

A FLY'S POINT OF VIEW.

BY MRS. H. C. PINNIX.

‘MOTHER, what sort of an animal is that two-legged creature?’ asked a youthful fly of the maternal insect. “I notice that that sort never goes on all-fours.”

“That, my child, is the most sagacious of all the lower animals. An all-wise Creator seems to have endowed him with instincts nearly allied to reason, to the end that he may provide for all our wants. But for the biped man, the great race of insects, of which ours—the fly race—is the crown and capital, could not exist. It is a part of the scheme of things that this lowly creature should toil his whole life long in our service. He contributes incidentally to the maintenance of the plebeian insect races. The flea, the bedbug, and other members of the numerous parasite family, he allows to pasture upon him. But it is for the fly alone that he puts forth his strenuous efforts—that he toils through summer’s heat and winter’s cold.”

“Do you suppose that God made him just for that?”

“Why, of course my child. I don’t like the tone of your question. It is too skeptical. Of course all the domesticated animals—horses, dogs, cats, men, etc.—were created for our benefit.”

“They seem to take up a great deal more standing room in the universe than we do,” suggested the young person.

“The size counts for nothing, my dear. It is brain—intellect—soul—that constitutes the difference between us and these creatures.”

“Who knows but that men and women (that is what you call the females—isn’t it?) have minds and souls too?”

“Why, whoever heard of such a thing?” gasped the mother fly.

“They exhibit reason,” persisted her offspring.

“Instinct you mean, my dear. You cannot compare their work—their architecture, for instance—with that marvel of constructive ingenuity, the honey comb. The bee, although an inferior creature

to Us, still belongs to the great insect family, the only created beings endowed with reason and intelligence."

"But this creature you call man has erected some wonderful structures."

"None that will bear comparison with the work of the coral polyp. The island upon which we live was built up by that intelligent insect. When he had established the foundations, then man came and made ready for Us—the end and aim, the perfect flower (to speak in metaphor) of Creative Effort. It is for Us that man erects these enormous edifices you see around you. He was endowed with instinct to that end. You will appreciate the beautiful design of it when you note in every dwelling house, however large or small, an apartment called the kitchen. My child, that kitchen was built that food might be prepared in it *for Us*. Food is prepared in it, three times a day, *for Us*. *For Us* man sows and reaps, and gathers into barns; *for Us* he slaughters his nearest kinsman, the hog, and that nobler animal, the cow, serving up their remains in appetizing dishes to appease our hunger."

"How do you know all that—know that God made all these men and women just for our benefit—to minister to our wants? They are much bigger than we are."

"There you go again. My child, I must supervise your reading a little more. Somebody has been putting notions into your head."

"I believe that these two-legged animals are just as much the objects of God's care as we are, and I don't believe that they were all created just for our benefit either."

"I shall have to speak to your father about you. He is a very wise fly and can explain things better than I can."

"I hope then that he will be able to explain the yearly deluge that sweeps millions of us out of existence. It recurs with the periodicity of the equinox (I wonder if there is any connection between them). The female of these bipeds arms herself with a small tree—"

"A broom," corrected the mother fly.

"A broom then, although it looks like a small tree to me. She dips this broom or tree into a small ocean of soapsuds—after that, the deluge. Whole generations of us are swept away in the cataclysm of one house-clean. Wherefore? I say—that is, reasoning from your premise, regarding the fly as the objective point of nature's efforts. I should think that she would be at more trouble to conserve what she has been at such infinite pains to produce."

"The ways of Providence are past finding out," replied the pious mother fly.

"I don't believe we are as high and mighty as we think we are," observed the daughter insect. I cannot believe that all these magnificent buildings were constructed just for us to speck. Why should I believe it? Who knows? Who has been told by the Great Architect—the eternal Noumenon behind ever-changing phenomena—the meaning of it all? Into whose ear has He whispered the great secret? Who knows that a fly is wiser than a man? Who knows but that there are higher intelligences yet—beings as far beyond Us as we are beyond the humble creature man? Somewhere among the innumerable islands of the illimitable ocean there may be more God-like beings than the Fly."

"Impossible. The very thought is blasphemy. You take the *raison d'être* out of things when you degrade the Fly from his supreme position—when you make him other than the climax of creative effort. The universe is inexplicable otherwise."

"These men and women may have more reason than you give them credit for. They may have souls. They seem to have a language."

"Not intelligent speech like ours. The horse neighs, the cow lows, the dog barks, and man jabbars. Only flies discourse understandingly."

"How do you know that? Do you suppose a man or a dog understands our language? They probably consider it just a buzzing."

"I haven't the patience to argue with you. Go and study your catechism and learn what all the flies from time immemorial have taught and believed in, and never let me hear you again presume to set up your opinion against the cumulative wisdom of your ancestors. I very much fear that you are a degenerate fly."