

THE
TELL-TALE.



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ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.



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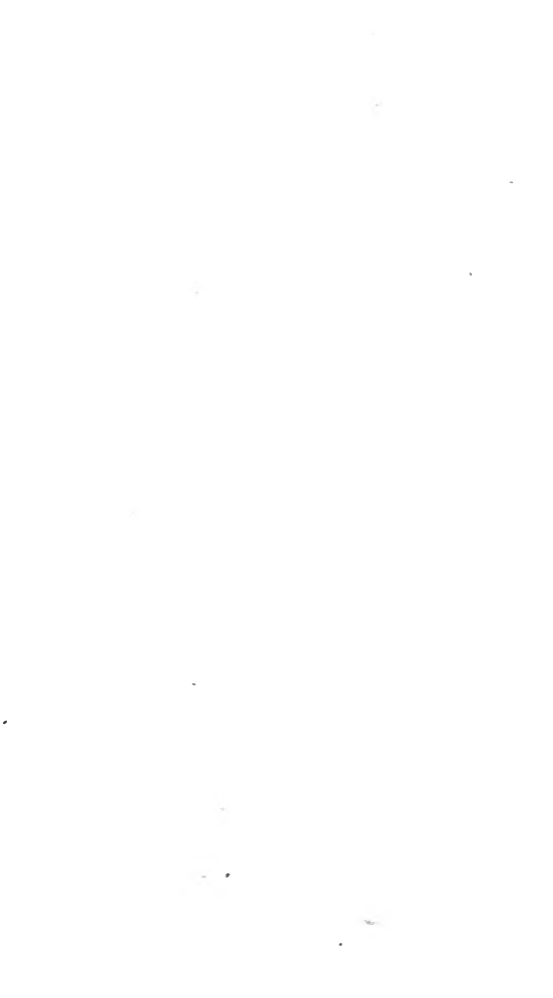
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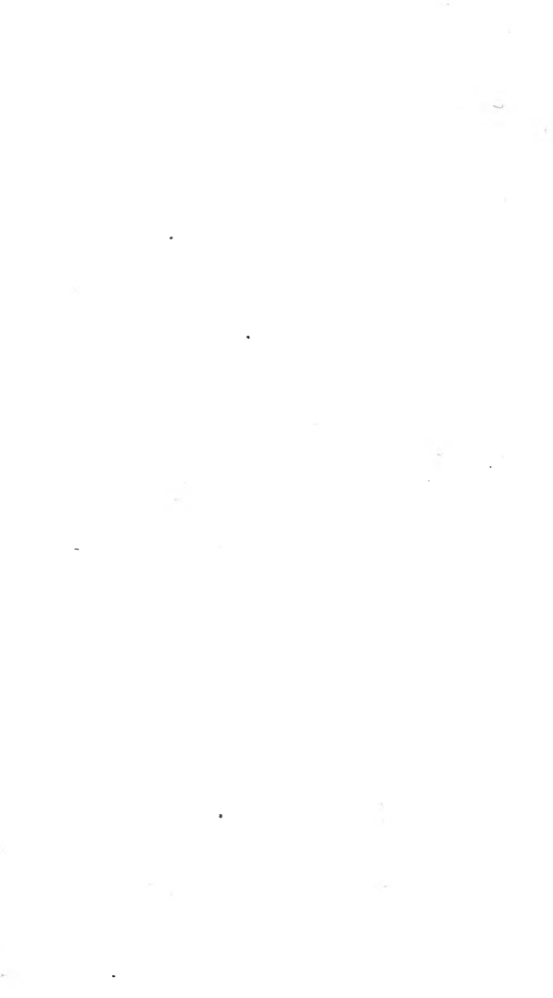
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

The Olive Percival
Collection of
Children's Books





THE
TELL - TALE.





THE
TELL-TALE :

AN

Original Collection

OF

MORAL AND AMUSING
STORIES.



LONDON :
HARRIS AND SON,
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.
1823.

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THE TELL-TALE.

ARPHU,

OR, THE FAIRY KITTEN.

“ My dear mamma,” said William Dormer, as he stood by his mother’s knee, “ have you no more pretty stories to relate ?”

“ Let me see,” said Mrs. Dormer, “ but I think I must have almost exhausted my stock. Beauty and the Beast, I told you yesterday ; the Yellow Dwarf you know by heart, for you were telling it the other day to your cousin ; and as for Puss in Boots, the Sleeping Beauty, and Whittington and his Cat, you know them nearly as well as I do.

“ However,” added she, “ I will endeavour to recollect something else ; but this is not the proper time for me to relate tales. When you have done the sum which your papa has given you, and Mary has finished her copy—and when Lewis has learned his lesson—when all this is done—why, perhaps, by that time, I shall have thought of a new story.”

This observation produced the desired effect. Lewis, who had been previously winding some thread about his fingers, began to apply himself diligently to his task ; William paid strict attention to his cyphering, till it was completed ; and Mary acquitted herself better than usual in writing. The children then reminded their kind mother of her promise, and anxiously inquired what story she had recollected.

“ You are very fond of fairy tales,” said Mrs. Dormer, “ and I am now going to relate one, which is called ‘ The Fairy Kitten.’ ”

“ Oh dear !” said William, “ did she catch mice ? I never heard of fairies keeping cats before.”

“ Remember the White Cat,” said Lewis, “ I dare say she was one of *her* kittens.”

“ Have patience,” said Mrs. Dormer, “ and you shall hear.

“ A very long time ago, when fairies dwelt in England, there lived on a woody hill, near a lake in Cumberland, a king of the fairies, who was very good and benevolent ; and if any of his little subjects ever committed evil or malicious tricks (to which it is said fairies are much inclined), he was sure to punish them severely. But it was the misfortune of this good king to have a little son, who, instead of resembling his excellent father, was of a most wicked and cruel disposition. The name of this mischievous being was Arphu, and to look at him, every one would have thought him exceedingly good. He had

a beautiful face, and hair that glittered like sunbeams; he had downy wings which shone with a thousand different colours, like that beautiful stuffed humming-bird, which your kind uncle sent me. But though he had all these beauties, he was always inclined to do evil, rather than good. While the other fairies were, in obedience to the orders of the king, busily employed in supporting flowers that had been overthrown by the hail, or raising the ears of wheat which had been beaten to the earth by a thunder storm, Arphu would silently slip away from these kind offices, and fly or run through wet or mire, in search of mischief. If he chanced to see a poor snail which with great toil had climbed a leaf to eat its breakfast, he would give it so hard a push, that the hungry little creature would tumble down, and have all its labour to begin again. If he saw a harmless caterpillar crawling on a twig that overhung the





lake, he would shake the branch violently, and then laugh to see the poor little animal descend by its slender thread, directly into the water below, where a greedy fish waited to devour it. He loved to drive flies into spiders' webs, and fish into nets; but his chief delight was to follow some rude children, the sons of a farmer, who lived in the valley under the hill. He did not mind if his golden ringlets were wet through, or his splendid wings dabbled with mire, if he could follow them in their play, and secretly tempt them to torment some harmless bird or animal, which he took care to entrap for their cruel sport.

This conduct gave great pain to the benevolent mind of the king; and, after some time, he declared in council, that the next wicked action which Arphu committed should be punished with exemplary severity. He then ordered four of the wisest fairies to follow the young prince secretly, and to bring him before

his throne the next lawless deed they found him doing. They obeyed, and that day caught him in a very wicked trick. Two swallows had built their nest under the eaves of a farmer's barn; but when they had completed it, and hatched their young, Arphu stole up to the nest and loosened it from the barn, so that the tender young ones were shattered to pieces on the ground. Whilst the mischievous prince was surveying the dying pangs of the wretched little birds, and listening to the woeful complaint of their parents, the fairies seized him and hurried him to the foot of his father's throne, where they related the distressing scene which they had just witnessed.

The king, as you may suppose, was extremely angry, especially as this cruelty had been exercised upon swallows, which were protected both by fairies and men, for their industry in clearing the air from noxious insects, and for their

ingenuity in building their curious nests. "Wicked and malicious little being!" said he, fixing his eyes with an awful frown on Arphu; "thou shalt learn by thy own experience what it is to suffer the miseries thou hast inflicted on others; and if this punishment do not amend thee, thou shalt be for ever stripped of thy gay wings and pearl coronet, and be confined with the evil gnomes in the neighbouring iron mines. Fly from my sight, and receive the reward of thy crimes!"

Arphu willingly fled from the palace of his angry father: but he had not proceeded far, before he felt himself whirled round and round in the air with such violence that his head became giddy, and he soon lost all sense. When he recovered, he was greatly astonished to find that he had entered the body of a little kitten, belonging to a cat which was tenderly nursing her young brood on some hay, in a loft over the farmer's

barn. He now comprehended the justice of his father's sentence, and was aware that the very children whom he had taught to be cruel, would now have it in their power to torment him. He shuddered at the cruelty he had seen them practise; he shook and trembled in every limb at the least noise; he tried to speak, and call out, but found that he could only utter piteous mews; and to add to his distress, he could not even see in this degraded state. His new mother, however, licked and caressed him with much affection; and, after he had thought a great while, and bitterly repented of his faults, he fell fast asleep.

The next morning he awoke very cold and hungry, for the cat was gone. Well, he pawed about with his little blind brothers and sisters, and got as close to them as he could to warm himself, but they, in crawling about to find their mother, often scratched his face

with their claws: he conceived, however, that they did not mean to hurt him, so he did not return it, for his weak and wretched state had already taught him wisdom. Presently he heard a loud purring: he shrunk in dismay, but he recollected it was only the cat who came to suckle and comfort them. Now for nine or ten days, old pussy took the tenderest care of her kits, though she did not know that the fairy prince was one of them; and in that time the kittens began to see clearly, and in a fortnight longer they grew strong, and very pretty; and Arphu with the rest of the brood began to frisk about and play a thousand funny tricks; and though they sometimes quarrelled with him, and bit his ears or tail, Arphu took such delight in their gambols, that he soon began to love them, and never attempted to hurt them. Arphu had often dreaded the time when he was to suffer pain, but so many days had gone by that he had

almost forgotten it. One morning, however, they heard a great noise on the hayloft stairs: the kittens all fled in great haste from where they had been frisking, and scampered into their nest, where they lay in great dread crouching close to each other. And now there was the noise of a great many feet on the stairs, and Arphu plainly distinguished the voices of the farmer's children.

“Come here, Maudlin,” said Hodge, the eldest boy, “come and look about, for I know that our Tib has kitted somewhere in the hayloft; let us find the kits, and we will have a nice drown.”

“Go, Hodge!” said Maudlin, “you cruel boy! if I could find the poor things, I would hide them all from you. You have grown so hard-hearted of late!”

All this time Hodge and his brothers were looking about, in spite of the re-

proaches of the kind little Maudlin ; but just as Hodge was giving up his search, Gilbert, the youngest boy, trod on Arphu's tail, and gave him such a pang, that he could not help mewling most piteously, which instantly betrayed their hiding place. Gilbert turned over the hay as quick as lightning, till he felt the soft fur of the kittens ; then called out, " I have found them, here they are."

Poor Arphu, and his unfortunate brothers, were now dragged to the light : whilst the gentle Maudlin wept to see the tender creatures in the hands of her cruel brothers, who griped them barbarously, regardless of their cries and wailings. After a few minutes the boys thought proper to carry them down stairs, and with shouts of joy took them to the horse-pond, where they ranged their shivering victims on the cold wet grass that grew around it : they then began to choose the prettiest, that they

might save it. Poor Arphu's errors and sufferings may well be imagined, but at length they chose him as the best; and tying some heavy stones round the necks of all the others, plunged them one by one into the pond; and Arphu saw his pretty brothers, his innocent frisking play-fellows, drowned before his face without mercy. Meanwhile the poor cat, which was almost mad to see her young treated so barbarously, ran amongst them, and seizing Arphu, dragged him off in her mouth. This way of carrying hurt him very much: but the cruel boys were so busy putting them to death, that they did not see pussy make off with him; and she soon carried him to a new hiding place. This was the hollow branch of a tree in the farmer's garden. Here Arphu suffered a great deal of cold, and on a moonlight night he would put his little nose out of the hole and see his fellow fairies dance in

the meadow below, and look most gay and beautiful: but no one took notice of him in his fallen state.

For a long time Arphu could not forget the pretty playfellows he loved so much, and with whom he used to have such merry games; but the playful nature of a kitten gradually overcame his grief, and he began to run up and down the oak, and ventured on the grass underneath, where he played in the sun with his shadow, and ran after his tail, the length and beauty of which was so great, that though a fairy, he could not help admiring it. And now our careless little Arphu by degrees forgot his cruel foes; till one fine sunny morning, when he was asleep under the oak, chance led Gilbert that way. The artful boy made no noise, but creeping softly forward, sprung upon Arphu, and held him so fast, that he almost squeezed him to death. He then ran into the kitchen, where the farmer's family were

at breakfast; and putting Arphu on little Maudlin's lap, he exclaimed, "I have found him at last; old Tib must have hid him in the garden, for he lay beneath the great oak." Maudlin tenderly stroked the kitten, and said, "Ah, pretty creature, I am sorry they have found thee, for I sadly fear they will hurt and ill use thee."

The good little girl then began to feed Arphu out of her bason; but at this unlucky minute the ill-natured Hodge came in, calling in a surly tone for his breakfast. He had been clipping the hedge in the front of the house, and was in a very ill humour, as he always was when he had any thing to do. Little Maudlin got up to pour his milk out of the boiler, but no sooner had she placed the kitten on her stool than the cruel Hodge in a moment laid his hands on it, and seizing the shears, cut the poor thing's nice velvet ears close to its head. He was then going to cut its tail, but

the piteous cries of the miserable little animal called Maudlin to its aid. Maudlin, seeing the kitten all over blood, began to cry; and her father, who loved his little girl dearly, called to Hodge: "Let thy sister's kitten alone, sirrah! or I will thrash thee soundly." Emboldened by this threat, Maudlin snatched Arphu out of her brother's hands, and ran down the garden to hide him. Hodge flew after her to see where the kitten was put; but just as he came up with her, Maudlin fell over the stump of a tree, Hodge tumbled on her, and his weight and her's together crushed poor Arphu to death.

Maudlin wept bitterly when she got up and saw what had happened; and the farmer coming up with his long cart whip, gave Hodge a handsome trimming for his cruelty and disobedience. And now Arphu, finding himself released from the body in which he had suffered so much pain, went and knelt as a penitent

before his father's throne, shuddering at the recollection of the agony he had so recently endured, and humbly promising amendment for the future. The fairy king was rejoiced to find that the harsh lesson had done his little Arphu good, and tenderly condoling him for his sufferings, restored him to favour again ; and I am happy to add that Arphu was never known to be again malicious, but ever remembered his own woes when he saw any animal tormented.

“ How strange, mamma ! ” said William ; “ I never heard a fairy tale before, but what had giants, and enchanters, and princesses in it.”

“ Well, William,” said Mary, “ it is quite as good without them. I wish my cousin John had heard it, because he might have learnt to treat poor little helpless animals better than he does. I don't like him, because he is such a cruel boy.”

“ Yes,” said William, “ it might have made him better ; but I will try to remember it, and tell it all to my cousin Kate, when she comes.”

“ You will soon have an opportunity, my love,” said Mrs. Dormer, “ for your uncle brings Kate to-morrow to spend the Midsummer holidays with us, and perhaps to stay some time longer : for her health is very indifferent, and I hope the pleasant air of Hampstead will do her good.”

“ How glad I am,” said Mary. “ But I hope he won’t bring John, for he would spoil all our pleasure. The last time he was here, he pinched Kate, and kicked me ; and you remember William beat him for it ; and my uncle was so angry !”

“ Yes, my love ; but William should not have taken the law into his own hands. However, do not be alarmed, for John is not to come. I cannot wonder at your disliking him, for he is by no

means good or gentle. But you must remember that he lost his mother during his infancy, which was a great disadvantage to him; and his father never sees him or Kate, but when they return from school for the holidays."

"But, mamma, Kate is very good."

"Yes, my dear Willy, Kate is very sweet-tempered and patient; but, like William, she is rather careless. And now, my dears, look out of the window, and see what your papa and the carpenter are about."

