The Fairchild Family

by Mary Martha Sherwood

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Title: The Fairchild Family

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Release date: August 19, 2009 [eBook #29725] Most recently updated: January 5, 2021

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/29725

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"Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild had three children, Lucy, Emily and Henry."—Page 1.

THE FAIRCHILD FAMILY BY Mrs SHERWOOD - EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION BY MARY E PALGRAVE - WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY FLORENCE M RUDLAND - NEW YORK FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY PUBLISHERS

Introduction

The History of Lucy, Emily, and Henry Fairchild was begun in 1818, nearly a century ago. The two little misses and their brother played and did lessons, were naughty and good, happy and sorrowful, when George III. was still on the throne; when gentlemen wore blue coats with brass buttons, knee-breeches, and woollen stockings; and ladies were attired in short waists, low necks, and long ringlets. The Battle of Waterloo was quite a recent event; and the terror of "Boney" was still used by nursery maids to frighten their charges into good behaviour.

Perhaps some of those who take up this book and glance at its title-page are saying to themselves. We have plenty of stories about the children of to-day—the children of the twentieth century, not of the early nineteenth. How should it interest us to read of these little ones of the time of our great-grandparents, whose lives were so dull and ideas so old-fashioned; who never played cricket or tennis, or went to London or to the seaside, or rode bicycles, or did any of the things we do?

To anyone who is debating whether or no he will read the Fairchild Family, I would say, Try a chapter or two before you make up your mind. It is not what people do, but what they are that makes them interesting. True enough, Lucy, Emily and Henry led what we should call nowadays very dull lives; but they were by no means dull little people for all that. We shall find them very living and real when we make acquaintance with them. They tore their clothes, and lost their pets, and wanted the best things, and slapped each other when they disagreed. They had their good times and their bad times, their fun and frolic and their scrapes and naughtiness, just as

children had long before they were born and are having now, long, long after they are dead.

In fact, as we get to know them—and, I hope, to love them—we shall realize, perhaps with wonder, how very like they are to the children of to-day. If they took us by the hand and led us to their playroom, or into "Henry's arbour" under the great trees, we should make friends with them in five minutes, even though they wear long straight skirts down to their ankles and straw bonnets burying their little faces, and Henry is attired in a frock and pinafore, albeit he is eight years old. We should have glorious games with them, following the fleet Lucy running like a hare; we should kiss them when we went away, and reckon them ever after among our friends.

And so, as we follow the History of the Fairchild Family we shall understand, better than we have yet done, how children are children everywhere, and very much the same from generation to generation. Knowing Lucy and Emily and Henry will help us to feel more sympathy with other children of bygone days, the children of our history books—with pretty Princess Amelia, and the little Dauphin in the Bastille, with sweet Elizabeth Stuart, the "rose-bud born in snow" of Carisbrook Castle, and a host of others. They were real children too, who had real treats and real punishments, real happy days and sad ones. They felt and thought and liked and disliked much the same things as we do now. We stretch out our hands to them across the misty centuries, and hail them our companions and playmates.

Few people nowadays, even among those who know the Fairchild Family, know anything of its writer, Mrs. Sherwood. Yet her life, as told by herself, is as amusing as a story, and as full of incidents as a life could well be. When she was a very old woman she wrote her autobiography, helped by her daughter; and from this book, which has been long out of print, I will put together a short sketch which will give you some idea of what an interesting and attractive person she was.

The father of Mrs. Sherwood—or, to give her her maiden name, Mary Butt—was a clergyman. He had a beautiful country living called Stanford, in Worcestershire, not far from Malvern, where Mary was born on May 6, 1775. She had one brother, a year older than herself, and a sister several years younger, whose name was Lucy.

Mary Butt's childhood, in her beautiful country home, was very happy. She was extremely tall for her age, strong and vigorous, with glowing cheeks and dark eyes and "very long hair of a bright auburn," which she tells us her mother had great pleasure in arranging. She and her brother Marten were both beautiful children; but no one thought Mary at all clever, or fancied what a mark she would make in the world by her writings.

Mary was a dreamy, thoughtful child, full of fancies and imaginings. She loved to sit on the stairs, listening to her mother's voice singing sweetly in her dressing-room to her guitar. She had wonderful fancies about an echo which the children discovered in the hilly grounds round the rectory. Echo she believed to be a beautiful winged boy; "and I longed to see him, though I knew it was in vain to attempt to pursue him to his haunts; neither was Echo the only unseen being who filled my imagination." Her mother used to tell her and Marten stories in the dusk of winter evenings; one of those stories she tells again for other children in the Fairchild Family. It is the tale of the old lady who was so fond of inviting children to spend a day with her.

The first grand event of Mary's life was a journey taken to Lichfield, to stay with her grandfather, old Dr. Butt, at his house called Pipe Grange. She was then not quite four years old. Dr. Butt had been a friend, in former days, of Maria Edgeworth, who wrote the Parents' Assistant and other delightful stories; of Mr. Day, author of Sandford and Merton; and other clever people then living at Lichfield. He knew the great actor, David Garrick, too, who used to come there to see his brother; and the famous Dr. Samuel Johnson, who had been born and brought up at Lichfield. But to little Mary, scarcely more than a baby, these things were not of much interest. What

she recollected of her grandfather was his present to her, on her fourth birthday, of "a doll with a paper hoop and wig of real flax." And her memories of Pipe Grange were of walks with her brother and nurse in green lanes; of lovely commons and old farmhouses, with walls covered with ivy and yew-trees cut in grotesque forms; of "feeding some little birds in a hedge, and coming one day and finding the nest and birds gone, which was a great grief to me."

Soon afterwards the nursery party at Stanford was increased by two little cousins, Henry and Margaret Sherwood. They had lost their mother, and were sent to be for a time under the care of their aunt, Mrs. Butt. They joined in the romps of Marten and Mary, and very lively romps they seem to have been. Mary describes how her brother used to put her in a drawer and kick it down the nursery stairs; how he heaped chairs and tables one on the other, set her at the top of them, and then threw them all down; how he put a bridle round her neck and drove her about with a whip. "But," she says, "being a very hardy child, and not easily hurt, I suppose I had myself to blame for some of his excesses; for with all this he was the kindest of brothers to me, and I loved him very, very much."

When Mary was six years old she began to make stories, but she tells us she had not the least recollection of what they were about. She was not yet able to write, so whenever she had thought out a story, she had to follow her mother about with a slate and pencil and get her to write at her dictation. The talk Mary and Marten heard while sitting at meals with their parents was clever and interesting. Many visitors came to the house, and after a while there were several young men living there, pupils of Mr. Butt, so that there was often a large party. The two little children were never allowed to interrupt, but had to sit and listen, "whether willing or not"; and in this way the shrewd and observant Mary picked up endless scraps of knowledge while still very young. She tells us a good deal about her education in these early days. "It was the fashion then for children to wear iron collars round the neck, with a backboard strapped over the shoulders; to one of these I was subjected

from my sixth to my thirteenth year. It was put on in the morning, and seldom taken off till late in the evening, and I generally did all my lessons standing in stocks, with this stiff collar round my neck. At the same time I had the plainest possible food, such as dry bread and cold milk. I never sat on a chair in my mother's presence. Yet I was a very happy child, and when relieved from my collar I not unseldom manifested my delight by starting from our hall-door and taking a run for at least half a mile through the woods which adjoined our pleasure grounds."

Marten, meanwhile, was having a much less strict and severe time of it. Mr. Butt was an easy-going man, who liked everything about him to be comfortable and pretty, and was not inclined to take much trouble either with himself or others. While Mary was with her mother in her dressing-room, working away at her books, Marten was supposed to be learning Latin in his father's study. But as Mr. Butt had no idea of authority, Marten made no progress whatever, and the end of it was that good Mrs. Butt had to teach herself Latin, in order to become her boy's tutor; and Mary was made to take it up as well, in order to incite him to learn.

The children were great readers, though their books were few. Robinson Crusoe; two sets of fairy tales; The Little Female Academy; and Æsop's Fables made up their whole library. Robinson Crusoe was Marten's favourite book; his wont, when a reading fit was on, was to place himself on the bottom step of the stairs and to mount one step every time he turned over a page. Mary, of course, copied him exactly. Another funny custom with the pair was, on the first day of every month, to take two sticks, with certain notches cut in them, and hide them in a hollow tree in the woods. There was a grand mystery about this, though Mary does not tell us in what it consisted. "No person," she says, "was to see us do this, and no one was to know we did it."

In the summer that Mary was eight years old, a quaint visitor came to Stanford Rectory. This was a distant relative who had married a Frenchman and lived at Paris

through the gay and wicked period which ushered in the French Revolution. Mary's description of this lady and her coming to the rectory is very amusing: "Never shall I forget the arrival of Mme. de Pelevé at Stanford. She arrived in a post-chaise with a maid, a lap-dog, a canary-bird, an organ, and boxes heaped upon boxes till it was impossible to see the persons within. I was, of course, at the door to watch her alight. She was a large woman, elaborately dressed, highly rouged, carrying an umbrella, the first I had seen. She was dark, I remember, and had most brilliant eyes. The style of dress at that period was perhaps more preposterous and troublesome than any which has prevailed within the memory of those now living. This style had been introduced by the ill-fated Marie Antoinette, and Mme. de Pelevé had come straight from the very fountain-head of these absurdities. The hair was worn crisped or violently frizzed about the face in the shape of a horse-shoe; long stiff curls, fastened with pins, hung on the neck; and the whole was well pomatumed and powdered with different coloured powders. A high cushion was fastened at the top of the hair, and over that either a cap adorned with artificial flowers and feathers to such a height as sometimes rendered it somewhat difficult to preserve its equilibrium, or a balloon hat, a fabric of wire and tiffany, of immense circumference. The hat would require to be fixed on the head with long pins, and standing, trencherwise, quite flat and unbending in its full proportions. The crown was low, and, like the cap, richly set off with feathers and flowers. The lower part of the dress consisted of a full petticoat generally flounced, short sleeves, and a very long train; but instead of a hoop there was a vast pad at the bottom of the waist behind, and a frame of wire in front to throw out the neckerchief, so as much as possible to resemble the craw of a pigeon.

"Such were the leading articles of this style of dress, and so arranged was the figure which stepped forth from the chaise at the door of the lovely and simple parsonage of Stanford. My father was ready to hand her out, my mother to welcome her. The band-boxes were all conveyed into our best bedroom, while Madame had her place

allotted to her in our drawing-room, where she sat like a queen, and really, by the multitudes of anecdotes she had to tell, rendered herself very agreeable. Whilst she was with us she never had concluded her toilet before one or two in the day, and she always appeared either in new dresses or new adjustments. I have often wished that I could recall some of the anecdotes she used to tell of the Court of Versailles, but one only can I remember; it referred to the then popular song of 'Marlbrook,' which she used to sing. 'When the Dauphin,' she said, 'was born, a nurse was procured for him from the country, and there was no song with which she could soothe the babe but 'Marlbrook,' an old ballad, sung till then only in the provinces. The poor Queen heard the air, admired, and brought it forward, making it the fashion.' This is the only one of Mme. de Pelevé's stories which I remember, although I was very greatly amused by them, and could have listened to her for hours together. My admiration was also strongly excited by the splendour and varieties of her dresses, her superb trimmings, her sleeves tied with knots of coloured ribbon, her trains of silk, her beautiful hats, and I could not understand the purpose for which she took so much pains to array herself."

I think when we read of Miss Crosbie's arrival at Mr. Fairchild's, and the time she kept them all waiting for supper while she changed her gown, we shall be reminded of these early recollections of Mrs. Sherwood's. A year or two later this quaint Madame came again on a visit to Stanford; and on this occasion, as Mary tells us, she put it into the little girl's head, for the first time, to wonder whether she were pretty or no. "No sooner was dinner over," she says, "than I ran upstairs to a large mirror to make the important inquiry, and at this mirror I stood a long time, turning round and examining myself with no small interest." Madame de Pelevé further encouraged her vanity by making her a present of "a gauze cap of a very gay description." It must have looked odd and out of place perched on the top of the little girl's "very long hair and very rosy cheeks." Another of Mme. de Pelevé's not very judicious presents was "a shepherdess hat of pale blue silver tiffany." But as this hat

had to be fastened on with "large, long corking-pins," it proved "a terrible evil" to its wearer; which, perhaps, was just as well!

By this time dear brother Marten had been sent away to school at Reading; but little Lucy was growing old enough to be something of a playmate; and Margaret, the motherless cousin, had been brought again to Stanford on a long visit. We can fancy what a delightful companion to these two small ones Mary must have been. She had left off, for the time, writing stories, but she was never tired of telling them. In company she was, in those days, very silent and shy, and much at a loss for words; but they never failed her when telling her stories to her little companions. Her head, she says, was full of "fairies, wizards, enchanters, and all the imagery of heathen gods and goddesses which I could get out of any book in my father's study," and with these she wove the most wonderful tales, one story often going on, at every possible interval, for months together. Her lively imagination "filled every region of the wild woods at Stanford with imaginary people. Wherever I saw a few ashes in a glade, left by those who burnt sticks to sell the ashes to assist in the coarse washings in farmhouses, I fixed a hoard of gipsies and made long stories. If I could discern fairy rings, which abounded in those woods, they gave me another set of images; and I had imaginary hermits in every hollow of the rocky sides of the dingle, and imaginary castles on every height; whilst the church and churchyard supplied me with more ghosts and apparitions than I dared to tell of." Mary and her stories must have been better worth having than a whole library of "fairy-books."

One source from which Mary drew her tales was a collection of old volumes which her father had bought at a sale and to which her mother had given up a room over the pantry and storeroom. Mr. Butt made Mary his librarian; and she revelled in old romances, such as Sir Philip Sydney's Arcadia, and in illustrated books of travel; spending many hours on a high stool in the bookroom, among "moths, dust, and black calf-skin," studying these treasures.

One more glimpse must be given of those happy child-days, and we will have it in Mary's own words: "I grew so rapidly in my childhood, that at thirteen I had obtained my full height, which is considered above the usual standard of women. I stooped very much when thus growing. As my mother always dressed me like a child in a pinafore, I must certainly have been a very extraordinary sort of personage, and everyone cried out on seeing me as one that was to be a giantess. As my only little friend of about my own age was small and delicate, I was very often thoroughly abashed at my appearance; and therefore never was I so happy as when I was out of sight of visitors in my own beloved woods of Stanford. In those sweet woods I had many little embowered corners, which no one knew but myself; and there, when my daily tasks were done, I used to fly with a book and enjoy myself in places where I could hear the cooing of doves, the note of the blackbird, and the rush of two waterfalls coming from two sides of the valley and meeting within the range where I might stroll undisturbed by anyone. It must be noticed that I never made these excursions without carrying a huge wooden doll with me, which I generally slung with a string round my waist under my pinafore, as I was thought by the neighbours too big to like a doll. My sister, as a child, had not good health, and therefore she could bear neither the exposure nor fatigue I did; hence the reason wherefore I was so much alone. From this cause, too, she was never submitted to the same discipline that I was; she was never made so familiar with the stocks and iron collar, nor the heavy tasks; for after my brother was gone to school I still was carried on in my Latin studies, and even before I was twelve I was obliged to translate fifty lines of Virgil every morning, standing in these same stocks, with the iron collar pressing on my throat."

When Mary was between twelve and thirteen a great change came in her life. Her father was presented to the vicarage of Kidderminster in Staffordshire, where the carpets are made. It was then a very rich living. It was settled that they should go to Kidderminster to live, while a curate was to do duty at Stanford and occupy the

rectory. In those days clergymen often held two or even three livings at once in different parts of the country, taking the stipends themselves, and putting a curate in charge of whichever parishes they did not choose to reside in.

Mary was pleased at the idea of a change, as children generally are; and so was her father, who loved society and the noise and bustle of a town. But to poor Mrs. Butt, who was a very shy, timid, retiring person, the idea of exchanging "the glorious groves of Stanford for a residence in a town, where nothing is seen but dusty houses and dyed worsted hanging to dry on huge frames in every open space," was terrible. Mary could well remember how, during that summer, her mother walked in the woods, crying bitterly and fretting over the coming change till her health suffered.

Life in the big manufacturing town was much less wild and free than it had been in the Worcestershire parsonage; but the two little girls managed to be very happy in their own way. For one thing, they had a bedroom looking into the street, and a street was a new thing to them, and they spent every idle moment in staring out of the windows. They had a cupboard in which they kept their treasures—a dolls' house which they had brought from Stanford, and all the books they had hoarded up from childhood; "these, with two white cats, which we had also brought from Stanford, happily afforded us much amusement." Mary's rage for dolls was, moreover, at its height, though she more than ever took pains to hide her darlings, under her pinafore, from the eyes of Kidderminster.

Most of all, however, they amused themselves, when alone, by talking together in characters, keeping to the same year after year, till at length the play was played out. "We were both queens," Mary tells us, "and we were sisters, and were supposed to live near each other, and we pretended we had a great many children. In our narratives we allowed the introduction of fairies, and I used to tell long stories of things and places and adventures which I feigned I had met with in this my character of queen. The moment we two set out to walk, we always began to converse in these

characters. My sister used generally to begin with, 'Well, sister, how do you do to-day? How are the children? Where have you been?' and before we were a yard from the house we were deep in talk. Oh, what wonderful tales was I wont to tell of things which I pretended I had seen, and how many, many happy hours have I and my sister spent in this way, I being the chief speaker."

Not long after their coming to Kidderminster, Mary's father took her with him on a visit to a large country house in Shropshire. They drove all the way in a gig, a man-servant riding behind on horseback. They reached the house just in time to dress for dinner, at which there was to be a large party. Mary had to put on her "very best dress, which," she tells us, "was a blue silk slip, with a muslin frock over it, a blue sash, and, oh! sad to say, my silver tiffany hat. I did not dare but wear it, as it had been sent with me."

A maid had been told off to dress Mary, and "great was the pains which she took to fix my shepherdess hat on one side, as it was intended to be worn, and to arrange my hair, which was long and hanging in curls; but what would I not have given to have got rid of the rustling tiffany!" Mary describes her consternation when she reached the drawing-room in this array, and found "a number of great people" there, but no other child to consort with. When everybody went to walk in the shrubberies after dinner, and a gentleman offered her his arm, as was the wont in those days, she was so panic-stricken that she darted up a bank, through the shrubs and away, and showed herself no more that evening.

The next thing that happened was that the other little cousin before mentioned, Henry Sherwood, came to live with the Butts and go to a day-school in the town. Mary recalls him as she saw him on arriving—a very small, fair-haired boy, dressed in "a full suit of what used to be called pepper-and-salt cloth." He soon settled down in his new home, "a very quiet little personage, very good-tempered, and very much in awe of his aunt," with a fame among his cousins for his talent for making paper

boxes one within another. His bed was in an attic, next door to his big cousin Marten's room. Marten had a shelf full of books, which Henry used to carry off to his own domain and read over and over again. From these books he first dated an intense love of reading which was destined to be his chief stand-by in old age. We shall not wonder that Mary loved to recall her early remembrances of this little school-boy when we know that, several years later, he became her husband, with whom she spent a long and happy married life.

Mary has other amusing recollections of this time of her early girlhood, and tells them in her own charming way; but we must pass on to her school life, which is bound to interest her readers of to-day, so many of whom go to school. It was the summer of 1790. Mr. Butt had been taking his turn of duty at the Chapel Royal, St. James's, being by this time one of the chaplains to the King. On his way home he stopped at Reading to visit his friend Dr. Valpy, in whose school Marten had for a time been educated.

During this visit Dr. Valpy took him to see "a sort of exhibition" got up by the "young ladies" of M. and Mme. de St. Quentin's school. This famous school, which was afterwards removed to London, was held then in the old Abbey at Reading. "This," thought Mr. Butt, "is the very place for Mary"; and to the Abbey School it was decided that she should go.

Marten was now at Westminster School. When the time came for him to return after the holidays, Mary had a seat in the chaise, and drove with him and her father as far as Reading. You will be amused by her description of her school and schoolmistresses, and of her first introduction to them.

"The house—or, rather, the Abbey itself—was exceedingly interesting; and though I know not its exact history, yet I knew every hole and corner of what remained of the ancient building, which consisted of a gateway with rooms above, and on each side of it a vast staircase, of which the balustrades had originally been gilt. Then, too,

there were many little nooks and round closets, and many larger and smaller rooms and passages, which appeared to be rather more modern; whilst the gateway itself stood without the garden walls upon the Forbury or open green, which belonged to the town, and where Dr. Valpy's boys played after school hours. The best part of the house was encompassed by a beautiful old-fashioned garden, where the young ladies were allowed to wander under tall trees in hot summer evenings."

When Mary arrived at the Abbey the holidays were not quite over, and she was the first of the sixty pupils to present herself. The school was kept by Mme. de St. Quentin and a Mrs. Latournelle, who were partners. "Madame," as the girls always called her, was an Englishwoman by birth, but had married a French refugee whom circumstances had obliged to become French teacher in the school. Madame was a handsome woman, with bright eyes and a very dignified presence. Mary tells us that she danced remarkably well, played and sang and did fine needlework, and "spoke well and agreeably in English and in French without fear." Mrs. Latournelle was a funny, old-fashioned body, whose chief concern was with the housekeeping, tea-making, and other domestic duties. She had a cork leg, and her dress had never been known to change its fashion. "Her white muslin handkerchief was always pinned with the same number of pins; her muslin apron always hung in the same form; she always wore the same short sleeves, cuffs, and ruffles, with a breast-bow to answer the bow on her cap, both being flat with two notched ends."

Mrs. Latournelle received Mary in a wainscotted parlour, hung round with miniatures and pieces of framed needlework done in chenille, representing tombs and weeping willows. Mary was to be what in those days was known as a "parlour-boarder," which meant that she was treated in part as a grown-up young lady, had more liberty and privileges than the other girls, and, in fact, was allowed to do very much as she liked. She thought herself gloriously happy, on coming down to breakfast next day in the twilight of a winter's morning, to be allowed to eat hot buttered toast and to draw as near as she liked to the fire; neither of which things

was it lawful to do at home.

Mary was "vastly amused," during the first few days, at seeing her future school-fellows arrive one after another. The two first to come were a pair of twin sisters named Martha and Mary Lee, so exactly alike that they could only be distinguished by a mark which one had on her forehead under the hair. There were many other big girls, but none besides herself who were parlour-boarders during that quarter. Mary soon chose out three to be her special friends; a Miss Poultenham, Amelia Reinagle (daughter of an artist who in that day was rather celebrated), and Mary Brown—niece of Mrs. Latournelle.

M. and Mme. de St. Quentin presently returned, and Mary tells us how shy she felt when "Monsieur" summoned her to undergo a sort of examination. "Full well I remember the morning when he called me into his study to feel the pulse of my intellect, as he said, in order that he might know in what class to place me. All the girls whom he particularly instructed were standing by, all of them being superior to me in the knowledge of those things usually taught in schools. Behold me, then, in imagination, tall as I am now, standing before my master, and blushing till my blushes made me ashamed to look up. 'Eh bien, mademoiselle,' he said, 'have you much knowledge of French?' 'No, sir,' I answered. 'Are you much acquainted with history?' And he went on from one thing to another, asking me questions, and always receiving a negative. At length, smiling, he said: 'Tell me, mademoiselle, then, what you do know.' I stammered 'Latin—Virgil,' and finished off with a regular flood of tears. At this he laughed outright, and immediately set me down in his class and gave me lessons for every day."

The discipline of the Abbey seems to have been very slack, especially for the big girls. This is how Mary describes it: "The liberty which the first class had was so great that, if we attended our tutor in his study for an hour or two every morning, no human being ever took the trouble to enquire where we spent the rest of the day

between our meals. Thus, whether we gossiped in one turret or another, whether we lounged about the garden or out of the window above the gateway, no one so much as said, 'Where have you been, mademoiselle?'"

Mary Butt spent a year at Reading, where she learnt a good deal of French, and not, it would seem, much of anything else. She left it the following Christmas with many tears, thinking that her school-days were over; but a few months later her parents decided to send her back to the Abbey for another year, and that her sister Lucy should go too. That was in the autumn of 1792, when the French Revolution was just beginning. On January 21, 1793, the terrible news came of the murder of the unhappy King, Louis XVI. All Europe, and England especially, were horrified at the cruel deed; and at the Abbey, where there was a strong French Royalist element, feeling ran particularly high. "Monsieur and Madame went into deep mourning, as did also many of the elder girls. Multitudes of the French nobility came thronging into Reading, gathering about the Abbey, and some of them half living within its walls." Our friend Mary, as a half-fledged young lady, saw a great deal of these poor refugees, who had lost everything but their lives. They seem, however, to have shown the true French courage and gaiety under evil circumstances. There was much singing and playing under the trees; and they helped the school-girls to get up some little French plays to act at their breaking-up party. Mary took a part in the character of a French abbess, but she tells us that "assuredly" her talents never lay in the acting line, and very honestly adds: "I could never sufficiently have forgotten myself as to have acted well."

Soon after Mary's finally leaving school her parents decided to put a curate in charge of the Kidderminster living, and to return to "lovely Stanford." This was a great relief to poor, shy Mrs. Butt, who had been like a caged bird in Kidderminster; but the young people were not quite sure if they liked the change. They had made many friends in the town and its neighbourhood; and now that Mary was, as we say nowadays, "come out," she had been taken to various balls and other diversions.

They soon, however, settled down again in the old home; and as there was a large, delightful, and very friendly family at Stanford Court hard by, they found plenty of variety and amusement even in the depths of the country.

The young Butts went across very often to dine at the Court; and on these occasions their hostess, Lady Winnington, got up little impromptu dances, which they greatly enjoyed. "Often," Mary writes, "when we dined at the Court she would send for the miller, who played the violin, and set us all to dance. My brother was always the partner of the eldest Miss Winnington, and as neither of them could tell one tune from another or dance a single step, we generally marvelled how they got on at all. The steward also, a great, big, and in our opinion most supremely ugly man, generally fell to my sister's lot. Thus, we did very well, and enjoyed ourselves in our own way. Sometimes the old Welsh harper came, and then we had a more set dance, and some of the ladies'-maids, and one or two of the upper men-servants, and the miller himself, and Mr. Taylor of the Fall, and the miller's brother Tommy, were asked, and then things were carried on in a superior style. We went into a larger room, and there was more change of partners; but as nothing could have induced the son and heir to ask a stranger, I always had him, whilst Miss Winnington and my sister sometimes fell to the share of the miller and his brother, the miller being himself musical and footing it to the tune better than his partners. The miller's brother seemed to wheel along rather than dance, throwing himself back and looking, in his white waistcoat which was kept for these grand occasions, not unlike a sack of meal set upright on trucks and so pushed about the room. I am ready to laugh to this hour when I think of these balls, and I certainly obtained very high celebrity then and there for being something very superior in the dancing line."

The happy life at Stanford was not destined to last long, for Mr. Butt's health began to fail, and in the autumn of 1795 he died. Mrs. Butt took a house at Bridgnorth, and settled there with her two daughters. Mary had now begun to write in good earnest; and while living at Bridgnorth two of her tales were published, one called Margarita

and the other Susan Grey. Probably very few people now living have ever seen or read these stories; and if we did come across them it is to be feared we should think them very dull and long-winded. But when new they were much admired, particularly Susan Grey, which was one of the earliest tales written to interest rich and educated people in the poor and ignorant. It was widely read and reprinted many and many times.

In spite of the pleasure and excitement of authorship, life in the little house in the sleepy town of Bridgnorth was very dull and cramped to the two young girls; and they were made much happier, because they were much busier, when the clergyman of one of the town churches asked them to undertake the management of his Sunday school. This is what Sunday school teaching meant at the end of the eighteenth century: "We attended the school so diligently on the Sunday that the parents brought the children in crowds, and we were obliged to stop short when each of us had about thirty-five girls and the old schoolmaster as many boys. We made bonnets and tippets for our girls; we walked with them to church; we looked them up in the week days; we were vastly busy; we were first amused, and next deeply interested."—"Sunday schools," she goes on to say, "then were comparatively new things, so that our attentions were more valued then than they would be nowadays."

The next important event in Mary's life was her marriage with her cousin Henry, by which she became the "Mrs. Sherwood" whose name has been a household word to generations of children. Henry Sherwood had had a curious history, and had endured many hardships and adventures in his youthful days. As a boy of about thirteen he had made a voyage on a rotten old French coasting-vessel, which was very nearly wrecked; was run into in the night by an unknown ship; and all but foundered in the Bay of Biscay. The French Revolution had just begun; and when the brig touched at Marseilles this young lad saw terrible sights of men hung from lamp-posts; heard the grisly cry, "À la lanterne! à la lanterne!" and was even himself seized by some of the mob, though he happily contrived, in the confusion, to slip away. In Marseilles, too,

he first saw the guillotine; it was carried about the streets in procession whilst the populace yelled out the "Marseillaise Hymn." Later on in the Revolution he was seized, as an Englishman, and imprisoned with a number of others at Abbeville; but, escaping from there, he made a wonderful journey through France, Switzerland, and Germany with his father, step-mother, and their five young children; being driven by the state of affairs from town to town, and wandering further and further afield in the effort to reach England. At length, after difficulties and hardships innumerable, they landed at Hull; and Henry made his way to some of his relations, who took care of him and set him on his legs again.

Henry Sherwood soon afterwards entered the army, joining the regiment then known as the 53rd Foot; and about the same time he began to come to Bridgnorth, where his pretty young cousin, Mary Butt, was growing more and more attractive. After a while he wrote her a letter, asking if she would be his wife; and on June 30, 1803, they were married at Bridgnorth.

Mary's marriage made a great change in her life. She had married into what used to be called a "marching regiment," which was constantly on the move from one station to another. After being transferred from place to place several times within a year, with long, wearisome journeys both by sea and land, following the regiment as it marched, the news came that the 53rd was ordered on foreign service, which meant a longer journey still. It was presently known that the regiment's destination was the East Indies, or, as we should now call it, India. This was a great blow to poor Mrs. Sherwood, for by this time she was the mother of a baby girl, whom she must leave behind in England.

The regiment embarked at Portsmouth. Captain and Mrs. Sherwood had a miserable little cabin rigged up on deck, made only of canvas, and with a huge gun filling more than half the space. The vessel in which they sailed was called the Devonshire. It was quite a fleet that set sail, for besides the vessels needed to convey the troops,

there had to be several armed cruisers in attendance. The war with France was going on, and there was continual danger of an attack by the enemy. When they had been more than three months at sea, three strange vessels were sighted, two of which soon ran up the French colours and began to fire, without the slightest warning, upon the English vessels. In a moment all was bustle on board the Devonshire, clearing the decks for action. The women and children were sent down into the hold, where they had to sit for hours in the dark, some way below watermark, while the shots whistled through the rigging overhead, the guns roared, the ladders had been taken away, and none of them could learn a word of what was going forward on deck, where their husbands and fathers were helping to man the guns. The fighting continued till late at night, but no serious damage befell the Devonshire. At length the women and children were hoisted up out of the hold, and "enjoyed some negus and biscuits."

From that time they saw no more of the French. At last the voyage, with its anxieties and discomforts, was over; the Devonshire sailed into the Hoogli and anchored in Diamond Harbour, expecting boats to come down from Calcutta to carry the regiment up there.

It would take too long to tell the story of the Sherwoods' life in India, though Mrs. Sherwood's account of it is very good reading. Two or three scenes will give you some notion of how she spent her time.

A certain number of the soldiers of the regiment were allowed to bring their wives and children out with them. There were no Government schools then for the regimental children, so that these little people idled away their time round the barracks, and were as ignorant as the day they were born. It came into Mrs. Sherwood's head to start a school for them, and this school she herself taught for four hours every morning, except in the very hottest weather; and the only help she had was from a sergeant of the regiment, a kind, good man. Some of the officers also were very thankful to send their children to school, so that Mrs. Sherwood soon

had as many as fifty boys and girls coming daily to her bungalow. Very hard work it was teaching them to read and write and to be gentle, truthful, and obedient. She found the officers' children generally more troublesome than the soldiers', because they were more spoilt, or, as she puts it, pampered and indulged. For these children she wrote many of her books, especially her Stories on the Church Catechism, which can still be bought, and which give a very interesting picture of the life of a soldier's child in India some eighty years ago.

Besides her day-school, Mrs. Sherwood collected in her house several little orphans, the children of poor soldiers' wives who quickly died in the trying climate of India. She found some of these children being dreadfully neglected and half starved, so took them home to her and brought them up with her own children. She gives an amusing description of her home life in India during the hot season, so terribly trying to Europeans: "The mode of existence of an English family during the hot winds in India is so very unlike anything in Europe that I must not omit to describe it. Every outer door of the house and every window is closed; all the interior doors and venetians are, however, open, whilst most of the private apartments are shut in by drop-curtains or screens of grass, looking like fine wire-work, partially covered with green silk. The hall, which never has any other than borrowed lights in any bungalow, is always in the centre of the house, and ours at Cawnpore had a large room on each side of it, with baths and sleeping-rooms. In the hot winds I always sat in the hall at Cawnpore. Though I was that year without a baby of my own, I had my orphan, my little Annie, always by me, quietly occupying herself when not actually receiving instruction from me. I had given her a good-sized box, painted green, with a lock and key; she had a little chair and table.

"She was the neatest of all neat little people, somewhat faddy and particular, perchance. She was the child, of all others, to live with an ancient grandmother. Annie's treasures were few, but they were all contained in her green box. She never wanted occupation; she was either dressing her doll or finding pretty verses in her

Bible, marking the places with an infinitude of minute pieces of paper. It was a great delight to me to have this little quiet one by my side.

"In another part of this hall sat Mr. Sherwood during most part of the morning, either engaged with his accounts, his journal, or his books. He, of course, did not like the confinement so well as I did, and often contrived to get out to a neighbour's bungalow in his palanquin during some part of the long morning. In one of the side-rooms sat Sergeant Clarke, with his books and accounts. This worthy and most methodical personage used to fill up his time in copying my manuscripts in a very neat hand, and in giving lessons in reading and spelling, etc., to Annie. In the other room was the orphan Sally, with her toys. Beside her sat her attendant, chewing her paun[A] and enjoying a state of perfect apathy. Thus did our mornings pass, whilst we sat in what the lovers of broad daylight would call almost darkness. During these mornings we heard no sounds but the monotonous click, click of the punkah,[B] or the melancholy moaning of the burning blast without, with the splash and dripping of the water thrown over the tatties.[C] At one o'clock, or perhaps somewhat later, the tiffin [answering to our luncheon] was always served, a hot dinner, in fact, consisting always of curry and a variety of vegetables. We often dined at this hour, the children at a little table in the room, after which we all lay down, the adults on sofas and the children on the floor, under the punkah in the hall. At four, or later perhaps, we had coffee brought. We then bathed and dressed, and at six or thereabouts, the wind generally falling, the tatties were removed, the doors and windows of the house were opened, and we either took an airing in carriages or sat in the veranda; but the evenings and nights of the hot winds brought no refreshment."

The days spent in that strange hot twilight must have seemed very long to children, even to those who had forgotten or never known the freedom of life in England; but Mrs. Sherwood had plenty of ways of filling her long quiet hours. She wrote a number of little stories about life in India, which were very much liked in their day

and went through many editions. One of these was called The Ayah and Lady, and told about a native servant, her ignorant notions and strange ways, and how her mistress tried to do her good. Another was Lucy and her Dhaye, the history of a little English girl and her dark-skinned nurse, who was so devoted to her that she nearly broke her heart when Lucy went home to England and she was left behind. But the best of them all was Little Henry and his Bearer, which is one of the most famous stories ever written for children. The history of little Henry, the neglected orphan child whom nobody loved save his poor faithful heathen "bearer," or native servant, is exceedingly pretty and touching.

Mrs. Sherwood was always thinking about children and trying to find out ways of helping them to be happy and good. A page from her diary will show how often she must have been grieved and distressed at the spoilt boys and girls she saw in the houses of the English merchants and Civil servants at Calcutta and elsewhere.

"I must now proceed," she writes, "to some description of Miss Louisa, the eldest daughter then in India of our friends, who at that time might have been about six or seven. She was tall of her age, very brown, and very pale. She had been entirely reared in India, and was accustomed from her earliest infancy to be attended by a multitude of servants, whom she despised thoroughly as being black, although, no doubt, she preferred their society to her own country-people, as they ministered with much flattery and servility to her wants. Wherever she had moved during these first years of her life she had been followed by her ayah, and probably by one or two bearers, and she was perfectly aware that if she got into any mischief they would be blamed and not herself. In the meantime, except in the article of food, every desire and every caprice and every want had been indulged to satiety. No one who has not seen it could imagine the profusion of toys which are scattered about an Indian house wherever the 'babalogue' (children people) are permitted to range. There may be seen fine polished and painted toys from Benares, in which all the household utensils of the country, the fruits, and even the animals, are represented, the last

most ludicrously incorrect. Toys in painted clay from Morshedabad and Calcutta, representing figures of gods and goddesses, with horses, camels, elephants, peacocks, and parrots, and now and then a 'tope walla,' or hat wearer, as they call the English, in full regimentals and cocked hat, seated on a clumsy, ill-formed thing meant for a horse. Then add to these English, French, and Dutch toys, which generally lie pell-mell in every corner where the listless, toy-satiated child may have thrown or kicked them.

"The quantity of inner and outer garments worn by a little girl in England would render it extremely fatiguing to change the dress so often as our little ladies are required to do in India. Miss Louisa's attire consisted of a single garment, a frock body without sleeves, attached to a pair of trousers, with rather a short, full skirt gathered into the body with the trousers, so as to form one whole, the whole being ruffled with the finest jindelly, a cloth which is not unlike cambric, every ruffle being plaited in the most delicate manner. These ruffles are doubled and trebled on the top of the arm, forming there a substitute for a sleeve; and the same is done around the ankle, answering the purpose almost of a stocking, or at least concealing its absence. Fine coloured kid shoes ought to have completed this attire, but it most often happened that these were kicked away among the rejected toys.

"How many times in a day the dress of Miss Louisa was renewed, who shall say? It, however, depended much upon the accidents which might happen to it; but four times was the usual arrangement, which was once before breakfast, once after, once again before tiffin, and once again for the evening airing. The child, being now nearly seven years old, was permitted to move about the house independently of her ayah; thus, she was sometimes in the hall, sometimes in the veranda, sometimes in one room, sometimes in another. In an Indian house in the hot season no inner door is ever shut, and curtains only are hung in the doorways, so that this little wild one was in and out and everywhere just as it hit her fancy. She had never been taught even to know her letters; she had never been kept to any task; she was a complete

slave of idleness, restlessness, and ennui. 'It is time for Louisa to go to England,' was quietly remarked by the parents; and no one present controverted the point."

Children like this must have made the good Mrs. Sherwood very unhappy; her own little ones—of whom she had three who lived to come home to England—were very differently brought up. She had also a lovely little boy named Henry, and a little fair-haired Lucy, who both died in India before they were two years old.

It would be impossible to end even this short sketch of Mrs. Sherwood's Indian life without mentioning her friendship with Henry Martyn, that saintly soul and famous missionary in India and Persia. When the Sherwoods knew him he was Government chaplain at Dinapore, a great military station, at which the 53rd Foot then was. Mrs. Sherwood nursed him through a bad illness, and she and her husband afterwards paid him a visit in his quarters at Cawnpore, to which place he had been transferred. He had a school at Cawnpore for little native children; and worked hard at preaching to the heathen; while all the time doing his utmost for the soldiers of the various regiments stationed in the barracks. The Sherwoods heard his wonderful farewell sermon before starting for Persia; and the news of his death in that far land reached them not long before they quitted India for England.

After being about twelve years in the East, the 53rd Regiment was ordered home, and very thankful Captain and Mrs. Sherwood were to bring the children they still had living safely back to a more healthy climate. Two of the orphans came with them, so there was quite a party of little people on board the ship; and when they landed at Liverpool they must have been a very quaint-looking group, for "we had not a bonnet in the party; we all wore caps trimmed with lace, white dresses, and Indian shawls." Can we wonder if, as Mrs. Sherwood goes on to say, "we were followed wherever we went by hundreds of the residents of Liverpool"?

The rest of Mrs. Sherwood's long life was spent in England, save for an occasional visit to France and Switzerland. She and her husband settled in the west, where she

had been born and bred, and of which she was so fond. She had more children, most of whom died young; and she lived a very busy, active, useful life, working hard at writing stories and tracts, visiting the prison at Worcester, and doing whatever good and useful work lay within her power.

The first part of the Fairchild Family was published in 1818. It was so popular that, more than twenty years afterwards, she wrote a second part, which, as you will see, begins at p. 150. As we read we shall notice little points of difference between it and the first part; but our friends, Lucy, Emily, and Henry are just as nice and as naughty, as good and as silly, as they were in the opening chapters of the book.

A few years later, when a very old woman, Mrs. Sherwood wrote a third part of the Fairchild Family, in which she was helped by her daughter, Mrs. Kelly. But this third part is less entertaining and interesting than the two which went before it, and is also not entirely Mrs. Sherwood's own work; so you will not find it printed here.

In 1851 Mrs. Sherwood died at Twickenham, where she had gone to live a few years previously. In the course of her long life she had seen many trials and sorrows, but she had had a great deal of happiness. She had made the very most of all the gifts given her by God. Countless children have been the happier and the better for what she wrote for them. And by means of this new edition of a dear old book, with its pleasant type and charming illustrations, I hope a new generation will spring up of lovers and admirers of Mrs. Sherwood.

MARY E. PALGRAVE.

FOOTNOTES:

[A] Described in Little Henry and his Bearer as "an intoxicating mixture of opium and sugar."

[B] The huge fan, hanging from the ceiling, by which the air of houses in India is kept moving.

[C] The "tatta" is a blind, or screen, woven of sweet-smelling grass, which is kept constantly wet by the water-carriers.

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The Fairchild Family

The History of the Fairchild Family

Part I

Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild lived very far from any town; their house stood in the midst of a garden, which in the summer-time was full of fruit and sweet flowers. Mr. Fairchild kept only two servants, Betty and John: Betty's business was to clean the house, cook the dinner, and milk the cow; and John waited at table, worked in the garden, fed the pig, and took care of the meadow in which the cow grazed.

Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild had three children: Lucy, who was about nine years old when these stories began; Emily, who was next in age; and Henry, who was between six and seven. These little children did not go to school: Mrs. Fairchild taught Lucy and Emily, and Mr. Fairchild taught little Henry. Lucy and Emily learned to read, and to do various kinds of needlework. Lucy had begun to write, and took great pains with her writing; their mother also taught them to sing psalms and hymns, and they could sing several very sweetly. Little Henry, too, had a great notion of singing.

Besides working and reading, the little girls could do many useful things; they made their beds, rubbed the chairs and tables in their rooms, fed the fowls; and when John was busy, they laid the cloth for dinner, and were ready to fetch anything which their parents might want.

Mr. Fairchild taught Henry everything that was proper for little boys in his station to learn; and when he had finished his lessons in a morning, his papa used to take him very often to work in the garden; for Mr. Fairchild had great pleasure in helping John to keep the garden clean. Henry had a little basket, and he used to carry the weeds and rubbish in his basket out of the garden, and do many such other little things as he was set to do.

I must not forget to say that Mr. Fairchild had a school for poor boys in the next village, and Mrs. Fairchild one for girls. I do not mean that they taught the children entirely themselves, but they paid a master and mistress to teach them; and they used to take a walk two or three times a week to see the children, and to give rewards to those who had behaved well. When Lucy and Emily and Henry were obedient, their parents were so kind as to let them go with them to see the schools; and then they always contrived to have some little thing ready to carry with them as presents to the good children.

The Birthday Walk

Good children

"It is Lucy's birthday," said Mr. Fairchild, as he came into the parlour one fine morning in May; "we will go to see John Trueman, and take some cake to his little children, and afterwards we will go on to visit Nurse, and carry her some tea and sugar."

Nurse was a pious old woman, who had taken care of Lucy when she was a baby, and now lived with her son and his wife Joan in a little cottage not far distant, called

Brookside Cottage, because a clear stream of water ran just before the door.

"And shall we stay at Nurse's all day, papa?" said the children.

"Ask your mamma, my dears," said Mr. Fairchild.

"With all my heart," said Mrs. Fairchild; "and we will take Betty with us to carry our dinner."

So when the children had breakfasted, and Betty was ready, they all set out. And first they went down the lane towards John Trueman's cottage. There is not a pleasanter lane near any village in England; the hedge on each side is of hawthorn, which was then in blossom, and the grass was soft under the feet as a velvet cushion; on the bank, under the hedge, were all manner of sweet flowers, violets, and primroses, and the blue vervain.

Lucy and Emily and Henry ran gaily along before Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild, and Betty came after with the basket. Before they came up to the gate of John Trueman's cottage, the children stopped to take the cake out of Betty's basket, and to cut shares of it for John's little ones. Whilst they were doing this, their father and mother had reached the cottage, and were sitting down at the door when they came up.

John Trueman's cottage was a neat little place, standing in a garden, adorned with pinks and rosemary and southernwood. John himself was gone out to his daily work when Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild came to his house; but his wife Mary was at home, and was just giving a crust of bread and a bit of cheese to a very poor woman who had stopped at the gate with a baby in her arms.

"Why, Mary," said Mr. Fairchild, "I hope it is a sign that you are getting rich, as you have bread and cheese to spare."

"Sir," she answered, "this poor woman is in want, and my children will never miss what I have given her."

"You are very right," answered Mrs. Fairchild; and at the same time she slipped a

shilling into the poor woman's hand.

John and Mary Trueman had six children: the eldest, Thomas, was working in the garden; and little Billy, his youngest brother, who was but three years old, was carrying out the weeds as his brother plucked them up; Mary, the eldest daughter, was taking care of the baby; and Kitty, the second, sat sewing: whilst her brother Charles, a little boy of seven years of age, read the Bible aloud to her. They were all neat and clean, though dressed in very coarse clothes.

When Lucy and Emily and Henry divided the cake amongst the poor children, they looked very much pleased; but they said that they would not eat any of it till their father came in at night.

"If that is the case," said Mrs. Fairchild, "you shall have a little tea and sugar to give your father with your cake;" so she gave them some out of the basket.

As Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild and their children passed through the village they stopped at the schools, and found everything as they could wish—the children all clean, neat, cheerful, and busy, and the master and mistress very attentive. They were much pleased to see everything in such good order in the schools, and having passed this part of the village, they turned aside into a large meadow, through which was the path to Nurse's cottage. Many sheep with their lambs were feeding in this meadow, and here also were abundance of primroses, cowslips, daisies, and buttercups, and the songs of the birds which were in the hedgerows were exceedingly delightful.

"They ran on before."—Page 7.

As soon as the children came in sight of Nurse's little cottage they ran on before to kiss Nurse, and to tell her that they were come to spend the day with her. The poor woman was very glad, because she loved Mr. Fairchild's children very dearly; she therefore kissed them, and took them to see her little grandson Tommy, who was asleep in the cradle. By this time Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild and Betty were come up, and whilst Betty prepared the dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild sat talking with Nurse

at the door of the cottage.

Betty and Joan laid the cloth upon the fresh grass before the cottage-door, and when Joan had boiled some potatoes, Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild sat down to dinner with the children, after which the children went to play in the meadow by the brookside till it was time for them to be going home.

"What a happy day we have had!" said Lucy as she walked home between her father and mother. "Everything has gone well with us since we set out, and everyone we have seen has been kind and good to us; and the weather has been so fine, and everything looks so pretty all around us!"

"Here were abundance of flowers."—Page 7.

Mrs. Fairchild's Story

I sat down on one of the branches to eat cherries

The next morning, when Lucy and Emily were sitting at work with Mrs. Fairchild, Henry came in from his father's study.

"I have finished all my lessons, mamma," he said. "I have made all the haste I could because papa said that you would tell us a story to-day; and now I am come to hear it."

So Henry placed himself before his mother, and Lucy and Emily hearkened, whilst Mrs. Fairchild told her story.

"My mother died," said Mrs. Fairchild, "many years ago, when I was a very little child—so little that I remember nothing more of her than being taken to kiss her when she lay sick in bed. Soon afterwards I can recollect seeing her funeral procession go out of the garden-gate as I stood in the nursery window; and I also remember some days afterwards being taken to strew flowers upon her grave in the village churchyard.

"After my mother's death my father sent me to live with my aunts, Mrs. Grace and

Mrs. Penelope, two old ladies, who, having never been married, had no families to take up their attention, and were so kind as to undertake to bring me up. These old ladies lived near the pleasant town of Reading. I fancy I can see the house now, although it is many years since I left it. It was a handsome old mansion, for my aunts were people of good fortune. In the front of it was a shrubbery, neatly laid out with gravel walks, and behind it was a little rising ground, where was an arbour, in which my aunts used to drink tea on a fine afternoon, and where I often went to play with my doll. My aunts' house and garden were very neat; there was not a weed to be seen in the gravel walks or among the shrubs, nor anything out of its place in the house. My aunts themselves were nice and orderly, and went on from day to day in the same manner, and, as far as they knew, they were good women; but they knew very little about religion, and what people do not understand they cannot practise.

"Mrs. Grace taught me to sew, and Mrs. Penelope taught me to read."—Page 10.

"I was but a very little girl when I came to live with my aunts, and they kept me under their care till I was married. As far as they knew what was right, they took great pains with me. Mrs. Grace taught me to sew, and Mrs. Penelope taught me to read. I had a writing-and music-master, who came from Reading to teach me twice a week; and I was taught all kinds of household work by my aunts' maid. We spent one day exactly like another. I was made to rise early, and to dress myself very neatly, to breakfast with my aunts. At breakfast I was not allowed to speak one word. After breakfast I worked two hours with my Aunt Grace, and read an hour with my Aunt Penelope; we then, if it was fine weather, took a walk, or, if not, an airing in the coach—I, and my aunts, and little Shock, the lap-dog, together. At dinner I was not allowed to speak, and after dinner I attended my masters, or learned my tasks. The only time I had to play was while my aunts were dressing to go out, for they went out every evening to play at cards. When they went out my supper was given to me, and I was put to bed in a closet in my aunts' room.

"Now, although my aunts took so much pains with me in their way, I was a very naughty girl; I had no good principles."

"What do you mean by good principles?" asked Lucy.

"A person of good principles, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "is one who does not do well for fear of the people he lives with, but from the fear of God. A child who has good principles will behave just the same when his mamma is out of the room as when she is looking at him—at least he will wish to do so; and if he is by his own wicked heart at any time tempted to sin, he will be grieved, although no person knows his sin. But when I lived with my aunts, if I could escape punishment, I did not care what naughty things I did.

"My Aunt Grace was very fond of Shock. She used to give me skim-milk at breakfast, but she gave Shock cream; and she often made me carry him when I went out a-walking. For this reason I hated him, and when we were out of my aunts' hearing I used to pull his tail and his ears and make the poor little thing howl sadly. My Aunt Penelope had a large tabby cat, which I also hated and used ill. I remember once being sent out of the dining-room to carry Shock his dinner, Shock being ill, and laid on a cushion in my aunts' bedroom. As I was going upstairs I was so unfortunate as to break the plate, which was fine blue china. I gathered up the pieces, and running up into the room, set them before Shock; after which I fetched the cat and shut her up in the room with Shock. When my aunts came up after dinner and found the broken plate, they were much surprised, and Mrs. Bridget, the favourite maid, was called to beat the cat for breaking the plate. I was in my closet and heard all that was said, and instead of being sorry, I was glad that puss was beaten instead of me.

"Besides those things which I have told you, I did many other naughty things. Whenever I was sent into the store-room, where the sugar and sweetmeats were kept, I always stole some. I used very often at night, when my aunts were gone out,

and Mrs. Bridget also (for Mrs. Bridget generally went out when her mistress did to see some of her acquaintances in the town), to get up and go down into the kitchen, where I used to sit upon the housemaid's knee and eat toasted cheese and bread sopped in beer. Whenever my aunts found out any of my naughty tricks, they used to talk to me of my wickedness, and to tell me that if I went on in this manner I certainly should make God very angry. When I heard them talk of God's anger I used to be frightened, and resolved to do better; but I seldom kept any of my good resolutions. From day to day I went on in the same way, getting worse, I think, instead of better, until I was twelve years of age.

"One Saturday morning in the middle of summer my aunts called me to them and said, 'My dear, we are going from home, and shall not return till Monday morning. We cannot take you with us, as we could wish, because you have not been invited. Bridget will go with us, therefore there will be no person to keep you in order; but we hope, as you are not now a little child, that you may be trusted a few days by yourself.'

"Then they talked to me of the Commandments of God, and explained them to me, and spoke of the very great sin and danger of breaking them; and they talked to me till I really felt frightened, and determined that I would be good all the while they were from home.

"When the coach was ready my aunts set out, and I took my books and went to sit in the arbour with Shock, who was left under my care. I stayed in the arbour till evening, when one of the maid-servants brought me my supper. I gave part of it to Shock, and, when I had eaten the rest, went to bed. As I lay in my bed I felt very glad that I had gone through that evening without doing anything I thought naughty, and was sure I should do as well the next day.

"The next morning I was awakened by the bells ringing for church. I got up, ate my breakfast, and when I was dressed went with the maid to church. When we came

home my dinner was given me. All this while I had kept my aunts' words pretty well in my memory, but they now began to wear a little from my mind. When I had done my dinner I went to play in the garden.

"Behind the garden, on the hill, was a little field full of cherry-trees. Cherries were now quite ripe. My aunts had given me leave every day to pick up a few cherries if there were any fallen from the trees, but I was not allowed to gather any. Accordingly I went to look if there were any cherries fallen. I found a few, and was eating them, when I heard somebody call me, 'Miss! Miss!' and, looking up, saw a little girl who was employed about the house, in weeding the garden, and running errands. My aunts had often forbid me to play or hold any discourse with this little girl, which was certainly very proper, as the education of the child was very different from that which had been given me. I was heedless of this command, and answered her by saying: 'What are you doing here, Nanny?'

"'There is a ladder, Miss,' she replied, 'against a tree at the upper end of the orchard. If you please, I will get up into it and throw you down some cherries.'

"At first I said 'No,' and then I said 'Yes.' So Nanny and I repaired to the tree in question, and Nanny mounted into the tree.

"'Oh, Miss! Miss!' said she as soon as she had reached the top of the ladder, 'I can see from where I am all the town, and both the churches; and here is such plenty of cherries! Do come up! Only just step on the ladder, and then you can sit on this bough and eat as many cherries as you please.'"

"And did you get into the tree, mamma?" said Lucy.

"Yes, my dear, I did," said Mrs. Fairchild; "and sat down on one of the branches to eat cherries and look about me."

"Oh, mamma!" said Emily, "suppose your aunts had come home then!"

"You shall hear, my dear," continued Mrs. Fairchild. "My aunts, as I thought, and as they expected, were not to come home till the Monday morning; but something

happened whilst they were out—I forget what—which obliged them to return sooner than they had expected, and they got home just at the time when I was in the cherry-orchard. They called for me, but not finding me immediately, they sent the servants different ways to look for me. The person who happened to come to look for me in the cherry-orchard was Mrs. Bridget, who was the only one of the servants who would have told of me. She soon spied me with Nanny in the cherry-tree. She made us both come down, and dragged us by the arms into the presence of my aunts, who were exceedingly angry; I think I never saw them so angry. Nanny was given up to her mother to be punished; and I was shut up in a dark room, where I was kept several days upon bread and water. At the end of three days my aunts sent for me, and talked to me for a long time.

"'Is it not very strange at your age, niece,' said Mrs. Penelope, 'that you cannot be trusted for one day, after all the pains we have taken with you, after all we have taught you?'

"'And,' said my Aunt Grace, 'think of the shame and disgrace of climbing trees in such low company, after all the care and pains we have taken with you, and the delicate manner in which we have reared you!'

"In this way they talked to me, whilst I cried very much.

"'Indeed, indeed, Aunt Grace and Aunt Penelope,' I said, 'I did mean to behave well when you went out; I made many resolutions, but I broke them all; I wished to be good, but I could not be good.'

"When my aunts had talked to me a long time, they forgave me, and I was allowed to go about as usual, but I was not happy; I felt that I was naughty, and did not know how to make myself good. One afternoon, soon after all this had happened, while my aunts and I were drinking tea in the parlour, with the window open towards the garden, an old gentleman came in at the front gate, whom I had never seen before. He was dressed in plain black clothes, exceedingly clean; his gray hair curled about

his neck, and in his hand he had a strong walking-stick. I was the first who saw him, as I was nearest the window, and I called to my aunts to look at him.

"'Why, it is my Cousin Thomas!' cried my Aunt Penelope. 'Who would have expected to have seen him here?'

"With that both my aunts ran out to meet him and bring him in. The old gentleman was a clergyman, and a near relation of our family, and had lived many years upon his living in the North, without seeing any of his relations.

"'I have often promised to come and see you, cousins,' he said, as soon as he was seated, 'but never have been able to bring the matter about till now.'

"My aunts told him how glad they were to see him, and presented me to him. He received me very kindly, and told me that he remembered my mother. The more I saw of this gentleman, the more pleased I was with him. He had many entertaining stories to tell; and he spoke of everybody in the kindest way possible. He often used to take me out with him a-walking, and show me the flowers, and teach me their names. One day he went out into the town, and bought a beautiful little Bible for me; and when he gave it to me he said: 'Read this, dear child, and pray to God to send His Holy Spirit to help you to understand it; and it shall be a lamp unto your feet, and a light unto your path.'"

"I know that verse, mamma," said Lucy; "it is in the Psalms."

"The old gentleman stayed with my aunts two months, and every day he used to take me with him to walk in the fields, the woods, and in the pleasant meadows on the banks of the Thames. His kind words to me at those times I shall never forget; he, with God's blessing, brought me to the knowledge of my dear Saviour, and showed me the wickedness of my own heart, and made me understand that I never could do any good but through the help of God."

"When the good old gentleman was gone, did you behave better than you did before he came, mamma?" said Lucy.

"After he left us, my dear, I was very different from what I was before," said Mrs. Fairchild. "I had learned to know the weakness of my heart, and to ask God to help me to be good; and when I had done wrong, I knew whose forgiveness to ask; and I do not think that I ever fell into those great sins which I had been guilty of before—such as lying, stealing, and deceiving my aunts."

On Envy

"How lovely! How beautiful!"

"Who can go with me to the village this morning," said Mr. Fairchild, one winter's day, "to carry this basket of little books to the school?"

"Lucy cannot go," said Mrs. Fairchild, "because her feet are sore with chilblains, and Henry has a bad cold; but Emily can go."

"Make haste, Emily," said Mr. Fairchild, "and put on your thick shoes and warm coat, for it is very cold."

As soon as Emily was ready, she set off with her father. It was a very cold day, and the ground was quite hard with the frost. Mr. Fairchild walked first, and Emily came after him with the little basket. They gave the basket to the schoolmaster, and returned. As they were coming back, Emily saw something bright upon the ground; and when she stooped to pick it up, she saw that it was a ring set round with little white shining stones.

"Oh, papa, papa!" she said, "see what I have found! What a beautiful ring!"

When Mr. Fairchild looked at it, he was quite surprised.

"Why, my dear," said he, "I think that this is Lady Noble's diamond ring; how came it to be lying in this place?"

Whilst they were looking at the ring they heard the sound of a carriage; it was Sir Charles Noble's, and Lady Noble was in it.

"Oh, Mr. Fairchild!" she called out of the window of the carriage, "I am in great

trouble; I have lost my diamond ring, and it is of very great value. I went to the village this morning in the carriage, and as I came back, pulled off my glove to get sixpence out of my purse to give to a poor man somewhere in this lane, and I suppose that my ring dropped off at the time. I don't know what I shall do; Sir Charles will be sadly vexed."

"Make yourself quite happy, madam," said Mr. Fairchild, "here is your ring; Emily just this moment picked it up."

Lady Noble was exceedingly glad when she received back her ring. She thanked Emily twenty times, and said, "I think I have something in the carriage which you will like very much, Miss Emily; it is just come from London, and was intended for my daughter Augusta; but I will send for another for her."

So saying, she presented Emily with a new doll packed up in paper, and with it a little trunk, with a lock and key, full of clothes for the doll. Emily was so delighted that she almost forgot to thank Lady Noble; but Mr. Fairchild, who was not quite so much overjoyed as his daughter, remembered to return thanks for this pretty present.

So Lady Noble put the ring on her finger, and ordered the coachman to drive home.

"Oh, papa, papa!" said Emily, "how beautiful this doll is! I have just torn the paper a bit, and I can see its face; it has blue eyes and red lips, and hair like Henry's. Oh, how beautiful! Please, papa, to carry the box for me; I cannot carry both the box and the doll. Oh, this beautiful doll! this lovely doll!" So she went on talking till they reached home; then she ran before her papa to her mamma and sister and brother, and, taking the paper off the doll, cried out: "How beautiful! Oh, what pretty hands! What nice feet! What blue eyes! How lovely! how beautiful!"

Her mother asked her several times where she had got this pretty doll; but Emily was too busy to answer her. When Mr. Fairchild came in with the trunk of clothes, he told all the story; how that Lady Noble had given Emily the doll for finding her diamond ring.

When Emily had unpacked the doll, she opened the box, which was full of as pretty doll's things as ever you saw.

Whilst Emily was examining all these things, Henry stood by admiring them and turning them about; but Lucy, after having once looked at the doll without touching it, went to a corner of the room, and sat down in her little chair without speaking a word.

"Come, Lucy," said Emily, "help me to dress my doll."

"Can't you dress it yourself?" answered Lucy, taking up a little book, and pretending to read.

"Come, Lucy," said Henry, "you never saw so beautiful a doll before."

"Don't tease me, Henry," said Lucy; "don't you see I am reading?"

"Put up your book now, Lucy," said Emily, "and come and help me to dress this sweet little doll. I will be its mamma, and you shall be its nurse, and it shall sleep between us in our bed."

"I don't want dolls in my bed," said Lucy; "don't tease me, Emily."

"Then Henry shall be its nurse," said Emily. "Come, Henry, we will go into our play-room, and put this pretty doll to sleep. Will not you come, Lucy? Pray do come; we want you very much."

"Do let me alone," answered Lucy; "I want to read."

So Henry and Emily went to play, and Lucy sat still in the corner of the parlour. After a few minutes her mamma, who was at work by the fire, looked at her, and saw that she was crying; the tears ran down her cheeks, and fell upon her book. Then Mrs. Fairchild called Lucy to her, and said:

"My dear child, you are crying; can you tell me what makes you unhappy?"

"Nothing, mamma," answered Lucy; "I am not unhappy."

"People do not cry when they are pleased and happy, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild.

Lucy stood silent.

"I am your mother, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "and I love you very much; if anything vexes you, whom should you tell it to but to your own mother?" Then Mrs. Fairchild kissed her, and put her arms round her.

Lucy began to cry more.

"Oh, mamma, mamma! dear mamma!" she said, "I don't know what vexes me, or why I have been crying."

"Are you speaking the truth?" said Mrs. Fairchild. "Do not hide anything from me. Is there anything in your heart, my dear child, do you think, which makes you unhappy?"

"Indeed, mamma," said Lucy, "I think there is. I am sorry that Emily has got that pretty doll. Pray do not hate me for it, mamma; I know it is wicked in me to be sorry that Emily is happy, but I feel that I cannot help it."

"My dear child," said Mrs. Fairchild, "I am glad you have confessed the truth to me. Now I will tell you why you feel so unhappy, and I will tell you where to seek a cure. The naughty passion you now feel, my dear, is what is called Envy. Envy makes persons unhappy when they see others happier or better than themselves. Envy is in every man's heart by nature. Some people can hide it more than others, and others have been enabled, by God's grace, to overcome it in a great degree; but, as I said before, it is in the natural heart of all mankind. Little children feel envious about dolls and playthings, and men and women feel envious about greater things."

"Do you ever feel envious, mamma?" said Lucy. "I never saw you unhappy because other people had better things than you had."

"My heart, my dear child," answered Mrs. Fairchild, "is no better than yours. There was a time when I was very envious. When I was first married I had no children for seven or eight years; I wished very much to have a baby, as you wished just now for Emily's doll; and whenever I saw a woman with a pretty baby in her arms, I was

ready to cry for vexation."

"Do you ever feel any envy now, mamma?" said Lucy.

"I cannot say that I never feel it, my dear; but I bless God that this wicked passion has not the power over me which it used to have."

"Oh, mamma, mamma!" said Lucy, "how unhappy wickedness makes us! I have been very miserable this morning; and what for? only because of the naughtiness of my heart, for I have had nothing else to make me miserable."

Then Mrs. Fairchild took Lucy by the hand, and went into her closet, where they prayed that the Holy Spirit would take the wicked passion of envy out of Lucy's heart. And as they prayed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who died upon the cross to deliver us from the power of sin, they did not doubt but that God would hear their prayer; and indeed He did, for from that day Lucy never felt envious of Emily's doll, but helped Emily to take care of it and make its clothes, and was happy to have it laid on her bed betwixt herself and sister.

"She saw that it was a ring."——Page 19.

Story of the Apples

Henry stood under the apple-tree

Just opposite Mr. Fairchild's parlour window was a young apple-tree, which had never yet brought forth any fruit; at length it produced two blossoms, from which came two apples. As these apples grew they became very beautiful, and promised to be very fine fruit.

"I desire," said Mr. Fairchild, one morning, to his children, "that none of you touch the apples on that young tree, for I wish to see what kind of fruit they will be when they are quite ripe."

That same evening, as Henry and his sisters were playing in the parlour window, Henry said:

"Those are beautiful apples indeed that are upon that tree."

"Do not look upon them, Henry," said Lucy.

"Why not, Lucy?" asked Henry.

"Because papa has forbidden us to meddle with them."

Henry. "Well, I am not going to meddle with them; I am only looking at them."

Lucy. "Oh! but if you look much at them, you will begin to wish for them, and may be tempted to take them at last."

Henry. "How can you think of any such thing, Lucy? Do you take me for a thief?"

The next evening the children were playing again in the parlour window. Henry said to his sister, "I dare say that those beautiful apples will taste very good when papa gathers them."

"There, now, Henry!" said Lucy; "I told you that the next thing would be wishing for those apples. Why do you look at them?"

"Well, and if I do wish for them, is there any harm in that," answered Henry, "if I do not touch them?"

Lucy. "Oh! but now you have set your heart upon them, the devil may tempt you to take one of them, as he tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. You should not have looked at them, Henry."

Henry. "Oh, I shan't touch the apples! Don't be afraid."

"There was one he could just reach."—Page 26.

Now Henry did not mean to steal the apples, it is true; but when people give way to sinful desires, their passions get so much power over them that they cannot say, "I will sin so far, and no further." That night, whenever Henry awoke, he thought of the beautiful apples. He got up before his parents, or his sisters, and went down into the garden. There was nobody up but John, who was in the stable. Henry went and stood under the apple-tree. He looked at the apples; there was one which he could just

reach as he stood on his tip-toe. He stretched out his hand and plucked it from the tree, and ran with it, as he thought, out of sight behind the stable. Having eaten it in haste, he returned to the house.

When Mr. Fairchild got up, he went into the garden and looked at the apple-tree, and saw that one of the apples was missing; he looked round the tree to see if it had fallen down, and he perceived the mark of a child's foot under the tree. He came into the house in great haste, and looking angrily, "Which of you young ones," said he, "has gathered the apple from the young apple-tree? Last night there were two upon the tree, and now there is only one."

The children made no answer.

"If you have, any of you, taken the apple, and will tell me the truth, I will forgive you," said Mr. Fairchild.

"I did not take it, indeed, papa," said Lucy.

"And I did not take it," said Emily.

"I did not—indeed I did not," said Henry; but Henry looked very red when he spoke.

"Well," said Mr. Fairchild, "I must call in John, and ask him if he can tell who took the apple. But before John is called in, I tell you once more, my dear children, that if any of you took the apple and will confess it, even now I will freely forgive you."

Henry now wished to tell his father the truth; but he was ashamed to own his wickedness, and he hoped that it would never be found out that he was the thief.

When John came in, Mr. Fairchild said:

"John, there is one of the apples taken from the young apple-tree opposite the parlour window."

"Sir," said John, "I did not take it, but I think I can guess which way it went." Then John looked very hard at Henry, and Henry trembled and shook all over. "I saw Master Henry this morning run behind the stable with a large apple in his hand, and

he stayed there till he had eaten it, and then he came out."

"Henry," said Mr. Fairchild, "is this true? Are you a thief—and a liar, too?" And Mr. Fairchild's voice was very terrible when he spoke.

Then Henry fell down upon his knees and confessed his wickedness.

"Go from my sight, bad boy!" said Mr. Fairchild; "if you had told the truth at first, I should have forgiven you, but now I will not forgive you."

Then Mr. Fairchild ordered John to take Henry, and lock him up in a little room at the top of the house, where he could not speak to any person. Poor Henry cried sadly, and Lucy and Emily cried too; but Mr. Fairchild would not excuse Henry.

"It is better," he said, "that he should be punished in this world whilst he is a little boy than grow up to be a liar and a thief."

So poor Henry was locked up by himself in a little room at the very top of the house. He sat down on a small box and cried sadly. He hoped that his mother and father would have sent him some breakfast; but they did not. At twelve o'clock he looked out of the window and saw his mother and sisters walking in the meadows at a little distance, and he saw his father come and fetch them in to dinner, as he supposed; and then he hoped that he should have some dinner sent him; but no dinner came. Some time after he saw Betty go down into the meadow to milk the cow; then he knew that it was five o'clock, and that it would soon be night; then he began to cry again.

"Oh! I am afraid," he said, "that papa will make me stay here all night! and I shall be alone, for God will not take care of me because of my wickedness."

Soon afterwards Henry saw the sun go down behind the hills, and he heard the rooks as they were going to rest in their nests at the top of some tall trees near the house. Soon afterwards it became dusk, and then quite dark. "Oh! dear, dear," said Henry, when he found himself sitting alone in the dark, "what a wicked boy I have been to-day! I stole an apple, and told two or three lies about it! I have made my papa and

mamma unhappy, and my poor sisters, too! How could I do such things? And now I must spend all this night in this dismal place; and God will not take care of me because I am so naughty."

Then Henry cried very sadly indeed. After which he knelt down and prayed that God would forgive him, till he found himself getting more happy in his mind.

When he got up from his prayer he heard the step of someone coming upstairs; he thought it was his mother, and his little heart was very glad indeed. Henry was right: it was indeed his mother come to see her poor little boy. He soon heard her unlock the door, and in a moment he ran into her arms.

"Is Henry sorry for his naughtiness?" said Mrs. Fairchild, as she sat down and took him upon her lap. "Are you sorry, my dear child, for your very great naughtiness?"

"Oh, indeed I am!" said Henry, sobbing and crying; "I am very sorry, pray forgive me. I have asked God to forgive me; and I think that He has heard my prayer, for I feel happier than I did."

"But have you thought, Henry, of the great wrong which you have done?"

"Yes, mamma, I have been thinking of it a great deal; I know that what I did this morning was a very great sin."

"Why do you say this morning?" said Mrs. Fairchild; "the sin that you committed was the work of several days."

"How, mamma?" said Henry; "I was not two minutes stealing the apple, and papa found it out before breakfast."

"Still, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "that sin was the work of many days." Henry listened to his mother, and she went on speaking: "Do you remember those little chickens which came out of the eggs in the hen's nest last Monday morning?"

"Yes, mamma," said Henry.

"Do you think," said Mrs. Fairchild, "that they were made the moment before they

came out?"

"No, mamma," said Henry; "papa said they were growing in the egg-shell a long time before they came out alive."

Mrs. Fairchild. "In the same manner the great sin you committed this morning was growing in your heart some days before it came out."

"How, mamma?" said Henry. "I do not understand."

Mrs. Fairchild. "All wrong things which we do are first formed in our hearts; and sometimes our sins are very long before they come to their full growth. The great sin you committed this morning began to be formed in your heart three days ago. Do you remember that that very day in which your father forbade you to touch the apples, you stood in the parlour window and looked at them, and you admired their beautiful appearance? This was the beginning of your sin. Your sister Lucy told you at the time not to look at them, and she did well; for by looking at forbidden things we are led to desire them, and when we desire them very much we proceed to take them. Your father forbade you to touch these apples; therefore, my dear child, you ought not to have allowed yourself to think of them for one moment. When you first thought about them, you did not suppose that this thought would end in so very great a sin as you have now been guilty of."

