inflated with air, having a ridge down the back like a cock's comb, beautifully tinted with rose colour, the bladder itself being of a purplish hue at both ends. Below hang a number of thread-like appendages, some of which are straight, and some twisted, and all of which are of a beautiful dark blue or purplish hue. The animal possesses the power of contracting and dilating its bladder, and raising up the narrowest part, so as to make it serve for the purposes of a sail. There is also a little hole in the narrow part of the bladder, only large enough to admit a very fine bristle; through this the animal appears to squeeze out the air when it wishes to descend." 38

"I have often seen the Portuguese men-of-war," said a naval officer who stood near them. "I dare say there are fifty sorts of these creatures in the West Indies, and there are a great many also of the Medusæ, which are a thousand times more beautiful than those we have been looking at here."

"There are many different kinds of sea-jellies, or bubbles," said Mr. Merton, "in the British seas, and it is said that many kinds were found formerly, which now appear to be extinct. It is even supposed that the curious marks in the old red sandstone of Forfarshire, which are called Kelpies' feet, are occasioned by sea-jellies having been left by the sea on the sandstone, and lain there till decayed." 39

Fig. 3.

THE PORTUGUESE MAN-OF-WAR.

"The Kelpies were supposed to be water-spirits,—were they not?" said the young man.

"Yes," replied Mr. Bevan: "I remember, when travelling in the Highlands, hearing many strange stories about them."

While they were conversing in this manner, the steam-boat made rapid progress, and they now approached Calshot Castle, a fort situated on a small head-land jutting into the sea.

"That fort," said the old gentleman, "was built in the time of Henry VIII., to protect the entrance to Southampton water; and it is still used as a garrison, though the force it contains is but small. We are now in the Solent Sea, which divides the mainland from the Isle of Wight; and there," he continued, "is the Island itself."

They all turned to look; and Agnes was very much astonished to find it so near.

"How do you like the Isle of Wight?" asked her mamma.

"It looks a pretty mountainous country," said Agnes; "and more like Scotland than any thing I have before seen in England." 40

"You will find it very different," said the old gentleman, turning to Agnes, "when you see it nearer."

"Every thing is on a much smaller scale," said Mrs. Merton; "but there is certainly some resemblance."

At this moment the steam-boat stopped, and the passengers were desired to walk on shore at West Cowes. Agnes was deeply interested in watching the porters, who seized the luggage, and were carrying it off without asking where it was to go to; while several sailors surrounded the steam-boat, crying out, "Want a boat, want a boat, sir,—East Cowes, sir." As Mr. Merton was very much fatigued with his journey, Mrs. Merton's attention was entirely devoted to him; and, telling the porter to take their luggage to the Fountain Hotel, she gave her arm to her husband, to assist him to leave the vessel. Agnes was preparing to follow them, when, to her great dismay, she saw a man seize her own dear black leather portmanteau, and toss it into a boat going to East Cowes. She positively screamed; and, running to the edge of the vessel, she cried out, "Oh! do not take that! That is mine." 41

"Yours," cried a good-natured-looking sailor, who was standing in the boat taking in the luggage; "and are you not going with this party, then?"

“No,” said Agnes, trembling and panting for breath, “I am going to West Cowes,—to the Fountain. My papa and mamma are gone there.”

“Here,” cried the sailor; “I dare say the child is right;” calling to a young sailor who stood on the deck of the steam-packet; “Take this portmanteau, and go with that little girl to the Fountain.” At this moment the mate of the steam-packet came down to see what was the matter; and, having heard Agnes’s story, he asked what name was on the portmanteau; and, finding all was right, he told the boy to take it to the Fountain: Agnes following him, in a state of great agitation, but very much pleased at having saved her property. They had scarcely stepped on shore, when they met Mrs. Merton, who, having seen her husband comfortably placed on a sofa, had become uneasy at Agnes’s not following them, and had returned to the pier in search of her. When Mrs. Merton saw her little girl pale and trembling, she was very much alarmed; but, when she heard the story, she 42
praised Agnes for the courage she had displayed, instead of scolding her, as she had been about to do, for her delay. Agnes was, however, too much agitated to feel her usual pleasure at her mother’s praises. It was the first time she had ever acted for herself in her life; and, though she had done right, she felt the bad effect of the over excitement. Mrs. Merton now offered sixpence to the boy who had carried Agnes’s portmanteau on shore, but he refused it. “Oh! no,” said he; “the young lady is quite welcome;” and, declaring that his father would be very angry with him if he took anything, he hurried into the Fountain: and putting down his burthen in the hall, he ran off, without allowing Mrs. Merton to say another word. As the pier at West Cowes is, indeed, the yard of the Fountain Inn, Mrs. Merton and Agnes had not far to go; but, as Mr. Merton had wished to take some repose after his fatigue, Mrs. Merton satisfied herself with ordering dinner at the bar, and walked out into the little narrow streets of Cowes with her daughter.

The first object that Mrs. Merton had in view, was to order a carriage, to take them round the Island on the morrow; and, for this purpose, she went into a fruit-shop nearly opposite the front 43
door of the inn, where she saw a ticket offering carriages for hire. Mrs. Moore, for that was the name of the greengrocer, was a very nice person; and Mrs. Merton soon made an arrangement with her, that a little open carriage should be ready for them at nine the following morning. Mrs. Merton then asked Agnes, where she would like to walk; and Agnes having expressed a strong desire to visit East Cowes, as being the place to which her portmanteau had been so nearly conveyed, Mrs. Merton asked Mrs. Moore, which was the best mode of going.

“Oh! there are two ways, ma’am,” said Mrs. Moore. “You can either go by the ferry, at a penny a piece, or you can go in a boat from the pier, and pay a shilling.”

“Oh, let us go in the ferry-boat,” cried Agnes; “I never was in a ferry-boat in my life.”

Mrs. Merton having ascertained that the ferry-boat was perfectly safe, and that respectable people frequently went by it, determined to indulge her daughter, and they set off in the direction that was pointed out to them. The walk was not a very agreeable one; it was up a narrow street, and 44
a rather steep hill. This appeared very extraordinary both to Agnes and her mamma, as people generally descend to water. At last, however, after a very disagreeable walk, and inquiring their way several times, they began to descend the hill, and soon reached the ferry, where the boat being just ready to go, they took their seats. Agnes and her mamma were both very much amused at the old man who rowed them across.

“I thought ferry-boats had generally a rope to keep them steady,” said Mrs. Merton.

“So they have for the horse-ferries,” said the old man; “but as for this, I can row it as well without a rope as with one. But it is not everybody that can do that, that is true enough.”

As the old man spoke, he gave a vigorous pull, and as he did so, his grey hair blew back from his ruddy and sun-burnt face; while his whole figure presented a striking picture of the good effect which a life of moderate, but regular, labour in the open air has upon the human frame.

The ferry-boat was soon across the river; and when Mrs. Merton and her daughter had landed at East Cowes, and were walking on the terrace in front of the Medina Hotel, Agnes could not help 45
observing to her mother, that she thought the old man very conceited; “and it is such a ridiculous thing for a man to be proud of, too,” added she; “rowing a common ferry-boat.”

“My dear Agnes,” said her mother in a serious tone, “I have several times observed in you a tendency to look with contempt upon persons and things that you consider beneath you. It is true that you have many advantages which this ferryman has not. Fortunately for you, your parents are rich enough to allow you teachers to instruct you, servants to wait upon you, and a variety of comforts and indulgences which this ferryman can neither enjoy himself, nor give to his children. But these are merely accidental advantages. Circumstances might arise which would reduce you in a moment to a greater degree of poverty than this man, as, in fact, if we were obliged to live by the labour of our hands, he would be far superior to us from his activity and vigour. He is, though an old man, evidently in the enjoyment of robust health and great strength; and I am quite sure if your papa and I were obliged to row a ferry-boat for our support, we could neither of us do it half so well 46
as he does.”

“Oh! but mamma,” said Agnes, “there is no danger of our being reduced to poverty, is there?”

“Not that I am aware of,” said Mrs. Merton; “but it is impossible to say what may happen. As your papa is not in trade he is not liable to those sudden and violent changes which frequently affect the commercial part of the community; but still many things may happen that would occasion a severe reverse. You know in the time of the French Revolution, many persons of a much higher rank than ours were reduced to the greatest distress, and even Louis Philippe, the present King of the French, was obliged to teach in a school for his support.”

They had now reached a part of the beach where the pebbles were very rough, and as Agnes was much interested in what Mrs. Merton was saying, she did not pay proper attention to where she was going, and at this moment she stumbled over a piece of wood. This obliged her to look more carefully at her feet, and as the road was now become very rough, Mrs. Merton thought it better

not to proceed any farther along the beach, but to return to the terrace, where the road was smooth. They did so, and had not walked far, when they saw a skate that had just been caught, lying on the beach, panting, and opening and shutting its mouth, which was in the middle of its body on the under side. Agnes shuddered as she looked at it. “I wish they would throw it back into the water, mamma,” said she.

“We can hardly expect that,” returned her mother; “but I wish the fishermen in this country would stab their fish as soon as they have caught them, as I have heard fishermen do in the east. The skate is a kind of ray, and belongs to the same genus as the Torpedo. The thornback, or maid, belongs also to this genus. Do you remember the little things, that looked like little leather purses, that we used to find among the sea-weed at Brighton?”

“Oh yes! the fishermen called them skate barrows; but you told me they were the eggs of the skate.”

They now walked on in silence for a short time, till Agnes’s attention was caught by a building which some men were busily employed in pulling down.

“What is that, mamma?” cried she: “and why are those people taking off the roof?”

Mrs. Merton pointed to a portion of the walls that remained standing, and on which the words “salt-works” might still be read.

“Salt-works!” repeated Agnes; “what is salt made of, mamma?”

“Salt,” said Mrs. Merton, “can hardly be said to be made, as it is a mineral which is formed naturally in the earth, and which we procure in three different ways. Sometimes it is dug out of the salt-mines, as at Northwich in Cheshire, and in the Austrian dominions; but this kind of salt is coarse and dark-coloured. Another way of procuring it is from salt-springs; that is, from water which has become saturated with salt in its passage through the earth, as at Nantwich and other places in Cheshire, and at Droitwich in Worcestershire; and this salt is what we have in common use. The last kind of salt is what is made from the sea-water, and most of the works that have been erected for this purpose in England are in Hampshire, particularly in the Isle of Wight.”

“And how do they get the salt out of the salt-water?” asked Agnes.

“By boiling it,” said her mother, “in large shallow pans, such as that which you see before you.”

While they were examining the pans, Agnes asked her mother a great many questions respecting the salt-works, and Mrs. Merton told her, that the salt obtained from sea-water is of so much coarser kind than that obtained from the salt-springs, that it is principally used for curing meat, and for manuring the land.

“Ah!” said Agnes, “that reminds me of a question that I have often wished to ask you, mamma. When I was at Shenstone, my cousin George told me that salt would be excellent manure for my plants, and I put some on my annuals, which were just coming up, and, would you believe it, mamma, it killed them every one.”

“That,” said Mrs. Merton, “was because the manure was too strong for them, and you no doubt put a great deal too much. Salt, to do good to plants, should be given to them in very small quantities, as, though all plants require some mineral substances to be mixed with their food to keep them in health, it is in such small quantities that in some plants it is only in the proportion of one to four thousand; and where mineral substances are required in the greatest quantity for the nourishment of a plant, it is only in the proportion of about ten to one thousand.”

“I do not think I quite understand that, mamma,” said Agnes.

“Well,” returned Mrs. Merton, “at any rate you will remember, that though a very small quantity of salt may be useful to plants, a large quantity will kill them, and that, consequently, it is much safer for inexperienced gardeners not to give them any.”

“I remember once being told that all the places that produce salt end in *wich*; but the name of this place is Cowes.”

“I have heard that the word *wich* is derived from the Saxon, and that it signifies a salt-spring,” said Mrs. Merton, “but of course that does not apply to salt procured from the sea.”

Mrs. Merton and her daughter had now reached the beach, and ordering a boat from one of the boatmen lounging about, they stepped into it to return to West Cowes.

“But, mamma,” said Agnes, who was still thinking of the salt-works, “is this the water they use for making salt? This is the Medina, and not the sea, and the Medina is a river, is it not?”

“This part of the Medina,” said Mrs. Merton, “is what is called an estuary; that is, an arm of the sea mixed with the waters of a river; the water of this estuary is salt, and affected by the tides as far as Newport.”

“What makes the waters of the sea salt?” asked Agnes.

“That is a very difficult question to answer,” said her mother, “but it is supposed that rivers carry salt from the earth they run through, into the sea; and as the water in the sea is continually being evaporated by the heat of the sun, the quantity of salt, in proportion to the quantity of water, soon becomes much greater in the sea than in the river, and hence the water becomes much salter.”

“Why, mamma,” cried Agnes, “that is just what is done in the salt-pans.”

“You are right,” returned her mother. “The salt manufacturers observing the process of nature, have imitated it as well as they could, by applying artificial heat to evaporate the water. What is called bay-salt, is formed by the sea-water left in the clefts of the rocks by the tide evaporating naturally, and leaving a saline crust behind; and this salt takes its name from the sea-water being frequently thus left in bays. But see, here is the Fountain Inn, where I have no doubt your papa is waiting dinner for us.”

CHAPTER III.

Morning Walk through West Cowes.—Ride to Newport.—Carisbrook Castle.—Children of Charles I.—Donkey Well.—Chapel of St. Nicholas.—Boy Bishop.—Archery Meeting.—History of the Isle of Wight.—Bows and Arrows.

The next morning Agnes and her mamma both rose early; and as Mr. Merton felt inclined to take some repose, they went out by themselves to take a walk before breakfast. They were advised to visit the Parade and the Castle; and, accordingly, they bent their way down the main street of the town, and soon found themselves on the beach. They strolled gently along a terrace, supported by a sea-wall, till they arrived at a part which was semicircular, and which was backed by a small battery, pierced for eleven guns. This wall forms the boundary of the garden of a moderate-sized house, which, they were told, was called the Castle. This building had been formerly a fort, built by Henry VIII., at the same time as Calshot Castle, for the purpose of defending the coast against the 54
attacks of pirates, which were then frequent in this sea; but it has been so completely modernised, that it now retains nothing of a castle but the name. They saw a great many bathing-machines, which are very common here, as the gravelly beach permits the machines to be used at all states of the tide. After satisfying themselves with this walk, Mrs. Merton and her daughter turned up a beautiful lane, which afforded them a most magnificent prospect; commanding the Solent Sea, Calshot Castle, and the tall Tower of Eaglehurst, seated on the neighbouring cliffs. In a small garden that they passed, they saw a tortoise crawling slowly along; and Agnes, who disliked slow movements exceedingly, expressed her pity at its miserable fate.

“Nothing is destined by the all-merciful Creator to a miserable fate, Agnes,” said her mother; “and I am confident that every creature has a particular kind of happiness allotted to it, though our ignorance may prevent us from seeing in what it consists. The tortoise is also curiously and wonderfully made: as it has neither force to resist its enemies, nor swiftness to fly from them, it has been provided with a shield of amazing strength, under which it can draw its head, and thus remain 55
in perfect safety from the attacks of birds of prey; yet it can, when necessary, put forth its head again, so as to see and enjoy all around it.”

Agnes was very much interested in this, and would have willingly staid some time to watch it; but this Mrs. Merton could not permit, as they had no time to spare: and, on their return to the inn, they found breakfast ready, and Mr. Merton waiting for them. He was, indeed, very impatient to set off; as it was now after eight o’clock, and the carriage was to be at the door at nine. “We shall soon be ready,” said Mrs. Merton; “for everything is packed up, and we shall not be long taking our breakfast.”

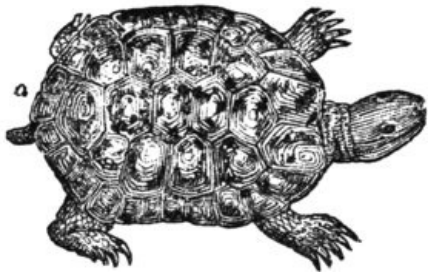


Fig. 4.

TORTOISE.

“That is, if you can get anything to eat,” said Mr. Merton; “for I never saw waiters so slow as these are.”

Not discouraged by these remarks, Mrs. Merton sat down to 56
table; and she and Agnes, whose appetites were sharpened by their morning walk, soon contrived to make an excellent breakfast; though Mr. Merton, who was rendered more fastidious by ill health, could scarcely get anything that he could like. At nine exactly the little carriage was at the door; and Agnes, after running up stairs into the bed-room, to make quite sure that nothing had been left behind, placed herself beside the driver, rejoicing that she had taken the precaution of packing up her portmanteau before she went out. Mr. and Mrs. Merton sat behind; and thus the whole party were enabled to have a distinct view of the country they passed through.

The ride from West Cowes to Newport does not, however, contain anything very striking; and, as the distance is only five miles, they were not long in reaching the town of Newport, which is remarkable for its neatness, though it has little else to recommend it. Our party called at the Post-office; and Mrs. Merton and Agnes visited the church and church-yard, while Mr. Merton was reading his letters.

The Church at Newport was built in the year 1172, in the reign of Henry II., and was dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket. There is nothing remarkable in the Church, excepting the stone which marks 57
the burial-place of Elizabeth, daughter of Charles I., who died at the age of fifteen, while a prisoner in Carisbrook Castle; and the handsome monument erected to the memory of Sir Edward Horsey, who was governor of the island in the time of Queen Elizabeth. In the church-yard there was pointed out to them a grave containing six persons of the name of Shore, who all died on the same day; and this having attracted the attention of Agnes, Mrs. Merton asked an explanation, when the guide told them, that this unfortunate family were coming from the West Indies, on board the ship Clarendon; and, as they intended remaining some time in the Isle of Wight, a house had been taken for them at Newport, looking into the church-yard. The Clarendon was wrecked off Blackgang Chine, on the 11th of October, 1836; and this unfortunate family were among the passengers. It is said all was prepared for them in the house; and even a dinner had been cooked by order of a near relative of theirs, who was anxiously awaiting their arrival when their dead bodies were brought to Newport.

As soon as Mrs. Merton and Agnes re-entered the carriage, they proceeded to the pretty little 58
village of Carisbrook, catching several views of the Castle on their route. Mr. Merton, who did not feel equal to the fatigue of visiting the Castle, remained at a little public-house, opposite the church, called the Bugle Inn, while Mrs. Merton and Agnes walked to the Castle. The wind had been high all the morning, but it had now increased so much, that, when Mrs. Merton and Agnes ascended the Castle hill, it almost blew them back again. At the gate were some old women, sitting at a fruit-stall;

and, though neither Agnes nor her mamma had any inclination to buy fruit, one old woman followed them up the hill, and was so importunate that they could hardly send her away. “Do ask the lady to buy this beautiful fruit for you, Miss,” said the old woman, holding up a miserable green peach, that looked as if it had fallen from the tree before it had attained half its proper size.

“I don’t want such a miserable-looking thing as that,” said Agnes, wrapping her cloak around her, though it was with great difficulty that she did so, on account of the wind.

CARISBROOK CASTLE

“It’s a peach, and not an apple, Miss,” said the woman. Agnes was quite provoked to have it supposed that she, a botanist’s daughter, did not know a peach from an apple; and, turning round angrily, told the woman to get away, and not to dare to be so troublesome. Unfortunately, however, while Agnes was scolding the old woman for teasing her, a sudden gust of wind, operating upon the broad surface of the cloak, actually blew her a short way down the hill before she could recover herself. The old woman laughed; and Agnes, who was quite indignant, declared that Carisbrook Castle was the most disagreeable place she had ever seen in her life. 59

“It is rather soon to say that,” said Mrs. Merton; “when you have only yet seen its ancient gate, and a troublesome old woman on the outside of it.”

The man whose office it was to show the castle now opened the gate, and called their attention to its antiquity. “These towers,” said he, “are of the age of Edward IV., and look, ladies, at this ancient wooden door, it is of equal antiquity.” They looked at the wooden door, which was indeed very old and very much dilapidated; but Mrs. Merton could not help suspecting that its workmanship was of more modern date than that which the man assigned to it, particularly as the arms of Elizabeth were emblazoned over the gateway. She pointed these out to the man, who replied, “The Castle was repaired and fortified in the reign of Elizabeth, when the whole country trembled with dread at the apprehension of the invasion of the Spanish Armada. Look at those ruins on the left. There is the window at which the unfortunate Charles I. attempted to escape, but his most Sacred Majesty being, as the historians describe him, of portly presence, the window 60 61

was too small to admit of his passing through it.” They now ascended the dilapidated steps of the keep, but Agnes was too cross and too much annoyed by the wind, to admire the beautiful prospect that presented itself. They, therefore, descended again, as well as the wind would permit them, the seventy-two stone steps by which they had mounted, and repaired to the well-house, to visit the celebrated donkey. When they first entered Agnes was a little disappointed to see the donkey without any bridle or other harness on, standing close to the wall, behind a great wooden wheel.

Fig. 5.

CARISBROOK GATE.

“Oh, mamma,” cried she, “I suppose the donkey will not work to-day, as he has no harness on?”

Fig. 6.

KING CHARLES’S WINDOW.

“I beg your pardon, miss,” said the man; “this poor little fellow does not require to be chained like your London donkeys, he does his work voluntarily. Come, sir,” continued he, addressing the donkey; “show the ladies what you can do.” The donkey shook his head in a very sagacious manner, as much as to say, “you may depend upon me,” and sprang directly into the interior of the wheel, which was broad and hollow, and furnished in the inside with steps, formed of projecting pieces of wood nailed on, the 62
hollow part of the wheel being broad enough to admit of the donkey between its two sets of spokes. The donkey then began walking up the steps of the wheel, in the same manner as the prisoners do on the wheel of the treadmill; and Agnes noticed that he kept looking at them frequently, and then at the well, as he went along. The man had no whip, and said nothing to the donkey while he pursued his course; but as it took some time to wind up the water, the man informed Mrs. Merton and her daughter while they were waiting, that the well was above three hundred feet deep, and that the water could only be drawn up by the exertion of the donkeys that had been kept there; he added, that three of these patient labourers had been known to have laboured at Carisbrook, the first for fifty years, the second for forty, and the last for thirty. The present donkey, he said, was only a novice in the business, as he had not been employed much above thirteen years; and he pointed to some writing inside the door, in which the date was marked down. While they were speaking the donkey still continued his labour, and looked so anxiously towards the well, that at last 63
Agnes asked what he was looking at. “He is looking for the bucket,” said the man; and in fact, as soon as the bucket made its appearance, the donkey stopped, and very deliberately walked out of the wheel to the place where he had been standing when they entered.

“Pretty creature,” said Agnes; “how sagacious he is!”

“He is very cunning,” said the man; “and he knows when the bucket has come to the top as well as I do.”

The man now threw some water into the well, and Agnes, who had heard that the water made a great noise in falling, after listening attentively for a second or two was just going to express her disappointment at not hearing it, when she was quite startled by a loud report, which seemed to come up from the very bottom of the well.

“Oh! surely,” cried she, “that never can be the same water that you threw down such a long time ago?”

“It is, indeed, miss,” said the man; “the water is five seconds in falling.”

“Five seconds!” cried Agnes; “why, that is only the twelfth part of a minute; surely it must have 64
been much longer than that!”

“Time,” said Mrs. Merton, “often appears to us much longer or shorter than it really is, according to the circumstances in which we are placed. Thus, as we are accustomed to hear a splash of water thrown into other water, the very moment we see it fall, the time that elapsed between your seeing this water fall and hearing it splash, appeared to you much longer than it really was.” The man then let down a lighted lamp; and Agnes, who watched its descent, was astonished to see how it dwindled away, till at last it appeared like a little star, and she saw its reflection on the water.

They had now seen all that was interesting in the “Well House;” and having left it, they were about to cross to the chapel on the opposite side of the court, when they met the old gentleman who had been their fellow-traveller in the railway carriage and in the steam-boat. He seemed very glad to see them again, and was much amused with Agnes’s account of all the wonders that she had seen in the “Well House.”

“And no doubt,” said he, “you have also seen the window through which Charles attempted to 65
escape; but are you aware that two of his children were confined here after their father was beheaded?”

They replied that they had seen the tomb of the Princess Elizabeth at Newport.

“Ay,” said the old gentleman; “she was said to be poisoned, but I believe the poor thing died of grief. She was called Miss Elizabeth Stuart, and her brother Master Harry; and it is said that the poor things almost broke their hearts when they found nobody knelt to them, or kissed their hands. It was said that the Parliament intended to apprentice Elizabeth to a mantua-maker; but she died, and disappointed them, and two years afterwards Cromwell sent the little Duke of Gloucester to the Continent.”

“We were going to the chapel,” said Mrs. Merton; “will you walk in with us?”

“This chapel,” said he, pointing to that to which they were bending their steps, “is dedicated to St. Nicholas, the patron Saint of children, students, sailors, and parish clerks.”

“What an odd mixture!” said Mrs. Merton, smiling.

“St. Nicholas,” continued Mr. Bevan as they entered the chapel, “was a child of extraordinary sanctity; so much so, indeed, that even when a baby at the mother’s breast, it was said he refused to suck on the fast days appointed by the Romish Church. As he grew older his devotion became so apparent that he was called the boy bishop; and it was in his honour that the curious festival bearing that name was instituted in the Romish Church.” 66

“I have often heard of the festival of the boy bishop,” said Mrs. Merton; “but I was not aware that it was instituted in honour of St. Nicholas.”

“What was the ceremony of the boy bishop?” asked Agnes.

“It was one of those strange festivals in the Romish Church,” said Mrs. Merton, “in which people were permitted, and even encouraged, to ridicule all the things which, during the rest of the year, they were taught to consider sacred, and to hold in the highest reverence.”

“The festival of the boy bishop,” observed Mr. Bevan, “is of remote antiquity, and it is said to have been practised on the Continent long before it was introduced into Britain; though we find that, in the year 1299, Edward I., on his way to Scotland, heard mass performed by one of the boy bishops, in the little chapel at Heton, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne.” 67

“And even that is above five hundred years ago,” remarked Mrs. Merton.

“On St. Nicholas’s day,” resumed Mr. Bevan, “the 6th of December, a boy was chosen, at each of our principal cathedrals, from amongst the choristers, to represent a bishop; and to this boy all the respect and homage was paid that would have been offered to a bishop, if he had really been one. His authority lasted until St. Innocent’s day, the 28th of December; and during this time he walked about in all the state of a bishop, attired in a bishop’s robes, with a crosier in his hand, and a mitre on his head. If one of these boy bishops died within the period of his office, he was buried with all the pomp and form of a real bishop; and there is, in fact, a monument in Salisbury Cathedral, representing a boy, about ten or twelve years old, attired in episcopal orders.”

“What a very curious thing!” said Agnes.

“This, I suppose then,” said Mrs. Merton, “is the reason why St. Nicholas is represented as the patron of children?”

“Yes,” said the old gentleman, “and he was considered the patron of students, from the following story:—St. Nicholas was Bishop of Myra, and an Asiatic gentleman, sending his two sons to be educated at Athens, desired them to call upon St. Nicholas at Myra to receive his benediction. They intended to do so, but unfortunately the landlord of the Inn where they put up, perceiving that they had plenty of money, murdered them in their sleep, and cutting their bodies into pieces, salted them, and put them into a pickling tub, used for pickling pork. St. Nicholas had a vision of this in a dream; and going the following morning to the Innkeeper, he desired him to show him the tub where he kept his pickled pork. The Innkeeper at first endeavoured to excuse himself, but, at length, he was compelled to obey; when St. Nicholas, uttering a prayer, the mangled pieces of the poor young men jumped out of the tub, and re-uniting themselves, fell at the feet of the holy bishop, thanking him for having restored them to life. It is on this account that, in ancient pictures, Saint Nicholas is generally represented with two naked children in a tub.” 68

“I think I have heard, when on the Continent,” said Mrs. Merton, “that St. Nicholas was also the patron of young girls; and that in convents, when the novices had behaved well, it was pretended that he had stuffed their stockings with sugar plums during the night.” 69

“Yes,” returned the old gentleman, “and nearly the same fiction was resorted to by parents; who, when they wished to make presents to their children, used to tell them that, if they left their windows open at night, and had been quite good, St. Nicholas would come through the open window and leave them something pretty or nice.”

