

not stimulated by a cold atmosphere, except, perhaps, by the increasing length of the night, at the bidding of some secret power, it sets about erecting its winter dwelling, and employing its foot both as a shovel to make its mortar, as a hod to transport it, and a trowel to spread it duly and evenly, at length finishes and covers in its snug and warm retreat; and then still further, to secure itself from the action of the atmosphere, with the slimy secretion with which its Maker has gifted it, fixes partition after partition, and fills each cell formed by it, with air, till it has retreated as far as it can from every closed orifice of its shell—and thus barricades itself against a frozen death. Again, in the spring, when the word is spoken—*awake, thou that sleepest*—it begins immediately to act with energy, it reinspires, as above related, the air stored in its cells, bursts all its cements, returns to its summer haunts, and again lays waste our gardens.

We may observe here, with respect to this and all hybernating animals, a beautiful relation and correspondence between their habits and their functions. Their official duty is to remove superfluities and nuisances, to prevent vegetable substances from encroaching too much upon each other, to remove entirely those that are dead and putrescent. At the season of the year, therefore, when the former are in full vigour, forth issue from their various retreats the innumerable tribes that make them their food; but when they cease to grow and flourish, these services are not wanted, and the animals who perform them disappear from the face of nature. Again, when dead animals, or the excrements of living ones, or the sweets issuing from innumerable flowers, would clog the air that we breathe with effluvia unfriendly to health and life—countless armies are every where upon the wing, or on the alert, to prey upon such substances, and prevent their miasmata from breeding