"Oh, mamma," said Henry, "I will try to remember what you have said to me all my life."

Mrs. Fairchild kissed little Henry then, and said:

"God bless you, my child, and give you a holy heart, which may never think or design any evil."

Mrs. Fairchild then led Henry down into the parlour, where Mr. Fairchild and Lucy and Emily were waiting for them to go to tea. Mr. Fairchild kissed his little boy, and Lucy and Emily smiled to see him.

"Henry," said Mr. Fairchild, "you have had a sad day of it; but I did not punish you, my child, because I do not love you, but because I do."

Then Mr. Fairchild cut a large piece of bread-and-butter for Henry, which he was very glad of, for he was very hungry.

"Behind the stable."—Page 26.

Story of an Unhappy Day

Lucy and Emily

It happened that Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild had had nothing for a long time to interrupt them in the care and management of their children; so that they had had it in their power to teach them and guard them from all evil influences. I will tell you exactly how they lived and spent their time; Emily and Lucy slept together in a little closet on one side of their mother and father's room; and Henry had a little room on the other side, where he slept. As soon as the children got up, they used to go into their father and mother's room to prayers; after which Henry went with Mr. Fairchild into the garden, whilst Lucy and Emily made their beds and rubbed the furniture; afterwards they all met at breakfast, dressed neatly but very plain. At breakfast the children ate what their mother gave them, and seldom spoke till they were spoken to. After breakfast Betty and John were called in and all went to prayers. Then Henry went into his father's study to his lessons; and Lucy and Emily stayed with their mother, working and reading till twelve o'clock, when they used to go out to take a walk all together; sometimes they went to the schools, and sometimes they went to see a poor person. When they came in, dinner was ready. After dinner the little girls and Mrs. Fairchild worked, whilst Henry read to them, till tea-time; and after tea Lucy and Emily played with their doll and worked for it, and Henry busied himself in making some little things of wood, which his father showed him how to do. And so they spent their time, till Betty and John came in to evening prayers; then the children had each of them a baked apple and went to bed.

Now all this time the little ones were in the presence of their father and mother, and kept carefully from doing openly naughty things by the watchful eyes of their dear parents. One day it happened, when they had been living a long time in this happy way, that Lucy said to Mrs. Fairchild, "Mamma, I think that Emily and Henry and I are much better children than we used to be; we have not been punished for a very long time."

"My dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "do not boast or think well of yourself; it is always a bad sign when people boast of themselves. If you have not done any very naughty thing lately, it is not because there is any goodness or wisdom in you, but because your papa and I have been always with you, carefully watching and guiding you from morning till night."

That same evening a letter came for Mr. Fairchild, from an old lady who lived about four miles off, begging that he and Mrs. Fairchild would come over, if it was convenient, to see her the next day to settle some business of consequence. This old lady's name was Mrs. Goodriche, and she lived in a very neat little house just under a hill, with Sukey her maid. It was the very house in which Mrs. Howard lived about fifty years ago, as we shall hear later on.

When Mr. Fairchild got the letter he ordered John to get the horse ready by daybreak next morning, and to put the pillion on it for Mrs. Fairchild; so Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild got up very early, and when they had kissed their children, who were still asleep, they set off.

Now it happened, very unluckily, that Mrs. Fairchild, at this time, had given Betty leave to go for two or three days to see her father, and she was not yet returned; so there was nobody left in the house to take care of the children but John. And now I will tell you how these children spent the day whilst their father and mother were out.

When Lucy and Emily awoke, they began playing in their beds. Emily made babies

of the pillows, and Lucy pulled off the sheets and tied them round her, in imitation of Lady Noble's long-trained gown; and thus they spent their time till Henry came to the door to tell them that breakfast was ready.

"And I have persuaded John," said Henry, "to make us toast and butter; and it looks so nice! Make haste and come down; do, sisters, do!" And he continued to drum upon the door with a stick until his sisters were dressed.

Emily and Lucy put on their clothes as quickly as they could and went downstairs with their brother, without praying, washing themselves, combing their hair, making their bed, or doing any one thing they ought to have done.

John had, indeed, made a large quantity of toast and butter; but the children were not satisfied with what John had made, for when they had eaten all that he had provided, yet they would toast more themselves, and put butter on it before the fire as they had seen Betty do; so the hearth was covered with crumbs and grease, and they wasted almost as much as they ate.

After breakfast, they took out their books to learn their lessons; but they had eaten so much that they could not learn with any pleasure; and Lucy, who thought she would be very clever, began to scold Henry and Emily for their idleness; and Henry and Emily, in their turn, found fault with her; so that they began to dispute, and would soon, I fear, have proceeded to something worse if Henry had not spied a little pig in the garden.

"Oh, sisters," said he, "there is a pig in the garden, in the flower-bed! Look! look! And what mischief it will do! Papa will be very angry. Come, sisters, let us hunt it out."

So saying, down went Henry's book, and away he ran into the garden, followed by Emily and Lucy, running as fast as they could. They soon drove the pig out of the garden, and it would have been well if they had stopped there; but, instead of that, they followed it down into the lane. Now, there was a place where a spring ran

across the lane, over which was a narrow bridge for the use of people that way. Now the pig did not stand to look for the bridge, but went splash, splash, through the midst of the water: and after him went Henry, Lucy, and Emily, though they were up to their knees in mud and dirt.

"Away he ran into the garden, followed by Lucy and Emily."—Page 39.

In this dirty condition they ran on till they came close to a house where a farmer and his wife lived whose name was Freeman. These people were not such as lived in the fear of God, neither did they bring up their children well; on which account Mr. Fairchild had often forbidden Lucy and Emily and Henry to go to their house. However, when the children were opposite this house, Mrs. Freeman saw them through the kitchen window; and seeing they were covered with mud, she came out and brought them in, and dried their clothes by the fire; which was, so far, very kind of her, only the children should not have gone into the house, as they had been so often forbidden by their parents.

Mrs. Freeman would have had them stay all day and play with their children; and Henry and his sisters would have been very glad to have accepted her invitation, but they were afraid: so Mrs. Freeman let them go; but, before they went, she gave them each a large piece of cake, and something sweet to drink, which she said would do them good. Now this sweet stuff was cider; and as they were never used to drink anything but water, it made them quite giddy for a little while; so that when they got back into the lane, first one tumbled down, and then another; and their faces became flushed, and their heads began to ache, so that they were forced to sit down for a time under a tree, on the side of the lane, and there they were when John came to find them; for John, who was in the stable when they ran out of the garden, was much frightened when he returned to the house, and could not find them there.

"Ah, you naughty children!" said he, when he found them, "you have almost frightened me out of my life! Where have you been?"

"We have been in the lane," said Lucy, blushing.

This was not all the truth; but one fault always leads to another.

So John brought them home, and locked them up in their play-room, whilst he got their dinner ready.

When the children found themselves shut up in their play-room, and could not get out, they sat themselves down, and began to think how naughty they had been. They were silent for a few minutes; at last Lucy spoke:

"Oh, Henry! oh, Emily! how naughty we have been! And yet I thought I would be so good when papa and mamma went out; so very good! What shall we say when papa and mamma come home?"

Then all the children began to cry. At length Henry said:

"I'll tell you what we will do, Lucy; we will be good all the evening; we will not do one naughty thing."

"So we will, Henry," said Emily. "When John lets us out, how good we will be! and then we can tell the truth, that we were naughty in the morning, but we were good all the evening."

John made some nice apple-dumplings for the children, and when they were ready, and he had put some butter and sugar upon them (for John was a good-natured man), he fetched the children down; and after they had each ate as much apple-dumpling as he thought proper, he told them they might play in the barn, bidding them not to stir out of it till supper-time.

Henry and Lucy and Emily were delighted with this permission; and, as Lucy ran along to the barn with her brother and sister, she said:

"Now let us be very good. We are not to do anything naughty all this evening."

"We will be very good indeed," answered Emily.

"Better than we ever were in all our lives," added Henry.

So they all went into the barn, and when John fastened them in he said to himself, "Sure they will be safe now, till I have looked to the pigs and milked the cow; for there is nothing in the barn but straw and hay, and they cannot hurt themselves with that, sure."

But John was mistaken. As soon as he was gone, Henry spied a swing, which Mr. Fairchild had made in the barn for the children, but which he never allowed them to use when he was not with them, because swings are very dangerous things, unless there are very careful persons to use them. The seat of the swing was tied up to the side of the barn, above the children's reach, as Mr. Fairchild thought.

"Oh, Lucy!" said Henry, "there is the swing. There can be no harm in our swinging a little. If papa was here, I am sure he would let us swing. If you and Emily will help to lift me up, I will untie it and let it down, and then we will swing so nicely."

So Emily and Lucy lifted Henry up, and he untied the swing, and let it down into its right place; but as he was getting down, his coat caught upon a bit of wood on the side of the barn, and was much torn. However, the children did not trouble themselves very much about this accident. First Emily got into the swing, then Henry, then Lucy; and then Emily would get in again.

"Now, Lucy," she said, "swing me high, and I will shut my eyes; you can't think how pleasant it is to swing with one's eyes shut. Swing me higher! swing me higher!"

So she went on calling to Lucy, and Lucy trying to swing her higher and higher, till at last the swing turned, and down came Emily to the floor. There happened providentially to be some straw on the floor, or she would have been killed. As it was, however, she was sadly hurt; she lay for some minutes without speaking, and her mouth and nose poured out blood.

Henry and Lucy thought she was dead; and, oh! how frightened they were! They screamed so violently that John came running to see what was the matter; and, poor man! he was sadly frightened when he saw Emily lying on the floor covered with

blood. He lifted her up and brought her into the house; he saw she was not dead, but he did not know how much she might be hurt. When he had washed her face from the blood, and given her a little water to drink, she recovered a little; but her nose and one eye, and her lip, were terribly swelled, and two of her teeth were out.

When Emily was a little recovered, John placed her in a little chair by the kitchen fire, and he took his blue pocket-handkerchief and tied Lucy and Henry to the kitchen-table, saying:

"You unlucky rogues! you have given me trouble enough to-day—that you have. I will not let you go out of my sight again till master and mistress come home. Thank God you have not killed your sister! Who would have thought of your loosing the swing!"

In this manner Henry and Lucy and Emily remained till it was nearly dark, and then they heard the sound of the horse's feet coming up to the kitchen door, for Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were come. John hastened to untie the children, who trembled from head to foot.

"Oh, John, John! what shall we do—what shall we say?" said Lucy.

"The truth, the truth, and all the truth," said John; "it is the best thing you can do now."

When Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild came in, they thought their children would have run to meet them; but they were so conscious of their naughtiness that they all crept behind John, and Emily hid her face.

"Emily, Lucy, Henry!" said Mrs. Fairchild, "you keep back; what is the matter?"

"Oh, mamma, mamma! papa, papa!" said Lucy, coming forward, "we have been very wicked children to-day; we are not fit to come near you."

"What have you done, Lucy?" said Mrs. Fairchild. "Tell us the whole truth."

Then Lucy told her parents everything which she and her brother and sister had

done; she did not hide anything from them. You may be sure that Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were very much shocked. When they heard all that Lucy had to tell them, and saw Emily's face, they looked very grave indeed.

"I am glad that you have told the truth, my children," said Mr. Fairchild; "but the faults that you have committed are very serious ones. You have disobeyed your parents; and, in consequence of your disobedience, Emily might have lost her life, if God had not been very merciful to you. And now go all of you to your beds."

The children did as their father bade them, and went silently up to their beds, where they cried sadly, thinking upon their naughtiness. The next morning they all three came into their mother's room, and begged her to kiss them and forgive them.

"I cannot refuse to pardon you, my children," said Mrs. Fairchild; "but, indeed, you made me and your father very unhappy last night."

Then the children looked at their mother's eyes, and they were full of tears; and they felt more and more sorry to think how greatly they had grieved their kind mother; and when Mrs. Fairchild kissed them, and put her arms round their necks, they cried more than ever.

Story of Ambition; or, The Wish to be Great

They went along the great gallery

Twice every year Sir Charles and Lady Noble used to invite Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild and their children to spend a day with them at their house. Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild did not much like to go, because Sir Charles and his lady were very proud, and their children were not brought up in the fear of God; yet, as the visit only happened twice a year, Mr. Fairchild thought it better to go than to have a quarrel with his neighbour. Mrs. Fairchild always had two plain muslin frocks, with white mittens and neat black shoes, for Lucy and Emily to wear when they went to see Lady Noble. As Mr. Fairchild's house was as much as two miles distance from Sir Charles

Noble's, Sir Charles always used to send his carriage for them, and to bring them back again at night.

One morning, just at breakfast-time, Mr. Fairchild came into the parlour, saying to Mrs. Fairchild:

"Here, my dear, is a note from Sir Charles Noble, inviting us to spend the day to-morrow, and the children."

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "as Sir Charles Noble has been so kind as to ask us, we must not offend him by refusing to go."

The next morning Mr. Fairchild desired his wife and children to be ready at twelve o'clock, which was the time fixed for the coach to be at Mr. Fairchild's door. Accordingly, soon after eleven, Mrs. Fairchild dressed Lucy and Emily, and made them sit quietly down till the carriage came. As Lucy and Emily sat in the corner of the room, Lucy looked at Emily, and said:

"Sister, how pretty you look!"

"And how nice you look, Lucy!" said Emily. "These frocks are very pretty, and make us look very well."

"My dear little girls," said Mrs. Fairchild, who overheard what they said to each other, "do not be conceited because you have got your best frocks on. You now think well of yourselves, because you fancy you are well dressed; by-and-by, when you get to Lady Noble's, you will find Miss Augusta much finer dressed than yourselves; then you will be out of humour with yourselves for as little reason as you now are pleased."

At this moment Henry came in his Sunday coat to tell his mother that Sir Charles Noble's carriage was come. Mrs. Fairchild was quite ready; and Lucy and Emily were in such a hurry that Emily had nearly tumbled downstairs over her sister, and Lucy was upon the point of slipping down on the step of the hall-door; however, they all got into the coach without any accident, and the coachman drove away, and

that so rapidly that they soon came in sight of Sir Charles Noble's house.

As it is not likely that you ever saw Sir Charles Noble's house, I will give you some account of it. It is a very large house, built of smooth white stone; it stands in a fine park, or green lawn, scattered over with tall trees and shrubs; but there were no leaves on the trees at the time I am speaking of, because it was winter.

When the carriage drove up to the hall-door, a smart footman came out, opened the carriage-door, and showed Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild through a great many rooms into a grand parlour, where Lady Noble was sitting upon a sofa, by a large fire, with several other ladies, all of whom were handsomely dressed. Now, as I told you before, Lady Noble was a proud woman; so she did not take much notice of Mrs. Fairchild when she came in, although she ordered the servants to set a chair for her. Miss Augusta Noble was seated on the sofa by her mamma, playing with a very beautiful wax doll; and her two brothers, William and Edward, were standing by her; but they never came forward to Mrs. Fairchild's children to say that they were glad to see them, or to show them any kind of civility. If children knew how disagreeable they make themselves when they are rude and ill-behaved, surely they would never be so, but would strive to be civil and courteous to everyone.

Soon after Mrs. Fairchild was seated, a servant came to say that Miss Noble's and Master William's and Master Edward's dinners were ready.

"Go, Augusta," said Lady Noble, "to your dinner, and take Master and Misses Fairchild with you; and, after you have dined, show them your playthings and your baby-house."

Miss Augusta got up, and, as she passed by Emily and Lucy, she said in a very haughty way, "Mamma says you must come with me."

So Emily and Lucy followed Miss Augusta, and the little boys came after them. She went up a pair of grand stairs, and along a very long gallery full of pictures, till they came to a large room, where Miss Augusta's governess was sitting at work, and the

children's dinner set out in great order. In one corner of the room was the baby-house. Besides the baby-house, there was a number of other toys—a large rocking-horse, a cradle with a big wooden doll lying in it, and tops, and carts, and coaches, and whips, and trumpets in abundance.

"Here are Mrs. Fairchild's children come to dine with me, ma'am," said Miss Augusta, as she opened the door; "this is Lucy, and this is Emily, and that is Henry."

The governess did not take much notice of Mrs. Fairchild's children, but said, "Miss Augusta, I wish you would shut the door after you, for it is very cold."

I do not know whether Miss Augusta heard her governess, but she never offered to go back to shut the door.

The governess, whose name was Beaumont, then called to Master Edward, who was just coming in, to shut the door after him.

"You may shut it yourself, if you want it shut," answered the rude boy.

When Lucy heard this she immediately ran and shut the door, upon which Miss Beaumont looked more civilly at her than she had done before, and thanked her for her attention.

Whilst Lucy was shutting the door, Miss Augusta began to stir the fire.

"Miss Augusta," said the lady, "has not your mamma often forbidden you to touch the fire? Some day you will set your frock on fire."

Miss Augusta did not heed what her governess said this time any more than the last, but went on raking the fire; till at length Miss Beaumont, fearing some mischief, forced the poker out of her hand. Miss Augusta looked very much displeased, and was going to make a pert answer, when her mother and the other ladies came into the room to see the children dine. The young ones immediately seated themselves quietly at the table to eat their dinner.

"Are my children well behaved?" said Lady Noble, speaking to the governess. "I

thought I heard you finding fault with Augusta when I came in."

"Oh, no, ma'am," said the governess; "Miss Augusta is a good young lady; I seldom have reason to find fault with her."

Lucy and Emily looked at Miss Beaumont, and wondered to hear her say that Miss Augusta was good, but they were silent.

"I am happy to say," said Lady Noble, speaking to Mrs. Fairchild, "that mine are promising children. Augusta has a good heart."

Just at that moment a servant came in, and set a plate of apples on the table.

"Miss Beaumont," said Lady Noble, "take care that Augusta does not eat above one apple; you know that she was unwell yesterday from eating too many."

Miss Beaumont assured Lady Noble that she would attend to her wishes, and the ladies left the room. When they were gone the governess gave two apples to each of the children, excepting Augusta, to whom she gave only one. The rest of the apples she took out of the plate, and put in her work-bag for her own eating.

When everyone had done dinner and the table-cloth was taken away, Lady Noble's children got up and left the table, and Henry and Emily were following, but Lucy whispered to them to say grace. Accordingly they stood still by the table, and, putting their hands together, they said the grace which they had been used to say after dinner at home.

"What are you doing?" said Augusta.

"We are saying grace," answered Lucy.

"Oh, I forgot," said Augusta; "your mamma is religious, and makes you do all these things. How tiresome it must be! And where's the use of it? It will be time enough to be religious, you know, when we get old, and expect to die."

"Oh, but," said little Henry, "perhaps we may never live to be old; many children die younger than we are."

Whilst Henry was speaking, William and Edward stood listening to him with their mouths wide open, and when he had finished his speech they broke out into a fit of laughter.

"When our parson dies, you shall be parson, Henry," said Edward; "but I'll never go to church when you preach."

"No, he shan't be parson—he shall be clerk," said William; "then he will have all the graves to dig."

"I'll tell you what," said Henry: "your mamma was never worse out in her life than when she said hers were good children."

"Take that for your sauciness, you little beggar!" said Master William, giving Henry a blow on the side of the head; and he would have given him several more had not Lucy and Emily run in between.

"If you fight in this room, boys, I shall tell my mamma," said Miss Augusta. "Come, go downstairs; we don't want you here. Go and feed your dogs."

William and Edward accordingly went off, and left the little girls and Henry to play quietly. Lucy and Emily were very much pleased with the baby-house and the dolls, and Henry got upon the rocking-horse; and so they amused themselves for a while. At length Miss Beaumont, who had been sitting at work, went to fetch a book from an adjoining room. As soon as she was out of sight, Miss Augusta, going softly up to the table, took two apples out of her work-bag.

"Oh, Miss Augusta, what are you doing?" said Emily.

"She is stealing," said Henry.

"Stealing!" said Miss Augusta, coming back into the corner of the room where the baby-house was; "what a vulgar boy you are! What words you use!"

"You don't like to be called a thief," said Henry, "though you are not ashamed to steal, I see."

"Do, Miss Augusta, put the apples back," said Emily; "your mamma said you must have but one, you know, to-day, and you have had one already."

"Hush, hush!" said Miss Augusta; "here's my governess coming back. Don't say a word."

So saying, she slipped the apples into the bosom of her frock, and ran out of the room.

"Where are you going, Miss Augusta?" exclaimed Miss Beaumont.

"Mamma has sent for me," answered Augusta; "I shall be back immediately."

When Miss Augusta had eaten the apples, she came back quietly, and sat down to play with Lucy and Emily as if nothing had happened. Soon after the governess looked into her work-bag, and found that two of the apples were gone.

"Miss Augusta," she said, "you have taken two apples: there are two gone."

"I have not touched them," said Miss Augusta.

"Some of you have," said Miss Beaumont, looking at the other children.

"I can't tell who has," said Miss Augusta; "but I know it was not me."

Lucy and Emily felt very angry, but they did not speak; but Henry would have spoken if his sister Lucy had not put her hand on his mouth.

"I see," said Miss Beaumont, "that some of you have taken the apples, and I desire that you Miss Emily, and you Miss Lucy, and you Master Henry, will come and sit down quietly by me, for I don't know what mischief you may do next."

Now the governess did not really suppose that Mrs. Fairchild's children had taken the apples; but she chose to scold them because she was not afraid of offending their parents, but she was very much afraid of offending Miss Augusta and her mamma. So she made Lucy and Emily and Henry sit quietly down by her side before the fire. It was now getting dark, and a maid-servant came in with a candle, and, setting it upon the table, said,

"Miss Augusta, it is time for you to be dressed to go down to tea with the ladies."

"Well," said Miss Augusta, "bring me my clothes, and I will be dressed by the fireside."

The servant then went into the closet I before spoke of, and soon returned with a beautiful muslin frock, wrought with flowers, a rose-coloured sash and shoes, and a pearl necklace. Emily and Lucy had never seen such fine clothes before; and when they saw Miss Augusta dressed in them they could not help looking at their own plain frocks and black shoes and feeling quite ashamed of them, though there was no more reason to be ashamed of their clothes at that time than there was of their being proud of them when they were first put on.

"Emily and Lucy had never seen such fine clothes before."—Page 52.

When Miss Augusta was dressed, she said to the maid-servant,

"Take the candle and light me down to the hall." Then, turning to Emily and Lucy, she added, "Will you come with me? I suppose you have not brought any clean frocks to put on? Well, never mind; when we get into the drawing-room you must keep behind your mamma's chair, and nobody will take any notice of you."

So Miss Augusta walked first, with the maid-servant, and Henry, and Lucy, and Emily followed. They went along the great gallery, and down the stairs, and through several fine rooms, all lighted up with many lamps and candles, till they came to the door where Sir Charles and Lady Noble, and Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild, and a great many ladies and gentlemen were sitting in a circle round a fire. Lucy and Emily and Henry went and stood behind their mother's chair, and nobody took any notice of them; but Miss Augusta went in among the company, curtseying to one, giving her hand to another, and nodding and smiling at another. "What a charming girl Miss Augusta has grown!" said one of the ladies. "Your daughter, Lady Noble, will be quite a beauty," said another. "What an elegant frock Miss Augusta has on!" said a third lady. "That rose-coloured sash makes her sweet complexion more lovely than

ever," said one of the gentlemen; and so they went on flattering her till she grew more conceited and full of herself than ever; and during all the rest of the evening she took no more notice of Mrs. Fairchild's children than if they had not been in the room.

After the company had all drank tea, several tables were set out, and the ladies and gentlemen began to make parties for playing at cards. As Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild never played at cards, they asked for the coach, and, when it was ready, wished Sir Charles and Lady Noble good-night, and came away.

"Well," said little Henry, "Sir Charles Noble's may be a very fine house, and everything may be very fine in it, but I like my own little home and garden, and John, and the meadow, and the apple-trees, and the round hill, and the lane, better than all the fine things at Sir Charles's."

Now all this while Emily and Lucy did not speak a word; and what do you think was the reason? It was this: that the sight of Miss Augusta's fine clothes and playthings, and beautiful rooms in which she lived, with the number of people she had to attend her, had made them both out of humour with their own humble way of living, and small house and plain clothes. Their hearts were full of the desire of being great, like Miss Augusta, and having things like her; but they did not dare to tell their thoughts to their mother.

When they got home, Mrs. Fairchild gave a baked apple to each of the children, and some warm milk and water to drink; and after they had prayed, she sent them to bed. When Emily and Lucy had got into bed, and Betty had taken away the candle, Lucy said,

"Oh, Emily! I wish our papa and mamma were like Sir Charles and Lady Noble. What a beautiful frock that was that Miss Augusta had on! and I dare say that she has a great many more like it. And that sash!—I never saw so fine a colour."

Emily. "And then the ladies and gentlemen said she was so pretty, and even her

governess did not dare to find fault with her!"

Lucy. "But Betty finds fault with us, and John, too; and papa and mamma make us work so hard! and we have such coarse clothes! Even our best frocks are not so good as those Miss Augusta wears every morning."

In this manner they went on talking till Mrs. Fairchild came upstairs and into their room. As they had thick curtains round their bed, it being very cold weather, they did not see their mamma come into the room, and so she heard a great deal of what they were talking about without their knowing it. She came up to the side of their bed, and sat down in a chair which stood near it, and putting the curtains aside a little, she said, "My dear little girls, as I came into the room I heard some part of what you were saying without intending it; and I am glad I heard it, because I can put you in a way of getting rid of these foolish thoughts and desires which you are speaking of to each other. Do not be ashamed, my dears; I am your own mamma, and love you dearly. Do you remember, Lucy, when Emily got that beautiful doll from Lady Noble, that you said you felt something in your heart which made you very miserable?"

Lucy. "Yes, mamma, I remember it very well; you told me it was envy. But I do not feel envy now; I do not wish to take Miss Augusta's things from her, or to hurt her; Emily and I only wish to be like her, and to have the same things she has."

"What you now feel, my dears," said Mrs. Fairchild, "is not exactly envy, though it is very like it; it is what is called ambition. Ambition is the desire to be greater than we are. Ambition makes people unhappy and discontented with what they are and what they have."

"I do not exactly understand, mamma," said Emily, "what ambition makes people do."

"Why, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "suppose that Betty was ambitious, she would be discontented at being a servant, and would want to be as high as her mistress; and

if I were ambitious, I should strive to be equal to Lady Noble; and Lady Noble would want to be as great as the duchess, who lives at that beautiful house which we passed by when we went to see your grandmamma; the duchess, if she were ambitious, would wish to be like the Queen."

Emily. "But the Queen could be no higher, so she could not be ambitious."

Mrs. Fairchild. "My dear, you are much mistaken. When you are old enough to read history, you will find that when Kings and Queens are ambitious, it does more harm even than when little people are so. When Kings are ambitious, they desire to be greater than other Kings, and then they fight with them, and cause many cruel wars and dreadful miseries. So, my dear children, you see that there is no end to the mischief which ambition does; and whenever this desire to be great comes, it makes us unhappy, and in the end ruins us."

Then Mrs. Fairchild showed to her children how much God loves people who are lowly and humble; and she knelt by the bedside and prayed that God would take all desire to be great out of her dear little girls' hearts.

"Dressed."—Page 52.

The All-Seeing God

At last she fell asleep

I must tell you of a sad temptation into which Emily fell about this time. It is a sad story, but you shall hear it.

There was a room in Mrs. Fairchild's house which was not often used. In this room was a closet, full of shelves, where Mrs. Fairchild used to keep her sugar and tea, and sweetmeats and pickles, and many other things. Now, as Betty was very honest, and John, too, Mrs. Fairchild would often leave this closet unlocked for weeks together, and never missed anything out of it. One day, at the time that damsons were ripe, Mrs. Fairchild and Betty boiled up a great many damsons in sugar, to use

in the winter; and when they had put them in jars and tied them down, they put them in the closet I before spoke of. Emily and Lucy saw their mother boil the damsons, and helped Betty to cover them and carry them to the closet. As Emily was carrying one of the jars she perceived that it was tied down so loosely that she could put in her finger and get at the fruit. Accordingly, she took out one of the damsons and ate it. It was so nice that she was tempted to take another; and was going even to take a third, when she heard Betty coming up. She covered the jar in haste and came away. Some months after this, one evening, just about the time it was getting dark, she was passing by the room where these sweetmeats were kept, and she observed that the door was open. She looked round to see if anybody was near, but there was no one. Her parents, and her brother and sister, were in the parlour, and Betty was in the kitchen, and John was in the garden. No eye was looking at her but the eye of God, who sees everything we do, and knows even the secret thoughts of the heart; but at that moment the fear of God was not in the heart of Emily. Accordingly, she passed through the open door and went up to the closet. There she stood still again, and looked round, but saw no one. She then opened the closet door, and took two or three damsons, which she ate in great haste. She then went to her own room, and washed her hands and her mouth, and went down into the parlour, where Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were just going to tea.

"She took two or three damsons, which she ate in great haste."—Page 60.

Although her parents never suspected what naughty thing Emily had been doing, and behaved just as usual to her, yet Emily felt frightened and uneasy before them; and every time they spoke to her, though it was only to ask the commonest question, she stared and looked frightened.

I am sorry to say that the next day, when it was beginning to get dark, Emily went again to the closet and took some more damsons; and so she did for several days, though she knew she was doing wrong.

On the Sunday following, it happened to be so rainy that nobody could go to church, in consequence of which Mr. Fairchild called all the family into the parlour and read the Morning Service and a sermon. Some sermons are hard and difficult for children to understand, but this was a very plain, easy sermon—even Henry could tell his mamma a great deal about it. The text was from Psalm cxxxix., 7th to 12th verses.

The meaning of these verses was explained in the sermon. It was first shown that the Lord is a spirit; and, secondly, that there is no place where He is not: that if a person could go up into heaven, he would find God there; if he were to go down to hell, there also would he find God: that God is in every part of the earth, and of the sea, and of the sky; and that, being always present in every place, He knows everything we do and everything we say, and even every thought of our hearts, however secret we may think it. Then the sermon went on to show how foolish and mad it is for people to do wicked things in secret and dark places, trusting that God will not know it. "If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me," for no night is dark unto God.

While Mr. Fairchild was reading, Emily felt frightened and unhappy, thinking of the wickedness she was guilty of every day; and she even thought that she never would be guilty again of the same sin; but when the evening came all her good resolutions left her, for she confided in her own strength; and she went again to the room where the damsons were kept. However, when she came to the door of the closet, she thought of the sermon which her father had read in the morning, and stood still a few moments to consider what she should do. "There is nobody in this room," she said; "and nobody sees me, it is true, but God is in this room; He sees me; His eye is now upon me. I will not take any more damsons. I will go back, I think. But yet, as I am come so far, and am just got to the closet, I will just take one damson—it shall be the last. I will never come here again without mamma's leave." So she opened the closet door and took one damson, and then another, and then two more. Whilst she was taking the last, she heard the cat mew. She did not know that the cat had

followed her into the room; and she was so frightened that she spilled some of the red juice upon her frock, but she did not perceive it at the time. She then left the closet, and went, as usual, to wash her hands and mouth, and went down into the parlour.

When Emily got into the parlour, she immediately saw the red stain on her frock. She did not stay till it was observed, but ran out again instantly, and went upstairs and washed her frock. As the stain had not dried in, it came out with very little trouble; but not till Emily had wetted all the bosom of her frock and sleeves, and that so much that all her inner clothes were thoroughly wet, even to the skin; to hide this, she put her pinafore on to go down to tea. When she came down, "Where have you been, Emily?" said Mrs. Fairchild; "we have almost done tea."

"I have been playing with the cat upstairs, mamma," said Emily. But when she told this sad untruth she felt very unhappy, and her complexion changed once or twice from red to pale.

It was a cold evening, and Emily kept as much away from the fire and candle as she could, lest any spots should be left in her frock, and her mother should see them. She had no opportunity, therefore, of drying or warming herself, and she soon began to feel quite chilled and trembling. Soon after a burning heat came into the palms of her hands, and a soreness about her throat; however, she did not dare to complain, but sat till bedtime, getting every minute more and more uncomfortable.

It was some time after she was in bed, and even after her parents came to bed, before she could sleep; at last she fell asleep, but her sleep was disturbed by dreadful dreams, such as she had never experienced before. It was her troubled conscience, together with an uneasy body, which gave her these dreadful dreams; and so horrible were they, that at length she awoke, screaming violently. Her parents heard her cry, and came running in to her, bringing a light; but she was in such a terror that at first she did not know them.

"Oh, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "this child is in a burning fever! Only feel her hands!"

It was true, indeed; and when Mr. Fairchild felt her, he was so much frightened that he resolved to watch by her all night, and in the morning, as soon as it was light, to send John for the doctor. But what do you suppose Emily felt all this time, knowing, as she did, how she had brought on this illness, and how she had deceived for many days this dear father and mother, who now gave up their own rest to attend her?

Emily continued to get worse during the night: neither was the doctor able, when he came, to stop the fever which followed the severe chill she had taken, though he did his uttermost. It would have grieved you to have seen poor Lucy and Henry. They could neither read nor play, they missed their dear sister so much. They continually said to each other, "Oh, Emily! dear Emily! there is no pleasure without our dear Emily!"

The next day, when the doctor came, Emily was so very ill that he thought it right that Lucy and Henry should be sent out of the house. Accordingly, John got the horse ready, and took them to Mrs. Goodriche's. Poor Lucy and Henry! How bitterly they cried when they went out of the gate, thinking that perhaps they might never see their dear Emily any more! It was a terrible trial to poor Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild. They had no comfort but in praying and watching by poor Emily's bed. And all this grief Emily brought upon her friends by her own naughtiness.

Emily was exceedingly ill for nine days, and everyone feared that if the fever continued a few days longer she must die; when, by the mercy of God, it suddenly left her, and she fell asleep and continued sleeping for many hours.

When she awoke, she was very weak, but her fever was gone. She kissed her parents, and wanted to tell them of the naughty things she had done, which had been the cause of the illness, but they would not allow her to speak.

From that day she got better, and at the end of another week was so well that she

was able to sit up and tell Mrs. Fairchild all the history of her stealing the damsons, and of the sad way in which she had got the fever.

"Oh, mamma," said Emily, "what a naughty girl have I been! What trouble have I given to you, and to papa, and to the doctor, and to Betty! I thought that God would take no notice of my sin. I thought He did not see when I was stealing in the dark. But I was much mistaken. His eye was upon me all the time. And yet how good, how very good, He has been to me! When I was ill, I might have died. And oh, mamma! mamma! how unhappy you would have been then!"

Emily's Recovery, and the Old Story of Mrs. Howard

"What sound is that I hear?" said Emily

After Emily's fever was gone, she got rapidly better every day. Her kind mother never left her, but sat by her bed and talked to her, and provided everything which was likely to do her good.

When she was well enough, Mr. Fairchild borrowed Farmer Jones's covered cart for two days; and he set out, with Mrs. Fairchild and Emily, to fetch Henry and Lucy from Mrs. Goodriche's. It was a lovely morning at the finest season of the year. The little birds were singing in the hedges, and the grass and leaves of the trees shone with the dew. When John drove the cart out of the garden-gate and down the lane, "Oh," said Emily, "how sweet the honeysuckles and the wild roses smell in the hedges! There, mamma, are some young lambs playing in the fields by their mothers; and there is one quite white—not a spot about it. It turns its pretty face towards us. How mild and gentle it looks!"

Whilst they were talking, the cart had come alongside a wood, which was exceedingly shady and beautiful. Many tufts of primroses, violets, and wood-anemones grew on the banks by the wayside; and as the wind blew gently over these flowers, it brought a most delightful smell.

"What sound is that which I hear among the trees?" said Emily. "It is very sweet and soft."

"That is the cooing of wood-pigeons or doves," said Mr. Fairchild. "And look, Emily, there they are! They are sitting upon the branch of a tree; there are two of them."

"Oh, I see them!" said Emily. "Oh, how soft and pretty they look! But now the noise of the cart has frightened them; they are flown away."

By this time the cart had passed through the wood, and they were come in sight of Mrs. Goodriche's white house standing in a little garden under a hill.

"Oh, mamma, mamma!" said Emily, "there is Mrs. Goodriche's house! And I shall see my dear Lucy and Henry in a very little time."

Just as Emily spoke, they saw Lucy and Henry step out of the house-door, and come running towards the cart. It would have pleased you to the heart had you seen how rejoiced these dear children were to meet each other. Mr. Fairchild lifted Henry and Lucy into the cart; and they cried for joy when they put their arms around dear Emily's neck.

"Oh, Emily, Emily!" said Henry. "If you had died, I never would have played again."

"God be praised!" said Mr. Fairchild. "Our dear Emily has been spared to us."

When the cart came up to Mrs. Goodriche's garden-gate, the good old lady came to receive Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild, and to kiss Emily; and Sukey peeped out of the kitchen-window, not less pleased than her mistress to see Emily in good health.

Whilst Sukey was getting the dinner, Emily and her brother and sister went to play in the garden. Henry showed Emily some rabbits which Mrs. Goodriche had, and some young ducks which had been hatched a few days before, with many other pretty things. When dinner was ready, Mrs. Fairchild called the children in, and they

all sat down, full of joy, to eat roast fowl and some boiled bacon, with a nice cold currant and raspberry pie.

"Emily and her brother and sister went to play in the garden."—Page 68.

After dinner Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild and Mrs. Goodriche, with the children, walked as far as the wood where Emily had seen the doves, to gather strawberries, which they mixed with some cream and sugar at night for their supper.

The next morning, after breakfast, Mr. Fairchild went out to take a walk. Then Mrs. Goodriche called the three children to her, and said:

"Now, my dear children, I will tell you a story. Come, sit round me upon these little stools, and hearken."

The children were very much pleased when they heard Mrs. Goodriche say she would tell them a story, for Mrs. Goodriche could tell a great many pretty stories.

The Old Story of Mrs. Howard

"About fifty years ago," said Mrs. Goodriche, "a little old lady, named Mrs. Howard, lived in this house with her maid Betty. She had an old horse called Crop, which grazed in that meadow, and carried Betty to market once a week. Mrs. Howard was one of the kindest and most good-natured old ladies in England. Three or four times every year Betty had orders, when she went to market, to bring all manner of playthings and little books from the toy-shop. These playthings and pretty little books Mrs. Howard used to keep by her till she saw any children whom she thought worthy of them. But she never gave any playthings to children who did not obey their parents, or who were rude or ill-mannered, for she would say, 'It is a great sin in the eyes of God for children to be rude and unmannerly.' All the children in the neighbourhood used from time to time to visit Mrs. Howard; and those who wished to be obliging never came away without some pretty plaything or book.

"At that time there were in this country two families of the name of Cartwright and Bennet; the former much beloved by the neighbours on account of their good

qualities; the latter as much disliked for their bad ones.

"Mr. Bennet was a rich farmer, and lived in a good old house, with everything handsome and plentiful about him; but nobody cared to go near him or to visit his wife, because their manners were so rough and disobliging; and their two children, Master Jacky and Miss Polly, were brought up only to please themselves and to care for nobody else. But, on the contrary, Mr. and Mrs. Cartwright made their house so agreeable by their civil and courteous manners that high and low, rich and poor, loved to go there; and Master Billy and Miss Patty Cartwright were spoken well of throughout the whole neighbourhood for their pretty and modest behaviour.

"It happened once upon a time that Betty went to town at the end of the Midsummer Fair, and brought some of the prettiest toys and books which had been seen in this country for a long time; amongst these was a jointed doll with flaxen hair, and a history of the Bible full of coloured pictures, exceedingly pretty. Soon after Betty brought these things home, Mrs. Howard said to her: 'Betty, you must make a cake and put some plums in it, and a large apple-pie, and some custards and cheesecakes; and we will invite Master and Miss Cartwright, and Master Bennet and his sister Miss Polly, and some other children, to spend a day with us; and before they go home, we will give those who have behaved well during the day some of those pretty toys which you brought from the Midsummer Fair.'

"Accordingly, Betty made the cake, and the cheesecakes, and custards, and the large apple-pie; and Mrs. Howard sent to invite Master and Miss Cartwright, and Master Bennet and his sister, to spend the next day with her.

"In those days little misses did not wear muslin or linen frocks, which, when they are dirtied, may easily be washed and made clean again; but they wore stuff, silk, and satin slips, with lace or gauze ruffles, and bibs, and aprons, and little round caps with artificial flowers. Children were then taught to be very careful never to dirty their best clothes, and to fold them up very smooth when they pulled them off.

"When Mrs. Bennet received Mrs. Howard's invitation for her children, she called them to her, and said:

"'My dears, you are to go to-morrow to see Mrs. Howard; and I have been told that she has by her some very pretty toys, which she means to give away to those children who please her best. You have seen the gilt coach-and-four which she gave last year to Miss Cartwright, and the little watch which Master Cartwright received from her last Christmas; and why should not you also have some of these fine toys? Only try to please the old lady to-morrow, and I dare say she will give you some; for I am sure you are quite as good as Master and Miss Cartwright, though you are not quite so sly.'

"'Oh!' said Master Bennet, 'I should like to get the toys, if it was only to triumph over Master Cartwright. But what must we do to please Mrs. Howard?'

"'Why,' said Mrs. Bennet, 'when your best things are put on to-morrow, you must take care not to rumple or soil them before you appear in Mrs. Howard's presence; and when you come into her parlour you must stop at the door, and bow low and curtsey; and when you are desired to sit down, you must sit still till dinner is brought in; and when dinner is ready, you must stand up and say grace before you eat; and you must take whatever is offered you, without saying, "I will have this," and "I will have that," as you do at home.'

"Mrs. Bennet gave her children a great many other rules for their behaviour in Mrs. Howard's presence, which I have not time to repeat now," said Mrs. Goodriche; "all of which Master Jacky and Miss Polly promised to remember, for they were very desirous to get the playthings.

"And now I will tell you what Mrs. Cartwright said to her children when she got Mrs. Howard's invitation. She called them to her, and said:

"'Here, Billy—here, Patty, is a note from Mrs. Howard to invite you to spend the day with her to-morrow; and I am glad of it, because I know you love to go to Mrs.

Howard's, she is so good to all children, and has been particularly kind to you. I hear she has some pretty playthings by her now to give away; but don't you be greedy of them, my dears. You have a variety of playthings, you know—more than most children have, and it does not become anyone to be covetous. And remember, my dear children, to behave civilly and politely to everybody.'

"And now I will tell you how these children behaved. About eleven o'clock Mrs. Cartwright had her two children dressed in their best, and sent them with the maid-servant to Mrs. Howard's. As they were walking quietly over a corn-field, through which they must needs pass, they saw Master and Miss Bennet with their servant sitting on a stile at the farther end of the field.

"'Oh!' said Miss Patty, 'there are Master and Miss Bennet—on the way, I suppose, to Mrs. Howard's. I am sorry we have met with them; I am afraid they will get us into some mischief.'

"'Why should you say so?' said Master Cartwright. 'Let us speak of things as we may find them.'

"When Master and Miss Cartwright came near the stile, Master Bennet called to them:

"'What a long time you have been coming over the field! We have been waiting for you this half-hour,' said he. 'Come, now, let us join company. I suppose that you are going, as we are, to Mrs. Howard's.'

"Master Cartwright answered civilly, and all the children, with the two servants, got over the stile and went down a pretty lane which was beyond.

"The children walked on quietly till they came to a duck-pond, partly overgrown with weeds, which was at the farther end of the lane. When they came near to this, Master Bennet whispered to his sister:

"'I'll see now if I can't spoil Miss Patty's smart silk slip.'

"I'll see now if I can't spoil Miss Patty's smart silk slip."—Page 77.

"'Do, Jack,' answered Miss Polly.

"Master Bennet then, winking at his sister, went up to the pond, and pulling up some of the weeds, which were all wet and muddy, he threw them at Miss Cartwright's slip, saying, at the same time:

"'There, Miss, there is a present for you.'

"But, as it happened, Miss Cartwright saw the weeds coming, and caught them in her hand, and threw them from her. Upon this Master Bennet was going to pluck more weeds, but Mr. Cartwright's maid-servant held his hands, whilst little Billy and his sister ran forwards to Mrs. Howard's house, which was just in sight, as fast as their feet would carry them.

"'There, now,' said Miss Polly, 'those spiteful children have gone to tell Mrs. Howard what you have done, brother, and we shall not get any toys. You are always in mischief, that you are.'

"'I am sure you told me to throw the weeds,' answered Master Bennet.

"'I am sure I did not,' said Miss Polly.

"'But you knew that I was going to do it,' said he.

"'But I did not,' said she.

"'But you did, for I told you,' said he.

"In this manner this brother and sister went on scolding each other till they came to Mrs. Howard's gate. There Miss Polly smoothed her apron, and Master Jacky combed his hair with his pocket-comb, and they walked hand-in-hand into Mrs. Howard's parlour as if nothing had happened. They made a low bow and curtsey at the door, as their mamma had bidden them; and Mrs. Howard received them very kindly, for Master and Miss Cartwright had not mentioned a word of their ill-behaviour on the road.

"Besides Master and Miss Cartwright, there were several other children sitting in Mrs. Howard's parlour, waiting till dinner should be set on the table. My mother was there," said Mrs. Goodriche—"she was then a very little girl—and your grandmother and great-uncle, both young ones; with many others now dead and gone. In one corner of the parlour was a cupboard with glass doors, where Mrs. Howard had placed such of those pretty toys (as I before spoke of) which she meant to give away in the afternoon. The prettiest of these was the jointed doll, neatly dressed in a green satin slip, and gauze apron and bib.

"By the time Master and Miss Bennet had made their bow and curtsey, and were seated, Betty came in with the dinner, and Mrs. Howard called the children to table. Master and Miss Bennet, seeing the beautiful toys before them through the glass doors of the cupboard, did not forget to behave themselves well at table; they said grace and ate such things as were offered them; and Mrs. Howard, who noticed their good behaviour, began to hope that Farmer Bennet's children were becoming better.

"After the children had got their dinner, it being a very pleasant afternoon, Mrs. Howard gave them leave to play in the garden, and in the little croft, where she kept her old horse Crop.

"'But take care, my dears,' she said to the little girls, 'not to soil your slips or tear your aprons.'

"The children were much pleased with this permission to play; and after they were gone out, Mrs. Howard put on her hood and cloak, and said to Betty:

"'I shall drink tea, Betty, in my bower at the end of the grass walk; do you bring my little tea-table there, and the strawberries and cream, and the cake which you made yesterday; and when we have finished our tea, bring those toys which are in the glass cupboard to divide amongst the children.'

"'And I think, madam,' said Betty, 'that Master and Miss Bennet will gain some of them to-day, for I thought they behaved very well at dinner.'

"'Indeed, Betty,' said Mrs. Howard, 'I must say I never saw them behave so mannerly as they did at dinner, and if they do but keep it up till night, I shall not send them home without some pretty present, I assure you.'

"When Mrs. Howard had given her orders to Betty, she took her gold-headed stick in her hand, and went down the grass walk to her bower. It was a pretty bower, as I have heard my mother say, formed of honeysuckles and other creeping shrubs nailed over a framework of lath in the old-fashioned way. It stood just at the end of that long green walk, and at the corner of the field; so that anyone sitting in the bower might see through the lattice-work and foliage of the honeysuckles into the field, and hear all that was said. There good Mrs. Howard sat knitting (for she prepared stockings for most of the poor children in the neighbourhood), whilst her little visitors played in the garden and in the field, and Betty came to and fro with the tea-table and tea-things.

"Whilst the children were all engaged with their sports in the croft, a poor old man, who had been gathering sticks, came by that way, bending under the weight of the load. When he appeared, the children ceased from their play, and stood looking at him.

"'Poor man!' said Miss Patty Cartwright, 'those sticks are too heavy for you to carry. Have you far to go?'

"'No, my pretty miss,' said the old man; 'only a very little way.'

"'I cannot help to carry your sticks,' said Master Cartwright, 'because I have my best coat on. I could take off that, to be sure, but then my other things would be spoiled; but I have got a penny here, if you please to accept it.' So saying, he forced the penny into the poor man's hand.

"In the meantime, Master Bennet went behind the old man, and giving the sticks a sly pull, the string that tied them together broke, and they all came tumbling on the ground. The children screamed, but nobody was hurt.

"'Oh, my sticks!' said the poor man; 'the string is broke! What shall I do to gather them together again? I have been all day making this little faggot.'

"'We will help you,' said Master Cartwright; 'we can gather your sticks together without fear of hurting our clothes.'

"So all the little ones set to work (excepting Master and Miss Bennet, who stood by laughing), and in a little while they made up the poor man's bundle of sticks again, and such as had a penny in their pockets gave it him. Miss Patty Cartwright had not a penny, but she had a silver sixpence, which she gave to the old man, and ran before him to open the gate (which led out of the field), wishing him good-night, and curtseying to him as civilly as if he had been the first lord of the land.

"Now the children never suspected that Mrs. Howard had heard and seen all this, or else Master and Miss Bennet, I am sure, would not have behaved as they did. They thought Mrs. Howard was in the parlour, where they had left her.

"By this time everything was ready for tea, and the cake set upon the table, with the strawberries and cream.

"'And now, Betty,' said Mrs. Howard, 'you may call the children; and be sure, when tea is over, to bring the toys.'

"Master and Miss Bennet looked as demure when they came in to tea as they had done at dinner, and a stranger would have thought them as well-behaved children as Master and Miss Cartwright; but children who behave well in the sight of their parents, or in company, and rudely or impertinently in private, or among servants or their playfellows, cannot be called well-bred.

"After the young people had had their tea and cake, and strawberries and cream, Betty came with the playthings, and placed them on the table before Mrs. Howard. You would, perhaps, like to know what these playthings were:—First of all was the jointed doll, dressed, as I before said, in a green satin slip, and a gauze bib and apron, and round cap, according to the fashion of those days; then there was the

History of the Bible, with coloured pictures; then came a little chest of drawers, for dolls' clothes; a doll's wicker cradle; a bat and ball; a red morocco pocket-book; a needle-book; and the History of King Pepin, bound and gilt. These beautiful books and toys were placed on the table before Mrs. Howard, and the little ones waited in silence to see what she would do with them. Mrs. Howard looked first at the playthings, and then at the children, and thus she spoke:

"'My dear children, I sent for these pretty toys from the fair, in order to encourage you to be good: there is nothing that gives me greater pleasure than to see children polite and mannerly, endeavouring to please everybody, "in honour preferring one another," as God hath commanded us to do. Pride and ill manners, my dear children, are great faults; but humility, and a wish to please everyone rather than ourselves, make us resemble the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, who did not despise the poorest among men. Many persons are polite and good-mannered when in company with their betters, because, if they were not so, people would have nothing to say to them: but really well-behaved persons are courteous and civil, not only when they are among their betters, but when they are with servants, or with poor people.'

"Then Mrs. Howard took the jointed doll, and the History of the Bible, and gave the one to Miss Patty Cartwright, and the other to Master Billy, saying:

"'I give you these, my children, because I observed your good manners, not only to me, but to the poor old man who passed through the croft with his bundle of sticks. To you, Master Bennet, and to you, Miss Polly, I shall not give anything; because you showed, by your behaviour to the old man, that your good manners were all an outside garb, which you put on and off like your Sunday clothes.'

"Then Mrs. Howard gave the rest of the toys among the lesser children, commending them for helping the old man to gather his sticks together; and thus she dismissed them to their own houses, all of them, except Master Jacky and Miss Polly, jumping and skipping for joy."

When Mrs. Goodriche had finished her story, Lucy said:

"What a pretty story that is! I think Master and Miss Cartwright deserved those pretty toys—they were nice children: but I did not know that having rude manners was so very great a fault."

"If you will think a minute, my dear," said Mrs. Goodriche, "you will find that rude manners must be one sign of badness of heart: a person who has always a lowly opinion of himself, and proper love for his neighbour, will never be guilty of rudeness; it is only when we think ourselves better than others, or of more consequence than they are, that we venture to be rude. I have heard you say how rude Miss Augusta Noble was the last time you were at her house. Now, why was she rude, but because she thought herself better than her company? This is pride, and a great sin it is."

Sad Story of a Disobedient Child

Looking in the glass, with a candle in her hand

When Mr. Fairchild returned from his walk he found John ready with the cart, so, wishing Mrs. Goodriche a good-evening, and thanking her for her kindness, they returned home.

The next morning Mr. Fairchild got up early, and went down to the village. Breakfast was ready, and Mrs. Fairchild and the children waiting at the table, when he came back.

"Get your breakfast, my dear," said he to Mrs. Fairchild; "don't wait for me." So saying, he went into his study and shut the door.

Mrs. Fairchild, supposing that he had some letters to write, got her breakfast quietly; after which she sent Lucy to ask her father if he would not choose any breakfast. When Mr. Fairchild heard Lucy's voice at the study-door, he came out, and followed her into the parlour.

When Mrs. Fairchild looked at her husband's face she saw that something had grieved him very much. She was frightened, and said:

"My dear, I am sure something is the matter; what is it? Tell me the worst at once; pray do!"

"Indeed, my dear," said Mr. Fairchild, "I have heard something this morning which has shocked me dreadfully. I was not willing to tell you before you had breakfasted. I know what you will feel when you hear it."

"Do tell me," said Mrs. Fairchild, turning quite white.

"Poor Augusta Noble!" said Mr. Fairchild.

"What, papa?" said Lucy and Emily and Henry, in one voice.

"She is dead!" exclaimed Mr. Fairchild.

The children turned as pale as their mother; and poor Mrs. Fairchild nearly fainted.

"Oh! poor Lady Noble! poor Lady Noble!" said she, as soon as she could speak. "Poor Lady Noble!"

Whilst the children were crying over the sad news Mrs. Barker came into the parlour. Mrs. Barker was a kind woman, and, as she lived by herself, was always at liberty to go amongst her neighbours in times of trouble.

"Ah, Mrs. Fairchild," she said, "I know what troubles you: we are all in grief through the whole village."

"What was the cause of the poor child's death?" asked Mrs. Fairchild. "I never heard that she was ill."

"Ah! Mrs. Fairchild, the manner of her death is the worst part of the story, and that which must grieve her parents more than all. You know that poor Miss Augusta was always the darling of her mother, who brought her up in great pride; and she chose a foolish governess for her who had no good influence upon her."

"I never thought much of Miss Beaumont," said Mrs. Fairchild.

"As Miss Augusta was brought up without the fear of God," continued Mrs. Barker, "she had, of course, no notion of obedience to her parents, further than just trying to please them in their presence; she lived in the constant practice of disobeying them, and the governess continually concealed her disobedience from Lady Noble. And what is the consequence? The poor child has lost her life, and Miss Beaumont is turned out of doors in disgrace."

"But," said Mrs. Fairchild, "how did she lose her life through disobedience to her parents? Pray tell me, Mrs. Barker."

"The story is so sad I hardly like to tell it you," answered Mrs. Barker; "but you must know it sooner or later. Miss Augusta had a custom of playing with fire, and carrying candles about, though Lady Noble had often warned her of the danger of this habit, and strictly charged her governess to prevent it. But it seems that the governess, being afraid of offending, had suffered her very often to be guilty of this piece of disobedience, without telling Lady Noble. And the night before last, when Lady Noble was playing at cards in the drawing-room with some visitors, Miss Augusta took a candle off the hall table, and carried it upstairs to the governess's room. No one was there, and it is supposed that Miss Augusta was looking in the glass with a candle in her hand, when the flame caught her dress; but this is not known. Lady Noble's maid, who was in the next room, was alarmed by her dreadful screams, and, hastening to discover the cause, found poor Augusta in a blaze from head to foot. The unhappy young lady was so dreadfully burnt that she never spoke afterwards, but died in agonies last night."

When Mrs. Fairchild and the children heard this dreadful story they were very much grieved. Mrs. Barker stayed with them all day; and it was, indeed, a day of mourning through all the house.

The Two Books

"Please choose a book for me"

It was the time of the Midsummer Fair, and John asked Mr. Fairchild's leave to go to the fair.

"You may go, John," said Mr. Fairchild; "and take the horse, and bring everything that is wanting in the family."

So John got the horse ready, and set out early in the morning to go to the fair; but before he went Emily and Lucy gave him what money they had, and begged him to bring them each a book. Emily gave him twopence, and Lucy gave him threepence.

"You must please choose a book for me with pictures in it," said Emily.

"I do not care about pictures," said Lucy, "if it is a pretty book. So pray don't forget, John."

In the evening, after tea, the children and their father and mother, as usual, got ready to take a walk; and the children begged Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild to go with them to meet John. "For John," said Henry, "will be coming back now, and will have brought us some pretty books."

So Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild took the road which led towards the town where the fair was held, and the children ran before them. It was a fine evening. The hedges were full of wild roses, which smelt most sweet; and the haymakers were making hay in the fields on each side of the road.

"I cannot think where John can be," said Henry. "I thought he would be here long before now."

By this time they were come to the brow of a rising ground; and looking before them, behold, there was John at a distance! The children all ran forward to meet him.

"Where are the books, John? Oh, where are the books?" they all said with one voice.

John, who was a very good-natured man, as I have before said, smiled, and, stopping his horse, began to feel in his pockets; and soon brought out, from among other things, two little gilt books; the largest of which he gave to Lucy, and the other to

Emily, saying:

"Here is two pennyworth—and here is three pennyworth."

"Indeed, John, you are very good," said the children. "What beautiful books!"

"My book," said Emily, "is 'The History of the Orphan Boy,' and there are a great many pictures in it: the first is a picture of a funeral—that must be the funeral of the poor little boy's papa and mamma, I suppose."

"Let me see, let me see," said Henry. "Oh, how pretty! And what's your book, Lucy?"

"There are not many pictures in my book," said Lucy; "but there is one at the beginning: it is the picture of a little boy reading to somebody lying in a bed; and there is a lady sitting by. The name of my book is 'The History of Little Henri, or the Good Son.'"

"Oh, that must be very pretty," said Henry.

By this time Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were come up.

"Oh, papa! oh, mamma!" said the little ones, "what beautiful books John has brought!"

"Indeed," said Mr. Fairchild, when he had looked at them a little while, "they appear to be very nice books, and the pictures in them are very pretty."

"Henry shall read them to us, my dears," said Mrs. Fairchild, "whilst we sit at work; I should like to hear them very much."

"To-morrow," said Mr. Fairchild, looking at his wife, "we begin to make hay in the Primrose Meadow. What do you say? Shall we go after breakfast, and take a cold dinner with us, and spend the day under the trees at the corner of the meadow? Then we can watch the haymakers, and Henry can read the books whilst you and his sisters are sewing."

"Oh, do let us go! do let us go!" said the children; "do, mamma, say yes."

"With all my heart, my dears," said Mrs. Fairchild.

The next morning early the children got everything ready to go into the Primrose Meadow. They had each of them a little basket, with a lid to it, in which they packed up their work and the new books; and, as soon as the family had breakfasted, they all set out for the Primrose Meadow: Mr. Fairchild, with a book in his pocket for his own reading; Mrs. Fairchild, with her work-bag hanging on her arm; Betty, with a basket of bread and meat and a cold fruit-pie; and the children with their work-baskets and Emily's doll, for the little girls seldom went out without their doll. The Primrose Meadow was not a quarter of a mile from Mr. Fairchild's house: you had only the corner of a little copse to pass through before you were in it. It was called the Primrose Meadow because every spring the first primroses in the neighbourhood appeared on a sunny bank in that meadow. A little brook of very clear water ran through the meadow, rippling over the pebbles; and there were many alders growing by the water-side.

The people were very busy making hay in the meadow when Mr. Fairchild and his family arrived. Mrs. Fairchild sat down under the shade of a large oak-tree which grew in the corner of the coppice, and Lucy and Henry, with Emily, placed themselves by her. The little girls pulled out their work, and Henry the new books. Mr. Fairchild took his book to a little distance, that he might not be disturbed by Henry's reading, and he stretched himself upon a green bank.

"Now, mamma," said Henry, "are you ready to hear my story? And have you done fidgeting, sisters?" For Lucy and Emily had been bustling to make a bed for their doll in the grass with their pocket-handkerchiefs.

"Brother," answered Lucy, "we are quite ready to hear you—read away; there is nothing now to disturb you, unless you find fault with the little birds who are chirping with all their might in these trees, and those bees which are buzzing amongst the flowers in the grass."

"First," said Henry, "look at the picture at the beginning of the book—the picture of the funeral going through the churchyard."

"Let me see, brother," said Emily.

"Why, you have seen it several times," said Henry; "and now I want to read."

"Still, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "you might oblige your sister. Good manners and civility make everybody lovely. Have you forgotten Mrs. Goodriche's story of Master Bennet?"

Henry immediately got up, and showed his sister the picture, after which he sat down again and began to read the story in Emily's book.

"Henry reads the story."—Page 91.

The History of the Orphan Boy

Marten behaved well at breakfast

"In a little flowery valley near Tenterden there lived once a certain farmer who had a wife and one little boy, whose name was Marten. The farmer and his wife were people who feared God and loved their neighbours, and though they were not rich, they were contented. In the same parish lived two gentlemen, named Squire Broom and Squire Blake, as the country people called them. Squire Broom was a man who feared God; but Squire Blake was one of those men who cared for nothing beyond the things of this world. He was a very rich man, and was considered by the neighbours to be good-tempered. His lady kept a plentiful house, and was glad to see anyone who came. They had no children, and, as they had been married many years, it was thought they never would have any. Squire Broom was not so rich as Squire Blake, and, though a very worthy man, was not of such pleasing manners, so that many people did not like him, though in times of distress he was one of the kindest friends in the world. Squire Broom had a very large family, which he brought up in an orderly, pious manner; but some of the neighbours did not fail to find fault with

him for being too strict with his children.

"When little Marten was about three years of age his father was killed as he was going to Tenterden market by a fall from his horse. This was so great a grief to his mother, who loved her husband very dearly, that she fell immediately into a bad state of health; and though she lived as much as two years after her husband, yet she was all that time a dying woman. There was nothing in the thoughts of death which made this poor woman unhappy at any time, excepting when she considered that she must leave her little Marten to strangers; and this grieved her the more because little Marten was a very tender child, and had always been so from his birth.

"It happened a few weeks before her death, as little Marten's mother was lying on her couch, that one Mrs. Short, who lived in Tenterden, and spent her time in gossiping from house to house, came bustling into the room where Marten's mother lay.

"'I am come to tell you,' said she, 'that Squire Blake's lady will be here just now.'

"'It is some time since I have seen Mrs. Blake,' said Marten's mother; 'but it is kind of her to visit me in my trouble.'

"Whilst she was speaking Mr. Blake's carriage came up to the door, and Mrs. Blake stepped out. She came into the parlour in a very free and friendly manner, and, taking Marten's mother by the hand, she said she was very sorry to see her looking so ill.

"'Indeed,' said the sick woman, 'I am very ill, dear madam, and I think that I cannot live longer than a few weeks; but God's will be done! I have no trouble in leaving this world but on account of little Marten; yet I know that God will take care of him, and that I ought not to be troubled on his account.'

"Mrs. Blake then answered:

"'As you have begun to speak upon the subject, I will tell you what particularly brought me here to-day.'

"She then told her that, as she and Mr. Blake had a large fortune and no family, they were willing to take little Marten at her death and provide for him as their own. This was a very great and kind offer, and most people would have accepted it with joy; but the pious mother recollected that Mr. Blake was one who declared himself to be without religion; and she could not think of leaving her little boy to such a man. Accordingly she thanked Mrs. Blake for her kind offer—for a very kind offer it was—and said that she should feel obliged to her till her dying moment.

"'But,' added she, 'I cannot accept of your friendship for my little boy, as I have a very dear Friend who would be disobliged if I did so.'

"Mrs. Blake turned red, and was offended; for she had never once thought it possible that Marten's mother should refuse her offer; and Mrs. Short lifted up her hands and eyes, and looked as if she thought the poor sick woman little better than a fool.

"'Well,' said Mrs. Blake, 'I am surprised, I must confess. However, you must know your own affairs best; but this I must say, that I think Marten may live long enough without having such another offer.'

"'And I must say that you are standing in the child's way,' said Mrs. Short. 'Why, Mr. Blake can do ten times more for the child than his father could have done, had he lived a hundred years; and I think it very ungrateful and foolish in you to make such a return for Mr. and Mrs. Blake's kindness.'

"'And pray,' said Mrs. Blake, 'who is this dear Friend who would be so much disobliged by your allowing us to take the boy?'

"'I suppose it is Squire Broom,' said Mrs. Short; 'for who else can it be?'

"'Yes,' said Mrs. Blake, 'I have no doubt it is, for Mr. Broom never loved my husband. But,' added she, looking at Marten's mother, 'you do very wrong if you think Mr. Broom could do as much for the child (even if he were willing) as my husband. Mr. Broom is not rich, and he has a great many children; whereas Mr. Blake has a very handsome fortune, and no near relation in the world. However, as

you have once refused, I do not think I would take the boy now if you were to ask me.'

"'I am very sorry,' answered Marten's mother, 'to appear unthankful to you; and perhaps, as I am a dying woman, I ought to tell you the true reason of my refusing your offer, though it may make you angry. I do not doubt but that you would be kind to little Marten, and I know that you have more to give him than his father could have had.'

"She then, in a very delicate manner, hinted at Mr. Blake's irreligious opinions, and acknowledged that it was on the account of these that she had refused his protection for her son.

"'The Lord Jesus Christ,' added she, 'is the dear Friend I spoke of, my dear madam, and the One I am afraid to offend by accepting Mr. Blake's offer. You are welcome to tell Mr. Blake all I say.'

"Mrs. Blake made no answer, but got up, and, wishing Marten's mother and Mrs. Short a good-morning, went away very much offended.

"When Mrs. Short was left with the sick woman she failed not to speak her mind to her, and that very plainly, by telling her that she considered her little better than a fool for what she had done.

"Marten's mother answered: 'I am willing to be counted a fool for Christ's sake.'

"The next day Marten's mother sent for Squire Broom; and when she had told him all that had passed between herself and Mrs. Blake, she asked him if he would take charge of poor little Marten when she was dead, and also of what little money she might leave behind her; and see that the child was put to a good school. Squire Broom promised that he would be a friend to the boy to the best of his power, and Marten's mother was sure that he would do what he promised, for he was a good man. And now, not to make our story too long, I must tell you that Marten's mother grew weaker and weaker, and about three weeks after she had had this conversation

with Mrs. Blake she was found one morning dead in her bed; and it was supposed she died without pain, as Susan, the maid, who slept in the same room, had not heard her move or utter a sigh. She was buried in Tenterden churchyard, and Squire Broom, as he had promised, took charge of all her affairs.

"And now, after having done with little Marten's good mother, I shall give you the history of the little boy himself, from the day when he was awoke and found his poor mother dead; and you shall judge whether God heard his mother's prayer, and whether He took care of the poor little orphan.

"Marten's mother was buried on Saturday evening. On Sunday little Marten went and stood by his mother's grave, and no one but Susan could persuade him to come away. On Monday morning Squire Broom came in a one-horse chaise to take him to school at Ashford. The master of the school at that time was a conscientious man but Squire Broom did not know that he was so severe in the management of children as he proved to be.

"Little Marten cried very much when he was put into the one-horse chaise with Squire Broom.

"'Oh, let me stay with Susan! let me live with Susan!' he said.

"'What!' said Squire Broom, 'and never learn to read? You must go to school to learn to read, and other things a man should know.'

"'Susan shall teach me to read,' said little Marten.

"Squire Broom promised him that he should come back in the summer, and see Susan, and little Marten tried to stop crying.

"When little Marten got to Ashford school he was turned into a large stone hall, where about fifty boys were playing; he had never seen so many boys before, and he was frightened, and he crept into a corner. They all got round him, and asked him a great many questions, which frightened him more; and he began to cry and call for Susan. This set the boys a-laughing, and they began to pull him about and tease him.

"Little Marten was a pretty child; he was very fair, and had beautiful blue eyes and red lips, and his dark brown hair curled all over his head; but he had always been very tender in his health; and the kickings and thumpings and beatings he got amongst the boys, instead of making him hardy, made him the more sickly and drooping.

"The boys used to rise very early, and, after they had been an hour in school, they played in the churchyard (for the schoolroom stands in the churchyard) till the bell rang to call them to breakfast. In the schoolroom there was only one fireplace, and the lesser boys could never get near it, so that little Marten used to be so numbed with cold in the mornings (for winter was coming) that he could scarcely hold his book; and his feet and hands became so swelled with chilblains that, when the other boys went out to play, he could only creep after them. He was so stupefied with cold that he could not learn; he even forgot his letters, though he had known them all when his mother was alive; and, in consequence, he got several floggings. When his mother was living he was a cheerful little fellow, full of play, and quick in learning; but now he became dull and cast down, and he refused to eat; and he would cry and fret if anyone did but touch him. His poor little feet and hands were sore and bleeding with cold; so that he was afraid anyone should come near to touch him.

"As the winter advanced it became colder and colder, and little Marten got a very bad cough, and grew very thin. Several people remarked to the schoolmaster, 'Little Marten is not well; he gets very thin.' 'Oh, he will be better,' the master would answer, 'when he is more used to us. Many children, when they first come to school, pine after home; but what can I do for him? I must not make any difference between him and the other boys.'

"One morning in the beginning of December, when the boys were playing in the churchyard before breakfast, little Marten, not being able to run, or scarcely to walk, by reason of his chilblains, came creeping after them; his lips were blue and cold,

and his cheeks white. He looked about for some place where he might be sheltered a little from the cold wind; and at length he ventured to creep into the porch of an old house, which stood on one side of the churchyard. The door of the house was open a little way, and Marten peeped in: he saw within a small neat kitchen, where was a bright fire; an elderly maid-servant was preparing breakfast before the fire; the tea-kettle was boiling; and the toast-and-butter and muffins stood ready to be carried into the parlour. A large old cat slept before the fire; and in one corner of the kitchen was a parrot upon a stand.

"Whilst Marten was peeping in, and longing for a bit of toast-and-butter, a little old lady, dressed in a gray silk gown, wearing a mob-cap and long ruffles, came into the kitchen by the inner door. She first spoke to the parrot, then stroked the cat; and then, turning towards the porch-door, she said (speaking to the maid):

"A little old lady, dressed in a gray silk gown, came into the kitchen."—Page 101.

"'Hannah, why do you leave the door open? The wind comes in very cold.' So saying, she was going to push the door to, when she saw poor little Marten. She observed his black coat, his little bleeding hands, and his pale face, and she felt very sorry for him. 'What little fellow are you?' she said, as she held the door in her hand. 'Where do you come from, and what do you want at my door?'

"'My name is Marten,' he answered, 'and I am very cold.'

"'Do you belong to the school, my dear?' said she.

"'Yes, ma'am,' he answered; 'my mother is dead, and I am very cold.'

"'Poor little creature!' said the old lady, whose name was Lovel. 'Do you hear what he says, Hannah? His mother is dead, and he is very cold! Do, Hannah, run over to the school-house, and ask the master if he will give this little boy leave to stay and breakfast with me.'

"Hannah set down a tea-cup which she was wiping, and looking at Marten:

"'Poor young creature!' she said. 'It is a pity that such a babe as this should be in a public school. Come in, little one, whilst I run over to your master and ask leave for you to stay a little with my mistress.'

"Hannah soon returned with the master's leave, and poor little Marten went gladly upstairs into Mrs. Lovel's parlour. There Mrs. Lovel took off his wet shoes and damp stockings, and hung them to the fire, while she rubbed his little numbed feet till they were warm. In the meantime Hannah brought up the tea-things and toast-and-butter, and set all things in order upon the round table.

"'You are very good,' said little Marten to Mrs. Lovel; 'I will come and see you every day.'

"'You shall come as often as you please,' said Mrs. Lovel, 'if you are a good little boy.'

"'Then I will come at breakfast-time, and at dinner-time, and at supper-time,' said Marten.

"Mrs. Lovel smiled and looked at Hannah, who was bringing up the cream-pot, followed by the cat. Puss took her place very gravely at one corner of the table, without touching anything.

"'Is that your cat, ma'am?' said Marten.

"'Yes,' said Mrs. Lovel; 'and see how well she behaves: she never asks for anything, but waits till she is served. Do you think you can behave as well?'

"'I will try, ma'am,' said Marten.