“How very strange!” cried Agnes; “I should have thought the parents would like to give the presents themselves, and see how happy they made their little children. Besides, was it not very wicked to tell falsehoods?”

“I consider it so,” said Mrs. Merton; “as I think we should never do what is bad even when we think it will produce good. We are all naturally so prone to do evil, that it is necessary to keep the boundary line between what is right and what is wrong as distinct as possible. This principle was not, however, so clearly understood formerly, as it is now; and thus children of the present day have great advantages over those of the preceding generation.” 70

While Mrs. Merton was speaking, Agnes was looking at the chapel so earnestly that her mother asked her what she thought of it.

“I was only thinking,” said Agnes, blushing, “how very odd it was that a saint, who was supposed to be so fond of giving pretty things to children should have such a very ugly chapel. There is not a single ornament in it, from one end to the other.”

Mrs. Merton smiled, and said she supposed that this chapel had been stripped of its ornaments at the time of the Reformation.

“The old chapel of Saint Nicholas was stripped in the time of Elizabeth,” said Mr. Bevan. “When that Queen repaired, and new fortified Carisbrook Castle, to enable it to resist the invasion of the Spanish Armada, she stripped this chapel of its ornaments, to remove all traces of the festival of the boy bishop, which she had previously suppressed in every part of England. But that does not apply to the present chapel, which was built on the site of the old one, in its present unornamented state, in the time of George II.”

They now left the chapel, and proceeded to the outworks, where they found a number of persons assembled in the open space, adjoining the castle, to celebrate an archery meeting. The gay dresses 71

of the ladies, contrasting with the green around, and with the grey walls of the old castle, had a most brilliant and animating effect. Mrs. Merton and Agnes, accompanied by Mr. Bevan, walked to the open space in the outworks of the castle, where the meeting was to be held.

“This space,” said Mr. Bevan, “was formerly the tilt-yard of the castle, where the fêtes and tournaments were held; and here the beautiful Isabella de Fortibus, the lady of the Island, in the time of Edward I., used to sit, surrounded by her court, to bestow her prizes on the victors.”

Agnes, who had never seen anything of archery before, was more interested in the preparations for the archery meeting than in what Mr. Bevan was saying of the ancient mistress of the Island; and her mother perceiving how attentive she was to all she saw, pointed out to her the target with its painted rings of black and white, and the red spot in the centre.

“And what is this red spot for?” asked Agnes.

“That’s the bull’s eye,” said a man who was employed in setting up the target, “and them’s the cleverest as hits it, or comes nearest it when they shoots.” 72

Agnes could hardly help laughing at the man’s bad grammar: and she looked at her mother, but, to her great surprise, instead of Mrs. Merton seeming inclined to ridicule the man, she entered into conversation with him, and asked him a great many questions about shooting. The man, thus encouraged, showed them the piece of leather, called the bracer, which is strapped on the left arm to prevent the wrist from being hurt by the rebound of the bow-string when the arrow is let off; and he told them that a young lady, who had attempted to shoot without a bracer, had had her arm so much injured as to be obliged to have it dressed by a surgeon. “But she wouldn’t listen to nobody,” continued the man; “and she would have her own way, and that was the end of it. She was sorry enough, I warrant her, when she saw the blood running down, and felt the smart; but it was too late then.”

Mrs. Merton and Agnes looked at each other again, but this time it was with a perfect community of feeling. The man then showed them a shooting glove, to save the fingers from being hurt when the archer pulls the string; and, reaching down the bow, he taught Agnes how it should be held. 73

“I believe the best bows are made of yew,” said Mrs. Merton.

“Yes,” said the man; “though there’s nothing that is seldomer seen than a yew bow among the gentry that comes down from London. All the bows that they bring with them are some queer kind of fancy wood or other. I don’t trouble my head with the names of them, for my part; but I know a good yew bow will beat them all hollow at any time.”

He then showed them the shaft, or arrow, which was a slender piece of wood, headed with iron and trimmed with feathers. The best arrows, he told them, were made of ash, as that wood was light, and tough at the same time. Agnes was very anxious to stay and see the archers begin to shoot, but her mother was afraid that Mr. Merton would be quite tired of waiting for them; and they therefore left the castle, without visiting the terraces, which are usually shown to strangers, on account both of their own beauty, and the fine views that they command.

As they walked back to the village Mrs. Merton observed to Agnes how much they should have lost, if they had not entered into conversation with the man who was setting up the target. “He spoke bad grammar,” said she, “because he had not had the same advantages of education that you have had; but you see, in all that he had an opportunity of learning, he was very intelligent, and that he actually knew a great many things that we did not know, and that we were very glad to learn.” 74

By this time they arrived at the Bugle Inn, where they found the kind hostess had lighted a fire for Mr. Merton as he felt chilly, and had wheeled the sofa round to it, so as to make him as comfortable as possible. Agnes, who had felt some contempt at the humble appearance of the little Inn, when they first entered it, was quite ashamed of having done so; and felt that she had committed another fault of the same kind as that which her mother had just reproved at the castle. Nothing, however, was said on the subject, and as soon as the carriage was ready the whole party entered it, and proceeded on their journey.

75

CHAPTER IV.

Departure from Carisbrook.—Road to Freshwater.—Yarmouth.—House where Charles II. was entertained by Admiral Sir Robert Holme.—Freshwater.—Rocks.—Roaring of the Sea.—Birds.—The Razor-bill and Guillemot.—Sea-weed.

Mrs. Merton's party had not long left Carisbrook, when she began to think that they were not on the right road, and she asked the driver.

"Oh! yes, ma'am," said he, "it is all right; all the ladies and gentlemen go this road."

"That is not what I mean," said Mrs. Merton; "it is of very little consequence to me what other people do, but I wish to go through Yarmouth."

"Oh! nobody goes through Yarmouth now, ma'am," said the man; "all the ladies and gentlemen go this way."

Mrs. Merton, though exceedingly provoked, could hardly help laughing at the obstinacy of the man.

"Well," said she, "you now understand that I wish to go to Yarmouth; and as I know there is a road which leads to it, and that turns out of this road, I desire you to take us there, as soon as we reach the turning. You understand me now," continued she. 76

"It will be five or six miles out of the way," said the man muttering.

"That is of no consequence to you," said Mrs. Merton, "as you know we hired your carriage by the day, to go where we liked; and the distance we have travelled is not only very short, but you have had a long rest at Carisbrook."

"It is of no use saying anything more," said Mr. Merton, interposing; "the man must do as he is bid."

They now proceeded a long way through narrow lanes, bordered by high hedges, which Agnes declared was the longest and most disagreeable ride she ever had in her life.

"You may find it tedious," said Mrs. Merton, "but it cannot be very long. The whole island is but twenty-four miles across, from one end to the other, and Newport is, as nearly as possible, in the centre."

"It is only nine miles from Carisbrook to Freshwater, the best way," said the driver; "but it will be a matter of fourteen miles the way you are going." 77

The rest of the party looked at each other, and smiled; and Mr. Merton asked Agnes, in French, if she did not think obstinacy made a person very disagreeable.

"But I do not think I ever could have been so obstinate as this man," said the self-convicted Agnes, whose conscience reminded her that she had often been accused of this fault.

"It is difficult to see our own faults in the same light as they appear to other people," said Mrs. Merton; "but I do assure you, Agnes, that your obstinacy has often appeared as unreasonable, and, I may say, as disagreeable to me, as this man's does to us all. Judge, then, in what a light you must have appeared to your governess, to the servants, and even to your companions, when you would persist in following your own way, in spite of all that could be said to the contrary."

Agnes was too much ashamed to reply; and they travelled on in silence, till they reached the little village of Calbourn. They passed through it without noticing the turn to Yarmouth, as Mr. and Mrs. Merton happened to be engaged in conversation, and the driver went on his own way. He would also have passed a second turn a few miles farther on the road, if Agnes's quick eye had not caught sight of the finger-post. Mr. Merton then insisted on the man taking them to Yarmouth, which he did, muttering and grumbling to himself all the way, and looking so disagreeable that Agnes resolved, in her own mind, that nothing should ever tempt her to be obstinate again. 78

They had a very pleasant drive, with a fine view of the sea, and of the numerous vessels in Yarmouth Roads, as they advanced. When they passed the turnpike, a fine healthy-looking country-woman came out with a child in her arms, to receive the toll. She no sooner saw Mr. Merton than she cried out, "Poor dear gentleman, how very ill he do look to be sure!—but our fine air will soon set him up again." Agnes was inexpressibly shocked at this, and she looked at her papa to see how he bore it. Mr. Merton smiled at her look of anxiety, and said, "Do not suppose, my dear Agnes, that I am hurt at the woman's observation; for though such a remark would have been exceedingly rude and unfeeling in ordinary life, it was here evidently dictated by kindness of heart. We should never forget," continued he, "when we are judging of the conduct of others, that we ought to estimate their conduct by their opportunities and habits of life, rather than by our own. You, Agnes, are but too apt to forget this, and to fancy that people who have been brought up in the simplest and rudest manner, should be acquainted with all the refinements and courtesies of life." 79

They now entered the pretty little town of Yarmouth, and had a fine view of the opposite shore of Dorsetshire, with the projecting point of land on which Hurst Castle is erected, stretching far into the sea, and the little town of Lymington in the distance. Mrs. Merton pointed this out to her daughter, and also told her that it was supposed that formerly the Isle of Wight was united to the mainland at this part. "Indeed," continued she, "the sea at one place is, I believe, only one mile across; and it is said there is a lane in the Isle of Wight leading directly down to this point, which is abruptly cut off by the sea, and which is supposed formerly to have been carried on at the other side."

"I think, my dear," said Mr. Merton, laughing, "you must not attach too much importance to that lane, as it may have merely led down to the beach. Besides, even if the Isle of Wight was once attached to the mainland, it must have been a long time ago; as the Romans, who took possession of the Isle of Wight, in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, in the year 45, describe it as an island. 80

However," he continued, "after all, it is very possible that the Isle of Wight was, at some distant period, united to the mainland, as the soil of which it is composed, being of a chalky nature, is easily soluble in water; and, indeed, the very name of the strait which separates the island from the mainland, and which is called the Solent or Solvent sea, seems to express that it has dissolved the soil which connected it with the mainland."

"Is that an old name?" asked Mrs. Merton. "I thought the Solent sea had been, comparatively, a modern appellation."

"It was the common name of the strait before the time of the Venerable Bede," said Mr. Merton.

Agnes, who began to get a little tired with this conversation, was glad when the carriage stopped at a curious old house, that looked more like an ancient manor-house than an inn; and which in fact 81
was the very house in which Charles II. was entertained in the year 1671, by the gallant admiral, Sir Robert Holme.

"I remember this house well," said Mrs. Merton; "for I was here with my aunt about fifteen years ago, at the time when a very melancholy calamity had just happened. A collier's vessel from Newcastle was lying in the roads, when the wife of the captain, who was near her confinement, was taken ill, and sent for a doctor from the town. The only doctor who happened to be at home was an elderly man, very much respected by every body, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten, though it well deserves to be remembered. The evening was dark and inclined to be stormy, and this worthy man was advised not to venture out to sea in such weather. However, he was determined to do his duty, and he went. After the little baby was born, he was about to return, but the storm had become more serious, and he determined to remain in the vessel till morning. Unfortunately, however, a dreadful storm arose, and the ship was lost. My aunt and I arrived at Yarmouth the very day after the accident, and we found the whole town in agitation and distress. 82
Every body knew the doctor; every body respected him; and every body was of course distressed at his untimely death. In the kitchen of the inn were three or four sailors, who had been saved by clinging to the rigging. I forget how many hours they had been in this state; but I remember well that when I saw them, their arms, which were being rubbed to restore circulation, were quite black, and so benumbed that they could not use them."

"I remember your mentioning the circumstance before," said Mr. Merton, "and I am not surprised at the impression it made on you."

"Yes," said Mrs. Merton, "it is one thing to read of shipwrecks, and of sailors clinging to the rigging for hours, and another to see the poor creatures who have undergone such dreadful sufferings."

Having now satisfied their curiosity with all that was to be seen at Yarmouth, they re-entered the carriage and proceeded to Freshwater.

On the road they saw so many beautiful wild flowers that Agnes begged permission to walk a little way, that she might gather some. There was the beautiful blue Scabious, the yellow Ragwort, and a 83
bright pink Lychnis. In one place there was a mass of Ground Ivy, growing so luxuriantly as to look like a garden flower; and when Agnes brought some of this to the carriage, her papa told her it belonged to the order of the Labiatæ or lipped plants, and made her observe the shape of the flower, and how completely it is double-lipped, the lower lip being more than twice the size of the 84
upper one. Then Agnes found a plant with small leaves like the Trefoil, and curiously coiled-up seed pods, which she said looked like snails, or hedge-hogs. This Mr. Merton told her was called the Spotted Medick, and that its curious pod was, in fact, a legume like that of the pea.

Fig. 7.

Ground-Ivy.
(*Glechoma hederucea.*)

Fig. 8.

The Spotted Medick.
(*Medicago denticulata.*)

The part of the island which contains Freshwater, the Needles, and Alum Bay, is almost separated from the rest by the river Yar, which rises behind the rock called Freshwater Gate, and runs into the sea at Yarmouth. It thus wants only a few yards of going entirely across the island. The

geological construction of this part of the Isle of Wight renders it peculiarly liable to change; since, as most of the rocks are composed of chalk and flint, the softer parts of the chalk are frequently washed away by the sea, or heavy rain, leaving the flints and the harder part of the chalk remaining. In this manner the curious isolated rocks at the Needles, and at Freshwater Gate have been formed, and the numerous caverns and chines scooped out; and in this way, doubtless, numerous other changes will take place, as long as the island continues to exist.

THE ARCHED ROCK AT FRESHWATER

Agnes was quite delighted with the appearance of the little inn at Freshwater, which is, in fact, a summer pavilion, with several rooms, all opening by folding doors, on a kind of terrace, shaded by a verandah, and close to the beach. 85

“What a delightful place!” cried Agnes.

“Yes,” said Mrs. Merton, “this little inn has always been a favourite of mine, and I am really sorry that the proprietor is erecting a more magnificent mansion on the cliffs, as I am sure it is impossible that his guests can be more comfortable anywhere than they are here.”

As soon as Mrs. Merton had ordered dinner, the whole party walked on the beach, and never was more beautiful sea-weed than that which lay spread at their feet. Agnes, who had promised to collect some sea-weed to take home to her aunt Jane, was quite embarrassed with the profusion around her; and she soon collected a great deal more than it was possible for her to carry away, as she had only brought a small basket from town with her for the purpose of holding it. At home, she had thought this would be quite sufficient; but now, alas! she found that one immense piece of sea-weed that she was dragging after her was alone sufficient to fill her basket entirely. 86

“My dear Agnes!” cried Mrs. Merton, “you never can take that large plant with you to town.”

“No, mamma,” said Agnes, sighing, “I am afraid I cannot; but only look what a splendid thing it is.”

“It is certainly a very fine specimen,” said Mrs. Merton; “but it is of the kind called tangle, which is common everywhere. The frond, or leafy part, has been found in some places twenty feet long, and as broad as the leaf of a plantain, to which, you see, it bears considerable resemblance.”

“Here is a piece of the winged fucus,” said Mr. Merton, “which though rare here, is common in Scotland, where we call it Badder-locks or Henware. Look, Agnes,” continued he, addressing his

daughter, “do you observe the strong projecting rib that runs up the middle of the leaf?—that part is frequently eaten in the North; and in some places the flat part is eaten also.”

“Eaten!” cried Agnes, very much surprised.

“Yes,” returned her father, “I assure you that this mid-rib, when stripped of its outer covering, affords a very important article of food to the poorer inhabitants of the northern islands of Scotland.” 87

Agnes looked at the plant which she held in her hand. “What a curious plant it is!” said she: “here is its root; but it seems to have only leaves: has it any flowers?”

“No,” replied Mr. Merton; “this is one of the cryptogamous plants; that is, one of those plants which have neither flowers nor seeds.”

“No seeds!” cried Agnes: “how, then, are the young plants produced?”

“By means of what are called sporules, which serve instead of seeds.”

“And what is the difference,” said Agnes, “between these sporules and seeds?”

“Every seed,” said Mr. Merton, “contains an embryo,—that is, a miniature plant,—which has one or two leaves, a root, and, generally, an ascending shoot, quite small, and curiously folded up, but still plainly to be distinguished, either by the naked eye, or with a microscope. Now a sporule has no embryo, and no traces of a plant can be discovered in it till it has begun to grow.”

“I am afraid that I do not quite understand you, papa,” said Agnes. 88

“It can hardly be expected that you should,” said Mrs. Merton; “but it will be sufficient for you to remember that cryptogamous plants have no flowers, and no regularly formed seeds.”

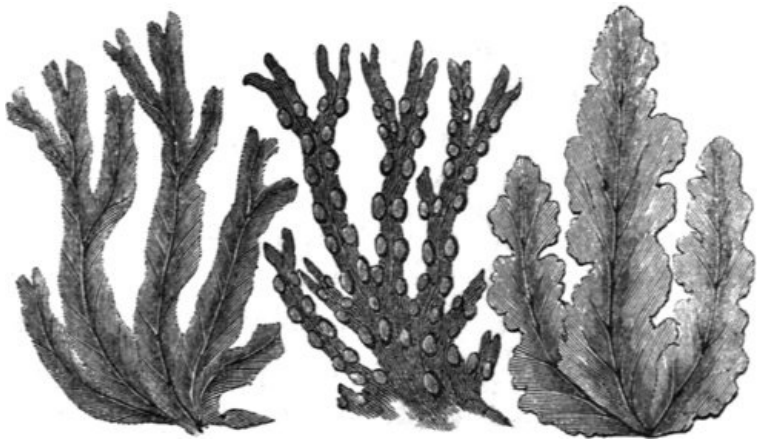


Fig. 9.

Winged Fucus. Bladder Fucus. Tangle.

“You will observe, Agnes,” said Mr. Merton, “that this sea-weed does not grow in the earth, like a land plant, but it is merely attached to any stone or other object that it finds in the sea, to which it fixes itself by means of its clasping roots.”

Agnes now dropped her long plant of tangle, which, it must be confessed, was very troublesome to carry, and which was loaded with the sand that adhered to it as she swept it along the beach; and, instead of it, she picked up a smaller piece of what she found to be the common Bladder-Fucus. 89

“This,” said Mr. Merton, “is one of the commonest of all the kinds of sea-weed; and its popular name is Sea-wrack. It is very abundant in the western isles of Scotland; where it is gathered in great quantities for making kelp.”

“And what is kelp, papa?” Agnes asked.

“It is the ashes which remain after burning the Sea-wrack,” said Mr. Merton; “and which were formerly constantly used in making glass, and also in making soap. Large quantities of iodine are still obtained from them.”

“Oh, I remember that iodine!” cried Agnes: “that was the medicine that did you so much good when your knee was so dreadfully swollen.”

“Yes,” said Mr. Merton; “it is now given in all cases of swollen joints; and it is said to remove even the goitres.”

Agnes did not ask any explanation of this; for she remembered that the goitres are swellings in the throat, to which the inhabitants of Switzerland, and other mountainous countries, are particularly liable: and her father then informed her that kelp is now little used since the duty has been taken off salt; as that and other forms of soda, and some other alkalies, which now pay but little duty, have been found to be more efficacious, in making both soap and glass, than kelp. “The Sea-wrack, however,” he continued, “is still collected, chiefly for manuring the land; though it is still used as a winter food for cattle, and sometimes for human beings.” 90

When Agnes heard this, she put a little bit into her mouth; but she found, though it had a salt taste, it was too tough to be eaten without difficulty, and she therefore amused herself with clapping the air-vessels in the fronds between her hands, as she went along, for she liked to hear them crack. The party now returned home to their dinner, after which Mr. Merton lay down on the sofa, and Mrs. Merton and Agnes walked out again on the beach, to enjoy the roaring of the waves and the delightful breezes from the sea. It was now nearly dark, and nothing could be grander than the manner in which the waves rose up, and foamed, and curled as they beat against the beach, 91

looking, as Agnes said, like Neptune’s horses.

Mrs. Merton and her daughter stood for some time watching the gradual advance of the waves, when they were startled by a large Newfoundland dog which brushed past them, and almost knocked Agnes into the sea. Mrs. Merton was very much alarmed, and instantly went farther back to a safer place; and then they saw a young man in a shooting-jacket, with a gun in his hand, advance and take their former position. The young man was evidently the master of the dog, which he was urging as much as possible to go into the sea; but the dog, in spite of all his efforts, stood still, wagging his tail and looking up in his master’s face, but without making any effort to jump into the water; though the gentleman threw several stones in, one after another, crying “Hoy, Neptune, fetch it out my boy! fetch it out!”

“What can be the reason that the dog will not take the water?” said Mrs. Merton, addressing an old fisherman who stood by her. “I thought Newfoundland dogs had been particularly fond of the sea. Is it possible that the dog being brought up in a town can make any difference?”

“The dog,” said the old sailor, “knows it’s no use going into the sea when the tide is coming in, with a wind in shore. He would be dashed all to pieces against the rocks in no time. Those dumb creatures have more sense than a Cockney any day.” 92

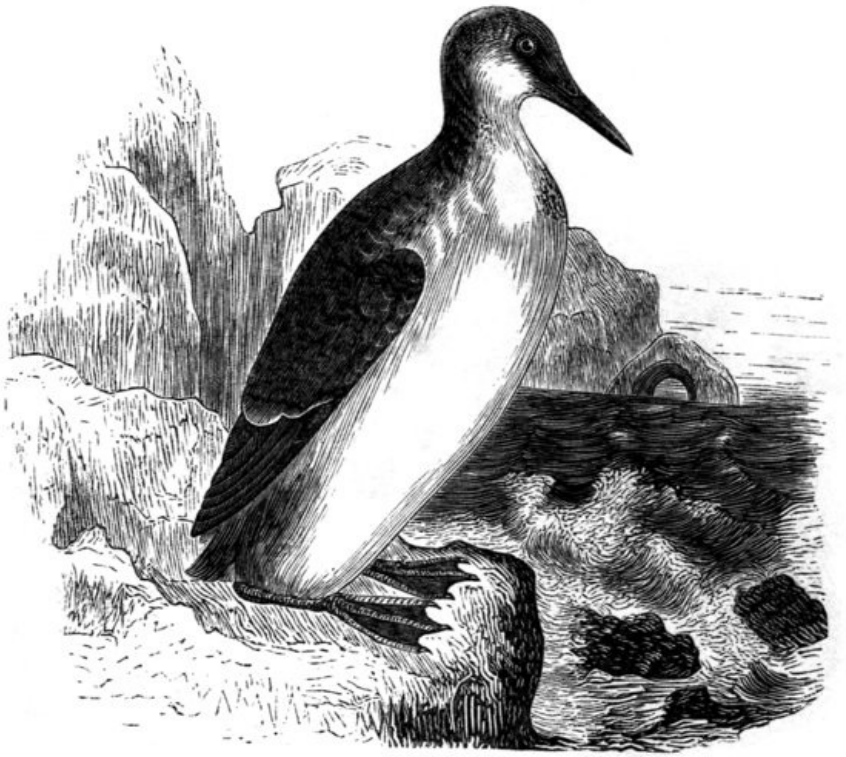
The young man, apparently tired of his fruitless exertions, now whistled his dog off, and climbing up the bank went off over the cliffs.

“What is he going to shoot?” said Mrs. Merton.

“Razor-bills and willocks,” said the old man. “There’s plenty of them here; but I have a notion the birds will not mind him any more than the dog did.”

“What queer names for birds,” cried Agnes; “I never heard those names before. How I should like to see the birds!”

“Come here, miss,” said the old man, “and I’ll show them to you;” and giving her his hand he helped her down some of the rocks, and lifted her over others, till he placed her in a situation where she distinctly saw a large guillemot or willock, as the man called it, sitting by itself on the bare ledge of the rocks.



THE GUILLEMOT

“Oh! dear,” cried Agnes, “what a curious bird that is. I never saw anything like it in all my life.” 93

“And those are young ones,” said the man, pointing down to some little creatures, looking like young ducks, dabbling in the sea beneath.

“But how can they ever get there?” cried Agnes, astonished at the almost immeasurable height at which the old bird appeared to sit above the young ones.

“The old ones carry them down on their backs,” said the old man.

This appeared perfectly incomprehensible to Agnes; but she had already learnt by her travels not to laugh at things because she did not comprehend them; and she therefore said nothing, while the man helped her back to the place where her mother was waiting for her.

“I can’t show miss a razor-bill to-night,” said the man, “without going a good way; for every bird keeps its rock to itself.”

Mrs. Merton now gave the man something for his trouble, and they returned to the hotel, where they found Mr. Merton waiting tea for them.

Agnes was quite delighted to tell her papa what she had seen; “but I suppose,” said she, “what the old man said about the old birds carrying down the young ones on their backs, could not be true.”

“It appears very strange, certainly,” said Mr. Merton, “but my friend, Mr. Waterton, who I believe knows more about birds than any other man living, has often told me the same thing.”

“Can you tell me anything more about these birds?” asked Agnes.

“The bird you saw,” said Mr. Merton, “is generally called the foolish guillemot, because it lays its egg on the bare rock, without any nest. I say its egg, for each female bird is said to lay only one; on which she sits, in an upright, and, in what appears to us, a most awkward position, till the egg is hatched; which is generally about a month. The young birds are at first covered with a sort of yellow down, mixed with bristly hair; and, as they sit on narrow ledges of rock, only a few inches in breadth, it seems wonderful how they can help tumbling into the sea.”

“But, if each bird lays only one egg, I wonder there are so many young ones,” said Agnes; “for I should think that a great many eggs must be broken or stolen.”

“It is said that, if the female guillemot loses her egg, she lays another; and, if that goes, another; so that she always has one egg to sit upon; just as a spider is enabled to form several new webs, if you destroy its old ones, though it would not have made the first any larger or stronger if it had been left unmolested. Would you like to see a willock’s egg, Agnes?”

“Very much indeed.”

Mr. Merton rang the bell; and, at his desire, the waiter procured an egg of one of these birds from an old woman who lived in the neighbourhood; and who, after boiling the eggs to make them keep, had them for sale. This egg Mr. Merton purchased, and gave Agnes. It was very large, and of a pear-shape; and its colour was a fine bluish green, blotched and streaked with reddish brown and black.

“I cannot imagine how the people can get these eggs,” said Agnes; “since they are laid on such narrow ledges of rock, and at such a height above the sea.”

“It is indeed astonishing,” said Mr. Merton; “but the young men who are brought up to the sea acquire early, wonderful activity of limbs and steadiness of nerves; so that they can climb crags almost as easily as you or I can walk on level ground. Besides, as most of them are very poor, they are glad to get a few pence by the sale of these eggs, and do not mind incurring some danger.”

“I am sure I never could accomplish such a feat,” said Agnes.

“Not at once,” said her mother; “but, if it were necessary for you to learn to climb crags, you might easily do so by practising a little every day; as there are very few things, indeed, that patience and perseverance will not accomplish in time.”

CHAPTER V.

Young Londoner and Neptune.—Disobedience of the Young Fisherman.—Fossils.—Fine Water.—Alum Bay.—The Needles.—Old Couple.—Dull Road.—Fertility of the Isle of Wight.

