'do you not perceive that I am in the room, Frederick?" "Oh, my birds! my birds!" cried he. "I understand," rejoined Mrs. Benson, "that you have neglected to feed your little pensioners; how came this about, Harriet?" "We were so tired last night," answered Harriet, "that we overslept ourselves, mamma." "This excuse may satisfy you and your brother," answered the lady, "but I fear your birds would bring heavy complaints against you, were they able to talk. But make haste to feed them now; and for the future, whenever you give any living creature cause to depend on you for sustenance, be careful on no account to disappoint it; and if you are prevented from feeding it yourself, employ another person to do it for you."

"It is customary," continued Mrs. Benson, "for little boys and girls to pay their respects to their papas and mammas every morning, as soon as they see them. This, Frederick, you ought to have done to me on entering the parlour, instead of running across it, crying out, 'My birds! my birds!' it would have taken you but very little time to have done so. However, I will excuse your neglect now, my dear, as you did not intend to offend me; but remember, that you depend as much on your papa and me for everything you want as these little birds do on you;"