"Mrs. Lovel then bade Marten fetch himself a chair, and they both sat down to breakfast. Marten behaved so well at breakfast that Mrs. Lovel invited him to come to her at dinner-time, and said she would send Hannah to his master for leave. She then put on his dry shoes and stockings; and as the bell rang, she sent him over to school. When school broke up at twelve o'clock, she sent Hannah again for him; and

he came running upstairs, full of joy.

"'This is a half-holiday, ma'am,' he said, 'and I may stay with you till bed-time: and I will come again to breakfast in the morning.'

"'Very well,' said Mrs. Lovel; 'but if you come here so often you must do everything I bid you, and everything which Hannah bids you.'

"'The same as I did to my poor mother, and to Susan?' said Marten.

"'Yes, my dear,' said Mrs. Lovel.

"'Then I will, ma'am,' said Marten.

"So Marten sat down to dinner with Mrs. Lovel; and at dinner he told her all he knew of himself and his mother; and after dinner, when she gave him leave, he went down to the kitchen to visit Hannah, and to talk to the parrot, and to look about him till tea-time. At tea-time he came up again; and after tea Mrs. Lovel brought out a large Bible full of pictures, and told him one or two stories out of the Bible, showing him the pictures. At night Hannah carried him home, and he went warm and comfortable to bed.

"Mrs. Lovel grew every day fonder of little Marten; and, as the little boy promised, he went to Mrs. Lovel's at breakfast, dinner, and supper; and Mrs. Lovel took the same care of him as his mother would have done, had she been living. She took charge of his clothes, mending them when they wanted it; prepared warm and soft woollen stockings for him, procured him a great-coat to wear in school, and got him some thick shoes to play in. She also would see that he learned his lessons well every day, to carry up to his master: she then practised him in reading out of school hours, so that it was surprising how quickly he now got on with his books. But the best of all was, that Mrs. Lovel from day to day gave such holy teaching to little Marten as was best adapted to make him a good man in after-life; and God blessed her teaching, and the boy soon became all that she could desire.

"A little before Christmas, Squire Broom came over to Ashford to see little Marten,

and determined in his own mind, if he saw the child unwell, or not happy, to take him home and bring him up amongst his own children; for Mrs. Broom had said that she thought little Marten almost too young to be at a public school, without a friend near him. Marten was standing in Mrs. Lovel's parlour window, which looked into the churchyard, when he saw Squire Broom's one-horse chaise draw up to the school-house door. Without speaking a word, he ran downstairs, and across the churchyard; and, taking Squire Broom's hand, as he stepped out of the chaise:

"'I have got another mother, sir,' he said, 'a very good mother; and I love her with all my heart; and her name is Lovel; and you must come to see her.'

"'Why, my little man,' said Squire Broom, 'you look very well, and quite fat.'

"When Squire Broom heard from the master what a kind friend Marten had found, and was told by all his friends in Ashford what a worthy woman Mrs. Lovel was (everybody in Ashford knew Mrs. Lovel's good character), he was very much pleased on little Marten's account, and said his poor mother's prayers were now answered.

"Little Marten could not be contented till he had brought Squire Broom to see Mrs. Lovel, and to drink tea with her. During this visit, Mrs. Lovel asked Mr. Broom if Marten might spend his Christmas holidays with her; and from that time the little boy spent all his holidays with Mrs. Lovel. In the summer holidays she often took him to a farmhouse in the country, where she had lodgings; and there he had the pleasure of seeing the haymaking, and hop-gathering, and all the country work, and of running about the fields. Once or twice she took him to Tenterden to see his old friends, particularly Susan, who lived with her mother in Tenterden.

"Marten became a fine boy; and as he grew in stature he grew in grace. He was very fond of reading; and soon he became one of the best scholars of his age in the school. As Mrs. Lovel got older, her eyes became dim; and then Marten read to her, and managed her accounts, and was in all things as a dutiful son to her.

"Marten continued with Mrs. Lovel till it was time he should leave school; and as he wished to become a clergyman, in order that he might spend his life in the service of God, Mrs. Lovel paid for his going to the University.

"When Marten had been the proper time at the University, he was ordained a clergyman; and he then returned to Mrs. Lovel, and soon afterwards he got a living in a pretty village in Kent. There he went to reside; and Mrs. Lovel, who was now become very old indeed, lived with him. He was as kind to her, and to Hannah, as if he had been their own child: and, indeed, it was but his duty to be so: he did everything to make their last years happy, and their deaths easy. Mrs. Lovel left all she had, when she died, to Marten; so that he was enabled to live in great comfort. Some time after Mrs. Lovel's death, he married Squire Broom's youngest daughter, who made him a kind and good wife, and helped him to bring up their children well. Susan, who was now an elderly woman, took the place of Hannah when Hannah died, and never left her master till she herself died of old age."

By this time it was one o'clock; and the haymakers left off their work, and sat down in a row, by the brook-side, to eat their dinner. Mr. Fairchild called to his children from the place where he was lying, at a little distance, saying:

"My dears, I begin to feel hungry. Lucy and Emily, see what Betty brought in the basket this morning; and you, Henry, go to the brook, and bring some water."

So Henry took an empty pitcher out of the basket, and ran gaily down to the brook to fetch some water, whilst Lucy and Emily spread a clean napkin on the grass, on which they placed the knives and forks and plates, with the loaf and cheese, and the fruit-pie, and a bottle of beer for their papa; for Betty was gone back to the house; and when they had said grace, they dined: after which the children went to play in the coppice and amongst the hay, for a little while. When they had played as much as their mamma thought fit, they came back, and sat down to work, as they had done in the morning, whilst Henry read the story in Lucy's book.

Marten goes to school

The History of Little Henri; or, The Good Son

Henri stood at the window

"Every person who lives in England has heard of France. A small arm of the sea parts this country from France; but though a person may pass from England to France in a few hours, yet there is a great difference in the manners and customs of the French and English. A few years ago the French were governed by a king who had so much power, that, if he did not like any person, he could condemn him to be shut up for life at his pleasure, and nobody dared to inquire after him. The religion of the French was, and still is, Roman Catholic.

"About one hundred and fifty years ago, there lived in France a certain great man, called the Baron of Bellemont: he was a proud man, and very rich; and his castle stood in one of the beautiful valleys of the Pyrenees, not far from the dwelling-places of those holy people the Waldenses."

"What are Waldenses, mamma?" said Henry.

"Why, my dear," answered Mrs. Fairchild, "many hundred years ago, when many of the nations of Europe were very wicked, a certain set of persons retired from the sight of the rest of mankind, and hid themselves in valleys amongst hills, where they led innocent and holy lives. These people, in some places, were called Waldenses; in others, Valdenses; and some were called The poor Men of Lyons, because there was a city called Lyons near their dwelling-places."

"The Baron de Bellemont," continued Henry, reading again, "lived in a castle not far from the valley of the Waldenses. He had one daughter, of the name of Adelaide, who was very beautiful; and as she was to have much of her father's riches at his death, everybody flattered and seemed to admire her, and many rich and great men in France sought to marry her. The Baron had also a poor niece living with him,

named Maria. Maria was not handsome, and she was poor; therefore, nobody who came to the castle took any notice of her: and her cousin Adelaide treated her more like a servant than a relation. Maria had been nursed among the Waldenses, and had learned, with God's blessing, all the holy doctrines of these people from her nurse.

"When Adelaide and Maria were about twenty years of age, they were both married. Adelaide was married to the young Marquis de Roseville, one of the handsomest and richest men in France, and went to live in Paris with her husband, where she was introduced to the court of the king, and lived amongst the greatest and gayest people in France."

"Where is Paris, mamma?" said Lucy.

"You know, my dear," answered Mrs. Fairchild, "that London is the chief town of England, and the residence of the Queen: in like manner, Paris is the chief town of France, and the Emperor of France's palace is in Paris."

"Maria's husband," continued Henry, "was one of the pastors of the Waldenses, of the name of Claude: he lived in a small and neat cottage in a beautiful valley; he was a holy young man, and all his time and thoughts were given up to teaching his people and serving his God. Maria was much happier in her little cottage with her kind husband than she had been in the castle of the Baron. She kept her house clean, and assisted her husband in dressing their little garden and taking care of a few goats, which afforded them abundance of milk.

"When the Marchioness of Roseville had been married twelve months she brought the Marquis a son, to whom his parents gave the name of Theodore. This child was so beautiful that he was spoken of in Paris as a wonder, and his parents, who were very proud and vain before, became more and more so. All the Marchioness's love seemed to be fixed upon this child, so that when, at the end of two years more, she had a second son born, she showed no affection whatever for him, although he was a lovely infant, not less beautiful than his brother, and of a tender and delicate

constitution.

"When this little infant, who was called Henri, was little more than two months old, the Marquis and Marchioness undertook a journey to the Castle of Bellemont, to visit the old Baron, bringing their two sons with them. The fatigue of the journey was almost too much for poor little Henri, who, when he arrived at his grandfather's castle, was so ill that it was supposed he could not live; but his mother, having no love but for the eldest child, did not appear to be in the least troubled by Henri's sickness.

"As soon as Maria heard of her cousin's arrival at Bellemont she hastened over to see her, though she did not expect to be very kindly received. Maria, by this time, had two children, the youngest of which was more than a year old, and a very healthy child. When this kind woman saw poor little Henri, and found that his parents did not love him, she begged her cousin to allow her to take the poor infant to her cottage in the valleys, where she promised to take great care of him, and to be as a tender mother to him. The Marchioness was glad to be freed from the charge of the sick child, and Maria was equally glad to have the poor baby to comfort. Accordingly, she took the little Henri home with her, and he was brought up amongst her own children.

"When the Marquis and Marchioness had remained a while at the Castle of Bellemont, they returned with their favourite Theodore to Paris; and there they delivered themselves up to all the vicious habits of that dissipated place. The Marchioness never stayed at home a single day, but spent her whole time in visiting, dancing, and playing at cards, and going to public gardens, plays, and musical entertainments. She painted her face, and dressed herself in every kind of rich and vain ornament, and tried to set herself off for admiration; but she had little regard for her husband, and never thought of God. She was bold in her manners, fond of herself, and hardhearted to everybody else. The only person for whom she seemed to

care was her son Theodore; for as for little Henri, she seemed to have forgotten that she had such a child; but she delighted in seeing her handsome Theodore well dressed, and encouraged him to prattle before company, and to show himself off in public places, even when he was but an infant. She employed the most famous artists in Paris to draw his picture; she hired dancing-masters to teach him to carry himself well, and music-masters to teach him to sing and play; and sometimes, when he was to go out with her, she herself arranged his glossy hair, in order that he might look the handsomer. She employed many servants to attend upon him, and commanded them never to contradict him, but to do everything to please him. As she continued to lead this life she became every year more and more bold, and more hardened in wickedness; so that, from beginning to be careless about God, she proceeded in time to mock at religion. Nor was the Marquis any better than his wife; he was proud and quarrelsome, and loved no one but himself. He spent all his time amongst a set of wicked young men of his own rank; they sat up all night drinking and swearing and playing at cards for large sums of money.

"In this manner they went on till Theodore was as much as fifteen years of age. In the meantime the old Baron had died and left all his money to his daughter; but the Marquis and Marchioness were none the better for all the riches left them by the Baron, for they became more and more wasteful, and more and more wicked.

"About this time the King, who was a very wicked man, began to talk of driving the Waldenses out of their pleasant valleys, or forcing them to become Roman Catholics. He consulted the great men in Paris about it; and they gave it as their opinion that it would be right either to make them become Roman Catholics, or drive them out of the country. The Marquis, among the rest, gave his opinion against the Waldenses; never considering that he had a relation amongst them, and that his little son Henri was at that very time living with them.

"Whilst these things were being talked of in the King's palace, Theodore was seized

with a violent fever, and before anything could be done for him, or his father or mother had any time for consideration, the poor boy died. The Marchioness was like a distracted woman when Theodore died; she screamed and tore her hair, and the Marquis, to drive away the thoughts of his grief, went more and more into company, drinking and playing at cards. When the grief of the Marquis and Marchioness for the loss of their beautiful Theodore was a little abated, they began to turn their thoughts towards their son Henri, and they resolved to send for him. Accordingly, the Marquis sent a trusty servant to the valley of Piedmont, to bring Henri to Paris. The servant carried a letter from the Marquis to the Pastor Claude, thanking him for his kind attention to the child, and requesting him to send him immediately to Paris. The servant also carried a handsome sum of money as a present from the Marquis to Claude; which Claude, however, would not take.

"Whilst all these things of which I have been telling you were happening at Paris, little Henri had been growing up in the humble yet pleasant cottage of Maria and the pious Claude. During the first years of his infancy he had been very delicate and tender, and no one would have reared him who had not loved him as tenderly as Maria had done; but from the time that she first saw him in the Castle of Bellemont, she had loved him with all the love of the tenderest mother.

"Henri was very beautiful, though always pale, never having very strong health. He always had the greatest fear of doing anything which might displease God; he was gentle and humble to all around him, and to his little cousins, the sons of Claude, he was most affectionate and mild. When they were old enough, these three little boys used to go with the Pastor Claude when he went to visit his poor people in their little cottages among the valleys; and heard him read and pray with them. Thus they acquired, when very young, such a knowledge of God, and of the Holy Bible, as might have put to shame many older people.

"Many of the cottages which Claude and his little boys used to visit were placed in

spots of ground so beautiful that they would have reminded you of the Garden of Eden; some in deep and shady valleys, where the brooks of clear water ran murmuring among groves of trees and over mossy banks; some on high lawns on the sides of the mountains, where the eagles and mountain birds found shelter in the lofty forest trees; some of these cottages stood on the brows of rugged rocks, which jutted out from the side of the hills, on spots so steep and high that Claude's own little stout boys could scarcely climb them; and Claude was often obliged to carry little Henri up these steeps in his arms. In these different situations were flowers of various colours and of various kinds, and many beautiful trees, besides birds innumerable and wild animals of various sorts. Claude knew the names and natures of all these; and he often passed the time, as he walked, in teaching these things to his children. Neither did he neglect, as they got older, to give them such instructions as they could get from books. He taught his little boys first to read French, and afterwards he made them well acquainted with Latin and the history of ancient times, particularly the history of such holy people as have lived and died in the service of God—the saints and martyrs of old days. He also taught his little boys to write; and they could sing sweetly many of the old hymns and psalms which from time immemorial had been practised among the Waldenses.

"Claude's own little sons were obliged to do many homely household jobs, to help their mother. They used to fetch the goats to the cottage door, along the hill-side path, and milk them and feed them; they used to weed the garden, and often to sweep the house and make up the fire. In all these things little Henri was as forward as the rest, though the son of one of the greatest men in France. But though this family were obliged to labour at the lowest work, yet they practised towards each other the most courteous and gentle manners.

"In this manner Henri was brought up amongst the Waldenses till he was more than twelve years of age, at which time the servant came from his father, the Marquis, to bring him to Paris.

"When the Marquis's letter arrived, all the little family in the Pastor Claude's house were full of grief.

"'You must go, my dear child,' said the Pastor; 'you must go, my beloved Henri, for the Marquis is your father, and you must obey him; but oh! my heart aches when I think of the hard trials and temptations to which you will be exposed in the wicked world.'

"'Yet I have confidence,' said Maria, wiping away her tears; 'I have prayed for this boy—this my dear boy; I have prayed for him a thousand and a thousand times; and I know that he is given to us: this our child will not be lost; I know he will not. He will be able to do all things well, Christ strengthening him.'

"'Oh, Maria!' said the Pastor Claude, 'your faith puts me to shame; why should I doubt the goodness of God any more than you do?'

"In the meantime Henri's grief was so great that, for some hours after the servant came, he could not speak. He looked on his dear father and mother, as he always called Claude and Maria, and on their two boys, who were like brothers to him; he looked on the cottage where he had spent so many happy days, and the woods and valleys and mountains, saying, beyond this he knew nothing; and he wished that he had been born Claude and Maria's child, and that he might be allowed to spend all his life, as Claude had done, in that delightful valley.

"Whilst Maria, with many tears, was preparing things for Henri's journey, the Pastor took the opportunity of talking privately to him, and giving him some advice which he hoped might be useful to him. He took the child by the hand, and leading him into a solitary path above the cottage, where they could walk unseen and unheard, he explained to him the dangerous situation into which he was about to enter; he told him, with as much tenderness as possible, what his father's and his mother's characters were; that they never knew the fear of God, and that they acted as most persons do who are rich and powerful, and who are not led by Divine grace; and he

pointed out to him how he ought to behave to his parents, telling him that he must not be led away, but must persevere in well-doing. These, with many other things, the good Claude besought Henri always to have in remembrance, as he hoped to see his Redeemer in the land which is very far off; and he ended by giving him a little Bible, in a small velvet bag, which he had received from his own father, and which he had been accustomed to carry in his pocket in all his visits to his poor people. In these days, Bibles are so common that every little boy and girl may have one; but this was not the case in former days; Bibles were very scarce and very difficult to get; and this Henri knew, and therefore he knew how to value this present.

"It would only trouble you were I to describe the sorrow of Claude's family when, the next morning, Henri, according to his father's orders, was dressed in a rich suit of clothes, and set upon a horse, which was to carry him from among the mountains to the Castle of Bellemont, where the Marquis's carriage waited for him. Henri could not speak as the horses went down the valley, but the tears fell fast down his cheeks; every tree and every cottage which he passed, every pathway winding from the highroad among the hills, reminded him of some sweet walk taken with Claude and his sons, or with his dear foster-mother. As the road passed under one of the cottages which stood on the brow of a hill, Henri heard the notes of one of those sweet hymns which Maria had been accustomed to sing to him when he was a very little boy, and which she had afterwards taught him to sing himself. Henri's heart at that moment was ready to burst with grief, and though the servant was close to him, yet he broke out in these words:

"'Farewell, farewell, sweet and happy home! Farewell, lovely, lovely hills! Farewell, beloved friends! I shall never, never see you again!'

"'Do not give way to grief, sir,' said the servant; 'you are going to be a great man; you will see all the fine things in Paris, and be brought before the King.'

"The servant then gave him a long account of the grandeur and pleasures of Paris;

but Henri did not hear one word he said, for he was listening to the last faint sounds of the hymn, as they became more and more distant.

"Nothing particular happened to Henri on his journey; and at the end of several days he arrived at the gates of his father's grand house at Paris. The Marchioness that evening (as was common with her) gave a ball and supper to a number of friends; and on this occasion the house was lighted up, and set off with all manner of ornaments. The company was just come, and the music beginning to play, when Henri was brought into the hall. As soon as it was known who was come, the servants ran to tell the Marquis and Marchioness, and they ran into the hall to receive their son. The beauty of Henri, and his lovely mild look, could not but please and delight his parents, and they said to each other, as they kissed him and embraced him:

"'How could we live so long a stranger to this charming child?'

"His mother had expected that her son would have had an awkward and low appearance; she was, therefore, greatly surprised at his courteous and polite manners, which delighted her as much as his beauty.

"All that evening Henri remained silent, modest, and serious, and as soon as his parents would give him leave, he asked to go to bed. He was shown into a room richly furnished, and so large that the whole of Claude's little cottage would have gone into it. The servant who attended him would have undressed him; but he begged to be left alone, saying he had been used to dress and undress himself. As soon as the servant was gone, he took out his Bible and read a chapter; after which, kneeling down, he prayed his Almighty Father to take care of him now, in this time of temptation, when he feared he might be drawn aside to forget his God.

"The young son of the Marquis de Roseville did not awake early, having been much tired with his journey. When he had dressed, he was taken to breakfast in his mother's dressing-room; she was alone, as the Marquis had gone out after the ball

the night before, and was not returned. The Marchioness kissed Henri, and made him sit down by her, showing him every proof of her love; nevertheless, everything he saw and heard made him wish himself back again in the cottage amongst the hills. He could perceive by the daylight what he had not found out the night before, that his mother was painted white and red, and that she had a bold and fretful look, which made her large dark eyes quite terrible to him.

"Whilst the Marchioness and Henri sat at breakfast, she asked him a great many questions about his education and manner of life among the mountains. He did not hide anything from her, but told her that he never intended to become a Roman Catholic. She answered that there was time enough yet before he need trouble himself about religion.

"'You have a long life before you, Henri,' she said, 'and have many pleasures to enjoy; it will be well enough to become devout when you are near death.'

"'May not death be near now?' said Henri, looking very serious. 'Had my brother Theodore any greater reason to expect death than I have? And yet he was suddenly called away.'

"The Marchioness looked grave for a moment; then smiled, and said:

"'Oh Henri, Henri, how laughable it is to hear one at your age speaking so seriously! Yet everything sounds prettily out of your mouth,' she added, kissing him, 'for you are a charming boy. But come,' she said, 'I will be dressed; and we will go out and pay visits, and I will show you something of this fine city.'

"When the Marchioness was dressed, she and Henri went out in the carriage; and, returning at dinner-time, they found the Marquis at home: he looked pale and fatigued, but was pleased to embrace his son, with whom he seemed better and better satisfied as he saw more of him.

"The next day a tutor was appointed for Henri: he was a Roman Catholic priest; but although he bore the character of a clergyman, he seemed to have no thought of

religion; he took great pains to teach Henri such things as he thought would please his father and mother, and make him appear clever before his fellow-creatures, but he had no desire to make him a good man. Besides this tutor, Henri had masters to teach him music and dancing and drawing, and all such things as were wont to be taught to the children of the great men at that time in France. Thus Henri's mornings were employed by attending on his masters; and his mother often in the evening took him out to pay visits, and to balls and public amusements. He was introduced several times to the King, and became acquainted with all the nobility in Paris. But, amongst all these worldly pleasures and enjoyments, God still held the heart of Henri; so that he took no delight in all these fine things, and would have preferred Claude's cottage to all the splendours of Paris.

"When Henri had been in Paris about six months, it happened that one day his father went to the King's palace to pay his court: so it was, that something had vexed the King that day, and he did not receive the Marquis so cordially as he had been used to do. This affronted the Marquis so much (for he was a very proud man) that from that time he gave himself up altogether to abusing the King, and contriving how to do him mischief; and he invited to his house all the people of consequence in Paris who were discontented with the King: so that his house was filled with bad people, who were always contriving mischief against the King. These people used to meet almost every evening to sup at the Marquis's; and you would be shocked if I were to repeat to you the language which they used, and how they used to rail against their King. On these occasions they drank abundance of wine; after which they used to play at cards for large sums of money; and the Marquis and Marchioness not being so clever in play as some others of the party, lost a great deal of money; so that what with their extravagance, and what with the money they lost at cards, they had almost wasted all they possessed, and were in debt to everybody who supplied them with anything.

"Poor Henri, although so young, understood very well the wicked way in which his

father and mother went on; and though he did not dare to speak to his father about the manner of life he led, yet he spoke several times to his mother. Sometimes the Marchioness would laugh at Henri when he talked to her in this way; and sometimes she would be quite angry, and tell him that he was meddling with things he could not understand.

"Abusing the King, and forming schemes against the Government, are called treason. It was not long before the treasonable practices of the Marquis, and the bad company he kept, were made known to the King, who, one night, without giving notice to anyone, sent certain persons with a guard to seize the Marquis, and convey him to a strong castle in a very distant part of France, where he was to be confined for life; at the same time the King gave orders to seize all the Marquis's property for his own use. It was one night in the spring, just after the Marquis's wicked companions had taken their leave, that the persons sent by the King rushed into the Marquis's house, and making him a prisoner in the name of the King, forced him into a carriage, with his wife and son, scarcely giving them time to gather together a little linen, and a few other necessary things, to take with them: amongst these, Henri did not forget his little Bible, and an old Book of Martyrs, which he had bought at a bookstall a few days before.

"The Marquis and his family, well guarded, were hurried away so fast that before the dawn of morning they were some miles from Paris. The Marquis then asked the person who rode by the carriage where they were taking him: they answered that his plots against the King had been found out, and that he was going to be put into a place where it would be out of his power to execute any of his mischievous purposes. On hearing this, the Marquis broke out into a violent rage, abusing the King, and calling him every vile name he could think of; after which he became sullen, and continued so to the end of his journey. The Marchioness cried almost without ceasing, calling herself the most miserable of women, and wishing she had never seen the Marquis.

"At the end of several days, towards the evening, they entered into a deep road between two high hills, which were so near each other that from one hill the cottages and little gardens and sheepfolds, with the cows and sheep feeding, might be plainly seen on the other. As they went on farther, they saw a little village on the right hand among some trees; and, above the village, a large old castle, with high walls and towers, and an immense gateway with an iron gate.

"When the Marquis saw the castle he groaned, for he supposed that this was the place in which he was to be confined; and the Marchioness broke out afresh in crying and lamenting herself; but Henri said not one word. The carriage took the road straight to the castle, and the guard kept close, as if they were afraid the Marquis should strive to get away. They passed through the little village, and then saw the great gate of the castle right before them higher up the hill. It was almost dusk before the carriage stopped at the castle gate; and the guards called to the porter (that is, the man who has the care of the gate) to open the gate, and call the Governor of the castle. When the porter opened the gate, the guard took the Marquis out of the carriage, and, all gathering close round him, led him through the gates into the outer court of the castle, which was surrounded by dark high buildings; Henri and his mother following. From thence he went through another gate, and up a number of stone steps, till they came to an immense hall, so big that it looked like a large old church; from the roof of this hall hung several lamps, which were burning, for it was now quite dark. There the Governor of the castle, a respectable-looking old officer, with a band of soldiers, met the Marquis, and received him into his charge. He spoke civilly to the Marquis, and kindly to Henri and his mother.

"'Do not afflict yourself, madam,' he said: 'I am the King's servant, and must obey the King's orders; but if I find that you and the Marquis are patient under your punishment, I shall make you as comfortable as my duty to the King will allow.'

"To this kind speech the Marchioness only answered by breaking out like a child,

crying afresh; and the Marquis was so sullen that he would not speak at all; but Henri, running up and kissing the hand of the old gentleman, said:

"'Oh, sir, God will reward you for your kindness to my poor father and mother: you must pardon them if they are not able to speak.'

"'You are a fine boy,' said the old gentleman; 'and it is a pity that at your age you should share your parents' punishment, and be shut up in this place.'

"'Where my father and mother are,' answered Henri, 'I shall be best contented, sir; I do not wish to be parted from them.'

"The Governor looked pleased with Henri; and giving his orders to his soldiers, they took up a lamp, and led the poor Marquis to the room where he was to be shut up for the remainder of his life. They led him through many large rooms, and up several flights of stone steps, till they came to the door of a gallery, at which a sentinel stood; the sentinel opened the door, and the Marquis was led along the gallery to a second door, which was barred with iron bars. Whilst the soldiers were unbarring this door, the Marquis groaned, and wished he had never been born; and the poor Marchioness was obliged to lean upon Henri, or she would have fallen to the ground. When the iron-barred door was opened, the guard told the Marquis and his family to walk forward: 'For this,' said they, 'is your room.' Accordingly, the Marquis and his wife and Henri went on into the room, whilst the guard shut and barred the door behind them. One little lamp, hanging from the top of the room, but high above their reach (for the rooms in those old castles are in general very lofty), was all the light they had: by this light they could just distinguish a large grated window, a fireplace, a table, some chairs, and two beds placed in different corners of the room. However, the unhappy family offered not to go near the beds; but the Marquis and Marchioness, throwing themselves on the ground, began to rail at each other and at the King. Poor Henri endeavoured to soothe and comfort them; but they pushed him from them, like people in a frenzy, saying, 'Go, go! Would to God you

were in your grave with your brother Theodore!' Henri withdrew to a distance, and, kneeling down in a dark part of the room, he began to pray; till, being quite weary, he fell fast asleep on the floor.

"When Henri awoke, he was surprised to find it was daylight; he sat up and looked around him on the prison-room; it was a large and airy room, receiving light from a window strongly grated with iron. In two corners of the room were two old-fashioned but clean and comfortable-looking beds; opposite the beds were a chimney-piece and hearth for burning wood; and several old-fashioned chairs and a table stood against the wall; there were also in the room two doors, which led into small closets.

"Henri's poor father and mother had fallen asleep on the floor, after having wearied themselves with their violent grief; the Marquis had made a pillow of his cloak, and the Marchioness of a small bundle which she had brought in her hand out of the carriage. Henri looked at them till his eyes were full of tears; they looked pale and sorrowful even in their sleep. He got up gently, for fear of disturbing his poor parents, and went to the window: the air from the opposite hill blew sweet and fresh in at the casement; it reminded Henri of the air which he used to breathe in Claude's cottage. The window was exceedingly high from the court of the castle; so that the little village below, and the opposite green hill, with its cottages and flocks and herds, were all to be seen from thence above the walls of the court.

"'What reason have we to be thankful!' said Henri; 'I was afraid my poor father might have been shut down in a dismal vault, without light and fresh air. If the Governor of the castle will but allow us to stay here, and give us only bread and water, we may be happy; and I have my little Bible, and my Book of Martyrs.'

"Whilst Henri stood at the window, he heard someone unbar the door; and an old man came in with a basket, in which was a comfortable breakfast.

"'I have orders,' said he, 'from my lord the Governor, to give you everything which is

convenient.'

"'God bless your lord,' said Henri; and he begged the old man to return his thanks to him.

"'I shall come again presently,' said the old man, 'and bring you the things which you brought with you in the carriage.'

"'Your lord the Governor is a kind man,' said Henri.

"'Yes,' said the old man, 'and if your noble father will but make himself contented, and not try to get away, he will have nothing to complain of here, and you would do well to tell him so. My young gentleman, excuse an old man for giving his advice.'

"Henri went up to the old man, and, taking his hand, thanked him for his kindness.

"When the old man was gone, Henri, full of joy and thankfulness, began to take the things out of the basket, and to set them in order upon the table; and now Henri found the use of having been brought up to wait upon himself and upon others; he soon set out the little table in the neatest way, and set a chair for each of his parents; and all this so quietly that the poor Marquis and Marchioness did not wake till he had done. The Marchioness first opened her eyes, and looked round her. Henri ran to her, and kissing her, said:

"'Dear mother, see what comforts we have still got! We are fallen into good hands; look around on this room, how light, how airy, and how pleasant it is!'

"Henri then told her all the kindness of the Governor, and showed her the breakfast prepared for them; but she still looked sullen and unthankful, and began to blame the Marquis, as he lay asleep, as the cause of all her affliction.

"'Oh, mother, dear mother!' cried Henri. 'Look at my poor father; how pale he looks, and how he sighs in his sleep! You once loved him, dear mother; oh now, love him again, and comfort him in his trouble!'

"In this manner Henri talked to his mother, till she broke out into tears, and putting

her arms round his neck:

"'My child, my Henri,' she said, 'you are too good for me!'

"Yet still Henri could not persuade her to take any breakfast; she placed herself in a chair in a corner of the room, and, leaning her head upon her hands, continued crying without ceasing.

"When the Marquis awoke, Henri endeavoured to comfort him, as he had done his mother; the Marquis embraced him, and called him his beloved child and only comfort, but he complained that he was ill, and put his hand to his head. Henri brought him a cup of coffee, which he made him drink; and the old man coming in with the linen and other things which had been brought from Paris, they put some clean linen on the Marquis, and the old man and Henri assisted him to bed. The Marquis continued to get worse, and before night he was in a violent fever. This fever continued many days, and brought him very near to death. Whilst this illness lasted Henri never left him, and the Governor of the castle not only provided him with everything he wanted, but brought a doctor from the village to see him.

"For many days the poor Marquis did not seem to know anything that passed, or to know where he was, or who was with him, but seemed in great horror of mind, expressing great dread of death; but when his fever left him, though he was very weak, he recovered his recollection, and expressed himself very thankful for the kindness he had received, particularly from the Governor and the doctor. As to Henri, he kissed him often, called him his darling son, and could not bear him to leave him for a moment. It was lovely to see how Henri watched by his poor father, and how he talked to him, sometimes soothing and comforting, and sometimes giving him descriptions of the happy manner in which he used to live in Claude's cottage.

"'And all this happiness, dear father,' he would say, 'came from our being religious; for all the ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.'

"'Claude and Maria,' said the Marquis one day to Henri, 'were very good people; they always led innocent lives; they had no sins to trouble their consciences, therefore they were happy; but I have many evil actions to remember, Henri.'

"'Oh, dear father,' said Henri, 'do let me read the Bible to you. I have got a little Bible, and I will, if you please, read a little to you every day, as you can bear it.'

"The Marquis did not refuse to hear Henri read; accordingly, every day his good son used to read certain portions of Scripture to his father. The Marquis, having nothing else to take his attention—no cards, no wine, no gay companions—and being still confined by weakness to his bed, often lay for many hours listening to the Word of God. At first, as he afterwards owned, he had no pleasure in it, and would rather have avoided hearing it; but how could he refuse his darling son, when he begged him to hear a little—only a little more?

"In the meantime, the Marchioness appeared sullen, proud, and unforgiving: she seldom came near her husband, but sometimes spent the day in crying and lamenting herself, and sometimes in looking over the few things which she had brought with her from Paris. The Governor of the castle, seeing her so miserable, told her that he had no orders from the King to keep her or her son in confinement, and that she had liberty to depart when she pleased, and to take her son with her; but Henri would not hear of leaving his poor father, and used all his endeavours to persuade his mother to stay.

"When the Marquis was first able to leave his bed, and sit in his chair opposite the window, Henri was very happy: he brought him clean linen, and helped him to dress; and when he had led him to his chair, he set a table before him, and arranged upon it, as neatly as he could, the little dinner which the old man had brought in the basket, with a bottle of weak but pleasant wine which the Governor had sent him.

"'Dear father,' said Henri, 'you begin to look well; you look even better than you did when you were at Paris. Oh! if you could but learn to love God, you might now be

happier than ever you were in all your life; and we might all be happy if my poor mother would but come to you and love you as she used to do. Oh! come, dear mother,' added Henri, going up to her and taking her hand; 'come to my father, come to my poor father! You loved him once, love him again.'

"In this manner Henri begged and entreated his mother to be reconciled to his father. The Marchioness at first seemed obstinate; but at last she was overcome, and running to her husband, put her arms round his neck, and kissed him affectionately; whilst he, embracing her, called her his beloved wife, his own Adelaide. This little family then sat down to their dinner, enjoying the lovely prospect, and the soft and delightful breezes from the opposite hill; and after they had dined, Henri sang to his parents some of the sweet hymns he had learnt when living in the valleys of Piedmont.

"Henri had done a great work; he had made peace between his father and his mother; and now he saw, with great delight, his poor father gaining strength daily; and though sometimes full of sorrow, yet upon the whole composed, and never breaking out in impatient words.

"About this time the Governor of the castle invited Henri to dine with him. Henri was much pleased with the Governor, who received him kindly, and took him to walk with him in the village.

"'I am glad to hear,' said the Governor, 'that your father is more contented than he was at first; and you may tell him from me, that if he will endeavour to make himself easy, and not attempt to escape, I will always do everything in my power to make him comfortable; and now, if you can tell me what I can send him which you think will please him or your mother, if in my power you shall have it.'

"'Oh, sir!' said Henri, 'God has certainly put it into your heart to be kind to my dear father.'

"Henri then mentioned that he had heard his father say that in his younger days he

had been very fond of drawing; and he begged of the Governor a small box of colours, and some paper; and also needles and thread and linen for his mother. With what joy did Henri run back to his father and mother, in the evening, with these things! They received him as if he had been a long while absent from them, instead of only a few hours.

"What Henri had brought afforded great amusement to the poor Marquis and Marchioness; the Marquis passing his time in drawing, and the Marchioness with her needlework, whilst Henri continually read and talked to them, giving them accounts of the holy and happy lives which the Waldenses led, and the sweet lessons which Claude used to give to his children.

"In this manner the summer passed away, and the winter came. The Governor then, finding that the Marquis was content, and made no attempt to escape, allowed the prisoners abundance of wood for fire, and candles, with every convenience which could make the winter pass away pleasantly; and he often came himself and passed an evening with them, ordering his supper into the room. The Governor was an agreeable man, and had travelled into many countries, which he used to describe to Henri. When he paid his evening visit it was a day of festivity to the Marquis and his little family; and when he did not come, their evenings passed pleasantly, whilst Henri read the Bible aloud and the Marchioness sewed. In the meantime the work of grace seemed to advance in the heart of the Marquis, and he who but a year ago was proud, insolent, self-indulgent, boasting, blasphemous, was now humble, gentle, polite, in honour preferring all men. His behaviour to the Marchioness was quite changed: he was tender and affectionate towards her, bearing with patience many of her little fretful ways.

"In this manner the winter passed away, and the spring arrived, at which time the Governor gave the Marquis permission, attended by a guard, to walk with his family every day upon the roof of the castle. There the Marquis enjoyed the fresh air and

the beautiful prospect, and he said that all the pleasures of Paris were not to be compared to his happiness on such occasions.

"At the end of the fourth year of the Marquis's confinement the small-pox broke out in the village, and the infection was brought to the castle. The Marquis and Henri were both seized by the dreadful disease, and both died in consequence. After their deaths, the poor Marchioness, hearing that the Waldenses had been driven from their happy valleys by the King, removed into a small house in the village near, where the Governor supported and protected her till her dying day."

A Story of Besetting Sins

"Do you remember anything of the sermon?"

One Sunday, soon after the death of poor Miss Augusta Noble, Mrs. Fairchild, having a bad cold, could not go to church with the rest of the family. When the children were come home from church, Mrs. Fairchild asked Lucy what the sermon was about.

"Mamma," said Lucy, taking her Bible out of her little basket, "I will show you the text; it is in Heb. xii. 1: 'Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.'"

When Mrs. Fairchild had looked at the text, she said:

"And do you remember anything more of the sermon, Lucy?"

"Indeed, mamma," said Lucy, "I did not understand the sermon; it was all about besetting sins. What are they, mamma?"

"I will explain," said Mrs. Fairchild. "Though our hearts are all naturally sinful, yet every man is not inclined alike to every kind of sin. One man, perhaps, is inclined to covetousness, another to swear and use bad words, another to lie and deceive, another to be angry and cruel; and that sin which a man feels himself most inclined to is called his besetting sin."

"Oh! now I know what besetting sins mean," answered Lucy. "Has everybody a besetting sin, mamma?"

"Yes, my dear," answered Mrs. Fairchild; "we all have, although we do not all know what they are."

"Have I a besetting sin, mamma?" said Lucy.

"Yes, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild.

"What is it, mamma?" asked Lucy.

"Can you not tell what fault you fall into oftener than any other?" said Mrs. Fairchild.

Lucy considered a little, and then answered she did not know.

"I think, my dear," said Mrs. Fairchild, "although it is hard to judge any other person's heart, that your besetting sin is envy. I think I have often observed this fault in you. You were envious about Emily's doll, and about poor Miss Augusta Noble's fine house and clothes and servants, and about the muslin and ribbon I gave to Emily one day, and the strawberry your papa gave to Henry; and I have often thought you showed envy on other occasions."

Lucy looked grave when her mother spoke, and the tears came into her eyes.

"Mamma," she said, "I am a naughty girl; my heart is full of envy at times; but I pray that God would take this sin out of my heart; and I hate myself for it—you don't know how much, mamma."

"My dear child," said Mrs. Fairchild, kissing Lucy, "if you really grieve for your sins, and call in faith upon the Lord Jesus Christ, you will surely in God's good time be set free from them. And now, my dear," added Mrs. Fairchild, "you know what is meant by the sin which doth so easily beset us; and you understand that every person has some one besetting sin."

"Yes, mamma," said Lucy, "and you have told me what my own besetting sin is, and

I feel that you have found out the right one. But mamma, you said that many people do not know their own besetting sins."

"Yes, my dear," answered Mrs. Fairchild. "Careless people do not know their hearts, and have no idea of their besetting sins; indeed, they would laugh if you were to speak of such things before them."

Whilst Mrs. Fairchild was speaking these last words, they heard the dinner-bell ring; so they broke off their talk and went downstairs. Whilst Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild and all the family were sitting at dinner, they saw through the window a man on horseback, carrying a large basket, ride up to the door. Mrs. Fairchild sent John out to see who this person was; and John presently returned with a letter, and a haunch of venison packed in a basket.

"Sir," said John, "the man says that he is one of Mr. Crosbie of London's servants; and that he has brought you a letter with his master's compliments, and also a haunch of venison."

"Mr. Crosbie's servant!" said Mr. Fairchild, taking the letter and reading it aloud as follows:

"Dear Mr. Fairchild,

"I and my wife, and my sister Miss Crosbie, and my daughter Betsy, have been taking a journey for our health this summer. We left London three months ago, and have been down as far as Yorkshire. We are now returning home, and have turned a little out of our way to see you, as it is as much as twelve years since we met; so you may look for us, no accident happening, to-morrow, a little before two. We hope to dine with you, and to go on in the evening to the next town, for our time is short. I have sent a fine haunch of venison which I bought yesterday from the innkeeper where we slept; it will be just fit for dressing to-morrow; so I shall be obliged to Mrs. Fairchild to order her cook to roast it by two o'clock, which is my dinner-hour. My man Thomas, who brings this letter, will tell the cook how I like to have my

venison dressed; and he brings a pot of currant jelly, to make sauce, in case you should have none by you; though I dare say this precaution is not necessary, as Mrs. Fairchild, no doubt, has all these things by her. I am not particular about my eating; but I should be obliged to you if you would have the venison ready by two o'clock, and let Thomas direct your cook. My wife and sister and daughter Betsy send best compliments to our old friend, Mrs. Fairchild, and hoping we shall meet in health to-morrow,

"I remain, dear Mr. Fairchild, Your old friend, "Obadiah Crosbie.

"P.S.—You will find the haunch excellent; we dined upon the neck yesterday, and it was the best I ever tasted."

When Mr. Fairchild had finished the letter, he smiled, and said:

"I shall be very glad to see our old friends, but I am sorry poor Mr. Crosbie still thinks so much about eating. It always was his besetting sin, and it seems to have grown stronger upon him as he has got older."

"Who is Mr. Crosbie, papa?" said Lucy.

"Mr. Crosbie, my dear," said Mr. Fairchild, "lives in London. He has a large fortune which he got in trade. He has given up business some years, and now lives upon his fortune. When your mamma and I were in London, twelve years ago, we were at Mr. Crosbie's house, where we were very kindly treated; therefore we must do the best we can to receive Mr. and Mrs. Crosbie kindly, and to make them as comfortable as possible."

When John went to church that same evening, Mr. Fairchild desired him to tell nurse to come the next day to help Betty, for nurse was a very good cook; and the next morning Mrs. Fairchild prepared everything to receive Mr. and Mrs. Crosbie; and Mr. Fairchild invited Mr. Somers, the clergyman of the parish, to meet them at dinner. When the clock struck one, Mrs. Fairchild dressed herself and the children, and then went into a little tea-room, the window of which opened upon a small grass

plot, surrounded by rose-bushes and other flowering shrubs. Mr. Somers came in a little before two, and sat with Mrs. Fairchild.

When the clock struck two, Mr. Crosbie's family were not come, and Mr. Fairchild sent Henry to the garden gate to look if he could see the carriage at a distance. When Henry returned he said that he could see the carriage, but it was still a good way off.

"I am afraid the venison will be over-roasted," said Mrs. Fairchild, smiling.

Henry soon after went to the gate, and got there just in time to open it wide for Mr. Crosbie's carriage. Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild ran out to receive their friends.

"I am glad to see you once again," said Mr. Crosbie, as he stepped out of the coach, followed by Mrs. Crosbie, Miss Crosbie, Miss Betsy, and Mrs. Crosbie's maid.

Mr. Crosbie was a very fat man, with a red face, yet he looked good-humoured, and had, in his younger days, been handsome. Mrs. Crosbie was a little thin woman, and there was nothing in her appearance which pleased Emily and Lucy, though she spoke civilly to them. Miss Crosbie was as old as her brother, but she did not look so, for her face was painted red and white; and she and Miss Betsy had sky-blue hats and tippets, with white feathers, which Lucy and Emily thought very beautiful.

"Have you any company, Mrs. Fairchild?" said Miss Crosbie, as Mrs. Fairchild was leading them into the parlour.

"Only one gentleman, Mr. Somers, our rector," said Mrs. Fairchild.

"Oh! then I must not appear in this gown! and my hair, too, is all rough," said Miss Crosbie; "I must put on another gown; I am quite frightful to look at!"

"Indeed," said Mrs. Fairchild, "your dress is very nice; there is no need to trouble yourself to alter it."

"Oh, sister," said Mrs. Crosbie, "don't think of changing your dress; Mrs. Fairchild's dinner is ready, I dare say."

Miss Crosbie would not be persuaded, but, calling the maid to attend her, ran

upstairs to change her dress: and Mrs. Fairchild sent Lucy after her. The rest of the company then went into the tea-room, where they sat round the window, and Mr. Crosbie said:

"What a pretty place you have here, Mr. Fairchild; and a good wife, as I well know—and these pretty children! You ought to be a happy man."

"And so I am, thank God," said Mr. Fairchild, "as happy as any man in the world."

"I should have been with you an hour ago," said Mr. Crosbie, "that I might have walked over your garden before dinner, but for my wife there."

"What of your wife there?" said Mrs. Crosbie, turning sharply towards him. "Now mind, Mr. Crosbie, if the venison is over-roasted, don't say it is my fault."

Mr. Crosbie took out his watch.

"It is now twenty-five minutes past two," said he; "the venison has been down at the fire twenty-five minutes longer than it should have been. And did you not keep us an hour waiting this morning, at the inn where we slept, whilst you quarrelled with the innkeeper and his wife?"

Mrs. Crosbie answered:

"You are always giving people to understand that I am ill-tempered, Mr. Crosbie; which I think is very unhandsome of you, Mr. Crosbie. There is not another person in the world who thinks me ill-tempered but you. Ask Thomas, or my maid, what they know of my temper, and ask your sister, who has lived with me long enough."

"Why don't you ask me what I think of it, mamma?" said Miss Betsy, pertly.

"Hold your tongue, miss!" said Mrs. Crosbie.

"Must I not speak?" said Miss Betsy in a low voice, but loud enough for her mamma to hear her.

When Miss Betsy first came in, Emily admired her very much; for, besides the sky-blue hat and feather, she had blue satin shoes, and a very large pair of gold

earrings; but when she heard her speak so boldly to her mother she did not like her so much. By this time John came to tell the company that dinner was on the table; and Mr. Crosbie got up, saying:

"The venison smells well—exceedingly well."

"But where is Miss Crosbie?" asked Mr. Fairchild.

"Oh, my aunt thought herself not smart enough to show herself before Mr. Somers," said Miss Betsy pertly.

"Be silent, miss," said Mrs. Crosbie.

"Don't wait for her, then," said Mr. Crosbie; "let us go in to dinner. My sister loves a little finery; she would rather lose her dinner than not be dressed smart; I never wait for her at any meal. Come, come! Ladies lead the way; I am very hungry."

So Mrs. Fairchild sent Emily to tell Miss Crosbie that dinner was ready, and the rest of the company sat down to table.

"Mrs. Crosbie," said Mr. Crosbie, looking at the venison, then at his wife, "the venison is too much roasted; I told you it would be so."

"What! finding fault with me again, Mr. Crosbie?" said Mrs. Crosbie. "Do you hear Mr. Fairchild finding fault with his wife in this manner?"

"Perhaps the venison is better than you think, Mr. Crosbie," said Mr. Somers; "let me help you to some. Mr. Fairchild, I know, is not fond of carving."

Mr. Crosbie thanked Mr. Somers; and Mr. Somers had just begun to cut the venison, when Mr. Crosbie called out, as if in agony:

"Oh, Mr. Somers, you will spoil the venison! You must not cut it that way upon any account. Do put the haunch by me, and let me help myself."

"What confusion you are making at the table, Mr. Crosbie!" said Mrs. Crosbie. "You are putting every dish out of its place! Surely Mr. Somers knows how to carve as well as you do."

"But papa is afraid Mr. Somers won't give him all the nice bits," said Miss Betsy.

"Learn to be silent, miss!" said Mr. Crosbie.

Miss Betsy was going to answer her father, when Miss Crosbie came into the room, newly dressed in a very elegant manner. She came smiling in, followed by Lucy and Emily, who went to sit at a small table with Henry.

"Sister," said Mrs. Crosbie, "where was the need of your dressing again? If we had waited for you, the dinner would have been spoiled."

"But we did not wait for Miss Crosbie, so there was no harm done," said Mr. Fairchild, smiling.

"My aunt would not lose an opportunity of showing her new-fashioned gown for the world!" said Miss Betsy.

"Indeed, niece," answered Miss Crosbie, "I do not know why you should say that I am fond of showing my clothes. I wish to be neat and clean, but no person cares less than I do about fashions and finery."

"La!" says Miss Betsy, whispering to Mrs. Fairchild "hear my aunt! she says she does not care about finery! That's like mamma saying how good-natured she is!"

"Fie, fie, Miss Betsy!" said Mrs. Fairchild, speaking low; "you forget your respect to your elders."

Miss Betsy coloured, and stared at Mrs. Fairchild. She had not been used to be found fault with; for she was spoiled by both her parents; and she felt quite angry.

"Indeed!" she said, "I never was thought disrespectful to anyone before. Can't I see people's faults? Can't I see that mamma is cross, and my aunt fond of fine clothes, and that papa loves eating?"

"Hush! hush!" said Mrs. Fairchild, in a low voice; "your papa and mamma will hear you."

"And I don't care if they do," said Miss Betsy: "they know what I think."

"What's that you are saying there, Miss Betsy?" said Mr. Crosbie.

"Oh, don't ask, brother," said Miss Crosbie; "I know it is something saucy, by my niece's looks."

"And why should you suppose I am saying anything saucy, aunt?" said Miss Betsy; "I am sure you are not accustomed to hear me say saucy things."

"Miss! Miss! be quiet!" said Mrs. Crosbie; for she was afraid Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild would think her daughter ill-behaved.

"What, mamma!" answered Miss Betsy, "am I to sit quietly and hear my aunt find fault with me before company—and for being impertinent, too, to my elders—as if I were a mere child?"

"Well, well—enough!" said Mr. Crosbie. "What is that pie, Mrs. Fairchild, in the middle of the table? I must have some, if you please."

Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were not sorry when dinner was over, and Mrs. Crosbie proposed that Mrs. Fairchild should show her the garden. Accordingly, the ladies and children got up, and left the gentlemen together; for Mr. Crosbie never stirred for some time after dinner. When Mrs. Crosbie had got into the garden, and had looked about her, she said:

"Ah, Mrs. Fairchild, how happy you are! Such a pretty house and garden!—such a kind husband!—such good children!" Then she sighed, and gave Mrs. Fairchild to understand that she was not so happy herself.

After tea, Mr. Crosbie and his family took their leave, and went off to the next inn upon the London road, where they were to sleep; for Mr. Crosbie was in haste to be at home, and would not stay, although Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild begged that they would—at least till the next day. When they were gone, Mr. Fairchild and Henry took a walk towards the village with Mr. Somers, whilst the little girls remained at home with their mother.

"Dear Lucy," said Mrs. Fairchild, as soon as she was alone with her little girls, "do you remember what we were speaking about yesterday, before Mr. Crosbie's letter came?"

"Yes, mamma," said Lucy; "we were speaking of besetting sins, and you said that everybody has a besetting sin, and you told me what you believed mine to be."

"True, my dear," answered Mrs. Fairchild: "I told you that, without the help of the Holy Spirit of God, very few people know what their own besetting sins are. You had an opportunity to-day of observing this: every individual of our friend Mr. Crosbie's family has a very strong besetting sin; Mr. Crosbie loves eating; Mrs. Crosbie is ill-tempered; Miss Crosbie is vain, and fond of finery; and Miss Betsy is very pert and forward. We can see these faults in them, and they can see them in each other; but it is plain they do not see them in themselves. Mr. Crosbie said several times that he was not particular about what he ate or drank; Mrs. Crosbie said that there was not a person in the world who thought her ill-tempered but her husband; Miss Crosbie said that nobody in the world cared less for finery than she did; and Miss Betsy was quite offended when she was told she was not respectful in her manners to her elders."

"Oh, yes!" said Emily; "she said, 'I am not saucy; of all faults, sauciness is not one of my faults, I am sure;' and I thought all the time she looked as saucy and impertinent as possible."

"And how Mr. Crosbie did eat!" said Lucy; "he ate half the haunch of venison! And then he was helped twice to pigeon-pie; and then he ate apple-tart and custard; and then——"

"Well, well! you have said enough, Lucy," said Mrs. Fairchild, interrupting her. "I do not speak of our poor friends' faults out of malice, or for the sake of making a mockery of them; but to show you how people may live in the constant practice of one particular sin without being at all conscious of it, and perhaps thinking

themselves very good all the time. We are all quick enough, my dear Emily and Lucy, in finding out other people's faults; but, as I said before, we are often very blind to our own."

"Mamma," said Lucy, "do you know any prayer about besetting sins?"

"Yes, my dear," answered Mrs. Fairchild; "I have one in my own book of prayers; and I will copy it out for you to-morrow morning."

So Mrs. Fairchild broke off her conversation with her little girls, and bade them go and play a little before bedtime.

"Miss Betsy."—Page 137.

A Visit to Mary Bush

The children looked at the kittens

Not very long after the death of poor Miss Augusta Noble, a note came from Sir Charles and Lady Noble, inviting Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild to dinner the next day; but not mentioning the children, as they used to do when they sent their invitations.

"Poor Lady Noble!" said Mr. Fairchild; "I wish we could give her any comfort! but we will certainly go."

The next day, when Sir Charles's carriage came for Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild, they kissed the children, and told them when they had dined, they might, if they pleased, go with Betty to see old Mary Bush. Mary Bush was one of the old women who lived at the end of the coppice; and, being a good woman, Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were not afraid of trusting their children with her. The children were very much pleased, and made haste to get their dinner; after which Lucy packed up a little tea and sugar, which her mamma had given her, in a basket; and the little girls, having put on their bonnets and tippets, went into the kitchen to see if Betty was ready. Betty was tying up a small loaf and a pot of butter in a clean napkin; and she had put some nice cream into a small bottle, for which John was cutting a cork.

"Betty, are you ready?" said Henry; "Lucy has got the tea and sugar, and Emily has got Miss Dolly, and I have got my hat and stick. So come, Betty, come!"

"But who is to milk the cow?" said John, pretending to look grave; "Betty must stay to milk the cow at five o'clock."

"No, John!" said the children, all gathering round him; "good John, will you be so kind as to milk the cow, and let Betty go?"

"Well, I will see about it," said John, putting the cork into the cream bottle.

"There's a good John!" said Emily.

"I love you, John!" said Henry. "And now, Betty, come, make haste away."

So the children set out; and they went out across the garden to a little wicket-gate which Mr. Fairchild had opened towards the coppice, and came into Henry's favourite Sunday walk. The green trees arched over their heads; and on each side the pathway was a mossy bank, out of which sprang such kind of flowers as love shady places—such as the wood anemone and wild vetch: thrushes and blackbirds were singing sweetly amongst the branches of the trees.

"This is my walk," said Henry; "and I say it is the prettiest in the country."

"No, Henry," said Emily; "it is not so pretty as the walk to the hut at the top of the hill: for there you can look all over the coppice, and see the birds flying over the tops of the trees."

"Sister," said Lucy, "now you shall carry my basket, and I will have the doll a little."

"With all my heart," said Emily.

"Why don't you give Miss to me?" said Henry.

"Oh, yes!" said Emily. "Did I not give her to you one day; and did you not hang her upon a tree in the garden, with a bit of string round her neck, and say she was a thief?"

"Lucy," said Henry, "let us have a race to that tree which has fallen down over the

path."

So away they ran; and when they got to the tree they sat down upon the trunk until Betty came up with Emily. On one side of the fallen tree was a place where the wood had been cut away, and the woodmen had made themselves a little hut, which they had now left empty. Round this hut were scattered many dry sticks and chips.

"Master Henry," said Betty, "here are some nice sticks: let us gather a few together; they will do to make a fire to boil Mary Bush's kettle."

"Oh, yes, Betty," answered the children: and they set to work, and soon gathered a great many sticks; and Betty tied them together with a piece of packthread which Henry pulled out of his pocket; then Betty took off her bonnet, and placed the bundle upon her head. They went on to Mary Bush's. The children wanted to help to carry the sticks, but Betty would not let them, saying they were too heavy for them.

"But we can carry the bread and butter," said Lucy; so Betty allowed them to do it.

When they had walked a little farther, they came in sight of Mary Bush's house, down in a kind of little valley or dingle, deeply shaded by trees. In the very deepest part of the dingle was a stream of water falling from a rock. The light from above fell upon the water as it flowed, and made it glitter and shine very beautifully among the shady trees. This was the same which took its course through the Primrose Meadow, and on towards the village, and so to Brookside Cottage, where nurse lived—a clear and beautiful stream as could be.

Mary Bush's cottage was so large, that, after the death of her husband, she had let half of it to one Goodman Grey, who lived in it, with his old wife Margery, and cultivated the garden, which was a very good one. John Trueman's wife was Mary Bush's eldest daughter; and Joan, nurse's son's wife, her youngest; and it was said of them that there were not two better wives and mothers in the parish: so Mary Bush was very happy in her children.

When the children and Betty came up to the cottage, they found Mary Bush spinning

at the door.

"We are come to drink tea with you, Mary," said Lucy.

"And we have brought bread and butter, and tea and cream with us," said Emily.

"And a bundle of sticks," said Henry, "to boil the kettle."

"Welcome, welcome, my little loves," said old Mary, as she got up and set her spinning-wheel on one side. "Come in, little dears."

Mary had but one room, and a little pantry, but it was a very neat room; there was a bed in one corner, covered with a clean linen quilt; there were also a nice oaken dresser, a clock, two arm-chairs, two three-legged stools, a small round table, a corner cupboard, and some shelves for plates and dishes. The fireplace and all about it were always very neat and clean, and in winter you would probably see a small bright fire on the hearth.

"How does the cat do?" said Henry, looking about for Mary Bush's cat.

"Oh, here she is, Henry!" said Emily, screaming with joy, "in this basket under the dresser, with two such beautiful tortoiseshell kittens! Do look, Lucy—do look, Henry!"

"Miss Lucy," said old Mary, "would you like to have one of the kittens when it is big enough to leave its mother?"

"Oh, yes, yes! and thank you, Mary," answered Lucy, "if mamma pleases."

When the children had looked at the kittens and kissed them, they went to visit Margery Grey, and to talk to old Goodman Grey, who was working in the garden, whilst Betty, in the meantime, and old Mary Bush, set out the tea-cups, and set the kettle to boil for tea. When the tea was ready, Betty called the children, and they would make Margery Grey come and drink tea with them. Henry would have the old man come too.

"No, master," said the old man: "I know my place better."

"Well, then," said Lucy, "I will send you a nice cup of tea, and some bread-and-butter, into the garden."

I wish you could have seen them all drinking tea at the door of the cottage, round the little table, the two old women sitting in the arm-chairs, for Lucy would have them do so, Betty making tea, and the three children sitting on stools—and how pleased and happy they were.

"Drinking tea at the door of the cottage, round the little table."—Page 149.

Part II

Story of Miss Crosbie's Presents

Miss Crosbie spoke kindly to her

We will begin this history again, by telling what had happened since the first part was concluded.

Sir Charles and Lady Noble had left their fine place soon after the funeral of their daughter, and it was supposed would never return; for the house and park were advertised to be let. After a few months it was taken by a family of the name of Darwell, said to be immensely rich: this family had an only daughter.

No other changes had taken place; everybody else lived where they did in the last part of our history, which is very pleasant, as we may hope to see our old friends all again.

Mr. Fairchild had had a few hundred pounds left him by a friend, from whom he had expected nothing; on the strength of which he bought a plain roomy carriage, which would hold himself and Mrs. Fairchild in the front seat, with a child between them, and two children behind. The pillion was put aside, and the old horse put in the shafts: and though, to be sure, he went but slowly, and not very far at a time, yet the whole family found great pleasure in the change.

The winter was past, and the sweet spring was beginning to show itself, when that happened which shall be related without delay.

One morning when Henry was with his father in the study, and Lucy and Emily were busy with their needles, seated in the parlour window together, and alone, they saw a gentleman's carriage stop at the gate, and a lady get out. A great number of bandboxes were taken from different parts of the carriage by a servant who was attending the carriage; and before the little girls could make anything of all these wonders, they saw their father first, and then their mother, run out and shake hands with the lady, and seem to invite her to come in. Henry, too, had gone out after his papa, and had been sent back, as they thought, to fetch Betty; for Betty soon appeared, and began, with the help of Henry, who seemed to be delighted at this interruption of his lessons, to carry the boxes into the house.

Lucy and Emily soon discovered that this lady was the elder Miss Crosbie; but they wondered how she had happened to come that day. Miss Crosbie had come from London, where she had been for some time, and was now so far on her way to visit a friend in the country.

She had come to Mr. Fairchild's door in another friend's carriage, and she was come to ask Mr. Fairchild to take her in until the Monday morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild both assured her that they were most glad to see her; expressed a hope that she would stay longer than Monday, and showed themselves so kind and hospitable, that Miss Crosbie was quite at her ease, and everything was settled about her staying, before Mr. Fairchild brought her into the parlour. But there was quite time enough, before Miss Crosbie came in, for Lucy and Emily to say many things, for which, I am happy to add, they were afterwards very sorry. Lucy spoke first.

"What a quantity of boxes she has brought!" she said; "some finery, I dare say, in all of them; how silly for such an old person to be fond of dress!"

"It is very silly," replied Emily, "and particularly for one so ugly. Don't you think Miss Crosbie uncommonly ugly?"

"To be sure I do," she answered; "everybody must: with her little nose, and her gray eyes, and her wide mouth."

"And to be so fond of finery after all!" said Emily. "I am sure if I was like Miss Crosbie, instead of dressing myself out, I would wear a veil and hide my face."

In this way the two little girls kept on chattering; and I fear my reader will say that they are not improved since last she heard anything of them.

When Miss Crosbie came into the parlour, she kissed them both, and made some remarks upon their looks, which showed that she was quite pleased with their appearance. Mrs. Fairchild employed them a little time in going backwards and forwards to Betty, and helping in many things; for when people keep but one maidservant, they must occasionally assist her.

When the room was ready for Miss Crosbie, and a fire lighted, and all the boxes and packages carried up, Mrs. Fairchild showed the lady to her room; and Miss Crosbie, having asked when dinner would be ready, said:

"Well, I shall just have time to change my dress."

"Oh, pray do not trouble yourself to dress," said Mrs. Fairchild; "you are very nice now, and we are plain people."

"You are very good," answered Miss Crosbie, "but I shall not be comfortable in the dress in which I travelled."

Mrs. Fairchild said no more; but having told her little girls, who had gone up with her to the visitor's room, to go and make themselves neat in their Sunday frocks, she hastened to give some orders, and perhaps some help, in the kitchen.

We will not repeat what Lucy and Emily said to each other whilst they were in their little room: all that passed was of the same kind, if not worse than what they had

said in the parlour; one encouraging the other, and carrying their ridicule of their mother's visitor farther than either of them intended when they began. When the little girls were dressed, they went into the best parlour, or tea-room, as their mother called it in the old-fashioned way; and there they found a fire burning, and everything in order. John was laying the cloth in the next room, and Henry soon came to them in his Sunday dress, and soon afterwards their father and mother; but Miss Crosbie did not appear till dinner was being served up. She came dressed in a muslin gown, with a long train, and large full sleeves, tied in several places with crimson ribbons; she had her hair frizzed and powdered, and a turban of crimson satin on her head. Her dress was quite out of place; but persons who are always used to be rather over-dressed are not judges of the times and places in which to put on their finery. At the sight of her, Lucy and Emily gave each other a look, which seemed to say, "How very silly!"

The dinner-time passed off very well. Miss Crosbie had a great deal to tell about London and her journey down into the country; and soon after dinner the children had leave to go to their play-room. They were not in the humour to do much good there: they began with talking nonsense, and finished off with getting pettish with each other. Henry said that he did not want to hear any more of Miss Crosbie and her finery. Lucy called him cross; and Emily said that he was not to hinder them talking of what they pleased. They were called to tea about six o'clock, and when the tea-things were removed, Miss Crosbie said:

"Now, Mrs. Fairchild, you shall see some of the things which I have brought from London; will you come to my room, or shall I send for the bandbox down here?"

"Oh, pray," said Mr. Fairchild, "let us have the box down here, that Henry and I may see the fine sights also."

"You don't mean to say," answered Miss Crosbie, laughing, "that a sensible man like you, Mr. Fairchild, can be amused by the sight of specimens of the fashions?"

"I am amused with anything," said Mr. Fairchild, "which entertains my family. I make a point of enjoying everything which they do, as far as I can."

"Well, then," said Miss Crosbie, "if I had my bandbox here——"

The children all at once offered to fetch it—she explained which they were to bring out of the many which had come with her, and in a very few minutes they had brought it down and set it on the table. Miss Crosbie sent them up again to look in her workbag for her keys, and to bring down a small parcel wrapped in brown paper, which was to be found in the same bag.

The parcel and the keys soon appeared. Miss Crosbie opened the parcel and presented Henry with a neat pocket-book, inside of which were a pencil, a leaf of ass's-skin, a penknife, and a pair of scissors.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, ma'am," said Henry, "how good you are!"

And his father and mother joined in the boy's thanks. There was nothing on Henry's mind particularly to render that gift bitter to him; he had not joined in the ridicule of Miss Crosbie.

She next opened the bandbox, and took out of it two bonnets and two tippets of grass-green silk, lined with pale pink satin. There were also two neatly plaited lace caps to wear under the bonnets, and waist ribbons to suit.

"These, I hope, will please you, my dear Miss Lucy and Miss Emily," she said; "I brought them for you, and I trust you will like them."

It was well at the moment that Emily was not struck by this kindness in the way that Lucy was. She was one full year younger than her sister, and could hardly be supposed to be able to reflect so deeply: she therefore could look joyful, could run forwards to kiss Miss Crosbie, and was ready almost to dance with delight, when she looked at the beautiful things on the table.

Had she not, as it were, pushed herself first, Miss Crosbie must have been struck, as

Mrs. Fairchild was, with the manner of Lucy: the little girl first flushed up to her brow, and all over her neck. She came forward to Miss Crosbie but slowly, and with her eyes cast down. She stood one moment, and then, throwing her arms round her neck and pressing her face against her shoulder, she sobbed deeply.

Miss Crosbie was certainly surprised; she did not expect that her present could have made the little girl feel so much. She spoke very kindly to her, put her arms round her, kissed her several times, and said:

"But, my dear, a bonnet and a tippet are not worthy of such deep gratitude; you make me ashamed that I have done so little for you."

"But you are so good, ma'am, so very good!" sobbed Lucy.

Miss Crosbie continued to soothe the little girl, and say kind things to her, which only made her seem to feel the more. Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild were certainly surprised, but they took no notice; and after a little while Lucy became calm, and the affair passed off, Miss Crosbie appearing to be rather pleased at the manner in which her present had been received.

Lucy became quite calm after her fit of crying, but her mother observed that she sighed deeply once or twice. When eight o'clock came, the children, at a hint from their mother, were wishing their friends good-night, when Miss Crosbie asked leave for their staying to supper. Mrs. Fairchild said:

"Not to-night, if you please, Miss Crosbie, but to-morrow night—we will all sup together to-morrow."

Miss Crosbie kissed Lucy affectionately before she left the room, and Mrs. Fairchild again saw the tears in the eyes of her little girl, but she did not appear to take notice of it.

When Lucy and Emily had got into their own room, Lucy at once gave way to her feelings.

"Oh, Emily, Emily!" she said, as she laid her new bonnet and tippet on the drawers, "I am so unhappy; I have been so wicked! to think how kind Miss Crosbie was to bring those beautiful things for us, and to know how I laughed at her, and said cruel things about her, and called her ugly! I have been naughtier than you, because I am older, and because, at the time I did it, I knew I was wrong; and when I saw those beautiful bonnets, I felt as if there had been a thorn put into my heart."

"It is odd," said Emily, "that I did not think of it, even when I saw you crying."

"If Miss Crosbie had not been so kind," replied Lucy, "I should not have cared. I can't forgive myself—I can't forget it!"

Then Lucy cried again, and Emily with her; and they were still weeping when sleep came over them. They were leaning back on their pillow; Emily had her arm over Lucy, and their cheeks were still wet with tears, when their mother came in before she went to bed to look at them.

She was again surprised to see their tears, and stood a while looking at them, being uneasy to think what could have caused them. They did not wake, and she did not like to disturb them; but she went to bed rather uneasy, though she hoped that there was no great cause for being so; and in the morning all her fears were soon removed, for she heard the voices of her little girls before she had quite finished dressing. They were knocking at her door, and asking to speak to her. She went to them immediately, and Lucy told her at once all that had made them unhappy the last evening, telling how they had prayed to be kept from such naughtiness again, and saying what pain Miss Crosbie's kindness had given them.

Mrs. Fairchild heard all they had to say without interrupting them, but her face looked kind and full of pity. When the story was told she put her arms round both of them, and kissed them tenderly, and then talked to them for some time of the want of kindness and good feeling they had shown towards their guest.

"Oh, mamma," said Lucy, "the more you talk the more vexed I am with myself.

What am I to do? Shall I go and beg Miss Crosbie's pardon?"

"Shall we, mamma?" added Emily.

"No, no, my children," answered Mrs. Fairchild, half smiling. "What! would you give the poor lady pain by telling her wherefore you come to beg her pardon?"

"No," replied Lucy, thoughtfully, "that will not do, I see."

"But we will not wear our bonnets to-day, mamma," said Emily, "though it is so fine."

"She wishes to see you in them," answered their mother; "she must not be disappointed."

"Now wipe away your tears, my little girls," she added. "We must try to make this day as pleasant as possible to poor Miss Crosbie."

And all went most pleasantly from the time that they met at breakfast till they parted after supper; and Miss Crosbie said:

"Well, Mrs. Fairchild, I have certainly had a most delightful day, and I wish that I could spend all my Sundays with you as I have done this; for, in general, I must confess I do find the Sunday the dullest day of all the seven."

"Then, ma'am," said Lucy, "I hope you will come often again;" and Mrs. Fairchild joined in the invitation.

A Visit to Mrs. Goodriche

In the summer parlour

Nothing happened for some weeks after Miss Crosbie went away which could be put down in this history, because almost every day was like another, unless we were to say what lessons the children did, and what the doll was dressed in, and what walks were taken. The spring came on, and a very fine spring it was; and Henry found a place among the trees where he thought a very beautiful arbour might be made, and

he got leave to make it, and John helped, and Lucy and Emily were very busy about it, and a most pleasant place it was. The hut in the wood was too far off for the children to run to when they had but little time; but Henry's arbour could be reached in three minutes by the shortest way. Mr. Fairchild was so good as to pay John Trueman to make a thatched roof and sides to it, and the man-servant John found some old boards for seats; but he could not find time to finish the seats as soon as Henry wished.

During this time Mrs. Goodriche came over to visit Mrs. Fairchild, and she then invited all the family to come and spend a whole day with her in the summer, and she promised that on that day, if all was well, she would tell them another story about old Mrs. Howard.

But the happiest times of people's lives are often those in which there is least to write and talk about; so we must pass over the spring, and go on to the month of June, the very first day of which was that fixed for the visit to Mrs. Goodriche.

It was a bright morning when the party set out in the carriage which Mr. Fairchild had bought. The dew was not off the ground, for they were to breakfast at Mrs. Goodriche's; but, as Henry said, the day would be too short anyhow, for these happy children thought many days too short.

What a curious old house Mrs. Goodriche's was! it was the very house in which Mrs. Howard had lived, and it had been scarcely altered for Mrs. Goodriche. There was what the old lady had called her summer parlour, because she never sat in it in cold weather; it was low and large, and had double glass doors, which opened upon the old-fashioned garden; and there was a short walk which went from the door to the old arbour. The walls of the room were painted blue, the windows were casements, and had seats in them, and there was a step up from the floor into the garden.

The visitors found Mrs. Goodriche in this summer parlour.

After breakfast the two elder ladies took out their work. Mr. Fairchild walked away

somewhere with a book, and the children went into the arbour. Lucy and Emily had their doll's work, and Henry had his knife and some bits of wood; it was very hot, so that they could not run about.