The next morning Mrs. Merton and Agnes rose early, and, as usual, walked out before breakfast. Almost the first thing they saw was the young man who had attracted their attention the preceding evening; and who, with his gun in his hand, and followed by Neptune, was sauntering over the cliffs. Almost as soon as they saw him, the young man fired his gun; and instantly a thousand birds rose from hidden places in the cliffs, screaming and flapping their wings in such a fearful manner that Agnes was quite terrified, and clung close to her mother's side, as if for protection. The young man was evidently pleased with the effect he had produced; and, calling Neptune, he threw a stone for him to fetch out of the sea. Neptune did not now refuse; for, as his instinct told him there was no 98
longer any danger of his being dashed against the rocks, he gladly indulged his natural fondness for the water, and sprang into the waves after the stone; though, of course, it had sunk too deep for him to reach it. The young man then threw in a piece of stick, which Neptune brought out in triumph: and his master, sauntering away over the cliffs, again fired off his gun; at which the sea-birds again rose, but, this time, with a wild scream which seemed like fiendish laughter. Neptune had just plunged in again, after something his master had thrown for him, when a young fisherman came up to Mrs. Merton, and asked her if she would not give the young lady a sail. Mrs. Merton, remembering that she had heard it was a beautiful sail from Freshwater to Alum Bay, hesitated: she wished to show her little daughter as much as possible of the beauties of the island; and she recollected that Mr. Merton could easily go round in a carriage, if he thought the boat would be too fatiguing.

"Oh! do go, mamma," cried Agnes; "I should so like to see the caverns."

Mrs. Merton was well aware that the caverns could only be seen to advantage from the sea; and, 99
as she was never so happy as when gratifying the wishes of her darling, she was half inclined to engage with the man; but she did not like to do so till she had consulted Mr. Merton: she therefore told the man she would consider of it; and was just turning away, when the gruff voice of the old fisherman sounded in her ear, bidding her beware, for there would be a storm before night. "If you had set out by day-break," said he, "it would have been a different thing; but now you will never be able to get near enough the shore to see anything without running on the rocks."

"Why, now, father!" cried the young man, "did ever any body hear the like? there's mother waiting for us at Black Gang Chine; and here's a lady that would have paid for the boat half-way, if it had not been for you."

"Nonsense, lad," said the father; "mother had rather we had staid away, than went in such weather as this: she'll not expect us; she's been a fisherman's wife too long not to know when a storm's coming on."

"Never mind, my lad," cried the young Londoner, coming down the cliffs; "I'll go with you, and to 100
Black Gang Chine, too; for that is just where I want to go. Never mind the old fellow's croaking. It is all very well for women and children," continued he, glancing contemptuously at Mrs. Merton and Agnes; "but we are hearts of oak, my boy: ain't we?"

"You had better not go, Jack," said the father to his son. "You know Black Gang Chine of old: and she's a bad one with a tide setting in shore; as I know to my cost."

The young man paid no attention to his father's remonstrance; but turned aside with the Londoner to settle what was to be paid for the boat. Agnes, who was very fond of dogs, in the meantime began to pat the head of Neptune, who stood beside her, wagging his tail, as though he knew her partiality, and was waiting to be caressed.

"Look, mamma," cried Agnes, "how singularly he is marked: he has a white throat, with a large, black, heart-shaped mark on the chest."

Mrs. Merton turned to look at the dog, and perceived the mark of which her daughter had spoken; which was, indeed, very singular, and very distinct. The Londoner, having finished his bargain, now 101
whistled off his dog; and the young fisherman hastened to the beach to prepare his boat. As he passed, the father repeated his ominous cry of "Jack, you'd better not go."

The young man, however, only replied: "Don't be a fool, father. He's given all I asked; and I could have had as much more, if I had but known."

"Oh! that self-will," said the old man; "it'll be the ruin of you, Jack."

"Never mind, if it is," said the young fellow; and, whistling a tune, he hurried down to the beach.

Both Mrs. Merton and Agnes were very much shocked at the recklessness and disobedience of the young man; and Mrs. Merton asked the father, why he had not warned the young Londoner of his danger.

"And much good it would have done," said the old man; "and much good it would have done," he repeated. "If my own son won't listen to me, how can I expect that a cockney would?"

"But why, then, did you warn us?" asked Agnes.

"You," said he, looking at her; "oh! that's quite a different thing. It may have done you some good. Besides," muttered he, as he stumped away, "I'd a little girl of my own once, and she was drowned." 102

The waiter from the inn now approached, to tell them that Mr. Merton was waiting breakfast; and Mrs. Merton asked him, if he thought the water was smooth enough for a boat.

"By no means, ma'am," said the waiter: "there's a young gentleman from London, who's gone out shooting, that ordered a boat last night; and I called him as soon as it was light, but he would not get up then, and now it's too late."

Mr. Merton, who had become tired of waiting, now joined them; and he made Agnes observe the curious shape of the isolated rocks at Freshwater Gate. One, that stands at some distance from the shore, forms an arch; and another, which is nearer to the cliffs, is of a conical form, and pointed. This last is called the Deer-bound Rock; because a deer, pursued by the hounds, is said to have leaped on it from the cliffs, about seventy years ago.

"And then there's the caverns, sir," said the waiter. "There are ten or twelve caverns. There's Lord Holmes's Parlour and Kitchen, Neptune's Cave, the Frenchman's Hole, the Wedge Rock, and the Lady,—there you see her, sir, sitting as natural as if she was alive."

"That is," said Mr. Merton, "I suppose you see a rock that a little imagination may make you fancy a lady in a cavern."

The man did not seem to like this interpretation; but he could not contradict it: and they walked back to the inn, where they found breakfast waiting. Agnes had then a glass of the excellent water for which the place is celebrated,—and which is so rarely good close to the sea;—and they left Freshwater, delighted with its little inn, civil waiters, and excellent fare, to visit the Needles and Alum Bay.

The shape of the Isle of Wight has been compared to that of a turbot; of which the point called the Needles forms the tail. From this point, which is the extreme west, to Foreland Farm, near Bembridge, which is the extreme east, the whole island measures only twenty-four miles in length; and its greatest breadth, which is from Cowes Castle to Rock End, near Black Gang Chine, is only twelve miles. It is, therefore, extremely creditable to this little island to have made such a noise in the world as it has done; and its celebrity shows that, small as it is, it contains a great many things worth looking at. One of the most remarkable of these curiosities is the point of land towards which our travellers were now advancing. It has a strange effect upon the natives of an inland county to hear the sea roaring on both sides of the tract of land they are passing over; and, when the point is reached from which the tongue of land springs which forms the promontory called the Needles, and the sea is seen, as well as heard, in this unusual position, the effect is still more striking. The part of the promontory on which the light-house is erected is seven hundred and fifteen feet above the level of the sea; but the downs slope down towards the cliffs. These, however, are still six hundred and fifty feet above the sea, which roars awfully beneath them. The promontory is of chalk, intermixed with flint; and the isolated rocks, called the Needles, show that it formerly projected much farther into the sea than it does at present; as they are evidently the remains of a portion from which the softer parts of the chalk have been washed away, while the flint and the firmer parts have been left. When Mr. Merton's party reached the promontory, they left the carriage; and Mr. Merton waited at the light-house, while Mrs. Merton and Agnes walked over the downs towards the cliffs. They had not gone far, when they met a man with a small telescope in his hand, coming towards them; and Mrs. Merton asked him if he would go back with them, and help Agnes to climb down part of the cliffs. He willingly consented: and they advanced as well as the wind would permit them; but this was so violent that Mrs. Merton, who was light, and not very strong, was in great danger of being blown into the sea. The man told them first to turn to the right, that they might descend to the beach, to see the curious stratification of the Bay; but, just as they had reached a sheltered nook, they observed a young man coming up towards them; and, to their great surprise, they recognised a friend of theirs residing at Godalming. After the first hurried greeting, they asked him how he came to be there; and he told them that he was staying with a friend at Freshwater. He no sooner said this, than Agnes asked him how he had contrived to reach the spot from which they saw him ascending.

"I came there in a boat," said he.

"I thought it was quite dangerous," said Agnes, eagerly.

"So it would have been," returned Mr. Russell,—for that was the name of the young gentleman,—"if we had not contrived to pass the Needles when the tide was full."

"And how did you manage that?" asked Mrs. Merton.

"By leaving Freshwater Gate at three o'clock in the morning," returned he: "and, I assure you, it was anything but agreeable. The night air blew excessively chill; and the sea was wrapped in such a thick gloom that it required some courage to plunge into it. However, the fishermen pushed off the boat; and, though there was such a heavy swell, that we were alternately mounted on the crest of the billows, and lost in the hollows between them, after about an hour's hard pulling, we found ourselves under the highest point of the cliff. The face of the rock is there nearly perpendicular, and it is six hundred and fifteen feet high."

"But did you see the caverns?" asked Agnes.

"Oh! yes; but I had seen them before. The best is Freshwater Cavern: surely you saw that?"

"No, we did not. Pray tell us all about it."

"It is an opening in the rocks about a hundred and twenty feet deep; and the principal entrance is by a bold, rugged arch about thirty feet high. It has a very curious effect when you look through this arch, as it is just like a church-window; and, when the tide is in, the water looks very beautiful, from the manner in which it seems to tremble in the irregular gleams of light which penetrate through the projections of the rocks. Then, there is Scratchell's Bay, with the grand arch three hundred feet high; and the Wedge Rock, where there is a great mass of rock detached from the cliff, which looks as though it had lodged between the rocks, just as it was falling down. It is the shape of a wedge; and, when you look at it, you can't help thinking every moment that it will fall."

"But the waiter at Freshwater talked of Lord Holmes's Parlour and Kitchen: what can they be?"

"The first is a cavern in which a certain Lord Holmes, who lived in the island about eighty or a hundred years ago, used to bring his friends to drink their wine in summer; and his kitchen is another cavern, where, it is said, his wine was kept, to cool it; but I did not pay much attention to the caverns as my object was to find Razor-bills and Willocks; which I wanted to shoot, that I might

stuff some of them for my father's museum."

"I suppose you saw a good many birds near the caverns," said Agnes.

"A good many," returned he; "but the most were between the highest cliff,—which is marked by a long streak of red ochre, from a stratum of that earth, I suppose,—and a place called Sun Corner, where the cliff overhangs the sea. Here there were hundreds and thousands of Guillemots and Razor-bills, which were flying about in parties of tens or twenties; and, far above them, the great grey Sea-mews were wheeling round and round, and uttering their loud and piercing cries; while, in the distance, the Needle rocks were covered with hundreds of Black-headed gulls. When we approached this place, the fisherman pulled right in for the cliff; and, as we drew near it, I never saw such a scene before in my life. The whole surface of the cliff was in ledges, like shelves, one above another; and these ledges were perforated, like honey-combs, by the Puffins and Razor-bills. Every ledge was crowded with birds, so thickly, that the only wonder was, how they could all find 109
room to sit; and yet every now and then some fresh birds came popping up through the holes in the ledges, and knocked off those that were sitting on them."

"How droll!" cried Agnes, laughing.

"But that was not all," continued Mr. Russell; "the birds that had been so unceremoniously tumbled off, soon returned and settled on the heads of those that had taken their places; slipping down behind them till they gained a footing on the rocks, and obliged those before them to tumble off in their turn. You may easily imagine what a noise all this caused, particularly among the Puffins. These little fellows as they sat upright on the rocks, turned their heads, sharply, first on one side, and then on the other, as if they were scolding and chattering at their disturbers; and, as they have white cheeks with a black hood, which looks as if it was tied under the chin, they had the appearance of a number of old women met to gossip. A few delicately white Kittiwakes, which looked like the young ladies of the party, were perched on some of the projecting crags; and here and there was a Cormorant standing, stern and upright, like a black sentinel, and quite alone. These 110
birds were very striking, from their black hue contrasting with the white cliffs; but I cannot say that I much admire them. I think the Razor-bills are the handsomest of all the Isle of Wight birds; as they have snow-white breasts, and black heads and backs. But, as to their cries, I really don't know which is the worst. Such a horrible clatter surely never can be heard any where else.'"

"I can easily conceive that," said Mrs. Merton, "from what we heard of these birds ourselves."

"Oh! but that could have been nothing to what we heard," said Mr. Russell. "The fisherman told me to fire: I did so; and all the previous din was quiet compared to the uproar which ensued. The sky was positively darkened with the multitude of birds that rose from the cliffs; and their wild screams and cries were hideous beyond description. But the most extraordinary part of the whole was, that though I fired so close that my shot touched the plumage of several of the birds, not one was killed."

"How could that be?" asked Mrs. Merton.

"The fact is," replied Mr. Russell, "that the feathers on the necks and breasts of these sea-birds are closely matted together, and form a covering, so smooth and compact, that the shots glance off 111
instead of penetrating it. The fisherman laughed at my astonishment when I saw the birds I had hit fly away; and told me that the only way to shoot a sea-bird was to get behind it. I profited by this advice, and soon contrived to shoot all the birds I wanted, except a Cormorant; and that I have come on land to shoot."

"But why did you not shoot one from the water?" asked Mrs. Merton.

"Because I could not manage it, my dear madam. Just under the cliff, where the Cormorants were sitting, there was a narrow slip of beach; and I landed there with great difficulty, as the swell of the sea was very heavy, and the bottom there is very bad. I was now almost perpendicularly under the birds, and I could plainly see their long necks, and stiff, still heads poked out towards the sea; and in the same position they continued, without turning their heads to the right or to the left, though I wasted a great quantity of shot upon them, and some excellent powder, which I grudged very much: and so, finding that I could do no good, shooting at them from below, I am now come to try a shot 112
from above; but I must not be long, for we shall have hard work to get through the Needles if we let the tide get too low, and we must be back at Freshwater to dinner."

"Did you see any of the eggs?" asked Agnes.

"Oh! yes, plenty of the Guillemots and Razor-bills, which were lying singly on the ledges of the rocks, and shaking with every puff of wind; for they are only just balanced on the bare rocks on which they lie: but the Puffins lay their eggs in the long holes they hollow out of the chalk. I have seen a man put his arm in almost up to the shoulder, to pull a Puffin's egg out of its hole; for the birds always contrive to lay them at the very bottom."

"Well," said Mrs. Merton, "we will not detain you, since you have such important business in hand."

He thanked her; but before he went he took something out of his pocket, which he gave to Agnes. "Here," said he, "is something curious that I picked up on the rocks where I landed. I also saw a Grampus on the shore at the Shingles;" and, so saying, he wished them good-bye, and ran off.

"What strange things these are that he has given me, mamma!" cried Agnes. "Do look! what can 113
they be?"

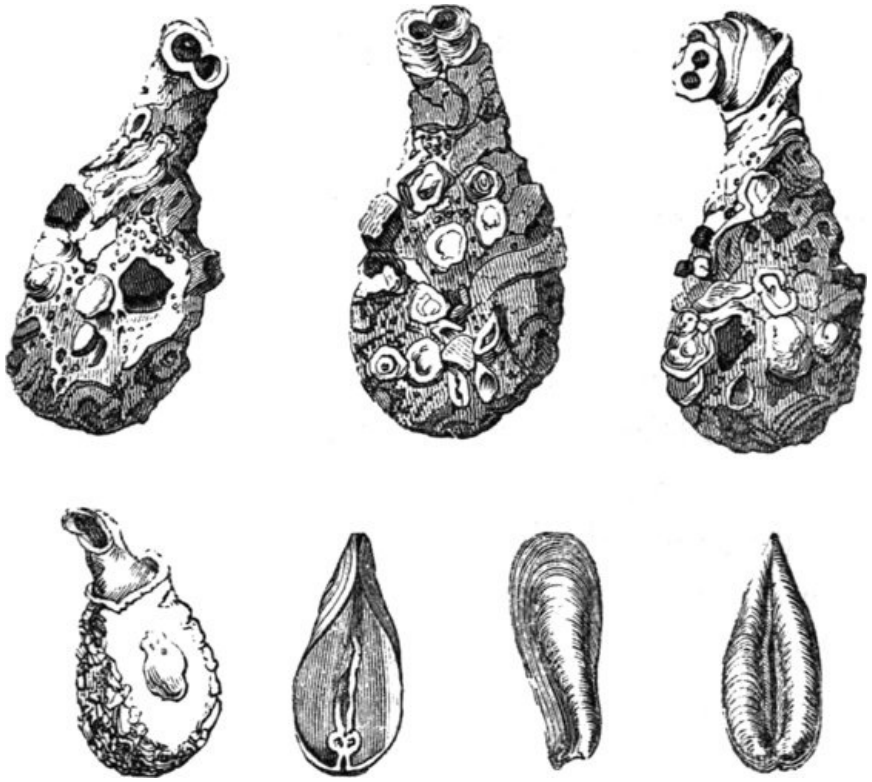


Fig. 10.

Burrowing Molluscs (*Gastrochæna Pholodia*).

"They are cases made by a kind of Molluscous animal," said her mother, "that lives like the Pholas enclosed in a burrow; but instead of taking up its dwelling in rocks, it forms itself a curious covering with broken bits of Corals and Madrepores, mixed with fragments of limestone, sand, gravel, and in short anything it can find. These materials it works up into the form of a flask, as you see; uniting them by a thick glutinous liquid, which exudes from its own body; and lining the whole with a kind of limy substance, which makes it quite smooth. Now we will open one of the cases, and I will show you what a curious little creature it is that makes this singular case."

Agnes was quite surprised to see how small the shell was of the little creature that had been working so hard; but they were not in a situation to stand much longer, and, indeed, they could not have remained so long had they not been in a hollow part of the rock. They then descended to the beach; and were quite astonished when they looked up to the cliff. The construction of Alum Bay is, indeed, very curious. On one side, it is bounded by high cliffs of chalk, and on the other, by horizontal strata of diluvial soil, which extend to Freshwater; but the most remarkable feature of the place consists of the vertical strata in the centre. At one end of these is the London clay, which is of a bluish grey; and then follow narrow vertical stripes of red and yellow ochre, fuller's earth, black flints, and grey and white sand: the colours of all the different kinds being so brilliant as to be seen distinctly at a little distance. While Mrs. Merton and Agnes stood on the beach, they saw hanging above them a man engaged in taking birds'-eggs. He had driven a large stake into the top of the cliff; to which he had fastened a strong rope, with two sticks placed crossways, at the other end, for him to sit on. It made Agnes giddy to look at this man; and she gladly turned her head from him, to listen to what their guide was telling her mother about Alum Bay, and the manner in which bottles are filled with the sands.

Fig. 11.

Section of Alum Bay.

"But why is it called Alum Bay?" asked Agnes.

"Because alum is frequently picked up on the beach," replied her mother; "and, I believe, copperas-stones are also found here. The white sand is used in making china and glass."

The guide now beckoned Agnes to advance; and, turning round the projecting rock, she saw the very Grampus Mr. Russell had spoken of lying on the shingles, which were a mass of stones projecting through the sea, at some distance from the shore. She was most excessively disappointed at first, as she thought the creature so very ugly; but, in a little time, she began to admire its glossy black skin, and the silvery-grey of the lower part.

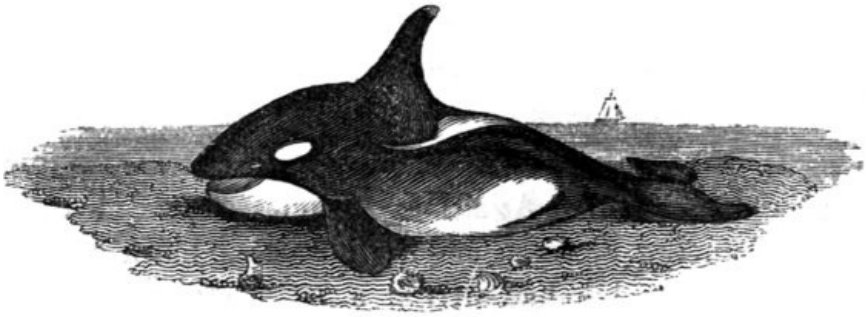


Fig. 12.

GRAMPUS (*Delphinus Orca*).

"Is it worth any money?" said Mrs. Merton.

"Oh! yes," said the guide; "it weighs three tons and a half; and the fisherman that found it has 117
sold it for twenty-three pounds."

They now began to re-ascend the path they had taken to descend; and soon reached the summit of the cliff: after which they proceeded along it, till they arrived at the best point of view for seeing the Needles.

"How dreadfully the wind blows!" said Agnes, as she wrapped her cloak more closely round her.

"The wind always blows at the Needles, miss," observed the guide.

"And are those the Needles?" cried Agnes, as they descended the down low enough to catch a view of these celebrated rocks. "I declare they look more like thimbles."

"That remark has been made before," said Mrs. Merton; "and yet they appear to me as little like thimbles as needles. The fact is, I think that they are more like mile-stones than anything belonging to the work-table; or, what bears a closer resemblance to them, they are like the awkward stone stiles I have seen, when I was a girl, in Gloucestershire."

They had now reached the point beyond which Mrs. Merton did not wish to go; and she sat down 118
on the turf, while the guide helped Agnes sufficiently far down the cliffs to enable her to see the birds sitting on their ledges of rock, uttering strange sharp cries, and then chattering, as though they were talking to each other. There were Cormorants, and Gulls, and Puffins, and Guillemots, with several smaller kinds, each sitting on its separate rock, and alternately muttering and shouting, till Agnes's head grew giddy, and she begged the man to take her back to her mamma.

"Do not most of the birds generally leave you about this season?" said Mrs. Merton to the guide, when they returned.

"They are later than usual this year, ma'am," replied the man. "It was a late summer."

"I thought there had been five Needles, mamma," said Agnes; "and I can see only three."

"There are five, miss," said the man, "but you can very seldom see them all at once, unless you'r on the water."

"I wonder how these rocks ever came to be called the Needles?" observed Agnes,—"since they are not conical."

"There was one formerly," replied the man "that was like a needle exactly. It was above one 119
hundred feet high, and quite thin and pointed. It used to be called the pillar of Lot's wife; but it fell down, and some of the cliffs have fallen down since then, and more will go soon I have no doubt of it. These cliffs are always a-falling, I think."

"I have heard," said Mrs. Merton, "that the name of Needles is a corruption of two Saxon words signifying Undercliffe; and there appears little doubt that these rocks once formed part of the cliff, as you see they are dotted with rows of flints."

Agnes here stooped and gathered a flower from the down. It sprang from a little hollow place in the turf, and was thus sheltered from the cold by the higher part of the hollow. "Oh! do look mamma," cried she, "I declare I thought there was a bee in the flower."

"It is the Bee Orchis," said Mrs. Merton, "which is common on these chalky downs, though it is rarely found in flower later than July."

She then showed Agnes the curious construction of the flower, and told her that the pollen of the 120
Orchis tribe, instead of being like fine dust, was in wax-like masses. "Here is another flower," continued she, "which is of the same species, but something different, for nothing can equal the variety of nature."

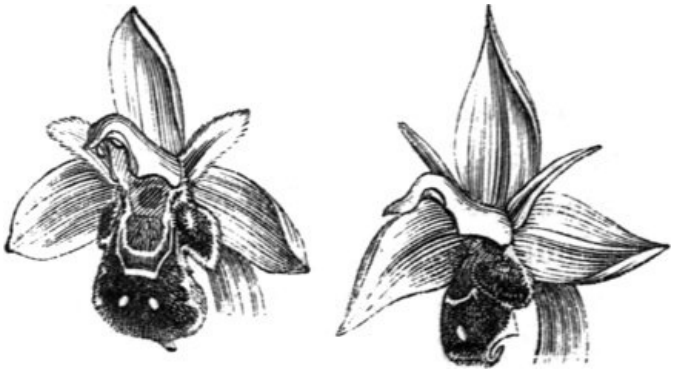


Fig. 13.

The Bee Orchis (*Orchis apifera*).

Agnes compared the two, and was astonished to find how different they were, though at first she had supposed them to be the same.

They now turned back in search of Mr. Merton; and as they ascended the hill, Agnes began asking her mother some questions about light-houses.

“They are buildings,” said Mrs. Merton, “erected on rocks near the sea-shore, in which lights are 121
exhibited all night, for the direction of mariners.”

“They are sometimes called pharos, are they not?” asked Agnes.

“That name,” said Mrs. Merton, “was given to them from the first light-house of which we have any record having been erected on the island of Pharos, near Alexandria, about two hundred and eighty years before Christ. The principal light-houses in Britain, however, are that on the Bell rock, opposite the Firth of Tay, and that on the Eddystone rocks, opposite to Plymouth Sound.”

“Why are light-houses made so high?” asked Agnes.

“In order that the light may be seen at a greater distance,” replied her mother; “and for the same reason the light is always placed in the upper part of the building.”

“Of what does the light consist?”

“It is an Argand lamp,” replied Mrs. Merton, “with a reflector behind it, made of silver strengthened with copper and highly polished.”

“I wonder,” said Agnes, “how the sailors know when it is a light-house. I should think that when they are at sea, they must be in danger of mistaking it for the light of a common house.” 122

“Yes,” said Mrs. Merton, “that has been done; and to prevent the possibility of such a mistake occurring again, as it would be a very serious one, contrivances have been devised for making the lights turn round, or of placing two in the light-house of different colours, so that the light of the light-house can never be mistaken for any other.”

“I suppose that on the Bell rock is one of those that turn round,” said Agnes, “for I remember when I was in Edinburgh and down at Leith, seeing it appear, disappear, and then appear again, till I was tired of looking at it.”

They now reached the light-house where they found Mr. Merton, who had been amused during their absence, hearing the history of the old couple who formerly lived there, and who, for nineteen years, had never, either of them, had a single hour’s illness. They now resumed their seats in the carriage, and returned in the way they came, till they were within a short distance of Freshwater, when they turned to the left, to take the road to Black Gang Chine. The road was extremely uninteresting, consisting of a series of narrow lanes between high hedges like those of Devonshire; 123
but without the beautiful views, which in that county delight the eye, whenever a field-gate makes a break in the hedge.

“What a dull country!” cried Agnes.

“It is a very fertile one, however,” said her father, “as it has been found, on calculation, that the Isle of Wight produces seven times as much corn and other articles of human food as would suffice for the wants of its inhabitants.”

To relieve the monotony of the road, Agnes now began to tell her papa what she had seen at the Needles; and even their surly driver mingled in the conversation. “Ah! miss,” said he, “the greatest sight that was ever seen near the Needles was a whale that was cast on shore on the Shingles, in the year 1814. It was before my time,” continued he, “but I have often heard talk of it.”

Agnes yawned; and her mother advised her to get out of the carriage, and walk a little, as she had been so much amused in gathering wild flowers the previous day. Agnes willingly complied, and soon returned with a piece of the weed called Crosswort, with an insect feeding on it. “What can this be?” cried she. “It does not look like a common caterpillar.” 124

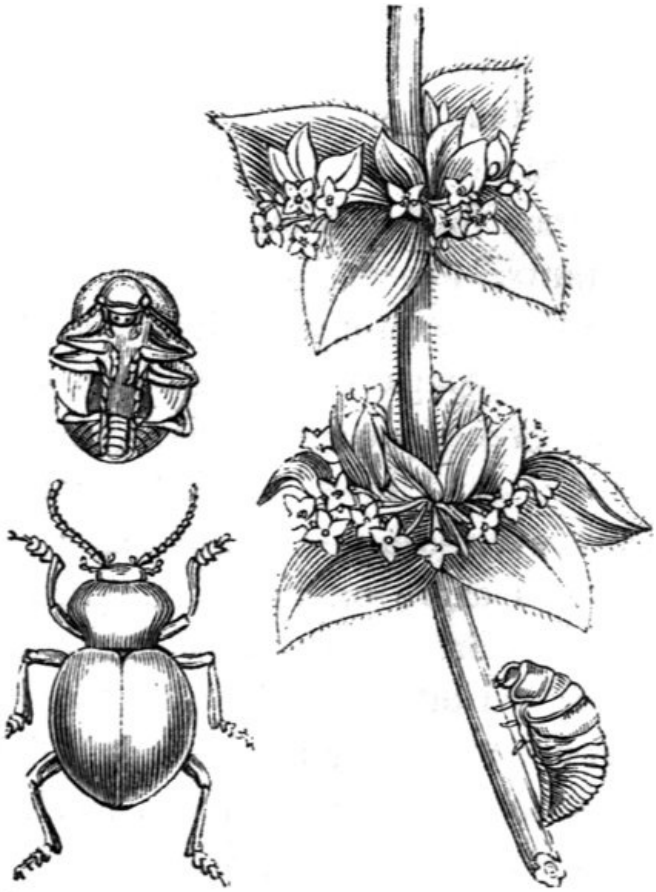


Fig. 14.

