

CHOICE OF SEASONS.

How regularly has God determined a set season for all his creatures, both for their actions and their use? "The Stork in the heavens," saith the prophet Jeremiah, "knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the time of their coming." Who have seen the Stork before the Calends of August, or a Swallow in the winter? Who hath heard the Nightingale in the heat of harvest; or the Bittern bearing her base note in the coldest months? Yea, the fishes of the sea know and observe their due seasons, and present us with their shoals only when they are wholesome and useful; the Herring doth not furnish our market in the spring, nor the Salmon or Mackerel in the winter: yea, the very flies both have and keep their days appointed; the Silk-worm never looks forth of that little cell of her conception, till the Mulberry puts forth the leaves for their nourishment; and who hath ever seen a Butterfly, or a Hornet, in winter? There are flies, we know, appropriate to their own months, from which they vary not.

Lastly, how plain is this in all the several varieties of Trees, Flowers, and Herbs! the Almond-tree looks out first, the Mulberry last of all; the Tulip, and the Rose, and all the other sweet ornaments of the earth are punctual in their growth and fall: but as for man, God, in his infinite wisdom has indued him with that power of reason, whereby he may make choice of the fittest seasons of all his actions, and appointed a time for every purpose under heaven, and given him wit to find and observe it. Even lawful acts unseasonably done may turn to evil; and acts indifferent, seasonably performed, may prove good and laudable. The best improvement of morality, or civility, may shame us, if due time be not well regarded. Only Grace, Piety, true Virtue, can never be unseasonable.—BISHOP HALL.

THE evening proceedings and manœuvres of the rooks are curious and amusing in the autumn. Just before dusk, they return in long strings from the foraging of the day, and rendezvous by thousands over the down, where they wheel round in the air, and sport and dive in a playful manner; all the while exerting their voices, and making a loud cawing, which, being blended and softened by the distance that we at the village are below them, becomes a confused noise or chiding; or rather a pleasing murmur, very engaging to the imagination, and not unlike the cry of a pack of hounds in hollow, echoing woods, or the rushing of the wind in tall trees, or the tumbling of the tide upon a pebbly shore. When this ceremony is over, with the last gleam of day, they retire for the night to the deep beechen woods. We remember a little girl, who, as she was going to bed, used to remark on such an occurrence, in the true spirit of physico-theology, that the rooks were saying their prayers; and yet this child was much too young to be aware that the Scriptures have said of the Deity—that, "He feedeth the ravens who call upon him." —WHITTE'S *Selborne*.

To direct a wanderer in the right way, is to light another man's candle by one's own, which loses none of its light by what the other gains.

THERE are two books from which I collect my divinity—the one, written of God; the other, of His servant Nature, that universal manuscript which he has expanded to the eyes of all. But I never so forget God as to adore the name of Nature. The effects of Nature are the works of God, whose hand and instrument only she is; and therefore, to ascribe His actions unto her, is to devolve the honour of the principal agent upon the instrument. If we may do this with reason, then let our hammers rise up and boast that they built our houses; and let our pens receive the honour of our writing.—BROWNE.

THE TIBET GOAT.

Of all the domestic goats this is the most valuable, from the material which it furnishes for the production of those elegant shawls manufactured in the valley of Cashmere and its immediate vicinity. Few goats of this species have been seen in Europe, most probably from the difficulty of preserving their lives through the various changes of climate to which they must be exposed in a journey from the bleak mountains of Tibet, to the shores of countries so far distant from their own clime. They are by no means hardy animals when taken from their native hills, but soon pine and die, if not attended to with extreme care. In the vessel in which the writer of this article returned from India, there were six of these animals, intended as a present for her Majesty Queen Charlotte of England, but they all died during the passage.

The Shawl-Goat is small; none of those just referred to much exceeded two feet in height. In confirmation of this I give the proportions set down by M. F. Cuvier. "It is of moderate stature, being two feet high to the withers, and its length from the snout to the incision of the tail about two feet ten inches. Its head from the tip of the snout between the horns is nine inches, and its tail five. Like the Yak, already described*, these goats are covered with long fine hair, reaching nearly to the ground, and almost entirely concealing their legs, which gives an ungainly appearance to their movements, except when they gambol about their native mountains. They are, indeed, beautiful creatures, the long, wavy hair undulating over their bodies, or raised by their eccentric motions, gives grace to every attitude. The hair waves slightly, but is not crisped like that of the Angola Goat. Upon the head and neck the coat is generally black, but white on every other part of the body, though it is sometimes all white, and occasionally of a very pale gray.

The material from which the shawls are manufactured is a fine silky down, which grows under the long hair next to the skin, and is of the finest texture. As one goat produces but a small quantity, it is exceedingly expensive, and the shawls produced from it, consequently fetch great prices.

It is by no means an easy matter to procure a shawl made solely of the Cashmere wool; as the native manufacturers, finding it so scarce a commodity, commonly mix it with a far less expensive material, by which the value of the shawl is considerably lessened. A large shawl made entirely of the wool of the Tibet goat, might be drawn through a moderately sized finger ring. The colour of this wool is invariably of a pale gray, whatever may be that of the longer hair.

There are several traits peculiar to this goat. It is a graceful and beautifully formed creature, and in its gambols displays a natural elegance of motion, remarkably striking. What especially distinguishes it, above all other animals of the goat tribe, is, that it emits no disagreeable odour, and is, I believe, the only goat which does not. Its habits are singularly gentle. It is a common inmate of the huts of the mountaineers, and is generally treated with great kindness. Its value is fully appreciated by the Tibetans, both for its domestic uses, and for the rare material which grows upon its skin.

Though Cuvier asserts that there are several races of the Shawl-goat, which chiefly differ, according to his account, in the length of the ears, yet he says they all produce the same wool, and seems to signify that there is no distinction of quality. He ascribes the fineness of their wool to the influence of climate, which

* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. V., p. 143.