"I love this arbour," said Henry.

Lucy. "So do I; don't you remember, Henry, that we were sitting here once, thinking of poor Emily when she had the fever, when Mrs. Goodriche came to us and told us that Emily was so much better and the fever gone, and how glad we were, and how we jumped and screamed? Oh! that was a dreadful time."

"To me it was not dreadful," replied Emily; "I think I may say it was a happy time, Lucy, for I had thoughts put into my mind in that illness which make everything seem different to me ever since. You know what I mean, Lucy, I can't explain it."

Lucy. "I know what you mean, Emily."

Emily. "I never felt anything like that till I had the fever, so I call the fever a happy time."

"I wish you would not talk about it," said Henry; "Lucy and I were miserable then; were not we, Lucy?"

Mrs. Goodriche dined very early, and after dinner she and Mrs. Fairchild came into the arbour, and there she told the story which she had promised.

Story of the Last Days of Mrs. Howard

When Betty returned, Mrs. Howard was well satisfied

"It was about half a year after the things had happened which are related in the last story of Mrs. Howard, that Betty, one evening when she returned from market upon Crop, came into the parlour to her mistress and said:

"'Ma'am, I have heard a bit of news; Mr. Bennet is going to leave the country.'

"'Indeed, Betty,' said Mrs. Howard: 'how has that happened?'

"'Some relation towards London has left him a property, and our county is glad of anything that takes off the family.'

"'Well, well, Betty,' said Mrs. Howard, and Betty knew that when her mistress said, 'Well, well,' it was a hint to her to say no more on the subject. Mrs. Howard soon heard from other quarters that the Bennets were going, but they were not to be off till the Lady Day next.

"A week or two before that time, Betty had occasion to go again to town. Many things were wanted, and on such occasions Crop did not object to carry panniers.

"When Betty was quite ready, and Crop at the door, and the woman in the house who always came to take care of things on such occasions, she came to ask her mistress if there was anything more not yet mentioned.

"Betty never travelled in cold weather without a long blue cloak, and a black felt hat tied over her mob.

"'Yes, Betty,' replied Mrs. Howard, 'but you must be very particular—you must get me two small neat Bibles with gilt edges, bound in morocco, scarlet or green; I should wish them alike, and a clear print; besides which you must bring a young gentleman's pocket-book, all complete and handsome, with a silver clasp; and lastly, you must bring me a genteel equipage in chased silver, the furniture quite complete and as it should be, and mind it is well wrapped in paper.'

"'Oh, ma'am,' said Betty, 'how shall I be able to choose one that will exactly suit for what you want? I am quite afraid to undertake the bringing of a genteel equipage, there is such a difference of opinion about so tasty a thing.'

"'Betty,' replied Mrs. Howard, 'you know I am always pleased with your taste; and if anyone in the world knows what I like, it is you, my good girl.'

"Mrs. Howard often called Betty a good girl, though she was too old to be so called; but it was a habit in those days in which the old lady lived.

"'I should know your taste, ma'am,' said Betty, smiling, 'by this time, I should think—me who has lived in yours and your lady mother's service four-and-forty years next Candlemas;' and so saying Betty set out."

"Pray, ma'am," asked Lucy, "what is an equipage?"

"A fine carriage and horses, to be sure, Lucy," said Henry. "Lady Noble had an equipage. I heard John once say, 'That's a fine equipage,' when he saw Lady Noble riding by."

"Oh, Henry," said Emily, "surely what Betty was to bring with her could not be a carriage and horses wrapped in paper."

Mrs. Goodriche smiled, and explained to the children what Mrs. Howard meant: she told them that an equipage was a little case which held a thimble, scissors, a pencil, or other such little matters, and, being either of gold or silver, was hung to the girdle to balance the great watches worn by the grandmothers and great-grandmothers of people now living.

"Thank you, ma'am," said Lucy; "and now please to go on, and tell us what Mrs. Howard meant to do with this equipage."

"When Betty returned," continued Mrs. Goodriche, "Mrs. Howard was well satisfied with what she had done; and the very next Sunday evening she took occasion, after service, to speak to Master and Miss Bennet, and to invite them to tea for the next evening.

"'I wonder,' said Master Jacky to Miss Polly, as they walked home together by their mother, 'what she can want with us. I promise you I shan't go.'

"'What's that you are saying, Jacky?' said Mrs. Bennet.

"Miss Polly then told her mother of the invitation and what her brother had said.

"'You had best go,' said Mrs. Bennet, 'and you may, perhaps, get some pretty present. I was told by one who was told by another, that Betty was in town last

week, and laying out money at the silversmith's, and at Mr. Bates the bookseller's, so I would have you go: you don't know but that the old lady may have some keepsakes to give you.'

"'Well then,' said Jacky, 'if Polly goes, I will; for I don't see why she is to have the presents, and me nothing—but as to anything that Mrs. Howard ever gave me yet,' added the rude boy, 'I might put it into my eye and see none the worse.'

"'And whose fault is that?' said Miss Polly.

"'It don't become you to talk, Miss,' replied Jacky; 'for if I have had nothing, you have had no more—so there is half a dozen for one and six for another.'

"By this discourse we may see," said Mrs. Goodriche, "that no great change for the better had yet passed on these rude children.

"But they had got a notion that, as Jacky said, there were presents in the wind, and they set out for Mrs. Howard's determining to behave their best, though they did not tell their thoughts to each other, for Jacky hoped that Polly would disgrace herself and get nothing, and Polly had the same kind wishes for Jacky.

"Mrs. Howard received them in the summer parlour, and they both behaved themselves very well, but more out of spite for each other than from love of what is right in itself; but you shall hear by-and-by how I came to the knowledge of these their thoughts.

"Betty had made a cake, and there was a roast fowl and hot apple-tart for supper; and between tea and supper Mrs. Howard showed them many curious things, pictures, and dolls dressed in the fashions of her youth, and a number of other things which she kept in a Japan cabinet, which always stood in the summer parlour while she lived in this house.

"It was not till after supper that she brought out the two Bibles and the pocket-book and equipage. She then laid them before her on the table, and she spoke to the two children:

"She began by saying that as they were going out of the country and she was far in years, she might, perhaps, never see them again in this world. She then spoke, in her own sweet warm way, of what our dear Saviour has done for us, and when she had said as much as she thought the children could bear, she presented each a Bible, having written their names in them. She next took the other presents in her hands:

"'And these, my dears,' she said, 'I ask you to accept. I am sorry if on former occasions I may have seemed harsh to you, but these little gifts are to prove that I am truly sorry if ever I gave you pain; when you look at them you will think of me, and know that nothing would ever give me more delight than to hear that you were both walking in the ways of holiness.'

"She then put the pocket-book into Jacky's hand, and the equipage into Miss Polly's; but she hardly expected what followed. The two children burst into tears; Jacky rubbed his eyes to hide his; but Miss Polly sprang from her chair, and fell weeping into Mrs. Howard's arms.

"'We will, we will try to do better, ma'am,' she said; 'we will indeed.'

"As the children walked home they said not one word to each other; and a very few days afterwards the family left the country, Mr. Bennet not having had even the decency to call and say good-bye to the old lady.

"Mrs. Howard was half-way between sixty and seventy when the Bennets left the country, and was supposed by many to be older, for she had dressed like an old woman for many years; her hair had long been gray, and she had always been a weakly person, very small and very pale.

"She, however, continued to live in this house as many as seventeen years after the Bennets were gone, and every year till the last had her children's party; but a change was coming on her household—Crop had died years before, and Betty afterwards always went to town in the market-cart; but what was the loss of Crop to the loss of Betty?

"Betty was younger than Mrs. Howard, but she was called away before her; she had lived forty years with Mrs. Howard in this very house, and the loss could not be made up to her in this world.

"Mrs. Howard had a great-nephew, a surgeon, of the name of Johnson, who lived in a fair village, called Pangbourne, in Berkshire; and when he heard of the death of Betty, and how low his aunt was, he came to her, and persuaded her to leave the country, and go and reside near to him. She was at first unwilling to go, but was at last persuaded; she took nothing with her but her favourite chair, her old round table, her books, and her cabinet. Her nephew got her some very pleasant rooms in a house called the Wood House, about half a mile from the village, towards the hills which are near the place. That side of Pangbourne was in those days almost a continued wood coppice, with occasional tall trees towards the hills, and there was a narrow road and raised path through the wood to the town.

"Mrs. Howard's parlour had an old-fashioned bow-window in it, looking to the road, though somewhat raised above it; and Mrs. Howard, as old people do, loved in fine weather to sit in the bow, and see the few people who passed.

"Every day her kind nephew came to see her, and now and then she returned his visit; but she was getting very infirm, though she had lost neither sight nor hearing, could read and work as in her younger days, and having got over the first shock of losing Betty, and the fatigue of the change, her faith in God's love was making her as happy as she had been before; she liked the people also who kept the house, and made herself very pleasant to them. Though she went to Pangbourne in the autumn, she did not, until the month of April, find the pleasure of sitting in the bow-window.

"It was then that she first noticed two little girls passing and returning every day at certain hours to and from the village.

"They were so near of a size that she thought they must be twins. They were very fair, and very pretty, and very neat. They wore light green stuff frocks, with lawn

aprons and tippets, and little tight neat silk bonnets of the colour of their frocks. They both always carried a sort of satchel, as if they were going and coming from school; and there was often with them, when they went to the village, either a man or woman servant, such as might be supposed to belong to a farmhouse. They often, however, passed by the window in the evening without a servant, and sometimes were met by a servant near the house. These little ones could not, from their appearance, have been more than seven years of age.

"As Mrs. Howard watched them from day to day, she thought them the pleasantest little people she had seen for a long time; and all her ancient love for children, which age and weakness had almost made her fancy was nipped and blighted, began to spring up again and blossom as flowers in May. She wished to get acquainted with these fair ones, but she took her own way to do so.

"She began one morning, when her window was open, by giving them a kind smile as they were walking gravely by, with a man in a smock-frock behind them. On seeing this smile they both stopped short and dropped formal curtseys.

"From that time, for a week or more, these smiles and these curtseys passed between the old lady and the twins twice every day regularly. Before the end of the week the children had left off looking grave at the lady, and gave smile for smile. You may be sure that Mrs. Howard, though she had not poor Betty and Crop to send on her errands, did manage to get some pretty toys ready to give these little girls whenever the time should come when she should think it right to make herself better acquainted with them; but she thought that she would observe their ways first, and in doing so she saw several things which pleased her. Once she saw them give a poor beggar some of what had been put in their satchels for their dinners; and she saw them another time pick up something which a very old man had dropped, and give it him as politely as they would have done to my lord judge, though it was only a potato which he had dropped from a basket. Seeing this it reminded her of the old

man and his bundle of sticks, and of the ill-behaviour of Master Bennet; and then all those old days came fresh to her mind. Mrs. Howard had sent to a friend in London to get the toys—two dolls exactly alike, and the histories of Miss Jemima Meek and Peter Pippin were the things she sent for; and they had not arrived a week when Mrs. Howard found a use for them. It was the beginning of July, and a very hot close day; Mrs. Howard sat at her window, and saw the little ones go as usual towards the village; it was Saturday, and she knew that they would be back again about one, for it was a half-holiday. The heat became greater and greater towards noon; there was not a breath of air, and the sun was hidden by a red glaring mist.

"'We shall have a tempest,' said Mrs. Howard to a maid who had been hired to wait upon her; 'I hope the little girls will get home before it comes on—have they far to go?'

"When Mrs. Howard had explained what little girls she meant, the maid told her that they were the children of a farmer of the name of Symonds, and that the house was not a half-mile distant up the lane.

"Whilst Mrs. Howard was talking with the servant, the heavens had grown black, the clouds hung low; there was a creaking, groaning sort of sound among the trees, and the larger birds arose and flew heavily over the woods, uttering harsh cryings.

"'It's coming,' said the servant; and at the same instant the two little ones appeared walking from the village.

"'There they are,' cried Mrs. Howard; and at the same moment a tremendous flash of lightning covered the whole heavens, followed by a peal of awful thunder. Mrs. Howard put her head out of the window, and called the little girls, who, from very fright, were standing still.

"They gladly obeyed the call, the maid went down to meet them, and the next minute they stood curtseying within the parlour-door. The maid had seen a boy who had been sent to meet them, and sent him back to tell his mistress that the Misses

were with the lady, and that she would keep them till the storm was over.

"'What lady am I to say?' asked the boy.

"'Our lady,' replied the maid; 'Surgeon Johnson's aunt.'

"The boy ran home, and told Mrs. Symonds not to be uneasy, for the little Misses were safe with Madam Johnson, who lodged at the Wood House; so Mrs. Symonds was made easy about her pretty daughters.

"'Well, my dears,' said Mrs. Howard, putting her hands out to the little people, 'I am glad to see you in my parlour.'

"'Thank you, ma'am,' said one of them; and the other repeated the same words.

"As they spoke they came near, and put each a hand into Mrs. Howard's.

"'Let me look at you, my children,' said the old lady in her pleasant smiling way; 'you are like two lilies growing out of one root; I cannot tell one from the other; what are your names?'

"'I am Mary, ma'am,' said the eldest.

"'And I am Amelia,' added the other.

"'Amelia,' said Mrs. Howard, 'why, that is my name: but which is the oldest?'

"'We came to our mother the same day,' replied Mary; 'but I came first, only a very little while though.'

"'Indeed!' said Mrs. Howard.

"Mrs. Baynes had come into the parlour after the children, to see and hear what was going forward; and now she thought it time to put in a word.

"'Yes, ma'am,' she said, 'they are twins; they are the only ones their mother ever had, and they are two pretty Misses, and very good children. Are not you very good, my precious dears?'

"The two little ones turned to her; and answered both together:

"'No, ma'am.'

"Mrs. Howard rather wondered at this answer, and said:

"'Not good, my dears, how is that?'

"'We wish to be good, ma'am,' said one of the little girls, 'but we are not.'

"'Well to be sure!' remarked Mrs. Baynes; 'but you have a very good mamma, my little dears.'

"'Mamma is good to us,' said Mary.

"'But God is the only real good person,' added Amelia.

"Mrs. Howard was rather surprised, but as the storm was still getting more frightful, she moved her chair, shut the window, and sat in the middle of the room; the two little ones in their fear clinging to her, whilst she put an arm round each of them.

"Mrs. Baynes went out to close the windows, and they were left together.

"Peal came after peal, and flash after flash; and the old lady and children trembled.

"'We ought not to fear,' said Mrs. Howard; 'it is wrong; is not the lightning in the hands of God?'

"'We will try not to be afraid,' said the little ones; and they clung closer to Mrs. Howard.

"And now there came a fearful hailstorm, patter, patter, against the window; and when the hail ceased the rain came pouring down.

"'Now, my loves, let us thank God,' said Mrs. Howard, 'the danger is past.'

"The little ones, with that quick obedience which we see in children only who are well brought up, joined their hands and said, 'Thank God!' but they expressed some fear lest their mother should be frightened about them.

"'We will see about that,' said Mrs. Howard; and she rang the hand-bell which always stood on the table, for bells were not then fixed on cranks and wires in every

room as they are now.

"Up came Mrs. Baynes again, and told the little ones that their mother knew where they were, for she had sent her a message by the boy.

"'Then we can stay, ma'am,' said the children, quite pleased: and Mrs. Howard asked to have the dinner sent up, requesting Mrs. Baynes to make up a little more from her own pantry, if she could.

"'That shall be done, ma'am,' she answered; and she added some eggs and bacon and a currant tart to Mrs. Howard's four bones of roast lamb.

"'We should like to dine with you, ma'am,' said one of the little girls, 'and to drink tea with you sometimes.'

"Mrs. Howard did not yet know one from the other, but she felt that all her old love for children was burning up again in her heart.

"'I am old, my dears,' she answered, 'and cannot bear noise and bustle; if you can be quiet, I shall be glad to see you often, but if you tire me I cannot have you.'

"'I hope we shall be quiet,' they answered; and then they asked her if she was very, very old.

"She told them she was eighty-two; and they said to each other, 'Then we must be very quiet.'

"The maid came in to lay the cloth, and they seemed quite amused by looking at her. The table was very small, but they said there would be quite room; and by Mrs. Howard's direction they went to her bedroom, took off their bonnets, and the maid combed their pretty curling hair.

"They behaved as well as children could possibly do at table, though they prattled a little, and told Mrs. Howard of the animals they had at home, their kittens and the old cat, and an owl in the garden called Ralph, and many other things. When the dinner was removed, Mrs. Howard said she had a great treat for them.

"'What is it, ma'am?' they said.

"'Something very nice,' replied the old lady; and going to the corner cupboard, she brought out a doll's cradle, and a small trunk full of doll's clothes, and the two new dolls both wrapped in the paper in which they had come from London.

"'Now,' she said, 'these are dolls which I keep for my visitors, and when you are here you may play with them. I do not call them yours, only when you are here; but you may choose which you will call your own in this house. Their names are Mary and Amelia.'

"'Oh, ma'am! Oh, ma'am!' cried the children; they were too glad to say another word.

"'You may take out the clothes from the trunk and dress them; but, before you go, you must put on their night-dresses, and put them to bed in the cradle, and restore all the other clothes to the trunk.' The little ones quite trembled with joy; they were past speaking. 'Now,' said Mrs. Howard, 'go into the bow-window. The lightning is past. I must keep in my chair, and you must not disturb me. If the day was finer I should let you go into the garden to play, but to-day you cannot.'

"The happy little girls went with the dolls into the bow-window."—Page 174.

"The happy little girls went with the dolls into the bow-window, and Mrs. Howard got her usual short sleep. They did not make any noise. In all their behaviour they showed that they had been well brought up.

"They drank tea with Mrs. Howard, and were very busy after tea in showing all the clothes to their old kind friend, and in packing them up in the trunk, and putting the dolls in the cradle, and restoring all the things to the place from whence they had been taken.

"Mrs. Howard saw them kiss the dolls, and heard them wish them a good-night when they had done.

"Mrs. Symonds had sent her green market cart and cloaks for her little girls. When

the cart came they both kissed Mrs. Howard, and asked her if they had been quiet.

"'Very quiet, my dears,' she answered.

"'Then may we come again?'

"'You may, my darlings,' answered the old lady; 'and next Saturday shall be the day, if all is well.'

"The fair little creatures did come on the day fixed, and the man who fetched them home that night brought Mrs. Howard a small cream cheese and several pats of fresh butter, with many, many thanks from Mrs. Symonds for her great kindness to her children.

"From the day of the thunderstorm till the end of the summer the little girls spent Saturday afternoon, every week, with Mrs. Howard, and now and then stopped an hour with her on other days; and never passed the window without speaking to her, often coming in with flowers, or fruit, or a fresh egg, or some little thing from the garden or poultry-yard. Thus such a friendship grew up between the old lady and these little girls, that one might have thought that Mrs. Howard must have been their grandmother.

"Often and often she would hear them read a chapter, or repeat a hymn, and do what she could to improve their minds; she taught them to sing some fine old psalm tunes, and she also taught them some new stitches in the samplers they were working. Many times she walked between them a little way in the wood, whilst they carried the dolls, and in these walks she often told them stories, so that they loved her more and more every day, and tried more and more to please her.

"All this time Mrs. Symonds had been so busy with the work of the farm that she had not found time to come herself to thank Mrs. Howard for all she was doing for her little ones; and it was rather strange that all this time she had understood that the kind old lady's name was Johnson. The children never called her anything but 'our nice lady,' and never thought of any other name for her.

"But the harvest-time being over, Mr. Symonds told his wife that she must not put off calling on the lady any longer.

"'And be sure,' he said, 'that you take something nice in your hand, or let the boy carry it after you; some nice cakes and butter pats, or anything else; and you may as well go and meet the children as they come home this evening, and go in with them.'

"Mrs. Symonds was one of those old-fashioned wives who never went anywhere but to church, and as her church was not at Pangbourne she seldom passed the Wood House. She, however, made up her basket of presents, and having dressed herself neatly, she took the boy and went to meet her children.

"She met them a little above the Wood House, and they turned back with her, and soon brought her to the door of Mrs. Howard's parlour: there they knocked, and the old lady having called to them to come in, the twins entered, leading their mother.

"But how great was their surprise when their mother, at the sight of Mrs. Howard, uttered a cry, ran forwards and threw her arms round the old lady's neck.

"'Oh, dear, dear Mrs. Howard,' she said, 'is it you? Can it be you?'

"Mrs. Howard did not know Mrs. Symonds, and as she drew herself civilly from her arms, she said:

"'Indeed, ma'am, I have not the pleasure of knowing you.'

"'Not remember Polly Bennet?' replied Mrs. Symonds, 'but I remember you, my best and dearest friend, and shall remember you, for I have cause to do so, when time shall be no more.'

"Mrs. Howard now herself came forward and kissed Mrs. Symonds. The tears stood in the old lady's eyes, and she placed her old thin hands in the other's.

"'And are you,' she said, 'the mother of these dear little girls? and have I lived near you so long and not known you? Now I think I can trace the features; sit down, my dear friend, and tell me all about yourself and your family.'

"'I have not much to say,' answered Mrs. Symonds; 'my parents are dead, and my brother living far off: and I have been blessed beyond my deservings in a good husband and these dear children.'

"'Dear, indeed,' said Mrs. Howard.

"'But how can I value enough what you have done for me, Mrs. Howard?' said Mrs. Symonds, 'and through me, in some sort, to my mother and father before their death.'

"'I do not understand you,' said Mrs. Howard.

"Mrs. Symonds then told the old lady how she had been affected by the last kindness which she had shown to her and her brother.

"'When you sent for us, dear madam,' she said, 'we accepted your invitation because we expected presents; but with presents we expected also, what we had well deserved, a severe lecture. But when you spoke to us, as you did, with such amazing kindness—when you even almost begged our pardons if you had been hard upon us, which you never were—when you spoke to us of our Saviour, whilst your eyes filled with tears, we were cut to the heart and filled with shame, and we then resolved to read the Bibles you gave us. And we never could forget your words.

"'The work, indeed, is of God; but you, dear lady, were made the minister of it in the commencement. You were the first person who made me and my brother to understand that the new spirit imparted by God to His children is the spirit of love.'

"Mrs. Symonds said much more; indeed she went on speaking till Mrs. Howard burst into tears of joy and thankfulness.

"The little ones were frightened to see their mother and Mrs. Howard weeping, and could not at first be made to understand that they were crying for very joy. When they understood that Mrs. Howard was an old dear friend of their mother's, they became happy again.

"What a pleasant party there was that evening in the bow-window! the white cakes

and fresh butter and cream were added to the feast; and what a delightful story was there to tell to Mr. Symonds when his wife and children got home!

"'Tell the old lady,' said Mr. Symonds, 'that I should be ever ready to serve her to the last drop of my blood.'

"From that time," continued Mrs. Goodriche, "till the death of Mrs. Howard, which happened in her ninetieth year, Mr. and Mrs. Symonds were a son and daughter to her. Mary and Amelia never both left her; sometimes one, and sometimes both, being continually with her."

"This is a beautiful story," said Lucy.

"I wish it was longer," said Henry; "can't you tell us more, ma'am?"

"Not now, my dear," said Mrs. Goodriche, "we must go in now; and, indeed, I know not that I have any more to tell."

It was late when the family got home. As they were returning, Mrs. Fairchild told Mr. Fairchild the story of old Mrs. Howard, which pleased him much.

The Fair Little Lady

The coach came in sight

It was not long after that delightful day at Mrs. Goodriche's, when the children, having done their morning lessons, had just gone out of the hall-door, on their way to Henry's arbour, when they heard the wheels of a carriage sounding from a distance.

The sound was not like that of a waggon, which goes along heavily, crashing and breaking the stones in its passage, whilst the feet of the horses come down with a heavy beat upon the ground; but horses and wheels went lightly, and as if the carriage was coming near quickly.

Very few light carriages passed that way, and therefore when anything of the kind was heard or seen, everybody left off what they were doing to look, let them be ever

so busy. Lucy and Emily and Henry ran down to the gate which opened on the road. Henry climbed to the top of the highest bar; but the little girls stood on one side, where they were half hidden by a rose-bush.

When they were got there the carriage was heard more plainly: and Henry was hardly fixed upon the top of the gate before John came up, with a hoe and a basket in his hand.

"So, Master Henry," he said, "you are come to see the coach; I just caught sight of it as it went round the corner below, and I promise you it is worth seeing; it beats Sir Charles Noble's to nothing—but here they come."

At first there appeared a groom, dressed in a glazed hat, and a livery, and shining boots; and he was riding a fine horse, and he went forward quickly; he had several dogs running by him. Lucy and Emily were glad that John, with his hoe, was close by, for they did not love strange dogs.

But the groom and his dogs were very soon out of sight; he was riding on to see that the gates were open where the coach was going. Immediately afterwards the coach came in sight—and a fine new coach it was; and there were four horses, with postillions whipping and cutting away; and ladies and gentlemen in the coach.

Lucy and Emily and Henry did not look at the grown people, but at a very pretty little lady, of Emily's age perhaps, who was looking out of the window on their side.

They saw her face, which was fair and very pale, and they saw her curling light hair, and her blue satin hat, which had white feathers in it; and they knew that she saw them, for she rather smiled and looked pleased, and turned to speak about them, they thought, to the lady next to her. But the coach was gone in a minute, not rattling like a hack-chaise, but making a sort of low rumbling sound, and that sound was not heard long.

"Who are those?" said Henry, as he stood at the very top of the gate, like a bird upon a perch, "who are those fine people?"

"They are the great folks," replied John, "who are come to live at Sir Charles Noble's. They call them Honourable—by way of distinction—the Honourable Mr. and Mrs. Darwell, and they are immensely rich; and that is their only child, for they have but one—and she, to be sure, is no small treasure, as people say, and they never can make enough of her."

"What is her name, John?" asked Lucy.

"Don't ask me, Miss," replied John; "for though I have heard the name, I could not pretend to speak it properly, it is so unaccountably fine."

"I should like to hear it," said Emily.

"And that you will be sure to do soon, Miss," answered John; "for all the country is talking about the family, and they say they are uncommon grand."

"But, John," said Henry, "when will you come and nail the benches in my hut? Will you come now? Shall I fetch the hammer and nails?"

"No, master," returned John, "you need not fetch them, for I have them here in this basket, and was just going when I saw the coach."

"Away then," cried Henry, jumping from the top of the gate, and running before, whilst John followed close behind him, and Lucy and Emily came afterwards, talking of the fair little lady.

Story of a Holiday

Henry looked along the road

One day a letter came from Mrs. Goodriche to say that she was going early the next day to the town, in a hired chaise, and that she hoped to be back again in the evening; she added that, as she should be quite alone, it would be a great pleasure to her to take up Mrs. Fairchild and one of the little people to go with her to town, and she would set them down again at their gate.

Mrs. Fairchild thought this a very neighbourly offer, and it was soon settled that she

should go, and take Lucy with her, and that Mr. Fairchild should get the horse he often rode and attend the carriage.

Lucy very much pressed her mother to take Emily instead of herself, but it was Lucy's turn to go out when there was a scheme only for one, and I don't think that Emily would have taken it from her on any account. So an answer was written to Mrs. Goodriche, and her kind invitation accepted.

There was a good deal of talking and settling with Lucy about what Emily and Henry wanted her to get for them in the town, before they went to bed. Emily had one shilling and sixpence, and Henry tenpence, and it was of great consequence to them that this money should be spent to the best advantage.

It was at last settled that Lucy should choose a book for each of them—Henry's book was to be about a boy—and the rest of their money, if any was left, was to be spent as Lucy thought might please them best. So she took their money, and put it into her purse with her own. She had two shillings, and she had settled it in her own mind that she would buy nothing for herself, but spend some, if not all of it, for her sister and brother.

The family were all up at six o'clock, and soon afterwards they might be seen seated before the open window of the parlour at breakfast, those who were going being quite ready.

Emily and Henry, who were to be left, were to have no lessons to do, but their father and mother advised them not to tire themselves in the early part of the day by running about, but to amuse themselves during the very hottest hours with something quiet. Mr. Fairchild also reminded them that they must not go beyond the bounds in which they were always allowed to play.

"I hope we shall be good, mamma," said Emily, "I hope we shall!" And Henry said the same.

Henry ran out to the gate to look for the carriage after he had taken breakfast, and he

got to the very highest bar, and looked along the road, which he could see a great way, because it came down a steep hill from Mrs. Goodriche's house.

It was hardly more than a black speck on the white road when he first saw it, and then he lost sight of it as it descended into the valley, and he heard it rattle and jingle before he got sight of it again; but when he was sure of it, he ran to the house, and you might have heard Lucy's name from the very cellar to the roof.

Emily was with Lucy in their little room, and she was holding her gloves whilst Lucy tied her bonnet, and she was talking over the things that were to be bought, when their brother's voice came up the stairs as loud and sharp as if a stage-coach was coming, which would not wait one moment for those who were going.

"I hope we shall not get into a scrape to-day," said Emily: "Henry has forgotten the day when mamma and papa went out, and we behaved so ill; what can we do to keep ourselves out of mischief?"

Lucy had no time to answer, for Henry was at the door, and there was such a rub-a-dub-dub upon it that her voice could not have been heard. At the same minute the hack-chaise had come jingling up to the gate, and Mrs. Goodriche was looking out with her pleasant smiling face. John, too, had brought the horse to the gate, and everybody who belonged to the house was soon out upon the grass-plot; the dog was there, and quite as set up as Henry himself; and Betty came too, though nobody knew why. Mrs. Fairchild got in first, and then Lucy; and everybody said good-bye as if those who were going were not to come back for a month; and the post-boy cracked his whip, and Mr. Fairchild mounted his horse, and away they went.

Emily and Henry watched them till the turn of the road prevented them from seeing them any longer; and then Henry said:

"Let us run to the chesnut-trees at the top of the round hill, and then we shall be able to see the carriage again going up on the other side; I saw it come down from Mrs. Goodriche's."

"Stay but one moment," said Emily, and she ran upstairs, put on her bonnet and tippet, and was down again in one minute, with her doll on her arm and a little book in her hand.

"Come, come," said Henry, and away they ran along a narrow path, among the shrubs in the garden, out at a little gate, and up the green slope. They were very soon at the top of the small hill, and under the shade of the chesnut-trees. They passed through the grove to the side which was farthest from their house, and then they sat down on the dry and bare root of one of the trees.

For a minute or more they could not see the carriage, because it was down in the valley beneath them, and the road there was much shaded by willows and wych-elms and other trees that love the neighbourhood of water, for the brook which turned the mill was down there. But when the carriage began to go up on the other side, they saw it quite plain; there was the post-boy in his yellow jacket, jogging up and down on his saddle, and Mr. Fairchild sometimes a little before and sometimes a little behind the carriage.

Henry was still in very high spirits; he was apt to be set up by any change, and when he was set up, he was almost sure to get into a scrape, unless something could be thought of to settle him down quietly.

Emily had thought of something, and got it ready; but whilst the carriage was in sight nothing was to be done, for Henry had picked up a branch which had fallen from one of the trees, and as he sat on the root, was jogging up and down, waving his branch like a whip, and imitating those sort of odd noises which drivers make to their horses; such as gee-up! so-ho! and now and then he made a sort of smacking with his lips.

"Are you driving a waggon or a coach?" asked Emily.

"A coach, to be sure," said Henry; "don't you see that I have got a chaise from the Red Lion, and that I am driving Mrs. Fairchild and Mrs. Goodriche and Miss Lucy

Fairchild to the town, and here we go on?"

The carriage was long getting up the hill, for it was a very steep one; but when it had reached the top, it got in among trees again, and was soon out of sight; and then Emily said:

"Now, Henry, I am going to curl my doll's hair, and dress her over again, for she is not tidy, and I have got a little book here which you may read to me."

"What book is it?" said Henry.

"You never saw it," she answered; "mamma found it yesterday in a box where she keeps many old things—she did not know that she had saved it—it was hers when she was a little child, and she supposed that it was lost."

"Let me see it, Emily," said Henry.

"Will you read it to me then?" asked Emily.

Henry was a good-natured boy, and loved his sisters, and had much pleasure in doing what they wished him to do; he therefore said at once, "Yes," threw away his branch of fir, and took the book.

This little book, which Mrs. Fairchild had found in her old chest, could not have been much less than a hundred years old; it was the size of a penny book, and had a covering of gilt paper, with many old cuts; its title was, "The History of the Little Boy who, when running after the Echo, found his Papa."

When Henry had seen how many pictures there were, and when he had read the title, he was quite in a hurry to begin the story, and Emily was so much pleased at hearing it, although she had read it before, that she forgot her doll altogether, and let her lie quietly on her lap.

Little Edwy and the Echo

He turned away from the terrible bird

"It was in the time of our good Queen Anne, when none of the trees in the great forest of Norwood, near London, had begun to be cut down, that a very rich gentleman and lady lived there: their name was Lawley.

"They had a fine old house and large garden, with a wall all round it, and the woods were so close upon this garden, that some of the high trees spread their branches over the top of the wall.

"Now, this lady and gentleman were very proud and very grand, and despised all people poorer than themselves, and there were none whom they despised more than the gipsies, who lived in the forest all about.

"There was no place in all England then so full of gipsies as the forest of Norwood.

"Mr. and Mrs. Lawley had been married many years, and had no children; at length they had one son—they called him Edwy, and they felt they could not make too much of him, or dress him too fine.

"When he was just old enough to run about without help, he used to wear his trousers inlaid with the finest lace, with golden studs and laced robings; he had a plume of feathers in his cap, which was of velvet, with a button of gold to fasten it up in front under the feathers, so that whoever saw him with the servants who attended him, used to say, 'Whose child is that?'

"He was a pretty boy, too, and, when his first sorrow came, was still too young to have learned any of the proud ways of his father and mother.

"No one is so rich as to be above the reach of trouble, therefore pride and self-sufficiency are never suitable to the state of man.

"Trouble was long in coming to Mr. and Mrs. Lawley, but when it came it was only the more terrible.

"One day, when the proud parents had been absent some hours on a visit to a friend a few miles distant, Edwy was nowhere to be found on their return—his

waiting-maid was gone, and had taken away his finest clothes; at least, these were also missing.

"The poor father and mother were almost beside themselves with grief, and all the gentlemen and magistrates about rose up together to find the child, and discover those who had stolen him, but all in vain; of course, the gipsies were suspected and well examined, but nothing could be made of it; nor was it ever made out in what way the little boy was got off; but got off he had been by the gipsies, and carried away to a country among hills, on the borders of the two shires of Worcester and Hereford."

"Did not I know it?" cried Henry, as he stopped to turn over a leaf; "I knew it from the first that the gipsies had him."

"In that country," he continued, as he read on, "there is a valley where two watercourses meet deep in a bottom; where there are many trees, and many bushes, and much broken irregular ground, where also there are rocks, and caves, and holes in these rocks, and every possible convenience for the haunt of wild people. To this place the gipsies carried the little boy, and there they kept him, all the following winter, warm in a hut with some of their own children.

"They had stripped him of his velvet, and feathers, and lace, and gold clasps, and studs, and clothed him in rags, and daubed his fair skin with mud; but they fed him well; and after a little while he seemed to be unconscious of any change.

"Now, the part which comes next of this true and wonderful history has nothing to go upon but the confused and imperfect recollections of a little child.

"The story nowhere tells the age of Edwy when he was stolen, but he had been lost to his parents from the time that the leaves in the forest of Norwood were becoming sear and falling off, till the sweet spring was far advanced towards the summer.

"Probably the cunning gipsies had hoped that during the long months of winter the little child would quite forget the few words which he had learned to speak distinctly

in his father's house, or that he would forget also to call himself Edwy; or to cry, as he remembered that he often did, 'Oh, mamma, mamma! papa, papa! come to little Edwy.' The gipsies tried to teach him that his name was not Edwy, but Jack or Tom, or some such name; and to make him say mam and dad, and call himself the gipsy boy, born in a barn. But after he had learned all these words, whenever anything hurt or frightened him, he would cry again, 'Mamma! papa! come to Edwy.' The gipsies could not take him out, of course, whilst there was danger of his breaking out in this way; and after he came to that hut in the valley, he did not remember ever going out with any of the people when they went their rounds of begging, and pilfering, and buying rags; telling fortunes meanwhile, as gipsies always do.

"When left behind, there were always two or three children, a great girl, an old woman, or a sick person, staying with him, until the day which set him free from his troubles. It was in the month of May. Who would not like to live like a gipsy in a wood, if all the year round was like that month of May? It was about noon, and Edwy, who had been up before the sun, to breakfast with those who were going out for their day's begging and stealing, had fallen asleep on a bed of dry leaves in the hut, as soon as most of the people were gone; one old woman, who was too lame to tramp, was left with him.

"He slept long, and when he awoke he sat up on his bed of leaves, and looked about him to see who was with him; he saw no one within the hut, and no one at the doorway.

"Little children have great dread of being alone. He listened to hear if there were any voices without, but he could hear nothing but the rush of a waterfall close by, and the distant cry of sheep and lambs. The next thing the little one remembered that he did, was to get up and go out of the door of the hut. The hut was built of rude rafters and wattles in the front of a cave or hole in a rock; it was down low in the glen at the edge of the brook, a little below the waterfall. When the child came out, he looked

anxiously for somebody, and was more and more frightened when he could see no creature of his own kind amid all the green leaves, and all along the water's edge above and below.

"Where was the old woman all this time? who can say? but perhaps not far off; perhaps she might have been deaf, and, though near, did not hear the noise made by the child when he came out of the hut.

"Edwy did not remember how long he stood by the brook; but this is certain that the longer he felt himself to be alone, the more frightened he became, and soon began to fancy terrible things. There was towards the top of the rock from which the waters fell a huge old yew-tree, or rather bush, which hung forward over the fall. It looked very black in comparison with the tender green of the fresh leaves of the neighbouring trees, and the white and glittering spray of the water. Edwy looked at it and fancied that it moved; his eye was deceived by the dancing motion of the water.

"Whilst he looked and looked, some great black bird came out from the midst of it uttering a harsh croaking noise. The little boy could bear no more; he turned away from the terrible bush and the terrible bird, and ran down the valley, leaving hut and all behind, and crying, as he always did when hurt or frightened, 'Papa! mamma! Oh, come, oh, come to Edwy!'

"He ran and ran, whilst his little bare feet were pierced with pebbles, and his legs torn with briars, until he came to where the valley became narrower, and where one might have thought the rocks and banks on each side had been cleft by the hand of a giant, so nicely would they have fitted could they have been brought together again. The brook ran along a pebble channel between these rocks and banks, and there was a rude path which went in a line with the brook; a path which was used only by the gipsies and a few poor cottagers, whose shortest way from the great road at the end of the valley to their own houses was by that solitary way.

"As Edwy ran, he still cried, 'Mamma! mamma! papa! papa! Oh, come, oh, come to

Edwy!'—and he kept up his cry from time to time as he found breath to utter it, till his young voice began to be returned in a sort of hollow murmur.

"When first he observed this, he was even more frightened than before; he stood and looked round, and then he turned with his back towards the hut, and ran and ran again, till he got deeper amongst the rocks. He stopped again, for the high black banks frightened him still more, and setting up his young voice he called again, and his call was the same as before.

"He had scarcely finished his cry, when a voice, from whence he knew not, seemed to answer him; it said, 'Come, come to Edwy;' it said it once, it said it twice, it said it a third time, but it seemed each time more distant.

"The child looked up, the child looked round, he could never describe what he felt; but in his great agitation he cried more loudly, 'Oh, papa! mamma! Come, come to poor Edwy!' It was an echo, the echo of the rocks which repeated the words of the child; and the more loudly he spoke, the more perfect was the echo; but he could catch only the few last words; this time he only heard, 'Poor, poor Edwy!' Edwy had not lost all recollection of some far distant happy home, and of some kind parents far away; and now at that minute he believed that what the echo said came from them, and that they were calling to him, and saying, 'Poor, poor Edwy!' But where were those who called to him? alas! he could not tell. Were they in the holes in the rocks?—his mind was then used to the notion of people living in caves—or were they at the top of the rocks? or were they up high in the blue bright heavens?

"It would have been a sorrowful sight to behold that pretty boy looking up at the rocks and the sky, and down among the reeds, and sedges, and alders by the side of the brook, for some persons to whom the voice might belong; in hopes of seeing that same lady he sometimes dreamed of, and that kind gentleman he used to call papa; and to see how the tears gushed from his eyes when he could not find anyone.

"After a while he called again, and called louder still. 'Come, come,' was his cry

again, 'Edwy is lost! lost! lost!' Echo repeated the last words as before, 'Lost! lost! lost!' and now the voice sounded from behind him, for he had moved round a corner of a rock.

"The child heard the voice behind, and turned and ran that way; and stopped and called again, and then heard it the other way; and next he shrieked from fear, and echo returned the shriek once more, and thrice, finishing off with broken sounds, which to Edwy's ears appeared as if somebody a long way off was mocking him.

"His terror was now at its highest; indeed he could never remember what he did next, or when he turned to go down the valley; but turn he did, after having run back many paces.

"His steps, however, were guided by One whose eye was never off him, even his kind and heavenly Father; and on he went, neither heeding stones nor briars; every step taking him nearer to the mouth of the glen, and the entrance on the great high road.

"And who had been driving along that road in a fine carriage with four horses?"

"Who?" cried Henry Fairchild, turning over another leaf; "who, but his own papa?—but I must go on."

"Mr. and Mrs. Lawley had given up all hopes of finding their little boy near Norwood, and they had set out in their coach to go all over the country in search of him. They had come the day before to a town near to the place where the gipsies had kept Edwy all the winter, and there they had made many inquiries, particularly about any gipsies who might be in the habit of haunting that country: but people there were afraid of the gipsies, and did not like to say anything which might bring them into trouble with them. The gipsies never did much mischief in the way of stealing near their own huts, and were always civil when civilly treated.

"The poor father and mother, therefore, could get no information there; and the next morning they had come on across the country, and along the road into which the

gipsies' valley opened.

"Wherever these unhappy parents saw a wild country, full of woods, and where the ground was rough and broken, they thought, if possible, more than ever of their lost child; and at those times Mrs. Lawley always began to weep—indeed, she had done little else since she had missed her boy. The travellers first came in sight of the gipsies' valley, and the vast sweep of woods on each side of it, just as the horses had dragged the coach to the top of a very high hill or bank over which the road went; and then also those in the coach saw before them a very steep descent, so steep that it was thought right to put the drag upon the wheels.

"Mr. Lawley proposed that they should get out and walk down the hill. Mrs. Lawley consented; the coach stopped, everyone got down from it, and Mr. Lawley walked first, followed closely by his servant William; whilst Mrs. Lawley came on afterwards, leaning on the arm of her favourite little maid Barbara. The poor parents, when their grief pressed most heavily on them, were easier with other people than with each other.

"'Oh, Barbara!' said Mrs. Lawley, when the others were gone forward; 'when I remember the pretty ways of my boy, and think of his lovely face and gentle temper, and of the way in which I lost him, my heart is ready to break; and I often remember, with shame and sorrow, the pride in which I indulged, before it pleased God to bring this dreadful affliction upon me.'

"The little maid who walked by her wept too; but she said:

"'Oh, dear mistress! if God would give us but the grace to trust in Him, our grief would soon be at an end. I wish we could trust in Him, for He can and will do everything for us to make us happy.'

"'Ah, Barbara!' said the lady; and she could add no more—she went on in silence.

"Mr. Lawley walked on before with the servant. He, too, was thinking of his boy, and his eye ranged over the wild scene on the right hand of the road. He saw a raven

rise from the wood—he heard its croaking noise—it was perhaps the same black bird that had frightened Edwy.

"William remarked to his master that there was a sound of falling water, and said there were sure to be brooks running in the valley. Mr. Lawley was, however, too sad to talk to his servant; he could only say, 'I don't doubt it,' and then they both walked on in silence.

"They came to the bottom of the valley even before the carriage got there. They found that the brook came out upon the road in that place, and that the road was carried over it by a little stone bridge.

"Mr. Lawley stopped upon the bridge; he leaned on the low wall, and looked upon the dark mouth of the glen. William stood a little behind him.

"William was young; his hearing and all his senses were very quick. As he stood there, he thought he heard a voice; but the rattling of the coach-wheels over the stony road prevented his hearing it distinctly. He heard the cry again; but the coach was coming nearer, and making it still more difficult for him to catch the sound.

"His master was surprised to see him vault over the low parapet of the bridge the next moment, and run up the narrow path which led up the glen.

"It was the voice of Edwy, and the answering echo, which William had heard. He had got at just a sufficient distance from the sound of the coach-wheels at the moment when the echo had returned poor little Edwy's wildest shriek.

"The sound was fearful, broken, and not natural; but William was not easily put out; he looked back to his master, and his look was such that Mr. Lawley immediately left the bridge to follow him, though hardly knowing why.

"They both went on up the glen, the man being many yards before the master. Another cry and another answering echo again reached the ear of William, proceeding as from before him. The young man again looked at his master and ran on. The last cry had been heard by Mr. Lawley, who immediately began to step with

increasing quickness after his servant, though, as the valley turned and turned among the rocks, he soon lost sight of him.

"Mr. Lawley was by this time come into the very place where the echo had most astonished Edwy, because each reverberation which it had made seemed to sound from opposite sides; and here he heard the cry again, and heard it distinctly. It was the voice of a child first, crying, 'No! no! no! Papa! mamma! Oh, come! Oh, come!'—and then a fearful shriek or laugh of some wild woman's voice.

"Mr. Lawley rushed on, winding swiftly between the rocks, whilst various voices, in various tones, which were all repeated in strange confusion by the echoes, rang in his ears; but amid all these sounds he thought only of that one plaintive cry, 'Papa! mamma! Oh, come! Oh, come!' Suddenly he came out to where he saw his servant again, and with him an old woman, who looked like a witch. She had the hand of a little ragged child, to which she held firmly, though the baby, for such almost he was, struggled hard to get free, crying, 'Papa! mamma! Oh, come! Oh, come!'

"William was arguing with the woman, and he had got the other hand of the child.

"Mr. Lawley rushed on, trembling with hope, trembling with fear—could this boy be his Edwy? William had entered his service since he had lost his child; he could not therefore know him; nor could he himself be sure—so strange, so altered, did the baby look.

"But Edwy knew his own father in a moment; he could not run to meet him, for he was tightly held by the gipsy, but he cried:

"'Oh, papa! papa is come to Edwy!'

"The old woman knew Mr. Lawley, and saw that the child knew him. She had been trying to persuade William that the boy was her grandchild; but it was all up with her now; she let the child's hand go, and whilst he was flying to his father's arms, she disappeared into some well-known hole or hollow in the neighbouring rocks.

"Who can pretend to describe the feelings of the father when he felt the arms of his

long-lost boy clinging round his neck, and his little heart beating against his own? or who could say what the mother felt when she saw her husband come out from the mouth of the valley, bearing in his arms the little ragged child? Could it be her own—her Edwy? She could hardly be sure of her happiness till the boy held out his arms to her, and cried, 'Mamma! mamma!'"

"Could it be her own—her Edwy? She could hardly be sure of her happiness."—Page 202.

"This story is too short," said Henry; "I wish it had been twice as long; I want to hear more of that little boy and of the gipsies."

"It is getting very hot," said Emily, when they had done talking; "let us go into the house, and we will not come out again until it is cool. I hope we shall not be naughty to-day, Henry, but do what papa and mamma will think right."

"Come, then," replied Henry. And they went back to the house and spent the rest of the morning in their play-room: and I am sure that they were very happy in a quiet way, for Henry was making a grotto of moss and shells, fixed on a board with paste; and Emily was just beginning to make a little hermit to be in the grotto, till they both changed their minds a little, and turned the grotto into a gipsy's hut, and instead of a hermit an old woman was made to stand at the door.

"Oh Papa! Mamma! Come to Edwy!"

Further Story of a Holiday

"She will get amongst the shrubs," said Emily

The evening was very cool and pleasant, when Emily and Henry went out to play. Mary Bush had given Henry a young magpie; she had taught it to say a few words, to the great delight of the children. It could say, "Good morning!" "How do you do?" "Oh, pretty Mag!" "Mag's a hungry." "Give Mag her dinner." "A bit of meat for poor Mag." To be sure the bird's words did not come out very clearly. But it was quite

enough, as Henry said, if he understood them.

Mag had a large wicker cage, which generally hung up on a nail in the kitchen; but her master, being very fond of her company, used often to take the cage down, with the bird in it, and take it into his play-room or his hut, or hang it upon the bough of a tree before the parlour window, that Mag might enjoy the fresh air. Sometimes, too, Henry let the bird out, that she might enjoy herself a little, for as the feathers of one of her wings were cut close, she could not fly; and she was very tame, and never having known liberty, she was as fond of her cage, when she was tired or hungry, as some old ladies are of their parlours.

"Let us take Mag with us out of doors," said Henry; and the cage was taken down and carried out between the two children, whilst Mag kept chattering all the way, and was, if anything, more pert and brisk than spoiled magpies generally are. They first went to the hut, and set the cage on the bench, whilst Henry and Emily busied themselves in putting a few things to rights about the place, which had been set wrong by a hard shower which had happened the night before. There were a few fallen leaves which had blown into the hut from some laurels growing on the outside; and Henry said:

"I do hate laurels; for they are always untidy, and scattering about their yellow leaves when all the trees about them are in their best order."

Whilst the children were going in and out after these leaves, to pick them up and throw them out of sight, Mag kept hopping from one perch to another, wriggling her tail, twisting her head to one side and another, and crying, "Oh, pretty Mag!" "Mag's a hungry," in a voice more like scolding than anything else.

"What now, mistress?" said Henry.

"She is not in the best possible temper," replied Emily.

"She wants to be out," answered Henry; "she does not like to be shut up."

"But," said Emily, "it would be dangerous to let her out here, so far from the house,

and amongst the trees."

Henry was in a humour common not only to small but great boys on occasions. He chose, just then, to think himself wiser than his sister, and, without another word, he opened the cage door, and out walked Mag, with the air of a person who had gained a point, and despised those who had given way to her.

And first she strutted round the inside of the hut, crying, "Oh, pretty Mag!" with a vast deal of importance, and then she walked out at the entrance, trailing her tail after her, like a lady in a silk gown.

"She will get amongst the shrubs," said Emily; "and how shall we get her out of them?"

"Never fear," returned Henry; "you know that she cannot fly."

One would have thought that the bird knew what they said, for whilst they spoke, she laid her head on one side, as if turning an ear—stood still a minute, and then paraded onwards—I say paraded, for if she had been walking at a coronation she could not have taken more state upon herself.

"Let us see which way she goes," said Henry.

And the two children walked after her; Emily bringing the light wicker cage with her.

Mag knew as well that they were after her as if she had been what the country people call a Christian, meaning a human creature. And she walked on, not taking to the shrubs, which grew thick about the hut, but along a bit of grass-plot, at the farthest end of which was a row of laurels and other evergreens. These trees hid the back yard of the house from the garden and small portion of land near to it, which Mr. Fairchild had given up to flowering shrubs and ornamental trees.

Behind these evergreens was a row of palings, and as Mag drew near to these laurels, Henry ran forward, crying:

"She will get through the palings, if we don't mind, and into the yard."

Mag let him come near to her, and then gave a long hop, standing still till he was only at arm's length from her. Then she gave a second hop, alighting under a branch of laurel; and when Henry rushed forward to catch her there, she made another spring, and was hidden among the leaves.

"Stop! stop!" cried Henry, "stop there, Emily, where you are; and I will run round and drive her back; and you must be ready to catch her." And away he ran to the nearest wicket, and was on the other side of the laurels and the paling, in the fold-yard, not a minute afterwards.

Emily heard him making a noise on the opposite side of the shrubs, as if he thought Mag was between him and his sister, among the laurels; and he called also to her, bidding her to be ready when the bird appeared.

Emily watched and watched, but no bird came out; and not a minute afterwards she heard Henry cry:

"O there! there! I see her going across the yard towards the barn! Come round! leave the cage! come quickly, Emily!"

She obeyed the call in an instant; down went the cage on the grass. She was at the wicket and in the fold-yard in a minute, and there she saw Mag pacing along the yard, in her coronation step, towards the barn, being, to all appearance, in no manner of hurry, and seeming to be quite unconscious of the near neighbourhood of her master and his sister.

"Hush, hush!" whispered Henry; "don't make a noise." And the two children trod softly and slowly towards the side of the yard where the bird was, as if they had been treading on eggs or groping through the dark and afraid of a post at every step. They thought that Maggy was not conscious of their approach; though Emily did not quite like the cunning way in which the bird laid her head on every side, as if the better to hear the sound.

Once again Henry was at arm's length from her, and had even extended himself as far forward as he could, and stretched out his hand to catch her, when his foot slipped, and down he came at full length in the dust. At the same instant Maggy made a hop, and turned to look back at Henry from the very lowest edge of the thatch of the barn, or rather of a place where the roof of the barn was extended downwards over a low wood-house.

Henry was up in a minute, not heeding the thick brown powder with which his face and hands and pinafore were covered; and Emily had scarcely come up to the place where he had fallen, before he was endeavouring to catch at the bird on the low ledge to which she had hopped.

But Maggy had no mind to be thus caught; she had gotten her liberty, and she was disposed to keep it a little longer; and when she saw the hand near her, she made another hop, and appeared higher up on the slanting thatch.

After some little talking over the matter, Henry proposed getting up the thatch; and how he managed to persuade Emily to do the same, or whether she did not want much persuasion, is not known; but this is very certain, that they both soon climbed upon this thatch, having found a ladder in the yard, which John used in some of his work, and having set it against the wood-house, and from the top of the wood-house made their way to the roof of the barn.

"Now we shall have her!" cried Henry, as he made his way on his hands and knees along the sloping thatch; and again his hand was stretched out to seize the bird, when she made another upward hop, and was as far off as she had been when she sat on the edge of the thatch and he lay in the dust.

"What a tiresome creature!" cried Henry.

"I am sure she does it on purpose," said Emily, "only to vex us; and there she sits looking down upon us, and crying, 'Oh, pretty Mag!' I knew, when she was in the hut, that she was in a wicked humour."

"Let us sit down here a little," said Henry, "and seem not to be thinking about her. Let us seem to be looking another way; perhaps she will then come near to us of her own accord."

"We will try," replied Emily. And the children seated themselves quietly on the thatch; and if they had not been uneasy about the magpie, would never have been better pleased with their seats.

But it might seem that Mag did not choose to be thus passed over, and not to have her friends busy and troubled about her; for as soon as Emily and Henry had planned not to notice her, and to seem to look another way, she began to cry in her usual croaking voice, "How do you do, sir? Good morning, sir! Oh, pretty Mag! Mag's hungry!"

"What a tiresome bird it is," said Henry, impatiently. And Emily began to coax and invite her to come near, holding out her hand as if she had something in it.

Mag was not a bit behind in returning Emily's empty compliments, for she hopped towards her, and very nearly within reach of her hand, still crying, "Good morning! Oh, pretty Mag!"

Emily now thought she had her, and was putting out her arm to catch her when the bird turned swiftly round, and hopping up the thatch, took her station on the very point of the roof.

Henry lost no time, but, turning on his hands and knees, crept up the slope of the roof, and was followed by his sister, who was quite as active as himself. They were not long in reaching the place where Mag was perched; but, before they could catch hold of her, she had walked down very leisurely on the other side, and hopped off into the field. Henry was after her, half sliding down the thatch, but Emily more wisely chose to go back by the wood-house as she had come, and in a very few minutes afterwards they were in the field. Henry had never lost sight of his bird since he had found her in the fold-yard; but he was none the nearer to catching her.

She waited at a respectful distance till Emily came up; and then, between walking and hopping, made her way across the field, and perched herself on the upper bar of a gate.

The children were now in serious trouble, because they were not suffered, when alone, to go beyond the bounds of the next field.

Beyond the second field was the lane, into which they had followed the pig on that unfortunate day in which they had been left under the care of John; and if the magpie should go over into this lane, what could they do? They did wish to obey their parents this day.

In order, however, to prevent this misfortune, Henry did the very worst thing he possibly could; he began to run and cry, "Mag! Mag!" with a raised voice, whilst the bird, as if resolved to torment him, hopped forward across the other field, perched herself on the stile, and, as he drew near, flew right down from thence into the lane.

When Emily came up, there was poor Henry sitting across the stile in the greatest possible trouble, being more than half tempted to break bounds, and yet feeling that he ought not to do it. And there was Mag, walking up and down, pecking and picking, and wagging her tail; and now and then looking with one cunning eye towards her little master, as much as to say, "Why don't you come after me? Here I am."

It is often by very small things that the strength of our resolutions to be good is tested.

Henry was hardly tried, yet strength was given him to resist the temptation; and by Emily's persuasion he was induced to wait a little before he ventured to go down into the lane. And Mag seemed as well content to wait, or rather more so than he was.

The children were in hopes that some one might come by who would help them in their distress. And they had not waited a minute before they could see two children

just coming in sight, at the very farthest point where the lane was visible from the stile.

These children were—a very ragged boy, without shoes, stockings, or hat, about nine or ten years of age, and a little girl, worse clothed, if possible, than himself, for her petticoat was all in fringes, showing her little legs above the ankle; they both looked miserably thin. Mag waited saucily till these had come nearly opposite the stile, and then only stepped aside; whilst Henry, calling to the boy, told him his trouble, pointing out the bird to him, and asking his help.

The boy looked towards the bird, and then, turning cheerfully to Henry, he said:

"Never fear, master, but I'll catch her for you;" and, dropping the hand of the little girl, he pulled off his ragged jacket, and crept towards Maggy.

Cunning as the creature was, she did not understand that she had a deeper hand to deal with than that of her young master. She therefore let the boy come as near to her as she had let Henry do many times during the chase, and in this way she gave him the opportunity he was seeking of throwing his jacket over her, and seizing her as she lay under it.

"He has her!" cried Emily and Henry at once, and the ragged little girl set up quite a shriek of joy.

"Yes, I has her," added the boy; "but she pulls desperate hard, and would bite me, if she could, through the cloth. Suppose I wraps her in it, and carries her home for you, for we must not let her loose again. Hark! how she skirls, master and miss!"

Henry and Emily approved of this scheme; the boy kept Maggy in the folds of the old jacket, and Emily helped the little girl to get over the stile; and the four children walked quickly towards the house. When they had crossed the two fields, Emily ran forward to fetch the cage, and the boy managed to get Mag into it without getting his fingers bit; after which Henry and Emily had leisure to ask the boy who he was, for they had never seen him before.

He told them that his name was Edward, and that his little sister was called Jane, and that they had no father or mother, but lived with their grandmother in a cottage on the common, just by Sir Charles Noble's park; and that their grandmother was very bad, and could not work, but lay sick in bed; and that they were all half-starved, and he was come out to beg—"Miss and Master," added the boy, "for we could not starve, nor see granny dying of hunger."

What a sad thing it is that stories of this kind are often told to deceive people, and get money out of them on false pretences! But Emily and Henry saw how thin and ragged these poor children were, and Emily thought of a plan of giving them a supper without taking what they gave from her father. So she proposed her scheme to Henry, and he said:

"That will just do; I did not think of it."

Emily then said to the children:

"Sit down here; we will take naughty Mag into the house, and come back to you;" and she and Henry were off in a minute. They ran in to Betty, and asked her what she had for their supper. Betty was shelling peas in the kitchen, and she told them that she was going to cook them for her master and mistress; and she said:

"I suppose, Miss Emily, you and your brother will sup with your parents to-night."

"But, if you please, we would rather have our supper now," said Emily.

"That we would," cried Henry; "so please, Betty, do give us something now."

"Then you must not have a second supper, Master Henry," said Betty, "if I give you something to eat now."

"Very well, Betty," replied both children at once; "but we would like it now, instead of waiting later for papa and mamma."

So Betty gave each a currant turnover or puff, and a slice of bread and some milk.

"May we take our supper out of doors, Betty?" said Emily.

"If you please," replied Betty; and she put the turnovers, as she called the puffs, into a little basket, with two large slices of bread and two cans of milk, and put the basket into Emily's hands.

"You have made beautiful ears and eyes to the turnovers, Betty," said Henry; "I always call them pigs when they are made in that way."

"And they taste much better, don't they, Master Henry?" asked Betty.

"To be sure they do," answered Henry, and away he walked after his sister.

So Emily and Henry gave their supper to the little children; and they were very much pleased with them, because, when they had eaten part of the bread and drunk the milk, they asked leave to take what was left home to their grandmother.

"Emily and Henry gave their supper to the little children."—Page 215.

Emily fetched them a piece of paper to wrap the puffs in, and then she and Henry watched them back into the lane, and afterwards walked quietly home, to be ready when their parents and Lucy should come back.

"The magpie on the stile."—Page 209.

The Happy Evening

Preparing the peas for supper

Henry had just finished washing his hands and combing his hair, and Emily had only that minute changed her pinafore, when the distant sound of the carriage was heard.

Betty was preparing the peas for supper, and John laid the cloth, when Henry and Emily ran out upon the lawn.

What a happy moment was that when the carriage stopped at the gate, and John opened the door and let down the step, and Lucy jumped out and ran to meet Emily and Henry. One would have thought that the children had been parted a year instead of a day.

The chaise went on with Mrs. Goodriche, and all the family came into the parlour.

"How nice the peas smell!" said Mr. Fairchild; "and I really want my supper."

"So do I, papa," said Lucy.

"And so do I," whispered Henry to Emily.

"But you must not say so," returned Emily.

"No, no," said Henry firmly; "I know that; we agreed about that before."

John came in with a very large basket, well packed, out of the chaise; Lucy was running to begin to unpack it, when Mr. Fairchild said:

"Let us have our supper first, dear child, and the basket shall be our dessert."

"Very well, papa," answered Lucy, "so we will;" and her young heart was filled with joy on account of the things that were in it, though she did not know of one thing for herself.

John came in with a nice smoking leg of lamb; and he then went out and brought some peas and young potatoes, to which he added a hot current and raspberry pie. Everybody sat down; Mr. Fairchild said grace, and began to help those at the table from the lamb, whilst Mrs. Fairchild served the peas. Lucy being helped, Mr. Fairchild said to Emily:

"Are you very hungry, my dear? Shall I give you much or little?"

"None, thank you, papa," was the answer.

"A few peas, my dear, then?" said her mother.

"None, thank you, mamma," replied Emily.

Mrs. Fairchild offered potatoes or tart.

"None, thank you, mamma," was Emily's answer to every offer.

Mrs. Fairchild seemed rather surprised, but was still more so when Henry, who was always provided with a good appetite, gave exactly the same answers which Emily

had done. She supposed, however, that the children had supped already, and said:

"What did Betty give you, my dears?"

Emily told her mother, but coloured very much while speaking, and there was something their parents thought rather odd in both their faces.

"What is it?" said Mr. Fairchild; "there is some little mystery here; let us hear it. What has happened? I trust that you have not been playing in the sun and made yourselves unwell."

"No, papa," replied Henry, "we are not"—he was going to say hungry, but that would not have been true. "We are not—we do not—we do not wish for any supper; do we, Emily?"

"What!" said Mr. Fairchild, with a smile, and yet at the same time a little alarmed—"what! did you and Emily talk the affair over before, and agree together that you would not have any supper with us?"

"We did, papa," replied Henry bravely, "and when the things are taken away we will tell you all about it."

"I do beg," said Mr. Fairchild, "that you will tell us all about it, even before we begin to eat; for there is your mamma looking anxious; Emily looking ready to cry, and Lucy, too, with her. What is this great secret?"

"I will tell you, papa," said Henry, getting up, and walking round to his father's knee. "I opened the door, papa," he said; "it was not Emily's fault, she told me not to do it—and then she came out—and she went to the top of the barn, and we went after her—and she chattered to us—and then she went, and then we came after her—and then she sat on the gate, and went on and came to the stile, talking all the way, almost as if she had been making game of us. Did she not, Emily?"

"Really, my dear boy," replied Mr. Fairchild, forcing himself to smile, "you must try to make your story plainer, or we shall be more in the dark at the end of it than we

were at the beginning. All I now understand is, that you and Emily climbed over the roof of the barn after somebody. Well, and I hope you got no fall in this strange exploit?"

"You are not angry, papa?" said Lucy. "Henry has often been on the thatch of the barn and never got hurt."

"I did not say I was angry, my dear," replied Mr. Fairchild. "I might say that it was neither safe nor prudent for little girls to scramble up such places, and I might say, do not try these things again; but if no harm was intended, why was I to be angry? But I must hear a more straightforward story than Henry has told me; he has not given me the name of the person who went chattering before him and Emily; was it a fairy, a little spiteful fairy, Emily? Did you let her out of a box, as the princess did in the fairytale? And what has all this to do with your refusing your suppers? Come, Emily, let us hear your account of this affair."

Poor Emily had been sadly put out by all that had passed between Henry and her father; and she, therefore, looked very red when she began her story. But she got courage as she went on, and told it all, just as it is related in the last chapter; only she passed slightly over the wilfulness which her brother had shown in opening the cage door. She finished by saying, that as they had given away their suppers, they had agreed together not to eat another; "and we settled not to tell our reasons till the things were taken away."

"Yes, papa," added Henry, "we did."

"And this is all, my Emily?" said Mrs. Fairchild. "I will own that I was fearful there was something much amiss;" and she put out her hand to her little girl and boy, and having kissed them, she added, "Now, my children, sit down and eat."

"And we will all sup together," cried Lucy, with her brightest, happiest smile, "and afterwards open the basket."

"And I will do more than give each of you a slice of lamb," said Mr. Fairchild. "I am

going to-morrow to pay a visit to Mr. Darwell; I have put this visit off too long; and I will call on Mr. Burke, Sir Charles Noble's steward, and inquire about these poor people. What is the name of the old woman, my dears?"

"Edward, papa," cried Henry.

"Edward," said Emily, "is the boy's name, not the old woman's—we did not ask her name."

"I thought that was likely," answered Mr. Fairchild, smiling. "Well, Henry, I will tell you what must be done—you must be ready at six o'clock to-morrow morning, and we will walk, whilst it is cool, to Mr. Burke's, and get our breakfast there, and you must help us to find these poor people."

"Oh, papa!" said Henry: he could not say another word for joy.

After supper, and when everything but the candles was cleared from the table, the basket was set on it, and Mrs. Fairchild began to unpack it. First she took out a number of parcels of rice, and sugar, and pepper, and mustard, and such things as children do not care to see. These were put aside, and then came a smooth long parcel, which she opened; it contained a piece of very nice muslin to make Lucy and Emily best frocks.

There was no harm in the little girls being very pleased at the sight of this; they had been taught to be thankful for every good and useful thing provided for them. These, too, were put aside; and next came a larger parcel, tied up in a paper with care, and the name of "Lucy, from Mrs. Goodriche," written upon it. It was handed to Lucy; she did not expect it, and her hands quite shook while she untied the string. It contained a beautiful doll, the size of Emily's famous doll; and I could not say which of the two little sisters was most delighted. The two largest parcels were at the bottom of the basket, and came last; one was directed with a pencil by Lucy to Emily, and the other to Henry; and when these were opened it was found out that Lucy had spent all her own money to make these parcels richer. Each contained a

beautiful book with many pictures; and in Emily's parcel were a pair of scissors for doll's work, and needles and cotton, and lots of bright penny ribbon, and a bundle of ends of bright chintz for dolls' frocks. They were the very things that would please Emily most, and, as she said, would help so nicely to dress Lucy's doll.

Henry, besides his book, had a large rough knife, a ball of string, an awl, a little nail-passer, a paper of tacks, and some other little things which happened to be just what he wanted most of all things in the world, for he was always making things in wood.

Well, that was a happy evening indeed; it had been a happy day, only Mag had given some trouble; but, as Emily said, "Even Mag's mischief had turned out for some good, because the poor little children had got a supper by it."

The next day was almost, if not quite, as pleasant as the day before. Henry was out with his father; and Lucy and Emily had all the day given to them for dressing the new doll and settling her name; so they called her Amelia, after Mrs. Howard.

Breakfast at Mr. Burke's

A sturdy boy of four, roaring and blubbering

We will leave Lucy and Emily making their doll's clothes, and go with Mr. Fairchild and Henry.

They were off by six o'clock in the morning for the Park. Sir Charles Noble's place was about two miles from Mr. Fairchild's house, but Mr. Burke, the steward, lived as much as half a mile nearer, on Mr. Fairchild's side, so that Henry had not two miles to walk, for his father was to leave him at Mr. Burke's, whilst he went on to pay his visit to Mr. Darwell.

The first part of their walk lay along a lane, deeply shaded on one side by a very deep dark wood—it was Blackwood.

Henry saw the chimneys of the old house just rising above the trees; they were built

of brick, and looked as if several of them had been twisted round each other, as the threads of thick twine are twisted; they looked quite black, and parts of them had fallen.

Mr. Fairchild and Henry next crossed the corner of a common, where they saw several huts built of clay, with one brick chimney each, and very ragged thatch; and going a little farther, they saw Mr. Burke's house before them. It was a large farmhouse, with a square court before it, and behind it a quantity of buildings and many ricks. Mr. Burke was the steward of the estate, and he was also a farmer, and he was reckoned to be a rich man; but he and his wife were very plain sort of people, and though they had got up in the world, they carried with them all their old-fashioned ways.

They had eight children; the eldest was in his sixteenth year, the youngest between two and three. There were four boys and four girls, and they had come in turns; first a boy, and then a girl, and so on. The three elder boys and the three elder girls went to boarding-schools; but it was holiday time, and they were all at home.

There was no sign about the old people themselves of being rich, excepting that they had both grown very stout; but they were hearty and cheerful.

Mr. Burke spied Mr. Fairchild before he got to the house, and called to welcome him over a hedge, saying:

"You have done right to take the cool of the morning; and you and the little gentleman there, I dare say, are ready for your breakfasts. Go on, Mr. Fairchild, and I will be with you before you get to the house."

Mr. Fairchild and Henry crossed the fold-yard, and coming into the yard, which was surrounded by a low wall, with a paling at the top of it, they saw Mrs. Burke standing on the kitchen steps, and feeding an immense quantity of poultry of all sorts and kinds. She called to welcome her visitors; but though she spoke in a high key, it was impossible to hear a word she said for the noise made by the geese,

ducks, hens, turkeys, and guinea-fowl—all crowding forward for their food. Besides which, there was a huge dog, chained to a kennel, which set up a tremendous barking; and, before he could be stopped, was joined by other dogs of divers sorts and sizes, which came running into the yard, setting up their throats all in different keys. They did not, however, attempt to do more than bark and yelp at Henry and his father.

"Come in, come in, Mr. Fairchild," said Mrs. Burke, when they could get near to her through the crowd of living things; "come in, the tea is brewing; and you must be very thirsty." And she took up an end of her white apron and wiped her brow, remarking that it was wonderful fine weather for the corn.

Mr. Fairchild and Henry followed Mrs. Burke through an immense kitchen into a parlour beyond, which was nothing in size compared to the kitchen; and there was a long table set out for breakfast.

The table was covered with good things; a large pasty, which had been cut; a ham, from which many a good slice had already been taken; a pot of jam, another of honey; brown and white loaves; cream and butter and fruit; and the tea, too, was brewing, and smelt deliciously.

Mr. Burke followed them in almost immediately, and shook Mr. Fairchild by the hand; complimenting Henry by laying his large rough hand on his head, and saying:

"You are ready for your breakfast, I doubt not, little master;" adding, "Come, mistress, tap your barrel. But where are the youngsters?" He had hardly spoken, when a tall girl, very smartly dressed, though with her hair in papers, looked in at the door, and ran off again when she saw Mr. Fairchild.

Her father called after her:

"Judy, I say, why don't you come in?" But Miss Judy was gone to take the papers out of her hair.

The next who appeared was little Miss Jane, the mother's pet, because she was the

youngest. She came squalling in to tell her mother that Dick had scratched her, though she could not show the scratch; and there was no peace until she was set on a high chair by her mother, and supplied with a piece of sugared bread-and-butter.

A great sturdy boy in petticoats, of about four years old, followed little Miss Jane, roaring and blubbering because Jane had pinched him in return for the scratch; but Mrs. Burke managed to settle him also with a piece of ham, which he ate without bread—fat and all. Dicky was presently followed into the room by the three elder boys, James, William, and Tom. Being admonished by their father, they gave Mr. Fairchild something between a bow and a nod. James's compliment might have been called a bow; William's was half one and half the other; and Tom's was nothing more than a nod. These boys were soon seated, and began to fill their plates from every dish near to them.