Plant of Crosswort (*Galium cruciatum*), with the larva and perfect insect of the Bloody-Nosed Beetle (*Timarcha tenebricosa*).

"It is the larva of the bloody-nosed beetle," said Mrs. Merton. "Its colour is a deep green, and it has six legs near the head, with two other legs at the extremity of the body which assist it in climbing from leaf to leaf." 125

"But why has the beetle to which it belongs such a strange name?" asked Agnes.

"Because when attacked it ejects from its mouth some drops of a reddish fluid which look like blood. The eggs of this insect are of a bright orange, and its pupa case is green."

Agnes now shook the insect off, and was about to tread on it, when her mother stopped her. "Do not hurt it," said she, "it only feeds on weeds;—do you not remember what Cowper, who was pre-eminently the poet of Nature, says:—

'I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polished manners, and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility,) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.'

Yet I would not wish you to show a morbid sensibility. As when it is necessary that animals should be killed, even the same poet says:—

'The sum is this:—If man's convenience, health, 126
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.
Else they are all—the meanest things that are,—
As free to live, and to enjoy that life,
As God was free to form them at the first,
Who in his sovereign wisdom made them all.'"

"Thank you, mamma," cried Agnes, "I am glad I did not kill the caterpillar."

"Call it a grub," said Mrs Merton, smiling, "if you wish to give it its right name. The larvæ of butterflies and moths are called caterpillars; those of beetles, grubs; and those of flies, maggots."

They now entered the little hamlet of Mottistone; a pretty little place, with a very picturesque church, and a curious upright stone, supposed to be part of a temple of the Druids. Then they passed through Brixton, a village containing nothing worth seeing but a donkey that had lain down, with a lady on his back: after which the road made a sharp turn to the right, and they now approached the sea; though the scene was devoid of beauty, from the barrenness and gloomy hue of the downs. They were, however, tired with their journey, and glad to approach a newly-erected 127
Gothic cottage, which, they found, was the inn. The house was nearly full; and it was some time before they could be accommodated with a room. They were, however, at last shown into a tolerably large one, with two windows, one of which looked on the downs they had passed, and the other on the gloomy rocks of Black Gang Chine. Mrs. Merton ordered an early dinner; and, while it was

preparing, Agnes ran out under the veranda, to play with a large black dog belonging to the people of the house, and Mrs. Merton turned over the leaves of an album which lay on the table. When dinner was over, Mrs. Merton having seen her husband comfortably placed on the sofa, inquired the way to the Chine, and set out, accompanied by her daughter. They first entered a kind of field, by a gate; and, crossing a small wooden bridge, they arrived at a fanciful-looking cottage, filled with toys; where they engaged a guide. While waiting for this person, Mrs. Merton bought Agnes a curiously-shaped bottle,—filled with sand from Alum Bay, arranged so as to represent the Needle Rocks washed by the sea, and some hideous trees,—with some other trifles; and Agnes was amused watching a large Kittiwake Gull, which seemed quite tame. The guide at length arrived; and they 128
proceeded down the steep descent which leads to the Chine; the gull hopping before them, as though it were helping to show the way. The descent was very steep and slippery, and the rocks rose black and stern above them. The night was closing in more rapidly than Mrs. Merton expected; and, in fact, she began to get alarmed. “Do you not think it is getting dark very soon to night?” said she to the guide.

“Why, yes, it is,” returned the man; “but I think we shall have a storm.”

“A storm!” cried Mrs. Merton, looking at Agnes with terror.

“Oh! you’ll have plenty of time to see the Chine, and get miss back before it begins.”

They continued to descend till they reached the bridge, where they paused for a few moments to look around them; and a more gloomy scene can scarcely be conceived. They were surrounded by precipitous cliffs, which rose high on every side, and looked as black as night. Not a single sprig, not a blade of grass, not a tuft of moss, was to be seen; all was dark, save a few bands of a dusky yellow colour, which gleamed on the dark sides of the rocks. But, if the scene was thus dreary when 129
they looked above, what was it when they cast their eyes below? There a fathomless abyss seemed to yawn to receive them. Mrs. Merton shuddered. “I think we had better return,” said she; “for it is getting late.”

“Oh! mamma,” cried Agnes, “don’t let us go back without seeing the Chine.”

“We are more than half-way down,” said the man; “and the rest of the road is not half so bad as it looks.”

Mrs. Merton suffered herself to be persuaded; as, indeed, she seldom could refuse anything her darling wished, unless she thought it would be injurious to her; and she recollected that she had never heard of any accident occurring from visiting the Chine. Shipwrecks were, indeed, common on the coast; but that was another thing. She, therefore, gave her consent to go on; and they continued their descent. The path now became very steep; but they advanced more rapidly, and soon reached the point from which the best view of the Chine is obtained. Agnes was, however, excessively disappointed when she saw the small size of the water-fall.

“What!” cried she; “is that all?”

The man in vain assured her that the cascade was larger in winter; Agnes would not be pacified. 130
She had seen the falls of the Clyde; and she could not be persuaded that the little paltry stream that she saw trickling over the ledge of the rocks could ever be worth looking at. Her mother, however, at last turned her attention to the rocks themselves, which, in some places, are five hundred feet high; and to the vast chasm, called the Chine, which has been scooped out of them, and looks like the crater of an extinct volcano. The cliffs did, indeed, now look awfully grand; and the wind, which blew from the sea, howled among their recesses. The tide was coming in; and the high-curling waves broke against the rocks with a deafening roar; and then retired, murmuring as if they had rushed upon an enemy that they had hoped to overpower by their might, and had been beaten back again.

“Now, let us go,” said Mrs. Merton.

“Oh! stay a moment!” cried Agnes. “There is something in the sea that looks like a man’s head.”

Mrs. Merton and the man both looked, and saw, though it was now nearly dark, something black and hairy that was beating about by the waves.

“Bless you! miss,” exclaimed the man: “that’s a dog.” 131

The next wave carried its burden nearer shore,—so near, indeed, that they saw distinctly the large shaggy head and white throat of a Newfoundland dog. The wave retired, carrying its prey with it; but soon, with deafening roar and redoubled fury, it came again; and again they saw the dog, with its black head and white breast; and, more,—that there was a black heart-shaped mark on its breast, which Agnes instantly recognised. “Oh! mamma,” cried she, turning pale and trembling, “it is Neptune; but where is his master?”

“Where indeed?” exclaimed Mrs. Merton, shuddering, and turning away her head.

They now saw distinctly that Neptune was not merely struggling to reach the shore himself: he was dragging something with him that was frequently torn from him by the waves, and that he dived for again and recovered, and then seemed to lose again. They watched his progress with the most intense anxiety; but always, when he seemed just on the point of reaching the shore, something appeared to rise out of the sea, and to dash him back again.

“It’s the ground swell,” said the guide; “there’s few Newfoundland dogs strong enough to stand 132
against it.”

At this moment a large wave carried Neptune and his burden fairly on shore; and though its recoil swept them back again, the effect which a full sight of them produced upon the guide was electric.

“It’s a man!” he shouted. “Help, help!” and instantly several persons started from recesses in the cliffs, and ran upon the beach. Agnes saw that one was an old woman, who seemed in an agony of despair; and then she saw something black dashed against the rocks, and she heard a crash, and a shrill and piercing scream—and then she hid her face in her mother’s gown, for she could bear no more. Mrs. Merton bent over her and both remained silent for a few minutes. When they looked up,

all was bustle on the beach. Lights were flashing to and fro, and numerous voices were heard. The idea suddenly struck Mrs. Merton that her husband would be alarmed and might come to seek them, and endanger his life by the descent. “Oh! let us go,” she cried.

“Stay a moment,” said Agnes, softly laying her hands upon her mother’s arm. “Let them pass first.”

BLACK GANG CHINE.

Mrs. Merton shrank back, and let four men pass bearing the body of the young fisherman. He was 133
apparently quite dead, his long black hair hung back from his pallid face, which was distinctly seen by the torches carried by some of the men, and his aged mother walked beside him, hiding her face in her apron. The young Londoner still lay on the beach, with his faithful dog panting by his side; for it seemed that the people had gone to seek for him some more suitable mode of conveyance; but he was not alone, for several persons crowded round him; and among them Mrs. Merton was glad to perceive their guide. She beckoned him to approach, and under his guidance they began to retrace their steps. The way was long, and in some places the ascent was frightfully steep. It had become quite dark, and the flame of the torch carried by their guide quivered so tremulously in the sudden gusts of wind that howled round them, that they feared every moment it would be extinguished. The rain now began to fall—slightly at first, but gradually in thick small drops, that chilled them to the heart, and made the soft clay over which they had to climb, so slippery, that they could scarcely keep their feet. At last they reached the bridge; and they had no sooner done so, than they saw 134
distinctly the figure of Mr. Merton on the cliff above, surrounded by a number of men carrying torches; and he was waving a handkerchief to them to encourage their exertions. Then two men descended; one bore a torch; and the other, as soon as he reached the ascending party, took Agnes in his arms, and Mrs. Merton had soon the happiness of seeing her darling child safe by her father’s side. Mrs. Merton now felt new strength, and in a short time she reached the summit of the cliff herself. The men who were assembled round Mr. Merton waited a moment to see she was safe, and then hurried down the rocks to bring up the body of the young Londoner—the rapidity of their descent being marked by their torches, which appeared to slide down the different cliffs. The

Mertons did not stay to witness the result of their labours, but hastened to the inn; and when Mrs. Merton and Agnes offered up their evening prayers, they did not forget to add a fervent thanksgiving for the mercy that had saved them from a dreadful catastrophe similar to that they had beheld.

CHAPTER VI.

Management in Household affairs.—Undercliffe.—Alexandrian Pillar.—Light-house of St. Catherine.—Little Church of St. Lawrence.—Churchyard.—St. Lawrence's Well.—Ventnor.—Wishing Well, and Godshill.—Beautiful Butterflies.—Pulpit Stone.—St. Boniface.—Arrival at Shanklin.

THE night at Black Gang Chine was dreadful; the rain came down in torrents; and the wind rushed by in such furious gusts that the slight fancy building they were in shook to its foundation. The Mertons had a double-bedded room, but none of them slept much; and once, when the house absolutely rocked, from the violence of the wind, Mrs. Merton rose, and throwing a dressing-gown round her, she knelt by the side of Agnes's little bed, and took the poor child's cold and trembling hand in her own, till Agnes, soothed and comforted by the pressure of her mother's hand, at last fell asleep.

Mrs. Merton, herself, however, could not sleep, and she lay counting the tedious hours till the break of day, when she arose weary and unrefreshed.

The morning was extremely beautiful; and even the dark and gloomy hills of the Chine looked less fearful in the bright rays of the early sun. Mrs. Merton dressed herself, and was just going down stairs, when Agnes woke and begged her to wait for her. Mrs. Merton consented, and as soon as the little girl was ready they went down to the room in which they had sat the night before; one of the windows was open, but Agnes had no longer any pleasure in running out under the veranda; and she shuddered at the sight of the rocks, though the sea, which curled gently round them, at a depth of above five hundred feet below the situation of the inn, was now as smooth as glass. She could not even pat the black dog she had been so fond of the day before, and she sat on the sofa with her back to the window, while Mrs. Merton rang the bell to ask the waiter what had become of the sufferers of the night before. The account was unfavourable. The young fisherman was dead; and the Londoner, though alive, lay in a very enfeebled state, and his complete recovery was considered doubtful. Even the poor dog appeared to have sustained some severe internal injury, for it had refused its food, and seemed in great pain. A doctor had been sent for from Niton; but the young man had not yet been able to speak to tell where they could write to his friends. Neither Mrs. Merton nor Agnes felt inclined to walk out before breakfast; though, previously to their unfortunate visit to the Chine, they had intended to visit the medicinal spring, and to taste some of its nauseous waters. Now, however, they were only anxious to quit the place; and they were quite delighted to see Mr. Merton walk into the room a few minutes after they had finished their inquiries. Breakfast was immediately ordered, but not so easily obtained—first, there was no milk, and next the butter had to be *sent for*; then the cook had boiled only one egg, and the others had to be *waited for*;—till, with all this waiting and sending, the coffee became cold, and all the comfort of the breakfast was destroyed. To complete the whole, the waiter, who was a most respectable-looking person, and had the air of an old soldier, appeared so anxious to oblige them that it was impossible to scold him; and even the landlady was so civil, and so sorry for the delay, that nobody could blame her.

"What an uncomfortable breakfast!" cried Agnes, when they rose from table.

"And yet every thing was good of its kind," said Mrs. Merton.

"But something must have been wrong," said Agnes; "for I never saw so much trouble in getting a breakfast before; and yet we had nothing different to what we have in general. What can have been wanting?"

"Management and arrangement," said Mrs. Merton. "When I ordered breakfast, the waiter ought to have told me that there was neither milk nor butter in the house; and we should then have waited till all was ready, before we sat down, and our coffee would have been kept near the fire till it was wanted. Remember, Agnes, if ever you should have to act as a housekeeper, that you can never make a family comfortable unless you exercise your forethought and judgment, so as to provide every thing that is likely to be wanted beforehand. I do not mean to recommend you to have a profusion of anything; for it is a common fault with young housekeepers to provide too abundantly; but I hope you will always take care to have a sufficient quantity of the common articles of food ready in the house; as nothing can more decidedly show bad management than to have to send out for anything required for a meal after that meal is served."

The carriage being now ready, they drove along the road which led to the Undercliffe; and soon lost sight of the horrible Black Gang Chine. This remarkable part of the Island has been formed by a landslip,—or, rather, a succession of landslips; from the effects of which, a considerable portion of land has slipped or settled down from the lofty cliffs called St. Catherine's Down, so as to form a sort of intermediate cliff between the down and the sea. The summit of the Undercliffe forms a fine terrace about six or eight miles long, and from a quarter of a mile to a mile broad, along which the road is carried, with St. Catherine's Cliffs frowning above, and the remains, into which it was partly shattered by its fall, lying between it and the sea, and assuming a thousand fantastic shapes. The terrace is bordered with villas, shaded by trees, which grow with the greatest luxuriance and beauty; in some cases even down to the water's edge. Many of the cliffs, however, which face the sea rise from sixty to a hundred feet above it, and these are crowned by the road; but, in other cases, the road is thrown to some distance back, and villas are erected among the broken rocks between it and the sea. During the whole length of the terrace, it is sheltered from the north by a bold line of rocks, rising from two hundred to three hundred feet above it; which, in some places, form a kind of wall composed of horizontal beds of sandstone, and, in others, a less abrupt slope covered with green sward. Agnes was very much interested in this singular region, and began conversing with her papa on the causes of this remarkable convulsion of nature. "Is it supposed to have been occasioned by an earthquake or a volcano?" asked she.

"No," replied Mr. Merton; "the cause is supposed to be the numerous beautiful little springs,

which you will see presently, meandering among the fallen rocks; sometimes collecting into little pools, and sometimes forming miniature cascades, in their progress towards the sea. The springs, it is thought, formerly flowed under this sunken cliff, and must have melted some of the softer under strata, which being washed away, the upper part would gradually sink down, as we see it has done."

"Is it long since the fall took place?"

"All memory of the first land-slip of this cliff has passed away; but in the year 1779 a large portion of the upper cliff, about eighty or ninety acres, was suddenly seen sinking, and sliding towards the sea; the surface cracking in various directions, and chasms opening here and there as it fell. This was near the very spot we are now traversing."

"But have there been any slips since then?" asked Agnes, looking somewhat frightened.

"Yes," said the driver, "there was a house swallowed up near Niton, not many years ago."

"There was also a land-slip, in the year 1811, at the other extremity of the under cliff, near Bonchurch," said Mr. Merton, "by which about fifty acres were displaced."

They had stopped the carriage while they were looking at the cliffs, and now when they began to move on again, the driver pointed to what appeared an upright black stick, at the extremity of the horizon, and told Agnes that it was the Alexandrian Pillar. Agnes remembered that her mother had told her that light-houses were sometimes called Pharos, from the name of the island on which the first was erected; and she thought, as Pharos was near Alexandria, perhaps the Alexandrian Pillar was another name for a light-house, so she said, "Oh yes, the light-house; I see it just below us."

"No," said the man, "I don't mean the light-house, but the pillar Squire Hoy built on the Downs."

Mr. Merton now explained to Agnes, that Mr. Hoy, who possessed a good deal of property in that part of the Isle of Wight, had been a Russian merchant; and that he had erected this column, out of gratitude for the kindness he had experienced from the Emperor Alexander, in commemoration of that monarch's visit to Great Britain, in 1814.

"St. Catherine's Down," continued Mr. Merton, "is about nine hundred feet above the level of the sea, and is the highest part of the island."

"Yes, but it is lower now than it used to be," said the driver. "They say it is not above eight hundred feet high now in most parts, and that it is gradually sinking."

"I wonder they did not put the light-house on the top of the Down, as it is so high," said Agnes.

"There was anciently a chapel," replied Mr. Merton, "which was built in the year 1323, by the lord of the neighbouring manor; and a certain yearly sum was assigned to it to maintain a monk there, whose duty it was to sing mass, and keep a constant light burning to guide mariners. But at the Reformation the poor monk's revenues were swept away, and his chapel has become a ruin. There was, however, a light-house erected near it about fifty or sixty years ago, but I believe it soon fell into disuse."

"The sailors could not see the light on account of the fogs," said the driver.

"What! are there fogs on the summit of that down?" cried Mrs. Merton.

"So thick that you could not see your hand before you. It is not very long since the landlord of that very house you stopped at walked over the cliff one foggy night, when he thought he was going home to his own house. So they had no light-house at all here till the loss of the 'Clarendon' made such a talk; and then they built the light-house of St. Catherine's, that you see down yonder."

They had now just passed a pretty romantic-looking Gothic cottage called the Sand-rock Hotel; on the fine lawn before which were several persons sitting, enjoying the cold morning breeze. It was, in fact, a delightful scene: the air was fresh and pleasant, though the sun shone brightly; and the sea, instead of the boisterous force which it had shown the preceding night, curled gently round the cliffs, with a snow-white crest mantling on its edge, and seemed as if it were smiling at the mischief it had done. They had now a good view of the light-house which the driver had mentioned. It was an octagon building about one hundred and twenty feet high, standing upon a cliff about fifty feet above the level of the sea. Advancing rapidly, they soon reached the pretty little church of St. Lawrence; which is said to be the smallest parochial church in Great Britain; as it is only twenty feet long, twelve feet wide, and six feet high, in the lowest part; though, from the roof being of a steep slope, it is much higher in the middle of the church. Mrs. Merton and Agnes got out of the carriage, and walked round this curious little building, which appeared to have been constructed for Lilliputians, rather than for human beings of the ordinary size. They walked round the church-yard, and found one of the tomb-stones erected to the memory of a gentleman, upwards of ninety years of age, who had lost his life by falling from the downs just above the church, while travelling through the island. After satisfying their curiosity by inspecting the church, Mrs. Merton and Agnes returned to the carriage; and they drove on to St. Lawrence's Well, where the water of a delightfully clear and pure spring is received in a stone-basin, protected by a kind of alcove, which forms an elegant little stone building surrounded by trees. Fortunately the party had a travelling case with them containing a glass; and they were all, except the driver, very glad to refresh themselves with some of this delicious water, which tasted as cool as if it had flowed through ice. They now approached Steephill, a modern castle, which has been erected on a spot formerly called the Queen of the Undercliffe; and the grounds of which certainly appeared as pretty as wood and smooth turf could make them. On the road-side, sitting by a little stream of water which gushed out of the broken rocks, sat a large Kittiwake Gull. "Look, mamma," cried Agnes, pointing to the bird, "there is the very gull we saw at Black Gang Chine."

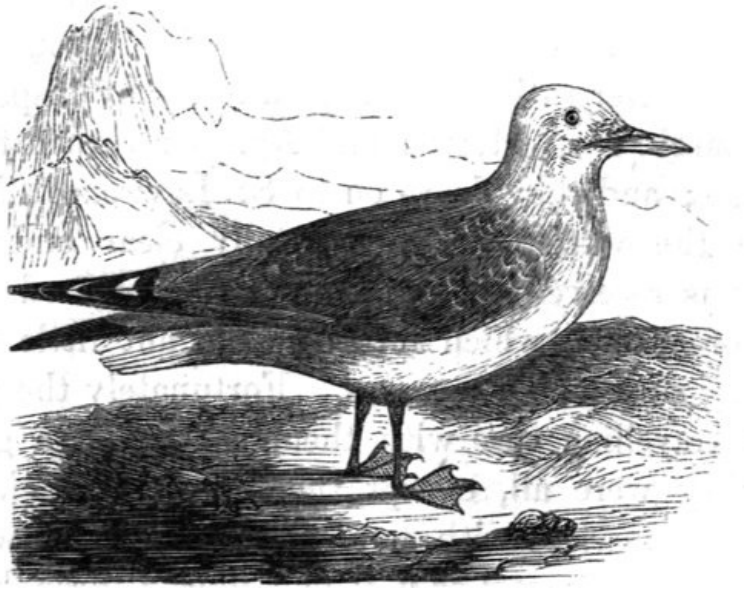


Fig. 15.

The Kittiwake Gull (*Larus rissa*).

“Not the same, I think,” said Mrs. Merton. “There are a great many of these gulls in the neighbourhood; and there was one, some years ago, kept by some cottagers at Bonchurch, which they had had twenty-seven years. Every spring, when the wild gulls arrived, it used to fly away with them, and amuse itself with them all the summer; but, about August, when they desert the island, it used to return to its old quarters, and would remain there all the winter.” 147

They now passed rapidly on, and soon reached Ventnor, where Mr. Merton had intended to stay for some time. He changed his mind, however, as soon as he saw its hilly situation; as, though Ventnor is now a fashionable place for consumptive patients, it is impossible to find anywhere a hundred yards of level ground; and every body knows how difficult it is for a person with weak lungs to climb a hill. Besides, new houses were building in every direction, and the smell of lime and mortar, and the jarring of stone-cutting, have an unpleasant effect on the senses and nerves of an invalid. He, therefore, determined to go on; and, after a short stay, they proceeded to Bonchurch.

“I have heard,” said Agnes, “of two things near Ventnor that I should like to see; and these are the Wishing Well and the church at Godshill.”

“And why should you like to see these things?” asked Mr. Merton.

“Because,” replied Agnes, blushing, “they say that if you go up the hill to the well without once looking back, and drink of the water without turning round, you will have three wishes.” 148

“How can you believe such nonsense?” said Mr. Merton.

“I don’t believe it, papa; but I should only like to see the well.”

“And, supposing you could have three wishes granted, what would they be?” asked Mrs. Merton.

“First,” said Agnes, “I would wish papa quite well; then I would wish you plenty of money, mamma; and then I think I should like to be very clever.”

“Your papa and I ought to be very much obliged by your first wishes; but I think I could put you in the way of getting the last wish fulfilled without a wishing-well.”

“Ah! I know what you mean, mamma. You mean that if I study hard I may make myself as clever as I like.”

“You are quite right, and, if you confess the truth, I think you will allow that I am right also.”

“But, mamma, I want to be clever without—without—”

“Taking any trouble at all;—but that, my dear Agnes, surpasses the lot of humanity. It is true that some persons are more highly gifted than others; but there is generally some serious drawback that reduces their lot to the level of that of other people; and, generally speaking, no talents are so useful as those which are in a great measure the result of our own industry.” 149

“But why did you wish to see the church, Agnes?” said her father.

“Because, papa, they say the stones of which it is built would not lie still in the valley where the people first wished to build the church; but ran rolling and tumbling along up hill as though they had been mad.”

“And the people must be mad who could believe so absurd a story.”

“Look, Agnes,” said Mrs. Merton, “at that butterfly! Is it not beautiful?”

“Oh, yes!” cried Agnes; “and there is another more beautiful still. How I should like to catch them.”

“We can admire them without catching them,” said her mother; “for I don’t like to torment poor innocent creatures merely because they are beautiful. Besides, that is a butterfly, called the Purple Emperor, which it is very difficult to catch, from the great height to which it flies.” 150

“Even if it were not, mamma,” said Agnes, laughing, “I do not think the Undercliffe would be a good place for a butterfly chase! But see, there is another butterfly of the same kind.—No, I see it is not, for it has red upon its wings.”

“That butterfly,” said Mrs. Merton, “is called the Alderman, I suppose partly from his gravity, and partly from his scarlet cloak, which you see he wears with great dignity. The caterpillar of this butterfly feeds on the nettle; and, generally, about July the female butterfly lays a single egg upon each leaf of the plant. The egg to the naked eye is scarcely bigger than the point of a pin; but when examined in a microscope, it is found to be curiously ribbed, almost like a melon cactus. As soon as the caterpillar is hatched, which it is by the heat of the sun, it begins to spin a kind of web, by means of which it draws the leaf together into a roundish hollow shape, so as to form a kind of boat, open at both ends. In this boat, or tent, the caterpillar lives; and it feeds on the lower part of the leaf, till, in a little time, it becomes perforated with holes.” 151

“How very much I should like to see some of these caterpillars, mamma!” said Agnes, “but no doubt I may some day, as I suppose if ever I find a caterpillar upon a nettle that this will be it.”

“You must not be too sure,” said Mrs. Merton, “for there is another caterpillar that feeds upon the nettle, which produces the peacock butterfly; but that caterpillar is black, with small white spots, and red hind legs. The caterpillars of the peacock butterfly, also, are found several together, while those of aldermen, are always solitary;—and there,” continued Mrs. Merton, interrupting herself as a butterfly flew past, “is another, whose caterpillar lives on the nettle. It is called the small Tortoise-shell, and it is extremely beautiful from the rich reddish-orange of its wings. This butterfly when it sits on a branch with its wings closed is not beautiful at all, as the inside of the wings is of a dusky brown; the caterpillar also is brown.”

“You should tell Agnes,” said Mr. Merton, “that it was from the golden hue of the pupa case of the small tortoise-shell butterfly, that the words chrysalis and aurelia have been applied to pupa cases generally. Both words signify golden, though the first is derived from the Greek, and the second from the Latin. Observe, also,” continued he, addressing Agnes, “that all the three nettle butterflies your mamma has just been telling you about, belong to the genus Vanessa.” 152

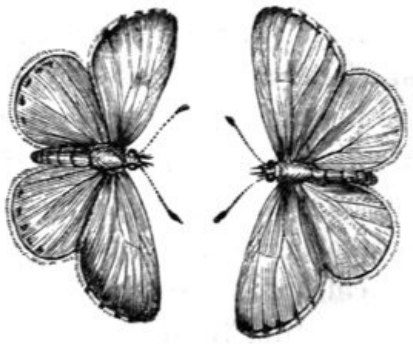


Fig. 16.

The Azure Blue Butterfly (*Polyommatus Argiolus*).

“But there is a butterfly of another genus,” said Mrs. Merton, “that is, the lovely little azure blue. Look, my dear,” continued she, addressing her husband, “it is just settled on that holly.”

