

merged *cottage* of the creature, its architect, rising beside it, on some rivulet of the Pleistocene. But how inconsiderable such works, compared with the wide extent of prospect in which they were included! How entirely inconspicuous rather, save when placed in the immediate foreground of the pictures into whose composition they entered! Not until the introduction of man upon earth do we find a creature whose works sensibly affect and modify the aspects of nature. But when man appears, how mighty the change which he effects! Immediately on his creation he takes under his care the vegetable productions of use and show: it becomes his business to keep and dress a garden. He next becomes a tiller of fields, then a planter of vineyards: here he cuts down great forests; there he rears extensive woods. He makes himself places of habitation; and busy cities spring up as the trophies of his diligence and skill. His labours, as they grow upon the waste, affect the appearance of vast continents; until at length, from many a hill-top and tall spire, scarce a rood of ground can be seen on which he has not built, or sown, or planted, or around which he has not erected his walls or reared his hedges. Man, in this great department of industry, is what none of his predecessors upon the earth ever were,—“a fellow-worker” with the Creator. He is a mighty *improver* of creation. We recognise that as improvement which adapts nature more thoroughly to man’s own necessities and wants, and renders it more pleasing both to his sense of the æsthetic and to his more material senses also. He adds to the beauty of the flowers which he takes under his charge,—to the delicacy and fertility of the fruits; the seed of the wild grasses become corn beneath his care; the green herbs grow great of root or bulb, or bulky and succulent of top and leaf; the wild produce of nature *sports* under his hand; the rose and lily broaden their disks and multiply their petals; the harsh green crab swells out into a delicious golden-rhinded