Mrs. Burke asked James if he knew where his sisters were; and Tom answered:

"Why, at the glass to be sure, taking the papers out of their hair."

"What's that you say, Tom?" was heard at that instant from someone coming into the parlour. It was Miss Judy, and she was followed by Miss Mary and Miss Elizabeth.

These three paid their compliments to Mr. Fairchild somewhat more properly than their brothers had done; and in a very few minutes all the family were seated, and all the young ones engaged with their breakfasts.

It was Mr. Fairchild's custom always, when he had business to do, to take the first opportunity of forwarding it: so he did not lose this opportunity, but told his reasons for begging a breakfast that morning from Mrs. Burke.

Mr. Burke entered kindly into what his neighbour said, and had no difficulty, though the surname was not known, in finding out who the grandmother of Edward and Jane was.

He told Mr. Fairchild that she bore a good character—had suffered many afflictions—and, if she were ill, must be in great need. It was then settled that as he

was going in his little gig that morning to the park, Mr. Fairchild should go with him; that they should go round over the common to see the old woman, who did not live very near to the farm, and that Henry should be left under Mrs. Burke's care, as the gig would only carry two persons.

When Mr. Burke said the gig would only hold two, James looked up from his plate, and said:

"I only wish that it would break down the very first time you and mother get into it."

"Thank you, Jem, for your good wishes," said Mr. Burke.

"For shame, Jem!" cried Miss Judy.

"I don't mean that I wish you and mother to be hurt," answered the youth; "but the gig is not fit for such a one as you to go in. I declare I am ashamed of it every time you come in sight of our playground in it; the boys have so much to say about it."

"Well, well, Jem!" said Miss Judy.

"Well, well, Jem!" repeated the youth; "it is always 'Well, well!' or 'Oh fie, Jem!' but you know, Judy, that you told me that your governess herself said that father ought to have a new carriage."

"I don't deny that, Jem," said Judy; "Miss Killigrew knows that father could afford a genteel carriage, and she thinks that he ought to get one for the respectability of the family."

"Who cares what Miss Killigrew thinks?" asked Tom.

"I do," replied Judy; "Miss Killigrew is a very genteel, elegant woman, and knows what's proper; and, as she says, has the good of the family at heart."

"Nonsense!" replied James; "the good of the family! you mean her own good, and her own respectability. She would like to see a fine carriage at her door, to make her look genteel; how can you be bamboozled with such stuff, Judy?"

Mr. Burke seemed to sit uneasily whilst his children were going on in this way. He

was thinking how all this would appear before Mr. Fairchild—that is, he was listening for the moment with Mr. Fairchild's ears.

When we keep low company we are apt to listen with their ears; and when we get into good company we do the same: we think how this will sound, and that will sound to them, and we are shocked for them, at things which at another time we should not heed; this is one way in which we are hurt by bad company, and improved by good.

Mr. Burke had never thought his children so ill-bred as when he heard them, that morning, with Mr. Fairchild's ears; and as he was afraid of making things worse by checking them, he invited him to walk out with him, after he saw that he had done his breakfast, to look at a famous field of corn near the house.

When this had been visited the gig was ready, and they set out, leaving Henry at the farm; and it was very good for Henry to be left, for he had an opportunity of seeing more that morning than he had ever yet seen of the sad effects of young people being left to take their own way.

The Unruly Family

They had a game at marbles

After Mr. Fairchild was gone out with Mr. Burke, the young people, who still sat round the table, all began to speak and make a noise at once. The two youngest were crying for sugar, or ham, or more butter. Tom was screaming every moment, "I am going to the river a-fishing—who comes with me?" looking at the same time daringly at his mother, and expecting her to say, "No, Tom; you know that is forbidden;" for the river was very dangerous for anglers, and Mr. Burke had given his orders that his boys should never go down to it unless he was with them.

James and Judy were squabbling sharply and loudly about Miss Killigrew and her gentility; William, in a quieter way, and with a quiet face, was, from time to time,

giving his sister Mary's hair a violent pull, causing her to scream and look about her for her tormenter each time; and Elizabeth was balancing a spoon on the edge of her cup, and letting it fall with a clatter every moment. Children never mind noise—indeed, they rather like it; and, if the truth must be told, Henry was beginning to think that it would not be unpleasant if his father would let him and his sisters have their own ways, as these children of Mr. Burke seemed to have, at least on holidays and after lesson hours.

When Miss Jane's mouth was well filled with jam, and Dick's with fat meat, Tom's voice was heard above the rest; he was still crying, "I am going a-fishing; who will come with me?" his large eyes being fixed on his mother, as if to provoke her to speak.

"You are not going to do any such thing, Tom," she at length said; "I shall not allow it."

Tom looked as if he would have said, "How can you help it, mother?" but he had not time to say it, had he wished; for Miss Judy, who had a great notion of managing her brothers, took him up, and said:

"I wonder at you, Tom. How often have you been told that you are not to go down to fish in the river?"

"Pray, miss, who made you my governess? If it's only to vex you, I will go to the river—if I don't fish I will bathe. Will that please you better?"

Henry Fairchild could not make out exactly what was said next, because three or four people spoke at once in answer to Tom's last words, and as all of them spoke as loud as they could in order to be heard, as always happens in these cases, no two words could be made out clearly. But Henry perceived that Tom gave word for word to his sisters, and was, as he would himself have said, "quite even with them." After a little while, James, at the whisper of his mother, cried, "Nonsense, nonsense! no more of this;" and taking Tom by the arm, lugged him out of the room by main

force; whilst the youngster struggled and tugged and caught at everything as he was forced along, the noise continuing till the two brothers were fairly out of the house.

"The noise continued till the two brothers were fairly out of the house."—Page 230.

Mrs. Burke then turned to Henry; and thinking, perhaps, that some excuse for her boy's behaviour was necessary, she said:

"It is all play, Master Fairchild. Tom is a good boy, but he loves a little harmless mischief; he has no more notion of going down to the river than I have."

"La, mother," said Miss Judy, "that is what you always say, though you know the contrary; Tom is the very rudest boy in the whole country, and known to be so."

"Come with me, Master Fairchild," said William, in a low voice to Henry, "come with me. Now Judy is got on her hobby-horse, she will take a long ride."

"What is my hobby-horse, Master William?" said Judy sharply.

"Abusing your brothers, Miss Judy," replied William.

She set up her lip and turned away, as if she did not think it worth while to answer him, for he was younger than herself; but the next sister took up the battle, and said something so sharp and tart, that even William, the quietest of the family, gave her a very rude and cutting answer. Henry did not understand what he said, but he was not sorry when Mrs. Burke told him that he had better go out with William and see what was to be seen.

William led Henry right through the kitchen and court into the fold-yard: it was a very large yard, surrounded on three sides by buildings, stables, and store-houses, and cattle-sheds and stalls. In the midst of it was a quantity of manure, all wet and sloppy, and upon the very top of this heap stood that charming boy, Master Tom, with his shoes and stockings all covered with mire.

On one side of the yard stood James, talking to a boy in a labourer's frock. These last were very busy with their own talk, and paid no heed to Tom, who kept calling to

them.

"You said," he cried, "that I could not get here—and here I am, do you see, safe and sound?"

"And I do not care how long you stay there," at length answered the eldest brother; "we should be free from one plague for the time at least."

"That time, then, shall not be long," answered Tom, "for I am coming."

"Stop him! stop him!" cried James. "Here, Will—and you, Hodge," speaking to the young carter, "have at him, he shan't come out so soon as he wishes;" and giving a whoop and a shout, the three boys, James, William, and Hodge, set to to drive Tom back again whenever he attempted to get out of the heap of mire upon the dry ground.

There were three against one, and Tom had the disadvantage of very slippery footing, so that he was constantly driven back at every attempt, and so very roughly too, that he was thrown down more than once; but he fell on soft ground, and got no harm beyond being covered with mire from head to foot.

The whole yard rang with the shouts and screams of the boys; and this might have lasted much longer if an old labouring servant had not come into the yard, and insisted that there was enough of it, driving Hodge away, and crying shame on his young masters. When Tom was let loose, he walked away into the house, as Henry supposed, to get himself washed; and James and William, being very hot, called Henry to go with them across the field into the barn, in one corner of which they had a litter of puppies. They were a long time in this barn, for after they had looked at the puppies they had a game at marbles, and Henry was much amused.

William Burke was generally the quietest of the family, and almost all strangers liked him best; but he had his particular tempers, and as those tempers were never kept under by his parents, when they broke out they were very bad. James did something in the game which he did not think fair, so he got up from the ground

where they were sitting or kneeling to play, kicked the marbles from him, told his brother that he was cheating, in so many plain words, and was walking quietly away, when James followed him, and seized his arm to pull him back.

William resisted, and then the brothers began to wrestle; and from wrestling half playfully, they went on to wrestle in earnest. One gave the other a chance blow, and the other returned an intended one, and then they fought in good earnest, and did not stop till William had got a bloody nose; and perhaps they might not have stopped then, if Henry Fairchild had not begun to cry, running in between them, and begging them not to hurt each other any more.

"Poor child!" cried James, as he drew back from William, "don't you know that we were only in play? Did you never see two boys playing before?"

"Not in that way," replied Henry.

"That is because you have no brother," answered James. "It is a sad thing for a boy not to have a brother."

They all then left the barn, and William went to wash his nose at the pump.

Whilst he was doing this, James turned over an empty trough which lay in the shade of one of the buildings in the fold-yard, and he and Henry sat down upon it; William soon came down to them. He had washed away the blood, and he looked so sulky, that anyone might have seen that he would have opened out the quarrel again with James had not Henry Fairchild been present; for, though he did not care for the little boy, yet he did not wish that he should give him a bad name to his father.

Henry Fairchild was learning the best lesson he had ever had in his life amongst the unruly children of Mr. Burke; but this lesson was not to be learned only by his ears and eyes; it would not have been enough for him to have seen Tom soused in the mire, or William with his bloody nose; his very bones were to suffer in the acquirement of it, and he was to get such a fright as he had never known before.

But before the second part of his adventures that morning is related, it will be as

well to say, in this place, that Mr. Fairchild was taken first by Mr. Burke to the poor widow's cottage, where he found her almost crippled with rheumatism. She had parted with much of her furniture and clothes to feed the poor children, but was gentle and did not complain.

From the cottage Mr. Burke drove Mr. Fairchild to the park, and there Mr. Fairchild had an opportunity of speaking of the poor grandmother and the little children to Mr. and Mrs. Darwell.

Mr. Darwell said that if the cottage required repair, Mr. Burke must look after it, and then speak to him, as the affair was not his, as he was only Sir Charles Noble's tenant.

Mrs. Darwell seemed to Mr. Fairchild to be a very fine lady, and one who did not trouble herself about the concerns of the poor; but there was one in the room who heard every word which Mr. Fairchild said, and heard it attentively.

This was little Miss Darwell. She was seated on a sofa, with a piece of delicate work in her hand; she was dressed in the most costly manner, and she looked as fair and almost as quiet as a waxen doll.

Who can guess what was going on in her mind whilst she was listening to the history of the poor grandmother and her little ones?

Miss Darwell, in one way, was as much indulged as Mr. Burke's children, but of course she was not allowed to be rude and vulgar; therefore, if her manners were better than those of the little Burkes, it was only what might be expected; but, happily for her, she had been provided with a truly pious and otherwise a very excellent governess, a widow lady, of the name of Colvin; but Mrs. Colvin seldom appeared in the drawing-room.

Mr. Darwell was proud of his little girl; he thought her very pretty and very elegant, and he wanted to show her off before Mr. Fairchild, who he knew had some little girls of his own; so before Mr. Fairchild took leave, he called her to him, and said:

"Ellen, my dear, speak to this gentleman, and tell him that you should be glad to see his daughters, the Misses Fairchild; they are about your age, and, as I am told, are such ladies as would please you to be acquainted with."

The little lady rose immediately, and came forward; she gave her hand to Mr. Fairchild, and turning to her father:

"May I," she said, "ask the Misses Fairchild to come to my feast upon my birthday?"

"You may, my love," was the answer.

"Then I will write a note," she said; and Mr. Fairchild saw that the pretty waxen doll could sparkle and blush, and look as happy as his own children often did.

She ran out of the room, and a minute afterwards came back with a neat little packet in her hand. There was more in it than a note, but she asked Mr. Fairchild to put it into his pocket, and not look at it.

Mr. Fairchild smiled and thanked her, and at that very moment other morning visitors were brought in, and took up the attention of Mr. and Mrs. Darwell.

Mr. Fairchild was rising, when the little girl, bending forward to him, said in a low voice:

"I heard what you said, sir, about those poor little children, and I will try to help them."

How pleasant was it to Mr. Fairchild to hear those words from that fair little lady! And he came away quite delighted with her, and pleased with Mr. Darwell.

He found Mr. Burke in his gig at the gates, with the horse's head turned towards home.

As they were driving back, Mr. Fairchild spoke of Miss Darwell, and said how very much he had been pleased with her.

Mr. Burke said that "she was a wonder of a child, considering how she was indulged, and that she seemed to have no greater pleasure than in doing good to the

poor, especially to the children." They then talked of the old woman.

Mr. Burke said he would, on his own responsibility, have the cottage put to rights. "It should have been done before," he added. "And I will see that she receives some help from the parish for the children; she has had a little for herself all along. And my wife shall send her some soup, and, may be, I could find something for Edward to do, if it be but to frighten away the birds from the crops; so let that matter trouble you no more, Mr. Fairchild."

Story of Henry's Adventure

Kind Mrs. Burke gave him a piece of bread and honey

Henry Fairchild sat with William and James Burke for some time under the shade of the building, and had the pleasure of hearing the two brothers sparring on each side of him, though they did not come to blows again. Whatever one said the other contradicted; if one said such a thing is, the other said, "I am sure it is not;" or, "There you go—that's just you." "Nonsense" was a favourite word of James's. "Nonsense, Will," was his constant answer to everything his brother proposed; and they used many words which Henry did not understand.

All this time Tom did not appear, and his brothers did not seem to think about him.

After a while William said:

"Let us go into the cornfield, and see what the men are about; this yard is very dull."

"No," said James, "let us show Master Fairchild the young bull."

"No! no!" cried Henry, "I do not want to see it."

Both the boys laughed outright at Henry's cry of "I do not want to see it;" and then they assured him that the creature was well tied up—he was in the cattle stall, just opposite to them, and could not hurt them; and they laughed again till Henry was ashamed, and said that he would go with them to look at him.

The cattle stall was a long, low, and narrow building, which ran one whole side of

the yard. At some seasons it was filled with cattle, each one having a separate stall, and being tied in it, but at this time there was no creature in it but this bull.

Now it must be told that, whilst the boys were in the barn, and just about the time in which James and William had been scuffling with each other and making much noise, Tom, who had not yet taken the trouble to wash himself, had got to the top of the cattle shed, and had been amusing himself by provoking the bull through an air-hole in the roof.

First he had thrown down on his head a quantity of house-leek which grew on the tiles, and then he had poked at him with a stick till the creature got furious and began to beat about him, and at length to set up a terrible bellowing.

Tom knew well that he should get into trouble if it was found out that he had been provoking the creature; so down he slipped, and was off in another direction in a few minutes.

The labourers were all in the field, and Henry and his companions were in the barn, so that no one heard distinctly the bellowing of the bull but the girl in the dairy, and she had been too long accustomed to the noises of a farm to give it a second thought. The animal, however, was so furious that he broke his fastenings, snapping the ropes, and coming out of the stall, and even trying to force the door of the shed; but in this he failed, as there was a wooden bar across it on the outside. After a little while he ceased to bellow, so no one was aware of the mischief which had been done, and no one suspected that the bull was loose.

James walked first to the door of the cattle shed, William came next, and afterwards Henry.

James did not find it easy to move the bar, so he called William to help him. The reason why it was hard to move was, that the head of the bull was against the door, and he was pressing it on the bar; the moment the bar was removed, the bull's head forced open the door, and there stood the sullen frowning creature in the very face of

poor Henry, with nothing between them but a few yards of the court. The other two boys were, by the sudden opening of the door, forced behind it, so that the bull only saw Henry; but Henry did not stay to look at his fiery eyes, or to observe the temper in which he lowered his terrible head to the ground and came forward.

"Run, run for your life!" cried William and James, from behind the door; and Henry did run, and the bull after him, bellowing and tearing up the ground before him; and he came on fast, but Henry had got the start of a few yards, and that start saved his life. Still he ran, the bull following after. Henry had not waited to consider which way he ran. He had taken his way in the direction of a lane which ran out of the yard; the gate was open—he flew through—the terrible beast was after him—he could hear his steps and his deep snortings and puffings; in another minute he would have reached Henry, and would probably have gored him to death, when all at once every dog about the farm, first called and then urged on by William and James, came barking and yelping in full cry on the heels of the bull.

The leader of these was a bulldog of the true breed, and though young, had all his teeth in their full strength. Behind him came dogs of every kind which is common in this country, and if they could do little else, they could bay and yelp, and thus puzzle and perplex the bull.

James and William, each with a stick in their hands, were behind them, urging them on, calling for help, and putting themselves to great danger for the sake of Henry. Tom was not there to see the mischief he had wrought.

Another moment, and the bull would have been up with Henry, when he found himself bitten in the flank by the sharp fangs of Fury meeting in his flesh. The animal instantly turned upon the dog; most horribly did he bellow, and poor Henry then indeed felt that his last moment was come.

The noises were becoming more dreadful every instant; the men came running from the fields, pouring into the lane from all sides: the women and girls from the house

were shrieking over the low wall from the bottom of the court, so that the noise might be heard a mile distant.

Henry Fairchild never looked back, but ran on as fast as he possibly could, till, after a little while, seeing a stile on his left hand, he sprang up to it, tumbled over in his haste, fell headlong on the new-shorn grass, and would have gotten no hurt whatever, had not his nose and his upper lip made too free with a good-sized stone. Henry's nose and lip being softer than the stone, they of course had the worst of it in the encounter.

A very few minutes afterwards, but before the labourers had got the bull back into its place, which was no easy matter, one of the men, running from a distant field towards the noise, found poor Henry, took him up far more easily than he would have taken up a bag of meal, and carried him, all bloody as he was, to the mistress, by a short cut through the garden.

Henry's nose had bled, and was still bleeding, when the man brought him to the house; but no one even thought of him till the fierce bull was safe within four walls. But it had been a dangerous affair, as the men said, "to get that job done;" nor was it done till both Fury and the bull were covered with foam and blood.

When everything was quiet in and about the yard, Mrs. Burke began to look up, not only her own children, but all the careless young people about.

"Where is Tom?" was the mother's first cry. Dick and Jane had made her know that they were not far off, by the noise they were both making.

"Tom is quite safe," replied someone.

"And Master Fairchild?" said Mrs. Burke.

Every one then ran different ways to look for Henry, and when he was found, all covered in blood, in the kitchen, Mrs. Burke was, as she said, ready to faint away. Everybody, however, was glad when they found no harm was done to the child, beyond a bloody nose and a lip swelled to a monstrous size. Kind Mrs. Burke herself

took him up to her boys' room, where she washed him and made him dress himself in a complete suit of Tom's, engaging to get his own things washed and cleaned for him in a few hours.

She then brought him down into the parlour, set him on the sofa, gave him a piece of bread and honey, and begged him not to stir from thence till his father returned; nor had Henry any wish to disobey her.

Henry was hardly seated on the couch with his bread and honey in his hand, when first one and then another of the children came in: the last who came was James, lugging in Tom.

Now, it is very certain that Tom stood even in more need of a scouring and clean clothes than Henry had done; for he had not used water nor changed his clothes since he had been rolled by his brothers in the mud in the yard. This mud had dried upon him, and no one who did not expect to see him could possibly have known him. He was lugged by main force into the parlour, though he kicked and struggled, and held on upon everything within his reach. He came in as he had gone out; but when he was fairly in, he became quite still, and stood sulking.

"I'll tell you what, mother," said James, "you may thank Tom for all the mischief—and he knows it."

"Knows what?"

"That it was through him the bull got loose, and that poor Fury is nearly killed."

"I am sure it was not," answered Tom.

"I say it was," replied James; and then all the brothers and sisters began to speak at once.

Judy. "Just like you, Tom."

Mary. "And see what a condition he is in."

William. "You know Hodge saw you, Tom, on the top of the shed."

Tom. "I am sure he did not."

Elizabeth. "What a dirty creature you are, Tom; and how you smell of the stable!"

Jane. "Mother! mother! I want some bread and honey, like Master Fairchild."

Dick. "I want a sop in the pan, mother—mayn't I have a sop?"

In the midst of all this noise and confusion, in walked Mr. Fairchild and Mr. Burke. The men in the yard had told them of what had happened; and it had been made plain to Mr. Burke that Tom had been at the bottom of the mischief.

Mr. Fairchild hastened in all anxiety to his poor boy; and was full of thankfulness to God for having saved him from the dreadful danger which had threatened him; and Mr. Burke began to speak to his son Tom with more severity than he often used. He even called for a cane, and said he would give it him soundly, and at that minute too; but Mrs. Burke stepped in and begged him off; and as she stood between him and his father he slunk away, and kept out of his sight as long as Henry and Mr. Fairchild stayed.

If Tom never came within sight of his father all the rest of that day, Henry never once went out of the reach of his father's eye.

After dinner and tea, Henry was again dressed in his own clothes, which Mrs. Burke had got washed and cleaned for him, and in the cool of the evening he walked quietly home with his father.

"Oh, papa!" said Henry, when they came again under the shade of Blackwood, "I do not now wish to have my own way, as I did this morning, I am now quite sure that it does not make people happy to have it."

"Then, my boy," replied Mr. Fairchild, "you have learned a very good lesson to-day, and I trust that you will never forget it."

The Story in Emily's Book. Part I.

Lucy and Emily had now each a doll

The little books brought by Lucy were not even looked at until the evening came which was to be given up to reading the first of them. Henry had begged that his book might be read last, because he said that he should be sure to like it best; so Emily's was to afford the amusement for the first evening.

Mr. Fairchild gave notice in the morning of his being able to give up that evening to this pleasure; not that he wished to hear the story, but that he meant to be of the party, and the root-house in the wood was the place chosen.

Lucy and Emily had now each a doll to take, and there was some bustle to get them ready after lessons.

Henry took his knife and some little bits of wood to cut and carve whilst the reading was going on; Mrs. Fairchild took her needlework; and there was a basket containing nice white cakes of bread made for the purpose, a little fruit, a bottle of milk, and a cup. The little ones, by turns, were to carry this basket between them. Mr. Fairchild took a book to please himself; and at four o'clock they set out.

When they all got to the hut they were soon all settled. There were seats in the hut; Henry took the lowest of them. Mrs. Fairchild took out her work; Mr. Fairchild stretched himself on the grass, within sight of his family. Emily and Lucy were to read by turns, and Lucy was to begin. She laid her pretty doll across her lap, and thus she began:

The Story in Emily's Book

"On the borders of Switzerland, towards the north, is a range of hills, of various heights, called the Hartsfells, or, in English, the Hills of the Deer. These hills are not very high for that country, though in England they would be called mountains. In winter they were indeed covered with snow, but in summer all this snow disappeared, being gradually melted, and coming down in beautiful cascades from the heights into the valleys, and so passing away to one or other of the many lakes which were in the neighbourhood.

"The tops of some of the Hartsfells were crowned with ragged rocks, which looked, at a distance, like old towers and walls and battlements; and the sides of these more rocky hills were steep and stony and difficult. Others of these hills sloped gently towards the plain below, and were covered with a fine green sward in the summer—so fine and soft, indeed, that the little children from the villages in the valleys used to climb up to them in order to have the pleasure of rolling down them.

"These greener hills were also adorned with large and beautiful trees under which the shepherds sat when they drove their flocks up on the mountain pastures, called in that country the Alps, to fatten on the short fine grass and sweet herbs, which grew there in the summer-time.

"Then the flowers—who can count the numbers and varieties of the flowers which grew on those hills, and which budded and bloomed through all the lovely months of spring, of summer, and of autumn? Sometimes the shepherds, as they sat in the shade watching their sheep, would play sweet tunes on their pipes and flutes, for a shepherd who could not use a flute was thought little of in those hills. It was sweet to hear those pipes and flutes from a little distance, when all was quiet among the hills, excepting the ever restless and ever dancing waters. There were many villages among the hills, each village having a valley to itself; but there is only one of these of which this story speaks.

"It was called Hartsberg, or the Town of the Deer, and was situated in one of the fairest valleys of the Hartsfells. The valley was accounted to be the fairest, because there was the finest cascade belonging to those hills rushing and roaring at the very farthest point of the valley; and the groves, too, on each side of the valley were very grand and old.

"The village itself was built in the Swiss fashion, chiefly of wood, with roofs of wooden tiles, called shingles; and many of them had covered galleries round the first floor. The only house much better than the others was the Protestant pastor's, though

this was not much more than a large cottage, but it stood in a very neat garden.

"There were a few, but a very few, houses separate from this village itself, built on the sides of the hills; and those belonged to peasants, or small farmers.

"In the summer-time strangers sometimes came from a distance to look at the famous waterfall, and to gather such scarce flowers as they could find on the hills. It was a good thing for Heister Kamp, the widow who kept the little inn in the village, when these strangers came, for it not only put money into her pocket, but gave her something to talk of. She was the greatest gossip in the valley, and, like all gossips, the most curious person also, for nothing could pass but she must meddle and make with it; and it was very seldom that things were the better for her meddling.

"Most of the inhabitants of the village were Protestants, but there were a few Roman Catholics, and these had a priest, an elderly man, who was a great friend of Heister Kamp, and might often be seen in her kitchen, talking over with her the affairs of the village. He was called Father St. Goar, and he had a small chapel, and a little bit of a house attached to it. His chapel was less than the Protestant church, but it looked far more grand within, for there was an altar dressed with artificial flowers, and burnished brass candlesticks, and over it waxen figures of the Virgin Mary and her Child, in very gaudy though tarnished dresses.

"And now, having described the place, and some of the people, there is nothing to hinder the story from going on to something more amusing.

"On the right hand of the great waterfall, and perched high on the hill, was an old house standing in a very lovely and fruitful garden; the garden faced the south, and was sheltered from the north and east winds by a grove of ancient trees.

"The garden abounded with fruit and flowers and vegetables, and there were also many bee-hives; behind the house were several sheds and other buildings, and a pen for sheep.

"This house was the property of a family which had resided there longer than the

history of the village could tell. The name was Stolberg, and the family, though they had never been rich, had never sought help from others, and were highly respected by all who knew them.

"At the time of this history the household consisted of the venerable mother, Monique Stolberg, her son Martin, a widower, and the three children of Martin; Ella, Jacques, and Margot.

"Ella was not yet fourteen; she was a tall girl of her age, and had been brought up with the greatest care by her grandmother, though made to put her hand to everything required in her station. Ella was spoken of as the best-behaved, most modest, and altogether the finest and fairest of all the girls in the valley.

"Heister Kamp said that she was as proud and lofty as the eagle of the hills. But Ella was not proud; she was only modest and retiring, and said little to strangers.

"Jacques was some years younger than Ella; he loved his parents and sisters, and would do anything for them in his power; but he was hot and hasty, especially to those he did not love.

"Margot was still a little plump, smiling, chattering, child, almost a baby in her ways; but everyone loved her, for she was as a pet lamb, under the eye of the shepherd.

"Monique had received her, before she could walk, from her dying mother, and she had reared her with the tenderest care.

"As to Martin, more need not be said of him but that the wish to please God was ever present with him. He had been the best of sons; and, when his wife died, he was rewarded for his filial piety by the care which his mother took of his children and his house.

"Monique had had one other child besides Martin; a daughter, who had married and gone over the hills with her husband into France; but her marriage had proved unfortunate. She had resided at Vienne, in the south of France, and there she had left

one child, Meeta, a girl of about the age of Ella.

"When Martin heard of the death of his sister, and the forlorn state of the orphan, he set himself to go to Vienne; it was winter-time, and he rode to the place on a little mountain pony which he had; but he walked back nearly the whole way, having set Meeta, with her bundle, on the horse.

"Everyone at home was pleased with Meeta when she arrived, though Monique secretly wondered how she could be so merry when her parents were hardly cold in their graves. Meeta was not, however, cold-hearted, but she was thoughtless, and she enjoyed the change of scene, and was pleased with her newly-known relations and their manner of life.

"Little plump baby-like Margot was scarcely less formed in her mind than Meeta, though Meeta was as old as Ella: and of the two, Margot, as will be seen by-and-by, was more to be depended on than Meeta. Margot, when duly admonished on any point, could be prudent, but Meeta could not; yet Meeta was so merry, so obliging, and so good-humoured, that everyone in the cottage soon learned to love her; though some of them, and especially Monique, saw very clearly that there was much to be done to improve her and render her a steady character.

"She was quick, active, and ready to put her hand to assist in anything; but she had no perseverance; she got tired of every job before it was half done, and she could do nothing without talking about it. As to religious principles and religious feelings, her grandmother could not find out that she had any. She was so giddy that she could give no account of what she had been taught, though Monique gathered from her that her poor mother had said much to her upon religious subjects during her last short illness. The snow was still thick upon the hills when Martin Stolberg brought Meeta to Hartsberg; so that the young people were quite well acquainted with each other before the gentle breezes of spring began to loosen the bands of the frost, and dissolve the icicles which hung from the rocks on the sides of the waterfall.

"During that time poor Martin Stolberg was much tried by several heavy losses amongst his live stock: a fine cow and several sheep died, and when the poor man had replaced these, he said, with a sigh to his mother, that he must deny himself and his children everything which possibly could be spared, till better days came round again.

"His mother answered, with her usual quiet cheerfulness:

"'So be it, my son, and I doubt not but that all is right, for if everything went smooth in this world we should be apt to forget that we are strangers and pilgrims here, and that this is not our home.'

"When Monique told Ella what her father had said, the young girl got leave to go down to the village, and, when there, she went to Madame Eversil, the pastor's lady, and having told her of her father's difficulties, she asked her if she could point out any means by which she might get a little money to help in these difficulties.

"Monsieur Eversil, though a very simple man, was not so poor as many Swiss pastors are. He had no children, and his lady had had money. Madame wished to assist Ella, whom she much loved; but she rather hesitated before she said to her:

"'I have been accustomed to have my linen taken up to be washed and bleached upon the mountains every summer. The woman who did this for me is just gone out of the country; if you will do it, you will gain enough during the summer to make up for the loss of the cow. But are you not above such work as this, Ella? They say of you that you are proud—is this true?'

"The bright dark eyes of Ella filled with tears, and she looked down upon the polished floor of the parlour in which she was talking with Madame Eversil.

"'I know not, Madame,' she answered, 'whether I am proud or not, but I earnestly desire not to be so; and I thank you for your kind proposal, and as I am sure that I know my grandmother's mind, I accept it most joyfully.'

"It was then settled that Madame Eversil should send all the linen which had been

used during the winter, to be washed and whitened and scented with sweet herbs, up to the hill as soon as the snow was cleared from the lower Alps. And Ella went gaily back to tell her grandmother and Meeta what she had done.

"They were both pleased; Meeta loved the thoughts of any new employment, and Monique promised her advice and assistance. Even Jacques, when he came in, said he thought he might help also in drawing water and spreading the linen on the grass.

"'And I,' said little Margot, 'can gather the flowers to lay upon the things—can't I, Ella?'

"So this matter was settled, and everyone in the family was pleased. The winter at length passed away: the cascades flowed freely from the melting snow; the wind blew softly from the south; the grass looked of the brightest, freshest green; and every brake was gay with flowers, amongst which none were more beautiful or abundant than the rose-coloured primrose or the blue gentian. The sheep, which had been penned up during the winter, were drawn out on the fresh pastures, and strangers began to come to the valley to see the waterfall, near to which they climbed by the sheep-path, which ran just under the hedge of Martin Stolberg's garden. Even before May was over, Jacques, who was all day abroad on the hills watching his sheep, counted eight or nine parties, which came in carriages to the inn, and climbed the mountain on foot.

"Heister Kamp was quite set up by the honour of receiving so many noble persons in her house, and still more pleased in pocketing the silver she got from them.

"There was great benefit also to Father St. Goar from the coming of these strangers, for he never failed to drop in just about the time that the guests had finished their dinner, and was always invited to taste of any savoury dish which remained, to which Heister generally added a bottle of the ordinary wine of the country.

"Things were being carried on in this sort of way when, one morning in the beginning of June, Margot and Meeta and Jacques went higher up the hill towards

the waterfall to gather sweet herbs and flowers to strew upon the linen that was spread on the sward before the cottage door.

"Margot could not reach the roses which grew above her head, so she busied herself in plucking the wild thyme and other lowly flowers which grew on either side of the path, putting them into her little basket and calling out from one moment to another:

"'See, Jacques! see, see, Meeta! see how pretty!'

"But Meeta and Jacques were too busy to attend to her, for Meeta had climbed on a huge piece which had fallen from the rock, and was throwing wreaths of roses to Jacques, who was gathering them up; but at length it was impossible for them not to give some attention to the little one, she was calling to them with such impatience.

"'Come, Jacques! come, Meeta!' she cried, 'I have found such a pretty little green fishing-net, all spotted with moons; and it has got rings, pretty gold rings; and there are yellow fish in it.' And she quite stamped with eagerness.

"'What does she say?' cried Meeta; 'little magpie, what is it?'

"'A pretty little net,' replied Margot, 'and fish in it, and moons and rings. Oh, come, come!'

"'She has found something strange,' said Jacques; 'I hope nothing that will hurt her.' And down he came tumbling, in his own active way, straight to his little sister, being quickly followed by Meeta.

"Margot was holding up what she had found, crying:

"'Pretty, pretty, pretty!' for it was quite bright and sparkling in the sun.

"'It is a purse!' said Jacques.

"'A green silk purse,' added Meeta, 'with gold spangles and tassels, and gold rings, and it is full of louis d'ors; give it to me, Margot.'

"'No, no, no!' cried the little girl; 'no, it is for grandmother; I shall take it to her.'

"'It is a valuable purse,' said Jacques; 'somebody has lost it; now grandmother will

be rich! Let me see it, Margot; let me see what is in it.'

"'No, no, no!' cried the little one, clasping it in both her dimpled hands; 'you shall not have it! it is for grandmother.'

"'Only let me carry it to the door,' said Jacques, 'for fear you should drop anything out of it; and when you come to the door, I will put it into your own hands.'

"Jacques never said what was not true to Margot, and Margot knew it; she, therefore, was content to give the purse to him; and the three then set off to run home as fast as they could.

"They supposed that no one had seen them when they were talking about the purse, but they were mistaken; Father St. Goar was not far off, though hidden from them by a part of the rock which projected between them.

"He heard Margot cry and talk of having found a net, and golden fish in it; but when Meeta and Jacques came near to the child, he could hear no more, because they spoke lower than before. He had heard enough, however; and when he went back to the village, he told Heister Kamp what he had seen, and made her more curious than himself to find out what it could be, though she felt pretty sure that it must be a purse of gold.

"How astonished was Monique when little Margot put the purse in her lap, for she was sitting at work just within the door.

"Meeta would not let Margot tell her own story, but raised her voice so high that Martin himself from one side, and Ella from another, came to see what could have happened. They came in just in time to see Monique empty the purse, and count the golden pieces. There were as many as fifteen on the one side of the purse, and on the other was a ring with a precious stone in it, and four pieces of paper curiously stamped. Martin Stolberg saw at once that these pieces of paper were worth many times the value of the gold, for he or any man might have changed them for ten pounds each.

"'Son,' said Monique, 'Margot found this near the waterfall; it must have been lost by some of the visitors; it is a wonder that we have heard of no one coming to look after it. What can we do with it?'

"'Buy a cow, father,' said Jacques.

"Martin Stolberg shook his head.

"'It is not ours, Jacques,' he said, 'though we have found it; we must keep it honestly for the owner, should he ever come to claim it.'

"'Father,' said Jacques, 'I was not thinking, or I hope I should not have said those words.'

"'I know you spoke hastily, Jacques,' replied Martin; and then having given Margot a few little pieces of copper money as reward for her giving up the little net to her grandmother, he took his venerable parent by the hand, and led her into an inner room, where they settled what was to be done with the purse.

"Martin said that the children must all be seriously enjoined never to mention the subject, because many dishonest persons might, if they could get at the description of the purse and its contents, come forward to claim it, and thus it might be lost to the real owner.

"'But,' he added, 'lest I should be tempted to use any of the money for myself, I will take the purse down to-morrow to the pastor's, and leave it in his care. Where it is, however, must not be known even to the children, lest we should bring inconvenience upon him. In the meantime, dear mother, do you stow the treasure safely away, and charge the young ones not to mention what we have found to anyone.'

"Martin then left the house; and Monique, going up to the room where she slept, and where the great family chest was kept, called all her grandchildren, and letting them see where she put the purse, she charged them, one and all, not to speak one word to any person out of the house about the treasure which had been found.

"'Why must not we, grandmother?' said Margot.

"'Because,' replied Monique, 'if any thieves were to hear that we had got so much money in the house, they might come some time when your father was out, and break open the chest and steal it.'

"'And perhaps they might kill us,' replied Margot, trembling all over.

"'We must not speak of it, then,' said Ella, 'to anyone.'

"'Our best way,' remarked Jacques, 'will be not to mention it to each other. We will never speak of it.'

"'How can we help it?' said Meeta; 'I can never help talking of what I am thinking about.'

"'That is a mistake of yours, Meeta,' said Monique; 'you never talk of some things which happened at Vienne, which you think would be no credit to you.'

"'You mean about our being so very poor, and being forced to sell our clothes, grandmother? I don't think that I should go to talk of that to strangers.'

"'Then you can keep some things to yourself, Meeta,' said Monique; 'and we shall not excuse you if you are so imprudent as to let out this affair of the treasure we have found to anyone.'

"'Don't fear me, grandmother,' returned Meeta; 'nobody shall hear from me—but we must watch little Margot.'

"That same evening, Martin Stolberg carried the purse and all the contents down to the house of the good pastor. He gave as his reason for so doing, that, being himself somewhat pressed for money, he did not dare to trust himself with this treasure."

The Story in Emily's Book. Part II.

Going gaily down the hill

Lucy had read first, and when she had finished the half of the story, Mrs. Fairchild

proposed that they should take what was in the basket, before they went on to the second part.

Mr. Fairchild was called in, and Mrs. Fairchild served each person from the store.

"I am quite sure," said Emily, "that Monique Stolberg never made nicer cakes than these."

"Papa," said Lucy, "I cannot help thinking that your book is not half so pretty as ours. You don't know what a pleasant story we have been reading, and we have half of it left to read. Shall I tell it to you, papa?" she added; and springing up, she placed herself close to him, putting one arm round his neck, and in a few minutes she made him as well acquainted with Monique, and Martin, and Ella, and Meeta, and Jacques, and Margot, and Heister Kamp, and Father St. Goar, as she was herself; "and now, papa," she said, "will any of the children, do you think, betray the secret?"

"Yes," said Mr. Fairchild, smiling, "one of them will."

"And who will that be, papa?" said Emily.

"Not Jacques," replied Henry, though he was not asked; "I am sure it will not be Jacques."

"Wherefore, Henry?" said Mr. Fairchild.

"Because he is a boy," replied Henry, "and boys never tell secrets."

"And are never imprudent!" answered Mr. Fairchild, smiling; "that is something new to me; but in this case I do not think it will be Jacques who will tell this secret."

"Not Ella, papa?" asked Lucy.

"I am sure it will not be Ella," added Lucy; "it must be between Meeta and little Margot."

"Probably," said Mr. Fairchild; "and I have a notion which of the two it will be; and I shall whisper my suspicions to Henry; as he, being a boy, will be sure to keep my secret till the truth comes out of itself. Of course he might be trusted with a thing

much more important than this."

Mr. Fairchild then whispered either the name of Meeta or Margot to Henry; at any rate, he whispered a name beginning with an "M," and Henry looked not a little set up in having been thus chosen as his father's confidant.

When every one of the children were satisfied, they placed the cup and the fragments in the basket, and then they all settled themselves in readiness for the rest of the story.

"We must now turn, a little while, from the quiet, happy family in Martin Stolberg's cottage to Heister Kamp. What Father St. Goar had told her about Stolberg's children having found something curious near the waterfall had worked in her mind for above a week, for so long it was since Margot had found the purse; and she had watched for some of the children passing by her door every day since.

"On the Sunday morning they did indeed pass by to go to church, but their father and grandmother were with them; and she knew well enough that she should have no chance of any of them when the older and wiser people were present.

"The family came to church in the afternoon, but Heister was at chapel then.

"In the evening, however, she made up her mind to climb the hill as far as the cascade, hoping there to meet one or two of the children standing about the place.

"It was hot work for Heister to make her way up the hill so far, but what will not curious people do to satisfy their curiosity? And just then the village was particularly dull and quiet, as no stranger had happened to come for the last ten days, and many of the poor women had left their houses and gone up with their flocks to the châlets on the mountains.

"When Heister got near Stolberg's cottage she met Jacques. He was going down on an errand to the pastor's from his father. He made a bow, and would have passed, when Heister stopped him to ask after his grandmother's health. When she had got an answer to this inquiry, she asked him various other questions about the lambs, the

bees, and other matters belonging to the farm and garden; and then, with great seeming innocence, she said:

"'You were looking for some herbs the other day, were you not, by the waterfall, and your sister found a very rare one, did she not? I ask you because I have many a chance of parting with scarce plants, dried and put into paper, to the strangers who come into the house.'

"'I don't think,' answered Jacques, 'that little Margot would know a scarce plant if she found one.'

"'But she did find something very curious that day,' said Heister.

"'What day?' asked Jacques.

"'It might be ten days since,' said Heister.

"'Ten days?' repeated Jacques; 'what makes you remember ten days ago so particularly?'

"'Well, but was it not about ten days ago,' returned Heister, 'that she found something very curious in the grass, and called on you to come and look at it?'

"'There is scarce a day,' answered Jacques, 'in which she does not call me to come to her and see something she has met with more wonderful than ordinary. What was it she said when she called me that day you speak of? If you can tell me, why then I shall better know how to answer you.'

"'She spoke of having found a net with golden fish and moons,' replied Heister; 'what could she mean?'

"'It is difficult to know what she does mean sometimes,' said Jacques; 'for the dear little lamb talks so fast that we do not attend to half she says. But is she not a nice little creature, Madame Kamp, and a merry one too?'

"'Yes, to be sure,' replied Heister; 'but about the net and the fish—what could the little one mean?'

"'Who heard her talk of them?' asked Jacques. 'Ask those who heard her, madame. They ought to be able to tell you more about it. But I must wish you good evening, as I am in haste to go to the pastor's.'

"Heister saw that she could make nothing of Jacques, so she let him go, pretending that she was herself going no higher, but about to turn another way.

"As soon, however, as Jacques was out of sight, she came back into the path which ran at the bottom of the cottage garden, and there she saw little Margot seated on the bank under the hedge, with a nosegay in her hand.

"The little one was dressed in her clean Sunday clothes, in the fashion of the country, and she wore a full striped petticoat which Monique had spun of lamb's-wool, a white jacket with short sleeves like the body of a frock, and a flowered chintz apron. Her pretty hair was left to curl naturally, and no child could have had a fairer, softer, purer complexion.

"'Now,' thought Heister, 'I shall have it;' and she walked smilingly up to the child, and spoke fondly to her, asking her, 'where she got that pretty new apron?'

"Margot rose and made a curtsey."—Page 262.

"Margot rose, made a curtsey, as she had been taught, and said:

"'Grandmother made it, madame.'

"Heister praised her pretty face, her bright eyes, her nice curling hair; and then she asked her if she had any pretty flowers to give her.

"Margot immediately offered her nosegay, but she refused it, saying she did not want such flowers as those, but such curious ones as she sometimes found near the waterfall.

"'I have got none now,' answered Margot.

"'But you found a very curious one the other day, did you not, my pretty little damsel?' said Heister.

"'Yes, madame,' said Margot, brightening up; 'yes, madame, I did.'

"'Ay, I have it now,' thought Heister; and she patted the little one as she said, 'Was it not bright and shining like gold, and was there not something about it like moons?'

"'Oh, no, madame,' replied the child; 'it was some pretty blue flowers that come every year. Jacques said they are called gentians; but I call them fairies' eyes, for they are just the very colour I always fancy the fairy of the Hartsfell's eyes must be—they are so very blue.'

"'Well, well!' exclaimed Heister, hastily, 'I dare say they were very pretty; but did you not find something more curious on the mountains than flowers? What was it you found, that Monique praised you for finding, and told you you were a good child for giving it up to her?'

"'Oh! it was the wild strawberries,' cried Margot; 'the pretty mountain strawberries. Grandmother thanked me for bringing her home the strawberries, for she said she had not tasted them since she was a girl.'

"'Pshaw, child,' said Heister Kamp impatiently; 'it is not that I want to know. What was it you called a golden fish and moons?'

"'Moons!' repeated Margot, colouring up to her very brow, 'moons, madame?'

"'Ay, moons, child. What do you mean by moons?'

"Poor little Margot! she was sadly put to for an answer, for she remembered what her grandmother had told her about keeping the secret of the purse; and not being old enough to evade a direct reply, she burst into tears, taking up her apron to her face.

"'So you will not tell me what you call moons?' said Heister angrily; then, softening her tone, she added, 'Here, my pretty Margot, is a sou (or penny) for you, if you will tell me what you mean by moons and golden fish.' But seeing the child irresolute, she added, 'If you do not choose to tell, get out of my way, you little sulky thing.'

"Margot waited no more, but the next moment the prudent little girl was up the bank and in the cottage, where she found her grandmother alone, to whom she told her troubles. Monique kissed her, wiped away her tears, and, taking her on her knee, she made the little one's eyes once more beam forth with smiles."

"There," said Henry, "just as papa said—he knew it would be Meeta."

"Oh, Henry!" said Mrs. Fairchild, smiling, "how nicely you have kept papa's secret! You see you would not have done so well as little Margot did with Heister Kamp."

Henry made no answer, and Emily went on.

"Jacques had made up his mind never to allude to the affair of the treasure by a single word, so he kept his meeting with Heister to himself; and when you have read a little more, you will say how unlucky it was that he did so, or that Meeta was not present when Margot had been with her grandmother; but when you have read to the end, you will say it was all right as it was.

"In the evening of the next day, Ella, with the help of Monique and Meeta, finished the getting up of a portion of the fine linen of Madame Eversil. It was therefore placed neatly in a basket covered with a white cloth, and sprinkled over with the fairest and choicest of flowers which could be gathered; and then Ella, being neatly dressed, raised it on her head, and set off with it to the village.

"I wish we had a picture of Ella, just as she was that evening, going gaily down the hill with the basket so nicely balanced on her head, that she hardly ever put her hand to steady it, though she went skipping down the hill like the harts which in former times had given their name to the place.

"She was dressed much as her little sister had been the evening before, only that she wore a linen kerchief and a linen cap, and her dark hair was simply braided. She loved to go to the pastor's, and she loved to be in motion; so she was very happy.

"Her light basket travelled safely on her head, and nothing happened to disarrange it, excepting that one end of a long wreath of scarlet roses escaped from the inner part

of the basket, and hung down from thence by the side of the fair cheeks of the young girl.

"When Ella entered the little street, she saw no one till she came opposite the Lion d'Or, or Golden Lion, the house of Madame Kamp, and there she saw Heister, seated in the porch, knitting herself a petticoat of dyed wool in long stripes of various colours, with needles longer than her arm.

"Heister liked knitting—it is the most convenient work for one who loves talking; the fingers may go whilst the tongue is most busy.

"Ella would have gone on without noticing Madame Kamp, but Heister had no mind that she should.

"'Good evening, Ella Stolberg,' she cried, 'whither away in such haste?—but I know, to Madame Eversil's. Can't you stop a minute? I have a word to say to you.'

"Ella stopped, though not willingly.

"'You look very bright and fair this evening, Ella,' said the cunning woman; 'and that garland hanging from your basket would be an ornament to Saint Flora herself; whose fancy was that, my girl? But it is a shame, Ella, that such a girl as you should be employed in getting up other people's linen—you above all, when there is no manner of necessity for it. I am much mistaken,' she added, with a cunning look, 'if there are not more gold-fish in your father's net than ever found their way into mine.'

"Ella was a little startled at this speech, and felt herself getting redder than she wished. She suddenly caught at her basket, brought it down from her head, and said, 'What garland is it you mean, neighbour?' and she busied herself in arranging the flowers again.

"'Well, but the fish, Ella—the silver and golden fish in the net,' said Heister, 'what have you to say about them?'

"Ella placed the basket on her head as she replied gaily:

"'If there are gold and silver fish in plenty in the Hartsberg lakes, neighbour, it is but fair that they should sometimes be caught in nets. Fishes have no reason to guide them from danger; they are easily caught in nets. I must not, then, take example from them, else I shall, too, some day, perhaps, be caught. Jacques lays many a snare or nets for the birds of the mountains,' she added, as if to turn the conversation; 'and once Margot found a young one caught, but she cried so bitterly about it that we took it home and nursed it till it got well. Did you ever see our starling, neighbour?'

"'A pretty turn off!' said Heister; 'but you know that I mean the gold and silver fish to be louis-d'ors and francs, Ella. Has not your father now, girl, got more of these than he ever had in his life before?'

"'I know this,' replied Ella, calmly, 'that I do firmly believe that my father never was so short of money as he is now: and this reminds me I must not linger, as I promised Madame Eversil a portion of her linen to-day: so good-evening, madame.'

"Heister looked after Ella as she walked away, and muttered:

"'The saucy cunning girl! but I am not deceived; I can trust Father St. Goar better than any one of those Stolbergs.'

"About an hour before Ella had passed the Lion d'Or, a wild dark woman had come to the house to sell horn and wooden spoons. Heister had taken a few, and in return had given her a handful of broken victuals and a cup of wine; she had not carried these things away to eat and drink them, but had merely gone round the corner of the house, and sat herself down there in the dust. She was so near that she could hear all that had passed between Ella and Heister; above all, that Ella had said her father was decidedly short of money.

"Ella had hardly turned into the gate of the pastor's house when Meeta appeared, going along after her. Monique had forgotten to send by Ella a pot of honey which she meant as a present to the pastor; and Meeta had offered to carry it, saying that she would have great pleasure in the errand, and would return with Ella. Monique

gave permission; and Meeta appeared opposite to the Golden Lion not five minutes after Ella was gone.

"'A very good evening to you, Meeta,' cried Heister from the porch; 'whither away in such haste? Stop a bit, I beseech you, and give a few minutes of your company to a neighbour. And how are all at home on the hill? I have been telling Ella, your cousin Ella, that she looked like the saint of the May. But you, Meeta, why, you might be painted for our Lady herself—so fresh and blooming, with your bright eyes and ruddy cheeks. But Ella tells me that things go hard with poor good Martin Stolberg—that he is short of money; and I am sorry, for I hoped that he had met with some good luck lately, and I fear that what I heard is not true.'

"'What luck?' asked Meeta.

"'Someone told me,' said Heister, 'that the little one had found a purse.'

"'A purse?' repeated Meeta.

"'What is a net,' answered Heister, 'with gold fish in it but a purse with gold pieces inside?'

"'Where—where,' cried Meeta, 'could you have heard that? for grandmother was so very particular in making us promise not to mention it.'

"'Heard it!' repeated the cunning widow; 'why, is not everything known that is done in the valley?'

"'But how?' asked Meeta; 'yet I can guess: Margot has told you. I said I thought Margot would tell all about it. But do tell me, how came you to hear it?'

"'Oh! there are a thousand ways of getting at the truth,' replied Heister; 'for if anything does happen out of the very commonest way, is it not talked of in my house by those who come and go? But this thing is in everybody's mouth, and people don't scruple to say that there were a vast number of golden pieces in the purse—some say a hundred.'

"'Nay, nay,' replied Meeta, 'that is overdoing it; I really don't think there are more than fifteen.'

"'Well,' returned Heister, 'I don't want to know exactly how many there are—I am not curious; no one troubles herself less with other people's affairs than I do; but I am glad this good luck has come to Martin Stolberg, above all others in the valley.'

"'That is very kind of you,' replied Meeta, 'but I do not see what luck it is to him, for the money is not his, and he could not think of spending it: it is all put by in some safe place in the house.'

"'Very good, very right,' answered Heister. 'No, no! Martin could never have such a thought. But where in the world can you find a place in the house safe enough for so many pieces? I should doubt whether they could count as many together even at Madame Eversil's. So you say there are fifteen, pretty Meeta? and though no doubt they take but little house-room, yet I should be sorry to keep so many in my poor little cottage, for I know not where I could stow them safely. I suppose neighbour Monique keeps them in her blue cupboard near the kitchen-stove?—a very good and a very safe place, no doubt, for them.'

"'Oh, no,' cried Meeta, 'she has them in her chest above stairs, and my uncle keeps the key himself, and carries it about with him; but what am I doing here, lingering? Ella will have left the pastor's before I have reached there, if I stay with you, neighbour, any longer. So good-even,' she added, 'and pray don't say a word about where my Uncle Stolberg keeps the money, or else grandmother will think I have told you, and she will, perhaps, be angry with me.'

"'And who else did tell me but yourself, giddy one?' cried Heister Kamp, laughing. 'It was all guess with me, I promise you, till you had it all out. Ella and Jacques, and even little Margot, would not tell me a word about it; and I really began to think that Father St. Goar had mistaken what the little one had said, till you let the cat out of the bag. But you ought to make haste after Ella, so don't let me hinder you.' And she

arose and went laughing into the house, whilst Meeta hastened after her cousin.

"We cannot suppose that Meeta's reflections were very pleasant, for, as soon as she was left to herself, she felt how very imprudent she had been. She tried, however, to comfort herself with thinking that she had done no harm. 'For what can it signify,' she said to herself, 'if Heister does know the truth?' But she would take care not to mention at home what she had said to Madame Kamp; and in this Meeta found, to her cost, that she could keep a secret."

"There now!" cried Henry, as Emily was turning over a leaf, "papa was right; he told me who would betray the secret."

"We all guessed," said Lucy; "but, Emily, do go on."

"The gipsy, or zingara (as they call such people in Switzerland and Germany), for such she was, had heard every word which had passed between Madame Kamp and Meeta; and as the coast was quite clear, she put the remains of her broken victuals into her bag and skulked away, like a thief as she was; and nobody thought of her, nor saw her go.

"Three or four days passed quietly after the evening in which Meeta and Ella went to the village; but on the fourth morning a message came from Madame Eversil to Monique, to tell her that she had just heard of a party of persons of great consequence who were coming from a distance to dine at her house; she sent to beg her to come down immediately to help in getting the dinner, and, if she had no objection, to bring Ella with her to wait on the ladies and at table.

"Martin Stolberg had gone off early that morning to market, at the nearest town, three leagues off; Jacques had gone up on the higher pastures with the flocks; and when Monique and Ella went down to the pastor's, only Meeta and Margot were left at the cottage.

"Ella dressed herself in her Sunday clothes, and carried the basket, which her grandmother had packed, down the hill. Monique had filled the basket with

everything she thought might be useful—a bottle of cream, new-laid eggs, and fresh flowers. She bade Margot and Meeta be good girls, and keep close at home, when she parted from them, with a kiss to each; and the next minute she and Ella were going down the hill."

"I know what is coming next," cried Henry, as Emily turned over a leaf; "but do make haste, Emily."

"Nothing could be more still and quiet than the cottage and all about it seemed to be when Meeta and Margot were left in it; for nothing was heard, when the children were not talking, but the rushing of the waterfall, the humming of the bees, and the bleating of the distant flocks, and now and then the barking of a sheep-dog.

"Every cottager on those hills keeps a dog. Wolf was the name of Martin Stolberg's dog: Wolf was of the true shepherd's breed, and a most careful watch he kept both day and night; but he had gone that morning with Jacques to the Alps above the waterfall.

"Monique had told the two girls that they might have peas for dinner, so it was their first business to gather these peas, and bring them into the house. Margot then sat down to shell them, but she did not sit within the house, because of the litter she always made when she shelled peas; so she sat on a little plot of grass under a tall tree, on one side of the straight path which led from the garden-gate to the house-door. Meeta remained within, being busy in setting the kitchen in order before she sat down to her sewing; and thus they were both engaged, when Margot saw two people come up to the wicket. Margot was very shy, as children are who do not see many strangers, and without waiting to look again at these persons, she jumped up and hid herself behind the large trunk of a tree, peeping at the people who were walking on to the house. The first was a very tall large woman: she wore a petticoat, all patched with various colours, which hardly came down to her ankles; she had long black and gray hair, which hung loose over her shoulders; a man's hat, and a

cloak thrown back from the front, and hanging in jags and tatters behind. She came up the path with long steps like a man's, and was followed by a young man, perhaps her son, who seemed, by his ragged dirty dress, to be fit to bear her company.

"Meeta did not see these people till the large form of the woman darkened the gateway. She was placing some cups on the shelf, and had her back to the door; when she turned, she not only saw the woman, but the man peeping over her shoulder, and though she was frightened she tried not to appear to be so.

"'Mistress!' said the woman in a loud harsh voice, 'I am dying with thirst; can you give me anything to drink?' and as she said so, she walked in and sat herself on the first seat she could find. The man came in after her, and began looking curiously about him.

"'I have nothing but water or milk to offer you,' answered Meeta, whose face was become as white as the cloth she held in her hand.

"'It does not matter,' said the woman; 'we have other business here besides satisfying our thirst; it was you, was it not, that told the hostess of the inn below that your uncle found a purse of gold and put it by? The purse is ours, we lost it near this place; we are come to claim it.'

"'Yes,' said the man, advancing a step or two towards Meeta; 'it is ours, and we must have it.'

"'My uncle,' answered the trembling girl, 'is not at home; I cannot give you the purse.'

"'You can't?' replied the man; 'we will see to that, young mistress; we knew your uncle was out when we came here, else we had not come; but we heard you say that you could tell, as well as he could, where he put the purse; if you do not do it willingly, we will make you.'

"Meeta began to declare and profess most solemnly that she did not know where the keys were kept; indeed, she believed that her grandmother had taken them away in

her pocket.

"The fierce man used such language as Meeta had never heard before; and the woman, laying her heavy hand on her shoulder, gave her a terrible shake.

"'Tell us,' said she, 'where is the chest into which the purse was put, or I will throw you on the ground and trample you under my feet.'

"Meeta, in her excessive terror, uttered two or three fearful shrieks; and would, no doubt, have gone on shrieking, if the horrible people had not threatened to silence her voice for ever.

"Little Margot, from behind her tree, heard those cries; and it is marvellous how the wits of a little child are sometimes sharpened, in cases of great trial; she thought, and thought truly, that she could do Meeta no good by running to her, but that she might help her by flying, as fast as her young feet could carry her, to the village. It was down hill all the way, and it was all straight running, if she could get unseen into the path on the other side of the hedge. So she threw herself on her hands and feet, and crept on all fours to where the hedge was thinnest, and, neither minding tears nor scratches, the hardy child came tumbling out on the path on the side of the village, jumping up on her feet; and no little lapwing could have flown the path more swiftly than she did."

"Well done, Margot!" cried Henry; but Emily did not stop to answer him.

"Jacques, at the very time in which Margot had begun to run down the hill, was watching his flock on the side of a green and not very steep peak, scarcely a quarter of a mile, as a bird would fly, from the cottage, though, to drive his flock up to it, he had perhaps the greater part of a mile to go. On the top of this peak were a few dark pines which might be seen for miles. Jacques was seated quietly beneath the shade of one of these trees; his sheep were feeding about him, his dog apparently sleeping at his feet, and his eyes being occupied at one moment in taking a careful glance at his flocks, and again fixed on a small old book which he held in his hand. Nothing

could have been more quiet than was the mountain in that hour, nearly the hottest of the day; and how little did Jacques Stolberg imagine what was then going forward so near to him.

"Wolf had been supposed by his master to be asleep some minutes, when suddenly the creature uttered a short sleepy bark, and then, raising his head and pricking his ears, he remained a minute in the attitude of deep attention and anxious listening.

"'What is it, Wolf?' said Jacques: 'what is it, boy?'

"The dog drew his ears forward, every hair in his rough coat began to bristle itself; he sprang upon his four feet—he stood a moment.

"'What does he see?' cried Jacques, getting up also, and grasping his crooked staff; 'eh, Wolf, what is it?'

"The dog heeded not his master's voice. He had heard some sound as he lay with his ear to the ground; he had made out the quarter from which it came whilst he stood listening at Jacques' feet. He had judged that there was no time for delay; and the next moment he was bounding down the slope, straight as an arrow in its course. There Jacques saw him bounding and leaping over all impediments, reaching the bottom of a ravine, or dry watercourse, at the foot of a small hill, and again running with unabated speed up the opposite bank. Jacques thought he was going directly towards the cottage, for the young shepherd could see him all the way; but as if on second thoughts, the faithful creature left the cottage, when near to it, on the right, and passing over the brow of the hill, was soon out of sight in the direction of the village.

"Jacques knew not what to think, but he had little doubt that the dog was aware of something wrong; so the boy did not waver; his sheep were quiet, he was forced to trust that they should not stray if he left them a little while, and he hesitated not to follow Wolf; though he could not so speedily overcome the difficulties of the way as the dog had done.

"Whilst Margot was running to the village, Wolf running after Margot (for such he afterwards proved was his purpose), and Jacques after Wolf, the fierce man had frightened poor Meeta out of all the small discretion which she ever had at command; and she told him that she had seen her grandmother put the purse in the great chest above stairs, that she did not know whether her uncle had taken the key, though, perchance, little Margot might know, as she slept with her grandmother.

"She could not have done a more imprudent thing than mention Margot, for the woman immediately started, like one suddenly reminded of an oversight, at the mention of the child's name, and ran out instantly to seek her; at the same time the man drove Meeta before him up the ladder or stairs to where the great old chest which contained all the spare linen and other treasures of the family stood, and had stood almost as long as the house had been a house. There, without waiting the ceremony of looking for the key, he wrenched the chest open, pulling out every article which it contained, opening every bundle, and scattering everything on the floor, telling Meeta that, if he did not find the purse, she should either tell him where it was or suffer his severest vengeance.

"So dreadful were the oaths he used that the poor girl was ready to faint, and the whitest linen in that chest was not so white as her cheeks and lips.

"The woman, in the meantime, was seeking Margot, and, with the cunning of a gipsy, had traced the impression of the little feet to the corner of the garden, where a bit of cloth torn from the child's apron showed the place where she had crept through the hedge. The gipsy could not creep through the opening as the child had done, but she could get over the hedge; and this she speedily did, and saw the little one before her, running with all her might. At the noise the woman made at springing from the hedge, Margot looked back, and set up a shriek, and that shriek was probably what first roused Wolf, who was lying with his ear on the earth.

"Now there were four running all at once; Margot first, the gipsy after her and

gaining fast upon her, Wolf springing over every impediment and gaining ground on the gipsy, and Jacques after the dog; and there was another party too coming to where Margot was. These last were coming from the pastor's house; and there was a lady seated on Madame Eversil's mule, on a Spanish saddle, and a little page in a rich livery was leading the mule. The pastor was walking immediately behind her with two gentlemen, her husband and her son. This lady was a countess, and she it was who had lost the purse a few weeks before, when she had come to see the cascade.

"In going home that day the carriage had been overturned, and she had been so much hurt that she never thought of her purse until a few days afterwards, and then she supposed that it must have been lost where the carriage had been overturned. She caused great search to be made about that place; and it might have appeared to be quite by accident that Monsieur Eversil heard of that search; but there is nothing which happens in this world by accident. He knew the count and countess, and wrote to them to tell them that if they would come again to Hartsberg and take dinner in his humble house, he would give them good news of the purse.

"When they came he told them of the honesty of the family of the Stolbergs; and when he had placed the purse in the hands of the countess, and she had seen that nothing had been taken out of it, the pastor brought the venerable Monique and the fair Ella before the noble lady, and she was as much pleased with one as with the other. Her mind, therefore, was full of some plan for rewarding these poor honest people, and more especially when Monique told her how the least of the family had found the net and the golden fish and the moons.

"'I must see that little Margot,' she said, 'and if she is like her sister, I shall love her vastly;' and then it was settled that the mule should be saddled, and that she and the gentlemen should go up the hill, whilst Madame Eversil remained to look after dinner.

"This party were also on the hill, though lower down and hidden by the winding of the way, when Margot set out to run; but none of Margot's friends would have been in time to save her, if it had not been for Wolf. The wicked gipsy had resolved, if she could catch her, to stop her cries one way or another; to take her in her arms, hold her hand over her mouth, and to run with her to some place in the hills, not far off, some cave or hole known only to herself and her own people; and if the poor child had once been brought there, she would never have been suffered to go free again among her friends to tell where the zingari hole was.

"When Margot knew that the woman was after her she increased her speed, but all in vain; the gipsy came on like the giant with the seven-leagued boots; she caught the terrified child in her arms, put a corner of her ragged cloak into her mouth, and, turning out of the path down into a hollow of the hills, hoped to be clear in a minute more.

"But she was not to have that minute; Wolf was behind; he had flown with the swiftness of the wild hart, and when within leaping distance of the old woman, he sprang upon her, and caused his fangs to meet in her leg. She uttered a cry, and tried to shake him off, but he only let go in one place to seize another, so she was forced to drop the struggling child in order to defend herself from the dog, for she expected next that he would fly at her throat. It was a fearful battle that, between the hardy gipsy and the enraged dog. The howlings and bayings of the furious animal were terrible, his fangs were red with the gipsy's blood; the woman, in her fear and pain, uttered the most horrid words, whilst little Margot shrieked with terror. Though the battle hardly lasted two minutes, it gave time for Jacques to come in sight of it on one side; the pastor, the count, and his son at another.

"Jacques did not understand the cause of this terrible war; he only saw that his dog was tearing the flesh of a woman; he did not at first see Margot, who had sunk in terror on the grass; therefore he called off his dog with a voice of authority, and the

moment Wolf had loosed his hold of the woman, she fled from the place, and was never more seen in that country. But now all this party had met round Margot, looking all amazement at each other, whilst the little one sat sobbing on the ground, and Wolf stood looking anxiously at his young master, panting from his late exertions, and licking his bloody fangs, for there was no one to explain anything but the child.

"'What is all this, Jacques?' asked the pastor.

"'What is it, Margot?' said Jacques, taking his little sister in his arms, and soothing her as he well knew how to do; whilst she, clinging close to him, could not at first find one word to say.

"Jacques carried the child, and they all went back into the path, where the countess sat, anxiously waiting for them, on her mule.

"All that Margot could say to be understood was:

"'Run, run, to poor Meeta—they will kill her; the man will kill her, and Wolf is not there.'

"Jacques repeated her words to the pastor.

"'I have it, Jacques,' replied the good man; 'these vagrants are after the treasure; maybe there are others in the cottage; put the child down, my boy, leave her to walk by the lady, and let us all run forward.'

"'Nay, nay,' said the lady, 'put the sweet child in my arms and hasten on.' So it was done, and the gentle lady took the little peasant before her, whilst she soothed her with her gentle tones and kindly words.

"'And what,' said she, 'was that naughty woman going to do with you? and who was it that saved you?'

"'Good Wolf came, madame,' said the child, 'and he saved me; but poor Meeta—they will kill poor Meeta!'

"When Jacques and those who were with him had reached the cottage, they found the doors all open, but no one below; they went up the stairs, and there they found Meeta extended on the floor in a deep fainting fit. The chest stood open, and all its contents scattered about, but no man was there; he had probably taken alarm at the various cries and howlings which he had heard, and had made good his escape.

"Meeta was lifted up and laid on the bed, and water being dashed in her face, she opened her eyes, but for a while could say nothing to be understood.

"She was soon able to arise, and to come down the stairs with the arm of the pastor, though her head was still dizzy and she trembled all over. In the kitchen they found the lady and little Margot; and it was then that, between Meeta and Margot, they were able to make out what had happened. Then it was that everyone patted the head of Wolf and smiled upon him, calling him 'Good dog'; and Margot kissed him, and he wagged his tail, and went about to be caressed.

"'And so,' said the countess to the little one, 'it was you, my pretty child, who found the silken net with the golden fish and pretty moons; and it was through my carelessness in losing it that all this mischief of to-day is come. I cannot bear to think of what might have happened to you, poor baby;' and the lady stooped and kissed the child, and it was seen that she had tears in her eyes.

"'All is now well, lady, through the care of Providence,' said the pastor, 'and we will rejoice together, and I trust be grateful to Him from whom all mercies flow; for if we had lost our little Margot, it would have been a thousandfold worse than the loss of the purse. But one thing puzzles me: how did these vagrants discover that this treasure had been found? Who could have told it? I thought it had been known only to this family and me.'

"'I am the guilty person,' said Meeta, coming forward; 'I will not throw suspicion on others by hiding my fault;' and she then repeated her conversation with Heister Kamp, but she could give no account of how the secret had passed on to the gipsies.

"'I am sure,' said the pastor, 'that Heister would be above having to do with such people; but she is a woman of excessive curiosity, and such people are dangerous to others, as well as injurious to themselves.'

"'A secret, my good girl,' said the countess, smiling, 'may be compared to a bird in a cage; whilst shut up within our own breasts, it is safe; but when we open the door, either of the cage or of the heart, to let the inmate out, we can never tell whither it may fly; but you have owned the truth, and you have suffered severely—let all be forgotten.'

"'I have a proposal to make,' said the pastor; 'we will go back and dine, and in the evening we will all come up and sup together; the good man shall find us feasting when he comes home.'

"'Agreed,' cried the count and countess; 'you must set the house in order, and we will send up the entertainment,' she added, speaking to Meeta and Jacques; 'and we will be with you in a few hours. Let us then see this little fair one in all the bravery of her Sunday attire.'

"And all was done as the lady and pastor wished. Meeta set everything in proper order. Jacques brought his flocks from the pasture, and gave his best help. All the Sunday dresses were put on, and Margot was standing at the wicket in her very best apron, when the mule and the lady appeared again, followed by the pastor and Monique, Ella, and people without number, bearing the things needful for such a supper as had not often been enjoyed under that roof.

"Oh, what a happy meeting was that! How delighted was the lady with Margot, and what a beautiful little enamelled box for containing sweetmeats did she give her from her pocket! But there were no sweetmeats in it; there were what Margot called golden fish.

"Wolf had a glorious evening; he went about again to be patted, and he had as much to eat, for once in his life, as he could conveniently swallow.

"Meeta was forgiven by everyone, because she had not hidden her fault; and the whole party were just sitting down to supper before the porch when Martin Stolberg came home.

"Who shall say how astonished he was, or how grateful when the countess placed in his hand all the gold which had been found in the purse?—the count adding, that in a few days he might look for a fine young cow and two sheep from his own farm, in the vicinity of his castle; and also saying, at the same time, that he and his lady should have great pleasure in doing anything for him and his family at any time when they might apply to them.

"The lady did not overlook Meeta and Ella; she assured them that she would remember them when the cow was brought; and truly there was an ample store of linen and flowered aprons, and kerchiefs and caps of fine linen, in packets directed to each. But the little one, like Benjamin, had more than her share even of these presents also; and she had well deserved them, for she had shared her golden fish with her brother, sister, and cousin.

"The young count took upon himself to make presents to Jacques; he sent him a strong set of gardener's and carpenter's tools, and a Sunday suit of better clothes than Jacques had ever worn before.

"Martin put his gold into the pastor's hands till he should require it, being in no mind to keep much treasure in his house.

"It is only necessary to add, that the count took proper steps for finding the wicked gipsy and her son, but they had left the country and could not be found; neither were they ever again seen by the peasants of the Hartsberg."

"Well," said Henry, when Emily had finished reading, "that is a beautiful book: it made me so hot when they were all running, my feet felt as if they would run too—they quite shook—I could not keep them quiet."

"And how nicely you kept papa's secret!" said Mrs. Fairchild; "you showed that you

were not much more clever than Meeta."

"But then, mamma," replied Henry, "papa's secret was not of so much consequence as Meeta's was."