Mr. Merton looked, and expressed his surprise as these butterflies are rarely seen so late in the season. 153

They now passed a very pretty villa, called St. Boniface, and very soon after they arrived at Bonchurch, which Agnes said she supposed was an abbreviation of St. Boniface. Just before they reached Bonchurch, however, they passed a curious stone called the Pulpit-rock, and the driver stopped, in order that some of the party might get out of the carriage, and climb up it. Mrs. Merton declined as she did not feel well; but Agnes was delighted to do so, as she was particularly fond of climbing; just as she got out of the carriage, however, her mother observed that a pretty little pink silk handkerchief, that she wore round her neck, was neither tied nor fastened by a pin.

“You had better tie your handkerchief, Agnes,” said Mrs. Merton, “or give it me to take care of till you come back.”

“Oh! no, thank you, mamma,” cried Agnes, “I will fasten it with a pin,” and she did, indeed, put a pin into it, but so carelessly that it fell out immediately, without her being aware of it. In fact, Agnes’s head was so full of the Pulpit-stone, that she could not stay to think about her handkerchief, and she ran away as fast as she could, passing through the narrow entrance, and climbing up behind the stone with the greatest agility. The pulpit-rock commanded a fine view, which Agnes stayed to look at; and, indeed, the rock itself took rather more time for Agnes to climb up and return than her papa had expected; so that, as soon as she re-entered the carriage, he desired the driver to go on. They passed through Bonchurch, and by Luccombe Chine, without stopping, and soon arrived at a very pretty little inn, called Williams’ Hotel, at Shanklin. 154

155

CHAPTER VII.

Consequences of carelessness.—Beach at Shanklin.—Lobster- pots.—Planorbis.—Marsh-snail.—Sea-rocket.—Starfish.—Crabs and Lobsters.—Seaweed—Mode of drying it.—Mussels.—Shanklin Chine.—The split shoe.—Shops at Shanklin.

When the carriage stopped at Williams' Hotel at Shanklin, Mrs. Merton asked Agnes what had become of her little pink silk handkerchief. Agnes mechanically put her hand to her neck; but, alas! no handkerchief was there. It was gone; and, though Agnes knew nothing about it, the probability was, that, at that very moment, it was dangling from one of the rough corners of the pulpit-stone. Agnes was quite in despair when this thought struck her; and she was most anxious to go back to seek it; but this Mrs. Merton would not hear of.

"No," said she; "I could forgive any loss that happened accidentally; but this was from downright carelessness."

Agnes was excessively vexed, and could not help crying; as the handkerchief had been given to 156
her by her aunt Jane, and was a great favourite: Mrs. Merton, however, paid no attention to her tears, but walked into the inn with her husband, leaving poor Agnes to follow by herself. The little girl felt this neglect bitterly, and she wept so much before she could summon courage to appear again before her mother, that the mistress of the house, who was a very good-natured person, on her return from showing Mr. and Mrs. Merton to a room, began to pity the poor child, and advised her to go into the garden for a few minutes to recover herself. Agnes complied, and sat down, very sorrowfully, under a tree within sight of the window of the room in which her parents were. What appeared to Agnes a tremendously long time passed before they appeared to notice her; but at last Mrs. Merton, having placed her husband comfortably on the sofa, opened the glass door of their room, and walked across the lawn to where Agnes sat. The little girl started up immediately, and, meeting her mother, begged to be forgiven.

"I will not promise never to lose anything again," said she; "but, if you will but forgive me, 157
mamma, I will never again be inattentive to your advice."

Mrs. Merton kissed her; and, telling her that was all that could be expected of a child of her age, proposed a walk to the beach. Agnes gladly complied; and the good-natured landlady seemed quite pleased when Mrs. Merton inquired what road they were to take, to see that the poor little culprit had been forgiven. In compliance with the directions they had received, they walked first up a short lane, till they came to an open shop dignified by the name of a bazaar, opposite to which was another lane which led down a steep hill to the beach.

"What a dreadful hill!" cried Agnes; "how shall we ever get up it again? Do look, mamma, at those horses, how they are striving to drag that cart up the hill; and yet it cannot be very heavy, for it is full of nothing but sea-weed. What can they be going to do with so much sea-weed?"

"Have you forgotten that I told you sea-weed is often used as manure?"

"I had forgotten it, I declare. It seems such a strange thing to use as manure. But look, mamma, what a fine view we have of the sea here? and yet how high we still are above it." 158

The descent now became more rapid; and Agnes ran down the remainder of the road, which, after various windings, at last conducted them to the beach. When they reached it, and looked back at the cliffs, they found the scene very striking. A long, almost perpendicular line of rocks spread along, as far as they could see, occasionally jutting out almost to the sea, and then falling back in deep bays. The face of the cliff was of a pale brown, or yellow ochre colour, streaked with a deeper or red shade. After looking around for a few minutes, Agnes cried, "mamma, do you remember that scene in the Antiquary, where Isabella and her father are surprised by the coming in of the tide, and in great danger of being drowned? I think it must have been in such a place as this."

Mrs. Merton was about to reply, when Agnes's attention was attracted by some curious-looking wicker-work cages which lay in a heap at the end of the terrace on which they had been walking. "What can these be?" cried she. A boy who was lying beside them, and tying them together with pieces of string, looked up in her face, without disturbing himself, and answered, "they are lobster- 159
pots."

"Pots!" repeated Agnes: "I think they are more like baskets than pots. And why are these snails put in them?"

"They are the bait," said the boy, without even looking at her this time.

"Do look, mamma," said Agnes, "what enormous snails! And here is a large flat snail like that Susan found for me in the kitchen, only it is such a great deal larger."

"That shell was placed among the snails by Linnæus," said Mrs. Merton; "but it is now called Planorbis, or the coil-shell. Look what a horny, almost transparent, substance it has; indeed, I believe it is sometimes called the Horny Snail. It does not live in the sea; but it is found in ditches, or any stagnant water that is nearly dry in summer. When attacked, it emits a dark reddish liquid, to hide itself from its 160
enemies, by rendering the water so dark that it cannot be seen."

"How clever!"

"Instinct teaches many molluscous animals to do the same. The violet snail emits a beautiful lilac fluid; and the cuttle-fish a liquid as black as ink. But this is not all that I have to tell you about the Planorbis: it lays its eggs upon a leaf, where they look like those of the spider, or of some kind of insect."

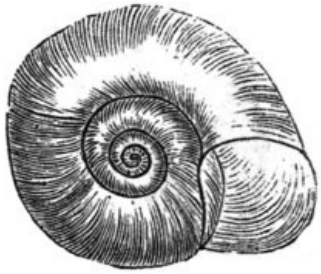


Fig. 17.

The Horny Snail
(*Planorbis corneus*).

"Look mamma! Here is another shell, quite different from the

Planorbis.”

Fig. 18.

The Marsh-snail (*Lymnea communis*).

“It is different in shape, but it is nearly allied in other respects, for that is the Marsh-snail, or Lymnea. Some of the species of this genus crawl with their backs downwards along the under surface of the water, if I may so describe it, just as you have seen a snail crawl on a glass; and the species of the genus Physa, which is another little black fresh-water-snail, not only creep in the manner I have described, but let themselves down by a thread in the water, just as you may have seen some kinds of caterpillars do on land.”

As they strolled along the beach they noticed several immense plants of Sea-rocket, which grew close to the cliffs, and some of the fleshy leaves of which Agnes gathered and ate. “I know I am safe in eating this,” said she; “because I see by the four opposite petals of the flower that it is one of the Cruciferæ, or cabbage-tribe, and I know the plants of that tribe are wholesome.”

“Take care, however, lest you should some day find that though the Cruciferous plants are eatable they are not always agreeable; for, remember, Horseradish, and some other pungent plants, belong to that tribe: but I am glad to find that you have remembered what I told you about the shape of the flowers, which are called cruciferous, or cross-bearing, from their four petals being arranged in the form of a Greek cross.”

Agnes now found a specimen of the Star-fish, or five-fingers, a species of which she had often seen in Scotland; but she did not attempt to pick it up, as she remembered that one she found at Dunbar began to decay before she could reach the inn. She stood, however, looking at it, and her mother, who told her these Star-fishes were usually only caught in the Northern seas, made her remark its mouth, or rather the opening to its short bag-like stomach, which is placed in the very centre of the rays; and the numerous holes through which the creature could project its feet, having the power of shortening or extending them at pleasure, and also of adhering, by the flat disk at their base, to any substance it might be near; the part which may be called the sole of the foot, acting like a sucker.

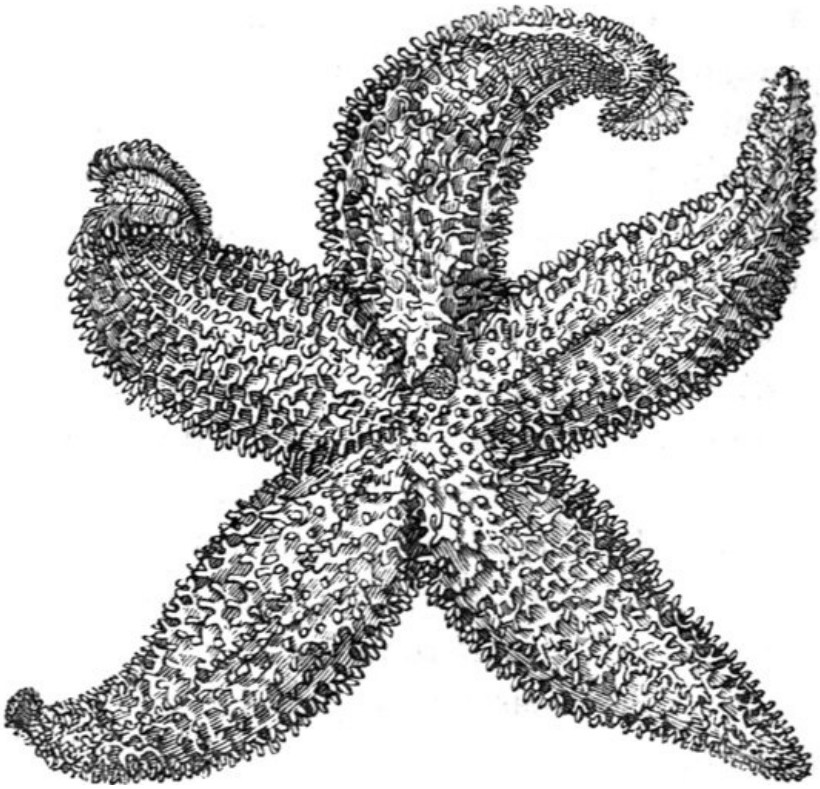


Fig. 19.

The Star-fish, or Five-fingers (*Asterias glacialis*).

“What poor helpless creatures these Star-fish seem to be!” said Agnes; “I wonder how they contrive to live, for they seem to have no means of catching anything.”

“You will be surprised, then, to hear that they are accused of catching oysters; and that it is asserted in many books on natural history, that there was formerly a penalty inflicted by the Admiralty Court on every dredger who caught a Star-fish and did not kill it.”

“But how could the poor Star-fish, with its soft body, attack an oyster, protected as it is by two strong shells?”

“It was said to wait till the oyster gaped, and then to thrust one of its rays in between the valves to suck out the oyster.”

“Oh, mamma!” cried Agnes, laughing; “how very stupid the oyster must have been not to shut its shell and crush the ray, instead of letting itself be sucked out!”

“The story is as old as Aristotle; and, like many other stories told by the ancients, it has been handed down to our times, without any one, till lately, taking the trouble to examine whether it was true or false. I believe the fact is, that when oysters or any other molluscous animals become sickly, they are attacked by Star-fish and other similar creatures, just as a dying snail is attacked and devoured by slugs; but I think with you, that if a Star-fish were bold enough to attack a healthy oyster, it would soon have reason to repent it.”

“I have often thought, mamma,” said Agnes; “what miserable lives oysters and other similar creatures must lead in the sea; fixed as they are to rocks, and incapable of hearing or seeing anything around them.”

“You forget,” replied her mother, “how often I have told you that our Beneficent Creator has provided not only for the nourishment, but for the enjoyments of all his creatures. I think it is Paley who remarks, that when we recollect the happiness we feel when in perfect health and high spirits, without any particular cause, we may easily comprehend the enjoyments of the inferior animals.” 165

“I can understand that, mamma; and so I suppose that these poor oysters enjoy the warmth of the sun and the flowing of the tide, as much as I do the fresh breeze when it blows against me as I run.”

“Exactly so. Every creature has a capability of happiness adapted to the situation in which it is placed; and when we do not perceive how this is effected, we may rest assured that the fault is in ourselves, and not in the system of Nature.”

While they were conversing in this manner, they had strolled to a considerable distance along the beach, and were beginning to think of turning back, as they were going from the Chine, which they intended to visit before they returned to the inn, when Agnes’s attention was attracted by a splendid mass of tangle, that had been thrown on the beach by the sea; and catching hold of it, she picked up at the same time a little crab not bigger than the end of her finger. The little crab was of a pale yellow, and as soon as it was caught, it began to run sideways as fast as possible. Agnes had often heard of crabs running sideways, but she had never seen one do so before; and the motions of 166
this little creature struck her as so very odd that she burst into a violent fit of laughter. Mrs. Merton came up to know what was the matter; and when she saw the little crab running sideways as fast as possible with only half of its legs, and then back with the other half, she could not forbear smiling also. The next moment, however, she checked herself.

“We ought not to laugh at this little creature,” said she, “since there is nothing really ridiculous that is natural; but it only strikes us as absurd because we are not used to it.”

“What curious creatures crabs are!” cried Agnes.

“They are called Crustaceous animals,” returned her mother, “because they are covered with a crust or shell; and they are said to be articulated, because their limbs are jointed so that they can throw one off without suffering much inconvenience.”

“Lobsters can do the same thing, can they not?”

“Yes, they also belong to the Crustacea, and so do shrimps, and prawns, and cray-fish, besides many other creatures you are not acquainted with. All the Crustacea have also the power of throwing off their shells when they have grown too large for them, and forming new ones, as I think 167
I explained to you some years ago when we were speaking of cray-fish.”

“They must suffer a great deal of pain when they change their shells.”

“They do; and some are said even to die under the operation; but I suppose they must also suffer a good deal from the old shell being too tight for them, before they throw it off.”

Agnes now picked up some sea-weed which struck her as being like what her mother had once taken, boiled with milk, for a troublesome cough.

“It is the same,” said Mrs. Merton; “the popular name is Carrageen, or Irish moss, but it is a kind of Fucus.”

“And what is this pale brown?” asked Agnes.

“That is called Duck’s Foot Conferva,” said Mrs. Merton, “and when 168
burnt it smells like lemons; but it is not a true Conferva.”

Fig. 20.

Irish Moss, or Carrageen.
(*Fucus crispus.*)

Fig. 21.

Duck's Foot Conferva (*Flustra foliacea*).

"Do look at this beautiful pink sea-weed, mamma," said Agnes.

"That is called Delesseria by botanists," said Mrs. Merton, "but I do not know its English name. It is very beautiful from its delicate texture, and its brilliant colour. Its seeds are produced on the back of the leaves, or fronds, as in ferns."

"I should like to take some of it," said Agnes,—"may I?"

"Certainly," said Mrs. Merton, "but take great care in drying it, as it is very apt to adhere to the 169
paper. I think you know how to dry sea-weed."

"Oh! yes," said Agnes, "Miss Green taught me. You first put the sea-weed in water, and then put a piece of writing paper under it, so as to let the plant lie upon the paper as it did in the water; and then you take it up carefully, so as to let the water run off without disturbing the plant."

"You are quite right," said Mrs. Merton; "but you must observe that some sea-weeds are spoiled by putting them into fresh water, and will change their colour, while others will crackle, when taken out, like salt when thrown on a fire. Some kinds, when laid on a plate in fresh water, will start and curl up as if they were alive; and nearly all sea animals, such as the Star-fish we saw just now, are killed instantly by putting them into fresh water. However, to return to the sea-weed, I am so well pleased at your remembering what was told you, that I will give you some more paper to dry your sea-weed on, if you should not have enough; and you may gather as much as you like."

Agnes did not suffer this permission to lie dormant; and she gathered sea-weed of a great variety 170
of shades of pink, brown, green, black, and even white; as, however, she could not carry half the quantity she had collected, her mother promised to bring her back to the beach the following morning, if the weather should be fine, when she might provide herself with a basket.

They now found the tide coming in so rapidly that they judged it most prudent to return; though Agnes, who was fond of excitement, would willingly have gone on a little farther, in spite of the danger; which, indeed, was not very great, as the tide seldom rises very high on the back of the Isle of Wight, and there was a considerable space between the cliffs and the shore. The billows, however, came in with considerable force, and they brought with them a piece of board that looked as if it had belonged to a ship. Agnes picked it up, and found some Mussels sticking to it; one of which was attached by what looked like a tuft of coarse brown thread; but, when she asked what it was, her mother smiled, and told her it was the Byssus.

"The Byssus!" cried Agnes: "I thought that was produced by the Pinna, or Sea-wing. Don't you 171
remember, mamma, showing me a pair of gloves made of the Byssus of the Pinna at the British Museum? I am sure you said the Pinna."

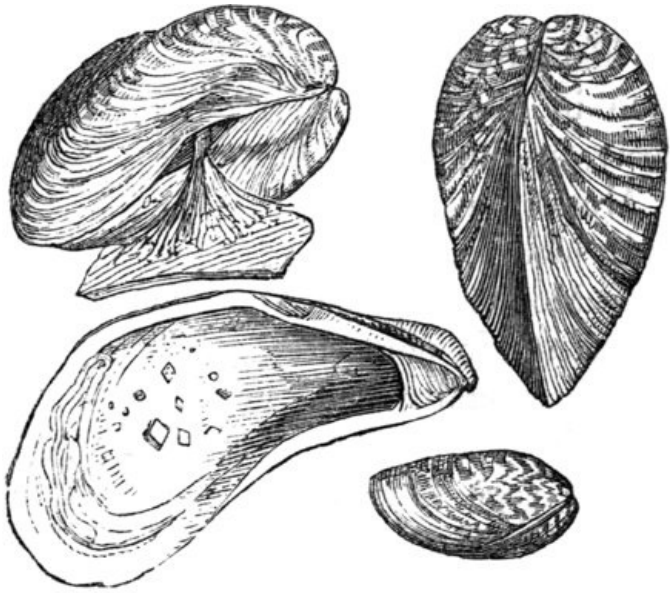


Fig. 22.

Freshwater Mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*).

“I remember it perfectly; but other shell-fish produce Byssus besides the Pinna.”

“Indeed! and are gloves made of it?”

“I believe not; because it is not produced in other shell-fish in sufficient quantities.” 172

“Do not some Mussels produce pearls?” asked Agnes.

“Those are the River Mussels,” said Mrs. Merton. “Remember that there are several kinds of Mussels: as, for example, the River Mussel, or Unio, which produces what are called British pearls, and which is common in many British rivers, particularly in the Conway, in Wales, and in the Tay, in Scotland; the Sea Mussel, or Mytilus, the animal of which is eaten, and which produces the Byssus; and the Horse Mussel, or Modiola. The kind you have found, however, belongs to none of these, as it is a freshwater species generally found in docks; and it must have adhered to some vessel that has been shipwrecked here soon after it left the dock in which it had been repaired.”

“Oh! mamma, don’t talk of shipwrecks,” cried Agnes, shuddering.

They had now reached a little terrace, raised to a considerable height above the beach, where there was a little shop, the proprietor of which sold fruit, and also engravings of various kinds, in the manner which seems fashionable at Shanklin; as the shops there generally contain articles of 173 the most heterogeneous kinds. Here Mrs. Merton inquired the way to the Chine, and they were directed to apply at a little cottage a good way farther up the beach. They did so; and a most uncivil person came out, who, unlocking a gate, told them to go through there, and then left them to find their way how they could. They went straight on along a narrow path, which was exceedingly slippery and disagreeable from the recent rains, and they soon came to a place where the road divided into two, and they did not know which way to take. As Mrs. Merton was very much fatigued by the want of sleep the previous night, Agnes ran forward along one of the paths, while Mrs. Merton waited her return. She soon came back, saying that the path merely led to a seat; but, as she descended the hill, Mrs. Merton noticed that her shoe had burst open behind, and that she had great difficulty in keeping it on her foot.

“My dear Agnes,” said her mother, “these shoes were never intended for walking along such roads as these. Why did you not put on your walking-shoes?”

Agnes looked at her feet in dismay; for, alas! the walking-shoes had been left at Black Gang 174 Chine. They had been very wet the preceding evening; and when they were brought up after being cleaned, they felt so damp that Agnes begged to have them dried, intending to put them on just before she came away; but this she had forgotten to do; and her present shoes, being totally unfit for walking on wet clayey soil, had burst open in the manner described.

“What shall I do, mamma?” said Agnes: “I think I must try to fasten my shoe together with a pin.”

Mrs. Merton smiled and shook her head; but, as no better means presented themselves, the pin was obliged to be used.

They now walked on very uncomfortably; the pin pricked Agnes every step she took; and her shoe was so loose that she had the greatest difficulty to prevent it from falling off. She was, besides, encumbered with her sea-weed, and some engravings they had purchased at the little shop on the beach for aunt Jane, though of these last her mamma soon relieved her. Mrs. Merton, on her part, did not feel much more inclined to enjoy the beauties of the Chine than her poor little daughter, for 175 the path was very narrow, and was not only wet and slippery from the recent rains, but in some places had given way altogether, and been rudely propped up with the branch of a tree, apparently just cut down for the purpose. Several other paths also branched off from that which appeared the principal one, and thus the constant fear of having to retrace their steps was mingled with their other troubles. What is called a Chine in the Isle of Wight, means a cleft in the rocks, which has been produced by the action of a stream running through them, and thus, wherever there is a Chine, there is always a stream of water running into the sea. At Shanklin Chine the cleft has penetrated to a considerable depth into the rocks; and thus a deep ravine is formed, on one side of

which the rock is almost perpendicular, while on the other it shelves gently downward, and is covered with trees and bushes, among which are a few cottages very picturesquely placed. The cascade is somewhat larger than that at Black Gang Chine; but still it possessed very little grandeur, and Mrs. Merton and Agnes were both very glad when they reached it to see a girl approaching with a key in her hand to let them out, as it was a proof that they had nearly reached the end of the Chine. They had still, however, a flight of broken, slippery steps to ascend, after which they found themselves once more on solid ground. Mrs. Merton's object was now to get her little daughter a pair of shoes, or boots; as, though she generally wished Agnes to suffer a little when she left anything behind from want of care, she considered the melancholy scene they had witnessed at Black Gang Chine was sufficient to excuse a little forgetfulness. They therefore walked into the village to find a shoe-shop; but this was a very difficult task. They were first directed to a shop where the people sold eggs and bacon, cheese and butter, intermixed with articles of haberdashery, and boots and shoes; but, unfortunately, there were none there that fitted Agnes; and they had to walk a long way on the dusty road, and even to pass through a turnpike, before Agnes could obtain a pair of boots to suit her; but she could not help sighing as they retraced their steps back to the inn, and frequently exclaiming, "How glad I am, mamma, that we do not live at Shanklin!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Shanklin continued.—Siphonia, or Sea-Tulip.—Zoophytes.—Sponges. —Corals.—Shells—Anomia—Scallop-shell—Cockle-shell—Whelk—Solen, or Razor-shell—Mactra, or Kneading Trough—Mya.

THE first thing Agnes thought of the following morning was her mamma's promise to take her again to the beach to pick up the shells and sea-weed which she had been compelled to leave behind her the preceding day. Mrs. Merton thought it prudent to stay till the tide was in and had begun to turn, in order that they might explore the cliffs as far as they felt inclined without danger; and it may be easily guessed that Agnes grew rather impatient at the length of time she had to wait. Fortunately, however, there was a beautiful little garden attached to the inn, in which, with the aid of two or three dogs, a kitten, and, what was better than all, a little girl of about her own age, who was also travelling with her parents through the island, Agnes contrived to amuse herself till her 178
mamma was ready. Before proceeding to the beach it was necessary to purchase a basket, and for this purpose they entered the bazaar which they had seen the day before. Agnes had some difficulty in finding a basket to suit her, as the pretty ones were all far too small to hold the quantity of sea-weed and other things she intended to bring from the beach; and it was with the greatest difficulty that her mamma could persuade her to be satisfied with a basket of moderate size, though even that Mrs. Merton feared when full would be much too heavy for the little girl to carry. Just as they were leaving the bazaar the woman showed them a curious specimen of the Siphonia, or Sea-Tulip, which she said had been picked up on the beach. The siphonia was intermixed with various fossil remains, and the whole presented so singular an appearance that Agnes, who had never seen any thing of the kind before, could talk of nothing else while they were descending to the beach.

"What a curious thing the sea-tulip is," said she. "Is it a plant, and are there any like it growing now?"

"It is not a plant," said Mrs. Merton, "but a zoophyte, and I believe it has only been found in a 179
fossil state."

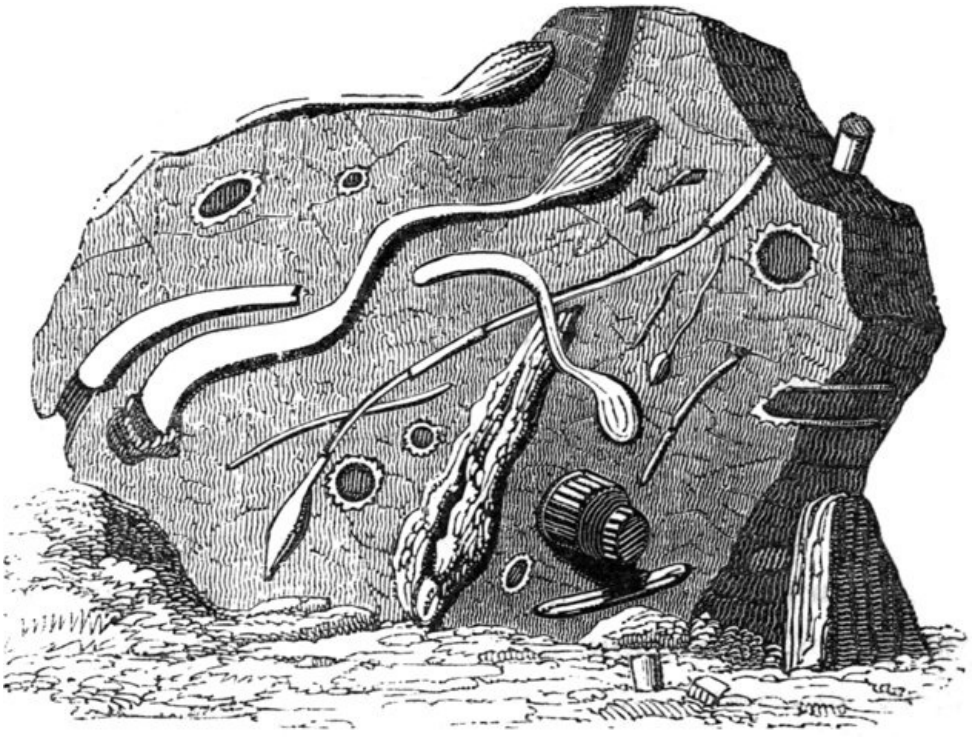


Fig. 23.

MASS OF FOSSILS CONTAINING THE SIPHONIA, OR SEA-TULIP.

"Zoophyte!" said Agnes; "that is half a plant, and half an animal, is it not, mamma?"

"The word zoophyte," returned Mrs. Merton, "signifies literally an animal plant; and it was formerly applied only to those singular creatures which grew in the ground like plants, and were 180
yet furnished with tentacula or arms which they could extend or contract so as to provide themselves with food. But it is now used in a more enlarged sense, and it includes various kinds of polypes, animalcules and other animals of the lowest class. Some of these creatures seem to consist merely of semitransparent jelly, and when disturbed they contract themselves into almost shapeless lumps."