"Oh, mamma," said little Lewis, "papa has a long rope, and a nice little chair, and Taylor is putting up two great posts."

"Do not you remember the swing he promised you?" asked Mrs. Dormer.

"Oh, what a good papa!" said William; "come mamma, do let us go and look at it."

"With pleasure," said the good mother, and taking William and Mary by

the hand, she went down the garden, preceded by the little Lewis, who literally jumped for joy.

After the arrival of cousin Kate, the little Dormers were so busy in making her welcome, and so much occupied with the new swing, that they forgot to ask their mamma for another story. The next afternoon, after they had finished their lessons, and were preparing for a visit to the swing, it began to rain very fast. This put a stop to their intended amusement, and, what was worse, they could not run on the grass for fear of catching cold; all the children, therefore, crowded together on one of the window seats, and remained some time looking sorrowfully at the rain. At last William said, "if mamma would tell us another story about Arphu, we should not be so dull as we now are."

"Well, my Willy," said Mrs. Dormer, "you shall not be dull if I can

help it—I will tell you another story, though it is not about Arphu.”

On hearing this, the four children got down from the window seat, and bringing their stools, seated themselves around Mrs. Dormer, anxious to hear the promised story.



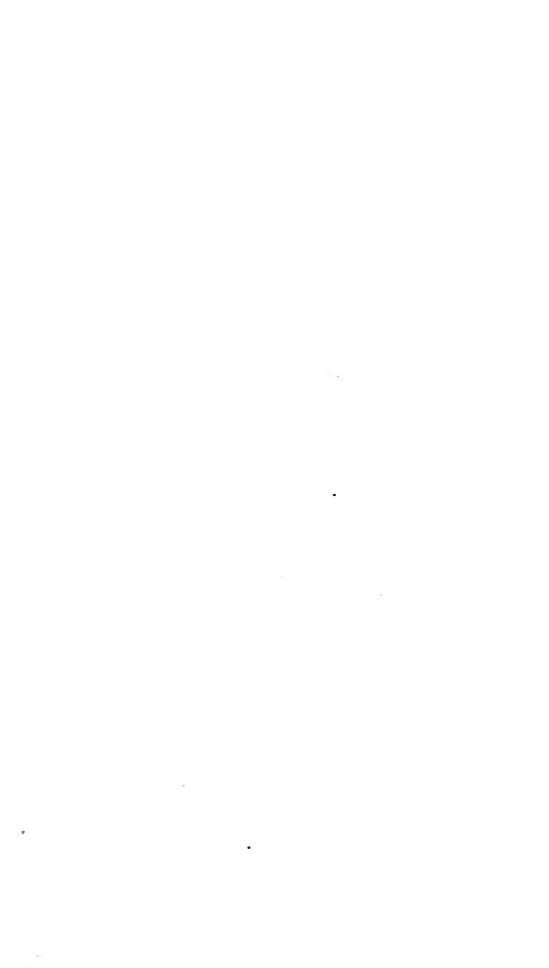
THE LITTLE WATER-CARRIER;

OR, THE REWARD OF INDUSTRY.

“Mamma,” said little Sidney Fletcher, taking his mother’s hand and leading her to the window, “do look at that little boy who is carrying those water-buckets on his shoulders through the rain.”

“Well, Sydney, I see him; but why did you wish me to leave my work? was it only to look at the little water-carrier?” inquired Mrs. Fletcher.





“ I wanted, my dear mamma, to know what his name is ; I thought you could tell me.”

“ And why did you want to know his name ?” said his mother.

“ Because,” answered Sydney, “ he seems so industrious. Charles and myself often sit and watch him from the school-room window. He comes from behind that opening in the street, going to work very early, and keeping on till it is almost dark ; don’t you think the poor fellow must be very much tired before night ?”

Mrs. Fletcher was pleased to see the amiable disposition of her child, and said,

“ My dear boy, I have myself often observed the industry of the little water-carrier. I dare say he is a good boy ; for he never appears discontented at his burden, but carries it cheerfully along, though it is certainly too great a weight for one so small.”

“Indeed, mamma,” said Sidney, “I do not think I should be near so patient as he is, for I would walk slower, and not go so often.”

“Then you would do very wrong, Sidney: for if you were forced to work, would it not render the labour lighter to do it willingly, and make haste? That little boy ought to be a pattern for you and Charles.”

“You are right, mamma, I do think, in what you say,” observed Sidney thoughtfully; “for I got my Latin lesson done much sooner (though it was very hard) this morning, because I learned it fast, and did not leave off to look out at the window, or to play; and papa gave me this nice pencil-case, and said I was a good boy.”

“Then, Sydney,” said his mother, “I hope you will not forfeit your good name; and if your father says to-morrow evening that you are still a good boy, and have not done any thing amiss, I

will give you the silver pen you have wished for so long."

Sidney was sure that he should be good enough to merit the pen, which he had long desired to possess. He was so pleased already with the thought of the reward, that he began jumping about the room for joy, making rather more noise than his mother's head could bear.

"I fear, Sidney, you are in a fair way of losing the pen, if you go on making so much noise, for that is not being good: but I do not wish to alarm you (for Sidney began to look rather grave); see, here are your sisters and brother, with your papa,"

Who then entered the room. Marcella, the eldest girl, was a year younger than her brother Charles, who was nearly fourteen years old: Sidney was eleven, and little Juliet eight. The two boys were studying the Latin language, with the help of their father; and Mar-

cella French with her mother : as to little Juliet, she was as yet but in the first rudiments of English grammar. Mr. Fletcher instructed the girls in writing and cyphering with their brothers.

The rain having left off, the children put on their hats, and went to take a walk with their father. Mrs. Fletcher preferred remaining at home, to the great disappointment of Sydney, who was very fond of his mother ; besides, he thought he should be less likely to err if she were with him.

Their way lay through a beautiful green lane, by the side of a wood. Charles, who was of a more serious turn than the generality of children of his early age, walked with his father, conversing on the various objects that met their view as they proceeded ; whilst the other children tripped gaily on before, sometimes running races, and at other times gathering the wild flowers that grew in the hedges. Little Juliet at length called them.

“Come, come,” said she, “and see what I have found.”

Sidney and Marcella soon came running to the spot where Juliet was plucking wild strawberries.

“I would not eat any till you came up,” said little Juliet.

“That was a good girl,” said her sister.

Sidney kissed her for remembering them, but said, “I will not take them from you, for I know where I can get plenty;” and away he ran, till he found a large gap in the hedge, through which he climbed up the bank into the wood. Marcella begged him to return; but Sidney was deaf to all intreaties, and invited them to follow his example. Marcella would not, and told him how wrong it was to trespass on forbidden grounds.

“Oh,” said he, “but I am not doing any hurt. Only see what a quantity of nice strawberries I have got in my hat :

if you will hold your frock, I will throw you some."

"No, Sidney," said she, "they do not belong to us: we have no right to any of them."

"Why, if I did not pluck them the birds would, and you know the owner of the wood cannot hinder them," answered Sidney.

"Well, then," said Juliet, "consider how you are robbing the pretty robin red-breasts and the blackbirds of their food. Come back, come back, Sydney, for papa is close by."

"Wait a minute," said he.

"Make haste, then."

"Here I am," said he, jumping across the ditch, which, unfortunately for him, was at that part half full of dirty water, and the opposite side high and slippery. Just as he had gained the edge of the bank his feet slipped, and he fell back into the water up to his middle, and his new trowsers were dirtied all over.

With some trouble he contrived to scramble out, by the assistance of his sisters; and whilst they were trying to fish out his hat, which unfortunately had fallen into the ditch, and was now sailing about with the unlucky strawberries in it, Mr. Fletcher and Charles came up to where Sidney stood, dripping with wet, and wringing the water from his jacket.

“How is this, Sidney?” inquired his father: “have you been learning to swim in this clear stream with your clothes on?”

Sidney felt very much ashamed, for he did not like to confess how foolishly he had acted, and happening at this moment to recollect the silver pen, he conceived it was certainly lost: he therefore hung down his head and began to cry bitterly.

“Come, Sidney,” said his father, “do not be such a baby as to cry: if you did fall into the ditch it cannot be helped; I dare say it was accidental.”

But Sidney, who well knew how naughty he had been, only wept the more.

Charles having, in the mean time, by the assistance of his father's walking-stick, brought the hat and all its cargo safe to land, a suspicion of somewhat like the truth struck the mind of Mr. Fletcher, who demanded an account of the whole transaction. Marcella knew that her brother would rather suffer any punishment than tell a falsehood to screen himself, she therefore gave her father a brief account of the unlucky affair.

Mr. Fletcher observed, that the fault had brought its own punishment; and bade the children hasten home, as Sidney's wet clothes might do him a serious injury, if they were not speedily changed.

Sidney ran into the parlour, and with tears of real penitence confessed the fault to his mother.

“ Well, Sidney,” said his good mamma, “ I am not *very* angry with you, as you have candidly told me all. But I fear the pen is forfeited ; and you must not mind having to appear in those dirtied clothes, for I cannot afford to buy you new ones yet. I think you will take more heed, and not be so naughty for the future.”

Sidney kissed his dear, kind mamma, and declared that he deserved to lose the pen, and wear the spoiled clothes, as a warning for him never to act contrary to the good advice of his sisters.

His mother then bade him change his clothes and return again to her. In about ten minutes Sidney returned, looking very clean and neat in his everyday clothes. He found his father, and brother, and sisters in the room. When he came in Mrs. Fletcher said, “ now, children, I have some news concerning your little favourite the water-carrier.” The two boys got on each side of her,

eagerly asking her what she had heard about him.

“ If you will have patience I will tell you, said Mrs. Fletcher. As soon as you were all gone, I put on my hat, and went to pay my milkwoman, Mrs. Beals, who lives under the same roof as the little water-carrier. There I learnt that he is a French boy, who has neither father nor mother, but only a blind grandfather, whom he entirely supports by his industry. This was enough for me; I tapped at the door, which was opened by the little fellow himself. He had been drawing water from the well; but on perceiving me he left his pails, and came up, cap in hand, and having dusted a chair, begged me, in the best English he could speak, to be seated. At one end of the kitchen, which, though scantily furnished, was very clean, sat an old man, with white hair and a long silver beard, splitting straw.”

“ An old man, with a long white

beard!" exclaimed all the little children; "how funny he must have looked!"

"Did you not burst out a laughing, mamma, when you saw him?" asked little Juliet.

"No, indeed: I did not commit so foolish and cruel an action, as to laugh at an old blind man," said Mrs. Fletcher. "But are you inclined to hear the rest, or I shall leave off?"

"Oh no, dear mamma, do not leave off—pray go on," cried all the children in a breath.

"Well, I did not burst out a laughing, as you supposed, Juliet, but I took a seat close by the old blind man, who rose and asked Louis in French whether he had given the lady a seat, for he knew me to be a female by my voice. Now, children, I must inform you that the conversation was carried on in French; but as you do not understand that language, I shall give it you, as near as I can remember, in English.

“ I told him that I was a neighbour, and hearing that he was both blind and ill, had come to see if I could render him any assistance. He expressed his gratitude, and said that he had been very sadly, but, by the blessing of God, he was now much better, owing to the care and tenderness with which his little grandchild had nursed him.

“ I then told him how interested you all were for the little water-carrier. The old man smiled with pleasure, and said, ‘ Louis is indeed a good boy, and God will take care of him, and bountifully reward him for all the dutiful kindness he has shown to me.’

“ He told me that Louis was nearly fifteen years old.

“ ‘ How long have you, then, been in this country?’ asked I.

“ ‘ Nearly four years,’ said the old man, ‘ during which time my son Louis has supported me by his industry.’

“ I then asked him why he came to

England. He said, ‘ Oh, lady, when the wars and the troubles broke out in our own country, I was too fond of my king to fight against him, so with my son and daughter, and this little Louis, I embarked, with what money we had, for England; but a storm came on in the night—the packet was wrecked, and my two children perished in the waves. By some miracle, myself and my grandchild were saved: but we lost all our property. You may be sure, madam, that I sorrowed greatly for the loss of my dear children; I would much rather it had pleased God to have taken me instead, or all of us together: but it was not so, and His will be done. I was enabled to reach London by the charity of a worthy gentleman, who likewise put me in a way of earning my bread by straw-work.’

“ I relate this to you, as near as I can, in the same way old Justin told it to me. But to go on: he lived in this manner some time, but at length he fell sick of

a fever, which deprived him of that greatest of all earthly blessings, his sight. His friend, the good gentleman, died suddenly, and Justin had exhausted all his little savings in medicine. Being blind he was unable to work, therefore what was he to do? Louis indeed had learned the art of working in straw: but he was very young, and his time was fully taken up in attending on his sick grandfather.

“ On Justin’s recovery, his landlady, finding that her lodgers had no means of paying their rent, advised him to travel down to one of the large towns, where he would get a double price for his straw baskets; besides which, she assured him that Louis would die, shut up in the close air of London. Pleased by the hopes which the woman held out to him, Justin and his grandson set off to travel down into the country. He said he did indeed experience great kindness from the people. He did not like to beg—he had never in his life before asked for

a piece of bread ; but the silent pleading of his little Louis, and his own forlorn state, moved the charitable hearts of the English to pity and relieve them."

Here Mrs. Fletcher paused to take breath.

" Well, mamma, go on," said Sidney, impatient to know what became of poor Justin.

" Do, dear mother, teil us all," said Charles and Marcella both together.

" Well, my dears, at last they came to this city, and a good widow took them into her house till they could get some employment. It was at a time when water was very scarce, as it often is at this part of the city, and water-carriers being in great request, the good widow heard of a place where Louis might probably earn some money. Louis was very happy to hear of this, and being fitted out with pails, he commenced his new employment, and worked so hard, that at the end of the week he brought home

to his grandfather seven shillings. The benevolent widow, though she was in very moderate circumstances herself, would not take any payment for the time they had been at her house, and, not content with this kindness, she engaged to dispose of any little trifle they could manufacture in straw, to the ladies at whose houses she went to work.

“ ‘ You may be sure, madam,’ said old Justin, ‘ that we were very grateful for the benefits bestowed by this excellent woman ; but we insisted on her sharing the profits of our little works. Louis gave great satisfaction wherever he went with his water pails. One lady took a great deal of notice of him, because of his beautiful curling hair, and presented him with a new cap ; another lady gave him a trifle to hear him talk in his broken English. Louis continued to work so hard, that I was fearful he would ruin his health ; he now always earned eight shillings every week by carrying of water,

besides putting our little dwelling to rights, and settling me to my employment, which was only splitting and preparing straw for him against the evening, for then he fell to work himself, and soon made straw baskets and boxes much quicker and neater than I ever could." The well whence Louis drew the water was at some distance from their lodgings, and the kind-hearted widow procured the rooms they now inhabit at a low rate. Being now close to the water, Louis was able to carry a great deal more in a day; they went on for about a year very comfortably, but at length old Justin fell sick, and then it was, Sidney, you used to see Louis working so hard in the rain, and beginning so much earlier, and keeping on till dark in the evening, that he might earn enough to support his sick grandfather. A little after this, their good friend the widow was forced to go up to London, to attend a daughter who was taken ill. I

have now told you, my children, all that old Justin communicated to me."

"Oh, thank you, dear mamma," said Sidney, "for telling us all this. But what did Louis say to you?"

"Why Louis took my hand, and said, 'May God bless sweet lady, for you much good and ver kind.'

"I asked him two or three questions in English, and, among others, if he could read. He considered a minute or two, and then said very quickly, 'Louis no book—me no read.'

"I then asked him who taught him English?' He said, 'Good lady widow teach Louis English; me know none before.'

"I now spoke to him in French, and asked 'if he were contented with his present situation.' You should have seen him then, Sidney, how his black eyes sparkled with joy when he heard me address him in his native language! He answered me with great animation

and vivacity, ‘ Oh, yes, Madame, I am quite contented, for I can honestly earn my bread ; but I should be happier if I had more time to attend to the wants of my poor blind grandfather ; and this I should have, if it were possible for me to work entirely on the straw.’