"Now, mamma," said Emily, "when do you think the day will come for Henry's story?"

Mrs. Fairchild answered:

"Papa will tell us when he can spare an evening."

"My book, I am certain," said Henry, "will be prettier than yours, Emily."

"Why must it be prettier?" asked his mother.

"Because Lucy said it is all about boys; I like boys' stories—there are so few books about boys."

"But I think it is a grave story," said Lucy.

"Never mind," answered Henry, "if it be about boys."

"Meeta offered to carry the honey."—Page 269.

Guests at Mr. Fairchild's

"She does not know that I made a slit in my frock"

The night after Emily's story had been read, there was a violent thunderstorm and rain, which continued more or less till daybreak; it was fine again after sunrise.

At breakfast a note was brought by a boy from Mrs. Goodriche: these were the words of it:

"Dear Mr. Fairchild,

"Since that happy day we spent together, we have been in what Sukey calls a peck of troubles; and, to crown all, last night one of our old chimneys was struck with lightning: part of it fell immediately, but I am thankful to be able to say, that by the care of Providence no one was hurt.

"We are all got into a corner out of the reach of it, should it fall, though it might yet stand for years as it is. I have other things to talk to you about, and was thinking of coming over to you if this accident had not happened. Now I must ask you to come to me; I have sent for workmen to consult about this chimney, but I shall have more confidence if you are here."

"I must be off immediately after breakfast," said Mr. Fairchild; and he did set off, in his little carriage, as soon as he had set Henry to work.

Mr. Fairchild saw the top of the ragged chimney over the trees in the garden. As soon as he came up to the gate, he himself put up the horse and carriage, for he could see no man about, and then went in at the back door, expecting to find Mrs. Goodriche at that end of the house farthest from the chimney.

Sukey was the first person he saw.

"Oh, sir," she said, "I am so glad you are come! We shall be all right now."

"Nay," said Mr. Fairchild, jestingly, "I hope you don't expect me to repair the chimney."

"Is that Mr. Fairchild?" cried the cheerful voice of Mrs. Goodriche; and the next minute she came out of her parlour, followed by a tall round-faced girl of about twelve years of age, in very deep mourning.

"My niece, Mr. Fairchild," said Mrs. Goodriche; "but tell me, have you breakfasted?" And when she heard that he had; "Come with me, kind friend," she said, "we will first look at the ruin, and then I have other things to talk to you, and to consult you about. So, Bessy, do you stay behind; you are not to make one in our consultations."

Mrs. Goodriche and Mr. Fairchild then walked into the garden; and we will tell, in as few words as possible, what they talked about.

First they spoke of the chimney, and Mr. Fairchild said that he could give no opinion

about it till the owner of the house and the masons came, and they were expected every hour.

Mrs. Goodriche said that she had lived in that house nearly twenty years, and should be sorry to leave it; but that she and Sukey, on windy nights, often felt that they should be glad to be out of it.

"And yet," said Mr. Fairchild, "it may stand long after you and I; still it is a wide, dull place for two persons, and very solitary."

"I wish I could get a house your way," replied Mrs. Goodriche; "though now we shall be more than myself and Sukey; and this brings me to the subject I wanted to consult you about before the business of the chimney."

Mr. Fairchild knew that Mrs. Goodriche had had one only brother, who had gone abroad, when young, as a merchant. He had married, and had one son; this son had also married, and Bessy was the only child of this son. Mrs. Goodriche's brother had died years ago, as had also his son's wife; at which time her nephew had sent his daughter home and placed her in a school in some seaport in the south of England, where she had, it seems, learned little or nothing.

Within the last month, Mrs. Goodriche had heard of the death of her nephew, and that she was left as guardian of his daughter.

"I had an acquaintance going to Plymouth only last week," she added; "and I got him to take charge of Bessy and bring her here. She has been with me only a few days, and is very glad to leave school, which does not speak well for her governess; or if not for her governess, for herself. As to what she is, I can as yet say little," added the old lady, "except that she seems to be affectionate and good-tempered; but she is also idle, wasteful, and ignorant in the extreme. She can't read even English easily enough to amuse herself with any book; and as to sewing, she is ready at a sampler, but could not put the simplest article of clothing together. With regard to any knowledge of the Bible, I much doubt if she can tell if the tower of Babel was built

before or after the Flood. She is a determined gossip and a great talker; but Sukey, to whom she is always chattering, assures me that she has never heard her say anything bad beyond nonsense."

"You mean to keep her with you?" asked Mr. Fairchild.

"I do," said Mrs. Goodriche; "I think it my duty, and I am far from disliking the poor thing. She has had so much schooling, and gained so little by it, that if I could get a good writing and maybe a ciphering master to attend her, I think I could do the rest myself, and impart to her some of the old-fashioned notions of industry, and neatness, and management. But this is a subject I wanted to consult you and Mrs. Fairchild about, for I so much like your plans with your own dear children."

Mrs. Fairchild had asked her husband to invite Mrs. Goodriche to their house until the chimney should be repaired; but Mr. Fairchild was doubtful whether this message should be delivered, when he heard that Miss Bessy was to remain with her great-aunt. After a little thought, however, he gave the message, stating his difficulty at the same time.

"Well," said Mrs. Goodriche, "I hardly know what to say: I should like to come to you, and I should like Bessy to see your children and your family plans; but as I know so little of her, I know not whether it would be right to let her mix with your children. You shall think the matter over, my good friend, and consult your wife; and be sure, whichever way the thing is settled, I shall not be offended."

When the men came to look at the chimney, it was found that the mischief might be remedied by a few days' work, so far as to make the chimney safe; but it was also seen that the house wanted many repairs.

"I think," said Mrs. Goodriche, "that I must give notice to quit this coming Midsummer. I shall still have half a year to look about me. The fright last night seems to have been sent to oblige me to settle my plans. I feel that this place is not exactly what will suit my niece—young people must have company; and if they are

not where they can find their equals, they will fly to their inferiors. Bessy will make intimacies with every cottager in the wood, and I shall not be able to help it."

"I believe you are right, Mrs. Goodriche," replied Mr. Fairchild; "and I wish we could find a house for you in our village."

Mr. Fairchild looked very anxiously at Bessy when he saw her again. There was a great appearance of good temper and kindness about her which pleased him. She had a round rosy face and laughing eyes; but her clothes, although quite new, were already out of place, and falling from one shoulder. She talked incessantly, whether heeded or not, and seldom said anything to the purpose.

"If I were to begin to find fault with her," said Mrs. Goodriche to Mr. Fairchild, "I could never have done: not that she is constantly committing heavy offences, but she never does anything in the right way. What shall I do with her, my good friend?"

"We will talk over the affair at home," replied Mr. Fairchild; "and you shall see me again to-morrow."

The next day accordingly brought Mr. Fairchild, and with him Mrs. Fairchild.

"Well, my good madam," said he, "we have settled it; we shall be glad to see you and Miss Bessy. We have spoken to Lucy and Emily; and they have promised to attend to all our wishes, and to inform us if anything should be said or done which they think we should not approve. So when shall I fetch you?—say to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, then," replied Mrs. Goodriche; "to-morrow evening, by which time I shall have settled things at home, and provided a person to be with Sukey."

After an early dinner, Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild went home.

The next morning Mrs. Fairchild had some conversation with her little girls.

"You have never, my dears," she said, "been in a house for any time with a young person whose character we do not know; but it seems that it is required of us now to receive such a one. Mrs. Goodriche is an old and very dear friend; she is in trouble,

and she has some hopes that her niece may be benefited by being for a while in an orderly family. You and Emily may be some help to her; but if you are led by her, or are unkind to her, or show that you think yourselves better than she is, you may not only be hurt yourselves, but very much hurt her instead of doing her good."

"Oh, mamma," replied Lucy, "I hope that we shall not do that: pray tell us every day exactly what to do."

"Be assured that I will, my children," said Mrs. Fairchild; "and we will not fear. You will not dislike Bessy—she is a good-tempered, merry girl; but you must not let her be alone with Henry: her very good humour may make her a dangerous companion to him."

Mr. Fairchild went, after dinner, to fetch Mrs. Goodriche and Bessy; and just before tea Henry came in to say the carriage was coming. He ran out again as fast as he could to set the gate open.

Mrs. Fairchild and the little girls met their visitors at the door.

Bessy jumped out of the carriage, and without waiting for the names to be spoken, gave her hands to Lucy and Emily. She kissed Lucy, and would have kissed Emily if she had not got behind Mrs. Fairchild.

"And that was Henry," she said, "who stood at the gate: he is a nice little fellow! I know all the names, and John's and Betty's too. Sukey has told me about Betty—just such another as herself. What a pretty place this is!—not like aunt's old barn of a house. I feel at home here already."

Whilst the young lady was prattling in this manner, Mrs. Fairchild was showing Mrs. Goodriche to her sleeping-room. She had put up a little couch-bed in the corner of the same room for Bessy, as she had no other room to give; and this had been settled between the ladies the day before. Mrs. Goodriche had told her niece to follow her upstairs, which Miss Bessy might perchance have done, after a while, had not Betty appeared coming from the kitchen to carry up the luggage.

"That is Betty," said Miss Bessy. "How do you do, Betty? Sukey told me to remember her to you."

"Very well, thank you, Miss," said Betty, with a low curtsey, as she bustled by with a bandbox.

Mrs. Goodriche now appeared, and speaking to her niece from the stair-head said:

"Come up, Bessy, and put yourself to rights before tea."

"Shan't I do, Miss Lucy?" said Bessy; "aunty is so particular; she does not know that I made a monstrous slit in my frock as I got into the carriage. I pinned it up, however, as well as I could, though I was forced to take the pins out of my dress for it. I shall run it up to-morrow, for, if she sees it, poor I will be forced to darn it thread by thread; so do lend me a pin or two, dear girls."

Betty now appeared again with a message to the young lady to go upstairs to her aunt, and then Bessy hurried off so rapidly, taking two steps at a time, that Lucy and Emily expected she would have a second slit in her dress to mend the next day. She did not appear again till told that tea was ready, when she came down after her aunt. Mrs. Goodriche looked all kind and calm as usual; she seemed quite pleased to find herself with her friends, though no doubt she was a little uneasy lest her niece should disgrace herself. As Bessy passed Lucy to go to a seat near Mrs. Fairchild, she whispered:

"Aunt has found out the slit, and poor I will be set to the darning to-morrow."

The whole party were seated before Henry came in; he had been seeing John put up the carriage. John had been busy, and Henry trying to help—so Henry was not like the boy who helped his brother to do nothing.

"Well, Master Henry," said Miss Bessy, calling over to the other end of the table, "so you speak to my aunt, and say you are glad she is come, and you don't speak to me."

"Because, ma'am——" Henry began.

"Eh?" cried Miss Bessy, "don't call me ma'am;" and she burst into a giggle, which made Henry open his eyes and look very hard at her.

This made her laugh the more; and, as she had her teacup in her hand, she spilt a quantity of tea on the unfortunate black frock.

"Bessy," said Mrs. Goodriche gently, "you had better set down your cup and wipe your frock, or I shall have to ask Mrs. Fairchild to lend you one of Henry's pinafores."

"It is not hurt, aunt; it will all come out. I threw a cup of milk over it the other day, and no one could see the mark unless I stood quite opposite them, and they looked quite hard at it."

"Well, then, Miss Bessy," said Mrs. Goodriche, "when you wear that frock, or any other of your frocks which people should not look hard at, I would advise you to keep in the background."

"Aunt is making sport of me, Mrs. Fairchild," said Bessy, with another giggle; "do you know what she means? She is advising me, in her cunning way, always to keep in the background of company."

"Always?" said Mr. Fairchild, smiling; "why, have you not any dresses which would bear close inspection?"

"Not many, I fear!" replied Miss Bessy; "I was always uncommon unlucky in tearing my clothes and getting them stained."

"Suppose we say careless," said Mrs. Goodriche; "but it is no laughing matter, niece. Have you never heard the old saying, 'Wilful waste makes woful want'?"

"Well, well," replied the niece, with something like a sigh, "I can't help it—I never could;" but before Mrs. Goodriche could say another word, she cried out, "You have got a magpie—have you not, Henry?"

"How could you know that?" asked Henry.

"Sukey told me," she answered, "and Mary Lampet told her. Mary was with the person who gave you the magpie, when she sent it to you."

"Who is Mary Lampet?" said Henry.

"One of Bessy's new friends," said Mrs. Goodriche; "a woman who sometimes comes for a day's work to my house."

"And such a curious old body," said Miss Bessy; "she wears a blue striped petticoat, and she generally has a pipe in her mouth."

"Never mind her, my dear," said Mrs. Goodriche: "Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild and I have a good deal to say to each other; we do not often meet, and we wish to have our share of talking; it is not for one person, and that one of the youngest, to have all the talk to herself."

Instead of noticing this remark, Miss Bessy looked round the table.

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven," she said; "aunt, you are wrong, I am not one of the youngest; there are three older, and three younger than me. I am Jack in the middle; and therefore I have a right to talk to the old people, and to the young ones too; and therefore I may talk most."

Henry was being gradually worked up by Miss Bessy to think that he might be as free as she was; and he began with, "Well now, is not that very odd?"

"My dear Henry," said Mr. Fairchild, "did not you hear Mrs. Goodriche say she thought that young people should not have all the talk to themselves?"

"Don't scold him," said Bessy; "he meant no harm."

Mrs. Goodriche looked distressed; her niece saw it, and was quiet for at least a minute or two, and then she began to talk again as if nothing had happened.

When tea was over, and everybody risen from the table, before it was settled what was to be done next, Henry walked out through the glass doors into the garden—he

was going to feed Mag.

Bessy saw him, and called after him; he did not answer her—perhaps he did not hear her. She called again—he was farther off, and did not turn.

"You little rogue!" she cried out; "but I will pay you;" and off she ran after him.

He heard her step and her voice as she called him; he took to his heels through the shrubbery, and to the gate of the fold-yard—into the yard—round the barn—amongst the hay-ricks—across a new-mown field, and over a five-barred gate, using all his speed, and yet gaining no ground upon her; so back again then he came to where he knew John would be, and making up to him, he got so behind him that he put him between Bessy and himself.

There the three were in the fold-yard, Bessy trying to catch Henry, who was dodging about round John, when Mr. Fairchild, who had followed Bessy, came up.

"Miss Goodriche," he said, "let me lead you to your aunt, she is asking for you. My dear young lady," he added, drawing her a little aside, "let me venture to point out to you, as a father, that it is not becoming in a girl of your years to be romping with a servant man."

"I was after Henry, sir!" she replied: "it was after him I was going, sir, I assure you."

"I dare say you set off to run after Henry, my dear young lady," he replied; "but when I first saw you, you were pushing John about, first on one side and then on the other, in a way I should call romping; and am I not right when I say that I think, even now, you have not spoken one word to him, and that you only guess he is my servant John? What would you think, Miss Goodriche, if you were to see my daughter Lucy suddenly run and do the same by yonder labourer in that meadow?—and yet she may know him quite as well, if not better, than you do John."

"La! Mr. Fairchild," cried Miss Bessy, laughing, "how you do put things! I never thought what I was doing. It must have looked uncommon strange, but I hope I

shan't do it again."

"Then you had better go in with me to your aunt, and if she approves, you shall help Lucy and Emily in their little gardens."

"Cutting off faded flowers, and picking up the dead leaves."—Page 299.

Mrs. Fairchild and Mrs. Goodriche were only waiting for Miss Bessy to follow the little girls into the garden; and there, whilst they worked and chatted together, Lucy and Emily and Miss Goodriche were employed in cutting off faded flowers, and picking up the dead leaves from the ground.

"Off she ran after him."—Page 295.

More about Bessy

She saw Bessy amongst some gooseberry bushes

It may be supposed that Mrs. Goodriche gave some good advice to her niece whilst they were in their room, for Miss Bessy came down looking rather sulky, and said very little at breakfast; only that she attempted several times to hold discourse with Lucy in whispers, for which they were quietly called to order by Lucy's father.

Mr. Fairchild said:

"You must not whisper at table, my dears, for we are met to make ourselves agreeable either by talking or attentive listening."

After breakfast Mrs. Fairchild said:

"As we hope your visit, Mrs. Goodriche, will be a long one, we will, if you please, go on with our plans. I shall go into my school-room with my little girls, and leave you and Bessy to yourselves; you will see us again about twelve o'clock."

"Very right," replied Mrs. Goodriche, with a smile; "and I trust that Bessy and I shall be as busy as you will be."

So Mrs. Goodriche went to her room, and when she came back with two large bags

and several books, there was no Miss Bessy to be found.

She, however, was, for an old person, very active, with all her senses about her, and off she trotted after her niece, finding her, after some trouble, chattering to Mag, who was hung in a cage before the kitchen window. She brought her into the parlour, saying:

"Come, niece, let us follow a good example, and make the best use of these quiet morning hours."

Bessy muttered something which Mrs. Goodriche did not choose to hear, but when she got into the parlour, she threw herself back on the sofa as if she were dying of fatigue.

Mrs. Goodriche handed a Bible to her, saying:

"We will begin the morning with our best book: you shall read a chapter whilst I go on with my work; come, find your place—where did we leave off?"

Bessy opened the Bible, fetching at the same time a deep sigh, and, after some minutes, began to read.

Mrs. Goodriche could have sighed too, but she did not.

Bessy was a most careless reader; she hated all books; indeed, her aunt thought that, from never having been exercised in anything but learning columns of spelling, she had hardly the power of putting any sense, in her own mind, to the simplest story-book which could be put into her hands.

It was heavy work to sit and hear her blunder through a chapter; but, when that was finished, the kind aunt tried at some little explanation; after which she set her to write in a copy-book. Mrs. Goodriche dictated what she was to write: it was generally something of what she had herself said about the chapter; but what with blots, and bad spelling, and crooked lines, poor Bessy's book was not fit to be seen.

This exercise filled up nearly an hour, and a most heavy hour it was: and then Mrs.

Goodriche produced a story-book—one lent to her by Mrs. Fairchild—which, being rather of a large size, did not quite appear to be only fit for children; what this book was I do not know.

"Now, my dear," she said, "you will have great pleasure in reading this book to me, I am sure; but before we begin I must fetch another bit of work: I have done what I brought down."

"La!" said Miss Bessy, "how fond you are of sewing!"

"Don't you remember, Bessy," replied Mrs. Goodriche, "that I never attend to anything you say when you begin with 'la'!"

"We always said it at school," she answered.

"May be so," replied Mrs. Goodriche, "and you may say it here, if you please; but, as I tell you, I shall never attend to anything you say when you put in any words of that kind."

"La!" cried Miss Bessy again, really not knowing that she was saying the word.

Mrs. Goodriche went up for her work, and when she returned, as she might have expected, her bird was flown; and when she looked for her, she saw her amongst some gooseberry bushes, feeding herself as fast as she could. When she got her into the parlour again, "Bessy," she said, "did you ever read the story of Dame Trot and her Cat?"

"I know it," answered Bessy.

"Now," added Mrs. Goodriche, "I am thinking that I am very like Dame Trot; she never left her house but she found her cat at some prank when she returned, and I never leave the room but I find you off and at some trick or another when I come back; but now for our book."

Bessy, before she took her book, rubbed her hands down the sides of her frock to clean them from any soil they might have got from the gooseberries. It was a new

black cotton, with small white spots, and was none the better for having been made a hand-towel.

Mrs. Goodriche saw this neat trick, but she felt that if she found fault with everything amiss in her niece, she should have nothing else to do; so she let that pass.

Bessy, at last, opened the book and began to read.

The first story began with the account of a lady and gentleman who had one son and a daughter, of whom they were vastly fond, and whom they indulged in everything they could desire, which (as the writer sagely hinted) they had cause to repent before many years had passed.

"Whilst their children were little, there was nothing in the shape of toys which were not got for them; dolls, whips, tops, carts, and all other sorts of playthings, were heaped up in confusion in their play-room; but they were not content with wooden toys—they had no delight in those but to break them in pieces. They were ever greedy after nice things to eat, and when they got them, made themselves often sick by eating too much of them. Once Master Tommy actually ate up——"

In this place Bessy stopped to turn over a leaf with her thumb, and then went on, first repeating the last words of the first page.

"—Master Tommy actually ate up the real moon out of the sky."

"What! What!" cried Mrs. Goodriche; "ate the moon? Are you sure, Bessy?"

"'What! What!' cried Mrs. Goodriche."—Page 305.

"Yes, it is here," replied Bessy; "the real moon out of the sky—these are the very words."

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Goodriche; "dear child, you are reading nonsense; don't you perceive it?"

"I don't know," replied Bessy, gaping; "I was not attending—what is it?"

"Don't you know what you have been reading?" asked Mrs. Goodriche.

"To be sure I do," answered Bessy, "or how could I have told the words right?"

"But the sense?" asked Mrs. Goodriche.

"I was not happening," replied Bessy, "just to be thinking about that. I was thinking just then, aunt, of the horrid fright Sukey was in when the bricks came rolling down, and how she did scream."

"Give me the book," said Mrs. Goodriche, almost at the end of her patience; "we will read no more to-day; go up and fetch that unfortunate bombazine frock, it must be darned; you have no other here, or indeed made, but that you have on."

Away ran Bessy, glad to be moving; and when Mrs. Goodriche had looked at the book, she found that Bessy had turned over two leaves,—that Tommy had once eaten a whole pound-cake in a very short time, and that he had cried the whole of the evening for the real moon out of the sky.

It might have been thought, from the time that she was absent, that Bessy had gone to the top of the barn to fetch her frock; the truth is, that it was some time before she could find it; she had thrown it on the drawers when she had taken it off, and it had slipped down behind them, to use an expression of her own. It was all covered over with dust, and the trimming crumpled past recovery; but she gave it a good shaking, and down she came, not in the least troubled at the accident. When she got into the parlour, she found Lucy and Emily seated each with her small task of needlework; their other lessons were finished; and Mrs. Fairchild, too, appeared with her work.

Mrs. Goodriche had desired to hear the story in Emily's new book, and they were each to read four pages at once, then to pass the book; and they had settled to begin with the eldest.

"I always think," said Lucy, "that when everything is done but our work, it is so comfortable; and when there is to be reading, I work so fast."

There was a little delay whilst Bessy was set to darn, and then Mrs. Goodriche read her four pages, and read them very pleasantly. The book was next given to Mrs. Fairchild, who passed it to Bessy.

"Where does it begin?" she said.

"At the top of the ninth page, Bessy," said Mrs. Fairchild.

There was another pause; and then Bessy started much like a person running a race, reading as fast as she could, till, like the same runner, when he comes to a stumbling-stone, she broke down over the first hard word, which happened to be at the end of the second sentence.

Mrs. Fairchild gently set her right, and she went on a little till she came to another word, which she miscalled, so that Mrs. Goodriche, who had not heard the story before, could not understand what she was reading about.

Emily looked down, and became quite red.

Lucy looked up full of wonder, and half inclined to smile; but a gentle look from her mother reminded her what civility and kindness required of her. Her mother's look seemed to say, "You ought to pity and not to laugh at one who has not been so well taught as yourself;" and she instantly looked down, and seemed to give her whole thoughts to her work.

"Bessy," said Mrs. Goodriche, "you had best pass the book to Lucy; I am sure that you will try to improve yourself against the next time you are asked to read aloud in company."

"I shall never make much of reading, aunt," she answered carelessly; "I hate it so."

The reading then went on till one o'clock, and there was enough of the story left for another day. The work was then put up, and the children were at liberty till dinner-time; but the day was very hot, so there could be no walk till the evening.

"Now," said Mrs. Goodriche, "before we part, you shall see something out of this

bag; it is full of pieces from my old great store-chest; there are three pieces of old brocade silk," and she spread them out on the table. They all looked as if they had been short sleeves; one was green, with purple and gold flowers as large as roses; another was pink, what is called clouded with blue, green, and violet: and the third was dove-colour, with running stripes of satin. "Now," she said, "each of you, my little girls, shall have one of these pieces, and you shall make what you please of it; and when you have made the best you can of the silk, you shall show your work to me, and I shall see who is worthy of more pieces, for I have more in this bag."

"If any of you, my dears," said Mrs. Fairchild, "should want little bits of ribbon or lining to help out what you wish to make, I shall gladly supply them; indeed," she added, "I may as well give what may be wanted now;" and having fetched a bag of odds and ends, she gave out some bits of coloured ribbon to suit the silks, with sewing silks and linings, such as her bag would afford, placing her gifts in equal portions on the three pieces of silk.

"And now," said Mrs. Goodriche, "who is to choose first?"

"Lucy and Emily," said Bessy; and Lucy wished Bessy to choose first. After a little while this matter was settled; Emily had the green with the golden flowers, Lucy the clouded pink, and Bessy the striped; but before they took them from the table, Mrs. Goodriche told them that they were only to have them on these conditions—that they were not to consult each other about the use they were to make of them; nor to get anybody to help in cutting them out, and not to tell what they were doing till they brought what they had made to her.

"Then, Lucy, you must not ask me," said Emily; "I will not ask you."

"I shall make no inquiries," said Mrs. Fairchild; "you may work at your things in any of your play hours excepting the walking time. Emily may work in my room, and Lucy in her own, because you must not be together; and if I come into my room, I shall not look at what you are doing, Emily."

Lucy and Emily took up their bits, all joy and delight, and full of thought; but Bessy was not so well pleased; she hated work as much as reading, and perhaps from the same reason, that she had neither got over the drudgery of work nor of reading. The beginning of all learning is dry, and stupid, and painful; but many things are delightful, when we can do them easily, which are most disagreeable when we first begin them.

After this day, things passed on till the end of the week much as we have said. Lucy and Emily were always very busy in their different places, from dinner to tea-time. Henry was often, at those times, with John; and where Miss Bessy was Mrs. Goodriche did not know, because she had proposed to go and work in Henry's arbour. Her aunt could not follow her everywhere, so she only made herself sure that she did not go beyond the garden, and she did not ask whether she spent half her time in the kitchen, for she was not afraid that Betty would hurt her.

"When am I to see the pieces of work?" said Mrs. Goodriche on the Saturday morning.

"Before tea, ma'am," replied Lucy; "Emily and I are ready, but we don't know whether Bessy is—we can wait if she is not."

"Oh, I am ready," answered Bessy; "my silk is done."

The tea-things were on the table when Emily came in first with an open basket—whatever was in it was hidden by a piece of white paper. Lucy followed with a neat little parcel, carefully rolled up; and Bessy followed, with a hand in one of her pockets, and a smile on her face, though she looked red and rather confused.

"I shall look at the little market-woman with her basket first," said Mrs. Goodriche; and Emily went up to her with a sweet pleasant smile, as if she felt sure that she had some very pretty things to show. She took up the white paper, and discovered three pin-cushions, very nicely made: they were so contrived that there was a gold and purple flower in the centre of each pin-cushion on both sides: the cushions were

square, well stuffed, and pinched in the middle of each side; they had a tassel at every corner, made of the odd bits of silk roved, and to each of them was a long bit of ribbon. Emily's face flushed like a rosebud when she laid them on the table. "Very, very good," said Mrs. Goodriche; "and you did them all yourself?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Emily. "I made the insides first, and stuffed them with bran, before I put the silk on."

"Now for Lucy," said Mrs. Goodriche; and Lucy, opening her parcel, showed an old-fashioned housewife with many pockets: she had managed her silk so, that the clouds upon it formed borders for the outside and each pocket; she had overcast a piece of flannel for the needles, and put a card under that part of the housewife; she had lined it to make it strong, and had put some ribbon to tie it with, and had made a case for it of printed calico, and a button and a button-hole.

"Very, very good, too," said Mrs. Goodriche; "let it be placed by the pin-cushions; and now for Bessy."

Bessy began to giggle and to move herself about in a very uneasy way.

"If you have nothing to show, Bessy," said her aunt; "or if you are not ready, we will excuse you."

"It does not signify," answered Bessy, "I am as ready now as I ever shall be. I can make nothing of the silk."

"Have you lost it?" asked her aunt.

"No," she answered; "I have it—you may as well see it at once;" and diving again into her pocket, she brought out what looked very like a piece of blotting-paper which had been well used, and laid it on the table. "I could not help it," she said; "but I had it on the table one morning, when I was in this room alone, and I tumbled over the inkstand right upon it; and I thought it was lucky that almost all the ink had fallen on the silk, and not on the cloth; so, as it was spoiled already, I used it to wipe up the rest of the ink, and that is the whole truth."

Mrs. Goodriche, though vexed, could not keep herself from smiling, which Bessy seeing, tried to turn the whole affair into a laugh; but it was not a merry laugh.

"Well, take it away, my dear," said Mrs. Goodriche; "put it by to wipe your pens with;" and away ran Bessy out of the room, not to laugh when by herself, but to cry: and this, we are glad to say, was not the first time that the poor motherless girl had shed tears for her own follies within the last day or two.

When she had left the room, Mrs. Goodriche said:

"Poor young creature! I am sorry for her."

"Yes, ma'am," said Lucy, "because she has had no mamma for many years; but Emily and I begin to love her, she is so good-tempered."

"God will bless her," said Mrs. Fairchild; "He has shown His love by giving her a friend who will be a mother to her."

"But now, my little girls," said Mrs. Goodriche, "these things which you have made so prettily are your own."

"Thank you, ma'am," they both answered; "and may we do what we like with them?"

"To be sure," replied Mrs. Goodriche.

"Then," said Emily, "I shall give one to Mary Bush, and another to Margery, and another to Mrs. Trueman, for their best pin-cushions."

"And I shall give this housewife to nurse," said Lucy.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Goodriche, "that you will like to have them furnished for the poor women; I will give what pins and needles can be found on Monday morning; and at the same time I have for each of you a piece of nice flowered chintz for your dolls."

The little girls kissed the old lady with all their hearts, and ran away with the things which they had made: it was agreed that they were not to talk of them again before

Bessy.

Bessy's Misfortunes

Bessy was crying most piteously

The Sunday morning was very fine, and there was a nice large party going to church together. We have not mentioned Mr. Somers lately, but he was still there, and very much beloved. His mother had lately come to live with him; she was a very old friend of Mrs. Goodriche, and when the two old ladies saw each other from their pews, they were vastly pleased. They hastened to meet each other after service; and Mrs. Somers begged all Mrs. Goodriche's party to come into the Parsonage House, which was close to the church.

Mrs. Fairchild said there were too many for all to go in; so she directed Betty to see the young ladies home: they had some way to walk, but had hardly got out of the village when Betty said:

"We shall surely have a shower—we shall be caught in the rain if we are not sharp."

"May we run, Betty?" asked Lucy and Emily; and having got leave, they set off at full speed, and got into the house just in time.

"Come, Miss Goodriche," said Betty; "you can run, I know, as well as the best of them, so why don't you set off too? As for me, I have not got my best bonnet on, for I foresaw there would be showers, and I have nothing else that can hurt. A very few drops would make that pretty crape bonnet of yours not fit to be seen."

"We shall be at home before the rain comes," said Bessy; "and I am sure that if it is only a few drops they will not hurt my bonnet; I want to stay with you. I want to ask you about the people I saw at church. Come, now, tell me, Betty, what was that family that sat just before us?"

Betty was walking away as fast as she could, and she answered:

"Miss, I can't stop to talk—it has begun to rain behind us on the hills; we shall have

it in no time; and there is no house this way to run into."

"O la! Betty," cried Miss Bessy next; "my shoe-string is unpinned: do, for pity, lend me a big pin."

"Why, Miss," said Betty, "sure you don't pin your shoe-strings?"

"Only when I am in a hurry," she answered.

Betty found a pin, and the shoe was put to rights as well as might be; but two minutes at least were lost whilst this was being done.

"Now come on, Miss, as fast as you can," said Betty; "the drops are already falling on the dust at our feet."

They went on a few paces without another word, and then Miss Bessy screamed:

"Oh, Betty, the other string has gone snap: have you another pin?"

"Miss, Miss!" said Betty, fumbling for a pin, and in her hurry not being able to find one. Once more Miss Bessy was what soldiers call in marching order, and they made, may be, a hundred paces, without any other difficulty but the falling of the rain, though as yet it was only the skirts of the shower. The house was in view, and was not distant three hundred yards by the road, and somewhat less over a field.

"Let us go over the field," said Bessy.

"No, no," replied Betty, bustling on. "If the gate on the other side should be locked—and John often keeps it so—we should be quite at fault."

"And what sort of a gate must it be," said Bessy, "that you and I could not get over?"

"We had better keep the road, Miss," replied Betty; "the grass must be wet already with the little rain which is come."

"And yet it has scarce laid the dust in the road," returned Bessy; "so if you choose to keep to the road, I shall take the field; so good-bye to you;" and the next minute she was over the stile, and running across the grass.

Betty looked after her a minute, and then saying, "Those who have the care of you

have their hands full," she hurried on; but with all her haste she was like one who had been dipped in a well before she got in.

Almost the moment in which the two had parted, the shower had come down in right good earnest, driving and gathering and splashing the dust up on Betty's white stockings, and causing her to be very glad that she had not put on her best-made bonnet and new black ribbons. Betty had never worn a coloured bonnet in her life.

In the meantime Miss Bessy was flying along the field, throwing up the wet at every step from the long grass. The pins in her shoes at first acted as spurs, pricking her for many steps, and then crooking and giving way; so that she had the comfort of running slipshod the rest of the way. Her shoes, being of stuff, were so thoroughly soaked, in a little time, that they became quite heavy. The gate at the end of the field was locked, of course; who ever came to the end of a field in a pelting shower, and did not find it locked? It was a five-barred gate, and Bessy could have got over it easily if John had not most carefully interlaced the two upper bars with thorns and brambles—for what purpose we don't know, but so it was.

Bessy tried to pull some of them out, and in so doing thoroughly soaked her gloves, and then only succeeded in pulling aside one or two of them; but she mounted the gate, and in coming down, her foot slipping, she fell flat on the ground, leaving part of her frock on the thorns, which at the time she did not perceive.

"It can't be helped," she thought, as she rose again, and ran on to the house without further misfortune. She thought herself lucky in getting in by the front door without being seen; and her aunt was not at home, which was another piece of luck, she believed; and she hastened to change her dress, cramming all her wet things into a closet in the room used for hanging up frocks and gowns when taken off. She did not, as it happened, throw her frock and bonnet on the floor of the closet; and she thought she had been very careful when she hung the frock on a peg and the bonnet over it. She had some trouble in getting off her wet gloves, which stuck as close to

her hands as if they had been part of them; and these, with the shoes and other inferior parts of her dress, found their places on the floor of the closet. They were all out of the way before her aunt could come; for though it had ceased to rain as soon as she came in, she knew it would take some time for the walk from the Parsonage House.

Such good use did Bessy make of her time that she had clean linen and her everyday gown on before Mrs. Goodriche came in.

The first inquiry which Mrs. Fairchild and Mrs. Goodriche made was whether the young people and Betty had escaped the shower. Lucy, who knew no more than that they had all come in soon after each other, answered:

"Oh yes, but we had a run for it."

Betty was not there to tell her story, and Bessy thought it was quite as well to let the affair pass.

Thoughtful people often wonder how giddy ones can be so thoughtless as they are, and giddy ones wonder how their thoughtful friends can attend to so many things as they do. Many persons are naturally thoughtless, but this fault may be repaired by management in childhood. Poor Bessy had had no such careful management; and her carelessness had come to such a pass, that from the time in which she had hung up her wet and spoiled clothes in the closet, she troubled herself about them no more till the time came when she wanted to put them on.

Still, she learned much, as it proved, from the misfortunes of that Sunday. After dinner it began to pour again, and Mrs. Fairchild took Bessy with her own children into a quiet room, and there she read the Bible and talked to them. Having been well used to talk to children and young people, she made all she said so pleasant, that Bessy was quite surprised when Betty knocked at the door and said tea was ready.

The rest of the Sunday evening passed off so very pleasantly that even Bessy yawned only three times, and that was just before supper—and yet it

rained—rained—rained.

The next morning rose in great brightness, promising a charming day. The forenoon was spent as usual; and after the lessons and work, Mrs. Goodriche furnished the pin-cushions and the housewife, and gave out the two pieces of chintz for the dolls' frocks; and so busy were the old lady and the little girls, that it was time to lay the cloth for dinner before the things were quite put away.

Whilst all this business was going on, Bessy was somewhere about in the garden.

Now it was not a very common thing for a loud knock to be heard at Mr. Fairchild's door. But it was Mr. Somers who knocked, and he came in all in a hurry. He came to say that a lady, who lived about two miles distant in another parish, had called. He told the lady's name to Mrs. Fairchild: and Mrs. Fairchild said she knew her, though they had not visited. This lady had a nice house and a pretty orchard; and she had come, only an hour before, to say that Miss Pimlico, with all her young ladies, were coming to spend the evening with her, and that they were to have tea in the open air, and to amuse themselves in any way they liked. The lady hoped that Mr. Somers and his mother would come, and that they would, if possible, bring with them Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild and their nice children, and make a pleasant evening of it.

"We told her that Mrs. Goodriche and her niece were at Mr. Fairchild's," added Mr. Somers; "and she said, 'Let them come also, by all means; the more the merrier;' and then she kindly entered into what carriages we could muster.

"I told her," he continued, "that Mr. Fairchild had a carriage which would hold two grown-up persons and three little ones, and that mine could do as much if needful; proving that we had even one seat to spare—so come, you must all go. Mrs. Goodriche and my mother shall have the back seat of my carriage, and I shall make interest for Miss Lucy to sit by me in the front seat."

All the children present looked anxiously to hear Mr. Fairchild's answer, and glad were they when they heard him say, "At what hour should we be ready?"

"At four I shall hope to call for Mrs. Goodriche and Miss Lucy," said Mr. Somers. "I have a poor woman to call on by the way, if this lady does not object. We may therefore set out about half an hour before you. So now, good-bye;" and he walked away.

"At four I shall hope to call for Mrs. Goodriche and Miss Lucy."—Page 321.

How merry and happy were the faces round the table at dinner! Mrs. Goodriche and Lucy had only just time to get ready before Mr. Somers came for them.

When they were gone the rest of the party found it was time to get dressed. John brought the carriage to the gate at the time fixed; and Henry, who had been watching for it ever since he had been dressed, came in to give notice. Emily and her father immediately went to the gate; and Mrs. Fairchild, thinking that Bessy might want a little attention and help, went to her room. As she knocked at the door she thought she heard low sobs within; she called Bessy twice, and no answer being given she walked in.

There was a sight indeed! Bessy was sitting at the foot of the bed without a frock, and sobbing and crying most piteously. On the floor, on one side of her, were her best shoes, shrunk up and wrinkled and covered with mud in the most extraordinary way. In another part of the floor lay the unfortunate frock, all draggled and splashed round the bottom, and, as Mrs. Fairchild could see without lifting it up, wanting a part of one breadth. On the drawers was the bonnet, which was of reeved crape made upon wire, and not one at all suited for a careless girl; but it was made by a milliner at Plymouth. What with soaking, crumpling, and here and there a rent from some bough, it had lost all appearance of what it had been: it looked a heap of old crape gathered carelessly together; and the pair of gloves, much in the state of the shoes, were lying near the bonnet on the drawers.

"Oh, ma'am! Oh, Mrs. Fairchild!" cried the unfortunate Bessy, "what can I do? What shall I do?"

Mrs. Fairchild lifted up the dress, but as hastily laid it down again, for she saw it would take some hours to make it fit to be worn. The bonnet, shoes, and gloves all equally required time and attention.

"I am afraid," she said kindly, "it will not do for you to attempt to put on these things; and, what is worse, I have none that will fit you. My dresses are as much too large as Lucy's are too small."

"Oh, do, dear Mrs. Fairchild," cried the sobbing Bessy, "at least, let me try one of your gowns."

Though aware the attempt would be useless, the kind lady brought one of her white dresses, to see if anyhow it could be made to fit; but even Bessy, after a while, acknowledged it would not do, being so very much too large for her.

Mrs. Fairchild next examined the young lady's everyday cotton; but, alas! that was too dirty to think of its being shown beside the best dresses of the other little misses. Then, too, if a dress could have been procured, bonnet, shoes, and gloves would have also been requisite; and these could not have been obtained even amongst Miss Bessy's own clothes; for if her best were unfit to be seen, her commoner ones were scarce worth picking up in the street.

"It will not do, I see," said Miss Bessy; "you had better go without me, Mrs. Fairchild."

"I am afraid it must be as you say," replied that lady, "and most sincerely sorry am I for you, my dear."

So saying, she left the room, and then came another burst of tears, and more sobs, for three or four minutes afterwards.

Bessy, who still sat on the bed, heard the carriage drive away. "Oh, how cruel!" she thought, or rather spoke—"how cruel of Mrs. Fairchild to go away, and hardly to say one word to me! But I know she despises me; she can think nobody worth anything but her own children:" then there was another burst of tears, and more sobs.

After a little time, all spent in crying, she heard her door open again, and turning round, she saw Mrs. Fairchild come in without her bonnet, in her usual dress, and with a work-bag in her hand. She came straight up to the weeping girl, and kissing her, "Now, Bessy," she said, "wipe away those tears, and we will have a happy and, I hope, useful evening. Betty will be ready to help us immediately, and we shall set to work and see what we can do in putting your things to rights. The carriage is gone with all the rest of the party, and I have sent a message to your aunt by Mr. Fairchild. He will make the best of the affair, and if you will help, we will try to put all these things to rights."

"Oh, Mrs. Fairchild," said Bessy, throwing herself into her arms, "and have you given up your pleasure for such a naughty girl as I am?"

"I have given up no pleasure so great as I shall receive, dear Miss Goodriche, if I can see you trying to do right this evening: trying for once to work hard, and to overcome those habits which give your aunt so much pain. Come, put on your frock, and let us set to work immediately."

The eyes of poor Bessy again filled with tears, but they were tears of gratitude and love; and she hastened to put on her frock, and then do anything which Mrs. Fairchild directed: and, first of all, the crape trimmings were taken from the bonnet and the skirt of the frock; Betty was then called, and she took them to her kitchen to do what might be done to restore them. The shoes were sent to John to stretch on a last, and to brush; and Mrs. Fairchild produced some pieces of bombazine from her store, and having matched the colours as well as she could, she carefully pinned the piecing, and gave it to Bessy to sew.

Poor Bessy's fingers had never plied so quickly and so carefully before. They were put in motion by a feeling of the warmest gratitude and love for Mrs. Fairchild.

No punishment, no severity, could have produced the effect wrought by this well-timed kindness of Mrs. Fairchild; and it gave to her the sweetest hopes of poor

Bessy, when she observed how strongly and deeply she felt that kindness.

They worked and talked till tea-time, and after tea they set to work again. Betty came up about seven o'clock with the crape and the bonnet, the plaitings of which—for it was a reeved bonnet—she had smoothed with a small Italian iron, and restored wonderfully. Then she sat down and sewed with Miss Bessy at the frock, whilst Mrs. Fairchild trimmed the bonnet.

At eight o'clock the work was got on so finely that Bessy cried out:

"Another half-hour, if they will but stay away, and it will be done; and oh, how I do thank you, dear Mrs. Fairchild, and dear Betty! I will really try in future to do better; I never wished to do better as I do now."

"There is an early moon, miss," said Betty; "I should not wonder if they stayed till it was up."

It struck nine, and they were not come; another five minutes and the work was finished. Bessy jumped up from the foot of the bed and kissed Mrs. Fairchild first, and then Betty; and then came a bustle to put everything away.

Mrs. Fairchild showed Bessy how to lay aside her bonnet in the bandbox, and her frock in a drawer, with a clean handkerchief over each. The tippet, which was the only one thing which had escaped mischief, for the plain reason that it had not been worn on the Sunday with the frock, was laid in the same drawer; and then the needles and silk and cotton were collected, and the bits and shreds picked up, and the room restored to order as if nothing wonderful had happened.

The last thing Mrs. Fairchild did in that room was to take up the gloves and give them to Betty, to see what could be done with them the next day, and then she, with the happy young girl, put on shawls and walked on the gravel before the house, for it was still hot.

"Well, we have had a happy, happy evening, dear Mrs. Fairchild," said Bessy; "I never thought I should love you so much."

The party did not come home till ten o'clock; they had had such an evening as Lucy and Emily had never known before; but they had often thought of poor Bessy, and wished for her many times, and their mother too. Mrs. Goodriche had also been uneasy about Bessy. How surprised, then, they were to see her looking so cheerful, and Mrs. Fairchild also seeming to be equally happy.

"I will tell you all about it when we get to our room, aunt," whispered Bessy; "but I do not deserve such kindness. Mrs. Fairchild says I had better not speak about it now."

They had had tea and a handsome supper; so when they had talked the evening over, and Mr. Fairchild had read a chapter, they all went to their rooms.

The History of Little Bernard Low

Bessy was very sorry to leave her young friends

The rest of Mrs. Goodriche's visit passed off very quietly and very pleasantly. Bessy became from day to day more manageable, and Lucy and Emily began to love her very much.

Mrs. Goodriche was inquiring everywhere for a house close by, and there was none which seemed as if it could be made to suit her. She and Bessy returned home therefore at the end of a fortnight, and Bessy was very sorry to leave her young friends.

It was four or five days after Mrs. Goodriche had left them before Mr. Fairchild proposed that they should read that famous book which Henry talked so much about.

"But where shall we go to read it?" he asked.

"Oh! to the hut in the wood, papa, if you please," answered Lucy; and in less than an hour everybody was ready to set out: and when everybody was seated as they had been the time before, the book was opened, and Lucy waited to read only till Henry and Emily had seen the picture at the beginning. I will tell you what the picture was

when we come to the place of it in the story.

The History of Little Bernard Low

THE STORY IN HENRY'S BOOK

"Mr. Low was a clergyman, and had a good living in that part of this country where the hills of Wales extend towards the plains of England, forming sweet valleys, often covered with woods, and rendered fruitful and beautiful by rills which have their sources in the distant hills.

"Mr. Low never had but one brother; this brother had been a wild boy, and had run away many years before, and never had been heard of since.

"The name of the valley in which Mr. Low's living was situated was Rookdale; his own house stood alone amongst woods and waterfalls, but there was a village nearer to the mouth of the valley, and in that village, besides some farmers and many cottagers, lived another clergyman of the name of Evans. He was a worthy humble man, and came from the very wildest parts of Wales. He was a needy man, and was forced to work hard to get a decent living for himself, his sister, Miss Grizzy Evans, and an orphan nephew, Stephen Poppleton. Mr. Low gave him fifty pounds a year to help him in the care of his parish, which spread far and wide over the high grounds which surrounded Rookdale; and he added something to his gains by teaching the children of the farmers in the parish, and by taking in two or three boys as boarders; he could not take many, because his house was small and inconvenient. We shall know more of Mr. Evans when we have read the few next pages.

"Mr. Low's living was a very good one, and brought in much money. The house too was good, and he kept several servants, and lived handsomely. He had had four children, but two of them were dead. Mr. Low had but one daughter, her name was Lucilla; and the two eldest were sons, Alfred and Henry. Henry died a baby, but Alfred lived till he was eight years old, and then died, and was buried by the side of his infant brother. The fourth and last child of Mr. and Mrs. Low was Bernard; he

was more than five years younger than Lucilla.

"When Bernard was born, it seemed as if no one could make too much of him. The old woman, Susan Berkley, who had been Mr. Low's own nurse, and had always lived in the family, was so fond of Bernard that she could not refuse him anything; and Mrs. Low was what people call so wrapped up in her boy, that she could never make enough of him. In this respect she was very weak, but those who have lost children well know how strong the temptation is to over-indulge those who are left. At first Mr. Low did not observe how far these plans of indulgence were being carried; indeed, he did not open his eyes fully to the mischief till Bernard was become one of the most troublesome, selfish boys in the whole valley. At five years old he was the torment of the whole house, though even then he was cunning enough to hide some of his worst tempers from his father. He had found out that when he pretended to be ill, mother, nurse, and sister were all frightened out of their senses, and that at such times he could get his way in everything, however improper. He did not care what pain he gave them if he could get what he wanted.

"His father, however, did at length find out the mischief that was going on; and as he feared that his wife and nurse would not have the firmness to check the boy if he remained always at home, he proposed that Bernard should be sent as a day boarder to Mr. Evans. His father wished that he should go every morning after breakfast, dine at school, and return to tea.

"'I have been much to blame,' said Mr. Low, 'in not speaking before of the way in which Bernard has been managed. I blame myself greatly for this neglect, and I now feel that no more time must be lost; and I think it will be easier for us to part with him for a few hours every day, than to send him to a distance.'

"Mrs. Low was a gentle person, and wished to do right; she shed tears, but made no resistance. Lucilla thought that her papa was right; she had lately seen how naughty Bernard was getting; so Mr. Low had no opposition either from his wife or daughter.

When nurse, however, was told that her darling was to go to school to Parson Evans, she was very angry; and though she did not dare to speak her mind to her master, she had no fear of telling it to her mistress and the young lady.

"'Well, to be sure,' she said, 'master has curious notions, to think of sending such a delicate babe as Master Bernard to be kicked about by a parcel of boys, and to be made to eat anything that's set before him, whether he likes it or not. So good a child as he is too: so meek and so tender, that if he but suspects a cross word, he is ready to jump out of himself, and falls a-crying and quaking, and won't be appeased anyhow, till the fit's over with him. Indeed, mistress, if you give him up in this point, I won't say what the consequences may be.'

"'But, nurse,' said Lucilla, 'really Bernard does want to be kept a little in order.'

"'And that from you, Miss?' answered the nurse; 'what would you feel, was you to see him laid in his grave beside his precious little brothers?'

"Lucilla could not answer this question, and Mrs. Low could not speak for weeping; so nurse was left to say all she chose; and as Bernard came in before she had cooled herself down, she told him what was proposed, and said it would break her heart to part with him only for a few hours every day.

"On hearing this, Bernard thought it a proper occasion to show off his meek spirit, and so much noise did he make, and so rebellious and stubborn was his behaviour, that his father, who heard him from a distance, made up his mind to go that very evening to speak about him to Mr. Evans. Mr. Low did not find the worthy man at home; he had walked out with his nephew and three boys who boarded in the house; but Mr. Low found Miss Evans in a small parlour, dressed, as she always was in an evening, with some pretensions to fashion and smartness: she was very busy with a huge basket of stockings, which she was mending.

"When Mr. Low told her his business, she was quite delighted, for she had lived in that humble village till she thought Mr. Low one of the greatest men in the world,

because she never saw any greater. She answered for her brother that he would receive Master Bernard and give him every care; 'and for me, sir,' she added, 'I promise you that the young gentleman shall have the best of everything our poor table will afford.'

"'I wish,' replied Mr. Low, 'that he may be treated exactly as the other boys, my good madam, and no bustle whatever made with him.'

"Soon after Mr. Low was gone, Mr. Evans and his nephew, and three pupils, passed the parlour window. Miss Grizzy tapped on the glass, and beckoned to her brother to come to her, which he did, immediately followed by his nephew.

"'Who do you think has been here, brother, whilst you have been out?' said she; 'who but Mr. Low?' and she told him what Mr. Low had come for, and that she had undertaken that Master Bernard should be received.

"'Very good, sister,' replied Mr. Evans, 'all is well;' and he went out again at the parlour door, seeming to be much pleased. Stephen remained behind, and the moment the door was shut, he said:

"'You seem to be much set up, Aunt Grizzy, at the thought of this boy's coming; you must know, surely, that he is a shocking spoiled child, and that there will be no possibility of pleasing him.'

"'We must try, however,' answered Miss Evans; 'I know, as well as you can do, what he is, a little proud, petted, selfish thing: for is he not the talk of the parish? I have often wondered how Mr. Low could have been so long blind to the need of sending him to school; but then think, nephew, Mr. Low offers as much as if the boy boarded here entirely, and he is only to dine; and I doubt not but that there will be pretty presents too—you know that both Mr. and Mrs. Low are very thoughtful in that way.'

"'But if you can't keep the little plague in good humour,' answered Stephen, 'instead of presents we may have disputes and quarrels; and where will you be then, aunt?'

"'I hope, Stephen, that you will not be creating these quarrels; that you will bear and forbear, and pay Master Low proper respect, and see that Meekin and Griffith and Price do the same: you know well that not one of them are of such high families as Master Low.'

"'You had best not say that to Griffith, aunt,' answered Stephen; 'he has a very high notion, I can tell you, of his family, though his father is only a shopkeeper.'

"Miss Evans put up her lip and said:

"'Well, mind me, Stephen, no quarrelling, I say, with Master Low, at least on your part; so now walk off to your place.'

"When nurse had said all that was in her mind, she became more calm upon the subject of Bernard's going to school; and so thoroughly did the child tease during the few days that passed before he went, that she was almost obliged to confess to herself that it was not altogether a very bad thing that he was to have lessons to learn, and some employment from home during part of every day.

"But when Bernard was actually to go, there was such a to-do about it, that he might just as well have stayed at home, as to any good which might be expected from it in the way of making him think less of himself.

"But when Bernard was actually to go there was such a to-do about it."—Page 332.

"Lucilla had had a little pony for several years; this pony was to be saddled for Bernard, and he was to ride to and from school, whilst a servant attended him. His mother took the occasion to send a present of fruit and nice vegetables by this servant to Miss Grizzy; and there was a note written to Mr. Evans all about Bernard, and a great deal said in it about getting his feet wet; and shoes were sent that he might change them when he came in from play. Nurse also was sent down about two hours after him, with some messages to Miss Evans and to hear how the darling got on.

"Bernard was very sulky all that first morning. He was quite eight years old; Mr.

Evans therefore was much surprised at his being a very poor reader. Indeed he could not in any way stammer out the first chapter in the Bible, and Mr. Evans was obliged to put him into the spelling-book at the first page. He called him up between each Latin lesson he gave, but found that each time he called him, he read rather worse than the time before. The simple truth is that he did not choose to do better.

"Griffith whispered to Meekin, the last time Bernard was up, 'Mind what I say, he is no better than a fool;' and Meekin passed the same words to Price, and then it was a settled thing with these three boys, that Bernard Low was a fool, and a very proper person to play any fun upon.

"But whilst these boys were settling this matter amongst them, Miss Grizzy had sent for Stephen into the parlour, and given him some of the fine pears and walnuts which Mrs. Low had sent.

"'Here, nephew,' she said, 'is the earnest of many more little presents which we may expect; but everything depends on your behaviour to the boy. We must keep him in good humour—we must show him every possible favour in a quiet way, and you must not let Griffith and the others tease him.'

"'This is an uncommon good pear,' said Stephen, as he bit a great piece out of one of them.

"'Is it not?' replied his aunt; 'but, Stephen, do you hear me? you must not let Griffith be playing his tricks on Master Low.'

"'I understand,' answered Stephen, taking another bite at the pear. 'Don't you think I know on which side my bread is buttered yet, aunt?' he asked; 'though I am near fifteen years of age, and half through Homer? but you must allow that Bernard Low is an abominably disagreeable fellow, and one that one should like to duck in a horse-pond—a whining, puling, mother-spoiled brat; however, I will see that he shan't be quizzed to his face, and I suppose that's all you require, is not it?'

"So he put all that remained of what his aunt had given him of the fruit into his

pocket, for himself, and left the room. He went straight to the yard where the boys played, and scarcely got there in time to hinder Griffith from beginning his tricks with Bernard, for he had got a piece of whipcord, and was insisting that the boy should be tied with it between Meekin and Price, and that they should be the team and he the driver; and a pretty run would the first and last horse have given the middle one, had Griffith's plan been executed.

"Bernard was already beginning to whine and put his finger in his eye, when Stephen came in and called out:

"'Eh, what's that there? David Griffith, let the child alone; he has not been used to your horseplay.'

"And as Stephen was much bigger and stronger than the other boys, they all thought it best to give way.

"Bernard was let off, and he walked away, not in the best of tempers, into the house, and into Miss Evans's own parlour, where she was seated at her usual employment, darning stockings.

"'Well, Master Low,' she said, 'I hope you find everything agreeable; I am sure it shall not be my fault if you do not; you have only to say the word and anything you don't like shall be changed, if it is in my power.'

"'I don't like that boy,' answered Bernard; 'that David Griffith.'

"'Never mind him, never mind him, Master Low,' replied Miss Evans; 'any time that he don't make himself agreeable, only come to me; I am always glad to see you here to sit in my parlour, and warm yourself if it is cold. You know how much I respect your papa and mamma; there is nothing I would not do for them.'

"Bernard had been so much used to flattery and fond words, that he did not value them at all; he thought that they were only his due; and he did not so much as say 'Thank you' to Miss Evans, nor even look smiling nor pleasant; but he walked up to her round table, and curiously eyed the large worsted stocking which she was

darning—'Whose is that?' he said.

"'My brother's, Master Low,' she answered.

"'Does he wear such things as those?' said Bernard; 'but I suppose he must, because he is poor, and a curate, and a schoolmaster—my papa wears silk.'

"'Your papa,' said Miss Evans, 'is a rich man, Master Low, and a rector; and he can afford many things we must not think of.'

"'When shall we dine?' asked the boy.

"'Very soon, my dear,' answered Miss Evans.

"And then Master Bernard turned off to some other question, as impertinently expressed as those he had put before.

"The dinner was set out in the room used for a schoolroom; an ill-shaped room, with walls that had been washed with salmon colour, but which were all scratched and inked. Each boy had a stool to sit upon; the cloth was coarse, though clean, and all the things set upon the table were coarse also.

"When called to dinner by a rough maidservant, Miss Evans led Bernard in by the hand, and set him by herself on a chair at the head of the table.

"'Sister,' said Mr. Evans, in a low voice, 'last come, last served—Master Low should sit below Price.'

"'Leave me to judge for myself, brother,' answered Miss Evans; 'you may depend on my judgment.'

"And Bernard kept his seat, and had the nicest bits placed on his plate.

"Bernard would have been quite as well contented, or, perhaps we may say, not in the least more discontented, had he been set down at once in his proper place, and served after the other boys.

"Then the other boys were not quite pleased; but Stephen was told to tell them that Master Low was a parlour-boarder; and though they did not quite understand what a

parlour-boarder meant, they thought it meant something, and that Bernard was to have some indulgences which they were not to have.

"Many a trick would they have played him, no doubt, if Stephen had not watched them. But as Stephen hated the spoiled child as much as they did, he never hindered their speaking ill of him, and quizzing him, when he did not hear or understand.

"Griffith soon gave him a nickname—this name was Noddy; there was no wit in it, but the boys found great amusement in talking of this Noddy, and of all his faults and follies, before the face of Bernard himself. When he asked who this Noddy was, they told him that they were sure he must have seen him very often, for his family lived at Rookdale.

"Mr. Evans himself was the only person in the family at school who really strove to do his duty by Bernard—he gave his heart to improve him; and he did get him on in his learning more than might have been expected. But there were too many things against the poor child to make it possible for him to improve his temper and his character.

"He went to school from the autumn until Christmas: at Christmas he was at home for a month, and made even his nurse long for the end of the holidays; and then he went again after the holidays, and continued to go every day till the spring appeared again. There was no intention then of changing the plan, though Mr. Low was not at all satisfied with him.

"Bernard was now become so cunning that he did not show the worst of his tempers before his father, nor even before his mother; but to his sister he appeared just as he was, and he often made her very, very sad by his naughty ways.

"Lucilla was one of those young people who love God and all their fellow-creatures, and desire to do them good. She had always loved Bernard, and she loved him still, though she saw him getting more and more naughty from day to day. She believed, however, that he still loved her as well as he could love any person besides himself,

and she thought a long time of some way which she might take to make him sensible of his faults.

"During that winter she had often spoken to him in her kind and gentle way, and shown him the certain end of evil behaviour; but she felt that he paid no more attention to her than he would have done to the buzzing of a fly; but now that the spring was come, and they could get out together into the fields and gardens and woods, before and after school-time, and on half-holidays, she thought she might have a better chance with him, and she formed a thousand plans for making the time they might thus pass together pleasant, before she could hit upon one which she thought might do.

"In a shadowy and sweet nook of the garden was an artificial piece of rock-work, which her mother, when first married, had caused to be made there, the fragments of rock having been brought from a little distance. There Lucilla, with the gardener's assistance, scooped a hollow place, a few feet square, and arranged a pretty little hermitage: dressing a doll like an old man, and painting a piece of glass to fix in the back of the hermitage, to look like the window of a chapel. She next sent and bought a few common tools, and thought, as Bernard was very fond of clipping and cutting, she could tempt him to work to help finish this hermitage. There was a root-house close to the place, where she thought they might set to work at this business. 'And if I can but engage Bernard,' she said to herself, 'to use his fingers, I might perhaps now and then say something to soften him, and make him feel it is wrong to go on as he does.'

"Mr. Evans always gave a week's holiday at Whitsuntide, and Lucilla thought that this should be her time for trying what she could do with Bernard."

But when Bernard was actually to go there was such a to-do

Second Part of the History of Little Bernard Low

"Let us sit here under the shade of a tree"

SECOND PART OF HENRY'S STORY

"Meekin and Griffith and Price went home to spend the Whitsun holidays on the Saturday evening, and Bernard came home also, with the expectation of an idle time, which was to last till the Monday after the next.

"The weather was very fine; all the early shrubs and flowers were in bloom, the cuckoo was still in the woods, and the leaves had not lost their tender young green.

"The young men in Rookdale were very fond of ringing the bells when there was a holiday, and they rang away great part of Sunday and of Monday also.

"The bells were soft and sweet, though rather sad; but the lads in the belfry found nothing sad in pulling at the ropes, and going up and down with them.

"Lucilla missed Bernard during several hours of the Sunday; she did not guess that he had gone into the belfry with the young men, and that he had persuaded the cook to give him a jug of beer to send to them. The men would not let him pull a bell, as he was not strong enough—even the beer would not tempt them.

"The Monday morning was as bright as the Sunday had been, and it was enough to make the old young again to hear the man who was mowing the lawn whetting his scythe whilst the dew was on the grass, and the various songs of the birds in the trees.

"Lucilla had fixed upon this day to show Bernard the hermitage; but she was rather put out, when she came down to breakfast, to see that there was a very sulky flush on his cheeks, and that he was complaining of his father to his mother, whilst his father was not in the room.

"'Now, mamma,' said Bernard, 'do ask papa; it's a holiday, and a fine day, and I want to go. And why can't I go? Papa is so cross.'

"'My dear, you can't go to L—— (that was the nearest town to Rookdale) to-day,'

replied his mother; 'your papa is too busy to ride with you.'

"'Can't John go?' asked Bernard.

"'He is engaged also,' said Mrs. Low.

"'Can't Ralph go?' returned Bernard.

"'Ralph is too young to be trusted with your papa's horse,' said Mrs. Low.

"'But I must go.'

"'But indeed you can't.'

"'I can walk. What's to hinder my walking?'

"'Now do be content, my dear—stay with your sister—she has nothing to do but to be with you;' and thus the mother and son went on until Mr. Low came in, and then Bernard became what Griffith would have called glum, for Griffith used many odd words.

"There was no more said about going to L—— after Mr. Low came in; but it was quite certain that Bernard's sour looks were not lost on his father.

"When breakfast was over, Lucilla said:

"'Now, Bernard, come with me—I have a pleasure for you.' When she had put on her bonnet she led him to her grotto, and showed him what she had done already, and gave him the tools and some little bits of wood, and said, 'Now you must make my hermit a table and a chair—he must have a table; and whilst you make these I will finish his dress, and fasten the flax on for his beard, and make him a rosary with beads.'

"Lucilla watched her brother's face whilst she showed him the things, and told him what she hoped he would do; and she saw that he never smiled once. Spoiled children sometimes laugh loud, but they smile very little; they have generally very grave faces.

"When they had looked at the grotto, they went into the root-house; there were seats

round it, and a table in the middle. Lucilla sat down, and pulled her needle and thread and beads and bits of silk and cloth out of her basket; and Bernard sat down too with the tools and bits of wood and board before him.

"He first took up one tool and then another, and examined them, and called them over. There was a nail-passer, and a hammer, and a strong knife, and one or two more things very useful to a young boy in making toys, or anything else in a small way; in short, everything that was safe for such a one to have. But Bernard was out of humour, and looked for something to find fault with, so of course he could find nothing to please him.

"'This nail-driver is too small, Lucilla,' he said; 'where did you get it?'

"'At L——,' she answered.

"'What did you give for it?' he asked. 'If you gave much, they have cheated you; and the hammer, what did you give for that?'

"Lucilla either did not remember, or did not choose to tell him; and, without noticing his questions, she said:

"'What will you make first?'

"Bernard did not answer.

"'Suppose you take this little square bit of deal,' said Lucilla, 'and put legs to it, Bernard?'

"The boy took up the deal, turned it about, and, as Lucilla hoped, was about to prepare a leg; for he took up a slender slip of wood, and began paring it. She then went on with her work, looking up from time to time, whilst Bernard went on cutting the slip. He pared and pared, and notched awhile, till that slip was reduced to mere splinters. Still Lucilla seemed to take no notice, but began to talk of anything she could think of. Amongst other things, she talked of the pleasant week they had before them, and of a scheme which their father had proposed of their all going to

drink tea some evening at a cottage in the wood; she said, how pleasant it would be for them all to be together. No answer again—Bernard had just spoiled another slip of wood, which he finished off by wilfully snapping it in two; after which he stared his sister full in the face, as if he was resolved to make her notice him.

"She saw what he was about, and therefore seemed as if she did not even see him. She was sad, but she went on talking. The bells had struck up again: they sounded sweetly, and they seemed sometimes to come as if directly from the church, and then again as if from the woods and hills on the opposite side. Lucilla remarked how odd this was, and said she could not account for it; and then she added, 'Do you know, Bernard, that I never hear bells ring without thinking of Alfred? he used to love to hear them; he called them music, and once asked me if there would be bells in heaven. I was very little then, only in my seventh year, and I told him that there would be golden bells in heaven, because the pilgrims had heard them ring when they were waiting in the Land of Beulah to go over the River of Death.'

"'I say,' said Bernard, 'these bits of wood are not worth burning.'

"'You cut into them too deeply,' answered Lucilla.

"'There goes!' returned Bernard, snapping another; then, laying down the knife, he took up the nail-passer, using it to bore a hole in the board which formed the table of the root-house.

"'You must not do that,' said Lucilla, almost drawn out of her patience.

"'Who says so?' answered Bernard.

"'It is mischief,' said Lucilla. 'It is papa's table; he will be vexed if he sees it.'

"'What for?' said the tiresome boy.

"Lucilla did not answer.

"'What for?' repeated Bernard, throwing down the nail-passer, and taking up the hammer, with which he knocked away on the place where he had made the hole.

"'Oh, my beads!' cried his sister; for the hammering had overturned the little box in which they were, and she had only time to save them, or most of them, from rolling down on the gravel.

"'Well,' said Bernard, 'if that does not please you, what can I do next?'

"Lucilla sighed; she could not speak at the moment, she was so very sad, and so much disappointed.

"'I thought,' said Bernard, after a minute, 'that you promised me a pleasure. What is it?'

"Lucilla's eyes filled with tears; she rubbed them hastily away, and went on working, though without any delight in her work.

"Bernard yawned, then stretched; and after a while he said:

"'Come, Lucilla, let us have a walk.'

"'Anything,' thought Lucilla, 'that will put you into a better state of mind.' So she gathered up her work, put it into her basket, and arose, leaving the tools and the work on her table; then, giving one sad look at her grotto, she led the way to a wicket not very far off, which opened on a path made by her father through some part of the large and beautiful wood which skirted part of the garden. Bernard followed her, and they went on together for some time in silence.

"The path first led them down into a deep hollow, through the bottom of which ran a pure stream of water, which had its source in the hills above. The rays of the sun, which here and there shone through the trees, sparkled and danced in the running stream. A gentle breeze was rustling among the leaves; and besides the song of many birds, the clear note of the cuckoo was heard from some distance.

"The path led them to a little bridge of a single plank and a hand-rail, over which they crossed, and began to go up still among woods to the other side, where the bank was very much more steep.

"Still they spoke not: Lucilla was thinking of Bernard, and grieving for his wayward humours; and Bernard was thinking that Lucilla was not half such good company as Ralph the stable-boy, or even as Miss Evans or Stephen; and yet he had some sort of love for Lucilla, though he did not like her company. He was, however, the first to speak.

"'Lucilla,' he said, 'do you know a lad in the parish called Noddy?'

"'Noddy?' replied Lucilla.

"'There is such a one,' said Bernard; 'Griffith knows him well, and they say he is the oddest fellow—a sort of fool, and everybody's laughing-stock. They will have it that I have seen him often; but if I have, I don't know him.'

"'There may be many boys in the parish unknown to me,' answered Lucilla.

"'I have asked Ralph about him,' said Bernard; 'but I can't get anything out of him; he always falls a-laughing when I speak the word.'

"Lucilla felt herself more and more sad about her brother, and said to him:

"'Really, Bernard, you are too intimate with Ralph; he may be a very good boy, but you ought not to be so free with him as you are.'

"Bernard walked on, and made no answer.

"It was rather hard work, even for these two young people, to climb this bank, which was, indeed, the foot of a very steep hill; at last they came out on one side of the wood, on a very sweet field, covered with fine grass, but nearly as steep as the path by which they had come. The prospect from the top of this field was very lovely, for immediately below was the deep dell in which the water flowed, and up a little above it their father's house and garden, and beyond that the tower of the church and the trees in the churchyard were seen; and still farther on, hills of all shapes, near and far off, and woods, and downs, and farmhouses. What pleased the little girl most was a road which looked like a white thread winding away over the heights, and

passing out of sight near around hill, with a clump of firs at the top.

"'Let us sit down here under the shade of a tree,' said Lucilla; and she sat down, whilst Bernard stretched himself by her side.

"Lucilla began to speak, after their long silence, by pointing out the different things which they saw before them, telling the names of the hills, and showing the farm-houses.

"'And there,' she said, 'look at that winding road and that round hill. Beyond that hill is a common covered with gorse, where there are many rabbits, and also many sheep. Nurse's son lives on that common: he was papa's foster-brother. You know he is nurse's only child, and has got a pretty cottage there. When poor little Alfred was beginning to get weak and unwell, soon after Henry died; and mamma was ill too, and obliged to go somewhere for her health, it was advised by the doctors that Alfred should also change the air: and as the air of that common was thought very fine, I went with my brother and nurse to spend the summer at her son's cottage; and, Bernard, though I was then but six years old, I remember everything there as if I had left it but yesterday, for nurse has so often talked about that time to me.

"'Sweet little Alfred! He seemed to get quite well and strong; he rode about the common on a donkey sometimes, and sometimes he played with me, and sometimes we used to sit on the little heaps covered with sweet short herbs, and talk of many things.

"'His chief delight was to talk of some place far away, where he always fancied we were to go soon: he was to see Henry there, and Henry would have wings, and his Saviour would be with them to take care of them, and I was to come, and papa and mamma. I suppose that he spoke the words of a baby; but the thoughts which were in his heart were very sweet. He was merry, too, Bernard, more merry than you are, and full of little tricks to make me laugh. But when we had been three months at the cottage he grew languid and pale again; he was brought home, and from that time

grew worse and worse; and he died before Christmas. Oh, Bernard, he was the gentlest, sweetest child—so pale! so beautiful!'

"Lucilla for a minute could say no more; she covered her face with her hands, and large tears fell from her eyes. Bernard did not speak, but he had an odd feeling in his throat, and wished that Lucilla was not there to see him cry, for he felt he wanted to cry.

"Lucilla soon spoke again, and went on in the kindest, most gentle way, to tell her brother how much more bitter his ill-behaviour was to their mother than even the death of her elder boys; saying everything which a loving, gentle girl could say to lead him to better behaviour.

"Suddenly, whilst she was speaking, she saw her father and mother coming from the little wicket which lay in full view below them, and taking their way slowly, and as if talking to each other, along the path in the wood. Sometimes the trees partly hid them, then Lucilla saw them clearly again, and then not at all. She pointed them out to Bernard, and said:

'"Now, now, dear brother, is your time; you can run down one bank and up another in a few minutes; you can run to mamma, and beg her pardon for being sullen and disobedient to her this morning at breakfast; and then, my dear, dear brother, you will have made a good beginning, and we shall all be so happy.'

"Bernard had laid himself at full length on the grass, amusing himself, whilst his sister spoke, with kicking his legs. He was trying with all his might and main to harden himself against what she said; and succeeded in making himself as stupid as a mere brick.