"Have I ever seen any of these animalcules?" asked Agnes.

"You probably have without being aware of it," returned her mother: "for in summer when the sun is warm they may generally be seen in ponds and slowly running waters, looking like little lumps of transparent jelly, and hanging to plants or any other object that may be in the water."

"I think I have seen them, then," said Agnes; "but I had no idea that they were living creatures."

“And yet,” returned her mother, “if you were to take one of these jelly-like lumps, not larger than a small pea, and examine it in a powerful microscope, you would find that it possessed six or more arms, which it has the power of stretching out in an extraordinary manner, so as to seize any insect that may come in their way, and which they convey to an opening in the centre of the polypus, which serves as its mouth, and which leads directly to the stomach.”

“Ah, mamma!” said Agnes, “then these creatures are polypes. I have been frequently going to ask you what kind of creatures they were, ever since papa was reading to us that curious account of the manner in which they form islands in the Australian Seas. But surely,” continued she, after thinking for a moment, “these soft jelly-like looking animals cannot possibly form any thing so hard as coral!”

“It is, indeed,” replied Mrs. Merton, “extremely difficult for us to conceive that animals so simple and jelly-like can form solid stone; but the way in which it is effected is, that the creature has the power of depositing, in a solid form, the earthy matter which is continually floating in the waters of the ocean, and which it swallows with its daily food.”

While Agnes and her mamma were thus speaking they continued descending the cliffs till they came to the part where the road turns, and leaves a little level space before it again descends. Just at this place they found an old woman sitting at a kind of stall covered with shells and various kinds of fossils; and Agnes, whose curiosity was always easily excited, stopped to look at them.

“I wish we could find any polypes here,” said she to her mamma.

“It is impossible,” said Mrs. Merton, “to find any here in a living state; but you may see some of their labours in these curious specimens of sponge.”

“Sponge, mamma?” cried Agnes. “Surely you do not mean to say that the polypes form sponge as well as coral!”

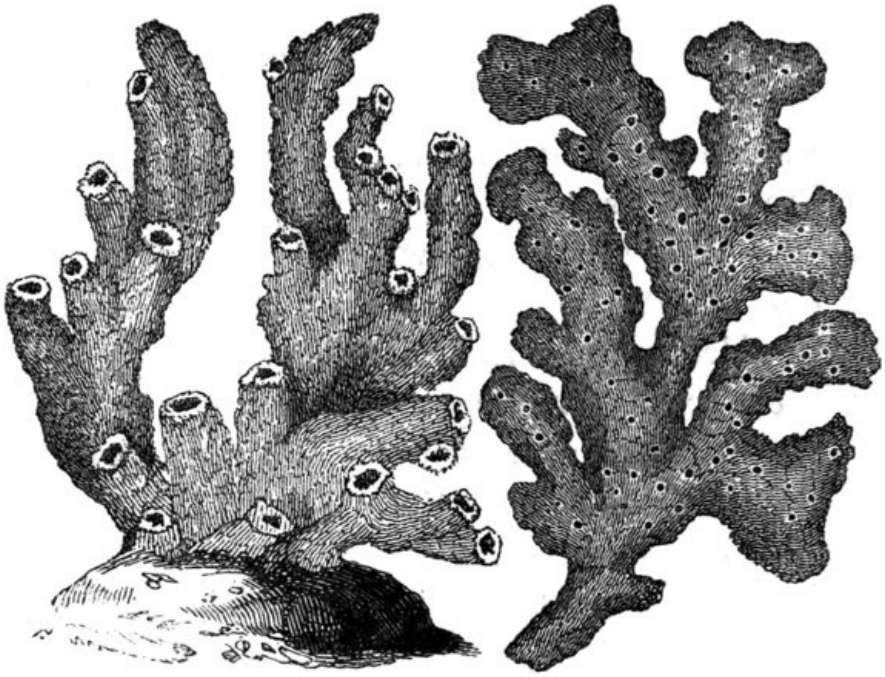


Fig. 24.

Sponges.

“Indeed I do,” said Mrs. Merton, “for though sponge was once supposed to be a marine plant, it has long since been discovered to be an animal. About the year 1752 a gentleman, named Ellis, was at Brighton forming a collection of marine plants for the instruction of some part of the Royal Family in botany, and amongst other things he collected some curious specimens of sponges, which he examined through a powerful microscope with a view to obtain a knowledge of some peculiarities which he considered necessary to be ascertained before they could be properly classified. By this examination he discovered that the sponges possessed a system of vessels through which the sea-water circulated, and which opened by means of innumerable pores. Subsequent examinations proved that what we call sponge may be compared to the shell of the snail or the oyster, and that it acts as a covering to the jelly-like animal or animals which reside in it, being as necessary to them as shells are to the molluscous animals. Mr. Ellis, after making these discoveries, examined different kinds of coral, and found that they were also furnished with pores containing animals, the tentacula or feelers of which were continually expanding and contracting as if seeking and seizing prey.”

“How very curious!” cried Agnes; “and what do these creatures live upon?”

“Probably,” returned her mamma, “on some animalcules contained in the water, the forms of which are too minute to be visible to human eyes even though aided by powerful microscopes.”

“I can easily imagine they must be very small,” said Agnes, “as the creatures which feed upon them are so little themselves. But I think I have seen the pores in the coral.”

“I have no doubt you have,” said Mrs. Merton; “the pores in some of the kinds of sponge are also

quite large enough to be visible to the naked eye."

"But where is sponge found, mamma?" asked Agnes.

"It is generally collected from rocks in the sea," replied Mrs. Merton, "about twenty or thirty feet deep, by divers, who in time become very expert in obtaining it. It grows so rapidly, that it is said 185
rocks have been found covered with it that were completely cleared only two years before."

"What kinds of coral are these mamma?" said Agnes, picking up two or three pieces which lay upon the stall.

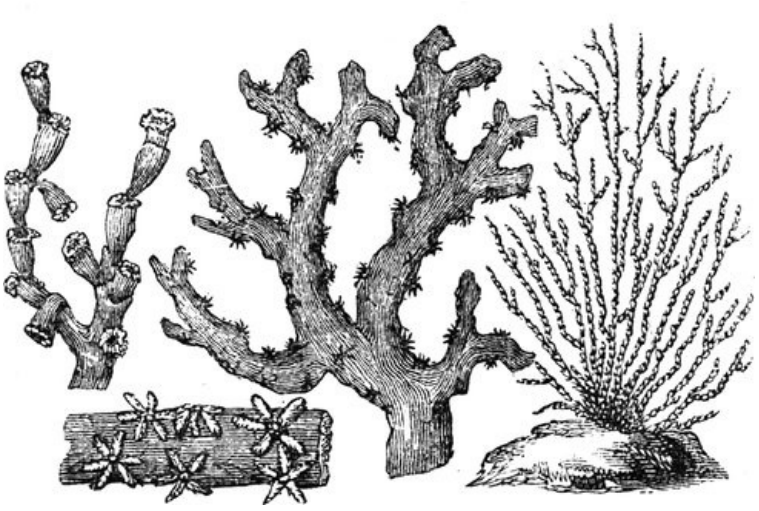


Fig. 25.

CORALS.

"I do not know the names of all of them," said Mrs. Merton; "but I believe that kind which looks as though it were formed of small beads is called the chain coral, or Catenipora; and that other kind which appears covered with star-like flowers is called Aulopora." 186

Fig. 26.

SADDLE-SHAPED ANOMIA.

Agnes's attention was now caught by some shells, and she begged her mamma to purchase for her a beautiful little Scallop-shell which was streaked with reddish bands, delicately shaded off into white; and also one of those shells which are called Anomia. They then proceeded on their walk, and as they descended the remaining cliffs Agnes asked her mamma what the use was of the hole in the upper valve of the anomia.

"It is that," said Mrs. Merton, "which has given rise to the popular English name of the Antique Lamp, by which the shell is generally known, as it resembles the opening through which the flame of the ancient lamps used to ascend; but its real use is to admit the passing through it of a strong muscle, at the end of which is a calcareous mass, by means of which the animal contained in the shell attaches itself to the rocks. Where the creature has fixed itself, it cannot be pulled off without killing it; but when it wishes, it 187
possesses the power of drawing its muscle into the shell so as to close the hole in the upper valve with the calcareous mass, which exactly fits it."

Agnes did not reply to this, and after a short silence her mamma asked her if she did not wish to know any particulars respecting the other shell they had purchased.

"Oh no!" said Agnes, carelessly, "as it is only a common scallop, I suppose I know all that you can tell me about that."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Merton, "and pray may I ask how much you do know about it?"

Agnes was about to speak, but after considering a moment, she hesitated, stammered, and at last said, "it is such a common shell."

"But what particulars do you know about it?" persisted Mrs. Merton.

"Everybody knows a scallop-shell," said Agnes.

"Everybody may easily know it as well as you do apparently," said Mrs. Merton; "for the fact is that you appear to know nothing of it but its name; and yet there are some particulars respecting the animal of the pecten or scallop which are extremely interesting. For instance, you are probably not aware that it possesses the power of leaping; and that a basket full of scallops just caught, 188
which was set down on the beach, was found speedily emptied of its contents by the pectens springing out of it and returning to the water. The animal of the scallop has also the power of making such frequent and sudden contractions of its muscles as to force itself rapidly forward through the water; and, indeed, a recent writer on the subject tells us, that it requires considerable agility to catch it as it flutters among the corals where it dwells. The name of pecten, which signifies a comb, was given to the scallop-shell from a supposed resemblance in the fluting of the shell to the teeth of a comb. The scallop-shell was formerly the badge of pilgrims who had been to the Holy Land, and was worn on their caps and cloaks."

They had now reached the beach, and Agnes was in such high spirits, that, though she was encumbered with her large basket, she could not refrain from running backwards and forwards several times, just as we often see little dogs do, who never seem thoroughly to enjoy a walk unless 189

Fig. 27.

Scallop Shell.

they are permitted to make it twice or three times as long as it ought to be.

Agnes ran round a projecting cliff so that her mother lost sight of her. She soon, however, came running back with two or three Cockle-shells in her hand. “Look mamma!” cried she, “what I have found!”

“Nothing very remarkable, certainly,” said Mrs. Merton, smiling; “for I believe the cockle-shell is common on the sea-beach in every part of the world. Yet something interesting may be told even of this common shell. In the first place it is what is called a bivalve, that is, the shell is in two parts, or valves, like those of the oyster and the scallop, the two parts being united by a hinge, formed by two projecting teeth in the centre, and two side teeth.”

“But what do you call teeth, mamma!”

“Look, here are two projecting parts with a hollow part between. The projecting parts are called the teeth, and you see they are so placed that the teeth of one valve fit into the hollow part of the other. The creature, which is something like an oyster, and is eaten, can open and shut these valves at pleasure, and it can push out a long elbow-like part of its body and 190
spring forward to a considerable distance when it wishes to leave the sand and return to the sea. Look, too, how delicately this valve that you have found, is ribbed, and observe the form of the shell. You see it bears some resemblance to a heart, and hence the scientific name of the genus is Cardium, which signifies a heart.”

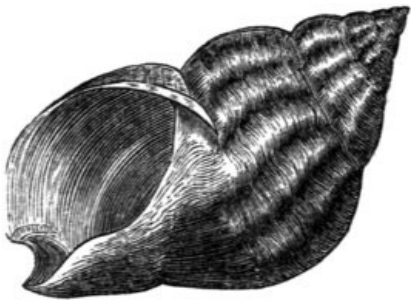


Fig. 28.

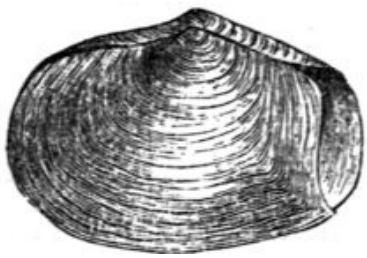
Whelk (*Buccinum undatum*).

Agnes now picked up another shell, and her mother smiled when she discovered that it was a Whelk, or Buckie. “My dear Agnes,” said she, “you certainly cannot boast of finding any very rare shells in your travels; for the whelk is nearly as common as the cockle. However, there is a material difference between them, for the whelk, or buccinum, is a univalve, that is, its shell is only in one part, like that of the snail. Look at this shell, and you will perceive a curious little notch at the lower end; and when there is this mark we know that the animal inhabiting the shell is carnivorous, that is, it lives on other creatures of its own kind. 191
The common garden snail, which, you know, lives on vegetables, has no notch.”

Agnes now saw several shells lying scattered about, but she scarcely condescended to look at them, till at last, one appeared so curious that she could not help calling her mamma’s attention to it. It was a long narrow shell, something resembling the handle of a pocket knife. What she picked up, however, was only the half of what was evidently a bivalve-shell, and to Agnes’s great annoyance, it was by no means perfect. Mrs. Merton, however, told her that it was what was called a Solen, or Razor-shell, or, sometimes, a Sheath-shell, from its resemblance to the handle, or sheath of a razor. She also showed her the hinge that united the two valves together, and which, though very slight, was curiously formed.

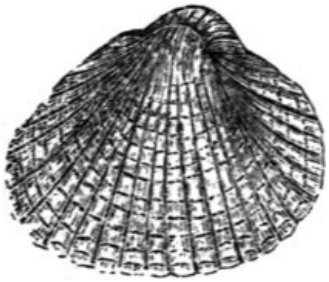
While Mrs. Merton was speaking, Agnes saw another shell nearly similar to the first, but smaller and prettier, and the little girl ran with great delight to pick it up. Just before she reached it, however, she saw it raise itself on one end, and then instantly disappear in the sand.

Fig. 29.



Truncated Gaper.

Solen, or Razor-shell.



Common Cockle.

The Kneading Trough.

It is scarcely possible to express the astonishment and almost terror which seized Agnes at this sight; and she ran back to her mamma almost too frightened to ask the cause of what she had seen. Her mamma, however, explained to her that it was the nature of the animals belonging to these shells to bury themselves in the sand when they were alarmed; and she added, that the disappearance of the shell was a certain proof that it was inhabited.

“Oh mamma!” cried Agnes, “how I should like to see the animal. Can’t we get it up out of the sand without hurting it?”

“I am afraid not,” said Mrs. Merton; “for these animals have been known sometimes to descend to the depth of two feet, and I believe they generally go at least a foot beneath the surface, which is a greater depth than I could possibly dig to, with the point of my parasol, and I have no other instrument at hand.”

“But then,” cried Agnes, “how will the poor solen return itself, for I suppose it will not always remain buried in the sand?”

“If you will look attentively,” said Mrs. Merton, “you will see that the solen has left a little hole, by which he can return to the surface whenever he thinks proper, which no doubt will be as soon as we have disappeared;” and, in fact, when Agnes looked at the little narrow tube which the solen had left in the sand, she fancied she could see some slight appearance of its shining pinkish shell in the hole. Her mamma, however, would not suffer her to attempt to get the shell out, lest she should destroy the tube, and thus convert the poor solen’s retreat into its tomb. She, therefore, stood for some time looking at the hole in silence; and at last asked her mamma if there was not any way of bringing the creature out without injuring it.

“It is said,” returned Mrs. Merton, “that when a fisherman wishes to catch one of these creatures alive, he can bring it to the surface by throwing a little salt down the tube; but, strange to say, this plan is only successful once, and the fisherman must be on the watch to seize the shell the moment it makes its appearance, as if the animal becomes alarmed and descends a second time, the salt has no longer any effect upon it, and no efforts on the part of the fisherman can induce it to rise again.”

“How very curious!” said Agnes; “but I do hope we shall find another of these creatures in time to seize it. Are they common on this coast, mamma?”

“Not very, I believe,” said Mrs. Merton; “and I think the kind of which you have the half valve is not a British shell at all, but has been washed here from some other country.”

They now walked on, and Agnes picked up the half of another bivalve shell, which her mother told her was called Mactra, or the Kneading Trough, from some fancied resemblance in the shape of the shell to that utensil. As this shell was not very beautiful, Agnes soon threw it away, but not before her mamma had made her observe that one of the teeth was shaped like the letter V.

“There are many shells,” continued Mrs. Merton, “which are of nearly the same outward shape as this, and which can only be distinguished from each other by some peculiarities in the teeth or hinge.”

Agnes now picked up another half of a bivalve shell, which she at first thought was another mactra, as the two shells bore considerable resemblance to each other; but when Mrs. Merton told her to look at the hinge she found that instead of being in the shape of a V there was a curious projection resembling a small spoon, which her mother told her fitted into a corresponding hollow in the other valve.

“This shell,” continued Mrs. Merton, “is one of the kind called Gapers, because the two valves, instead of closing, are always open or gaping at one end: they are so far apart, indeed, as to admit of a large tube, containing two smaller ones, to pass through the opening. This tube the animal can draw into the shell at pleasure; but generally when the creature buries itself in the sand it allows its tube just to reach the surface in order that it may take its food by means of the small tubes within the large one. In some cases the animal buries itself so deeply in the sand that it is obliged to elongate its tube to an extraordinary length, in order to make it reach the surface; but in other cases the tube is very short. The scientific name of this shell is Mya; and the animal belonging to it is eaten in some parts of the world as an article of food.”

Agnes now began to gather sea-weed and pebbles, and she had soon collected a large quantity of both to put in her basket, which she had placed on the beach while she filled it; this she did most effectively, for several times when it appeared full she contrived by dint of shaking and pressing to make it hold a little more. At last, however, she seemed satisfied that her basket was full, and she attempted to lift it up and carry it after her mamma, who had now turned, and was walking slowly back towards the village. Mrs. Merton was absorbed in thought, and as her back was turned towards Agnes, she was quite unconscious of the trouble of the little girl, who was trying in vain with all the strength she could muster to raise the basket. But all her efforts were in vain, the basket was far too heavy for her; and after a powerful but useless struggle, fearing that her mamma

would leave her behind, as she had already lost sight of her behind one of the projecting cliffs, poor Agnes uttered a cry so full of trouble and almost despair that her mamma came running back, terrified lest some dreadful accident had happened to her darling. When she found what was really the matter, she could scarcely help laughing at poor Agnes’s dilemma, and she put an end to it by emptying the contents of the basket on the beach, and helping Agnes to refill it with only a few of the stones and shells, and the lightest and prettiest of the sea-weed, with which they returned to the inn.

CHAPTER IX.

Sandown Bay.—Culver Cliff.—Sandown Fort.—High Flood.—Girl and Dog. —Poultry.—Hares.—Butterflies.—Ichneumon Fly.—Myrtles.—Brading. —Bembridge.—St. Helen's.—Arrival at Ryde.

THE next morning was rather cooler than any day since the Mertons had been in the Isle of Wight; and Agnes felt the want of her little pink handkerchief round her neck. She did not like to complain, however, as she was aware it was entirely her own fault that the handkerchief had been lost; and so she bore the cold as well as she could, without saying a word about it. The road they were travelling commanded a beautiful view of Sandown Bay and Culver Cliff, on which last, Mr. Merton told Agnes, was formerly erected a beacon to warn the inhabitants when any danger was apprehended of an invasion from France, as this was the part of the Island that approached nearest to that country.

"The Isle of Wight was once invaded by the French," said Mrs. Merton, "but I believe it was in the 199
reign of Henry V."

"It was invaded several times previously to that period," said Mr. Merton, "and also, I believe, once or twice in the reign of Henry VI.; and it was to repel these invasions," continued he, pointing to Sandown Fort, "that the fort we see before us was erected in the time of Charles I.; but we now trust to our shipping as our best protection. The only bed of coal that is worth working in the Isle of Wight, is in Culver Cliff."

They now approached the river, which flows inland from Brading Haven, and which had greatly overflowed its banks; but Agnes was very much amused to see a little robin redbreast sitting on a stone in the middle of the water, looking as saucy and unconcerned as possible. A little farther on they approached the deep part of the water; and here the driver told Mrs. Merton and Agnes to sit as steadily as possible, for the current was flowing with great violence, and the horse might be carried off his feet. They did as he desired, and soon reached the opposite bank in safety. They had scarcely done so, when Agnes' attention was attracted by a little girl who was standing on the high 200
bank just beyond the water, weeping bitterly. It was easy to guess the cause of her grief, for in the water lay the body of a little dog, which appeared to have been dashed by the current against some large stones near which it lay. They were all sorry for the poor little girl, and Mrs. Merton, telling the driver to stop, asked the little girl if it was her dog that she was crying over.

"No, it was not mine," said the child, "it was master's; but it loved me, and I have nothing to love me now."

Mrs. Merton entered into conversation with the girl, and learnt from her that she was an orphan, and had been bound an apprentice by the parish to a neighbouring farmer. The dog that lay dead before them had been her playfellow and companion, and the poor girl's sorrow at its loss was the greater as she had nothing to supply its place in her affections. As, however, it was impossible to restore it to life, Mrs. Merton thought the best thing that could be done was to change the current of the child's ideas, and accordingly gave her a shilling, which effectually answered the purpose 201
intended; for the little girl, who had never been mistress of so much money before, instantly dried her tears, and ran off, leaving Agnes very indignant at her, for suffering herself to be so easily consoled.

They now passed a farm-house, which both Mrs. Merton and Agnes thought might possibly belong to the master of the little girl; and they noticed some remarkably fine poultry feeding at the door of the barn.

"I have noticed in passing through the Island," said Mrs. Merton, "that the poultry is remarkably fine everywhere, and that it is apparently very abundant."

"One reason," said Mr. Merton, "is no doubt the fact, that there are neither badgers nor pole-cats in the Island, and till lately there were no foxes; but these have been now introduced for the sake of hunting them."

"The inhabitants of the Isle of Wight," said Mrs. Merton smiling, "appear to have been very badly off with regard to the rural sports, for at one time, I believe, no hares were to be found here. At least I remember reading somewhere, that the same Sir Edward Horsley, whose tomb we saw at 202
Newport, was so anxious to introduce hares here, that he gave a fat lamb for every hare that was brought over from the mainland alive."

"Oh! look mamma," cried Agnes, interrupting her mother, "what a beautiful butterfly! Surely that is quite different from those we saw the other day."

"You are quite right," said her mother, "it is different; and it is very extraordinary that it should be here at all, as it is generally found only in low marshy places."

"I have heard, however," said Mr. Merton, "of its being found in the neighbourhood of Dover on the chalk cliffs, and, therefore, it is not very surprising that we should meet with it here."

"But what is the name of this butterfly, mamma?" said Agnes.

"It is called the Marbled-white, or Marmoress," said Mrs. Merton, "but I think it is a variety a little different from the common kind."

"Look, mamma!" said Agnes, "there it is again, sitting on that bough with its wings closed. How very odd it is that butterflies should always sit in that queer position!"

"It is their attitude of repose," said Mrs. Merton. "They sit in that position when they are asleep, 203
and they are even found in it when they are dead."

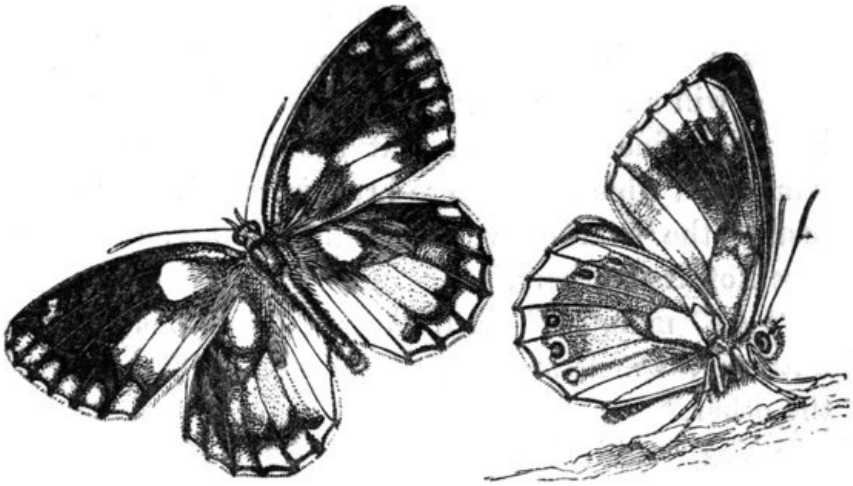


Fig. 30.

The Marbled-white Butterfly, or Marmoress
(*Hipparchia Galathea*).

"It is very curious," said Agnes, "that they should be so very fond of displaying the under side of their wings; and it is still more curious that the under side should be so very different from the upper side. How is it, mamma? I should have thought in wings so thin as those of the butterfly, that the colours would shine through."

"The marks on the butterfly's wing," said Mrs. Merton, "are composed of a number of delicate little scales, laid over each other like the feathers of birds; and there are two different sets of scales for every wing, one covering the upper, and the other the under side. If you lay hold of a butterfly by its wings, you will find that some of these delicate little scales will adhere to your fingers, on which they will look like fine dust, and that the membrane of the wing from which they were brushed will be laid bare; just as the skin of a bird would be if you were to pluck off its feathers."

"Ah, mamma," cried Agnes, "there is another butterfly, which appears to me quite different from the other."

"Yes," said Mrs. Merton, "that is the Clouded-Yellow, a very common butterfly in every part of England, and, I believe, in almost every part of the world. It is, however, rather capricious in its visits, as every three or four years a season occurs when not one of these butterflies is to be seen; while, perhaps, the next season they are so abundant as to lie dead under every hedge."

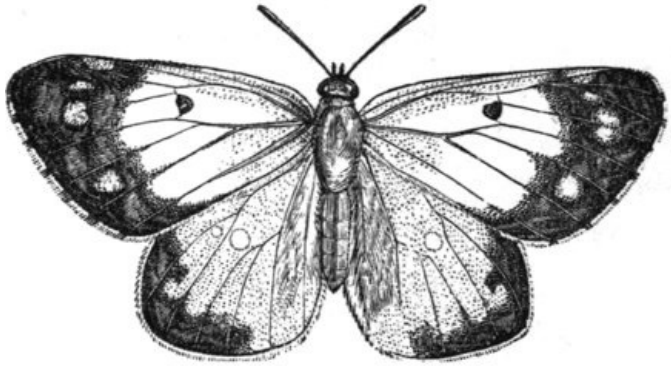


Fig. 31.

The Clouded-Yellow Butterfly (*Colias Edusa*).

"Several other kinds of insects," said Mr. Merton, "have the same peculiarity. Some years cockchafers are so abundant as to be quite a pest, though, perhaps, the next season they are rarely to be met with. Entomologists have been puzzled to account for these changes; but with regard to the butterflies, their abundance or scarcity is said to depend chiefly on the number of ichneumons."

"Ichneumons!" cried Agnes, "I thought they were only found in Egypt."

"I do not mean the animal that destroys the eggs of the Crocodile on the banks of the Nile," said Mr. Merton, "but a kind of fly which lays its eggs in the living bodies of caterpillars."

"Ah!" said Agnes, "I think you have told me of this fly before, mamma. I remember it now."

Fig. 32.

Ichneumon Fly on a Floret of the Flowering Rush.

"Yes," said Mrs. Merton, "I remember describing to you the Ichneumon that lays its eggs in the caterpillar of the Cabbage Butterfly; but there are several kinds, and there, I think, is one quite distinct hovering round the florets of that Flowering Rush." 207

She told the driver to stop; and Agnes distinctly saw the Ichneumon her mother had alluded to.

They now passed a pretty little cottage with a large myrtle trained against it; and Mrs. Merton remarked how very few similar specimens they had seen of the mildness of the climate. "I remember, when I was a girl," said she, "having heard so much of the myrtles of the Isle of Wight, that I expected to find the whole island a complete green-house; but, the fact is, we have seen much fewer myrtles here than we did last year in Devonshire."