“ I told him that he was a good boy, and that I would come and see him again. This was all that passed between Louis and myself, only I found that he had taken great pains in endeavouring to teach his grandfather a few words of English ; but, alas ! poor Justin was too old to learn a strange tongue.”

“ Oh, dear mamma,” exclaimed Charles, taking his mother’s hand as he looked wistfully in her face, “ cannot we do something for poor Louis and his blind grandfather, that he may not be obliged to work so hard ?”

“ That is exactly what I wished to consult you all about,” replied Mrs. Fletcher. “ What will be the best plan

to pursue? Charles, you are the eldest, and shall speak first."

"I would get Justin into the blind hospital," said Charles, "and then you know, mamma, we could put Louis to school."

"That will not do," rejoined Mrs. Fletcher: "for, in the first place, I am pretty sure that Louis would not quit his grandfather; and besides I do not see what good would result from putting Louis to school."

"Oh," cried Sidney and Marcella at once, "let us put all our money together and buy Louis some new clothes."

"That is much better," said their father, "and you are very good children to offer it; but I think I can improve on your plan still more."

"Do, dear papa, let us hear what *you* think best," they all said.

"You said just now, Sidney," answered Mr. Fletcher, "that you would all put your money together and buy Louis

a suit of new clothes ; now, if you will agree to that, I will make a contract with my friend Newman, who keeps the great toyshop at the bottom of Queen Street, to take all the straw ornaments, baskets, and whatever Louis makes, at a reasonable price. This I think can be done ; for I heard him the other day expressing a wish that he could meet with such articles ready made here, as sending for them from London made them come very expensive.”

“ And as Justin can split and prepare the straw, ready for Louis to work up,” said Mrs. Fletcher, “ I have no doubt but they will by this mean gain a very comfortable livelihood.”

The children unanimously agreed that this was the best plan yet thought of, and were all eager to have it put in immediate execution ; accordingly they all ran to fetch their stock of cash. Charles had six shillings, which he had been a long time saving up to buy a

flute; and in addition to this he had a new crown piece, which his uncle Fielding had sent him at Christmas, when each of his sisters and his brother had received a similar present. "I am sure," said he, "my uncle will not be angry if I give this to clothe poor Louis, so here are eleven shillings of mine."

"And I have nine shillings and sixpence," said Marcella, emptying her little treasure-box into her mother's lap.

Sidney had, with the new crown-piece, in all eight shillings, and some halfpence; but poor little Juliet (who could never pass either a cake-shop or a beggar while she had a penny in her pocket), now slowly advanced with her mite, which consisted of the enormous sum of three halfpence.

Mrs. Fletcher smiled at this donation, but it was rather a wonder that Juliet was mistress of so large a sum.

"Well, my dears," said their mother, as you have all so generously given up

your money, you shall go with me after tea to chuse some clothes for Louis. Charles, you are nearly of his size, so you shall be fitted for him."

The children jumped for joy whilst anticipating the delight which Louis would feel when newly clothed by their liberality; and after tea they went with their mother to a large warehouse of ready-made clothes, where, after some consultation, they made choice of a suit of good gray mixed cloth, a pair of shoes, and two strong pair of stockings. In the mean time Mr. Fletcher called on his friend Newman, who agreed to take all Louis's straw work, provided it was neatly wrought, and he was very glad to find one who would serve his shop so near home; he promised to call on Louis and look at some of his baskets, and if they were well made, he said he would keep him in constant employ. This being happily settled, Mr. Fletcher and his benevolent family returned home, much pleased with the success of their scheme.

It was too late that night to mention any thing to Louis ; but the next morning, after the children had finished their studies, Mrs. Fletcher took them all to Justin's cottage, and Marcella was permitted to carry the bundle. On their tapping at the door, Louis, who was cooking a morsel of dinner over a little fire, sprung forward ; and taking Mrs. Fletcher's hand, exclaimed, while his dark eyes sparkled with animation, " Her come agen ! her come agen ! " Mrs. Fletcher smiled at his imperfect attempt to express his joy at seeing her. " Here, Louis," said she (addressing herself to him in French), " here is a reward for the dutiful care you have taken of your grandfather."

Marcella advanced, and Louis gazed in silent wonder as she unfolded the bundle, and displayed its contents ; indeed he seemed almost struck speechless with astonishment, whilst he looked alternately at the clothes and at his kind

visitors. Mrs. Fletcher, perceiving his emotion, took him by the hand, and said, "Compose yourself, my little fellow, and try whether this suit will fit you."

Louis retired into an inner room : but soon returned so much improved in appearance, that his young friends could scarcely recognize in him the little ragged water-carrier whom they had been accustomed to see.

Justin now advanced to thank them for their bounty ; and his joy was much increased when he was informed that Louis would be no longer forced to carry water pails for his subsistence, but would pursue his straw-work, and remain always with him. Mrs. Fletcher perceiving a sudden gloom overspread the face of Louis, asked him in French what was the matter.

" Ah, Madame," replied he, " I was thinking what pleasure my poor grandfather would have had in *seeing* his little

Louis in these beautiful new clothes ; but, alas ! he is *blind*, and cannot see any thing."

The aged Justin laid his withered hand on the shoulder of his grandson, and said impressively, " My child, do not repine at the will of the Almighty. It pleased God to deprive me of my sight ; yet he has had great blessings in store for me. It was only for you, my Louis, that I feared ; and it has pleased heaven to listen to my prayers, and to raise up these kind friends for you. God bless and reward them as they deserve !"

Mr. Fletcher now entered the cottage, with his friend Mr. Newman. With a trembling hand Louis produced the specimens of his work, which were in a manner to decide his fate ; but the toyman was so well pleased with them, and so deeply interested in the little manufacturer, that he assured Louis he should never want employment whilst he lived, nor a friend while he continued to deserve one.

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher kindly invited Louis and his grandfather to spend the remainder of the day with them, to the great joy of the children, who liked Louis better than ever; and they have often looked back with delight upon this day, as one of the happiest in their lives. Sidney at night received the silver pen, and a kiss from his mother, who said he had well deserved it.

While Justin and his grandson were at the house of Mrs. Fletcher, she ordered a few light chairs and some plain furniture, with materials to assist Louis in his work, to be conveyed to their cottage; and little Juliet, who had bitterly lamented the smallness of her subscription to the purchasing the clothes, now begged her mother to allow of her presenting something of her own.

Mrs. Fletcher gave her leave to carry to the cottage a pot with a beautiful geranium, which had been given to her some time before. She placed it on the

window where old Justin usually sat, who had the pleasure (though he could not see its beauty) of inhaling its delightful perfume, as he sat splitting the straw for Louis's work.

Louis would never part with his water-pails, which were always placed in a conspicuous part of the cottage, "for these," he said, "first introduced me to the notice of my dear friends." And when, with a heart overflowing with joy, he has expressed his gratitude, Mrs. Fletcher would often answer, "remember, Louis, this was the reward of *industry*."

When Mrs. Dormer had finished the tale, she said to her son, "William, do you like this story? or do you prefer to hear about giants, and dwarfs, and fairies?"

William looked very thoughtful for some time: at last he said, "no, mamma, this is certainly the best; for it seems

more like the truth, I dare say all these things really happened; while you know even little Louis would laugh at me if I really believed there ever were such creatures as fairies."

"Ah, William," said Mary, "but there are some very beautiful stories about fairies. Do not you remember the story in verse which mamma read to us some time ago? It began thus:

"In Britain's isle, and Arthur's days,
When midnight fairies danced the maze."

"Oh yes, Mary, I remember, and I wish mamma would read us some more tales like that."

"I must find them first, Willy," said Mrs. Dormer, "for that tale stands alone in the English language: I do not remember another that equals it in beauty. But you must be content with hearing the adventures of children like yourselves, for my stock of fairy lore is almost exhausted."

"What is the name, dear aunt, of the

next story you mean to read us," asked Kate, "for I peeped into your desk when you took the last out, and I saw that you had a good many more left."

"That will depend on circumstances, my love," replied Mrs. Dormer. "I do not know which I shall read first. But I will tell you what you will like better; and that is, our friends Mr. and Mrs. Matthews have sent an invitation for you all to spend to-morrow afternoon with them. We shall have a delightful walk across the heath; and you, William, will see your little friends—for George and Edward have come home for the holidays."

This news gave great delight to the little Dormers, and they spent the evening anticipating the pleasure of the morrow, and in hoping and wishing for a fine day.

William's eyes were opened by six the next morning; he ran to the cham-

ber where his sister and cousin slept, and tapping at the door, asked them if they would get up, as it was a fine morning, and study their lessons in the garden before breakfast, and then they would be done very early when their mamma was teaching them. This proposal was perfectly agreeable to the little girls; who, after dressing themselves and saying their prayers, went into the garden, and with lively spirits enjoyed the delicious freshness of a lovely summer's morning. Here they walked up and down, studying very diligently till they had their lessons by heart, and already looked forward to the pleasure of their mamma's praise.

All this was very well, and they walked some time very soberly, till little Louis came into the garden, saying he had some very hard words to learn, and intreating his sister Mary to pronounce them for him. Mary very good-naturedly complied, and sat down on the seat

under the fir tree to con them over with him.

Kate and William, though good children were sometimes inclined to be giddy, and this morning they were in such high spirits, that they were more careless than usual. Unfortunately, chance led their steps towards the poultry-yard, which was separated from the garden by some pales and a wicket. They opened the gate and passed through, to look at some nice broods of ducks that were just hatched. Kate stood several minutes admiring the soft yellow ducklings, and did not notice what William was doing, till he called her to partake in some sport which he thought very delightful. He had laid a plank (left there by accident) across a small dirty pond, dug for the convenience of the ducks, and was racing backwards and forwards so cheerfully on this board, that giddy little Kate thought she must follow his example. After they had amused them-

selves for some time with this diversion, William took it into his head to jump from the plank across the pond, and as it was a very little distance, he did it easily. Kate endeavoured to follow, but as she was not used to leaping, it is no great wonder that she plumped up to her waist in the dirty water. They both shrieked in concert for help; and the gardener being fortunately near the spot, soon pulled Miss Kate out of the mud, and carried her in his arms to the house. In their way they met Mary and Louis, who had been alarmed by the cries of Kate: Mary was terribly frightened at seeing the water stream from her cousin's clothes; she ran to her mother's door, crying, "pray, mamma, come quickly, for I fear that Kate is drowned."

Mrs. Dormer was much astonished, for she did not think Kate could get at any water sufficient to drown herself. However, she hastened to the children's room, where she beheld the weeping

Kate, with the house-maid busily employed in taking off her wet clothes. Mrs. Dormer's first care was to hurry the imprudent child to bed, and cover her up warm, while her clean clothes were airing. She then demanded the particulars of the disaster; and, on hearing the whole affair, could hardly help laughing. However, she comforted the weeping girl by saying, if she had not taken cold there was no great harm done, and, promising to send her up some warm tea, she retired; whilst Kate was greatly troubled for fear she should be made to lay in bed all the day.

When Mrs. Dormer entered the parlour, she perceived William, looking much like a culprit.

“So, Sir,” said his mother, “it was you who led your cousin into this mischief.”

“It was, dear mamma, but I am very, very sorrow,” answered William.

“Consider,” said Mrs. Dormer, “the delicate state of your cousin's health,

and how fatal such an accident might have been if her wet clothes had not been taken off directly. I do not think she will be ill as it is, but hope she will be able to go to Mrs. Matthews's this afternoon.

“ I suppose, mamma,” said William, “ as I have been so bad a boy, *I* am not to go?”

“ You well know,” said his mother, “ that I never punish an act of carelessness as I do any thing criminal, therefore I shall trust to your own good disposition, that you will not err in a like manner for the future.”

William kissed the hand of his kind mamma, and said, “ I did indeed think of Sidney's jumping into the ditch, just as Kate fell into the pond: but you know, mamma, that was too late. We should have thought on it before we played such a foolish trick.”

After Mrs. Dormer had done breakfast she went up and dressed Kate, who had taken no hurt. The children finished their

lessons very soon: and Mrs. Dormer told them there was time for a good deal of play before dinner. "I think," added she, "I can answer for Kate's keeping out of the duck-pond."

On hearing this remark Kate hung down her head, and looked very foolish—at last she said, "I would rather not go out, aunt. If you would read us a story I should like much better to sit still and hear it."

Mrs. Dormer smiled, and unlocking her writing-desk, selected from among her papers the tale of

THE MIDSUMMER HOLIDAYS.

"Mr. Howard and Mr. Russel were near neighbours; indeed their grounds were only parted by a clear stream, which flowed between the two gardens: they were both widowers, and each had one son.

Mr. Russel was an old captain retired from service, with a small fortune and his pay to live on.

His neighbour Mr. Howard had been a banker in London, and having amassed a large fortune, withdrew from the fatigues of business, to enjoy the remainder of his life in the quiet retirement of the country.

These gentlemen were much alike in all their pursuits: they were both fond of gardening, fishing, and smoking; yet they did not visit, though they often entered into conversation across the river, when they were fishing opposite each other.

Mr. Howard's son Philip, or Phil as he was generally called, was nearly of the same age as Captain Russel's Harry. Captain Russel would not send Harry to school, for he did not approve of that method of education; Mr. Howard, on the contrary, kept his son at a public seminary, and only suffered him to return for a short time during the Midsummer holidays. He allowed him, indeed, to pass the whole vacation with him at

Christmas, when he thought that he could do the least mischief; and then Phil would much rather have been at school, for his father made him study as closely as he did there.

As to Harry Russel, he was the most unlucky boy that ever was born. He was always in mischief, robbing the farmers' orchards, or trespassing on their grounds, to deprive the poor innocent birds of their eggs and young. There always was some complaint being brought in from the maids, such as, "Sir, is Master Russel to steal the pipes? he has got away ever so many."

Then when Captain Russel went to shave, he found all his shaving soap gone: upon inquiry, it always was, "Why, Sir, Master Harry would take it; he said it was only to blow bubbles with." Poor Captain Russel was always in a passion: for before he was cool from one he was thrown into another. There was the gardener, with, "Sir, Master Harry

will tread on the border, Master Harry will run in the high grass, Master Harry will pluck the fruit;" but, in general, it ended with, " Master Harry will take the boy away from his work, to play with him." Thus was the Captain constantly tormented.

Captain Russel would not permit his son to visit, or receive visits, from any of the young gentlemen in the neighbourhood, for fear of having his flowers gathered, and his garden injured.

Harry, who was of a very social disposition, rather than not have playfellows, made companions of his father's cow-boy and all his ragged brethren; for Mr. Russel kept a cow, and this boy tended her, and worked in the garden.

Another of Master Henry's bad tricks was taking a large stick, and dabbling in his father's favourite fishing place; whenever he was found so employed, he received a good thrashing from the captain, which you must acknowledge he richly deserved.

Now the Midsummer holidays approached, and Harry heard Mr. Howard tell his father that Phil was coming home to spend a week or two with him. This greatly rejoiced Master Hal, for he was very curious to see his neighbour's son, of whom he formed great hopes.

At length the wished-for day arrived, and Harry ran down to the river to watch for young Howard's appearing in the opposite garden. He did not wait long, for a loud shout made him run to the banks of the stream; and there stood the long expected Phil, throwing stones into the river to scare the fish.

Now it was very delightful to find a companion; but Harry thought it still better for him to be as mischievous a creature as he was himself. They soon greeted each other with great glee, and stood talking some time across the river. Phil invited Harry to come over to him.

“ No,” said Harry, “ I cannot do that, for I do not choose to undress for a swim.”

“ Then come with your clothes on,” said Phil; “ look, here is a shallow place.”

Harry sat down on the grass, and pulling off his shoes and stockings, threw them over to Phil; he then paddled across the river with great expedition, and was joyfully welcomed by young Howard. For a long time they walked about, keeping at a respectful distance from the house for fear of being seen by Phil’s father; and, as they had many things to talk about, they did no great harm that day.

From this time the two boys became such friends, that, regardless of their fathers’ express commands to the contrary, they were seldom or ever apart; and as they were commonly walking arm and arm in one or other of the gardens, nothing could remain undis-

turbed for them ; the gardens were robbed of the best fruit, and the newly raked beds were completely covered with footmarks.