"When she pressed him to run to his father, he drew up his legs and lay with his knees above all the rest of him, and his eyes staring up to the tree above his head, so that an owl could not have looked more stupid.

"Lucilla felt more sad than she had done before, when she saw how determined he

was not to listen to her. She knew not what next to do or say; but whilst she was thinking, a dog was heard to bark on the other side the hedge which was behind them, and a voice saying, 'Be quiet, Pincher.'

"'Why, that is Stephen,' cried Bernard, jumping on his feet; 'what can he be doing here?'

"He flew to the hedge, he sprang up the bank, and called to Stephen, who was walking along the path on the other side with his dog Pincher.

"'Stop, stop!' cried Bernard; 'stop and I will come to you. Good-bye, Lucilla, you can go home by yourself;' and the next minute the rude boy had tumbled over the fence, and was running after Stephen.

"Poor Bernard little thought what he lost when he refused to listen to Lucilla, and what great pleasure he would have gained, had he done what she required of him, and run to beg his father's pardon.

"No one can say what a day may bring forth; and who could have foreseen the very strange thing which had happened whilst Lucilla and Bernard were out that morning? It was an affair of very serious business, which must be told: but as most young people hate business, it shall be told as shortly as possible.

"Mr. Low's brother had been a very wild boy, and had run away; so that for many years Mr. Low had heard nothing about him. At last he got a letter; it was a kind and humble one: in this letter Mr. John Low sent word, that after many adventures he had made some money, and bought a farm in America, on the banks of the Hudson, above New York; that he was doing very well, that he had never married, and only wished that his brother would come and see him. Mr. Low had answered this letter as a brother should do; and every year since, they had written to each other, and sent each other presents. But this morning a letter had come from Mr. John Low, entreating his brother to come to him, if possible, and to bring his family; stating that he had a disease upon him that must soon finish his life; and telling him that he

had engaged the captain of the Dory, who brought the letter, to take him and his family back with him to America, he having undertaken to pay all the costs. The letter finished with the most earnest entreaties that they would all come.

"With Mr. John Low's letter came another from Captain Lewis, of the Dory, saying he should go back in less than a fortnight, and pressing Mr. Low to attend to his brother's request; adding that he almost feared that his friend, Mr. John Low, would hardly be found alive when they reached New York.

"Mr. and Mrs. Low were talking over this letter, and forming their plans about it, when their children saw them walking so gravely in the wood. They had come to the resolution to go with Captain Lewis, and they had a long discourse about Bernard. They resolved at once to take Lucilla with them; they wished her to see her uncle, and to see the New World, and her company would be pleasant to them; but they had many doubts about Bernard. Mr. Low was quite against taking him, and he took this occasion to tell his wife that they had both been to blame in spoiling him as they had done, and that he considered his present ill-behaviour as a punishment which he himself deserved, for having suffered his boy to be so spoiled.

"Mrs. Low had not much to say; she thought her husband was right.

"Now, had Bernard listened to Lucilla, and had he come just at that minute before his parents and begged pardon for his ill-behaviour, he might have changed his father's determination—for fathers are very forgiving—and then his mother, too, would have been on his side; and so he might have got the pleasure of going that long journey into the New World.

"Everything was settled after Mr. Low had made up his mind, even before Bernard returned; for Stephen was going a long walk to see Meekin's father, who was a farmer in the next parish, and Bernard went with him. Stephen would not take him, however, till he had come back to where Lucilla was, to ask her if she thought Mr. Low would be pleased if he took him.

"Stephen could speak very properly and well, when it served his turn to do so; and Lucilla thought him a very nice person, and to be trusted, for he was older than Bernard, by several years, and was often trusted to walk with the boys. She could not say that she could give leave, but she promised to tell her father where Bernard was gone, and with whom. Everything was therefore settled before the spoiled boy came home late in the evening. Mr. Low agreed with Mr. Evans that he should take care of his church; and as Mr. Evans was going to have his house painted and a new schoolroom built, it was also settled that he should come and reside at the rectory until Mr. Low returned. Miss Evans was immensely pleased at the thought of this. Bernard was to remain under Mr. Evans's care; Mr. Low's servants were all to be put on board wages and sent home, excepting the gardener. Even nurse was to go to her son, for Mr. Low said that nurse was the one who spoiled Bernard most. The boys were to have a large laundry, which was in the yard, for their schoolroom, and the drying yard for their play-ground; and Mr. Evans and his family were to come in the day Mr. Low left.

"Mr. Low had also to ask leave for being absent from his living, and Mrs. Low had packing to do; so that there was a vast deal to get through, for it was necessary for them to be in London, where Captain Lewis was, in a very few days.

"As Lucilla, who had not yet heard of all this great bustle, walked quietly home, her heart was very sad on account of her brother. She came back by the grotto, and took up her work-basket, putting away the hermit and the tools and bits of wood in a corner of the little cave out of sight; and taking her basket in her hand, she walked towards home, thinking to return to her little hermitage the next day at latest.

"Poor Lucilla could not help shedding a few tears as she passed slowly along the shrubbery, to think how all her little plans had ended in nothing. She did not just then remember that verse, 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it.'"

"He took up a slip of wood."—Page 344.

Third Part of the History of Little Bernard Low

There was no end of the indulgences given in private to the boy

THIRD PART OF HENRY'S STORY

"As this history has been very long, and there is more to write about it, we will not say much of what happened the next seven days; for both houses, that is, Mr. Low's and Mr. Evans's, were all in a bustle, and everybody was pleased at the changes which were coming. Even Bernard, after he had roared, and cried, and sulked for the first two days, had altered his manner, and taken up the behaviour of Harry in the old spelling-book—what we may call the don't-care behaviour—for, as he told nurse, if his father did not love him enough to take the trouble of him in the voyage he was taking, he did not care, not he; he should be very happy at home without him. He should cry no more: he wondered why he cried at first, for he had not cared all the while; and so he went whistling about the house the tune of the 'Jolly Miller' which he had heard Ralph sing:

"'There was a jolly miller once Lived on the River Dee; He work'd and sang from morn till night, No man so blithe as he.

"'And this the burden of his song For ever used to be— I care for nobody, no, not I, And nobody cares for me.'

"Bernard, however, did not let his father hear him whistling this tune, nor did he say, 'I don't care,' before him.

"The Monday following that in which he had walked with Lucilla was the day fixed for the many changes. Very early in the morning, nurse's son brought a donkey for his mother. The old woman cried, and said she should have no peace till she came back again, and told Mrs. Low that she was sure she should never live in comfort with her son's wife Joan. She kissed Bernard twenty times, and begged him to come

and see her; and Bernard did his best not to cry. There was an early breakfast, but nobody sat at the table two minutes together; something was to be done every moment. Mr. Low walked in and out five or six times. The housemaid and the cook came in to say good-bye; they were going to walk to their homes; and Ralph was to go with his sister, the cook. People, too, were coming with packages from Mr. Evans's, and the bustle kept Bernard from thinking very deeply on what was going to happen; and yet he could not eat his breakfast, nor whistle, for he was not in his usual spirits.

"At length the chaise came from the inn, and the trunks were brought down to be fastened on.

"Bernard placed himself at the window to look at what was being done without; and again he felt the same choking he had had on the hill.

"He heard his mother say, 'When shall we start, my dear?' and his father answer, 'In less than half an hour.' He saw his mother look at him with tears in her eyes. He could bear it no longer—he rushed out into the shrubbery, and having got behind a laurestinus, he gave full way to his tears—he could not then say, 'Who cares?'

"Lucilla saw him run out and followed him; she was weeping very bitterly; she threw her arms round him, and they both cried together. She kissed him many times, and they would not have parted then, had they not heard themselves called. Lucilla hastily then put a very pretty little Bible in his hand, and gave him another kiss.

"There only remained a tender parting between the boy and his parents; and whilst they were still blessing him they were driven away, and the poor child was left standing alone on the gravel. His eyes followed the carriage as long as it could be seen from that place; and then, observing some people coming in at the gate, he ran away. He took the path through the shrubbery, and across a field, to a high green bank, from which he could trace the road a long way, even as far off as where it passed under the round hill with the clump of firs on it, near to nurse's son's house.

"He sat down on the bank, waiting until the carriage should come in sight again: for when it got down into the bottom of the valley, where there were many trees, it was hid from his view.

"This was perhaps the first time in Bernard's life in which he ever had any really useful thoughts. He was made then to have some little notion that he owed his present trouble to his having been a very rebellious naughty boy; but with this good thought came also a bad one: 'But if papa loves me as he ought to do, he would not have been so cruel as to leave me. He would have forgiven me and overlooked the past, and tried me again.'

"Bernard did not consider that it would actually have been very dangerous to have taken a disobedient boy to sea, for no one could tell what mischief he might have got into on board ship.

"When Bernard saw the carriage again, it looked like a speck on the white road. The speck seemed to grow smaller and smaller, and at last it disappeared round the foot of the little hill. Then the poor boy cried and cried again, until he could cry no longer, and every tear seemed to be dried up.

"No one can say how long he sat there, but it was a long time; at last he heard a voice, saying, 'Master Low! Master Low! where are you?' and the next minute old Jacob, the gardener, appeared.

"Now Jacob was the only servant who had not helped to spoil Bernard, and therefore Bernard had never liked him, but always called him cross old Jacob. He was glad, however, to see him then; and yet he did not speak first to him.

"'I am glad I have found you, Master,' said the old man; 'I have been hunting you everywhere; and so has Mr. Evans. They be all come—Miss Grizzy herself, and the two maids, and Master Stephen, and a power of traps; and the lad that cleans the shoes and knives. But I shan't let him meddle with the horses, which he is forward enough to do. But you must come along with me. Master; they are all in trouble

about you.'

"'Surely,' said Bernard, forgetting that one good thought which he had had a little before, 'I may go anywhere I please on my own papa's grounds; everything here is papa's, Jacob, and I am at home here.'

"'True,' replied Jacob, 'and so am I too; but neither you nor I is master here.'

"'That is just like you, Jacob,' answered Bernard; 'but I am the master's son, and you are a servant.'

"'I could answer you from Scripture,' said Jacob, 'if I would.'

"'Do then!' cried Bernard.

"'Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father' (Gal. iv. 1, 2).

"Bernard made no answer to this, but, getting up, walked before Jacob to the house. At the door he was met by Mr. Evans, who spoke to him kindly, said he hoped to make him happy, and to do everything for his good in his father's absence. He added also that Griffith and Meekin and Price were come, and were in the laundry, which was then to be called the schoolroom; but that he should not call any of them that day to lessons; only he hoped that he would not go far from the house, as he was now accountable for his safety.

"Mr. Evans then walked away, and Bernard went to his own room, where he had much difficulty to prevent himself from crying again; but happening to light upon some penny pictures and a pair of scissors, he amused himself with cutting them all to pieces; first cutting out the figures, then the houses, and then the trees, till he had spoiled them all.

"At one o'clock the bell rang for dinner. Bernard did not stir till somebody had had the trouble of coming up to call him. The dinner was laid in the family dining-room.

Miss Grizzy was seated at the head of the table when Bernard came in; she was in very good humour, and smart as usual. Mr. Evans was in Mr. Low's place at the bottom; the boys on each side.

"'Master Low,' said Miss Evans, as he came in, 'I hope you are well; here we are, you see, in your papa's handsome room, and here is your chair by me. I don't ask you to sit down, for who has such a right to sit here as you have? Make room, Meekin. Surely there is room enough at this large table? Sit a little lower, Griffith; and now, Master Low, what shall we give you?'

"All that was proud and selfish in the heart of poor Bernard was awake and busy long before Miss Evans had finished her speech. The boy looked round the table for what he liked best; but instead of asking, told the servant to take his plate for it, saying:

"'Don't give me fat, I don't like it.'

"'No fat for Master Low,' cried Miss Evans: and then again speaking to the boy, 'You have a charming house here, Master Low; I had no notion how good it was till I went over it this morning. I tell the young gentlemen here that they must be very careful not to do mischief.'

"'They cannot do any, sister,' said Mr. Evans, 'if they keep to their places. They must not go into the garden, there is abundant room for them to play in elsewhere, and they shall have as much fruit as is good for them. Mind, boys, on honour, no going into the garden. You shall not need, for as Mr. Low kindly leaves us the use of the fruit, you shall have your full share.'

"'You hear, young gentlemen,' said Miss Evans; 'Master Meekin, Master Griffith, Master Price——'

"'And Master Low,' added Mr. Evans, 'you are, on honour, not to go into the garden.'

"'Master Low!' repeated Miss Grizzy; 'Master Low not to go into his papa's garden?'

"Mr. Evans never disputed with his sister before the boys, and not, indeed, very often when alone with her, for he loved peace and quietness, and she would always have many last words; so he said no more; and she, tapping Bernard gently on the back, said, in a low voice:

"'That would be hard, would not it, to keep you out of your dear papa's own garden?'

"'I should think so,' answered Bernard, in the same low voice.

"This was only the beginning; and as Miss Grizzy went on as she had begun, in setting up Bernard, and flattering him to the very utmost in her power, there is much reason to fear that he was not likely to be the better for being left with her.

"Griffith, with his friends Meekin and Price, would soon have given him a lesson or two of another kind, had not Stephen watched them; but Stephen had been well tutored by his aunt, and as much was gained them from Mr. Low's friendship, besides the honour of having Master Low at school, they cared for nothing so much as keeping the naughty boy in good humour.

"As to Mr. Evans, he was a simple, earnest man, not suspecting evil of others, and anxious to do good. He was kind to all his pupils; he never made a difference: and it was for his sake that any boys remained in the house; so that he really caused the family to prosper, whilst his sister fancied it was all her own doing.

"The next day Mr. Evans began to give his lessons; and kept them on most regularly till the Midsummer holidays. He was not aware that Bernard had any other indulgence but being helped first at table, which he did not quite like; and he kept him as close as the others at his lessons.

"But Miss Grizzy, and Stephen, and Bernard were too deep for him; and there was no end of the indulgences given in private to the boy. He had cakes, and puffs, and strawberries and cream given him, when nobody saw it, by Miss Evans.

"Stephen never took notice when he went beyond bounds unless his uncle was likely to catch him. He helped him privately at his lessons; and when set to hear him, often

let him slip them altogether; and always took his part when there was a quarrel between him and the other boys. The holidays made but little difference with Bernard. Mr. Evans gave him a daily lesson, because he wanted to get him on. And as to other things, he could not be more spoiled and stuffed by Miss Grizzy at one time than at another.

"Miss Grizzy all this while disliked him as much as Stephen did, and that was with their whole hearts.

"Stephen called him a little proud, insolent puppy. And Miss Evans said he was the most greedy child she ever saw, and so wasteful and thankless, and one of the worst-mannered boys she ever had to deal with.

"Stephen said the same to Meekin and Griffith and Price; he laid all the partiality with which they charged him on his aunt, and said he only wished he could have his way with him, and he would soon bring down his airs, and teach him what he was made of.

"The same boys met again after the holidays, and things went on much in the same way.

"Several letters were received from Mr. Low from different places; at length one came, stating their arrival in New York, and their being about to go up the Hudson to Mr. John Low's house.

"The great indulgence with which Bernard was treated, and the bustle that was made about him, together with the real kindness of Mr. Evans, made him very hard and careless about his parents.

"He used often to say, 'I do very well here; if papa stays longer than he at first intended I shall not fret after him, and I dare say he will not fret after me, for if he had loved me so very much he would not have left me behind.'

"Bernard could not forgive his father for leaving him; but whenever he talked in this way not even Stephen could keep Griffith from speaking his mind to him.

"'There you go again,' Griffith would say; 'always blaming your father, when the fault is all your own. Don't you know, Bernard, that there is nobody that can bear with you who thinks they have not something to get by you?'

"The name Noddy, which Stephen had forbidden, was got up again after the Midsummer holidays; and everything that Bernard did to make himself disagreeable was set down to this Noddy.

"At last Bernard got to the truth of this matter by being told by Meekin that if he wished to see Noddy, he must take a peep in the looking-glass. On hearing this, Bernard struck Meekin, and if Stephen had not come in, the spoiled boy for once would have got his deserts.

"Letters were again received from Mr. Low about December; he said in them that his poor brother was very ill, not likely to live through the winter; that it was impossible for him to leave him, and that at all events he meant to stay till the season for crossing the sea should be better. Lucilla at the same time wrote a long letter to her brother.

"The Christmas holidays passed, and nothing particular happened; the same boys met again after Christmas, and another boy came also; but Bernard despised him as much as he did Meekin and Griffith and Price, because he had heard it said that his father kept a shop.

"January passed, and February, and March; another letter had come from Mr. Low; poor Mr. John Low was dead, and Mr. Low was busy settling his affairs. Mr. John Low had left his brother a good deal of money, but Mr. Low did not say anything about that; Miss Grizzy therefore made it out that there was none.

"Another letter arrived at the end of March to say that Captain Lewis was to sail for England in the Dory in a few days, and that Mr. Low hoped to come with him. There was another sweet letter from Lucilla, telling how many pretty things she had collected for her dear brother.

"It was about four weeks after these two last letters had been received, when one morning Mr. Evans came in a great hurry, and with a face of much trouble, into the school-room, and called out Stephen. Stephen came back five minutes afterwards, and told the boys that his uncle had been called suddenly away, and they had leave to play.

"'Good news—good news!' cried Griffith, and away ran the four pupils, with Stephen after them; whilst Bernard went into the house to see what he could get.

"As he came into the hall he saw that the parlour door was open, and he heard people talking within. Miss Grizzy was in the parlour, and she was talking to a neighbour who had dropped in. The coming of that neighbour, Bernard thought, had something to do with the holiday so suddenly given, and by listening he thought he might find something out about this holiday.

"The words Bernard heard were these:

"'I know, Mrs. Smith, better than most, that the family had nothing to depend upon but the living. To be sure, the living is very good, and much might be saved out of it for the children, but if what we hear is true they will come but poorly off, I fear.'

"'You forget, Miss Evans,' answered Mrs. Smith, 'that if what we hear be true—and I fear it is—there is only one left to provide for.'

"As Bernard drew closer to the door to hear more, he knocked his foot against it, and Miss Grizzy called out:

"'Who is there?'

"Bernard walked into the parlour at the call, in his usual manner, and without taking any notice of Mrs. Smith, he said:

"'I want some bread and butter.'

"'What, already?' cried Miss Grizzy tartly; 'don't you see that I am talking business with my neighbour, Master Low? Come, you had best go to play, and mind to shut

the door after you.'

"Bernard looked at her with a look which seemed to say, 'What's the matter now?' and walked away, leaving the door as wide open as he could push it.

"He walked into the garden, but old Jacob was not there, and then he went to the back of the house to look for the other boys. He had heard their voices at a distance, when he got there, and saw them in the very field where he had sat with Lucilla. Their voices came straight over the valley; but it was a long way to go, down first and up again, to them. However, he set out to go, and in his way had to pass by the door of a cottage near the brook. In this cottage lived an old woman, who had been supported for some years by his father's family, though she could do little in return. She was sitting on the step, with her face on her knees, crying bitterly.

"'What now, Betty?' said Bernard.

"'Ah, Master Low!' she said, looking up, 'is it you, my precious master, and do you say, what's the matter now? Have not they told you? The hardened creatures to keep such news from you!'

"And she then told him the real cause of the breaking up of the school, the absence of Mr. Evans and Jacob, and the visit of Mrs. Smith. News had come that day to Rookdale, that the Dory had been lost at sea, and gone down with every creature on board: having been seen to founder by some other vessel, in a dreadful squall off some island.

"Mr. Evans had gone immediately to discover the truth of this account, which was in a newspaper. It is not known where he went, or to whom he wrote letters; but this is certain, that he only obtained confirmation of the dreadful news, and as weeks passed, and nothing was heard from Mr. Low or of the Dory, every one, of course, believed that poor Bernard was an orphan.

"Miss Grizzy began to think where the money was to come from to pay for Bernard's keep; for what had been said was very true, Mr. Low had had little to

depend upon but his living; or if he had saved anything, it could not be known where his savings were, till his papers could be looked up, and that could not be done until it was as certain as might be that he was really dead.

"Poor Bernard!—now his time of trial had come: he was quite unprepared for the story old Betty told him. Mr. Evans had wished it might for the present be kept from him. He fell down like one struck with death when he heard the story.

"The old woman screamed; at her cry, Stephen and the boys, who were not far off, came running to her; more help was called, Bernard was lifted up, and carried to the house and put to bed.

"When laid on his bed, it was found that the sudden shock had made him very ill, and there was fear of inflammation of the brain. The doctor was sent for, he was bled more than once, his head was shaved, and a large blister put upon it. He was reduced to be as weak as a baby: he called often, when he knew not what he said, for his father and his mother, and his own sweet Lucilla; and when he recollected that he had heard they were dead, he called for his nurse.

"Nurse came the moment she heard of his illness; but Mr. Evans was not come home, he was absent more than ten days, and Miss Grizzy would not let nurse see him. In grief and anger the old woman went home, and took to her bed almost as ill as poor Bernard.

"Miss Grizzy was the person who watched by Bernard's bed, and saw that everything the doctor ordered was done; but Bernard fancied she was not the same Miss Grizzy that used to smile upon him and flatter him in past times, she looked so grave, and said so often, 'That must be done, Master Low.'

"Bernard, however, did not think much about her; his whole mind was filled, till his head got well, with thoughts of his parents and sister, and even of his little brothers, whom he had never seen. And in this time of suffering and weakness he began to be sincerely sorry for his past naughtiness.

"Mr. Evans came back without any hope respecting Mr. Low. He was very much grieved, especially for Bernard, and showed his kindness by visiting him often in his room; and when the boy was better, another friend showed himself; this was Griffith, who had made up his mind never again to quiz Bernard so long as he lived. He came often to him, and even read to him in the Bible Lucilla had given. Jacob too showed his deep affection for his little master. But Jacob himself was soon afterwards taken ill, and Miss Grizzy contrived that he should be sent away till he got better. So Bernard was made to feel that those were not his real friends who flattered him when all seemed to be well with him.

"Time passed on, Bernard's health was restored, and he was able to come down as usual. He went down to dinner the first day on a Sunday. He had been well enough to go down the Monday before, but Miss Grizzy had fixed on Sunday for the day; perhaps because her brother, who had two churches to serve, would not be at dinner. When Bernard came into the room, he looked at the place where he used to sit, but Master Larkin, the new pupil, was in it. There was a place kept for him by Stephen at the bottom of the table.

"'You are older than Larkin, Low,' said Stephen, 'and must give up the place of pet to him.' Bernard sat down. He did not just then understand the reason of being put out of his place—he had this to learn amongst other things. He was not asked what he would like, but helped in his turn; and when dinner was over, he was not asked if he would like to stay in the parlour, but told, if he felt tired, to go and lie on his own bed. At tea he was treated like the other boys, and at supper also, and from that time this went on. If Mr. Evans saw it, he did not interfere; but this good man was very absent, and many things passed before him which he did not notice.

"After a few days, one would have thought that Miss Evans and her nephew had ceased to care altogether about Bernard's feelings; they began to talk before him of who was to have the house and living, and that it was necessary to take great care of

the house and furniture; and Bernard was told that he must not run rampaging about as he had done formerly; for, as Miss Grizzy said, there was little enough left, she feared, for his maintenance, and there was no need to make things worse.

"It was a hard lesson for the spoiled boy to be taught to be patient under these mortifications, and never to fire up and answer these cruel hints; but he was patient, he bore much and said little. He felt that he deserved to be humbled in this way, and he tried to be submissive.

"Another month or six weeks went, and Bernard had only two earthly comforts: one was from the gentleness of Mr. Evans, and the other from the rough kindness of Griffith, who gave Meekin a sound drubbing one day for calling Bernard Noddy.

"'Why,' said Meekin, 'did not you give him the name?'

"'I did,' answered Griffith; 'but he shan't hear it now, never again.'

"The season of Whitsuntide had come round, and the boys were to go home for a week, and only Meekin, Low, and Stephen were left. The bells were not set to ring as usual on Sunday morning; the ringers were thoughtful enough to refuse to ring; but Stephen was resolved to have a peal, and he and Meekin and the big boy who worked about the place, and one other whom they contrived to muster, had one peal on the Sunday, and several others on the Monday.

"The return of Whitsuntide made Bernard more unhappy than he had been for many days. He remembered that time a year ago so very exactly, and what everybody had then said and done—his own bad behaviour especially. He had a very sad Sunday, and got up even more sad on the Monday morning.

"Miss Grizzy had put him out of his old sleeping-room after his recovery, into a little room which looked over the stable yard. Before he was dressed he heard talking in the yard. He dressed in haste, and ran to the window, and there he saw just below him a young man called Benjamin, the same who had helped to ring the bells with Stephen and Meekin and the servant boy—all gathered together examining

Lucilla's pony. Bernard could not hear what they said, and the bell rang for breakfast before he had time to ask.

"When he came down, he was sorry to find that Mr. Evans was gone out. He asked Meekin how long he was to stay from home; and Stephen answered:

"'Maybe all the week; maybe a month; maybe he wishes to try what sort of a schoolmaster I should make in his absence.'

"'Oh! I hope not,' said Bernard, speaking hastily and without thinking.

"'You do, do you?' answered Stephen spitefully; 'well, we shall see.'

"'It don't become you, Low, to speak in such a way now,' said Miss Grizzy, 'you are not master here, now. You can't count upon this place being yours more than my brother's any longer; it is just as well that you know the truth, and know at once what to expect. The living went from the family when your father died, and it is feared that there will not be much left for your keep when the things are sold, and everything paid.'

"The tears stood in Bernard's eyes—not that he attended to all the words Miss Grizzy said; he was thinking of that day a year ago, of his own ill behaviour, and of the kindness of his sweet Lucilla.

"'Oh!' he thought, 'how could I have run away from my gentle sister to go to that cruel Stephen?'

"Stephen and Meekin walked off in a hurry, after they had breakfasted, and Miss Grizzy sent Bernard after them. He followed them slowly, and yet did not like to stay long behind them.

"They were gone again into the yard, and there was Benjamin, and the servant boy, and the pony. Stephen was talking of the pony, and giving his orders: the pony had a long tail, and his mane wanted putting in order.

"'You must dock the tail close, Ben,' were the words that Bernard heard; 'she will

sell for nothing in that fashion.'

"'Oh, no, no!' cried Bernard, running forward, 'Lucilla would not like it; she said she would always have it long to flitch away the flies.'

"'Who bid you speak?' said Stephen.

"'Is she not my horse now?' cried Bernard.

"'No more yours than mine,' replied Stephen.

"'Don't cut her tail, Benjamin,' returned Bernard.

"'Hold your peace,' said Stephen.

"'Only stay till Mr. Evans comes home,' said Bernard.

"'Do it now,' said Stephen.

"Bernard was beside himself; he called Stephen cruel, deceitful, and anything else he could think of, and he tried to seize the halter of the pony.

"Stephen dragged him away, and in the scuffle thought Bernard had struck him; Meekin swore that he did.

"Stephen, when set up, was furiously passionate, and without taking time for thought, he snatched a switch from the hand of Ben, and laid it on Bernard till his back and even the sides of his face were covered with wheals. The poor boy ran, and Stephen after him. Stephen was even the more provoked because Benjamin cried to him to desist.

"Bernard at last got away from him by a little gate which led into the garden, and he continued to run until he had come to the arbour and the grotto. He had never gone to that corner of the shrubbery since the news had come of the loss of the Dory; and at first, when he almost dropped down on one of the benches, he scarcely recollected where he was. He was seated exactly where he had sat with Lucilla on the last Whitsun-Monday. The mouth of the grotto was exactly before him; the winter's wind had driven the dead damp leaves into it, and there had been no one to clear

them away. The highest point of the little window in the back, which Lucilla herself had painted on a piece of board, just peeped above the heap of leaves. Bernard thought of the tools Lucilla had bought; they were lying, no doubt, rusting in a corner.

"'Oh, Lucilla!' he cried; and bursting into tears, he laid his hands on the table, and stooped his face upon them: the board was quite wet with his tears when he looked up again.

"He was startled by the sudden ringing out of the bells. Stephen and the boys had gone to cool themselves in the belfry, after leaving the pony undocked in the field.

"How did those bells remind the unhappy boy of the year before, for he had heard them when sitting in that very place with Lucilla! He remembered his hardness and pride at that time, and like the Prodigal Son to his father, he cried to his God, 'I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am not worthy to be called Thy son.'

"Could Lucilla have foreknown in what spirit her dear brother would have spoken those words in that place, at the end of twelve months after she had brought him there, she would have been filled with joy, and would have said, 'My God, I thank Thee, for Thou hast heard my prayers.'

"When Bernard was getting more calm, his tears were made to flow again by the sight of the broken splinters and one of Lucilla's beads on the gravel at his feet. He took up the bead, wrapped it in a bit of paper, put it into his waistcoat pocket, and went out of the shrubbery by the wicket close by into the wood.

"As he walked along his wandering eye at last settled upon that spot of ground, at the foot of the round hill with the crown of fir-trees, where the carriage which had taken away his parents had disappeared. He thought then of his nurse, and that she had been one of those to whom he had behaved ill.

"'Poor nurse!' he said to himself, 'I will go to beg her pardon, and I will get her to let me live with her, and never let me come back to this place again. Nurse will give me

bread, and I shall want nothing else. I will go;' and he got up and looked to see which was the shortest way to get to the round hill. When he fancied he had made this out, he got up and set off slowly, for by this time the stripes given him by the switch had got stiff; but he had set his mind on going to nurse's, and, indeed, he did not dare to go home.

"Oh, what a long and dreary way did he find it! The first half-mile was tolerably level, but the next two miles and a half were all uphill, only with a very little going down sometimes. The sun was shining without clouds, and his bones were sore, and he was getting hungry; and what was worse than all, his heart was very sad, and the road was solitary. He scarcely met anyone, excepting a party of people with asses; still he often caught sight of the round hill, and found himself getting nearer to it: he thought it looked higher, and higher, and higher as he went on, and he had to go beyond it. It was quite noonday before he reached the foot of it; and there he had to ask a man, who was breaking stones on the road, the nearest way to the common. The man showed him a deep lane a little further, up which he was to go, and when he had got to the end of it, he saw the common and the rabbit-burrows, and sheep, and geese, and many cottages. He asked at many doors before he could learn where nurse lived; but when he saw her house he was pleased, because it looked larger and neater than the others, and he thought there would be room for him. It stood in a pretty garden, surrounded with a neat quickset hedge, nicely shorn.

"He opened the wicket-gate without fear, and walked up to the door. He saw a neat kitchen within, for the door was half open; he knocked, and called, 'Is nurse at home?' No one answered at first, but soon he heard a step, and nurse's daughter-in-law appeared.

"She was a tall, hard-looking woman, and the first words she said, were:

"'Surely it is not you, Master Low, and in such a plight? Why, you have been a-fighting.'

"'I want nurse,' said Bernard.

"'What, mother-in-law?' answered the woman; 'you can't see her.'

"'Why?' answered Bernard.

"'She is sick in bed,' said the woman.

"'Let me go up and see her, if you please,' said Bernard.

"'You can't do no such thing,' said the woman; 'she is not in the house, and if she was she could not have much to say to you. Has not Miss Grizzy forbid her to come about you? and times are hard, Master Low. You has run away from school, I doubt not, by the look of you. You has been a-fighting. Don't think that we shall go to harbour you here, and get nothing but cross words for our pains. Miss Grizzy told mother that there would be nothing a-coming to you when all was paid. So go back as fast as you can; you can't come in. Go back, there's a good lad.'

"She then, in her great goodness, handed him a crust and a bit of dry cheese, and pushed him from the door; for she was afraid that her husband and his mother, who were both out, might come in before the child was gone.

"Bernard hardly knew what he did when he took the bread and cheese, and felt the hand of the woman pushing him out. He could not eat what was given him, for he was parched with thirst, and his young heart was almost broken by his disappointment. Even to nurse he had behaved ill, and now he thought that even she had forsaken him. He dragged himself back through the deep lane, and being again in the highroad at the foot of the hill, he sat, or rather stretched, himself on a green bank under a hedge; and having cried again till he could cry no longer, he fell into a sort of stupor, neither asleep nor otherwise, quite worn with tiredness, and thirst, and sorrow.

"About the time when Bernard was turned from nurse's door, the dinner-bell at his papa's house was ringing, and Miss Evans waiting at the head of the table ready to carve.

"Before the bell had done tinkling, Stephen and Meekin came in, and Miss Grizzy said:

"'Where is Low? I suppose he does not expect us to wait for him.'

"Stephen looked at Meekin, and Meekin looked at Stephen. Stephen was not quite easy in the thought of the severe beating which he had given Bernard; but as it was expected that Mr. Evans would not return till the evening of the next day, he trusted that there would be nothing about Bernard to lead his uncle to inquire about what had happened in his absence.

"'The boy is sulking somewhere,' he thought, 'and when he is hungry he will show himself;' and with this thought he went to the bottom of the table; and they had all just seated themselves, when in walked Mr. Evans.

"Miss Grizzy set up a shriek of wonder, and Stephen turned scarlet.

"Mr. Evans had set out with the intention of going to the Bishop, under whom he and Mr. Low lived, to ask him about some little difficulty which had arisen in the management of the parish, and to beg that things might remain as they were, until more decided news could be got of the loss of the ship.

"The worthy man was not thinking of himself, but of poor Bernard. He had hardly gone ten miles of the thirty he had to go, when he met the Bishop's coach, and had the opportunity of settling his business in a few minutes. And what had he then to do but to stop at a little inn by the wayside to refresh his horse, and go quietly home, much pleased by the kindness of the Bishop?

"When he had, in a few words, explained how it happened that he was at home so soon, he was preparing to sit down to dinner, when he missed Bernard.

"'Where is Master Low?' he said, looking round. 'Where is Bernard, sister? Stephen, where is the child?'

"There was a certain something in the flushed features and stammering answers of

Stephen which struck even the unsuspicious Mr. Evans, and when he was once roused he could show great firmness. He insisted that the little boy should appear; and when he did not answer to any call, or to the repeated ringing of the bell, he ordered the dinner away.

"'No one in the house shall dine, sister Grizzy,' he said, 'till the orphan is found. Mind what I say. Do you, boys, run in all directions; let the women go also, and bring the poor child to me. You, Stephen, have been quarrelling with him.'

"'Sir,' said Meekin, 'he struck Mr. Stephen.'

"'No, Master Meekin,' said the boy who was waiting at table, 'I did not see as he did; nor Ben neither, and he was by.'

"'No matter now,' said Mr. Evans; 'be off, all of you, and bring the child to me.'

"And Mr. Evans sat down, having no expectation but that Bernard would be brought in, with the tear in his eye, but safe and sound, in a few minutes. He waited alone, maybe a quarter of an hour, and then went out, becoming more frightened every moment.

"There was a set of people, such as sell pottery, happening to pass up the road at the minute Mr. Evans went out of the gate; and he bethought himself of asking them if they had met a little boy in their way, describing Bernard.

"The old woman of the party told him that they had met such a boy, and told him also exactly where. It struck Mr. Evans at once that the child had set out to go to nurse's; and without losing another minute he called Tom, ordered him to saddle the pony, and was on his way towards nurse's not ten minutes after he had spoken to the old woman. He made the pony go at a very brisk trot, wherever the steepness of the road would allow.

"Bernard had really fallen asleep under the hedge after some time, and had only just awakened when Mr. Evans came trotting round the foot of the hill.

"The worthy man no sooner saw him than he came almost cantering up, sprang from the quiet pony, and caught him in his arms.

"'My son! my child!' he said, whilst his eyes filled with tears; 'my poor boy, why are you here? What has happened? Do you not know that when you lost a better father, you became to me like a son, and that I then resolved to be a father to you so long as you needed one? If anything goes wrong with you, my boy, under my roof, come to me and tell me, as you would have done to your own father, and be sure that so long as I have a loaf you shall have a son's portion of it.'

"No one can describe the effect of Mr. Evans's kindness on the heart of poor Bernard; again and again he fell on his neck and kissed him; and so full of love and gentleness was the child that he whispered:

"'Don't ask me why I ran away; I promise you that when I run again from the same people, I will run to you; and if you are out, I will only hide myself till you come back.'

"'It shall not happen again,' said Mr. Evans, who had observed the marks of the strokes on the child's face; 'it shall not happen again; I will prevent it; but I will ask no questions.'

"So saying, he lifted Bernard on the pony with the long tail, and taking the bridle in his hand, they set off together down the hill.

"Mr. Evans had gone off in such a hurry that he had not told anyone that he had heard of Bernard; and therefore, without planning any such thing, he had left the people at home in the greatest trouble, their alarm becoming more and more every minute in which the child could not be found.

"Mr. Evans and Bernard had first, in their way from the round hill, to go down a very steep bit of road, into a kind of hollow where were a brook and many trees, and then beyond which was a rise, and then another deep descent. When Bernard came to the brook, he begged that he might get off and drink a little water in the hollow of

his hand; and when he had done so, he tried to make Mr. Evans mount the pony whilst he walked. But the kind man would not hear of any such thing; he lifted Bernard on the horse again, and they were just going to ascend the bank, when they heard a voice behind them, crying: 'Stop, stop, Master Bernard.'

"They looked back, and there was nurse; she had come home about an hour before, and having heard by some chance who had been at the cottage and been sent away, she had had a violent quarrel with her daughter-in-law, and had come posting after her boy.

"But before Mr. Evans and Bernard knew the voice, there was a sound of carriage-wheels coming from behind nurse; and so quick upon her was the carriage, that the horses' heads were in a line with her, when Bernard and Mr. Evans turned to see who called them. The road just there was not only steep but narrow.

"'That is nurse,' said Mr. Evans; 'but we must not stop just here, or the carriage will be upon us; a little above there is room for the pony to stand aside, and the ground is there more level for the feet.'

"So for the next minute or more the three parties all went on, Mr. Evans and Bernard going up slowly towards the level place; the carriage coming rapidly down the road, being drawn by horses used to steeper hills than that; and nurse behind at the top of her speed after the carriage.

"Those in the carriage had known nurse as they passed, though she never once looked up to them; and they knew also Bernard, and good Mr. Evans, and the long-tailed pony.

"When Mr. Evans had reached the bit of level ground, which might have been fifty feet, or more, from the bottom of the valley, he stopped, and lifted Bernard off the pony to wait for nurse.

"The carriage, too, stopped at the brook, and there was a cry from it. 'Bernard, Bernard! It is our dear, dear Bernard; open the door, open the door.' The door was

burst open from within, and out sprang Lucilla, flying forward to her brother. She was followed by Mr. and Mrs. Low, as soon as the postboy could let down the steps.

"Bernard made one effort to rush to meet Lucilla, and then fell unconscious upon the ground.

"It is impossible to give an account of such a scene; the people who were present could tell nothing about it themselves. Mr. and Mrs. Low and Lucilla could not understand why everyone should be so surprised to see them; why Bernard should faint, why nurse should scream, and why Mr. Evans should look so white.

"They had suffered much in a terrible storm, and been driven far out of their course, and been obliged to lie for months in some far-off harbour for repairs, and had had a long and weary voyage. But they had written letters, and supposed all this was known at home. The letters, however, having been sent from a very out-of-the-way place, had never arrived, but this they could not know.

"They were not surprised at anything, when they found that all their friends and neighbours had thought them dead; and when Bernard, having had his temples bathed with water, opened his eyes and recovered his colour, and began to shed tears, they were no longer frightened about him. He was then lifted into the carriage, and held in the arms of his own father; nurse got upon a trunk behind, Mr. Evans mounted the pony, and on they went, having now only down hill to go to the village.

"'Let us pass quietly, if possible, through the village,' said Mr. Low, 'that we may get our dear boy home as soon as possible;' but Mr. Low could not have everything as he wished. The news was told at the very first house, which was the turn-pike, by Mr. Evans before the carriage, and by nurse behind it; and the whole street was up in a moment. There was such joy, that men, women, and children set up shouts; and four young men, who were enjoying the Whitsun holidays, flew to the church and set the bells a-ringing before the carriage came in sight of the rectory.

"'Surely,' said Miss Grizzy to the dairy-maid, 'those lads are not gone off to the

belfry, and that plague of a boy, young Low, not found yet! I always said he was the most ill-conditioned child that ever lived; and I know now he is only hiding out of malice to my poor Stephen.'

"Before she could finish her speech there was a sound of wheels and of horses, and the barking of all the dogs about, and of doors opening; and the very next minute in came nurse with the news into the dairy.

"Miss Grizzy was almost as ready to faint as Bernard had been—but not from pleasure; all her unkindnesses to the child rose before her mind, and it was with the greatest difficulty that she could put on even the appearance of being glad, whilst her worthy brother's heart was lifted up with joy.

"When Stephen heard the news, as he came skulking in to tell his aunt he could find Bernard nowhere, he walked himself off with Meekin, and did not return till night; but he need not have done so, for Bernard never uttered a complaint against him or anybody else, though he spoke continually of the very great kindness of Mr. Evans.

"The happiness of Lucilla that evening was complete. Bernard had hardly spoken to her before she found how changed he was.

"Mr. Low was equally thankful; and Mrs. Low and nurse, though they did not understand the cause of the change so clearly, yet felt that their darling was a new and improved creature. Mr. Low, having it now in his power, did much to assist Mr. Evans in many ways; he felt all his kindnesses; he helped to furnish his new rooms, and raised his salary as a curate.

"Miss Grizzy and Stephen left him almost immediately. Miss Grizzy went to keep the house of a cross old uncle, and Stephen went to his parents. Mr. Evans took nurse for a housekeeper, and whether she managed well or ill for him people do not agree; but this is certain, that all the boys, especially the little ones, liked her so much that Mr. Evans soon found even his larger house too small for his pupils.

"The last we heard of Mr. Low's family was that Bernard and Lucilla had furnished

the grotto so beautifully that every person in the neighbourhood came to see it; and that this brother and sister were the delight of their parents, and the comforters of every poor old person or orphan child in the parish."

Bernard rushed to meet Lucilla

The Birthday Feast

She only seemed anxious that Lucy and Emily should look well

"Well," said Henry Fairchild, "it is just as I knew it would be; mine is the prettiest story, and it is the longest, and that is something."

"No, no!" replied Emily; "if a story is stupid, its being long only makes it worse."

"But it is not stupid," says Henry, "as it comes in at the end so nicely, and in so much bustle. I do love a story that ends in a great bustle."

"Well," said Emily, "my story finishes with as great a bustle as yours; and we must say that Lucy has chosen two very nice books; so, Lucy, we thank you with all our hearts."

We have been so busy over the stories which Lucy brought, that we have taken no notice of the note and parcel which came from Miss Darwell.

The note was to invite the Misses Fairchild and Master Fairchild to spend her birthday with her. She asked them to come very early, and they were to come in their playing dresses, and then they could bring others with them, because in the evening there would be company. She offered to send a carriage for them; and she said that a note would come to invite their parents to dinner. The little lady seemed to have thought of everything to make the day pleasant to them.

Mrs. Fairchild's children were not so rich as Miss Darwell, but they were as well brought up; and Mrs. Colvin had heard this, and was glad to have the opportunity of seeing these children.

The parcel contained a few small presents, which Emily and Lucy thought a great

deal of, and put by amongst their treasures.

The day of Miss Darwell's birthday came, after what Henry called a very long time. Time seems very long to children; they think a month as long as old people think a year. Henry talked of a year or two past as of a time a long while ago.

Lucy and Emily looked out the very first thing that morning to see what weather it was; but Henry did more, he got up and went out as soon as he heard anyone stir, and saw John cleaning the horse, that he might be ready for Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild in the afternoon.

Soon after breakfast Mrs. Fairchild got the children ready, in their neatest morning dresses, according to Miss Darwell's desire; meaning to bring their evening things when she came. But they were hardly ready when a little pony-carriage, driven by a careful old man, came for them from Miss Darwell; for this young lady never forgot the chance of doing a kindness.

They got into the little carriage, and were driven away. Henry sat by the servant in front, and his sisters in the seat behind.

"My little lady," said the servant, "bade us be sure to bring you all safely, and very soon, Master Fairchild." And then he went on to say what a dear, good young lady she was. "But she bade me not tell what is to be done this evening; and you are not to ask anybody about it."

"Then I will not," said Henry; "though I want to know very much."

"To be sure you do, master,'" said the man; "but you will know by-and-by."

As they came near the park, they saw several fine carriages drawing towards the house.

"We are going to have a world of company," said the man; "but Miss Darwell has no visitors in her own rooms but you and your sisters, Master Fairchild. My lady would have had more invited, but Mrs. Colvin begged off; and so you and the young ladies

are much favoured."

And then, giving his horse a fillip, away they went, bowling along over the park amid high fern brakes, lofty trees, and many deer.

"I see something white through the trees," said Henry; "look, look, all along under the branches—see, Lucy—see, Emily!"

"Do you, master?" answered the servant; "well, that is unaccountable; but look before you—what do you see there?"

"Only trees," replied Henry, "and fern."

"Look again, master," said the man.

And Henry looked again till he had quite passed the place where the white things might be seen, and indeed had forgotten them.

When they came to the house and drove to the door, a footman appeared, and was directed to lead the little ladies and gentleman to Miss Darwell's rooms. The man went before them upstairs and along the galleries to the door of that very room where they had been received by poor Miss Augusta Noble.

As the footman, having opened the door, mentioned their names, they saw that everything within the room was just the same as it had been. But there was a nice elderly lady, dressed in black silk, who sat near the open window. She seemed, by the book in her hand, to have been reading to a pretty fair girl, nearly of the age of Lucy, who sat on a stool at her feet.

These were Mrs. Colvin and Miss Darwell; and when they heard the names announced, they both rose and came to meet their visitors. They both smiled so sweetly, and spoke so pleasantly, that they took all fear at once from the children.

Mrs. Colvin herself took off the bonnets and tippets, and laid them aside; and Miss Darwell said, "I am glad you came so soon; I told Everard to make haste."

As soon as they were ready, Miss Darwell began to talk of what they were to play at.

Mrs. Colvin gave them leave to go out for a time to play in the shade of what they called the cedar-grove, a place near the house, but they all begged her to go with them.

"Not to play, my dears," she said; "I can't run."

"No, ma'am," said Lucy; "but you can have a book and sit down and read, as then you can see us at play."

"Well, then," said Mrs. Colvin, smiling, "I will come." And away they all went to the cedar-grove.

As they were going Henry said:

"I am not to ask what is to be done this evening."

"No," replied Miss Darwell; "you ought not even to say, 'I am not to ask.'"

When they had got into the grove, and Mrs. Colvin was seated, they began to consult about what they should play at. As Miss Darwell had not often any children to play with, she did not know of half the games that others did.

"Let us play at Little Edwy and the Echo," said Lucy.

"But we have no echo here," said Miss Darwell.

"Then Henry shall be Edwy, and I will be the echo: and it is me you shall try to catch," replied Lucy; "and you shall have to run for it. Henry, you must call, and I will answer, but they shall not find me."

Lucy could run almost as quick as a greyhound, and she managed the game so well, that it took up the whole time Mrs. Colvin allowed them to stay out of doors. It was getting hot, and they went back into the house, and to their room.

"Now," said Mrs. Colvin, "you shall take your visitors into your play-room, Miss Darwell, and leave the door open, my dear, that I may hear you and see you; I know you like to have me near you."

"Yes, I do, dear Mrs. Colvin," said Miss Darwell; and she put her arms round the

excellent governess's neck and kissed her; and then, running and opening a door, led her visitors into a large room which they had not seen before. It was furnished with shelves, on which many books and toys were ranged in order—for it was one of Mrs. Colvin's wishes to make her pupil neat.

Mr. Fairchild's children quite cried out at the sight of these things; there were enough to furnish a toy-shop, besides the books.

Miss Darwell said, "Which would you like?"

Henry fixed upon a large Noah's ark, and when it was reached down, he placed himself on the floor, and made a procession of its inmates. He placed Noah himself in front, with his little painted wife, and Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and their wives after him. Then came the beasts, and then the birds, and then the insects and creeping things. Lucy chose a dissected map of England and Wales, and another which formed a picture; and Emily, a box of bricks and doorways, and pillars and chimneys, and other things for building houses.

Mrs. Colvin had told the children that they were to keep themselves quiet till dinner-time; so Miss Darwell took her doll, and for a long time they were all very still with their toys: they were to dine at half-past one, and Henry had not done with his ark when a female servant came into the outer room to lay the cloth.

"For a long time they all very still with their toys."—Page 389.

"It is time to put up now," said Mrs. Colvin, calling from the next room.

Lucy and Emily and Henry began immediately to put the things they had been playing with into the cases, and Lucy was putting her dissected map into the place from which she had taken it, when Miss Darwell said:

"Don't put it away, Miss Fairchild; it shall be tied up ready to go with the carriage."

Lucy did not understand her.

"Did you not choose it, Miss Lucy?" said Miss Darwell; "if you please to accept it, I

will send it in the carriage to-night with the bricks and the ark."

"Thank you, dear Miss Darwell," Lucy answered; "but we must not take anything, unless your mamma and my mamma give leave."

At that instant Mrs. Colvin called Lucy.

"I called you, my dear, to tell you that you are quite right: you ought never to receive a present without your mamma's leave, and ought never to desire to receive one. But I have no doubt that Miss Darwell will remember to ask Mrs. Fairchild this evening if you may have them."

"I will," said Miss Darwell; "I hope I shall not forget it in the bustle."

"Shall I tell you of it?" said Henry.

Lucy and Emily got as red as scarlet when Henry said these words; but Mrs. Colvin whispered:

"Let him alone, he is very young, and he will get wiser as he gets older."

"I shall be obliged to you to remind me of it, Henry," said Miss Darwell; "and I will speak the moment I see Mrs. Fairchild."

How happily did the four children and the good governess dine together that day before the open window, where they could smell the sweet flowers in the garden below, and see a large pool which was beyond the trees, and still beyond that the green heights of the park.

"I see people," said Henry, whose eyes were everywhere, "going up the park by that pretty white building which looks like a temple with a porch—there they go—I see women and children—and there are men carrying baskets. What are they doing, ma'am?" he added, looking at Mrs. Colvin.

"Taking a pleasant walk this fine afternoon," she answered; "and we will walk too by-and-by, but upon one condition, as it is so very warm, that after dinner you will each of you take a book and sit quite still, until I speak the word for all to move."

"Might I play with Noah's ark, ma'am, instead?" said Henry; "I will not move."

"Very well," said Mrs. Colvin; and when they had dined, she directed Lucy and Emily to choose their books and sit down in any place they chose.

Miss Darwell also took a book, as did Mrs. Colvin; and so still was everyone, that it might have been thought that there was not a creature in the room but the Seven Sleepers, unless it might be two or three bees which came buzzing in and out.

"How pleasant," thought Mrs. Colvin, "it is to have to do with well-behaved children! I should not mind having these little Fairchilds always with me, at least till Henry is fit only to be managed by men."

Lucy and Emily wished much to know what was going to be done in the park, but they did not find the time long. Lucy had chosen the History of Mrs. Teachum, and Emily the Adventures of Robin, Dicksy, Flapsy, and Pecksy, quite a new book, which she had never seen before. The great people in the parlour were to dine at four o'clock, that they also might go into the park afterwards; and a little before four the waiting-maid came up with the best things for Master and the Misses Fairchild, packed in a bandbox, the pretty presents of Miss Crosbie not having been forgotten.

When Mrs. Colvin saw the box she called the children to her; they all came running but Henry.

"Now, my dears," she said, "you have been very quiet, and it is time to dress;" and she offered the maid's help to dress Lucy and Emily.

"No, thank you, ma'am," said Lucy; "we have no one to wait upon us at home; we always dress each other."

"I wish," said Miss Darwell, "that I had a little sister whom I might dress; but Mrs. Colvin always dresses me," she added in a whisper to Lucy, "because she loves me, and I love her."

"But where is Henry?" said Mrs. Colvin.

They went to look, and there was he, sound asleep on the floor in the play-room, with Shem, Ham, and Japhet in his hands, and all the birds and beasts about him.

"Well," said Mrs. Colvin, "I did think he was the quietest boy that I had ever known, but he has lost a little credit with me now; most boys are quiet when they are asleep."

Emily stooped down and kissed him, which caused him to wake; but when he was aroused he looked about him in such a surprised way that all the little girls laughed heartily, and he looked as if he felt ashamed.

Mrs. Colvin set him to pack up his ark, whilst she showed Emily and Lucy into a room to dress, saying:

"When you are ready, come to me, that I may see that all is right."

When they were dressed they called Henry, who was yet to be dressed, and then sought Mrs. Colvin; she, too, was ready, and Miss Darwell was standing by her.

The little lady, according to the taste of her mother, was set off with lace on her sleeves and feathers in her hat, and coloured shoes, and everything which could make a child fine; but her manner was not the least changed; she only seemed anxious that Lucy and Emily should look well. Mrs. Colvin turned them about, examining them, and made some amendment in the tying and pinning.

"Well," she said, "you look very nice; little girls should always attend to neatness; it is a compliment due to those who care for them; and now each of you give me a kiss, and we will be off, as I see Henry is now ready, and Everard is waiting." They all then went down, and found Everard at the hall-door with the pony-carriage. A boy was holding a small horse by the carriage. "Now," said Mrs. Colvin, "how is it to be managed, Miss Darwell? Suppose I walk?"

"No, no!" cried Miss Darwell; "Henry is to ride; I know he will like it, and Joseph shall walk by him, and you shall sit in front with Everard, and we little ones will go behind. There is quite room, and it is a very little way, and it will be so pleasant;"

and thus it was settled, to the immense joy of Henry.

Away they went through one gate and another gate, till they came upon the green smooth drive which went quite round the park.

"Is not this pleasant?" said Miss Darwell, taking the hand of Lucy and Emily on each side; "but please first to call Henry, and tell him that I have settled about the things. I sent a note to Mrs. Fairchild whilst you were dressing, with a pencil to write yes or no, and she wrote the right word; so Henry will not have to remind me. Mrs. Colvin always tells me not to put things off. But now you shall know what we are going to do. Mamma lets me have a pleasure on my birthday, so I asked to have all the children in the parish invited to have tea in the park; and mamma has had tents put up, and we have got music, and the children are to play, and the old people are to come with the children. I was only afraid it would not be fine, but it is fine," she added, clapping her hands in her great delight; "but I would not tell you, that you might have something to guess about."

They first went up a rising ground, then they came to a grove; then they passed under the white building which Henry called a temple. Then they saw a lovely sparkling waterfall; then they came to an open place, green and smooth; then they came to another grove, and there they found that they were getting amongst the people, some of whom Henry had seen going to that place three or four hours before. When country people have a holiday, they like to make the most of it; and very soon they saw the tents through the trees.

Henry was first, and he looked back to his sisters as if he would have said, "These are the white things I saw this morning." There were four tents; they had pointed tops, but were open on the sides; tables were spread in each of them, and also under the trees in various places round about; and there sat several musicians on a bank. The people all about, men and women and children, were like bees swarming about the tents. There were parties of young people and children who had been playing

and amusing themselves, but they all stood still when they saw the carriage coming, and the music struck up a fine merry tune to welcome the little lady.

There were none of the grand people from the house yet come; those that were there were chiefly the cottagers, but they had all their very best dresses on, and all the poor children were dressed exactly alike. They wore dark blue cotton frocks with white tippets, and aprons, and caps. There were a few persons present, seated in one of the tents, who were not among the poor. Henry immediately saw Mrs. Burke and her daughters, for Mrs. Burke smiled kindly at him; the boys were somewhere among the people.

But though there were so many, there was no fear that the feast would run short, for the tables were heaped up with bread and butter and cakes, and fruit, and tea and sugar, and there were pails of milk standing under the trees, and more bread, and more fruit, and more of everything. It was settled that when Miss Darwell came, the feast was to begin.

"Oh!" cried Lucy, "how pleasant everything looks!"

There was not time for any more to be said, for the carriage was getting close to the tents; it stopped, and Mrs. Colvin and the young people alighted.

Miss Darwell was received by many smiling faces; every child looked at her with innocent delight, and the women murmured, "Bless her sweet face!" And then orders were given that the feast was to begin, and the people settled themselves on the grass in small parties.

Mrs. Colvin having given Miss Darwell a hint, she went to speak to Mrs. Burke, and invited her and her daughters to come and assist in serving the people, and seeing that everyone had as much as they wished.

Kind Mrs. Burke was the very person to like to be asked to do such a thing, and the Misses Burke could not be offended when they saw Miss Darwell as busily engaged as she possibly could be.

"Now," said she to Lucy, and Emily, and Henry, "now you are to come with me; look at that little party under that oak; there is a very old woman and two children. There are more people near, but I don't want you to look at them—come close to them." And they all four walked towards them.

"Do not stir, do not speak," said Miss Darwell, to the two children and the old woman; "let Master and the Misses Fairchild see if they recognise you again."

The little ones under the tree entered into the joke, and sat quite still. The boy, indeed, laughed and chuckled; but the little girl kept her countenance. The old woman did not know Mr. Fairchild's children, so she had no trouble to keep herself from smiling.

All these three were neatly dressed, and their clothes looked quite new. The boy had a suit of what is called hodden-gray, with a clean shirt as white as the snow.

"I do not know them," said Lucy.

"But I do," cried Henry.

"And so do I," said Emily; "they are Edward and Jane."

"Yes, Miss," said the two little ones, jumping up.

"And it is all through you," added Edward, "that the good little lady has done everything for us: and the house is new thatched, and the walls made as white as paper; and more money given to grandmother; and me cowboy at Squire Burke's; and Jane in the school—don't Jane look well in them clothes, sir? Oh, that was a good day when we lighted on you, Master and Miss!" And the poor boy pulled the front lock of his hair and bowed I know not how many times.

When every person had as much as was good for them, and a few persons, perhaps, a little more, orders were given that what remained should be set in order in the tents for supper; and then the music struck up. And whilst the elder people were amusing themselves in other places, Miss Darwell called all the little girls to follow her into a

pretty green glade among the trees, and hidden from the rest of the company.

Mrs. Colvin went with her, for she was never willing that her good governess should lose sight of her; and Lucy and Emily were equally anxious for her presence. Henry was the only boy allowed to come.

"Now, Lucy," said Miss Darwell, for she was getting quite fond of her, "now there is to be some play, but I do not know many games; so you and Emily must lead. What shall we have?"

"Lucy knows a thousand thousand games!" cried Henry.

After some talking, "Hunt the Hare" was chosen; and Lucy, who was a particularly quick runner, was chosen for the hare, and everyone was to follow Lucy in and out wherever she went.

All the children were to stand with joined hands in a circle; Lucy was to be in the middle. They began with dancing round her, and when they stopped she was to begin to run, and after ten had been counted, one other was let loose to follow her, and then the whole pack, as Henry called them, at a signal given.

Miss Darwell got between Henry and Emily in the circle; Lucy was put into the midst; and they danced round her, singing, "My leader, my leader, I will follow my leader wherever she goes!" Then they stood still, and Lucy began to run out under one pair of hands and in under another, and back again, and about and about like a needle in a piece of cloth; and when ten had been counted, Henry was let loose, and then the sport really began. They expected he would have caught her immediately; he was as quick as ever his little legs would allow, and as true to all her windings as the thread is to those of the needle. But when he was following Lucy the last time through the middle of the circle, he gave the signal for the whole party to loose hands and follow him, and away they all went. But they could not get on for laughing, for Lucy had as many pranks as Harlequin himself, so that several of the children, and amongst these Miss Darwell herself, fairly stood still to laugh.

This game lasted for some time. Then came "Puss in the Corner"; and then, as Mrs. Colvin thought there had been strong exercise enough, the evening being very hot, she made all the children sit down, and asked who could tell a story.

"Lucy can," said Emily; and Lucy then, without hesitation, told the story of "Edwy and the Echo," by the particular desire of Miss Darwell.

Lucy had one particularly pleasing quality, which arose in some degree from the habit of quick obedience in which she had been brought up; this was, that when, in company, desired by a proper person to do anything she could to make herself agreeable, she immediately tried; and when Mrs. Colvin had said, "If you can tell the story, Miss Lucy, do favour us with it," she took her place, and did it as easily as if Emily and Henry only had been by. Emily had the same wish to make herself pleasant as Lucy had, but she was naturally more shy. Everybody was so pleased with Lucy's story that she told another, and that was the story of "Margot and the Golden Fish," which delighted everyone, and was a useful story to the poor children.

But now the sun was beginning to dip its golden disc below the hills, and the sound was heard of carriages. Mr. and Mrs. Darwell, and those who had dined with them, were come up into the park.

Mrs. Colvin called on all the village children to put themselves in the neatest order, and to take their places two and two, she herself arranging Lucy and Emily and Miss Darwell in their bonnets and tippets; and then walked with her train to join the company.

A great number of fine ladies and gentlemen were in the midst and within the tents, and there were Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild.

Mrs. Darwell spoke civilly, but very coldly, to Lucy and Emily. Mr. Darwell spoke kindly. The ladies and gentlemen had a great deal to say to Miss Darwell, but she was become very reserved among so many strangers, and seemed to cling close to Mrs. Colvin.

The village people were then offered more refreshments, and as they could not take much, everything that was left was ordered to be given amongst them; but none of them had gone, when all who had come from the house returned to it.

"I am very sorry you are going, dear Lucy and Emily and Henry," said Miss Darwell; "I have had the happiest day I ever had in my life. I thought I should like you, but I did not know how very much it would be."

The little girls then kissed each other, and Mrs. Colvin gave them a note for their mother.

"This," she said, "is to tell Mrs. Fairchild, that I care not how often you and Miss Darwell meet. I can add no more to that."

The children were to go home with their father and mother; and if they loved Miss Darwell much already, they loved her more for her kindness when they saw three large brown paper parcels under the seat of the little carriage.

They had a sweet drive home, though they had not time to tell all that had happened to their mother till the next day; but their parents knew, from Mrs. Colvin's note, as soon as they got home, that their children had behaved very well.

"In their neatest morning dresses."—Page 383.

Grandmamma Fairchild

"Will Lucy love me?" said the old lady

After this very pleasant day at the park, and long before Lucy and Emily had left off talking about it, a note came from Miss Darwell, to say that they were all going to the sea, for which she was sorry, because she wanted to see them all again.

Lucy answered the note, and said that she and Emily were also very, very sorry; and this they truly were. Several weeks then passed, and nothing particular happened, till a letter came from their grandmamma, saying that her grand-daughter was very ill, and much desired to see her uncle. "Indeed," added the old lady, "I feel that I shall

be required to give up my Ellen also; but God does all things well."

The letter came at breakfast-time, and Mr. Fairchild resolved to set out as soon as he possibly could get ready. There was a great bustle for the next hour, and then Mr. Fairchild took leave of his family, and was driven by John to the town—he was to go on from thence by the coach.

The children stood to see them off, and then walked back into the house. Their mother told them to take their needlework and sit down in the parlour; and she gave Henry a book to read whilst she was busy in another part of the house. It was a very hot day, the window was open, and all was still—even the children did not speak for some time; at last Lucy said:

"I hope poor cousin Ellen will not die. What will grandmamma do if she dies?"

"If she did not live so far off," said Emily, "perhaps we might comfort her."

"I never remember seeing her but twice," said Lucy, "and you never saw her, Henry."

They went on talking about their grandmother till Mrs. Fairchild came in and sat down with them, and they still went on with the subject, asking her many questions, especially wherefore their grandmother had come so seldom to see them, and why they had not been asked to see her. From one thing to another they went on till they heard a much more regular account of the history of their family than they had ever heard before.

"When I first knew your father's family, my dears," said Mrs. Fairchild, "your grandmother was living in Reading with two sons: the elder brother soon afterwards went to the East Indies, where he married and had several children. Your father was intended to have been a clergyman, but before he could be ordained he was attacked with an illness, which finished with such a weakness in the chest, that he knew he could never read the Service without danger. We had enough to live on, and we settled here, and here you were all born."

"Yes," said Lucy, "and we love this dear place. We shall never like another so well; it would grieve me to leave it."

"We must take things as they come," said Mrs. Fairchild, going on with her history. "Your uncle was abroad several years, and was enabled to make a very good fortune. Whilst you were a very little baby, Lucy, he returned to England, and then purchased that place where your grandmamma now lives, a place known by the name of The Grove, between Reading and London, on the banks of the Thames. His wife had died abroad, and several children also in infancy. He brought with him two little girls, of five and six years of age, Emily and Ellen; and they were lovely little creatures then," said Mrs. Fairchild; "their very paleness making them only look the more lovely. When I saw that sweet little Emily, I resolved, that if ever I had another girl, it should be an Emily.

"My nieces lost their father only one year after they came to England, and then their grandmother settled herself quite down to give all her attention to them; and truly, from the extreme delicacy of their health, they needed all the care that she could give them. From the very earliest period of their lives they were invariably gentle, humble, and attentive to the comfort of every person who came near to them."

"Were not they like Miss Darwell?" said Henry, who had dropped his book, and was listening with all his attention.

"I think they were, Henry," replied Mrs. Fairchild; "and their outward circumstances were much alike—they were, like her, the daughters of a rich man, and brought up very tenderly. It was about four years since," she continued, "that your lovely cousin Emily died of a rapid decline. A little before her death, seeing her sister weeping bitterly, she said, 'Do not cry, gentle sister, we shall not be parted long.' Ellen never forgot those words, though it was not till some time afterwards that she reminded your grandmamma of them."

"And do you think she will now die, mamma, and go to her Emily?" said Lucy.

"I cannot say," replied Mrs. Fairchild; "but she has certainly been gradually falling off ever since she lost her sister."

Mr. Fairchild wrote every day; his accounts from the first were bad; they became worse and worse as to the hopes respecting the poor young lady, and her grandmother's anxiety. At last a letter came to say that she was dead, but had died in great peace.

The children cried very much, but more for their grandmother than for their cousin; for they had not a doubt that she was happy. Then, too, Lucy and Emily began to think how they could make up the loss to the old lady, if she would but come and live with them; and then they began to plan what rooms she could have, and were a little puzzled because the house was very small; yet Lucy said she thought it might be contrived.

The next letter from Mr. Fairchild said that he had persuaded his mother to leave The Grove for a few weeks; and that she was to set out the next day with her maid, whilst he remained to settle everything.

The old lady was expected to come the day after the next, as she would sleep on the road; and there was much to be done to get everything ready, and to see after mourning.

Lucy and Emily had many plans for comforting their grandmother; and as the old lady was used to be wheeled about in a Bath-chair, John was sent to the Park to borrow one which had belonged to Sir Charles Noble's mother.

The elder Mrs. Fairchild was old, and had long been affected by lameness, which prevented her from walking with ease; and this her daughter-in-law knew. There was nothing she would not have done to make her comfortable. Henry cheerfully gave up his room for the maid, and had a little bed put up for him in the play-room. He had settled that he was to be his grandmother's horse as soon as he saw the Bath-chair.

The children had not known much of their cousins; they had been at their grandmother's only once since they could remember, for the very bad health of their cousins had prevented their going with their father when he went to see his mother; they could not therefore feel for their cousins as if they had known them well, but they thought very much of their grandmother's loss.

Mrs. Fairchild had settled that the old lady was to have the use of their little drawing-room, and no one but herself was to go to her in that room unless she wished it; and she told the children they must expect her to be very sad indeed till after the funeral, and that they must be very quiet, and not come in her sight unless she desired it.

She was not expected until the evening of the third day after they had heard she was coming; and then Henry went up to the top of the round hill to watch for the carriage, and to be the first to give notice of it.

It was not far from six o'clock when he first saw it coming down the hill towards the village, and he was not sure of it for some time; he then ran in, and went up with Lucy and Emily to their window to wait till it came.

After a while they heard the sound of it; then they saw John go to the gate and set it open; then they drew back a little, not to be seen, and came forward when the carriage stopped, but they did not see the old lady get out. Mrs. Fairchild was below to receive her, and to lead her into the house: but they saw the maid busy in seeing the things taken out of the carriage, and they heard her giving her orders. This maid was not the same who had for years waited on the old lady, but one who had taken the place whilst the old waiting-maid stayed behind to take care of the house. This new maid called herself Miss Tilney: her mistress called her Jane, but no one else took that liberty. She was dressed as smartly as she could be in deep mourning; and she gave orders in such a sharp tone that the children could hear every word she said.

She called Betty "young woman," and bade her carry up some of the parcels to her lady's room. She asked John his name; and told the postboy he was not worth his salt.

"Well," said Henry, "there will be no need for my making a noise to disturb grandmamma; that woman would make enough for us all."

"That woman!" cried Emily; "don't speak so loud, she will hear you."

In a few minutes the boxes were all removed, and the carriage driven away; and then the children heard the maid's voice talking to Betty in the next room, which was the only spare room in the house. They heard her say, "Well, to be sure, but our rooms at The Grove are so large, that one is not used to such bandboxes as these."

"I am sure," said Henry, "the room is good enough for her:" and he was going to say more, when his sisters stopped him, and begged him not to listen. "I don't listen," he answered; "I hear without listening."

They were interrupted by Mrs. Fairchild, who came to tell them that their grandmother had asked for them. Mrs. Fairchild walked first, and opened the drawing-room door; there they saw their grandmother. She was a neat little old lady in black, exactly such as they fancied Mrs. Howard had been. She was seated, and looked very pale. At the sight of them she became paler than before; she held out her hands to them, and they all three rushed into her arms.

"My children, my precious children!" said the old lady, kissing one and another as they pressed forward.

"We will be your own grandchildren," said Lucy; "we will comfort you and read to you, and do everything for you. Do not be unhappy, dear grandmamma, we will all be your own children."

The old lady was scarcely able to speak, but she murmured to herself:

"Yes, my God is good, I am not left without comfort."

"Stand back, my dears," said Mrs. Fairchild, "and let your grandmamma look at you quietly—you overpower her."

They drew back. The old lady wiped away a tear or two which dimmed her sight, and then, with a gentle smile, she looked first at Lucy.

"She has the oval face and gentle look so dear to me," said the old lady; "this is Lucy. Will Lucy love me?"

The little girl, being thus called upon, fell again on grandmamma's neck, and quite sobbed with feeling; she soon, however, recovered herself, and pointing to her sister:

"This is Emily, grandmamma," she said.

"Another Emily!" replied the old lady, "I am rich indeed!" and, fixing her eyes on the younger little girl, "I could almost think I had my child again. Daughter," she added, speaking to Mrs. Fairchild, "do my eyes deceive me? Is there not a likeness? But your little girls are such exactly as I fondly wished them to be. And this is Henry, our youngest one;" and she took his hand in hers, and said, "Did you expect to see grandmamma looking so very old, my little man?"

"No, ma'am," replied Henry, "not quite so old;" and the little boy made a bow, thinking how very civil he ought to be to his own father's mother.

"He does not mean to be rude, ma'am," said Lucy.

"I see it, my dear," replied the old lady, smiling. "Do not, I pray you, say anything to destroy his honesty—the world will soon enough teach him to use deception."

Henry did not understand all this, but fearing, perhaps, to lose his place as grandmamma's horse, he took the occasion to ask if he might not be her horse.

"What is it, my child?" said the old lady.

"May I be your horse, ma'am?" he said.

"My horse?" repeated the old lady, looking for an explanation from Lucy; and when she had got it, she made him quite happy by assuring him that no horse could please

her better.

She did not drink tea that evening with the family, and went very early to bed; but having seen them all that evening, she was ready to meet them more calmly in the morning, and quite prepared to rejoice in the blessing of having such grandchildren to make up her losses.

Great Changes

"Here, ma'am, you can gather any you like"

Henry arose the next morning as soon as he heard the step of John in the garden, and was very soon with him, asking him what he could do to help him. Henry loved to help John.

John did not answer in his own cheerful way, but said:

"I don't know, Master Henry; it can't much matter now, I reckon, what we do, or what we leave undone."

"Why, John?" said Henry.

"You will know soon enough," John answered, "but it shan't be from me you shall learn it. I suppose, however," he added, "that we must get the peas for dinner; folks must eat, though the world should come to an end next Michaelmas."

"What is the matter, John?" said Henry; "I am sure something is."

"Well," replied John, "if there is nothing else, is it not enough to have that lady's-maid there in the kitchen finding fault with everything, and laying down the law, and telling me to my face that I don't understand so much as to graff a tree?"