Soon after they arrived at the little town of Brading; and Mrs. Merton and Agnes went to visit the Church, while Mr. Merton rested for an hour or two at the inn. As they entered the church-yard, they saw, to their great joy, their old acquaintance Mr. Bevan, whom they had not seen before since they left Carisbrook Castle. He told them he had been staying at Newport; but that he had now come to Brading to see the Church, which was the oldest in the island, part of it being said to have been built in the year 704. "It is also large for the Isle of Wight, which is remarkable for the 208 smallness of its churches," continued he; "and it contains some curious old tombs of the Oglanders, the founder of whose family came over with William the Conqueror; also the original of the epitaph which has been so often quoted, beginning: 'Forgive, blest shade! the tributary tear'—I do not remember the rest, but the words are doubtless familiar to you."

As he was speaking, a woman came up, and asked if the party wished to see the church. The old gentleman replied that they did. "Because," said she, dropping a curtsy, "my husband, as keeps the key, is gone out with the key in his pocket, and won't be home 'till night."

Mrs. Merton and Agnes could not help laughing at the woman, who gave this intelligence with the air of one who is communicating something peculiarly agreeable, and which she means to be remarkably civil; but the old gentleman did not take it so quietly: on the contrary, he went into a passion, and ordered the woman to send for her husband immediately. She said she did not know where to find him, and curtsying again, walked off. The rage of the old gentleman was now excessive: his face became quite red; he stamped, and shook his fist at the woman; till, happening 209 accidentally to cast his eyes on Agnes, he was evidently struck at the expression of her countenance, and felt ashamed of having exposed himself so much before a lady and a child. He stopped, pushed his wig back into its place,—as it had been disordered by his vehemence,—and began to apologise; but, as he saw Mrs. Merton looked grave, he stopped suddenly. He then endeavoured to turn their attention to another subject, and began speaking of Brading Haven.

"The sea here," said he, "spreads over a piece of land eight or nine hundred acres in extent, which, tradition tells us, was formerly partly covered with an extensive oak forest, in which the Druids performed their rites. In the centre of the forest was a stone-cased well, in which Merlin, who was a powerful magician, had confined a troublesome water-spirit; and the exact situation of this well was kept a secret, as it was said, that if ever the lid was raised, ruin to the whole country round would follow. The time of the Druids passed away, and all memory of the well was lost, till the time of William the Conqueror, when the Norman knight, Fitz Osborne, who subdued the island 210 and reigned over it as an independent sovereign, gave this tract of land to one of his followers, Robert Okelandro. This knight, being fond of hunting, determined to clear away the underwood in the forest, and in doing so he discovered the enchanted well, and ordered its cover to be removed that it might be filled up; some of the oldest inhabitants of the place remonstrated; but he would be obeyed; the cover was taken off, and the waters rushed up with such force as to overwhelm the whole district, and to drown the adventurous knight and several of his attendants."

Mrs. Merton thanked the old gentleman for relating this legend, and asked him if the harbour was not useful for shipping.

"No," returned he; "it is too shallow to bear anything but a small boat, even when the tide is in; and when it is out it is only a mass of mud. In the reign of James I. Sir Hugh Middleton, the same who first supplied London with water, contracted with some Dutchmen to embank this spot, and redeem it from the sea; but after upwards of seven thousand pounds had been expended, a furious

tide made a breach in their bank, and the land being again overflowed, they were at length compelled to give up the project in despair.”

The old gentleman now bowed and took his leave, and Mrs. Merton returned his salutation very coldly, as she had been disgusted with the violent rage he had displayed, and which was so unbefitting his age and general intelligence. Agnes was also quite hurt to find him so very different from what she had expected. “I never could have believed he would have behaved so; his appearance was so respectable,” said she.

“My dear Agnes,” returned her mother; “this is your first experience in that important lesson in life—that it is always dangerous to place much reliance on appearances.”

They now returned to the inn, where they found the carriage waiting; on the road they stayed a moment to look again at Brading Haven, with the little town of Bembridge, forming the southern point of the harbour, and approaching nearly to the pretty village of St. Helen’s at its northern point. Mrs. Merton was anxious to pass through St. Helen’s, as she wanted to show Agnes the old church-tower which is now washed by the sea, though it is said to have been once a mile from it, and the green, round which the houses of the village are built; but as Mr. Merton was far from well, she thought it advisable to proceed to Ryde as speedily as possible, and after a very dull ride, only varied by the beautiful view from St. John’s of the town of Ryde, they arrived at that place, and drove to the Pier Hotel.

CHAPTER X.

Ryde.—Handsome Shops.—Binstead.—Wootton Bridge.—Newport.—East Cowes.—Horse Ferry.—Steam Boat.—Arms of the German Empire.—Return home.

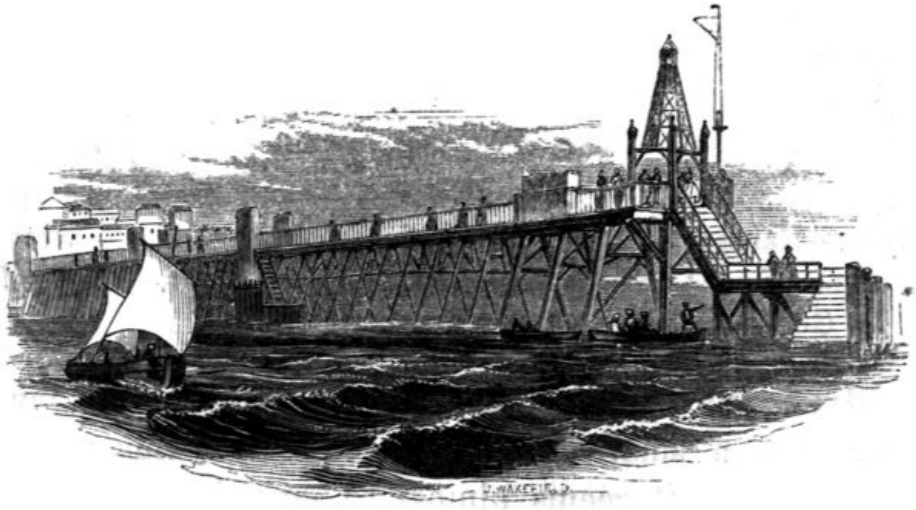


Fig. 33.

Ryde Pier.

Ryde, the Guide-books tell us, was only a few years ago a small fishing village; but if this really was the case, it seems almost to have rivalled Aladdin's palace in rapidity of growth, for it is now a large and flourishing town. The streets are wide, and the shops are splendid. The pier is also long and large; and the view of Portsmouth, with its harbour full of shipping, and Spithead with its numerous men-of-war, is very striking. Agnes was, however, most pleased with the shops full of shells, which she found near the hotel; the shells being marked at prices so low as to be quite astonishing. Some very nice specimens of Haliotis, or Sea-ear, were marked only a penny each, and others were equally cheap. Above all things, there were numerous specimens of articles from the 214
Royal George, a very large ship, which everybody knows sunk while lying at anchor at Spithead, about sixty years ago, and the remains of the wreck of which have been lately brought up by the exertions of Major-General Pasley. The Bazaar at Ryde reminded Agnes of the Burlington Arcade; and everything in the town appeared so comfortable, and in such a superior style to any other place they had seen in the island, that Agnes at last said she thought she should like to live at Ryde 215
almost as well as in London. She was also very much delighted with a stroll on the beach, where she picked up some shells, though she found nothing very valuable. At last she found a mussel-shell that she was sure was not common, as it was quite different from anything she had ever seen before; and, on showing it to her mother, she was delighted to find that it was indeed very rare.

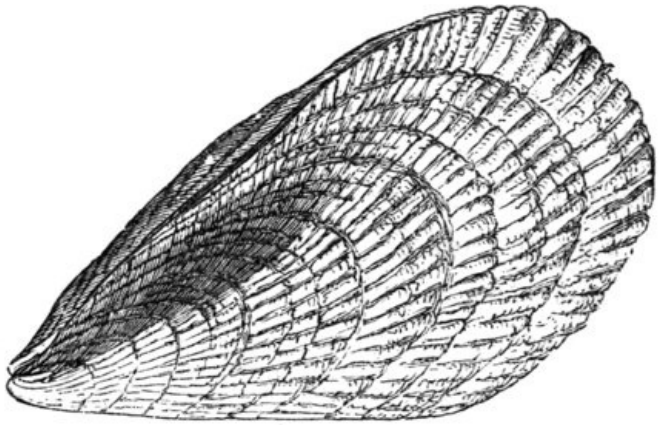


Fig. 34.

Ribbed Mussel (*Myrtilus crenulatus*).

"It is a native of the West Indies," said Mrs. Merton; "and must have adhered to some ship from that country, which has chanced to come into Portsmouth Harbour."

Agnes now admired her treasure more than ever, for, like many persons much older than herself, 216
she valued things by their rarity rather than their beauty.

The party did not leave Ryde till rather a later hour than usual, and when they did they took the road to Newport as Mr. Merton thought it necessary to return to that town for his letters. The first place that attracted their attention on their road was Binstead, where they bestowed a passing glance on a lovely little thatched cottage which stood embosomed in a wood, and nestling in the

hollow formed by an old stone quarry, from which, it is said, the stone used in building Winchester Cathedral was taken. The church at Binstead is very pretty, but they did not stop to visit it; and they passed also, without stopping, the turn which led to the ruins of Quarr Abbey, once the richest and largest monastery in the Island, its walls having enclosed a space of thirty acres in extent. They now saw at a distance what appeared to be a very large lake, or rather inland sea, which, when they approached, they found was crossed by a bridge along which lay their road. The lower part of this noble sheet of water forms a broad estuary, called Fishbourne Creek, which spreads out from the 217
bridge, gradually widening till it reaches the sea: but the part above the bridge, which is known by the name of the Wootton river, looked like a vast mirror set in a verdant frame. Nothing could be more calm and still than this broad expanse of water, reflecting in its glassy bosom the sloping banks which rose on each side; here covered with a carpet of smooth turf, and there sprinkled with trees with spreading branches, hanging down to the water's edge. The rich verdure of this part of the Isle of Wight affords a striking contrast to the naked and barren rocks at the back of the island; and Agnes gazed at the present scene with the more pleasure, as she liked naturally the luxuriant and beautiful, better than the wild and grand.

They had scarcely crossed the bridge when one of the traces broke which fastened the horse to the carriage. The accident was of no great consequence, as the driver had some string with him, with which he told them he could easily contrive to tie the broken parts together; but as they found the operation would take some time, Mrs. Merton and Agnes agreed to walk on. The country they 218
were now passing through looked somewhat barren, as, in fact, it formed part of Wootton Common; but Agnes did not dislike this, notwithstanding her love for verdant scenery, as it reminded her of the moors of Scotland and their fragrant heather; and though she was an English girl (having been born at Bayswater) she loved everything Scotch, as she had many dear friends in that country. She therefore ran gaily to and fro, gathering wild flowers and bringing them to her mother, who walked more steadily and slowly along the regular path. In one place Agnes had made rather a longer excursion than usual, and she returned slowly, holding something carefully between her two hands.

"What have you there?" asked her mother, when she approached near enough to be heard.

"Oh! mamma," cried Agnes, "I have found some of the most beautiful beetles I ever saw in my life. Do look how brilliantly they are marked with scarlet and white! They must be something very rare and curious, I should think."

"No, they are by no means uncommon; and they are called Tiger beetles, from their savage nature; for they are carnivorous, and devour all the weaker insects that fall in their way." 219

"How sorry I am to hear that! Who could have thought that such beautiful creatures could be cruel? But may I put them in a piece of paper, mamma, and take them home?"

"I am afraid you would then be as cruel as the beetles, and with less excuse; as they devour other insects for food, and you would torture them for no purpose, but to gratify a passing wish."

"But, mamma, Aunt Jane and Aunt Mary both have collections of insects; and I am sure they are not cruel; and you know I have some moths and butterflies at home that Aunt Mary gave me."

"Your aunts are both entomologists, and have made collections of insects for scientific purposes; besides, they know how to kill the insects they take without giving them much pain; but you would only torture these poor beetles by keeping them alive a day or two without food, or, at any rate, in a miserable place of confinement." 220

"Very well, mamma," cried Agnes; "then I will set them free, and take them back to where I found them;" and she ran off as fast as possible. When she returned, almost out of breath, her mamma laughed at her for taking so much trouble. "If you had put the beetles down here," said she, "they would soon have found their way back, if they had wished to do so; for they are remarkably active, and their legs are so long, in proportion to their bodies, that, I think, they can even run faster than you can. So you have given yourself quite unnecessary trouble."

"Oh! I don't mind that," cried Agnes; "I like running."

"So I perceive," said Mrs. Merton, smiling; "for you are like a little spaniel, you run two or three times over the same ground."

Mrs. Merton had scarcely finished speaking when Agnes darted off again, like lightning, and soon came back, bringing with her some shells. "Now, mamma," said she, "I think I have really found something that is rare: you always say the things I find are so common; but I am sure these snails are very different from any I ever saw before." 221

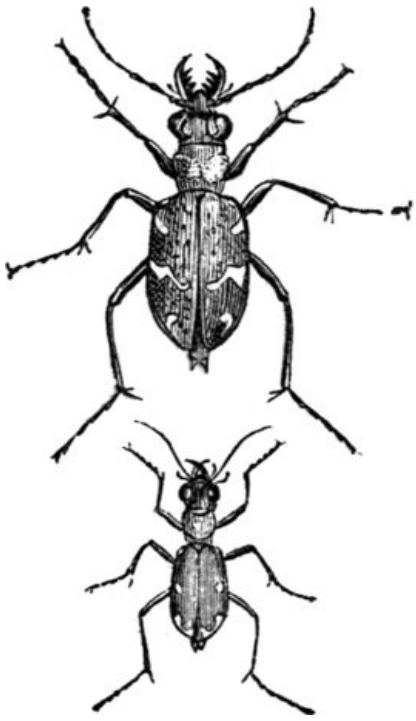


Fig. 35.

Tiger Beetles (*Cicindela*).

"I am sorry to say, however, that they are found, in great abundance, in many places; and sometimes they appear so suddenly, and in such immense quantities, as to give rise to the idea that they must have fallen from the clouds. I do not know their popular name, but naturalists call them *Helix virgata*. They are remarkable for the thinness of their shells, and they are so small that two or three have been found adhering to a single blade of grass."

"Ah! mamma," cried Agnes, laughing, "one might almost fancy you saw me pick up these very shells; for I found them both sticking to one blade of grass, and I was quite delighted with their thin, delicate shells. I am only sorry they are so common."

"To console you, I must add that they are only common in the South of England, in warm, open situations; and they are generally found in company with the other little shell you have in your

hand. That is called *Bulimus articulatus*: and both kinds are found in such quantities on the downs in the South of England, that they are said to give the sheep that feed on the downs their peculiar flavour; as the sheep eat them with every blade of grass they take."

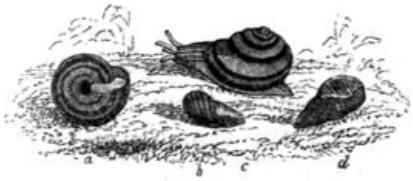


Fig. 36.

a, b. Helix virgata. c, d. Bulimus articulatus.

"I remember the name of *Bulimus*," said Agnes. "I think we saw some shells called by that name in the splendid collection of Mr. Cuming, that you told me laid eggs as large as a pigeon's; and, indeed, we saw some of the eggs."

"That was a species of *Bulimus* only found in the torrid zone; but the genus is a very extensive one, and, I believe, contains nearly a hundred and fifty species."

They now heard the wheels of the carriage, and stood still till it overtook them. They were soon seated, and advanced rapidly over a very fertile country, till they came in sight of the Medina; which looked like a silver riband, winding through the country in a broad line of shining light. Agnes was delighted to see this river again, as it appeared to her like an old friend. "I am quite satisfied, now," said she, "that we have been all round the island; for here, I find, we have arrived at the same point from which we set out."

"The Medina," said Mr. Merton, "rises at the foot of St. Catherine's Down, near Black Gang Chine; and it divides the island so nearly into two equal parts that it is said to derive its name from the Latin word *media*, which signifies the middle."

"And it is very singular," observed Mrs. Merton, "that, as the Medina forms a central line of division across the island from north to south, so there is a central chain of hills which stretches across it from east to west, and cuts off what is called the back of the island from the northern part. Newport is the capital of the whole, and is now the only place in the island which returns members to Parliament; though formerly Newtown, which is a hamlet, and Yarmouth, which, you know, is only a very small town, returned also two members each."

They now arrived at Newport, and while Mr. Merton was enquiring for his letters, Mrs. Merton informed Agnes that in the school-room of the Free Grammar School of this town, the conferences were held between Charles I. and the Commissioners appointed by Parliament, which lasted forty days, and ended in the determination of the Commissioners to bring that unhappy King to the scaffold.

"Did the Isle of Wight suffer much during the civil war?" asked Agnes.

"No," replied Mrs. Merton, "but it was remarkable at this period for the heroism displayed by the Countess of Portland, whose husband had been Governor of the Island, and who defended the Castle at Carisbrook against the militia of Newport, who were directed by the Parliament to assail it."

As soon as Mr. Merton had finished his business at Newport, they took the road to East Cowes, following the course of the Medina, and passing by East Cowes Castle on their route. As soon as they arrived at the ferry at East Cowes, the driver hailed the horseferry boat, and Agnes had an opportunity of seeing the manner in which it was worked by a rope across the river. They drove into the boat without getting out of the carriage, and drove out again in the same manner, when they reached the landing-place at West Cowes, and proceeded immediately to the pier, where they found a steam-boat just ready to start. While Mr. Merton was paying the driver, and Mrs. Merton was superintending the removal of the luggage, Agnes's attention was attracted by the appearance of the young Londoner whom they had first met with at Freshwater, and afterwards seen shipwrecked at Black Gang Chine; but he was wonderfully changed since they saw him last. He was now pale and exhausted, and sitting on a chair, in which he was carried on board by two men, and immediately taken down into the cabin, where he remained during the voyage. He was followed by his Newfoundland dog, who also looked sadly changed since the day Agnes patted his head on the beach at Freshwater, where she had seen him first. Agnes was so deeply interested in watching this young man and his dog, that she did not perceive that her mamma had gone into the packet-boat, and Mrs. Merton, who was afraid lest Mr. Merton would over-fatigue himself, did not perceive that she was standing on the shore; and thus Agnes was in imminent danger of being left behind, for the men had actually began to remove the board, when she saw her danger and cried out to them to stay. The men laid down the board again, and Agnes ran hastily down it, but the steam-boat was already in motion; and Agnes would have been precipitated into the sea, if one of the seamen had not caught her in his arms and lifted her on board. The wind and tide were both in their favour, and the steam-boat proceeded so rapidly, that when Agnes had sufficiently recovered herself to think of looking for the sea-nettles, she found that the packet was going too fast for her to see one of them. They soon arrived at Calshot Castle and passed it close by; and, as they now proceeded a little more leisurely up the river, Agnes began to look round at her fellow-passengers. Immediately in front of her, sat an old gentleman with a small book in his hand; and when he opened it, several engravings flew out. Agnes instantly ran to pick them up; and when she returned them to the old gentleman, he

thanked her, and asked her if she knew what one of the engravings represented.

Agnes answered that she saw it was a coat of arms, but she did not know to whom it belonged.

“It represents the arms of Austria,” said the old man, “and it is now just a thousand years since the present family ascended the throne.” 227

“Indeed!” exclaimed Agnes.

“Yes,” said the old gentleman. “The German monarchy dates from the treaty of Verdun, signed in 843, by which the dominions of Charlemagne were divided amongst his three sons; but these arms were not assumed all at once; on the contrary they contain an epitome of the history of the German Empire if understood rightly. Shall I explain them to you?”

Agnes gladly assented, and he continued. “The eagle has been, from the earliest ages, the emblem of the German monarchy; and there is an old tradition which states that at the battle of Teutoburg, two Roman eagles were taken, one black and the other white. The Germans retained the black eagle in memory of their victory, and gave the white one to their allies the Poles; and hence the arms of Poland bear the white eagle to this day.”

“But why has the eagle two heads?” asked Agnes.

“That is an emblem that Italy was added to Germany, and thus the eagle is represented with two heads and with two crowns. The eagle also bears in one claw a globe, signifying that it wields imperial power, surmounted by a cross, the emblem of Christianity; and in the other a sceptre headed by a lance-head, the emblem of power and might.” 228

Fig. 37.

Arms of Germany.

“But why are there so many coats of arms on the eagle?”

“The German empire was elective, and the arms borne on the eagle are those of the seven electorates out of whom the emperor was to be chosen. Three of them are archbishops who possess regal power in their separate dominions, and their arms are contained in one shield; and the other four are counts of the empire, or kings, and their arms are in the other shield. The archbishops are those of Mentz, Treves, and Cologne; and the temporal lords are the Count of Brandenburg, the King of Saxony, the Elector Palatine, and the King of Bavaria.” 229

“And what is the meaning of their arms?”

“The first Archbishop of Mentz, whose name was Willige, was the son of a wheelwright; and one day a person thinking to mortify him, drew a rude picture of a wheel on the door of his palace and wrote under it:—

‘Forget not Willige,
What thine origin is!’

“‘Forget it,’ cried the worthy prelate, ‘No, I don’t wish to forget it, and what’s more no one else shall;’ and he ordered a white wheel on a black ground to be adopted for his arms; and this wheel has been borne in the arms of the Archbishops of Mentz ever since.” 230

At this moment Mr. and Mrs. Merton approached, and thanked the gentleman for his kindness to their little daughter.

“But I have not explained all the coat of arms to her yet,” said he; “and when I have done I will give her one of the engravings to keep that she may remember what I have told her.”

Agnes thanked him, and he continued. “The arms of the Archbishop of Treves exhibit a red cross on a white field, in remembrance of the fiery cross which is said to have fallen from Heaven into the middle of the city of Treves, a representation of which, in stone, still adorns the market-place; and the arms of Cologne are a black cross on a white field, in commemoration of the first Archbishop of Cologne having come from the East, a black cross being borne by the Eastern priesthood. This finishes the arms of the spiritual lords.”

“That is, the archbishops,” said Agnes.

“Right; but I am sorry I cannot explain the others so fully: the arms of Brandenburg have a red eagle on a white field; those of Saxony two crossed swords on a black and white ground; those of the Palatinate a red lion on a golden field; and those of Bavaria chequers of blue and white.” 231

“What do the two flags mean?”

“They are the banners of Germany, and they are black, red, and golden yellow. The red was first adopted by the immediate successors of Charlemagne, whose body-guards were clad in that colour; the black was added by the House of Saxony, when it attained imperial honours, the family colours of Saxony being black and white; and the golden yellow alludes to the Swabian emperors, whose dynasty has been called the golden age of the German empire.”

The old gentleman here concluded, and Mr. Merton complimented him on the knowledge he possessed of the subject.

“I am interested in it,” said he, “because I am a native of Germany, though I have now lived a long time in England. It is more than thirty years since I saw my native land; but still my heart warms whenever I hear anything relating to the scenes of my youth.”

“We can sympathize with you,” said Mr. Merton, “for Agnes has an uncle and two aunts in Poland, who no doubt feel the same when they hear anything of Great Britain.” 232

They were now interrupted by the arrival of the steam-boat at Southampton, or “Souton,” as the sailors called it, and getting a porter to carry their luggage they proceeded directly to the terminus of the railway. A train was just going off; so they took their places and in about three hours reached London. Another half hour carried them to Bayswater, where they found Aunt Jane waiting for them; and when she heard Agnes recount the various things she had seen, she felt, like her little niece, that it was difficult to believe so much could possibly have happened in so short a space of time.

THE END.

London:
Printed by S. & J. Bentley, Wilson, and Fley,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

233

New and Interesting Works,

PUBLISHED BY

GRANT AND GRIFFITH,

(SUCCESSORS TO JOHN HARRIS,)

Original Juvenile Library,

CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON.

MRS. LOUDON'S NEW WORK.

FACTS FROM THE WORLD OF NATURE,
ANIMATE AND INANIMATE. Part 1. The Earth. Part 2. The Waters. Part 3. Atmospheric Phenomena. Part 4. Animal Life. By Mrs. Loudon. With numerous Illustrations on Wood, and a beautiful Frontispiece engraved on Steel. Fcap. 8vo. price 6*s.* cloth.

"A Volume as charming as it is useful."—*Church and State Gazette.*

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

THE DREAM OF LITTLE TUK,
and other Tales, by H. C. Andersen. Translated and dedicated to the Author by Charles Boner. Illustrated by Count Pocci. Fcap. 8vo. price 3*s.* 6*d.* plain; 4*s.* coloured.

"It will not be easy for any of our Christmas guests to put Andersen out of court as prime favourite with old and young."—*Athenæum.*

ANDERSEN'S TALES FROM DENMARK.
Translated by Charles Boner. With Fifty Illustrations by Count Pocci. Small 4to. price 6*s.* plain; 7*s.* 6*d.* coloured: or bound in Two Volumes, 3*s.* 6*d.* each, plain; 4*s.* 6*d.* coloured.

"We prophesy for these Tales an immortality in the nursery."—*Blackwood.*

LONDON CRIES AND PUBLIC EDIFICES.
Illustrated in 24 Engravings by Luke Limner, with Descriptive Letter-press. Square 12mo. Price 5*s.* plain; 7*s.* 6*d.* coloured. Bound in Emblematic Cover.

VISITS TO BEECHWOOD FARM;
or, Country Pleasures, and Hints for Happiness addressed to the Young. By Mrs. Catharine M. A. Couper. Four beautiful Illustrations by Absolon. Small 4to. price 3*s.* 6*d.* plain; 4*s.* 6*d.* coloured.

"Catharine Couper is one of those admirable women who have taken the exact measure of childhood's mental faculties."—*Pictorial Times.*

INSECT CHANGES.
With Illuminated Borders of Flowers and Insects in the highly-wrought style of the celebrated "Hours of Anne of Brittany," and forming a First Lesson in Entomology. Small 4to. price 6*s.* in elegant binding.

"One of the richest gifts ever offered, even in this improving age. Nothing can be more perfect in illumination than the embellishments of this charming little book."—*Art Union.*

MARIN DE LA VOYE'S ELEMENTARY FRENCH WORKS.

LES JEUNES NARRATEURS;
ou, Petits Contes Moraux. 18mo. With Frontispiece. Price 2*s.* cloth.

⁂ A Key is printed at the end of these Tales, in which every difficult word and phrase is explained.

THE PICTORIAL FRENCH GRAMMAR.
Numerous Engravings. (*Preparing.*)

THE PICTORIAL FRENCH PRIMER. (*Preparing.*)

ROWBOTHAM'S NEW AND EASY METHOD OF LEARNING
THE FRENCH GENDERS. New Edition. 1*s.* sewed.

THE AFRICAN WANDERERS;

or, The Adventures of Carlos and Antonio; embracing interesting Descriptions of the Manners and Customs of the Western Tribes, and the Natural Productions of the Country. By Mrs. R. Lee, (formerly Mrs. T. E. Bowditch,) Author of "Memoirs of Cuvier," "Elements of Natural History," &c. With Engravings. Fcap. 8vo. price 6*s.* cloth.

"For fascinating adventure, and rapid succession of incident, the volume is equal to any relation of travel we ever read. It exhibits marked ability as well as extensive knowledge, and deserves perusal from all ages."—*Britannia.*

"In strongly recommending this admirable work to the attention of young readers, we feel that we are rendering a real service to the cause of African civilization."—*Patriot.*

EARLY DAYS OF ENGLISH PRINCES.

By Mrs. Russell Gray. Dedicated by permission to the Duchess of Roxburghe. With Illustrations by John Franklin. Small 4to. price 4*s.* tinted plates; 5*s.* coloured. Cloth.

"We cannot too highly recommend its elegant style and moral tone."—*Brighton Gazette.*

"The illustrations by Franklin evince a highly poetical and creative genius."—*Atlas.*

THE SILVER SWAN.

A Fairy Tale. By Madame de Chatelain. Illustrated by John Leech. Small 4to. price 3*s.* 6*d.* plain; 4*s.* 6*d.* coloured. Cloth.