One day Mr. Russel, looking out of the chamber window, was not a little surprised at beholding his son perched in one of the great cherry-trees which grew on the grass-plot in front, and Master Phil in the other. In a tone of great displeasure, he demanded what they were doing there ?

Phil replied, without leaving off eating, and with the greatest audacity, “ we are keeping the birds off the cherry-tree, Sir.”

Mr. Russel was greatly enraged at the cool impudence of this answer ; and though he made no reply, he muttered to himself, as he turned from the window, “ these are your Eton tricks, young gentleman ; but your back shall pay for it.” He then ordered the culprits to be seized as soon as they left

the trees, and to be brought before him.

This was accordingly done; and the luckless pilferers, when they were preparing to escape, were caught and carried before Mr. Russel, in spite of all their kicking and struggling. The captain stood ready to receive them with a horsewhip, which he laid over their shoulders pretty smartly; and though they implored for mercy, and promised never to misbehave again, the captain knew that such promises could not be depended on. When he thought he had punished them sufficiently, he sent his own boy sobbing to bed, and followed Master Phil, with the horsewhip in his hand, threatening that the next time he caught him on his side of the stream that he would give him twice as much; when Phil, on reaching the stream, boldly plunged in, shoes and all, and splashed over to his own garden, and ran to the house, crying bitterly.

Though Mr. Howard knew that Phil had well deserved the stripes he had received, yet he did not choose that any one should chastise his son but himself, and he told Captain Russel so the next day. Captain Russel said he had borne with young Howard's lawless conduct long enough, and he would put up with it no longer, but whip him home whenever he caught him trespassing on his grounds, and Mr. Howard might do the same by his Hal, if he liked it. Mr. Howard declared, if he came plaguing him, he would ; and then told Captain Russel it was his unbearable boy who had spoiled and corrupted the manners of Phil. This Captain Russel denied with some warmth, and retorted the charge ; high words now arose between the fathers, and, though I am sure neither had any reason to defend their children, the two gentlemen parted in great wrath ; but both agreed to horse-whip the first boy that entered the other's garden.

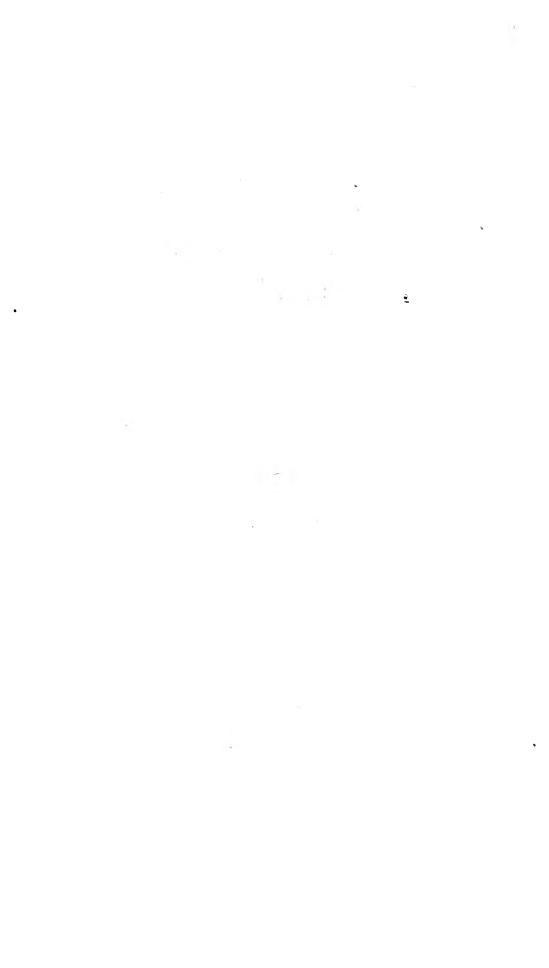
It was not long before Mr. Howard put his threat in execution, for in defiance of these prohibitions, Phil and Hal went into Mr. Howard's meadow, and were amusing themselves with swinging on the great gate. This made Mr. Howard very angry : he bestowed on them a good caning, and sent Hal Russel roaring home. One would have thought this might have cured them of their improper behaviour, but they would get over into the forbidden gardens now as often as ever. Mr. Howard was at length so completely wearied by his son's mischievous tricks, that he determined to shorten his holidays by three weeks : poor Phil was accordingly doomed to depart on the next Monday. But on the preceding Saturday he invited Harry to come over, and have one last gambol in the garden. He told him there was an early plum-tree loaded with delicious fruit, just ripe, and persuaded him to come and have

the first taste. Harry needed no very pressing invitation, and having forded the river, he proceeded with his companion to the plum-tree. The fruit was indeed tempting, and Harry mounted with great expedition: but he had scarcely tasted one plum before Phil called,

“Come down, Harry; make haste—my father is coming towards us!”

Harry was so hurried, that he forgot his usual dexterity in descending; his foot slipped, and he fell with such violence on the ground that his right arm and leg were broken. Mr. Howard, who had not before observed that Hal was in the garden, was instantly drawn to the spot by the screams of the suffering boy, whom he tenderly raised, and saw his servants convey him carefully home. He returned to his own house, and conveyed his son to a room which was utterly divested of all furniture, except a bed to sleep on; he then





gave him a supply of bread and water for the day, and locked him in.

Phil, who had now leisure to repent of his folly and wilfulness, expected at least to be confined in this solitude till he was taken to school; and he grieved bitterly for the deplorable fate of his companion Harry, who might probably lose his life, or the use of his limbs. Many were the tears which he shed while eating his solitary meals, which were delivered to him in silence by a servant. Often did he wish for his father's presence, that he might ask his forgiveness; but three tedious days and nights passed on, and Mr. Howard did not appear. All the amusement Phil had, was looking out of a high and closely-barred window. He had not even a book to pass away the heavy hours, though he would have been thankful for the dullest that ever was written. On the fourth day, towards the evening, as he was sitting sighing in a corner,

the door unlocked, and on raising his eyes, his father stood before him, looking very stern and severe. He took the culprit's hand in silence, and led him through the garden. Phil shuddered when he saw the fatal tree, the cause of so much sorrow, and felt thankful when he had passed it. Mr. Howard conducted him through their own meadow to a little bridge that crossed the river, and divided Captain Russel's field from theirs. The gate of this bridge was always before kept padlocked; but on this occasion Mr. Howard opened it, and proceeded to Captain Russel's house, and went up the stairs to Harry's bed-chamber. The curtains were closed round the bed, and Captain Russel sat there, reading the Bible aloud. When he saw Mr. Howard, he rose and gave him his hand. Mr. Howard asked if his patient were awake. "Yes," said Captain Russel, unclosing the curtains, and exhibiting to the weeping Phil his

once healthy and blooming companion, reduced, comparatively, to a shadow. He was supported by a number of pillows, and looked like death. His hair, that used to curl in ringlets round his rosy, laughing face, now hung lank and straight over his sunken eyes and wan cheeks. This sad sight filled the heart of Phil with grief and remorse: he threw himself by the side of the bed, and hid his face in the bed-clothes to stifle his sobs. Harry stretched out his burning hand, and in a feeble voice desired him to be comforted.

“ See, young man,” said Captain Russel, “ the fatal effects of disobedience: this might have been *your* fate: let this misfortune be a lesson to you for the future. I see I need say no more.”

Phil was truly penitent: he sobbed as if his heart would break, and implored forgiveness with such unaffected sorrow, that the two gentlemen freely pardoned him. “ From this time,” he said, “ I

will be as dutiful as I was before disobedient, and if poor Hal does but recover, we will never be mischievous again."

"Think, Philip," said his father, "if Harry dies, you will have to answer for being the means of depriving Captain Russel of his only child."

Phil's grief now became so violent, that Mr. Howard thought that he had better take him away.

"Oh, Sir," said Phil (taking the hand of Captain Russel), "pray let me stay by Harry. I will sit quite still, and make no noise; indeed I cannot leave him."

The sick boy, in a low and feeble voice, begged that his friend might stay. Captain Russel kindly consented, and Philip took his station by the side of Harry's bed, and by every tender care endeavoured to soothe his pain and raise his spirits. When Captain Russel saw that Philip had naturally a noble disposition and a good heart, he would come

and converse with him, and often praised him for the friendly attention he shewed his suffering friend. When Philip dared ask him questions, he inquired what had happened during the days he had passed in confinement.

“ The first three days,” said Captain Russel, “ were passed by my suffering child in all the agony of pain and delirium ; your father, very kindly, passed all his time with me, sharing my solicitude and grief. - On the evening of the fourth day Harry recovered his senses, and earnestly begged to see you. Your father immediately went and fetched you, the rest you know.”

Philip had a bed made up in his friend's room, and never left him but when the doctor was dressing poor Harry's leg and arm : he then used to take a little air. At last Harry was able to sit up, but he was forced to hold his arm in a sling, and have his leg supported by pillows.

After some weeks Harry was sufficiently recovered to walk in the garden; and though he soon looked as rosy and handsome as before, still he always had a slight lameness, which served to remind him of his disobedience.

Philip staid at home till Harry was quite well, and then their fathers agreed that both the boys should go together to Eton school. This plan was carried into execution, and when they returned at Christmas they were so completely altered in their deportment, that their fathers beheld them with pride and pleasure.

You may be sure that the next Midsummer holidays were spent in a very different manner from those of the preceding year. Mr. Howard and Captain Russel had now become intimate friends, and often made a comfortable party by the river side, with their pipes and fishing tackle; and when the boys came, they would sit and play quietly at draughts, or chess, on a seat near them.

Hal was never heard to repine at this accident, but as he grew up he often declared that this misfortune had proved a blessing to him and Philip, and would warn any wayward children he saw in mischief to desist from evil, lest, like him, they should suffer from the bad effects of *disobedience*.

The cloth was laid for dinner by the time Mrs. Dormer had finished her story. The children all looked very grave at the end, and seemed much edified: particularly William, who said, as he seated himself at table, "I am afraid, mamma, you think that I behaved as bad as Harry or Phil this morning."

"No, Willy," said his mother, "what you did wrong was not the result of wilful mischief, but was only for want of thought: for instance, if I had looked over the pales when you were dancing on the plants, and told you to come

away, and never to do so again, I think I can answer for my William that he would not have disobeyed me."

"No, dear mamma," said William, "I hope I should not have been so wicked."

Just as dinner was finished, Edward Matthews drove up to the door in a donkey chaise, which he had brought, by the desire of his father, that the little girls might not be fatigued with walking in the heat of the day. Mrs. Dormer, with Kate and Mary, were soon ready; and Edward, having lifted the young ladies and little Lewis into the chaise, walked with William by the side of the donkey, leading him, and patting his neck. Mr. and Mrs. Dormer walked behind, and were greatly pleased with the attention and kindness of Edward: who, to say the truth, was a favourite with all the family. He was a fine manly youth of thirteen, but though he was by many years older than the little Dor-

mers, he was so sweet tempered that they doated on him.

The little party proceeded joyously across the heath, exulting in the company of their dear Edward; who, poor fellow, had need of two or three pair of ears: for, in the joy of their hearts, the children all talked at once, telling him all the wonderful things that had happened to them since they saw him last.

The afternoon passed rapidly; and the children enjoyed themselves so much, that their indulgent parents, rejoicing to see them good and happy, delayed breaking up the party till the latest minute. When the hour of separation at length arrived, and they were preparing to depart, Mrs. Matthews asked Mrs. Dormer if she would permit her little family to join her sons in a party to Hampstead-fair, that day week. Now Mrs. Dormer had a dislike to fairs; but as Mr. Dormer seemed to wish it, and the children all looked up in her face

with most anxious countenances, she would not withhold her consent.

The donkey chaise was again brought to the door, and the little Dormers had a charming ride home. Mary, in particular, was delighted at seeing the heath spangled with glow-worms.

“ Oh, papa,” she exclaimed, “ do let me get out and catch some of the lovely creatures ; I never saw any before.”

“ No, Mary,” said her mother, “ you must not run on the damp grass with your thin shoes. Look,” continued she, holding up her handkerchief, which shone like a lamp, “ see, Mary, I have collected a great many of the lovely creatures, as you call them, and will examine them when we get home.”

Mary was highly pleased at this ; but she could not help calling out, as she saw these beautiful insects shine brighter as the darkness increased : “ Oh, mamma, there is another ! do catch it.”

All the little party were quite grieved when they turned down the lane that separated their house from the heath.

Sleep weighed too heavy on the eyes of all the children to allow them to look at the glow-worms that night, but in the morning Mary ran into her mother's dressing-room to look at the beautiful prisoners. She hastily took off the lid of a glass jar, in which her mother had placed them, and, lifting up some wet moss, gave almost a shriek of disappointment. "Oh, mamma," she said, "all the glow-worms have run away; here are nothing but some ugly brown beetles! I dare say they have eaten those pretty creatures."

"What a pity!" said Kate. "Dear aunt, let us empty the jar into the garden."

"No, my love," said her aunt, "let them alone; perhaps these beetles may bring us some tidings of the glow-worms. At that minute they heard Mr. Dormer

below, talking to Edward, who had just arrived, with his little brother George. Mrs. Dormer, therefore, went down to ask them to dinner; which invitation they thankfully accepted.

In the cool of the evening, after the children and their guests had tired themselves with play, they all came up to Mrs. Dormer's dressing-room and begged for a story. Mrs. Dormer had prepared for them, there, a regale of cakes and fruit, and while they were enjoying it, she kindly read to them the story of

THE BLIND HIGHLAND PIPER.

“ IF you have finished writing those rules in your cyphering book in time, you shall go with me to the book-sellers, to choose some books for your cousin Jane, and for yourself,” said Mr. Percy to his nephew, Arthur Stanly, who was writing at a desk.

“ Thank you, my dear uncle. What time shall you be ready ?” asked Arthur, still continuing to write on.

“ In about half an hour at farthest,” said Mr. Percy.

“ Shall you be ready by that time ?”

Arthur cast his eyes over a long page of writing and figures which he had still to copy into his book, repeating, “ Half an hour ! I am afraid I cannot get it all done.”

“ I shall be sorry,” observed his uncle, “ to go without you ; but I am engaged to dine with some friends precisely at two o’clock. It is now a few minutes past one : therefore we shall have but one quarter of an hour to walk there, and transact our business, and the other quarter to go home and dress in.”

Arthur ardently wished that the time went slower.

“ I think you have had plenty of time to finish this rule ; it is now upwards of an hour since you began. What

have you been doing all this while?" said Mr. Percy, looking over his nephew's shoulder.

Arthur felt much ashamed : he looked down at his feet, and began tying his shoe-strings without saying a word, for he did not know what excuse to offer to his uncle.

Mr. Percy still looked at him, as if expecting an answer ; and at last he repeated the question.

" I was trying," said Arthur, " to catch a robin which flew into the room. I was very silly, and have lost a great deal of time by it."

" You was silly, indeed," replied his uncle ; " but that is your concern, not mine. However, if you have finished by the time the hand of the hall clock points to half past one, you shall go with me. If your rule be written out neatly in that time, I shall give you great credit, if not you must remain at home. Here are two good pens for you."



Arthur eagerly took the pens and began writing; but his uncle had hardly quitted the room, when the thought entered into his head that no one would be the wiser if he were to put back the clock a few minutes. Accordingly, without giving himself time to reflect on the gross impropriety of such an action, he opened the study door and looked out into the hall. No one was near; he listened a moment—; all was quite still. He then jumped upon a chair which stood near the clock, and, having carefully opened the door in front, put back the hand ten minutes. In doing this, however, he was under considerable alarm, for persons who are acting wrong are always in fear of being detected.

He now jumped from the chair, and ran back to his desk; but his hand trembled so much that he could hardly hold his pen. In a minute or two, however, he recovered himself, and just as he heard his uncle entering the hall, he

finished his assigned task, happy for a moment in the success of his scheme.

His cousin Jane now came running into the room, and exclaimed :

“ Arthur, papa is waiting for you ; but he supposes you have not done yet.”

“ Yes, but I have, though,” answered he, in a tone of exultation, and went into the hall with his book. Mr. Percy was standing with his watch in his hand, comparing it with the clock.

