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## BEAST, BIRD, AND FISH.

[First Paper.]

EARTH, AIR, AND WATER.

IF to the six substantives named in our titles we add three verbs, *to walk, to fly, to swim*, we seem to include all that can be said of the animals with which we are most familiar. For to the question, "What is it?" the answer is, *Beast, or Bird, or Fish*. To the question, "How does it act?" the answer is, *It walks, it flies, or it swims*; and to the question, "Where does it live?" the answer is, *On the earth, in the air, or in the water*.

And if the inquirer has been more devout than scientific, and if he has accepted the groupings of the literal Mosaic record of the creation; or if he has been strictly brought up and duly impressed with the wickedness of asking inconvenient questions, he may rest satisfied with the above answers, and base his further investigations into Natural History upon the creed that Beasts are animals that walk upon the earth; Birds are animals that fly in the air; and Fish are animals that swim in the sea.

But if he be at the same time disposed to respect the opinions of Cuvier and Agassiz, and if, still better, he be encouraged to use his own eyes and his own brains concerning the living things about him, it will occur to him that there are a good many Walkers on the earth which are not beasts, some Flyers in the air which certainly are not birds, and a few Swimmers in the sea which he would much scruple to consider as fish. He has heard of the bitter dispute between



FIG. 1.—Osprey, or Fish-hawk, bearing off a Weak-fish. (From Audubon.)—Wild-cat, with a bird in its mouth. (From Schinz, *Saugethiere*.)

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