towards those who would hurt them, &c.; from which we may infer that it is cruel to rob birds of their young, deprive them of their liberty, or exclude them from the blessings suited to their natures, for which it is impossible for us to give them an equivalent. Besides, these creatures, insignificant as they appear in your estimation, were made by God as well as you. Have you not read in the New Testament, my dear, that our Saviour said, ‘Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy’? How then can you expect that God will send His blessing upon you if, instead of endeavouring to imitate Him in being merciful to the utmost of your power, you are wantonly cruel to innocent creatures which He designed for happiness?"

This admonition from Mrs. Benson, which Lucy did not expect, made her look very serious, and brought tears into her eyes; on which the good lady took her by the hand, and kindly said, “I wish not to distress you, my dear, but merely to awaken the natural sentiments of your heart: reflect at your leisure on what I have taken the liberty of saying to you, and I am sure you will think me your friend. I knew your dear mamma, and can assure you she was remarkable for the tenderness of her disposition. But let me not detain you from your amusements;