Arthur coloured like scarlet, for he feared to be detected in his guilt. He stood silent, and dared not raise his eyes to the face of his uncle.

But, far from having the least suspicion of what had been done, Mr. Percy only observed that he must get his watch regulated, for though he had set it by the clock that very morning, it was now ten minutes faster.

Arthur felt all the pain arising from conscious guilt. He hung his head in silence, whilst his uncle, glancing his eyes

over the writing, exclaimed, "Very well, indeed! very prettily done! I give you a deal of credit for this; and so short a time as you had to do it in, too! Well, we shall see, if you improve so fast, what I shall do."

"Arthur, who had never deceived his good uncle before, felt more pain at this unmerited praise than if he had been punished as he deserved.

"Oh," thought he, "if my uncle did but know how wicked I have been, he would never forgive me."

Mr. Percy told him to put on his hat and great-coat, for they had no time to lose.

"Good bye, my little Jane," said Mr. Percy, as he shut the street door.

"Good bye, dear papa, and cousin Arthur," cried Jane Percy, going into the parlour.

"I never knew you so very silent before, Arthur: what is it you are thinking of?" said Mr. Percy, as they entered the shop of Mansel, the bookseller.

Arthur was spared the trouble of replying, for Mr. Mansel then came forward, and entered into conversation with Mr. Percy.

Arthur walked to the door: he scarcely knew what was going forward, his mind being too much occupied in reflecting upon his late transgression, and in considering what he had best do. At length he determined to tell his cousin, and ask her advice. He had not observed the people who were hurrying along to escape a heavy fall of snow, till his ear was attracted by the plaintive tones of a child's voice, asking charity. He looked up, and beheld a little girl without any shoes or stockings, leading by the hand a Highland soldier, who was very handsome, but quite blind. He appeared scarce thirty years of age: the tattered remnant of a plaid which was wrapt round him bespoke poverty and distress in the extreme, and scarcely sufficed to defend his body from the cold

wind and snow. On his head he wore a sort of cap or bonnet, of various colours; through the many holes of which his yellow hair appeared, and waved to the breeze in long curls. By his side he wore an old sword, which made Arthur conclude that he was a soldier. The little girl had been asking relief of the passengers; but no one thought it worth while to stop, at the risk of getting wet, to inquire into the cause of their distress. One man rudely pushed the little suppliant away, calling her an impostor, and a little beggar brat. She then turned with a sorrowful look towards Arthur, who dropped into the plaid bonnet which she held in her hand all the halfpence he had about him, and inquired if her father were quite blind?

The tears stood in the little girl's eyes, as she turned them sorrowfully up to her father's face, and answered, "yes: he is *quite* blind, and very ill."

“Poor man!” said Arthur; “how much he is to be pitied! Is he a soldier?”

“He was once a soldier, but he cannot see now,” replied the little girl.

“And what is your name?” asked Arthur.

“Flora Glengary?”

“And how came your father to lose his sight?”

As Flora did not immediately reply, the soldier, taking off his cap, said, “my good young gentleman, I was once a soldier, and served with the army in Egypt, but lost my sight by lightning. I then took my little girl, and came back to England, in hopes of being able to beg my way to Dunbar, my native town, in Scotland, where I had friends; but now I can get no farther, for I am very ill, and quite friendless. Before I lost my bagpipes I got on very well; but now they are gone, I believe my child and I must starve.”

“ And how came you to lose your pipes ?” asked Arthur.

“ I fell sick, master, and was forced to sell them for a mere trifle. Whilst I had them, I did not beg, exactly, for many people gave me money to hear me play.”

“ And how much would it cost you to buy them again ?”

“ I cannot get them back for less than half a guinea,” answered the Highlander, sighing; “ but we do not possess a sixpence in the world.”

“ Will half a guinea restore your pipes to you ?” eagerly inquired young Stanly.

He half checked himself, however, as he put his hand into his pocket, and opened his purse; for he had no money, but one half guinea which his aunt had recently given him, with a strict charge never to part with it on any account. “ My aunt will be very angry,” said he, “ if I give this money away; besides, it was in my dear father’s posses-

sion for many years. I should like to keep it as long as he did." But when he saw the look of joy and hope which shone in the eyes of the anxious Flora, as she viewed the gold in his hand, he thought it would be cruel, indeed, to disappoint her.

"No, Flora," said he, "your father shall not starve while I have this, which I really do not want, only for its having belonged to my father." He then put the money into her bonnet, saying, "take this; buy the bagpipes, and some bread for your father: I have no more, or it should be yours."

He would now have retreated; but Flora forcibly detained him, eagerly seizing hold of his hand, and uttering a thousand thanks. At length, however, he disengaged himself, and returned to the shop with a feeling of happiness, which arises only from the knowledge of having performed an act of real benevolence.

“ Arthur,” said his uncle, “ where have you been ? I have been waiting for you some minutes. I have selected such books as I think will be the most proper for your cousin Jane. Now, what is it you wish to have ?”

Arthur looked over several volumes which laid on the counter. “ If you have no objection, Sir, I should prefer either Homer’s Iliad, or Voltaire’s History of Charles the Twelfth, or the Life of Gustavus Vasa.”

“ Any of these you can have,” said his uncle ; “ it only remains for you to determine.”

Arthur considered for a few minutes. “ Homer I have read ; we have it in the library. I have not read either of the others ; but I admire Gustavus more than Charles, because I think he was the most amiable character. Well, then, if you please, Sir, I will take this,” said he, choosing an elegantly bound pocket volume, containing

the life of that excellent monarch, by Raymond. He wrote his name in it, and Mr. Mansel packed it up with the rest.

The fall of snow having ceased, Arthur returned home, and Mr. Percy proceeded to join his friends.

Arthur tried to read part of the life of Gustavus aloud, to his aunt and cousin: but, in spite of every thing, the misdeed of the morning would obtrude into his thoughts; he therefore made some excuse, and retired to the study, to consider what he should do.

As he passed through the hall, and raised his eyes to the clock, his conscience reproached him bitterly for his misconduct. He ran into the study, and throwing himself into a chair, covered his face with both his hands. It was the first fault of the kind he had ever committed, but that did not lessen it in his eyes.

Arthur bitterly lamented his idleness,

when he first began writing. "If I had not tried to catch the poor little robin," said he, "this would not have happened; for I should have finished my writing in plenty of time."

Arthur actually shed tears of regret and sorrow at his own foolishness, in thus having been tempted to deceive his good and unsuspecting uncle.

While he was thus deploring his fault, Jane Percy softly stole into the room, and taking one of his hands from his face, said in a soothing voice,

"My dear cousin, what is it that affects you? Will you not tell your Jane?"

Arthur was moved by the gentle, persuasive voice of his amiable relative, and confided to her the cause of his sorrow. Jane was truly grieved that her dear cousin Arthur should have acted so extremely wrong; but she strove to console him in the best manner she could.

"Consider, Arthur," said she, "it is the *first* fault of the kind you ever were guilty of."

But this observation, far from comforting him, only added to his grief, as reminding him that he had now forfeited his good name. It was true, no one need know it but himself and Jane: but *he* was conscious of it, and therefore he could never again bear to be praised for being a good boy, when he knew he did not deserve that character.

“Dear Arthur,” said Jane, “I think it will be the best to go to your uncle tomorrow morning, and tell him what you have done. He will not be so angry if you openly confess it to him; and I know you will never do so again.”

Arthur tenderly embraced his little cousin, and thanked her for her good advice.

“Indeed, Jane,” said he, “that will be the best plan: for I would rather my uncle should know it at once, and be angry, and punish me as I deserve; for then I might, by my future good conduct, atone for my transgression. But

I never can look up in his face with pleasure again, knowing that I have deceived him."

Arthur now wished to tell his cousin about little Flora and her father; but a feeling of something like pride withheld him. He was afraid she might think he told her, only to lessen the crime he had committed in her eyes, he therefore remained silent on that subject; for Arthur knew well that a generous action, however excellent, did not obliterate the disgrace of deceit and falsehood.

The next morning, when Mr. Percy came into the study, to set Arthur and Jane their tasks, he offered to shake hands with his nephew, according to his usual custom; but Arthur, bursting into tears, exclaimed,

"Oh, Sir! I have been a very wicked boy, and am not worthy that you should shake hands with me."

Mr. Percy, much surprised, demanded

an explanation ; and Arthur, with great earnestness and simplicity, related what he had done.

Mr. Percy was sensibly touched by the sincerity of his nephew, though at the same time he was seriously displeased, for he did not like to be deceived by a child : he therefore finished setting the copies, and left the room, without saying a word ; for though he would not punish Arthur, as he had so nobly revealed the truth ; yet he thought, if he left him in doubt, it would operate on his mind as an adequate punishment. In this opinion he was perfectly correct : for poor Arthur, imagining that he had offended past all forgiveness, gave himself up to despair.

Jane herself knew not what to think, but she tried to comfort her disconsolate cousin ; and whilst they were condoling together, they heard Mrs. Percy calling them.

“ Come, make haste, children,” said

she, "come and hear the Scotch piper."

The sound of music was plainly heard in the street; and Arthur eagerly pressed forward to catch a glance at the musician. All the pain he had previously suffered was amply repaid at that moment, by the sight of the blind Highlander, and little Flora his daughter, who was looking, with the greatest delight, at her father as he played.

Arthur had the satisfaction of beholding many a handful of halfpence thrown into the plaid bonnet of the now happy Flora.

The Highlander came opposite the window. Mrs. Percy threw open the sash, in order to bestow a trifle on the piper.

Flora raised her eyes, and uttered almost a scream of joy, as she beheld their little benefactor: exclaiming, "There he is—there he is!—Oh, how glad I am to see him!"

Arthur hastily drew in his head ; for he feared lest his aunt should be angry at his having parted with the half-guinea.

But Flora still continued jumping about, and calling for him to look out, and see how happy they were.

“ What can the child mean ? ” said Mr. Percy, who stood with them at the window. “ Let somebody call her in, and we will hear.”

“ No, no, dear uncle, do not have her in,” cried Arthur, in a tone of entreaty.

But Mr. Percy, who was determined to know the reason, left the room, and hastened into the street ; where he heard the whole account of his nephew’s generosity from the lips of the grateful Flora.

At first he could scarcely credit it ; but the truth was attested by the soldier, who, on hearing Arthur’s voice, declared it to be that of his benefactor.

Arthur, with tears in his eyes, in-

formed his aunt and cousin of the whole affair, saying, as he concluded,

“ Indeed, my dear aunt, I could not help giving the money to them, though it had been my father’s.”

Mrs. Percy, far from blaming her nephew, applauded him as he deserved; as to Jane, she was, if possible, the happiest of the party.

Mr. Percy shortly after returned, and presenting his hand to Arthur, said: “ I now give you my hand with the greatest pleasure I ever did in my life; your fault was trivial compared to your generous action, and I am at this moment prouder of my nephew than if he had been born a prince.”

That very day Mr. Percy presented Arthur with the *Life of Charles XII*; and a beautiful edition of *Homer*, handsomely bound in purple morocco. He also raised a subscription among his friends, to enable the blind piper to return to the place of his nativity.

Arthur Stanly was often heard to declare, when he grew to man's estate, that these two days had been the most miserable as well as the happiest of his life.

All eyes were attentively fixed on Mrs. Dormer as she concluded, and the children agreed that this was the best story they had yet heard. When they had done commenting on it, Edward observed that it was getting dusk, and was time for him and his brother to be going. When he had taken his leave, the children sat talking with their mother till near dark, and Mrs. Dormer began to think it was almost bed-time. As Mary and Kate were bidding her good-night, the latter happened to look towards a flower-stand, on which Mrs. Dormer had placed the glass jar.

“ Oh, Mary,” cried she, “ look, look! the dear little glow-worms have come back again!”

As she spoke all the children ran to the jar, which glittered among the plants, and every moment became an object of greater beauty, as the brilliant insects, one by one, unfolded their light, as if in emulation of each other, filling the vase with lustre, and shewing every particle of the moss they laid on, as if it were transparent. The children gazed on it with the greatest admiration; at last Mary said,

“ I can hardly help laughing, to think how silly I was in the morning; for I now see plainly the shape of the glow-worm is the same with the brown beetles I was so angry with.”

“ Oh, Mary,” said Kate, “ my aunt knew all about it, when she told us so gravely that the ugly beetles would bring us news of the glow-worms.”

“ I did, indeed,” said her aunt, “ for many summers ago I kept many of them in wet moss and grass till near autumn; at that time they laid some whitish eggs

and died. These eggs, however, did not produce any thing ; so I cannot tell you whether these insects assume any other form previous to that you now see them in ; nor can I direct you to any book that will give you a satisfactory account."

" Dear mamma," said Mary, " they are far from being ugly now ; for they are very brisk and lively, and constantly in motion, though in the morning they seemed half dead."

" It seems," said her mother, " that damp and dark places are necessary to to their existence ; and yet they appear only in the warmest weather.

" But, Mary, there is another luminous insect, which some people mistake for the glow-worm : it is of a very disgusting shape, being a species of the centipede ; it has, like that ugly insect, nearly fifty legs, on each side, and runs amazingly fast, leaving behind a long trail of greenish light."

“ I should not like them at all,” said William, “ for I think the centipede is uglier than a snake.”

“ I have a great dislike to them, myself,” said Mrs. Dormer; “ but the luminous centipede is not so frightful as those black ones you see sometimes on cellar walls, and in old wood. I remember the first time I saw any of the bright centipedes: I was coming home with my brother in the evening, through a green lane; I saw something shine brightly in the hedge: I ran up to it, thinking it was one of my favourite glow-worms, but recoiled, with no little disgust, when I saw that I was going to lay my hand on a nest of these centipedes, all writhing and clinging together like serpents, shewing at the same time a brilliant light.”

“ Dear!” said William, “ how horrid they must have looked! I suppose, mamma, you did not catch any?”

“ No,” said Mrs. Dormer, “ I was

then very young, not much older than Mary; and I could not conquer the antipathy I had to their hideous shape. But my brother took one, and brought it home, and when we looked at it by the light we found it was about two inches and a half long, of a pale brown, and certainly the best-looking of its species that I have seen."

The children would have been glad to have asked some more questions, but it grew so late, that their mother would not detain them from their beds, and they went away talking about the story and the glow-worms.

During the next week the children could think of nothing but the pleasure they were to enjoy at Hampstead fair; and all of them were continually wishing for a fine day. As the time drew near, Lewis and Kate were every minute running into the hall, and climbing one of

the green chairs to consult the barometer; though I cannot say they understood much about it. However, the evening before the wished-for day Kate ventured boldly to predict beautiful weather for the morrow: they all retired to rest, therefore, in excellent spirits. But when they awoke in the morning the rain was descending in torrents, and the sky looked as dark and heavy as if the wet weather had set in for a week. The poor children passed the morning in great anxiety, frequently peeping out at different windows, in hopes of seeing a little bit of blue in the sky, and wishing in vain for the rain to clear off. When the afternoon came, and they were forced to give up all hopes of going, Mary retreated to a corner, and began to weep bitterly. Kate and her brothers came and tried to comfort her; but Mary had set her mind so much on going, that she only cried the more. Presently her mamma came

in; and Mary, ashamed that her mother should see that she was such a baby as to cry for a little disappointment, hid her face in her frock : but still she could not suppress a sob or two. Mrs. Dormer came up to the corner where they all were assembled.

“ What is the matter ? ” she said (putting Mary’s frock from her eyes), “ What ails my poor Mary ? Is she ill, or has some one hurt her ? ”

Mary was much confused, and did not answer. Kate told her aunt that she believed her cousin cried because the rain had hindered her from going to the fair. Mrs. Dormer looked at Mary for some time, and then said,

“ I dare say, Mary, you expect that I should ridicule you for being so weak as to cry ; but I will not do so, for I see that you are ashamed of it already. Come out of your corner, and see whether I can convince you, that you might have gone to the fair, and it is possible

you might have returned still more unhappy than you are now."

Mary dried her tears ; and her mamma seated her on part of her own chair. The other children got their stools, and sat down by Mrs. Dormer.

" I remember the time, Mary, when I was as anxious to see the fair as you are now ; and the day on which I was to go turned out quite fine, and yet I was very far from spending it happily."