"The moral is in the good, broad, unmistakeable style of the best fairy period."—*Athenæum.*

"The story is written with excellent taste and sly humour."—*Atlas.*

THE HAND-BOOK OF JOKING;

or, What to Say, Do, and Avoid. With an Illustration by Leech. Royal 32mo. price 1*s.* cloth.

"The clever author has tied up in a very small parcel more good things than were ever crammed by a despairing footman into a hamper for the Derby day."—*Court Journal.*

"The good feeling of the author is not the least recommendation."—*Pictorial Times.*

THE WONDER SEEKER;

or, The History of Charles Douglas, by M. F. Tytler, Author of "Tales of the Great and Brave." With Illustrations by Absolon. Second Edition. Fcap. 8vo. price 4*s.* 6*d.* cloth; 5*s.* 6*d.* coloured, gilt edges.

"Books such as this are always delightful."—*Athenæum.*

"It is precisely the book that town boys would like, because it tells them of the country; and country boys cherish, because it teaches them to enjoy in the country what perhaps they never enjoyed before."—*Art Union.*

THE MODERN BRITISH PLUTARCH;

or, Lives of Men distinguished in the Recent History of our Country for their Talents, Virtues, and Achievements. By W. C. Taylor, LL.D., Author of "A Manual of Ancient and Modern History," &c. 12mo. price 6*s.* cloth.

"A book which will be welcomed in any circle of intelligent young persons."—*British Quarterly Review.*

THE YOUNG LADIES' READER:

with Observations on Reading aloud, and Remarks prefixed to the divisions of the Work, by Mrs. Ellis, Author of "The Women of England." Foolscap 8vo. 4*s.* 6*d.* cloth; 5*s.* roan.

"Well calculated to improve the taste, strengthen the judgment, and confirm moral and religious principles."—*Edinburgh Witness.*

GLIMPSES OF NATURE,

and Objects of Interest described, during a Visit to the Isle of Wight. Designed to assist and encourage Young Persons in forming habits of observation. By Mrs. Loudon. Second Edition. With additional Illustrations, and a New Chapter on Shells. 16mo. price 3*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

"We could not recommend a more valuable little volume. It is full of information conveyed in the most agreeable manner."—*Literary Gazette.*

THE YOUNG JEWESS AND HER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL-FELLOWS.

By the Author of "Rhoda," &c. With a Frontispiece by J. Gilbert. 16mo. price 1*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

"Peculiarly adapted to impress upon the minds of young persons the powerful efficacy of example."—*Englishwoman's Magazine.*

RHODA;

or, The Excellence of Charity. With three Illustrations by Williams. Square 16mo. price 2*s.* cloth.

"Not only adapted for children, but many parents might derive great advantage from studying its simple truths."—*Church and State Gazette.*

EMILY'S REWARD;—(*Mrs. Hofland's Last Work,*)

or, The Holiday Trip to Paris. By the Author of "The Son of a Genius," "Ellen the Teacher," &c. With Frontispiece by Williams. 18mo. price 2*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

HOME AMUSEMENTS.

A Collection of Riddles, Charades, Conundrums, Parlour Games, and Forfeits. With a Frontispiece, printed in gold and colours. Price 2*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

THE CELESTIAL EMPIRE;

or, POINTS AND PICKINGS OF INFORMATION ABOUT CHINA AND THE CHINESE. By the Author of "Paul Preston," "Soldiers and Sailors," &c. With Twenty Engravings. Foolscap 8vo., price 6*s.* cloth, 9*s.* 6*d.* morocco.

"A work at once amusing and important, full of graphic descriptions of the peculiarities of the country, as well as striking sketches of the people. The Illustrations are characteristic and judiciously selected."—*Pictorial Times.*

"This very handsome volume contains an almost incredible amount of information."—*Church and State Gazette.*

BIBLE SCENES; or, Sunday Employment for Very Little Children. By the Author of "Mamma's Bible Stories," and "Short and simple Prayers for Children." Consisting of 12 Coloured Illustrations on Cards, and the History written in Simple Language. In a neat box. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*; or dissected as a Puzzle, price 6*s.* 6*d.*

FIRST SERIES: HISTORY OF JOSEPH.
SECOND SERIES: HISTORY OF OUR SAVIOUR.
THIRD SERIES: HISTORY OF DAVID.

⁂ The Illustrations bound with the Letterpress, 3*s.* col.; 2*s.* 6*d.* plain.

SHORT AND SIMPLE PRAYERS, for the Use of Young Children. With Hymns. Square 16mo. price 1*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

"Well adapted to the capacities of children,—beginning with the simplest forms which the youngest child may lisp at its mother's knee, and proceeding with those suited to its gradually advancing age. Special prayers, designed for particular circumstances and occasions, are added. We cordially recommend the book."—*Christian Guardian.*

MAMMA'S BIBLE STORIES, for her Little Boys and Girls. Sixth Edition, with Twelve Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

A SEQUEL TO MAMMA'S BIBLE STORIES. Second Edition. Twelve Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

HINTS TO A CLERGYMAN'S WIFE; or, Female Parochial Duties practically illustrated. Dedicated to the Rev. C. BRIDGES. Second Edition. Fcap. 8vo. price 3*s.* cloth.

"This is a truly valuable book."—*Christian Guardian.*

CONYERS MIDDLETON'S CELEBRATED LETTER FROM ROME, shewing an exact Conformity between Popery and Paganism. New and Cheap Edition. 12mo. price 1*s.*

"A sound and learned work, peculiarly adapted to the present times."—*Church of England Journal.*

STORIES FROM THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, on an improved Plan. By the Rev. BOURNE HALL DRAPER. With 48 Engravings. Fifth Edition. Price 6*s.* half-morocco 12mo.

WARS OF THE JEWS, as related by JOSEPHUS; adapted to the Capacities of Young Persons, and illustrated with 24 Engravings. Fifth Edition. Price 6*s.* half-bound morocco, 12mo.

SOLDIERS AND SAILORS; or, Anecdotes, Details, and Recollections of Naval and Military Life, as related to his Nephews. By AN OLD OFFICER. Price 6*s.* foolscap cloth, or 9*s.* 6*d.* bound in morocco. With more than Fifty beautiful Woodcuts, from Designs by JOHN GILBERT.

"Cheerfully do we award the meed of praise to this volume. It is the best book of its class we have yet read, containing a rich fund of interesting amusement for the young, and is not without its attractions for those of a more mature age."—*United Service Gazette.*

SCENES IN FOREIGN LANDS; from the Portfolio and Journal of a Traveller in various Parts of EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, and AMERICA; upon a Plan arranged by the late Rev. ISAAC TAYLOR, Author of "Scenes of Commerce," &c. With 192 Engravings. Price 9*s.* half-bound morocco, 12mo.

SCENES OF COMMERCE BY LAND AND SEA; or, "Where does it come from?" A New Edition; including "Scenes of British Wealth," with 66 Engravings on Steel, and a View of the Royal Exchange. Price 7*s.* 6*d.* half-bound morocco, 12mo.

TRUE STORIES FROM ANCIENT HISTORY, chronologically arranged from the Creation of the World to the Death of Charlemagne. By the Author of "Always Happy," &c. Ninth Edition, illustrated with 24 Engravings. Price 7*s.* 6*d.* half-bd. mor., 12mo.

TRUE STORIES FROM MODERN HISTORY, chronologically arranged, from the Death of Charlemagne to the Battle of Waterloo. Sixth Edition, illustrated with 24 Engravings. Price 7*s.* 6*d.* half-bound morocco, 12mo.

TRUE STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY, chronologically arranged from the Invasion of the Romans to the Present Time. Fifth Edition. With 36 Engravings. 7*s.* 6*d.* hf.-bd. morocco, 12mo.

TRIMMER'S CONCISE HISTORY OF ENGLAND, with a Continuation to the Reign of Victoria, by Mrs. MILNER, Author of "Life of Dean Milner," &c. With Illustrations. New and Cheaper Edition. In one volume, fcap. 8vo. price 4*s.* 6*d.* cloth.

OUTLINES OF IRISH HISTORY: written for the Use of Young Persons. With Engravings. Price 4*s.* 6*d.* half-bd. 12mo.

THE HISTORY OF SANDFORD AND MERTON. By THOMAS DAY, Esq. New Edition, revised, 12mo. price 5*s.* cloth.

BEGINNINGS OF BRITISH BIOGRAPHY; being the Lives of One Hundred Persons eminent in English History. By the Rev. I. TAYLOR. 48 Engravings. 7*s.* 6*d.* in 1 thick vol. hf.-bd. 12mo.

BEGINNINGS OF EUROPEAN BIOGRAPHY; or, Sketches of the Lives of eminent Persons. By the Rev. ISAAC TAYLOR.

I. THE MIDDLE AGES. 24 Engravings. 7*s.* hf.-bd. 12mo.
II. THE LATTER AGES. 24 Engravings. 7*s.* 6*d.* hf.-bd. 12mo.

HOW TO BE HAPPY; or, Fairy Gifts: to which is added, a SELECTION OF MORAL ALLEGORIES, from the best English Writers. Second Edition, with 8 superior Engravings. Price 4*s.* 6*d.* half-bound, 12mo.

EVENINGS AT HOME; or, The Juvenile Budget Opened. By Dr. AIKIN and MRS. BARBAULD. Sixteenth Edition, revised and newly arranged by Arthur Aikin, Esq., and Miss Aikin. With some additional Pieces by the Authors. With Engravings by HARVEY. Foolscap 8vo. Price 5*s.* cloth.

THE JUVENILE TRAVELLERS; or, A Tour through the principal States and Kingdoms of Europe; with an account of their Inhabitants, Natural Productions, and Antiquities. By PRISCILLA WAKEFIELD. Eighteenth Edition, corrected and enlarged. 12mo. price 6*s.* cloth.

A FAMILY TOUR THROUGH THE BRITISH EMPIRE; containing some account of its Manufactures, Natural and Artificial Curiosities, History and Antiquities. By PRISCILLA WAKEFIELD. 15th Edition, corrected and enlarged. 12mo. 6*s.* cloth.

THE VISIT FOR A WEEK; or, Hints on the Improvement of Time, containing Original Tales, Anecdotes from Natural and Moral History, &c. By LUCY PEACOCK. Price 4*s.* cloth.

MORAL TALES. By MISS EDGEWORTH. A New Edition, in One Volume. Foolscap 8vo. 6*s.* cloth. 241

BATTLE FIELDS. A Graphic Guide to the places described in the History of England as the scenes of such events; with the situation of the principal Naval Engagements fought on the Coast of the British Empire. By Mr. WAUTHIER, Geographer. Price, on a large sheet, 5*s.*; in case, 7*s.* 6*d.*; or, mounted on oak and varnished, 12*s.*

A STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF ALL THE NATIONS AND STATES IN EUROPE, compiled from the latest returns and most authentic sources, comprising the Government, Capitals, Area in Square Miles, Population, Revenues, Public Debt, Standing Army, &c., with Historical Notices. By G. C. PEMBERTON, Esq. On one sheet Imperial. Price 2*s.*

BUTLER'S OUTLINE MAPS, and KEY; or, Geographical and Biographical Exercises: designed for the Use of Young Persons. By the late WILLIAM BUTLER. Enlarged by his Son, J. O. BUTLER. The Twenty-sixth Edition, with a set of coloured outline Maps. Price 4*s.*

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY, for the Use of Schools. Twenty-fourth Edition, carefully revised and corrected. By J. ASPIN. Price 9*d.* sewed.

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S PRIMER. Dedicated to her Majesty Queen Victoria. New and improved Edition, with Three Hundred Engravings. The Title, Frontispiece, and Cover printed in Gold and Colours. Price 1*s.*

MRS. LOVECHILD'S GRAMMATICAL WORKS.

THE CHILD'S GRAMMAR. By the late Lady FENN, under the assumed name of Mrs. Lovechild. 41st Edition. 18mo. 9*d.* cloth.

THE MOTHER'S GRAMMAR: a Sequel to "The Child's Grammar." Twenty-first Edition. 18mo. price 1*s.* cloth.

PARSING LESSONS FOR CHILDREN, adapted to the Child's and Mother's Grammars. Eighth Edition. 18mo. 1*s.* 3*d.* sewed.

THE ABBE GAULTIER'S GEOGRAPHICAL WORKS. 242

I. FAMILIAR GEOGRAPHY, with a concise Treatise on the Artificial Sphere, and Two coloured Maps, illustrative of the principal Geographical Terms. Tenth Edition. Price 3*s.* cloth, 16mo.

II. GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL QUESTIONS, referring, by characteristic and distinguishing marks, to the most remarkable places in the World; with 3 small coloured Charts of the comparative heights of Mountains and lengths of Rivers. Price 3*s.* cloth, 16mo.

III. AN ATLAS, adapted to the Geographical Games, consisting of Eight Maps Coloured, and Seven in Outline, &c. Price 15*s.* hf.-bd. fol.

⁂ For the purpose of playing the Games, a set of Counters, on which the names of Kingdoms, Seas, Rivers, &c., are printed, may be had, price 6*s.* in a box.

The following Works are uniformly printed in 16mo., with numerous Illustrations to each, and handsomely bound in cloth.

ANECDOTES OF KINGS, selected from History; or, Gertrude's Stories for Children. With Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS; or, A Description of Manners and Customs peculiar to the East, and especially Explanatory of the Holy Scriptures. By the Rev. B. H. DRAPER. With Illustrations. Fourth Edition. Revised by the Editor of "The Pictorial Bible." Price 4*s.*

THE BOY'S FRIEND; or, The Maxims of a cheerful Old Man. By CARLTON BRUCE. Second Edition, with numerous Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

THE BRITISH HISTORY BRIEFLY TOLD, and a description of the Ancient Customs, Sports, and Pastimes of the English. With full-length Portraits of the Sovereigns in their proper Costumes, and 18 other Engravings. Price 4*s.* 6*d.*

CHIT CHAT; or, Short Tales in Short Words. By a MOTHER, Author of "Always Happy." New Edition, enlarged. With 16 Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

COSMORAMA. The Manners, Customs, and Costumes of all Nations of the World described. By J. ASPIN. New Edition, with numerous Illustrations. Price 4*s.* plain, and 5*s.* 6*d.* coloured.

CONVERSATIONS ON THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST, for the use of Children, by a MOTHER. A New Edition. With 12 Engravings, the designs principally from the old Masters. Price 2*s.* 6*d.* 243

EASY LESSONS; or, Leading-Strings to Knowledge. In Three Parts. The First and Third Parts by a LADY, for her own Children; the Second Part arranged by the late Mrs. TRIMMER. New Edition; with 16 Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

FACTS TO CORRECT FANCIES; or, Short Narratives compiled from the Biography of Remarkable Women. By a MOTHER. With Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

THE FARM: a New Account of Rural Toils and Produce. By JEFFERYS TAYLOR. Second Edition. Illustrated with 8 Engravings on steel and 26 Woodcuts. Price 4*s.*

THE JUVENILE RAMBLER; or, Sketches and Anecdotes of the People of various Countries, with Views of the Principal Cities of the World. New Edition. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

THE GARDEN; or, Frederick's Monthly Instructions for the Management and Formation of a Flower-Garden. Fourth Edition. With engravings of the Flowers in Bloom for each Month in the Year, &c. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* plain, or 6*s.* with the Flowers coloured.

INFANTINE KNOWLEDGE: a Spelling and Reading Book, on a Popular Plan. By the Author of "The Child's Grammar."

With numerous Engravings. Sixth Edition. Price 3*s.*; or 3*s.* 6*d.* col.

KEY TO KNOWLEDGE; or, Things in Common Use simply and shortly Explained. By a MOTHER, Author of "Always Happy," &c. Twelfth Edition. With numerous Illustrations. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

LITTLE LESSONS FOR LITTLE LEARNERS in words of One Syllable. By Mrs. BARWELL. Sixth Edition, with numerous Illustrations. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

MAMMA'S LESSONS for her Little Boys and Girls. With 16 Plates. Ninth Edition. Price 3*s.* 6*d.* plain; or 4*s.* 6*d.* half-bound, coloured.

THE LADDER TO LEARNING: a Collection of Fables, Original and Select, arranged progressively in words of One, Two, and Three Syllables. Edited and improved by the late Mrs. TRIMMER. With 79 Cuts. Seventeenth Edition. 3*s.* 6*d.*

MARMADUKE MULTIPLY'S MERRY METHOD OF MAKING MINOR MATHEMATICIANS; or, The Multiplication Table in Rhyme. With 69 Engravings. Price 4*s.* 6*d.* coloured.

THE MINE; or, Subterranean Wonders. An account of the Operations of the Miner, and the Products of his Labours. By the late Rev. ISAAC TAYLOR. Sixth Edition, with corrections and additions, by Mrs. LOUDON. Forty-five new Woodcuts and steel Engravings. Price 4*s.*

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF QUADRUPEDS. By F. SHOBERL. With numerous Engravings, from drawings by T. LANDSEER. New Edition, in 1 volume. Price 4*s.* 6*d.*

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF BIRDS. By F. SHOBERL. With numerous Engravings, from drawings by T. LANDSEER. Price 4*s.*

THE OCEAN: a Description of Wonders and Important Products of the Sea. Second Edition. With Illustrations of 37 Genera of Shells, by SOWERBY, and four steel and 50 wood Engravings. Price 4*s.*

PAUL PRESTON'S VOYAGES, TRAVELS, AND REMARKABLE ADVENTURES, principally in Europe. With numerous Engravings. Second Edition. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER DESCRIBED. By F. SHOBERL. With 24 steel Engravings. Price 4*s.* 6*d.*

SHORT TALES, written for Children. By DAME TRUELOVE and her Friends. A new Edition, illustrated with 20 Engravings. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*

THE SHIP: a Description of different kinds of Vessels, the Origin of Ship-building, a Brief Sketch of Naval Affairs, with the Distinctive Flags of different Nations, and numerous illustrative engravings. By the late Rev. ISAAC TAYLOR. Fifth Edition. Edited by M. H. BARKER, Esq., "The Old Sailor." Price 4*s.*

STORIES OF EDWARD AND HIS LITTLE FRIENDS. By Madame EMMA DE K——, Author of "Holly Grange." With 16 illustrations on steel. Price 3*s.* 6*d.*, or 4*s.* 6*d.* coloured.

STORIES SELECTED FROM THE HISTORY OF FRANCE, from Clovis to the present time. Embellished with Portraits of Thirty-four of the Sovereigns in their proper Costumes, also Four Engravings relating to Events of French History. Price 4*s.*

THREE SHILLINGS EACH, CLOTH.

With Frontispiece, or other Engravings.

THE CHAPTER OF KINGS. By Mr. COLLINS. With 38 Engravings. (4*s.* coloured.)

CLAUDINE, a Swiss Tale. By the Author of "Always Happy," &c. New Edition. With Engravings.

COUNSELS AT HOME; with Anecdotes, Tales, &c. Two Engravings.

ENGLISH HISTORY MADE EASY on a Popular Plan. Second Edition. With Engravings. 18mo.

FRUITS OF ENTERPRISE, exhibited in the Travels of Belzoni. Tenth Edition. 18mo.

FAMILIAR GEOGRAPHY. By the Abbé GAULTIER. With coloured Maps. Tenth Edit. Square 16mo.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL QUESTIONS. By the Abbé GAULTIER, forming a sequel to "Familiar Geography." 16mo. cl.

THE LITTLE GRAMMARIAN; in a Series of Instructive Tales. By the Rev. W. FLETCHER. Second Edition. With 12 engravings, 18mo.

INFANTINE KNOWLEDGE. By the Author of "The Child's Grammar." Sixth Edition. With numerous woodcuts. Square, price 3*s.* plain, or 3*s.* 6*d.* half-bound, coloured.

MORAL TALES. By a FATHER. With 2 Engravings.

THE SON OF A GENIUS. By Mrs. HOFLAND. 14th Edition, 18mo.

MRS. TRIMMER'S OLD TESTAMENT LESSONS. 24 Engravings.

MRS. TRIMMER'S NEW TESTAMENT LESSONS. With 40 Engravings.

THE TWIN SISTERS; or, The Advantages of Religion. By Miss SANDHAM. 21st Edition, 18mo.

A VISIT TO GROVE COTTAGE; and The INDIAN CABINET OPENED. New Edition. 18mo.

WILLIAM TELL AND HOFER THE TYROLESE. New Edition. With four Engravings. 18mo.

HALF-A-CROWN EACH, CLOTH.

With Frontispiece or other Engravings.

ANECDOTES OF PETER THE GREAT, Emperor of Russia. Intended to exhibit the result of Perseverance and Laborious Exertion in overcoming Difficulties. By the author of "A Visit to my Birthplace, &c." With a Frontispiece. 18mo.

ANCIENT GEOGRAPHY. By the Abbé LANGLET DU FRESNOY. A New Edition. With coloured Maps, &c. 16mo.

ALWAYS HAPPY; or, Anecdotes of Felix and his Sister Serena. A Tale, written for her Children by a MOTHER. 13th Edition. 18mo.

CONVERSATIONS ON ASTRONOMY. With several appropriate Engravings. 16mo.

CONVERSATIONS ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST. By a MOTHER. With 12 Engravings. 16mo.

THE DAUGHTER OF A GENIUS. A Tale. By Mrs. HOFLAND. Sixth Edition. 18mo.

EASY RHYMES. By a LADY. With a variety of elegant Engravings. 18mo.

ELLEN THE TEACHER: a Tale for Youth. By Mrs. HOFLAND. New Edition. 18mo.

EMILY'S REWARD; or, The Holiday Trip to Paris. By Mrs. HOFLAND. 18mo.

HOME AMUSEMENTS; consisting of Riddles, Charades, Conundrums, Parlour Games, and Forfeits. By PETER PUZZLEWELL, Esq., of Rebus Hall. 16mo.

LESSONS OF WISDOM FOR THE YOUNG; or, Spring Mornings and Evenings. With 12 Plates. By the Rev. W. FLETCHER. Second Edition. 18mo.

THE LITTLE READER. With 20 wood-cuts, square.

NURSERY FABLES, Original and Select. With 19 cuts. New Edition. 16mo.

PARLOUR COMMENTARIES ON THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS OF ENGLAND. By J. TAYLOR. 12mo.

THE PICTURESQUE PRIMER; or, Useful Matter made Pleasing Pastime. New Edition. With 120 cuts. 16mo.

THE RIVAL CRUSOES: also, a VOYAGE TO NORWAY, and the FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE. Fourth Edition. 18mo.

THE STUDENTS; or, Biography of the Grecian Philosophers. With Frontispiece. 12mo.

SUNDAY LESSONS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN. By Mrs. BARWELL. Third Edition. 16mo.

THEODORE; or, The Crusaders. A Tale. By Mrs. HOFLAND. Seventh Edition. With a Frontispiece. 18mo.

TWO SHILLINGS, WITH FRONTISPIECES, ETC.

LE BABILLARD: an amusing Introduction to the French Language. By a French Lady. Third Edition. With 16 Engravings.

THE CHILD'S DUTY. Dedicated by a Mother to her Children. Second Edition.

THE HISTORY OF PRINCE LEE BOO. Nineteenth Edition.

MILL'S HISTORY OF ROME. With 48 Engravings. 48mo. roan, or 1*s.* 6*d.* boards.

MORE TALES FOR IDLE HOURS. New Edition.

NINA: an Icelandic Tale. By the Author of "Always Happy," &c. New Edition.

RHODA; or, The Excellence of Charity. By the Author of "The Cottage on the Common," &c. With three Engravings.

SPRING FLOWERS, AND THE MONTHLY MONITOR; or, Easy Lessons, adapted to every Season of the Year; with Lessons for Sundays, and Hymns. By Mrs. RITSON.

WELCOME VISITOR; or, The Good Uncle: a Collection of Original Stories, containing several well-authenticated Anecdotes, displaying striking traits of Virtue and Heroism in Early Life. Third Edition.

The Little Library of Fiction.

With Four Tinted Illustrations to each. Price One Shilling.

1. TOM THUMB; his Life and Death.
2. GRACIOSA AND PERCINET; a Fairy Tale.
3. THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.
4. VALENTINE AND ORSON.

To be followed by other Popular Works.

Nursery Books. One Shilling each.

With Coloured Plates.

1. THE ALPHABET OF GOODY TWO-SHOES; "by learning which, she soon got rich."
2. CINDERELLA; or, The Little Glass Slipper.
3. COCK-ROBIN; a pretty Painted Toy, for little Girl or little Boy.
4. THE CRIES OF LONDON; or, Sketches of various Characters in the Metropolis.
5. COSTUMES OF DIFFERENT NATIONS Illustrated.
6. THE COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE, AND PIC-NIC DINNER OF COCK ROBIN AND JENNY WREN.
7. THE COWSLIP; or, Cautionary Stories in Verse, with 32 new Woodcuts, plain. 18mo. (1*s.* 6*d.* coloured.)
8. THE DAISY; or, Cautionary Stories in Verse, with 30 Engravings, plain. 18mo. (1*s.* 6*d.* coloured.)
9. DAME PARTLETT'S FARM. An Account of the good Life she led, and the Riches she obtained by Industry.
10. DAME TROT AND HER CAT.
11. GRANDMAMMA'S RHYMES FOR THE NURSERY. With 24 superior Wood-cuts. Plain.
12. HISTORY OF THE APPLE PIE. With Dearlove's Ditties.
13. THE HISTORY OF THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT.
14. THE INFANT'S FRIEND; or, Easy Reading Lessons.
15. THE INFANT'S GRAMMAR; or, A Pic-nic Party of the Parts of Speech.
16. LITTLE RHYMES FOR LITTLE FOLKS. By the Author of "The Infant's Friend," &c.
17. THE MONKEY'S FROLIC, &c.
18. MOTHER HUBBARD AND HER DOG.
19. NURSERY DITTIES, from the Lips of Mrs. LULLABY. With Illustrations by LEECH. Plain.

20. OLD WOMAN AND HER PIG.
21. THE PEACOCK AT HOME; with the BUTTERFLY'S BALL; and the FANCY FAIR.
22. PORTRAITS AND CHARACTERS OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND. Part I.
23. PORTRAITS AND CHARACTERS OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND. Part II.
24. PETER PIPER'S PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES OF PLAIN AND PERFECT PRONUNCIATION. To which is added, a Collection of Entertaining Conundrums.
25. PUSS IN BOOTS; or, The Master-Cat.
26. SIMPLE STORIES, in Words of One Syllable. By the Author of "Stories of Old Daniel."
27. THE SNOWDROP; or, Poetic Trifles for Little Folks.
28. TAKE YOUR CHOICE; or, The Alphabet Community.
29. TOMMY TRIP'S MUSEUM of BEASTS. Part I.
30. TOMMY TRIP'S MUSEUM of BEASTS. Part II.
31. TOMMY TRIP'S MUSEUM of BIRDS. Part I.
32. TOMMY TRIP'S MUSEUM of BIRDS. Part II.
33. WALKS WITH MAMMA; or, Stories in Words of One Syllable.
34. WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT.
35. THE WORD-BOOK; or, Stories, chiefly in Three Letters.

New and Improved Edition. Price One Shilling.

The Prince of Wales's Primer.

Drawings by GILBERT. Engravings by LANDELLS. Edited by H. MAYHEW.

LONDON: Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY, WILSON, and FLEY, Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE:

Silently corrected obvious typographical errors.

Resolved the following inconsistent spelling and hyphenation usage within text:

- Pg 43 ferry boat changed to ferry-boat
- Pg 140 sand-stone changed to sandstone
- Pg 171 Fresh-water changed to Freshwater

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GLIMPSES OF NATURE, AND OBJECTS OF INTEREST DESCRIBED, DURING A VISIT TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT ***

it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

> This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

• You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

• You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™’s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary

Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.