" Pray, dear mamma," said William, " do tell us what happened ; for I would as soon hear you tell a story, as go to the fair ; only we should have liked to have spent another day with dear Edward."

" I had written down all that happened," said his mother ; I meant to have read it to you, one day or other, but I think this will be the best time ; for however you may laugh at the comical distresses I got into, yet you would have found them very unpleasant,

if they had befallen you to-day. Listen then, my children, and hear my account of

A DAY AT HAMPSTEAD FAIR.

It is now nearly nineteen years ago, since my uncle Richmond came to stay at this very house, with his two sons. You know, my dears, that your grandfather lived here before we did : I was then about eleven years old.

My uncle, Captain Richmond, was my father's brother, and the commander of a frigate in the navy ; he had been on a long cruise, and was passing a few weeks with my father, previously to his going to sea again.

Captain Richmond had lost his wife : he had only two sons ; one of whom went to sea as a midshipman, under his father, and the other to the naval academy at Portsmouth. This last was away from school for the vacation ; so

my uncle brought both of them to stay at my father's house. My poor mother had rather delicate nerves, and these rough sailor-boys discomposed her sadly: for they were as wild as tiger-cats, and as full of mischief as monkeys; they broke her china, insulted her lap-dog; stole her apples; ducked her hens in the pond (that very pond you are so well acquainted with, Kate); and above all, affronted my youngest brother Sam, who was my mother's pet. However, she bore with all these enormities, out of respect to my uncle Richmond, who was a brave, generous sailor, and sincerely attached to all his brother's family. This visit was agreeable enough to us children, only Frank and James Richmond were rather too rough in their play; and they sometimes fell out with my eldest brother, William, bestowing on him the epithets of "land-lubber," and "fresh water spark," when he displeased them. These dis-

putes were generally settled by my uncle with a few strokes of a cat-o'-nine tails that he always carried in his coat-pocket, for the accommodation of his sons. I was always engaged in these quarrels, either on one side or the other; and as I never came in for a share of the blows, I was sometimes wicked enough to laugh at the speed with which my uncle chastised his boys, whether guilty or innocent; and at the coolness with which the stripes were received by the young sailors. My uncle always took it for granted his sons were in the wrong; but if the instrument chanced to glance on the back of either of my brothers, the house resounded with their lamentations.

They had been at our house about six weeks, and were going away in a few days, when the captain said to my mother one evening, "sister, to-morrow is Hampstead fair; and I should like all the young ones to go, and have a day of it."

My mother shook her head, and seemed to disapprove; but my uncle seemed determined to have his own way: besides, my brother Sam set up a loud fit of crying, for fear he should not go. This induced my mother to give her consent; and the nurse-maid, Ann, and our old nurse Hill, were ordered to hold themselves in readiness to attend us to the fair on the morrow. Now my father was in London, where he had to spend two days on business, or *he* might possibly have put a negative on this arrangement; but as it was, we were all greatly delighted with the plan, particularly uncle Richmond, who declared that he would go with us, and steer us safely along.

In the morning I was awoke by a loud shout under the window from midshipman Frank. I got up quickly, and found my cousins dressed in their uniforms, and looking very smart. Frank promised to be my beau, and to take

great care of me. Well, it was past ten o'clock before we were all ready. At last, out we marched in the following order: the nurse-maid led my little sister Jane, and old nurse Hill the darling Sam, of whom my mother had given us all special charge; then came Frank, handing me along very politely, and Captain Richmond, with my brother William and cousin James, brought up the rear. In this manner we proceeded very sedately till we almost reached the town, and began to hear the noise and bustle of the fair. Just as we came to the houses we met a party of naval officers, who began shaking hands with Captain Richmond, and telling him about some recent victory at sea. Away went my uncle Richmond with them, without bestowing a thought on us poor children, whom he had under his care. Then my troubles began. Master James had behaved very peaceably while his father's eye was on him,

for he stood in some awe of the cat-o'-nine-tails, which he saw the Captain put into his pocket before he set out; indeed his father said to him, "Jem, if you are not on your best behaviour, you will have a taste of it." But the moment his father was fairly out of sight he began his pranks; he twitched his hand from William, and scampered some way before us, until he met with a quiet old hen, clucking in the dusty road with a few dirty chicks: the moment James saw the hen, he stole softly up, and putting his foot under her, by a dexterous toss, sent her cackling and screaming up in the air, as high as the garret windows of the next house. After performing this exploit, he ran laughing back to us. Now the old woman who owned the hen was enraged to see the unusual flight of the poor creature, and running out, began to abuse James in a very shrill voice, not sparing us, to whom she saw he

belonged ; but we had certainly no share in the mischief. Mrs. Hill, our nurse, was a woman of too much spirit to put up with so much injustice ; she began to scold in return, while the idle boy who had caused the quarrel stood laughing, and provoking the old woman to greater rage. Frank enjoyed the fray as much as his brother, but at last he attended to my intreaties, and persuaded Mrs. Hill to walk on, and leave the angry old woman : but he could not prevail on our good nurse to proceed, till she had quite exhausted her breath in scolding.

Master James seemed to think very highly of himself for this trick ; he marched before the whole party with his arms a-kimbo, kicking up the dust, and on the look-out for another mischievous prank. Mrs. Hill, when she had recovered her voice, scolded James for raising the dust : he answered saucily ; she retorted, and they entered

the fair, wrangling as hard as they could.

When we got among the crowd, James and William escaped from us, and got into a merry-go-round. Frank very kindly staid with me, and handed me about the fair. Sometimes we stopped to look at the fire-eaters, and sometimes to view the Merry-Andrew. The sun shone very hot ; and after we had been in the fair about an hour and a half, I became very faint and tired. The place got more and more crowded, and I could hardly move among a throng of people, most of whom were a foot taller than myself. Frank helped me through as well as he could, and we were making the best of our way towards a fruit-stall, when a saucy little drummer pushed me so rudely that I was nearly thrown on my face. Frank asked him how he dared act so ? and the drummer answered by twirling Frank's hat round on his head, and calling him a powder-monkey. This

was rather more than the little officer chose to bear, he therefore flew at the drummer, and gave him a violent blow; this was immediately returned, and a furious battle began. I escaped, half frightened to death, and luckily found Mrs. Hill and little Sam in a stall close by. In a little time Frank had well pummelled the drummer; but it was of no use waiting for him: he was off, and so were James and William. It was now one o'clock, and little Jane and Sam were very hungry. Nurse Hill proposed going out of the town, and eating the provisions we had brought for dinner in a green meadow at a little distance; but a new difficulty occurred: Master Sam, who had before been very tractable, now spied out a large gingerbread cocked-hat hung in front of a stall close by; this valuable article he insisted on buying; but it was the sign of the stall, and the man it belonged to was loth to sell it. However, after a

great deal of bargaining, the man agreed to take three shillings for the hat ; this was sixpence more than we had, and he would not take a farthing less, so poor Sam was disappointed ; but he thought (as all spoiled children do) to manage matters abroad as he did at home, by a fit of crying : however, all his screaming was of no avail here ; and nurse Hill, greatly scandalized at his bad behaviour, took him up in her arms, and carried him, kicking, out of the fair.

We had got to the field where we thought of dining before Sam was pacified ; at last we all sat down on the grass, and Ann took out of the basket a nice damask napkin, with some cold roast chicken and ham packed in vine leaves, and a bottle of cyder. We had all drank some of the cyder, which much refreshed us, and just as we were preparing to eat our dinner, a big boy stepped over nurse Hill's shoulder, and seizing the napkin and all that was in it,

ran off in an instant. Poor nurse Hill ran after him, scolding and threatening, but it was of no use. The hungry children cried bitterly for their lost dinner, and we had nothing but the cyder left. Ann put the bottle in her basket, thanking her stars that the thief had not taken that. Mrs. Hill thought it best for us to return to the fair, and lay out the money we had left in victuals for the children, and then try to collect the boys together and return home. My head ached with the noise of the fair, and I was loth to go back to it. We had nearly reached the town, when Frank met us; his face was adorned with two black eyes, otherwise he did not seem to have received much damage from the fight.

“Where have you been, you tiresome boy? always fighting and quarrelling, and scaring honest bodies out of their wits,” screamed nurse Hill in a shrill voice, as soon as she saw him.

“ There, mother Hill,” said Frank, “ hold your tongue. I have taken no hurt. I suppose you would have had me stood by, and see Mary pushed down and trampled on by that land-lubber? but I dressed his tawdry jacket for him. I say, cousin Mary,” continued he, “ I have been at the Bush, where my father and a party of officers are dining; and they tell me that Nelson has beaten the French soundly; and my father is appointed Captain of a ship in Nelson’s squadron, and we are ordered to sail next week, and I am to go with them; huzza!”

Frank now shouted and capered as if he was wild. I was a little peevish, however, and did not like the noise he made. “ I wish,” said I, “ you would be quiet, Frank, and come back with us to the fair, and help find those mad boys who have run away from us, and then we can go home.”

“ Well, I will,” said Frank; “ but I

forgot to tell you that my father gave me a guinea when I was at the Bush, to be divided amongst you all for fairings; and if mother Hill and Ann are good-tempered, they shall come in for a share."

This put us all in good-humour. We entered the town in high spirits, and soon got some refreshment, and Sam directly went to the stall to buy the gingerbread hat; but alas, it had been sold while he was gone. This disappointment occasioned another fit of roaring; till, to appease him, Mrs. Hill permitted him to mount one of the horses in a merry-go-round. We stood a few minutes, seeing him spin round in great state, when my brother William came up to us, crying aloud. He had certainly been rolled in the dust, for his coat was covered with dirt. Before we could inquire what was the matter James followed him: *he* did not cry, but he was in a sad pickle; his nose was

streaming with blood, the frill of his shirt hung in tatters, and one skirt of his coat was rent off. We really were not a little ashamed of this addition to our party : for a mob, attracted by the noise William made, began to gather round us. At this moment a hackney-coachman from London drove through the fair, calling, " Who rides ? who rides ? A ride for a penny a-head." Frank gave him a hail, as he called it. The man drew up, and Frank bustled James and William into the coach ; he then packed in nurse Hill, and the maid with the children. As he was handing me up the steps I dropped my shoe among the crowd.

" Oh, my shoe !" I cried ; " find my shoe !"

" Never mind your shoe," said Frank, " we cannot look for it among so many people." He then pushed me into the coach, jumped in himself, and the man shut the door.

How we all contrived to get into one coach I cannot think to this day; but when we were in, nurse asked the boys what had ailed them. William began to cry afresh, and James to laugh.

“How came you in such a plight, Jem?” asked Frank.

“Why,” said Jem, “you must know that a litte while ago William and I went up to a cake stall, and whilst I was bargaining, Master Will peeped through a hole in an oyster-woman’s stall close by, and there he saw a little white pitcher standing on one of the tubs; so he stooped down and picked up a pebble, which he threw with such good aim through the hole, that the pitcher, which was full of spirits, broke in pieces, and all the liquor ran among the oysters. The stall-woman flew out like a fury; but she could not have told who had done it, you know, only a great thick-headed boy who stood by pointed at poor Will, and said, “That is the boy who threw

the stone." The fish-woman at this began to cuff poor William, and knocked him into the dirt; whilst I, having nothing else to do, gave the boy who had told the tale a good banging; but I believe I came off the worst, for the boy was bigger and stronger than me, though Will has made such a piping for a few thumps."

By the time James had finished relating this mishap the coachman stopped his horses; he said he had given us a good ride for our money, and would go no farther; we offered to pay him handsomely if he would take us home. "No," he said, "he could make more money by driving about the fair, and he would not stir another step."

Think of me, unhappy creature that I was, for I had to walk home with only one shoe. Frank, to do him justice, was very kind, and offered to carry me on his back; but that I did not choose, for fear the people we met should laugh

at me. Well, we began to move slowly forward on the road home. I leaned heavily on Frank's arm, and hopped some paces on one foot. This mode of travelling so diverted the mischievous James, and he burst into such immoderate fits of laughter, that I, provoked beyond all endurance, began to cry as if I should break my heart. Frank was much concerned at this, and threatened James that if he were not quiet, he would get him a ropes-ending by telling his father. Frank then took off the black silk handkerchief which he wore round his neck, and tied it about my foot as well as he could, to defend me against the stones. James, who was brought to order by my tears more than by his brother's threats, begged my pardon, and offered to help me along. I took his arm rather sulkily, and, supported by him and Frank, contrived to limp forward a little way.

As we were proceeding homewards in this melancholy manner a post-chaise

drove past us. Presently it stopped, and my father jumped out; he came towards us, much astonished at meeting with his children in such a pitiful condition. He first looked at Frank's bruised face, and William's dirty jacket; then at my foot, and James's bloody nose and tattered garments.

“Why, children,” he said, “what do you all here so far from home? and who has been misusing you in this manner?”

We all lifted up our voices at once to reply; but nurse Hill contrived to make hers sound the loudest.

“Oh, Sir,” she said, “the Captain would take us all to Hampstead fair; but as soon as we got there he left us, and we have met with so many mischances, that I thought I never should have brought the children alive out of the fair.”

“So,” said my father, “this is just like my mad-cap brother! What could

induce their mother to trust so many children to such a hair-brained creature?"

We now complained how tired and hungry we all were; my father had us children put into the chaise, and, bidding the postillion drive at a foot-pace, walked by the side with Frank, hearing from him all our disasters; and indeed we had all contrived to get into some misfortune except our maid Ann, and quiet little Jane.

I hardly need tell you that we were all rejoiced when we arrived at home, and were fed and comforted after our fatigues.

Some days after Captain Richmond and his sons set off for Portsmouth, where his ship lay. It was a long time before I could laugh at our mishaps; indeed I would cry bitterly if any one afterwards proposed our spending another *day at Hampstead Fair*.

"I do not wonder at it, mamma," said Mary. "Oh, how vexed I should

have been! I am afraid that I should have fretted myself quite ill if such disagreeable things had happened to me."

"Therefore, Mary, such places are very improper for you, who cannot bear any little accident with temper. I was not fretful, but I really suffered severely from terror and fatigue. I see that Kate and William are laughing, as if they did not think it very frightful."

"Who can help laughing, mamma?" said William; "but I am sadly afraid, that if Kate and I had gone to the fair we might have got into some mischief, for we are both very careless."

"Your brother William is my father," said Kate to her aunt."

"Yes, my dear girl, said Mrs. Dormer, "and we often now laugh over our misfortunes at Hampstead fair."

The weather proved so wet all the week that it was impossible to go to the fair either of the two remaining days on which it was held; but after the first

disappointment was over, the children regretted it very little; and they were made ample amends, by spending another happy, quiet day with Edward and George before they went to school.

The month of July passed away very delightfully. Kate's health was greatly improved by the kind attention and judicious management of her good aunt: the consumptive symptoms that had before threatened her entirely disappeared, and by the middle of August she was considered well enough to go back to school; but previously to that her father wished her to return home with her uncle, aunt, and cousins, to spend some days with him. This gentleman had recently purchased a landed estate in Surrey, which he cultivated himself; and as he had now been for some time comfortably settled in the farm, he came over to invite them into Surrey at the

joyous time of the harvest. The invitation was accepted by Mr. and Mrs. Dorrner; and the next day the whole party set off for Mr. Richmond's estate. He drove Kate and William in his gig, and Mary and Lewis followed with their father and mother in a post-chaise. They enjoyed the ride greatly; and Kate strove to amuse her father, by relating to him some of the stories she had heard from her aunt.

It was past eight in the evening when they arrived at the farm. They drove round a lawn to a large handsome white house; which, though an old building, had a peculiar air of comfort and cheerfulness. Every thing within, also, appeared very neat; and the children, who had never been in a farm-house before, found plenty of objects to admire. The rows of pewter, which filled a long range of shelves over the dresser, and that rivalled silver itself in brightness, caught the attention of the young stran-

gers; who had a thousand questions to ask of their uncle, for every thing they saw was entirely new to them.

William and Mary ran to the door to look at a fine litter of young pigs, which the dairy-maid was feeding with some milk.

“ Look, Mary,” said William, “ how those little pigs are quarrelling for the milk! how greedy it seems of them, when there is plenty for all!”

“ It is very naughty for them to fight,” said Lewis, “ they are such pretty little white creatures; what a pity it is that they are not good.”

“ They are indeed very pretty,” said Kate; “ but you know, Lewis, those things which are the *prettiest* are not *always* the *best*.”

They were still amusing themselves by looking at the little pigs, when they were called into the parlour to supper. The children gazed with wonder at the profusion of victuals provided for them.

An enormous hot apple-pie smoked in the middle of the table ; on each side of it stood two large custards. At one end of the table were three roast chickens and a large ham, and at the other a huge plum-pudding. The journey had made them very hungry, and they did honour to the ample supper that Mrs. Harrison, the good old housekeeper, had provided for them.

The children's eyes were open by sunrise in the morning, and Mary and Kate jumped out of bed, and began dressing with great expedition, when Mary looking out of the window into a green meadow below, exclaimed in a tone of great surprise, " Oh, Kate, come and look at a beautiful creature that is walking about in the meadow below : I never saw any fowl like it before ; it is prettier than mamma's stuffed humming-bird."

Kate left off washing her face, and ran to the window, for she could not

think what Mary was admiring so much.

“ Oh, it is only the peacock,” said she.

“ How I should like to catch it,” said Mary. “ Kate, is it tame ?”

“ Not very, for it runs away and makes a noise if any one comes near it,” said Kate; “ it was once very tame, but John used to pull the long feathers out of its tail, and drive it about till it grew very cross, and has not suffered any one to catch it since.”

“ How cruel !” said Mary, “ to pull out its nice feathers ; what a pity John is not good !”

While Mary was tying her shoes, William and Lewis called out from an adjoining room for her to look at a large flock of sheep which were being driven into a field close by. Mary was astonished to see how carefully the shepherd's dog guided them along, and

brought back those which attempted to stray from the rest of the flock.

“ How pretty and innocent they look ! don't they, Kate ? ”

“ Yes, Mary. ”

“ But look, Kate, Mrs. Harrison is crossing the yard ; we shall be too late to see the cows milked, and the calves suckled. Make haste and comb out your hair, ” said Mary, impatiently.

“ We shall have plenty of time, dear Mary, ” replied Kate ; “ for, if you remember, Mrs. Harrison promised last night to call us when she was ready to show us the milking. ”

But Mary was so impatient to see the young calves, and to drink the new milk, that Kate led the way to the dairy, where the dairy-maid was busily employed in taking off the cream of the yesterday's milk. Kate was satisfying the curiosity of Mary respecting the various utensils, when Mrs. Harrison entered with William and Lewis, and they

all proceeded to the cowhouse, where all the cows stood fastened up, waiting to be milked.

The children were all delighted when the calves were let out of the adjoining crib, and came capering to suck.

“Look, madam,” said Mary, “how ill-tempered that spotted cow seems towards her calf.”

“And now see, Mary, how she is kicking it! What a cruel creature to hurt such a nice little calf?” exclaimed Lewis springing forward as he spoke, and before Mrs. Harrison had time to prevent him, he bestowed on the cow two or three hearty blows with an old shackle, which unfortunately for the poor beast happened to lay near, saying, “Now learn to use your calf so ill.” But the cow, not being used to such rough treatment, began kicking at a great rate. Lewis ran back to Mrs. Harrison in a fright.

“What ill-natured creatures cows





are," said Lewis, regarding the object of his wrath with great indignation.

"And yet, my dear, the cow was not so much to blame as you thought her, for see how the calf has bitten her."

"So it has, I declare," said Lewis, "for the blood is running quite fast. I wish I had not been so hasty in striking her, poor thing."

The cow was now quiet, and began eating her hay again. Lewis went up to her, and stroked her face and sides, which she did not seem to take at all amiss.

"Now, dear Mrs. Harrison, will you give us a little new milk?" said Kate; "here is the wooden cup."

"With pleasure," said the good old lady, and she filled the cup and sent it round; they each drank a good draught of the milk, and thought it delicious.

When the cows were all milked, they proceeded to the poultry-yard, and Mrs. Harrison filled her lap with barley and

dross wheat. At the sound of her well known voice, all sorts of poultry came tumbling over each other, in their eagerness to get their morning repast; turkeys and their chicks, guinea-fowls, and a peahen with her brood. This last was examined with great attention by Mary.

“They are not prettier than chickens; nay, I do not like them so well,” said she.

“No, my dear,” returned Mrs. Harrison; “it is many months before the young peachicks show any marks of their beauty; and then it is only the male that is handsome, for you see the peahen is rather an ordinary bird.

“But where are all the geese?” said William; “for I see only two, under coops, with some nice little yellow goslings.”

“All the geese, and large turkies, and ducks and hogs, are driven to the barley fields after the crops are cleared; and there they find an excellent living, by picking up the grains that have been scattered.”

The little party now returned to the house; and on entering the parlour, they kissed their mamma, and bid their father and uncle good morning. They then took their seats at a side-table very orderly, and ate their breakfasts of brown bread and milk, with great relish, for rising so early had given them a keen appetite.

When the cloth was removed, the children got round Mrs. Dormer, and began to tell her all they had seen. Mr. Richmond seemed greatly diverted by the adventure of Lewis with the cow; but advised him not to be so ready in administering justice among the cattle, lest he should get severely hurt for his pains.

“And now,” he said, “in about an hour I will return and take you to the harvest-field. In the mean time, Kate shall go with you into the garden, and there you will see the rabbits, and the

bees at work, only take care that you are not stung."

When they had sufficiently admired the rabbits, and looked at the bees till they were tired, they walked up and down the garden with Mrs. Dormer, till they saw their father and Mr. Richmond coming to them.

The whole party now proceeded across the lawn; the giddy little Lewis running on before till he reached a stile, which led into a field of barley-stubble. In this field there were a large flock of geese and some turkies, together with the peacock which Mary had admired in the morning. Lewis, who was a careless fellow, got among them, and was assaulted by the great turkey-cock, who ran after him, trying to bite him.

Lewis took to his heels, and in his haste to escape from the wrath of the turkey, he disturbed a flock of goslings, which with the old grey goose, were quietly sitting on the ground, sunning

themselves among the stubble. The goose, seeing her brood in disorder, made such a lamentable outcry as brought the gander and several of his companions to her aid. Lewis was now in the greatest distress; he knew not which way to run. At last he boldly faced about, and taking up a handful of stones, flung them among the foremost of his enemies: the gander, enraged at this, flapped his wings, and gave Lewis several unmerciful pecks on the back of his leg.

It would be difficult to determine which made the most noise, the geese, or Lewis Dormer, for they screamed in concert, and were joined by the turkeys; and though the peacock did not attempt to assist his neighbours, yet he added his note to increase the clamour.

The noise did not fail to reach the ears of the party in the meadow, who came quickly up to the barley-field. Mr. Richmond jumped over the stile,

and drove the geese away with his stick, and they retired hissing and screaming to a little distance, while Lewis, with tears in his eyes, ran to his mother, and related the bad behaviour of the turkies and geese; declaring at the same time that he wished his uncle would not keep such ill-tempered creatures, for he hated them all.

“And yet, Lewis does not dislike roasted goose for dinner,” said his father, “and I have seen him eat turkey at Christmas.”

“Yes; but roasted geese never *hurt* me,” said Lewis, rubbing his leg.

“Will you go back, and wait till your leg is better?” said Mrs. Dormer.

“Do, dear Lewis,” said his cousin Kate; “and I will stay with you, and we can look at the pictures in the great parlour.”

But Lewis, who did not relish the thoughts of returning to the house at all, thanked his cousin, and said his leg was

getting better ; indeed, he was in a few minutes the foremost in a race that William and Mary were engaged in, and scampered along as if nothing had happened.

They soon reached the harvest-field, where the men were busily employed in loading and carrying the wheat. Here every thing was alive and bustling : the men all looked cheerful and gay ; some whistled or sung as they worked, and others talked of the pleasures to be enjoyed at the expected harvest-home supper.

“ Here is our good master coming, my boys,” cried the men on the loaded waggon to those below.

“ Well, my lads,” said Mr. Richmond, as he drew near, “ when am I to prepare this harvest-supper for you ?”

“ We expect, Sir, to bring home the last load to-morrow afternoon,” said the head man, respectfully taking off his hat to his master.

In that part of the field which was cleared the wives and children of the labourers were permitted to begin gleaning. The children soon ran off to observe the gleaners at work; and Mary and Kate began gathering up the ears of corn, and presenting to those who appeared feeble, and not able to work so hard as the others.

“ God bless your pretty faces, my little dears,” said a poor old woman, to whom Mary and Kate had given a large handful of corn.

Lewis, hearing the benedictions which were so liberally bestowed on the girls, and determining not to be out-done in generosity, began to present large handfuls of the corn, which he pulled out of the standing sheaves, to the women and children; when, just as Lewis began to fill the lap of a little girl, his uncle touched him on the shoulder. “ Aha! my little man, if you are so bountiful I

shall soon lose half the profits of my fields."

Lewis was quite in a fright, for he thought his uncle would be very angry: indeed he had never recollected that the wheat was none of his to give away; so he looked very penitent, and begged his uncle's pardon.

His uncle readily forgave him; but reminded him that when he next intended to be generous, at another person's expense, he must first ask permission.

Shortly after Mr. Richmond told them he was going to quit the field, as they should have dinner very soon.

The next day presented a scene of bustle and activity; every body was busy, and every countenance beamed with joy—it was Harvest Home—and there was not an individual on the farm

but what partook of the general rejoicing that the master's corn was got safely in.

The great oaken table was placed in the middle of the hall, and benches and forms were brought to accommodate the guests. The hall itself was decked with green boughs, and a sheaf of wheat was suspended over the table. A barrel of ale was tapped, and a noble batch of harvest cakes baked; and the gardener brought in a great basket full of apples and plums, to entertain the good folks after supper.

Mary and Kate were highly interested in the preparations for the approaching festival. Mrs. Harrison, taking each of the little girls by the hand, went from place to place, giving orders to the maids, and seeing that her commands were executed; she then proceeded to make the plum-puddings and apple-pies, Mary and Kate seating themselves by her side and attentively looking on.

Presently the butcher knocked at the

kitchen door, and Mary's admiration was excited on seeing the enormous pieces of beef and suet which he took out of his basket.

"Mrs. Harrison," she exclaimed, "how is all that meat to be eaten?"

"I warrant you, my dear, there will not be a vast deal too much."

And in a few minutes a great fire was made, the plum-puddings were put into the copper, and two great pieces of beef laid down to roast.

Towards the evening Mrs. Harrison put on her green lute-string gown (which was never worn but on great occasions), her very best cap, and worked-muslin apron, and the maid-servants decked themselves out in their holiday-gowns.

A shout of "The last load! huzzah! here comes the last load!" brought the children to the window. They saw the last load of wheat coming home, crowned with green boughs, and followed by men, women and children, some before and

some behind, shouting joyfully as they advanced.

The little Dormers were in as high spirits as any of them ; and William and Lewis rushed out to see it unloaded.

Mrs. Harrison hurried forwards with a large basket full of harvest cakes, just hot from the oven, followed by one of the maids with a stone pitcher of ale, to regale the harvest-men as soon as the waggon was unloaded. The men with their wives and children then went home to dress.

At length the supper hour arrived, and the pieces of beef which struck Mary with such astonishment were placed on the table, and two great plum-puddings at the head, and two at the foot, and a great apple-pie in the middle ; a large piece of bread and a mug of ale were also placed to every plate. All had been arranged in the nicest order by Mrs. Harrison, who now took the head of the table.

Mr. Richmond walked through the hall with the children, to see that every thing was right, and that the people were comfortable. All the farming men were there, with their wives and children, who looked the pictures of health and joy: they were all standing round the table. When Mr. Richmond entered, the men bowed, the women curtsied, and the children followed the example of their parents.

“Is every thing ready, Mrs. Harrison?” asked Mr. Richmond.

“Yes, Sir; every thing,” was the reply.

“Then say grace, and begin your supper,” rejoined he.

Grace was accordingly said, and the company having taken their seats, Mrs. Harrison began carving. When Mr. Richmond had seen them all helped, he wished them a good appetite, and (that they might enjoy themselves without restraint) withdrew with his delighted little visitors.

Nor had the guests been forgotten ; for when the children entered the dining parlour they found an excellent supper laid out for them.

And now the cloth being removed, Mr. Richmond once more entered the hall, and threw open the folding doors, that the children might see the people.

“ Well, my good friends, how do you come on ? ” asked Mr. Richmond.

“ God bless your honour, bravely, ” replied many voices at once, and again the head man rose and said grace, the cloth was taken away, and the fruit and pitchers of ale put on the table ; a horn full of beer was then given to each. In a moment men, women and children burst into the chorus-song of “ Here ’s a health to our good master, the founder of the feast. ” Certainly their voices were not very harmonious, and the words were rather homely, the song having been used by their fathers before them for many ge-

nerations: but the children listened to it with great pleasure; they afterwards heard their own healths given, one by one; and Lewis seemed to think himself a person of great consequence when he was toasted in turn.

They staid up long after their usual time, and then retired to bed, greatly pleased at the scene they had beheld.

In a day or two after the jovial harvest-home Mr. and Mrs. Dormer took leave of their good brother and his family. The tears stood in Kate's eyes as she viewed the approach of the post-chaise which was to take her aunt away. "And now," she said, "I shall lose you. Oh, how often I shall think of your nice stories, and how happy I have been with my cousins, when I am at school at Guilford."

Mrs. Dormer stooped down and kissed away her tears, which now began to

fall very fast. "Do not grieve, my dear Kate, for these happy times will soon come again, for your father has promised that you shall spend next Christmas with me, and I have other stories which you shall hear then; and I hope my little Kate will spend her Christmas holidays as pleasantly as she has the Midsummer. Kate wiped away her tears at hearing this joyful news, and summoned fortitude to bid her cousins good-bye, though it required all Mrs. Harrison's kindness to comfort her, when she could no longer see the carriage that bore them away.

The intervening months passed rapidly away; the long anticipated vacation arrived, and the little Dormers were once more gratified with the company and conversation of their cousin Kate. A thousand little occurrences were remembered and related with mutual satisfaction; and amidst all the festivities attendant on the season of Christmas, the

intellectual enjoyment of hearing more tales was eagerly anticipated by the children. The very first evening after Kate's arrival, therefore, Mrs. Dormer was reminded of her kind promise : and as she was at all times willing to gratify her beloved family, she desired the young folks to form themselves into a comfortable circle round the fire whilst she related the story of

THE PRIMROSE GIRL,
OR, LITTLE EMMA'S BIRTH-DAY.

IT was a beautiful morning in the month of April, when Mr. and Mrs. Selwhyn arose somewhat earlier than their usual hour, on account of some expected visitors who had been invited on that day to Heathwood Park, for the purpose of celebrating the birth-day of little Emma, who, being an only child, was made a great pet of, and who had now completed her ninth year. She

was, indeed, a most promising little creature of her age: but why was she so?—because she was good, and kind, obedient to her parents, and attentive to all the instructions of her teachers: therefore she might truly be called promising; because, my young readers, if children do well at this early age, they promise to do better when they grow older; and thus was Miss Emma Selwhyn at nine years of age considered a very promising young lady by all her numerous friends and acquaintance. It is no wonder, therefore, that her birthday was commemorated with peculiar pleasure by her fond parents, because they hoped with the increase of years she would also increase in learning, humility, and virtue.

With this pleasing anticipation, Mrs. Selwhyn requested her husband to favour her with half an hour's conversation, as they walked towards the summer-house in the garden, which breathed

the delicious fragrance of the opening flowers !

“ I have been thinking, my love,” said Mrs. Selwhyn, “ if you have no objection, of trying a little stratagem with Emma. As it is her birth-day, I should wish to know whether thankfulness for her own blessings would induce her to perform any act of kindness towards others on this particular day, that she may with more pleasure remember it on the next.”

“ With all my heart,” rejoined Mr. Selwhyn. “ Let us try the experiment, by presenting her, instead of personal ornaments, as formerly, with a purse of money, and we shall then see what she will do with it.”

“ I shall be much disappointed if she does not make use of it in the way I should wish,” said Mrs. Selwhyn, drawing out of her pocket a neat red morocco purse, containing two half-crown pieces, to which Mr. Selwhyn added two more, making in

the whole, the sum of ten shillings. Now this was certainly a very large sum for a little girl of Emma's age to be trusted with: for some children spend their money very foolishly, and throw it away on mere trifles. However, we shall see what use Emma will make of it, and I hope it will be a good one; for money is of little or no value, unless it be appropriated to good purposes.

“Now,” said Mr. Selwhyn, “we will return; as by this time, I dare say, Emma is ready for her breakfast, and will no doubt be delighted with the unexpected present we are going to make her.”

“Oh, you cannot think,” cried Mrs. Selwhyn, “how careful she is of her money! I gave her two new shillings, and I should not be at all surprised if she has one of them laid by.”

Mrs. Selwhyn now stopped a few moments, intending to gather some flowers, but suddenly directing her attention to-

wards the summer-house, she perceived her amiable daughter in close conversation with a poor little girl, who, though almost clothed in rags, was yet very clean and modest in her appearance. She had no bonnet on her head, but a large basket, plentifully supplied with bunches of primroses; and though she had a smiling countenance, full of good-humour and sweetness, yet her rosy cheeks were wet with tears, which she brushed away with hands that were sun-burnt, but not dirty.

“Poor little girl!” cried Emma, “I am very sorry for you, indeed; and I am sure, if my mamma were here, she would let me buy a great many of your primroses. I would buy all you have got in your basket if I could afford it.” With these words Emma, taking a bundle of primroses out of the basket, gave the little girl a penny, exclaiming, “how sorry I am that I have no more than this penny; but if I had, you should be welcome to it, indeed you should.”

“ Bless you, Miss,” cried the primrose girl; “ it is more than anybody else has given me; and God will love you, because you are not proud, and are not ashamed of speaking to a poor girl like me !”

“ Oh dear, I should be very wicked if I were ashamed of speaking to poor people,” said Emma. “ Papa and mamma would be much displeased with me; and they are so kind, that I should be sorry to do any thing to excite their displeasure.”

The primrose girl now placed her basket on her head, and putting her penny into one corner of it, sighed mournfully as she bade Emma adieu, saying she would buy a penny roll, and carry it home to her sick mother.

“ Oh dear,” cried Emma, “ if you have got a sick mother, I am sure my mamma would do something for her, for she is very kind to every body that is ill. Where do you live, little girl?

pray tell me, and I will come and see you, if mamma pleases, and bring you something. I have got a nice basket, which will hold a great deal, you cannot think how much! This is my birth-day, and what do you think I will do? I will save all my plum-cake, and you shall have it for your sick mother, indeed you shall."

The primrose girl dropt a low curtsey, and informing her young benefactress that her mother lived by the side of the old barn in the forest, she tripped away in pursuit of more customers, and with a joyful heart, that she had already got one penny towards the homely meal which awaited her when the labours of the day should be over; while little Emma awaited a very different scene in the splendid breakfast parlour in the family mansion of Heathwood Park. Scarcely, however, could the transports of Mr. and Mrs. Selwhyn be concealed in the presence of their beloved child,

the discovery of whose benevolent disposition towards the poor primrose girl had rendered her doubly dear to them.

“ Well,” cried Mrs. Selwhyn, “ what do you think of Emma now ?”

“ Think !” exclaimed Mr. Selwhyn, “ why I am of opinion that the red morocco purse cannot be better bestowed than on one who knows so well how to make a proper use of it. Here she comes, with cheeks as fresh as the blooming rose ! But pray do not say a word of the primrose girl.”

Emma now came into the room, and paid her respects to her papa and mamma, who kissing her ruby lips, reminded her that it was her birth-day.

“ You are nine years old to-day, Emma,” said Mrs. Selwhyn.

“ Yes, mamma ; and nine more will make eighteen, and I shall be a great woman, if I live till then ; and my apple-tree, that papa said he planted the day I was born, will be a great tree,

with plenty of apples on it; and you know, as it is mine, I may, when I am grown a woman, do what I like with it."

"Oh, certainly," exclaimed Mr. Selwhyn; "but pray, Emma, in that case, what would you do with it? I should like to know."

"Why, papa, I would gather all the apples I could find on it, and make them all into apple-dumplings, for poor little girls who had sick mothers, and could not afford to buy any."

Mrs. Selwhyn could no longer refrain from pressing her darling girl to her maternal bosom, for at this moment a mother's heart was quite full; while Mr. Selwhyn, equally delighted, affectionately kissed his beloved daughter.

"Mrs. Selwhyn," said he, "I believe it is high time to produce the red morocco purse; it is really growing quite troublesome in my pocket."

"Then suppose you give it without further delay," rejoined Mrs. Selwhyn.

“ Emma, your papa is going to present you with a birth-day gift; a little red morocco purse.”

“ With money in it ? ” inquired Emma.

“ Yes, my love: a purse is of little use without there is money in it.”

Emma was silent, but her blushing cheeks and sparkling eyes evinced the secret pleasure which this intelligence conveyed.

Mr. Selwhyn, while presenting his daughter with her birth-day gift, said, “ now Emma, place this carefully in your pocket; and though you need not now examine its contents, remember they are entirely your own, and you are at liberty to make use of them agreeable to your own inclinations.”

“ What, papa, may I do what I like with the money ? ” inquired Emma, regarding the purse with a wishful eye, while she deposited it carefully in her pocket.

“ I have given it you for that pur-

pose," answered her fond parent; "only remember, that if you live till next birthday, you must inform me in what manner you disposed of it." Mr. Selwhyn then retired to his study, and his good lady was left alone with her daughter.

"I will spare you from your studies, this morning, my dear Emma," said Mrs. Selwhyn, "for we have company to dinner, because it is your birth-day. But look! as I live, here is Susannah, your old nurse, hobbling over the stile. She is coming, I suppose, to wish you many happy returns of this day. She was a kind nurse to you, Emma, when you was a helpless little baby, and could not take care of yourself; so I will leave you to make her as welcome as you please, while I attend to my domestic concerns."

Susannah had by this time arrived at the garden-gate, and Emma with a joyful countenance came out to meet her.

“ How kind it is of you, dear Susannah,” cried she, “ to come and see me on my birth-day ! But you have walked a great way, and must be extremely fatigued ; pray sit down, and rest yourself.”

Susannah seated herself in the first chair she could find, for she was very aged and infirm ; and when Emma had taken off her cloak, and laid aside her walking-stick, she thus addressed her :

“ There, Susannah, now you are seated, and may take as much rest as you please, and I will wait on you, and bring you any thing you may want : for mamma told me you was a kind nurse to me, when I was a little baby and could not help myself, so now I have got strength, I will help you, Susannah. Indeed, I should be very naughty if I did not. Will you take any refreshment after your walk ? Suppose I fetch you some nice cake, and a little cream ?”

“ Heaven preserve and bless you, my darling!” cried Susannah; “ there is no occasion for that: I see you, and I am happy; but I could not rest without coming to bless you on your birthday! You was a tender lamb, and you are a tender lamb now. Heaven spare you to see many such days! But I shall never live to see them — I am growing old and feeble.”

“ Ah! but, Susannah, you do not know what I have got for you!” said Emma, throwing her arms affectionately round Susannah’s neck, while she slyly drew from her pocket the red morocco purse. “ Do you know, papa has given me this pretty purse full of money, and says, because it is my birth-day, I may do whatever I like with it. Let us see how much money there is in it.” The delighted Emma now threw the whole contents on the table, exclaiming, “ there, Susannah, four half-crown pieces, I declare! Only think what a kind papa I

have got, and what a deal of money he has given me! Now, Susannah, I will give you two of these pieces, because you are my nurse, and the other two I will keep for somebody. Oh dear, what a charming thing it is to have plenty of money, to do whatever one likes with! I am so happy you cannot think, because I know somebody I am going to see, who will be quite happy too! It is a great pleasure to make other people happy, when we can do it so pleasantly, is it not, Susannah?"

"My dear child," rejoined Susannah, "I cannot accept of your kindness without the consent of your parents;" and with this remark she returned the money, much to the mortification of Emma; who, however, after many entreaties, at last prevailed on her visitor to put the two half-crowns into her pocket.

The maid now came in, to tell Emma that her mamma desired she would go

and be dressed, and with an invitation to old Susannah that she would go into the housekeeper's room, where she would be made quite comfortable. Emma accordingly left Susannah, with a fresh kiss, and a fresh blessing from the affectionate nurse.

On being afterwards introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Selwhyn, from whom, on that day, she always received her accustomed present of a new gown and a guinea, Susannah pulled out the two half-crowns which Emma had given her, and while she dwelt with artless simplicity on the kindness and generosity of the young donor, she declared she could not receive her gift without consulting them on the occasion.

Mr. and Mrs. Selwhyn exchanged looks of evident satisfaction.

“The red morocco purse will not disgrace its owner,” said Mr. Selwhyn. “You must certainly accept of Emma's present; so put the two half-crowns

into your pocket, for the money was given to her with an intimation that she might use it in any manner she liked best; and I am very well satisfied that she knows so well how to appreciate its value."

Before we proceed further, permit me to ask my young readers if it was not very praiseworthy and amiable in Emma, to present her poor old nurse with this mark of her bounty and affection? I am sure you will agree with me; and if you have had a poor old nurse who has taken care of you in your infancy, I have no doubt but you will be happy to imitate the example of Miss Emma Selwhyn.

At half-past three o'clock two carriages arrived at Heathwood Park, and a very happy and agreeable party of friends assembled together. Indeed, it was truly delightful to see with what marked attention little Emma was treated by all her numerous friends and acquaint-

tances, several of whom had brought her some very pretty birth-day presents. As she was blessed with an excellent memory, her papa desired her to recite the "Beggar's Petition," and it was very pretty to hear her say,

"Pity the sorrows of a poor old man,

"Whose trembling limbs have borne him to your door,

"Whose days are dwindled to the shortest span :

"Oh, give relief, and Heaven will bless your store!"

When she had finished she received the praises of every body present ; which would not have been the case had she not paid due attention to her learning, by which she retained all she had read, and could with ease repeat all her lessons on that account.

A very large and beautiful plum-cake was now put on the table ; but though Emma was presented by her mamma with a double allowance, in honour of her birth-day, she contrived to eat but a small portion of it herself, reserving the rest for the benevolent purpose she had

intended: for the Primrose Girl and her sick mother were not forgotten, as will appear in the sequel of our tale.

The birth-day having closed in the most agreeable manner, Emma arose very early the next morning, and, taking the basket under her arm, she first of all deposited her large piece of plum-cake; she then ran down stairs to Betty the cook, whom she addressed in the following manner:

“ Good morning, Betty; the weather is extremely pleasant; and as I am going out for a walk, who knows but I may happen to meet with somebody who is very poor, and very hungry? I shall take it very kind, Betty, if you will put into my basket a little stale bread, or a little meat, or any thing else you may have at hand. I shall be so much obliged to you; and so, I dare say, will somebody else; for you know, Betty, it is a sad thing to be hungry and poor!”

Betty lost not a moment in complying

with Emma's request ; but filled the little basket as full as she could with cold victuals and other trifling things : for not only Betty, but all the rest of the servants at Heathwood Park, were very fond of their young mistress, whose amiable disposition and gentle manners had rendered her a very deserving favourite amongst them. And this, my reader will allow, was a very commendable trait in Emma's character ; for we must not look with contempt upon servants because they are our inferiors ; for they are not only useful to us, but they are also our fellow-creatures, and sometimes prove our friends, and there is nothing more unbecoming in young persons than to speak uncivilly to those who are employed in their service. I hope you will remember this, my young reader, and never pout, or look cross at persons who do their duty towards you, in that humble station in which it has pleased Providence to place them.

Emma now pursued her way to the forest, with the basket hanging on her arm; but when she arrived there she was puzzled to find her way to the barn. At last she met with an old woman who was going the same way.

“ Pray, Goody,” cried Emma, “ can you tell me where I can find an old barn? I shall be so much obliged to you !”

Now some old women are apt to be very inquisitive about what does not concern them, yet they are by no means to be answered rudely on that account.

“ Why, yes, pretty miss,” cried the old woman, dropping a low curtsey (for she soon saw that it was Miss Emma Selwhyn she was talking to), “ it is close by; and, as I am going that way, I will shew you: but pray, miss, may I be so bold as to inquire who you may want? for, alack-a-day! nobody lives there but Margery Blackbourne, the woodman’s widow, and her daughter

Fanny, who is nothing better than a poor primrose girl!"

"A poor primrose girl!" cried Emma. "Ah, Goody, you are right, it is that poor child I am going to see; and though she is nothing better than a primrose girl, yet I like her very much, because she is good to her mother who is sick; besides Fanny is altogether the nicest little girl I ever saw!"

"Fanny is much obliged to you, I am sure," rejoined the old woman; "and indeed, I cannot say but the poor thing has a hard life of it. To be forced to cry primroses from morning till night is no easy matter, when one is both hungry and thirsty. But there is her mother, Miss; do not you see her by yonder stile, picking up some dry sticks to light her fire, while Fanny, I suppose, is gone to try if she can get her a morsel of bread."

Emma did not wait to listen to any further conversation of the old woman,

but she did not forget to reward her for the trouble she had taken in shewing her the way, and slipping six-pence into her hand, wished her good morning. She then went directly to the door of the poor primrose girl, and found, to her no small satisfaction, that she had not yet set out on her accustomed ramble, but was busily employed in boiling a little pottage, over a very little fire for her mother's breakfast. Emma immediately accosted her thus :

“ Ah, little Fanny, (for I am told that is your name) how do you do? and how is your mother? I promised I would come, and I am so happy, you cannot think, to find you at home.”

“ Miss, will you be so good as to sit down?” asked the primrose girl; “ here is mother's great chair; it is the best we have got.”

“ I do not mind where I sit, thank you, Fanny,” said Emma, seating herself on

a little wooden stool before the fire, and placing her basket on the table; "but I must not stay long, because my papa and mamma do not know where I am; so make haste, Fanny, if you please, and empty the basket which I have brought with me. I told you it would hold a great deal, and it is quite full."

The primrose girl did as she was desired; but when she saw the plum-cake at the bottom of the basket, the poor little creature was so overcome, that she burst into a flood of tears, and turning to Emma, clasped her little sun-burnt hands together with heartfelt gratitude!

"Oh, Miss!" she exclaimed, "this is too much for poor people like us to expect. That you should save your plum-cake on purpose that we might share it is so kind, so very kind, that indeed my heart is quite full, and so will mammy's be, when she sees you."

At this instant poor Margery came in : but could scarcely believe her senses, when she saw Miss Emma Selwhyn, the heiress of the rich Squire of Heathwood Park, sitting on the wooden stool before the fire, in familiar conversation with her daughter Fanny !

Emma very soon explained the nature of her errand, and drawing out her red morocco purse, presented Margery with the two remaining half-crowns that were in it. “ There,” cried she, “ take this money ; it will buy you some victuals when you are hungry. It is entirely my own, for my papa gave it to me to do whatever I liked with it, so I shall now go home quite contented and happy ; and one day or other, when I am grown a great woman, I will have a garden full of primroses, and that will always make me remember Fanny.”

With this observation Emma retired, taking with her the blessings of the poor widow, and the prayers of a fatherless

child ! and these, my young reader, are of great importance, and should never be lightly esteemed. They will make you happy when you have nothing else to make you so, because you cannot obtain these blessings except by the performance of kind and benevolent actions.

Emma, on returning from her visit of mercy, was rewarded by the warm approbation and fond endearments of her beloved parents ; and I am happy to add, that she lived to witness the return of many joyful birth-days, on which occasions the red morocco purse was always replenished with the sum of four half crowns, with the same permission that she had hitherto obtained from her papa. Two of these pieces were regularly bestowed on Susannah her old nurse ; and as there yet remained two at the bottom of the purse, my reader will probably guess what Emma did with them. They were, in fact, reserved as a present for

her young favourite primrose girl, Fanny of the forest, who ever gratefully remembered the fortunate hour when she first beheld little Emma, to whom she sold a penny bunch of primroses on the morning of her birth-day.

THE END.

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