"Who says so, John?" asked Henry.

"Why, my lady's maid," replied John; "that Miss Tilney or Tolney, or some such name, as is written as large as life on her boxes. As to the old lady, she has a good right to come here, but she did very wrong to bring that woman with her, to disturb

an orderly family. Why, Master Henry, she makes ten times the jabbering Mag does."

"I wish, then, she would fly away over the barn," said Henry, "as Mag did."

"We would none of us go after her," replied John, "to bring her back; but I am a fool," added the honest man; "here have I lived ever since master came here, and most of these trees did I plant and graff with my own hands, and made the sparrow-grass beds and all, and now this woman is to come with her nonsense, and turn everything topsy-turvy."

Henry was quite puzzled; he saw that John was vexed, and he knew that the words topsy-turvy meant upside-down; but he could not understand how the lady's-maid could turn the roots of the trees up in the air. He was going to ask an explanation, when a very shrill voice was heard screaming, "Mr. John, Mr. John!"

"There again!" cried John, "even the garden can't be clear of her—there, Master Henry, put down the basket and be off, she is no company for you. If you see her, and she asks for me, tell her I am gone to clean the pig-sty; she will not follow me there." So off ran John one way, and Henry another.

But Henry was not so lucky in his flight as John was; he ran into a narrow walk enclosed on each side with filberts, and before he was aware came quite opposite to the lady's-maid. He thought she looked very fine—quite a lady herself; and he stopped short, and wished her good-morning. Had she been the poorest person he would have done the same, for his parents had taken great pains to make him civil to everyone.

"Master Fairchild, I presume," cried the maid. "A charming morning, sir. I was looking for Mr. John, to ask him if he would please to select some flowers to arrange in my mistress's room: she always has flowers in her dressing-room at The Grove."

"John," said Henry, "is gone to clean the pig-sty."

The lady's-maid drew up her lip, and looked disgusted.

"Faugh!" said she, "I shall not think of troubling him to cull the flowers."

"Shall I get some for grandmamma?" asked Henry.

She thanked him for his politeness, and accepted his offer.

The little boy walked before her to where there was a bit of raised ground covered with rose-bushes.

"There, ma'am," he said, "you can gather any you like."

"Upon my word, Master Fairchild, you are uncommon polite," she said; "I shall tell our people at home what a handsome genteel young gentleman you are. They will be so desirous to know all about you—and not at all high and proud neither, though you have such great prospects."

"What do you mean by great prospects, ma'am?" asked Henry; "I do not understand you."

"That is your humility, Master Fairchild," said the maid; "to be sure, this place is but small, and I wonder how you could have managed in it so long, but it is neat and very genteel; yet, when you have seen The Grove, you will think nothing of this little box here."

"What box?" asked Henry.

"This house, Master Fairchild," she answered; "you might put the whole place into the hall at The Grove."

"What an immense hall!" said Henry in amazement.

"Poor Betty, as I tell her," said the maid, "will be quite out of her place amongst so many servants; she can't bear to hear it talked of."

"What talked of?" answered Henry. "But please not to gather the rose-buds; mamma does not like them to be gathered."

"To be sure, Master Fairchild," said the maid, "and that is just right. In a small garden like this one should be particular; yet, at The Grove, a few rose-buds would

never be missed. But you are a very good young gentleman to be so attentive to your dear mamma; I am sure I shall delight our people by the account I shall have to give when I go back; and I am to go back when Mrs. Johnson comes, and that will be in a few days. I shall tell them there that you are not only very good, but vastly genteel, and so like pretty Miss Ellen—and she was quite a beauty—dear young lady! You will see her picture as large as life in the drawing-room at The Grove, Master Fairchild."

Henry did not understand one-half of what the maid said to him, and was very glad when he heard the step of someone coming round the little mound of rose-bushes. It was Emily's step; she came to call him to breakfast; she was dressed with a clean white pinafore, and her hair hung about her face in soft ringlets; she looked grave, but, in her usual way, mild and gentle.

When she saw the maid, she, too, said, "Good-morning."

"That young lady is your sister, no doubt, Master Fairchild," said the maid.

"It is Emily," said Henry.

"I should have known the sweet young lady anywhere," she answered; "so like the family, so pretty and so genteel. Miss Emily, I wish you health to enjoy your new place."

Emily was as much puzzled as Henry had been with Miss Tilney's speeches. She said, "Thank you, ma'am," however, and walked away with Henry.

Their grandmother had slept later than usual; she had not rested well in the early part of the night, and had fallen asleep after the rest of the family were gone down.

She was not, therefore, present in the parlour; and when Henry came in, and had gotten his breath—for he and Emily had run to the house—he began to repeat some of the things which the maid had said to him, and to ask what they meant. Emily also repeated her speech to herself; and Lucy looked to her mother to explain these strange things.

"Cannot you guess, my children?" said Mrs. Fairchild, rather changing countenance; "but I had hoped that for a few days this business might not be explained to you. Our servants would not have told you, but I see that others will, so perhaps it is best that you should hear it now."

"What is it, mamma?" said all three at once; "nothing bad, we hope."

"Not bad," replied Mrs. Fairchild, "though it is what I and your dear papa had never wished for."

"Oh, do tell us!" said Lucy, trembling.

Mrs. Fairchild then told them that, by the death of their poor cousin, their father had come into the possession of the house and estate at The Grove, and, in fact, the whole of his late brother's fortune.

The children could not at first understand this, but when they did, they were much excited.

Their mother, after a while, told them that it would probably be necessary for them to leave that dear place, and go to The Grove, their grandmamma wishing to be always with them, and having her own comfortable rooms at The Grove.

Lucy and Emily began to shed tears on hearing of this, but they said nothing at that time.

Henry said:

"But John, mamma, and Betty—what can we do without them?"

"Can't they go with us, my dear?" said Mrs. Fairchild.

"And John Trueman, and nurse, and Mary Bush, and Margery, and—and—and——" added Henry, not being able to get out any more names in his impatience.

"And the school!" said Emily.

"We do not live in the same house with these persons last mentioned," answered

Mrs. Fairchild, "and therefore they would not miss us as those would do with whom we may reside; we must help them at a distance. If you, Lucy and Emily, have more money given you now, you must save it for these poor dear people. Kind Mrs. Burke will divide it amongst them as they want it; and she will look after the school."

"Oh, Emily!" said Lucy, "we will save all we can."

Emily could not speak, but she put her hand in Lucy's, and Lucy knew what that meant.

Who could think of lessons such a day as this? As soon as breakfast was over, Henry ran to talk to John about all that he heard: and Lucy and Emily, with their mother's leave, went out into the air to recover themselves before they appeared in the presence of their grandmother. They were afraid of meeting the maid, so they went up to the top of the round hill, and seated themselves in the shade of the beech-trees.

For a little while they looked about them, particularly down on the house and garden and the pleasant fields around them, every corner of which they knew as well as children always know every nook in the place in which they have spent their early days. They were both shedding tears, and yet trying to hide them from each other. Lucy was the first who spoke.

"Oh, Emily!" she said, "I cannot bear to think of leaving this dear home. Can we ever be so happy again as we have been here?"

The little girls were silent again for some minutes, and then Lucy went on:

"Oh, Emily! how many things I am thinking of! There—don't you see the little path winding through the wood to the hut? How many happy evenings we have had in that hut! Shall we ever have another? And there is the way to Mary Bush's."

"Do you remember the walk we had there with Betty a long time ago?" said Emily.

"Ah! I can remember, still longer ago, when you were very little, and Henry almost a baby," said Lucy, "papa carrying us over the field there to nurse's, and getting

flowers for us."

"I should like," she added, "to live in this place, and all of us together, just as we are now, a hundred years."

"I feel we shall never come back if we go away," said Emily.

"We shall never come back and be what we have been," replied Lucy; "that time is gone, I know. This is our last summer in this happy place. Oh, if I had known it when we were reading Henry's story at the hut, how very sad I should have been!"

"I cannot help crying," said Emily; "and I must not cry before our poor grandmamma."

"These things which are happening," said Lucy, "make me think of what mamma has often said, that it seldom happens that many years pass without troubles and changes. I never could understand them before, but I do now."

"Because," added Emily, "we have lived such a very, very long time just in the same way."

The two little girls sat talking until they both became more calm; but they had left off talking of their own feelings some time before they left the hill, and began to speak of their grandmother; and they tried to put away their own little griefs, as far as they could, that they might comfort her. With these good thoughts in their minds, they came down the hill and returned to the house.

"It was Emily's step."—Page 411.

Grandmamma and the Children

Grandmamma was very much pleased with Lucy's stories

"I don't care so much now," said Henry, meeting them at the door; "John says he will go with us, if it is to the world's end, or as far as the moon; and Betty says she will go too; and we can take the horse and Mag—so we shall do. But grandmamma is up and has had her breakfast, and we have got the Bath-chair ready, and she says that

she will let us draw her round the garden; and I am to pull, and John says he will come and push, if the lady's-maid is not there too. He says that the worst thing about going with us, is that lady's-maid; and he hopes, for that reason, that the house will be very large."

Lucy and Emily ran to their grandmother; she was in the drawing-room; she kissed and blessed them, and looked at them with tears in her eyes.

"Grandmamma," said Lucy, "we have thought about it, and we will go with you to The Grove, and be your own children; only we would like you best to stay here."

"My own sweet children," replied the old lady, "we will refer all these things to your papa and mamma. I am too old, and you are too young, to manage worldly matters; so we will leave these cares to those who are neither so young nor so old; God will guide them, I know, to what is best."

"Come, grandmamma," said Henry, putting his head only into the room, "the carriage is ready."

"And so am I," said the old lady, and she stepped out into the passage, and was soon in her Bath-chair.

John was ready to push, but seeing the maid come out to take her place behind the chair, he walked away without a word.

Miss Tilney, as she called herself, had not much to say before her mistress, so that she did not disturb the little party.

They did not go beyond the garden, but stopped often in shady places, where one of the children sat at their grandmother's feet, and the others on the grass.

The old lady seemed sometimes to have difficulty to be cheerful. She was often thinking, no doubt, of what was going on at The Grove, for the funeral was not over. She could not yet speak of the children she had lost.

Lucy guessed what made her sad, and for some minutes she was thinking what she

could say to amuse her; she thought of several subjects to speak about; and, young as she was, settled in her own mind she must not speak of anything sad. At last she thought of what she would say, and she began by asking her if she saw a high piece of ground covered with trees at some distance.

"I do, my dear," replied the old lady.

"Would you like to hear about an old house which is beyond that wood?"

The grandmother was not so desirous of hearing about the old house, as she was to hear how her little grand-daughter could talk. By the words of children we may learn a great deal of their characters, and how they have been taught; and so she begged Lucy to tell her about this old house.

It was Mrs. Goodriche's house that Lucy meant: and she began by telling what sort of a house it was; and who lived in it now; and what a kind lady she was; and how they went often to see her; and what pretty stories she could tell them, particularly about Mrs. Howard.

"Mrs. Howard!" repeated old Mrs. Fairchild, "I have heard of her; I knew the family of the Symondses well. Do, Lucy, tell me all you know about that good lady."

How pleasant it was to Lucy to think that she had found out the very thing to amuse her grandmother; and she went on, and on, until, with a word or two now and then from Emily, she had told the two stories of Mrs. Howard, and told them very prettily and straightforward—not as Henry would have done, with the wrong end foremost, but right forward, and everything in its place. Mrs. Fairchild had always accustomed her little girls to give accounts of any books they read; and Lucy had always been particularly clever in doing this exercise well.

Grandmamma was very much pleased with Lucy's stories—pleased every way; and it might be seen that she was so by her often asking her to go on.

The maid was also much amused, and when Lucy had told all, she said to her mistress:

"Indeed, ma'am, Miss Lucy is a most charming young lady, as agreeable as she is pretty, and I am sure you have the greatest reason to be proud of her; and, indeed, of the other young lady, too, Miss Emily; and Master Fairchild himself, he does honour to his family."

"None of this, Tilney, I beg," said the old lady; "I rejoice in what I see of these dear children, and I thank God on their account; but we must not flatter them. I thank my Lucy for her stories, and her wishes to amuse poor grandmamma; and I thank my gentle Emily for the help she has given; but as to little boys in pinafores doing honour to their families, you must know that is quite out of the question. It is enough for me to say that I love my little boy, and that I find him very kind, and that I think his dear papa and mamma have, so far, brought him up well."

About noon the little party went into the house: the old lady lay down to read, and the rest went to their own rooms. They met again at dinner, and at tea; then came another airing; and they finished the day with reading the Bible and prayers.

Several days passed much in the same way, till Mr. Fairchild returned. He brought grandmamma's own servant with him; and Miss Tilney, to the great joy of John and Betty, went the next day.

Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild had much business to do, for it was settled that they were all to move to The Grove in the autumn; but the old lady, having her own maid with her, and having become very fond of the children, did not depend on her son and daughter for amusement.

After Mr. Fairchild returned, she went out much farther in the Bath-chair, and was drawn to many of the places loved by the children. That summer was one of the finest ever known in the country, and many were the hours spent by the little party about the Bath-chair, in the shade of the woods.

At these times grandmamma would often speak of the children she had lost, and of the happy years which she had spent with them. How very pleasant good and

cheerful old people are! They are pleasanter than young ones, because they have seen so much, and have so many old stories to tell. Grandmamma remembered the time when ladies wore large hoops and long ruffles and lappets, and when gentlemen's coats were trimmed with gold lace. She could tell of persons who had been born above a hundred years ago, persons she had herself seen and talked to; and her way of talking was not like that of many grown-up people who make children covetous and envious. That was not grandmamma's way; she was like the eagle in the fable, always trying to encourage her eaglets to fly upwards; and she did this so pleasantly that her grandchildren were never tired of hearing her talk. One of grandmamma's stories is so interesting that we will relate it in this place.

"A hundred years ago."—Page 420.

Grandmamma's History of Evelyn Vaughan. Part I.

To teach little Francis his letters

"Will it not sound very strange to you, my dear children," said old Mrs. Fairchild, "to hear me talk of people, whom I knew very well, who were born one hundred years or more ago? But when you know that I can remember many things which happened seventy years ago, and that I then knew several people who were more than seventy years old—even Henry will be able to make out more than a hundred years since the time that they were born."

"Stop, grandmamma," said Henry, "and I will do the sum in the sand."

Henry then took a stick and wrote 70 on the ground.

"Now add to that another seventy, and cast it up, my boy," said grandmamma.

"It comes," cried Henry, "to a hundred and forty; only think, grandmamma, you can remember people who were born a hundred and forty years ago: how wonderful!"

"And the odd years are not counted," remarked Emily: "perhaps if we were to count them they might come up to a hundred and fifty."

"Very likely, my dears," said the old lady; "so do you all sit still, and I will begin my story.

"One hundred and, we will say, forty years ago, there resided near the town of Reading, in which I was born, a very wealthy family, descended from the nobility, though through a younger son.

"There are some reasons why I shall not mention the real name, or rather the first name of the family, for it had two; I will therefore give the second, which was Vaughan. They had many houses and fine lands, amongst which was The Grove, the place which we have now.

"The Mrs. Vaughan who was married one hundred and forty years ago was a very particular woman, and insisted on abandoning all her pleasant places in the country, and residing in a very dull and dismal old-fashioned place just at the end of one of the streets at Reading. I shall tell you more about that place by-and-by.

"This lady had four daughters before she had a son; not one of these daughters ever married. They were reared in the greatest pride, and no one was found good enough to marry them. There was Mistress Anne, and Mistress Catherine, and Mistress Elizabeth, and Mistress Jane, for in these old days the title of Miss was not often used.

"After many years, Mrs. Vaughan added a son to her family, and soon afterwards became a widow.

"This son lived many years unmarried, and was what you, my children, would call an old man, when he took a young and noble wife. The daughter and only child of this Mr. Vaughan was about my age, and she is the person whose history I am going to tell you.

"There is a picture of her at The Grove in the room in which your dear cousins spent many of their early days. It is drawn at full length, and is as large as life. It represents a child, of maybe five years of age, in a white frock, placing a garland on

the head of a lamb; behind the child, an old-fashioned garden is represented, and a distant view of The Grove house in which she was born."

"But, grandmamma," said Henry, "you have not told us that little girl's name."

"Her name was Evelyn," answered the old lady; "the only person I ever knew with that name."

"But it is a pretty one," remarked Lucy.

"There were a great many people to make a great bustle about little Evelyn, when she came: there were her own mother and her father, and there were the four proud aunts, and many servants and other persons under the family, for it was known that if no more children were born, Evelyn would have all her father's lands, and houses, and parks, and all her mother's and aunts' money and jewels.

"But, with all these great expectations, Evelyn's life began with sorrow. Her mother died before she could speak, and her father also, very soon after he had caused her picture to be drawn with the lamb."

"Poor little girl!" said Lucy; "all her riches could not buy her another papa and mamma. But what became of her then, grandmamma?"

"She was taken," added the old lady, "to live under the care of her aunts, at the curious old house I spoke of as being close at the end of the town of Reading; and she desired to bring nothing with her but the pet lamb, which, by this time, was getting on to be as big as a sheep, though it still knew her, and would eat out of her hand, and would frisk about her.

"The four Mistresses Vaughan were at the very head and top of formal and fashionable people. As far as ever I knew them, and I knew them very well at one time, they were all form, and ceremony, and outside show, in whatever they did, until they were far, very far advanced in years, and had been made, through many losses and sorrows, to feel the emptiness of all worldly things. But I have reason to hope that the eyes of some of them were then opened to think and hope for better

things than this life can give; but I shall speak of them as they were when Evelyn was under their care, and when I was acquainted well with them.

"The entrance to the house where they lived was through heavy stone gates, which have long since been removed; and along an avenue formed by double rows of trees, many of which are now gone.

"I have often, when a little child, been taken by my nurse to walk in that avenue; and I thought it so very long, that had I not seen it since, I could have fancied it was miles in length."

"That is just like me, grandmamma," said Henry; "when I was a little boy, I used to think that the walk through Mary Bush's wood was miles and miles long."

"And so did I," added Emily; and then the story went on.

"At the farthest end of this avenue," continued grandmamma, "the ground began to slope downwards, and then the house began to appear, but so hidden by tall dark cypress-trees, and hedges, and walls, I may call them, of yew and box and hornbeam, all cut in curious forms and shapes, that one could only here and there see a gable, or a window, or door, but in no place the whole of the front. The house had been built many, many years before, and it was a curious wild place both within and without, though immensely large. The way up to the door of the principal hall was by a double flight of stone steps, surmounted with huge carved balustrades. Nothing could, however, be seen from any window of the house but trees; those which were near being cut into all sorts of unnatural forms, and those which were beyond the garden growing so thickly as entirely to shut out the rays of the sun from the ground below."

"I should like to see that place, grandmamma," said Lucy.

"You would see little, my child," replied the old lady, "of what it was seventy years ago. I am told that it is altogether changed. But if the place was gloomy and stiff without, it was worse within, where the four old ladies ordered and arranged

everything. I can tell you how they passed their days. They all breakfasted either in their own dressing-rooms or in bed, being waited upon by their own maids."

"Why did they do that, grandmamma?" asked Henry.

"I will tell you, my dear," answered the old lady. "At that time, when I was a little girl, and knew those ladies, people dressed in that stiff troublesome way which you may have seen in old pictures.

"The ladies wore, in the first place, very stiff stays; and those who thought much of being smart, had them laced as tight as they could well bear. Added to these stays, they wore hoops or petticoats well stiffened with whalebone. Some of these hoops were of the form of a bell with the mouth downwards—these were the least ugly; others were made to stand out on each side from the waist, I am afraid to say how far; but those made for grand occasions were nearly as wide as your arm would be, if it were extended on one side as far as it would go. Over these hoops came the petticoats and gowns, which were made of the richest silk—for a gown in those days would have cost thirty or forty pounds. Then there was always a petticoat and a train; and these, in full dress, were trimmed with the same silk in plaits and flounces, pinked and puckered, and I know not what else. The sleeves were made short and tight, with long lace trebled ruffles at the elbows; and there were peaked stomachers pinned with immense care to the peaked whalebone stays. It was quite a business to put on these dresses, and must have been quite a pain to walk in the high-heeled silk shoes and brilliant buckles with which they were always seen. They also wore watches, and equipages, and small lace mob caps, under which the hair was drawn up stiff and tight, and as smooth as if it had been gummed."

"Oh, I am glad I did not live then!" said Lucy, fetching a deep breath; "yet it is very pleasant to hear these stories of people who lived just before we did; and there is no harm in liking it, is there, grandmamma?"

"None in the least, my child," said grandmamma; "the persons who remember

anything of those times are getting fewer and fewer every day. If young people, then, are wise, instead of always talking their own talk, as they are too apt to do, they will have a pleasure in listening to old persons, and in gathering up from them all they can tell of manners and customs, the very memories of which are now passing away. But now, Henry, my boy, you may understand why the Mistresses Vaughan always breakfasted in their own rooms; they never chose to appear but in their full dress, and were glad to get an hour or two every morning unlaced, and without their hoops.

"About noon they all came swimming and sailing down into a large saloon, where they spent the rest of their morning. It was a vast low room, with bright polished oaken floors, and with only a bit of fine carpet in the middle of it. They each brought with them a bag for knotting, and they generally sat together in such state till it was time for their airing.

"This airing was taken in a coach-and-four; and they generally went the same road and turned at the same place every day but Sunday throughout the week. They dined at two, and drank tea at five; for though they had some visitors who came to tea, they were too high to return these visits. They finished every evening by playing at quadrille; supped at nine, and then retired to their rooms."

"What tiresome people!" said Henry; "how could they spend such lives? I would much rather live with John Trueman, and help to thatch, than have been with them."

"But how did they spend their Sundays, grandmamma?" asked Emily.

"They went to church in Reading," answered the old lady; "where they had a grand pew lined with crimson cloth. They never missed going twice; they came in their coach-and-four; they did not knot on Sundays, but I can hardly say what they did beside."

Lucy fetched a deep breath again, and grandmamma went on.

"It was to this house, and to be under the care of these ladies, that little Miss Evelyn

came, the day after her father's funeral. She was nearly broken-hearted.

"The Mistresses Vaughan were not really unkind, though very slow in their feelings; so, after the funeral, they soothed the child, taking her with them from The Grove to their own house, where she afterwards always remained. But they did another unfeeling thing, without seeming to be aware of it: Evelyn's nurse had been most kind to her, but she unhappily spoke broad Berkshire, and was a plain, ordinary-looking person; so she was dismissed, with a handsome legacy left by her master, and the poor little girl was placed under the care of a sort of upper servant called Harris. Harris was charged never to use any but the most genteel language in her presence, and to treat her with the respect due to a young lady who was already in possession of a vast property, though under guardians.

"Three handsome rooms in one wing of the house on the first floor were given to the little lady and Harris; and an inferior female servant was provided to wait upon them in private, and a footman to attend the young lady in public. It was not the custom for young children then to dine with the family; the only meal, therefore, which Evelyn took with her aunts was the tea, when she saw all the company who ever visited them; her breakfast and dinner were served up in her own rooms.

"She was required to come down at noon, and to go down and salute her aunts and ask their blessing; and whenever any one of them declined the daily airing, she was invited to take the vacant place as a great treat.

"Her education was begun by Harris, who taught her to read, to use her needle, and to speak genteelly; it was afterwards carried on by masters from Reading, for her aunts had no sort of idea of that kind of education which can only be carried on by intellectual company and teachers. Harris was told that no expense would be spared for Miss Vaughan; that her dress must be of the first price and fashion; that if she desired toys she was to have them, and as many gift-books as St. Paul's Church-yard supplied.

"As to her religious duties, Harris was to see that she was always very well dressed, and in good time to go to Church with her aunts; that she was taught her Catechism; and that she read a portion every day of some good book; one of the old ladies recommending the Whole Duty of Man, another Nelson's Fasts and Festivals, a third Boston's Fourfold State, whilst the fourth, merely, it is to be feared, in opposition to her sisters, remarked, half aside to Harris, that all the books above mentioned were very good, to be sure, but too hard for a child, and therefore that the Bible itself might, she thought, answer as well, till Miss Vaughan could manage hard words. As Harris herself had no particular relish for any of the books mentioned, she fixed upon the Bible as being the easiest, and moreover being divided into shorter sections than the other three.

"So Evelyn was to have everything that a child could wish for that could be got with money; and though Harris minded to the letter every order that was given her, yet she thought only of serving herself in all she did. In private with the child she laid praises and flattery upon her as thick as honey in a full honeycomb; she never checked her in anything she desired, so long as she did nothing which might displease her aunts, should it come to their knowledge; she scarcely ever dressed her without praising her beauty, or gave her a lesson without telling her how quick and clever she was. She talked to her of the fine fortune she would come into when she was of age; of her mamma's jewels, in which she was to shine; of the fine family houses; and, in short, of everything which could raise her pride; and there was not a servant about the house who did not address the little girl as if she had not been made of the same flesh and blood as other people."

"Poor little girl!" said Lucy.

"I am sorry for her," remarked Emily; "she must have been quite spoiled by all these things."

"We shall see," continued the old lady. "It was in a very curious way that I, many

years afterwards, learned many particulars of the ways and character of this little girl in her very early years, before I was personally acquainted with her. After my eldest son was born, being in want of a nursemaid, Fanny, the very servant who had waited on Miss Evelyn and Mrs. Harris, offered herself; and as I had known her well and loved her much, though I had lost sight of her for some years, I most gladly engaged her. She told me many things of Mrs. Harris and her little lady, which I never could have known otherwise. She said that Mrs. Harris was so much puzzled at the ways of the little girl, that she used often to speak of it to Fanny.

"'Miss Evelyn,' she said one day, 'is the queerest little thing I ever met with; I don't know where her thoughts are. When I am dressing her to go down to tea in the saloon, and putting on her nice smart dresses, and telling her to look in the glass and see how pretty she is—and to be sure she is as pretty as any waxwork—she either does not answer at all, as if she did not hear me, or has some out-of-the-way question to ask about her lamb, or some bird she has seen, or the clouds, or the moon, or some other random stuff; there is no fixing her to any sense.'

"'Perhaps, Mrs. Harris,' Fanny said, 'she has heard your praises, and those of other people, till she is tired of them.'

"'Pish!' answered Mrs. Harris; 'did you ever hear of anyone ever being tired of their own praises? The more they hear of them the more they crave them; but this child has not sense enough to listen to them. Do you know what it is for a person to have their wits a wool-gathering? Depend on it that Miss Vaughan, with all her riches and all her prettiness, is a very dull child; but it is not my business to say as much as that to the ladies; they will find it out by-and-by, that is sure. But it is a bad look-out for you and me, Fanny, with such chances as we have; for if Miss Evelyn was like other young ladies, we might be sure to make our fortune by her. I have known several people in my condition get such a hold on the hearts of children of high condition, like Miss Vaughan, that they never could do without them in no way, in their after

lives. But I don't see that we get on at all with this stupid little thing; though for the life of me I cannot tell what the child's head is running upon. She never opens out to me, or asks a question, unless it is about some of the dumb animals, or the flowers in the garden, and the trees in the wood.'

"I cannot tell what the child's head is running on."—Page 433.

"'Or the moon or the clouds,' Fanny added. 'She asked me the other day who lived in the moon, and whether dead people went there.'

"It is very clear, from the conversation between Mrs. Harris and Fanny, that Evelyn passed for a dull child, and had very little to say, because she had not found anyone since she had left The Grove who would talk to her in her own way and draw out her young ideas, and encourage her to tell her thoughts. Her father had encouraged her to talk to him in her own way whilst he was spared to her; and her nurse had been the kindest, best of foster-mothers. Though, to be sure, she did speak broad Berkshire, and though she was what learned people would call an ignorant woman, nurse had the strongest desire to do right, for she had been made to feel that God was the friend of His creatures. She felt sure that He would help those who behaved well; and she did what she could to teach what she knew to her little girl. She told her that she must be good, and not proud, or she would never go to the happy world where angels are. She told her also, that though her mother was gone into another world, she knew and was sorry when she was naughty.

"Nurse was a particularly generous woman, and was always teaching the little lady to give things away; and she took great pains to make her civil to everybody, whether high or low.

"Nurse had loved to be much out of doors, and Evelyn loved it as much; and the two together used to ramble all about the place, into the fields and yards where animals were kept, and into the groves and gardens to watch the birds and butterflies, and to talk to the gardeners and the old women who weeded the walks. Nurse was always

reminding Evelyn to take something out with her to give away; if it was nothing else than a roll or a few lumps of sugar from breakfast; for Evelyn's mother, just before her death, had said to her nurse:

"'My child may be very rich, teach her to think of the wants of the poor, and to give away.'

"But the more happy Evelyn had been with her nurse, the more sad she was with Harris. There was not anything which Harris talked of that the little girl cared for, and the consequence was that she passed for being very dull; because when Harris was talking of one set of things, she was thinking of something very different.

"When Harris wanted her to admire herself in her new frocks, when she was dressed to go down to tea, or at any other time, she was wishing to have her pinafore on, or that she might run down to her lamb, which fed in a square yard covered with grass, where the maids dried the clothes.

"Mr. Vaughan had died somewhat suddenly in the spring; the lamb was then only six weeks old. Evelyn came to live with her aunts immediately after the funeral; and the summer passed away without anything very particular happening.

"It was Harris's plan to indulge Evelyn as much as she possibly could, though she did not like the child; and therefore, when she asked to go out, which, by her goodwill, would have been every hour of the day, she went with her. When she went to take anything to her lamb, and to stroke it, or to hang flowers about its neck, Harris stood by her. But if Harris did not like Evelyn, she hated her pet still more; she pointed out to Evelyn that there were young horns budding on its brow; that it was getting big and coarse, and, like other sheep, dirty; and said that it would soon be too big for a pretty young lady like Miss Vaughan to stroke and kiss.

"'But I must kiss it,' answered Evelyn, 'because I got poor papa once to kiss it; and I always kiss it in the very same place, just above its eyes, Harris—exactly there.'

"'Just between where the horns are coming, Miss Vaughan,' said Harris; 'some day,

by-and-by, it will knock you down when you are kissing it, and perhaps butt you with its horns, till it kills you.'

"That same day Mrs. Harris told Fanny that she would take good care that Miss Vaughan's disagreeable pet should be put beyond her reach before very long—and, indeed, one fine morning, when Evelyn went down to the yard, the lamb was missing. There was much crying on the part of the little girl, and much bitter lamentation but her footman, having been told what to say by Harris, said to his little lady, that the young ram had got tired of the drying-yard, and had gone out into the woods to look for fresh grass and running water, and that he was somewhere in the park.

"'And is he happy?' asked Evelyn.

"'Very happy,' answered the footman; 'so don't cry about him, Miss.'

"'I will go and see if I can find him,' said the child.

"'You had better not go near him now,' said Mrs. Harris; 'when pet lambs become large sheep they often turn most savage on those who were most kind to them.'

"'He knew me yesterday,' replied the child, 'and let me stroke him. Would he forget me in one day?' and she burst into fresh tears."

"I am sorry for her," said Henry, rubbing the sleeve of his pinafore across his eyes.

"And there was one person who heard her," said grandmamma, "who was sorry for her also, and that was Fanny; but she did not dare to say anything because of Mrs. Harris."

The old lady then went on:

"When the summer was past, and the weather less pleasant, Mrs. Harris pretended to have a pain in her face, and instead of going out always with Evelyn, she sent Fanny.

"This was a pleasant change for the little lady. She found Fanny much more

agreeable to her. And Fanny was surprised to find how Evelyn opened out to her during their walks.

"For several days Evelyn led Fanny about the groves and over the lawns of the park to look for the lamb. They could not find him, but the child still fancied that he was somewhere in the park.

"One morning Evelyn proposed that they should try the avenue, and look for the lamb in that direction. Fanny had no notion of contradicting Evelyn—indeed Harris had told her to keep her in good humour, lest she should tell her aunts that Harris seldom walked with her; so that way they went. They had scarcely got to one end of the long row of trees when they saw a plain-dressed woman coming to meet them from the other. Evelyn uttered a joyful cry, and began to run towards her; Fanny ran, too, but the little girl quite outstripped her.

"It was nurse who was coming; she had been forbidden the house; but she had often come to the lodge, and often walked a part of the way along the avenue, if it were only for a chance of seeing her child.

"Nurse was a widow, and had only one child living. He had a good situation in the school on the London road, which anyone may see at the entrance of the town. So nurse then lived alone, in a small house on that road.

"How joyful was the meeting between Evelyn and her nurse! how eagerly did the little girl rush into those arms which had been the cradle of her happy infancy!

"After the first moments of joy were past, they sat down on a fallen and withered bough, between the rows of trees, and talked long and long together; so long, that Evelyn was almost too late to be taken to her aunts at noon. They talked of many things; and the good nurse forgot not to remind Evelyn of what she had taught her by the desire of her mother; especially to remember to give; to be civil to all persons; to speak when spoken to; to say her prayers; and not to be proud and haughty.

"The nurse also took care to tell Evelyn, that when she talked of giving, she wanted nothing herself, being in her way quite rich, through the goodness of Mr. Vaughan.

"'So don't give me anything, my precious child, but your love.'

"This meeting with nurse served the purpose of keeping alive all the simple and best feelings of Evelyn. The little one told her how her lamb had left her, and that they had been looking for it that very morning.

"'Well, my dear,' said the nurse, 'the poor creature is happier in the fields, and with its own kind, than you can make it; and if you are not too young to understand me, I would advise you to learn, from this loss of your lamb, henceforth not to give your heart and your time to dumb creatures, to which you can do little good, but to your own fellow-creatures, that you may help. Now, to make what I say plain, there is, at this very time, at the lodge, a pretty orphan boy, maybe two years of age, who has been taken in for a week or so by Mrs. Simpson, at the lodge. She means to keep him till the parish can put him somewhere, for she cannot undertake to keep him without more pay than the parish will give, having a sick husband, who is a heavy burden upon her. Now, if you have—as I know you have—the means, why not help her to keep this little boy? Why not get some warm comfortable clothing for him, with your aunts' leave, and so help him forward till he wants schooling, and then provide for that?'

"'I will do it, nurse; I will do it,' answered Evelyn.

"'God bless you, my lamb!' said nurse.

"And soon after this nurse and Evelyn parted; but they both cried bitterly, as Fanny told me.

"The name of the baby at the lodge was Francis Barr; and, as Fanny said, he was a most lovely boy, with golden hair curling about his sweet face.

"Evelyn had only to mention him to her aunts, and they immediately ordered their steward to pay so many shillings a week to Mrs. Simpson, and to give another sum

for his clothing; and this was, they said, to be done in the name of Miss Vaughan.

"They would have done better if they had let Evelyn look a little after the clothes, and, indeed, let her help to make them; but such was not their way; perhaps they thought Miss Vaughan too grand to help the poor with her own hands. But it is always easier for the rich to order money to be paid than to work with their own hands.

"Mrs. Harris was told of the meeting with the nurse by Evelyn herself; but the little girl did not tell her all that nurse had said, not from cunning, but because she was not in the habit of talking to Harris. She could not have told why she did not; but we all know that there are some people whom we never feel inclined to talk to, and we hardly know why.

"Mrs. Harris was, however, jealous of nurse, and thinking to put her out of her young lady's head, she used the liberty allowed her, and went one day to Reading, and bought a number of toys and gilt books."

"I wonder what they were, grandmamma," said Henry.

"Fanny did not tell me," answered the old lady, "and I had all this part of the story from Fanny.

"Evelyn, she said, was pleased with them when they came, and put them all in a row on a side-table in her sitting-room, and changed their places several times, and opened the books and tried to read them; but she was hardly forward enough to make them out with pleasure. However, she picked a few out from the rest, and told Fanny to put them in her pocket; for her plan was, that Fanny was to read them to her when they went out, which was done.

"The day after she had picked out the books, she asked for some paper and a pen and ink, and set herself to write, by copying printed letters. It was well she was in black, as she inked herself well before she had finished her letter.

"Harris did not ask her what she was doing; that was not her way; but she looked at

what she had written when it was done, and found it was a letter to nurse, blotted and scrawled, and hard to be read. When this letter was finished, the child asked Fanny for some brown paper, and in this she packed most of the toys and the letter, and having sent for her footman, she told him to get a horse and ride to nurse's and give her the parcel and the letter.

"The man looked at Mrs. Harris, as doubting whether he was to obey. Mrs. Harris was sewing, and looked like thunder.

"'Miss Vaughan,' she said, 'did I hear aright? Is that parcel to be taken to nurse's?'

"'Yes, Harris,' answered Evelyn; 'those things are mine, and I am going to send them to nurse.'

"'Upon my word, Miss Vaughan, you have chosen a very proper present for the old woman; she will be vastly amused with all those pretty things.'

"This speech was made in much bitterness, and meant the very contrary to what the words expressed; but Evelyn thought she meant what she said, and she answered:

"'Yes, Harris, nurse will be so much pleased; I think she will put the things in a row on her chimney-piece.'

"Harris, as Fanny told me, did not answer again immediately, but sat with her head stooped over her work, whilst Evelyn repeated her directions to Richard; and Richard looked for his orders to Mrs. Harris.

"'Don't you hear what Miss Vaughan says, Richard?' she at length said, as she looked up with very red cheeks and flashing eyes; 'what do you stand gaping there for? Don't you know that all Miss Vaughan's orders are to be obeyed? Make haste and carry the parcel.'

"'And tell nurse to read my letter,' said Evelyn; 'and to send me word if she has read it; she will be so glad, I know.'

"As soon as Richard was gone, Harris called Evelyn to her, and, lifting her on her

knee, she began to kiss and praise her, and to coax her, but not in the old way by telling her of her beauty and her grandeur, but by flattering her about her kindness and her gratitude to nurse.

"'I love nurse, Harris,' answered Evelyn.

"'And she deserves it too, Miss Vaughan,' replied Harris; 'she took care of you when you could not have told if you were ill-used. Little ladies should always remember those who were kind to them in their helpless years. Come now, tell me what nurse said to you when you saw her last. I am sure she would tell you nothing but what was very good.'

"'She told me,' said Evelyn, 'about my mamma being an angel; and she told me that if I was good, and not selfish, and gave things away, that I should go to heaven too; I should then, she said, be like a lamb living under the care of a good shepherd.'

"Harris, on hearing this, as Fanny said, looked about her in that sort of wondering way which people use when they are thoroughly surprised; but it being very near twelve at noon, she had no time to carry on the discourse further then. Evelyn's frock required to be changed, and her hair put in order; and then, as the custom was, Mrs. Harris had to lead the child into the saloon to make her curtsey, and leave her till the bell rang to recall her.

"When Harris had left the child with her aunts, she came up again to her own apartments. She came with her mouth open, being all impatience to let out her thoughts to Fanny.

"'Who would have guessed,' said she, 'that the wind blew from that quarter, Fanny? and here I have been beating about and about to find out the child, and trying to get at her in every way I could think of, all the while missing the right one.'

"'What do you mean, Mrs. Harris?' said Fanny.

"'What do I mean?' answered Harris; 'why, how stupid you are, girl! have I not been trying to get to the child's heart every day these six months, by indulging her, and

petting her, and talking to her of her pretty face and fine expectations, and all that? and has she not all along seemed to care as little for what I said as she would for the sound of rustling leaves?'

"'Will you deny that it is very true?' answered Fanny; 'I think she has heard of her grandeur and those things, till they are no news to her.'

"'Maybe so,' answered Harris; 'but I never yet met with the person, young or old, who could be tired out with their own praises, however they may pretend.'

"'I was never much tired in that way,' answered Fanny.

"'Maybe not,' said Mrs. Harris; 'what was anyone to get by honeying one like you? Well, but to return to this child. I did set her down to be none of the sharpest; but for once I think I was mistaken. It is not often that I am; but I have got a little light now; I shall get on better from this day forward, or I am much mistaken.'

"'What light is it?' said Fanny.

"'Why, don't you see,' answered Harris, 'that young as Miss Evelyn is, that old nurse has managed to fill her head with notions about death, and heaven, and being charitable, and giving away; and that the child's head runs much, for such a child, on these things?'

"'I cannot wonder at it,' answered Fanny, 'when one thinks how much the poor orphan has heard and seen of death.'

"'And who has not heard and seen much of death, Fanny?' answered Mrs. Harris: 'but for all that we must live and make our way in life.'

"Then, as if she thought that she might just as well refrain from opening herself any more to Fanny, she sent her away on some errand, and there the discourse ended. But not so the reflections of the young servant on what she had said; she had let out enough to make her quite understand a very great change, which took place from that day, in the behaviour of Harris to Evelyn.

"She never spoke to her again about her beauty and riches; she never praised her on these accounts; but she constantly spoke of her goodness in giving away, of her civility and courtesy, of her being so humble, of the very great merit of these things, and of the certainty that these things would make her an angel in glory."

"Oh, the cunning, wicked woman!" cried Henry.

"Was not this sort of flattery more dangerous, grandmamma, than the other?" asked Lucy.

But Emily said nothing; for Emily's besetting sin was vanity, and she felt that she should have been more hurt by the praises of her beauty than of her goodness.

"By this new plan Harris gained more on Evelyn," continued grandmamma, "than she had done by the first, and the child, as time went on, became more attached to her.

"Two years passed away after this affair of sending the toys to nurse, without many changes. Nurse was not allowed to see Evelyn again, though the little lady often sent her a note, and some little remembrance to nurse's son. Masters came from Reading to carry on Miss Vaughan's education; and she proved to be docile and industrious. She still kept up her love of being out of doors; and being of a friendly temper, she often visited the cottages close about, and took little presents, which caused the poor people to flatter her upon her goodness, as much as Harris did. She had no pet animal after she had lost her lamb; but she became very fond of Francis Barr, and often walked with Fanny to see him. He soon learned to know her, and to give her very sweet smiles in return for all her kindness; and when he could walk by himself, he always hastened to meet her.

"He was nearly six years younger than Evelyn, and was, therefore, not much more than four during the summer in which she was ten.

"In the early part of that summer she used to go with Fanny most days to the lodge, to teach little Francis his letters, and talk to him about God; and they used to hear

him say his prayers. Evelyn loved him very much, and Harris praised her before every one for her goodness to this poor orphan.

"It would have been strange if all this dangerous flattery, together with the pleasure the dear child had in bestowing kindnesses, which, after all, cost her but little, had not so worked on her mind as to make her vain and self-satisfied.

"But her heavenly Father, who had guided her so far, was not going to leave her uncared for now. He who had begun the work with her was not going to leave it imperfect.

"I am now come nearly to what I may call the end of the first part of my story, and to the end of the young, and sunny, and careless days of the life of dear Evelyn Vaughan.

"These careless days, these days of young and comparatively thoughtless happiness, were suddenly finished in a very sad and awful way.

"I will not enter into many particulars of that affair, because it will give you pain. In a few words it was this: Late one evening, in the summer, little Francis Barr was playing in the road, when a carriage, coming along at a full gallop, the horses having taken fright and thrown the postillion, came suddenly upon the poor child, knocked him down, and killed him on the spot. There was no time to send the news to the great house; and, as it happened, Evelyn and Fanny went the next morning, before breakfast, to give the little boy his lesson. When arrived at the lodge, they found the door open and no one within. Mrs. Simpson had just gone into the garden to fetch more flowers to lay over the little boy. Not seeing anyone in the kitchen, they walked into the parlour, and there poor Evelyn saw her little loved one cold, yet beautiful, in death, having one small hand closed upon a lily, and the other on a rose.

"Evelyn could not mistake the aspect of death; she uttered a wild shriek, and fell senseless to the floor. She was carried home, but she was very ill for many days; and I may truly say never perfectly recovered from that time.

"But now, my dear children," added grandmamma, "I begin to feel tired, and have only finished half my story; if all is well, we will come here to-morrow, and then I shall hope to finish it."

"I wish it was to-morrow," said Henry: and his sisters joined in the wish.

"To hang flowers round its neck."—Page 435.

Grandmamma's History of Evelyn Vaughan. Part II.

Miss Anne Vaughan led her niece by the hand

When they were all seated, the next day, in the shade of Henry's arbour, grandmamma began her story without more delay.

"I am now," she said, "come to the time when I became acquainted with Evelyn Vaughan myself."

"I was left early without parents, my dear children; for my father died when I was a baby, and my mother when I was ten years of age. I was sent, after her death, being of course in deep mourning, to the school kept in the old Abbey at Reading, and there was then a very full school, above sixty girls. It was a large old house, added to a gateway which was older still; and it was called The Abbey, because it lay within the grounds of the ancient monastery, the ruins of which still remain, the gateway itself being a part of this very ancient establishment."

"The school was kept by certain middle-aged unmarried sisters; and we had many teachers, and among these a Miss Latournelle, who taught us English after a fashion, and presided over our clothes. I was under her care, and slept in her room, which was one of those in the gateway; and though she was always scolding me about some untidiness, she was very kind to me. She was young then, but always in my eyes looked old, having a limping gait, and a very ordinary person.

"I cannot say what we were taught in that house beyond a few French phrases and much needlework. I was not there many years, but my school-days passed happily,

for we were not exhausted with our learning, which in these days often destroys the spirit of children. We spent much time in the old and pleasant garden; and I had several dear friends, all of whom are now dead.

"The first time that I saw Miss Evelyn was on the first Sunday I went to church with the school. We went to St. Lawrence's, which is near The Abbey, and we sat in the gallery, from which we had a full view of the pew then occupied by the Vaughans. They always came there, though not the nearest church, because they could not please themselves in seats in any other church in the town, and regularly came in their coach-and-four, and a grand footman went before them to open the door. Their pew was square and lined with crimson, and they always came rustling in, and making a knocking sound with their high heels on the pavement; they walked according to their ages, with this difference only, that the eldest Mistress Vaughan present always brought Evelyn in her hand.

"We sat in the gallery just opposite to this pew, and I was in the first row; and as there was no teacher nor governess near us, I could whisper to the little girls near me about these ladies. 'Don't you know,' my next neighbour in the pew answered, 'that those are the Mistresses Vaughan, who live in the house beyond the lodges on the Bath road; and that little one is Miss Vaughan, and she will have the largest fortune of any lady in England—and see how beautifully she is dressed?' We could not see her face, as she stood, but we could see her fine clothes."

"Do tell us how she was dressed, grandmamma," said Emily.

"She wore a pink silk slip, with small violet flowers, or spots, and a laced apron, with a bonnet and tippet of violet silk. Oh, we did admire it! If she had not a hoop, her skirts were well stiffened with whalebone."

"How curious!" said Lucy. "She must have looked like a little old woman."

"The delicate fairness of her neck, and her lovely auburn curls, prevented that mistake, Lucy," replied grandmamma; "and then her way of moving, and her easy,

child-like manner, showed her youth, if nothing else would have done so.

"I had heard of Miss Evelyn before, but I had never seen her so near; and all the rest of that day I could think and talk of nothing but Miss Vaughan; and how I did long for a pink slip with violet spots.

"The Sunday on which I saw Miss Vaughan for the first time at church was the first day of that week in which little Francis Barr was killed.

"We did not see her again for many weeks. We were told of the sad accident, and of the severe illness of Evelyn which followed; and we all entered into the feelings of the little lady with much warmth.

"It was late in the autumn when she appeared again at church; but, though we did not see her face, we could observe that she sat very still, and seemed once, whilst the psalm was being sung, to be crying, for she stooped her head, and had her handkerchief to her eyes. We were very sorry again for her, but our French teacher, when we came home, said, 'Let her weep; she will console herself presently.'

"It was, maybe, ten days after we had seen Miss Evelyn the second time at church, as some of us were sitting, on the eve of a half-holiday, on a locker in a window of the old gateway, that we saw the coach-and-four, with the Vaughan liveries, wheeling along the green open space before The Abbey gate; half a dozen of us at least were standing the next minute on the locker to see this wonder better.

"Nearer and nearer came the carriage, with the horses' heads as if they were a-going through the arch; and when we were expecting to hear the rolling of the wheels beneath our feet, the carriage suddenly stopped right in front of the garden-gate.

"Next came loud knockings and ringings without, and the running of many feet within the house, one calling to another, to tell that the Mistresses Vaughan were come, and had asked to see our governess.

"We strained our necks to see, if we could, the ladies get out, but we were too directly above them to get a good view; and if we could, we were not allowed, for

our French teacher came up, and made us all get down from the locker, shutting the window which we had opened, and saying a great deal about 'politesse' and the great vulgarity of peeping.

"The house was as still as the mice in the old wainscot when they smelt Miss Latournelle's cat, whilst the ladies were in the parlour, for our teachers insisted on our being quiet; but as soon as we saw the coach bowling away, we all began to chatter, and to speak our thoughts concerning the occasion of this visit, which was considered a very great honour by our governesses."

"Did the Mistresses Vaughan come to speak about putting Evelyn to your school, grandmamma?" asked Emily.

"Not exactly so, my dear," replied the old lady; "I will tell you what they came for. Poor Evelyn had never recovered her quiet, happy spirits since the fright and the shock of her little favourite's death. Her mother had had a very delicate constitution, and had died early of consumption. Perhaps Evelyn had inherited the tendency to consumption from her mother, though neither her aunts nor Mrs. Harris had thought her otherwise than a strong child till after her long illness.

"After she recovered from this illness, however—or rather seemed to be recovered—her spirits were quite gone; and she was always crying, often talking of death and dying, and brooding over sad things. When the family physician who attended her was told how it was, he advised that she should go to school, and mix with other children, and he recommended The Abbey.

"The Mistresses Vaughan thought his advice good, so far as that Evelyn might be the better for the company of other children. But they said that no Miss Vaughan had ever been brought up at a school, for there were sure to be some girls of low birth, and that they could not think of their niece being herded with low people.

"After a long discussion, however, the old ladies yielded so far to the opinion of the physician, that they determined to ask our governess to permit Miss Vaughan to

come to them every dancing day, and to join in the dancing with the other girls.

"It was to ask this favour that the four old ladies came to the Abbey; and it was then settled that Miss Vaughan was to come on every Friday evening to dance with us, and to take her tea in the parlour with the mistress.

"This high honour was made known through the house immediately after the ladies were gone. Miss Evelyn was to be brought the first time by her aunts, and afterwards by Mrs. Harris; and she was to come the very next Friday.

"From that day, which was Wednesday, until the Friday afternoon, what a bustle were all in; what trimming, and plaiting, and renewing, and making anew, went forward! I was in deep mourning; and as Miss Latournelle kept my best bombazine, and crapes, and my round black cap, in her own press, I had nothing to think of; but our governess insisted that all the other young ladies should have new caps on the occasion; and as these were to be made in the house, there was enough to do.

"I could smile to think of the caps we wore at that time; our common caps fitted the head exactly, and were precisely in the shape of bowls. They were commonly made of what is called Norwich quilt, such as we now see many bed-quilts made of, with a little narrow plaiting round the edge. My common black caps were made of silk quilted in the same way. Our best caps were of the same form: the foundation being of coloured silk or satin, with gauze puffed over it, and in each puff either a flower or a bit of ribbon, finished off to the fancy, with a plaited border of gauze, and larger bunches of flowers peaked over each ear."

"Oh, grandmamma!" cried Emily, "how strange! Did not the children look very odd then?"

"The eye was used to the fashion," said the old lady; "there is no fashion, however monstrous, to which the eye does not become used in a little while.

"By the time that all the caps were made, and all the artificial roses, and lilacs, and pansies duly disposed, it was time to dress. You have never been at school, or you

would know what a bustle there is to get all the little misses ready on a dancing day.

"What a bustle there is to get ready on a dancing day."—Page 453.

"It was time to light the candles long before Miss Latournelle mustered us and led us down into the dancing-room. This was a long, low room, having a parlour at one end of it, and at the other a kind of hall, from which sprang a wide staircase, leading to the rooms over the gateway; the balustrades of the staircase still showed some remains of gilding.

"We were ranged on forms raised one above another, at the lowest end of the room, and our master was strutting about the floor, now and then giving us a flourish on his kit, when our youngest governess put her head in at the door, and said:

"'Ladies, are you all ready? You must rise and curtsey low when the company appears, and then sink quietly into your places.'

"She then retreated; and a minute afterwards the door from the parlour was opened, and our eldest governess appeared ushering in the four Mistresses Vaughan, followed by other visitors invited for this grand occasion. There was awful knocking of heels and rustling of long silk trains; and every person looked solemn and very upright.

"Miss Anne Vaughan, who came in first, led her niece in her hand, and went sweeping round with her to the principal chair, for there was a circle of chairs set for the company. When she had placed the little lady at her right hand, and when the rest of the company were seated, we on the forms had full leisure to look at this much envied object. There was not one amongst us who would not have gladly changed places with the little lady.

"Evelyn Vaughan was an uncommonly beautiful girl; she was then nearly eleven years of age, and was taller than most children of her age, for she had shot up rapidly during her illness. Her complexion was too beautiful, too white, and too transparent; but she wanted not a soft pink bloom in her cheeks, and her lips were of

a deep coral. She had an oval face and lovely features; her eyes were bright, though particularly soft and mild; her hair of rich auburn, hanging in bright, natural ringlets; whilst even her stiff dress and formal cap could not spoil the grace and ease of her air.

"Indeed, persons always accustomed to be highly dressed are not so put out of their way by it as those who are only thus dressed on high occasions; and dressed she was in a rich silk, with much lace, with a chain of gold and stud of jewels, silken shoes, and artificial flowers. We on the forms thought that we had never seen anything so grand in our whole lives, nor any person so pretty, nor any creature so to be envied.

"The ladies only stayed to see a few of our best dancers show forth in minuets before tea, and then they withdrew: and as the dancing-master, who had always taught Miss Vaughan, was invited to join the tea-party, we went into the schoolroom to our suppers, and to talk over what we had seen. After a little while, we all returned to the dancing-room to be ready for the company, who soon appeared again.

"We were then called up, and arranged to dance cotillons, and whilst we were standing waiting for the order to take our places, we saw our master go bowing up to Evelyn, to ask her to join our party. I saw her smile then for the first time, and I never had seen a sweeter smile; it seemed to light up her whole face. She consented to dance, and being asked if she would like any particular partner, she instantly answered:

"'That young lady in black, sir, if you please.'

"There was but one in black, and that was myself. The next moment I was called, and told that Miss Vaughan had done me the honour to choose me for a partner; and it was whispered in my ear by my governess, when she led me up, that I must not forget my manners, and by no means take any liberty with Miss Vaughan. This admonition served only to make me more awkward than I might have been if it had not been given to me.

"Evelyn had chosen me because she had heard it said in the parlour that the little girl in black was in mourning for the last of her parents. And I had not begun the second cotillon with her before she told me that she had chosen me for a partner because, like herself, I had no father or mother.

"After this I was shy no longer; I talked to her about my mother, and burst into tears when so doing, for my sorrows were fresh.

"Evelyn soon made herself acquainted with my name—Mary Reynolds—and we found out that we had been born the same year; and she said that it was very odd that she should have chosen a partner who was of her own age.

"I remember no more of that evening; but the next Friday Miss Vaughan came again, accompanied by Mrs. Harris.

"Harris played the great lady quite as well as the Mistresses Vaughan had done, acting in their natural characters; as she always, at home, took her meals with her young lady when in their own rooms, she was invited to tea in the parlour; and to please Evelyn, I was also asked, for I had been again chosen as her partner.

"Our friendship was growing quickly; it was impossible to love Miss Vaughan a little, if one loved her at all. She was the sweetest, humblest child I had ever known; and she talked of things which, although I did not understand them, greatly excited my interest.

"It was in October that Evelyn first came to dance at the Abbey, and she came every Friday till the holidays. We thought she looked very unwell the last time she came; and she said she was sorry that some weeks would pass before she saw me again; she repeated the same to Mrs. Harris.

"All the other children went home for Christmas, but I had no home to go to; and I saw them depart with much sorrow, and was crying to find myself alone, having watched the last of my school-fellows going out with her mother through the garden-gate, when Miss Latournelle came up all in a hurry.

"'Miss Reynolds,' she said, 'what do you think? You were born, surely, with a silver spoon in your mouth. But there is a letter come, and you are to go from church on Christmas Day in the coach to spend the holidays with Miss Vaughan. It is all settled; and you are to have a new slip, and crape tucker and apron, and a best black cap. Come, come, we must look up your things, and we have only two days for it; come away, fetch your thimble; and don't let me see any idleness.'

"The kind teacher was as pleased for me as I was for myself; though she drove me about the next two days, as if I had been her slave.

"When I found myself in the coach, on Christmas Day, all alone, and driving away with four horses to the great house at the end of the avenue, I really did not know what to make of myself. I tried all the four corners of the coach, looked out at every window, nodded to one or two schoolfellows I saw walking in the streets, and made myself as silly as the daw in borrowed feathers."

The children laughed, and the old lady went on:

"When I got to the lodge and the avenue, however, I became more thoughtful and steady. Even in that short drive, the idea of riding in a coach-and-four was losing some of its freshness, and deeper thoughts had come. I was a little put out, too, at the sight of the fine man-servant who opened the doors for me and led me upstairs. The moment I entered Miss Evelyn's sitting-room, she ran up to me, and put her arms around my neck, kissing me several times.

"'Dear, dear Mary,' she said, 'how very glad I am to see you! I shall be so happy! I have got a cough; I am not to go out till warm weather comes; and it is so sad to be shut up and see nothing but the trees waving, and hear nothing but the wind whistling and humming. But now you are come I shall be so happy!'

"'I hope you will, Miss Vaughan,' said Mrs. Harris; 'and that your head will not always be running, as it has been lately, upon all manner of dismal things. Miss Reynolds, you must do your best to amuse Miss Evelyn; you must tell her all the

news of the school, and the little misses; I dare say you can tell her many pretty stories.'

"Evelyn did not answer Harris, though she gave her a look with more scorn in it than I had ever seen her give before.

"Miss Vaughan had shown symptoms of great weakness in the chest—that is, Henry, in the part where people breathe. She had been directed by the physician to be kept, for some weeks to come, in her own rooms; and when this order was given, she had begged to have me with her.

"I believe that I was a comfort to her, and a relief to Harris; and Fanny, also, rejoiced to see me. I was with Evelyn several weeks, and the days passed pleasantly. I had every indulgence, and the use of all sorts of toys; dolls I had partly put aside; but there were books, and pictures, and puzzles; and when I went back to school I was loaded with them; not only for myself, but for my schoolfellows.

"Evelyn seemed to be pleased to see me delighted with them, but she had no pleasure in them herself, any more than I have now; and once, when Harris said: 'Come, Miss Vaughan, why can't you play with these things as Miss Reynolds does?' she answered: 'Ah, Harris! what have I to do with these? I know what is coming.'

"'What is it?' I inquired.

"'Don't ask her, Miss Reynolds,' said Harris hastily; 'Miss Vaughan knows that she should not talk of these things.'

"'Oh, let me talk of them, and then I shall be more easy!' Evelyn answered. 'It is because I must not that I am so unhappy. Why have you put away my Bible and the other good books?'

"'Because your aunts and the doctors say you read them till you have made yourself quite melancholy, Miss Vaughan; and so they have been taken away, but not by me. I have not got them. You must not blame me for what others have done; you know my foolish fondness, and that I can deny you nothing in my power to grant.'

"We had two or three conversations of this kind; but Harris watched us so closely, that Miss Vaughan never had an opportunity of talking to me by ourselves; so that we never renewed, during those holidays, the subjects we had sometimes talked of at the Abbey.

"I stayed at that time about six weeks with Miss Vaughan; and as she appeared to be much better and more cheerful, I was sent back to school, with a promise from my governesses that, if Miss Vaughan desired it, I was to go to her again at the shortest notice.

"The spring that year was early, and some of the days in March were so fine, that the Mistresses Vaughan presumed to take their niece out in the coach without medical advice. Deeply and long did the old ladies lament their imprudence; but probably this affliction was the first which ever really caused them to feel.

"About six days after the last of these airings, the coach came to the school, bringing a request that I should be sent back in it instantly.

"Miss Vaughan had been seized with a violent inflammation in the chest, attended with dreadful spasms. She had called for poor dear Mary, as if Mary could help her; and I was told that she was in a dying state. I sobbed and cried the whole way, for where were the delights then to me of a coach-and-four? I was taken immediately up to her bedroom, for she had called again for poor dear Mary. But, oh, how shocked was I when I approached the bed! Fanny was sitting at the pillow, holding her up in her arms: she was as pale as death itself; her eyes were closed, her fair hands lay extended on the counterpane, her auburn ringlets hanging in disorder. She was enjoying a short slumber after the fatigue of acute pain, for she then breathed easily. Near the bed stood Harris, with the look of a person at once distressed and offended. Miss Vaughan had preferred, in her anguish, to be held by Fanny rather than by her. She had often suspected Evelyn of not liking her, and the truth had come out that morning during her sufferings.

"In the next room I could see the figures of the four Mistresses Vaughan, all in their morning dresses. The physician was with them; and when he saw me he arose, and came and stood by the bed.

"I know not how long it was before Evelyn opened her eyes.

"'Thank God,' she said, in a low, weak voice, 'it is gone for this time;' then added, as she saw me, 'Mary, Mary dear, don't go again. Fanny, is it you? but you will be tired. Might not nurse come, poor dear nurse?'

The physician asked Harris what the young lady said. Harris pretended not to have heard. Fanny looked to me to speak, and I said:

"'She wants her nurse, sir, her own nurse.'

"'And where does this nurse live?' he inquired.

"I told him, on the London road; I told him also her name. I spoke out boldly, though I felt the eyes of Harris upon me.

"'I know the woman,' the doctor answered: 'she is a worthy person; she must be sent for.'

"When Harris heard this she left the bedside and went to the ladies, to prevent, if possible, this sending for nurse. The reason she gave for its not being right to have the poor woman brought there was, that she was the first to put melancholy thoughts in the head of Miss Evelyn, and would be quite sure to bring the same things forward again. Mrs. Harris would have got her own way, if the physician had not insisted that Evelyn ought to see her nurse if she desired it; and he himself undertook to send for her. He had not far to send. Nurse had heard of her child's violent attack, and was no further off than the lodge.

"From the time that Evelyn had mentioned her nurse, she had lain quite still, with her eyes closed, till the worthy woman came in. At the sound of the soft step with which the nurse came forward, she opened them and saw the person she loved best

on earth. A sweet bright glow arose in her cheeks, and she extended both her arms as if she would have risen to meet her.

"Though poor nurse, at the first glance, had seen death in the sweet features of her child, yet she commanded herself.

"'I am come, my love,' she said; 'and rejoice to find you easy.'

"'Yes, it is gone—the pain is gone,' replied Evelyn: 'when it comes again I shall die. I know it, nurse; but come, and never go away. Take poor Fanny's place, and lay my head there—there,' she added.

"'On my bosom,' said the nurse, 'where you used so often to sleep;' and she placed herself on the bed and raised her child so that she rested on her arm.

"At this moment Harris, whose eyes were flashing with every evil passion, brought a vial containing a draught which had been ordered.

"Evelyn took it without a word, and then, laying her sweet head on nurse's bosom, fell into a long deep sleep—long, for it lasted some hours, and during that time only nurse and I were with her; nurse holding her in her arms, and I seated at the foot of the bed.

"I had many thoughts during these hours of stillness—thoughts more deep than I had ever had before, on the vanity of earthly things and the nature of death.

"The sun was descending behind the groves when Evelyn stirred, and began to speak. I arose to my feet; she still lay with one side of her face upon the nurse's bosom—that side, when she stirred her head a little, was warm and flushed; the other cheek was pale and wan.

"'Nurse, nurse,' were the words she uttered.

"'I am here, my child,' was the good woman's answer.

"'You will not go,' said Evelyn; 'and Mary must not go, and Fanny must not go.'

"The nurse raised her a little, still supporting her, whilst she asked me to ring the

bell, and gave notice that Miss Evelyn was awake and was to have some nourishment which had been ordered.

"Harris came in with something on a salver, Evelyn received it in silence, but did not forget to thank Harris, though even whilst taking it she whispered, 'Don't go, nurse.' Mrs. Harris heard the whisper, as I could see by the manner in which she went out of the room.

"I was called away just then, to take some refreshment, and for this purpose I was taken to the room of Mistress Catherine. She was there, and had been crying bitterly; she spoke kindly to me, and said she hoped that the sight of me would be a comfort to Miss Vaughan; but she seemed to be unable to talk much.

"When I returned to Evelyn's room, I found that she had fallen again into a doze, and it was thought best for me to go to bed. I slept, by my own desire, with Fanny; but Fanny left me about midnight, to take her turn in attending the little lady.

"She died at last somewhat suddenly, and very peacefully, like one falling asleep. The last word which she was heard to utter distinctly was the name of her Saviour.

"I was present when she died, and went with her aunts to the funeral, where I cried till I was quite ill.

"A few days before her death, she had asked to be left with her Aunt Catherine, and got her to write down several things which she wished to be done after her death. It was found, when the paper written by Mistress Catherine was read, that she had remembered everyone, and desired that Harris, and Fanny, and nurse's son, should all have something very handsome. All her toys and gayest dresses, and many ornaments and books, were to be given to me: and the poor whom she had loved and visited were all remembered.

"That death was the cutting up of all the worldly prospects of the old ladies, for Evelyn was the last of that branch of the family. At the death of the youngest Mistress Vaughan, who lived to a very great age, the estates went into other hands,

and The Grove was sold, and purchased by a gentleman whose son parted with it to your uncle. The very name of Vaughan is now nearly forgotten in that part of the world, excepting it may be by a few very old persons like myself."

Farewell to the Old Home

Henry reminded her of the robin

Michaelmas was the time fixed for their all moving to The Grove, and leaving that sweet place which was the only one the children had learned to love. Mrs. Fairchild had let August pass without saying much to her children about the moving, though she and Mr. Fairchild had been busy with many settlements.

Mr. Fairchild had been at The Grove again, and come back again. He had settled that John was to have a part of the large garden under his care, and that no one was to meddle with him; and that he was to take charge of the old horse and carriage, and to go out with the children when they went abroad in it. Henry was to have leave to go to John, when he wished to work in the garden.

Mrs. Fairchild fixed on Betty to wait upon the children; she knew that they must have a maid, and she soon settled who that maid should be.

"I know Betty," she said; "and I know I may trust her with my children."

Miss Tilney was very angry when she heard of this.

"Well, to be sure," she said, "so Betty is turned into a young lady's governess; who could have thought it? How very ridiculous some people are!"

When September came, Mrs. Fairchild reminded her children how near the time was come, and that they must think of preparing to move. When Lucy and Emily heard this, which they did one morning at breakfast, they could not help shedding a few tears.

Their mother sent them out into the fresh air, saying she would have no lessons that morning, but giving no particular reason. The little girls were glad to be left to

themselves, and they put on their bonnets and walked out, taking their way to the hut in the wood.

It may be supposed what they talked of; they talked of the change that was coming, and the time which was gone. They made each other cry more by trying to remember things which had happened in every place they passed through. They went as far back as the time when Mr. Fairchild used to carry Henry in his arms when they went out, and only now and then set him down to walk. They had a story belonging to almost every tree, to the brook and the bridge, to each little path, and many for the hut at the end of their walk.

In this hut they sat down and began to ask each other what neither could answer, whether it was likely they should ever come back to that dear place.

"It is papa's, we know," said Lucy; "but then he will let the house, and we don't know who will have it; people always let houses which they don't live in. He said, one day, that he should let it. But," said Lucy, with a deep sigh, "I do not think we ought to cry so much; if grandmamma sees our eyes red, and asks the reason, we shall be obliged to tell her, and then she will think we do not like going with her."

"Henry does not mind going," said Emily; "he likes it now John is to go."

They were talking in this way, and had not yet succeeded in quite stopping themselves from crying, when they thought they heard a voice from the wood on the other side of the brook. They listened again, and plainly heard these words: "Lucy! Emily! where are you?"

They came out to the mouth of the hut, and listened, but could not hear the voice again. Then there came the sound of steps, and they were frightened and ran back into the hut. The steps were heard more plainly as they pattered over the bridge, and, not a minute afterwards, who should appear before the hut but Bessy Goodriche! She was quite out of breath and all in a glow with running; her hair all in disorder, and her bonnet at the very back of her head. She could not speak for a moment, but

her face was bright with joy. Lucy and Emily ran to her and kissed her, and said how she had frightened them.

"Poor little things!" she answered: "you would not do to be lost in a wood on a dark night. But I am come to tell you it is all settled, though, to be sure, you know it already; I am so glad and my aunt is so glad. No more chimneys to come down and clatter over our heads;—and then, you know, you can come whenever you like, the oftener the more welcome, and stay as long as you like, the longer the better. Aunt will have such pleasure in taking care of your poor old women—the pin-cushion and the housewife woman, I mean. But I am much afraid that I shall not make up your loss, good little things as you are, I shall never manage it; but I must try. I hope I have got the goodwill, though I have nothing else."

In this place Bessy stopped for actual want of breath.

"What is it?" said Lucy; "what do you mean, dear Bessy?"

"What is it? don't you know? How strange—no, it is not, neither; Mr. Fairchild said he should not tell you till it was settled; and so there can be no harm in telling it. And are you not delighted?—you don't look delighted. Your papa said that there could be nothing which would please you so much."

"But what is it?" asked the little girls; "how can we be delighted, when we do not know what it is?"

"Have not I told you?" asked Bessy; "I thought I told you at first. Why, we are to live in this place, and take care of it, and see that everything is kept in order; every tree, and every bench, and everything you love. How you stare!" added Bessy; "how round your eyes are! I don't mean this hut; did you think I meant that my aunt and I were to live in it, and take care of the benches?"

"The house, the house?" answered Lucy, with a cry of joy; "are you and Mrs. Goodriche to have the house and the garden; and to take care of the poor people, and the school, and the hut, and the arbour, and the benches, and our little room, and the

parlour, and the roses? Oh, Bessy, Bessy, dear Bessy, now am I glad indeed! and we will come to you here, and you shall come to us there. Oh, Emily, Emily, I am so happy!"

The gentle eyes of Emily sparkled as brightly as Lucy's did, when she heard this news, though she said little; but she whispered to her sister, the next minute: "Now, Lucy, we should not have cried so much, it was not right."

Lucy answered aloud: "No, Emily, we should not; but I hope that we shall cry no more. If the whole world had been picked, we could not have found any people we like so well to live here as Mrs. Goodriche and Bessy."

"Aunt is at the house, she is come to spend the day here; and Mr. Fairchild sent me here to look for you; and we shall come in when you go out; and things are to be left as they are now, only a few to be moved. Aunt will sell her rubbish furniture, and we are to be so tidy, and I am to have your little room and bed."

"And you will feed our poor robin," said Emily; "he has come every winter for a great many years, and he knows that window; but you must shut it after you have put out the crumbs, for fear of the cat. He knows us, and he will soon know you."

As the three girls walked back to the house, they were quite busy in telling and hearing what things were to be attended to. Lucy and Emily felt like people who have had a tight cord bound over their hearts, and that cord had been suddenly cut, and they were loose.

The three weeks which followed that day were a time of great bustle. On one evening all the children of the school came and had tea in the field behind the barn; and Mrs. Goodriche and Bessy came, that they might get acquainted with them.

Another day all the old people whom the children loved were invited to dinner; and Mrs. Goodriche came also to make their acquaintance. No one went away without some useful gift; but these meetings and partings were sad, and made some wish they were in that blessed state in which there shall be no more sorrow, nor any more

tears.

Mary Bush, and nurse, and Margery, however, said that if Mr. and Mrs. Fairchild must go, they could not have chosen anyone they should have liked so well as Mrs. Goodriche.

All this bustle caused the few last days in the home of their childhood to pass more easily with the little girls; but when they rose for the last time, from that bed in which they had slept so long as they could remember, they both felt a sadness which they could not overcome.

The breakfast was to be at an early hour, but, early as it was, Mrs. Goodriche and Bessy had come before it was ready. They were to return again to their old house for a day or two, but they wished to see the last of their dear friends before their departure. Mr. Somers also came in immediately after breakfast.

The coach from The Grove also arrived at the same time with Mr. Somers, for the horses and coachman had rested during the night in the village. Old Mrs. Fairchild always liked to be driven by the man she knew, and drawn by the horses she had often proved; and they were to travel slowly, and be three days on the road. Henry came flying in when the coach arrived; and Lucy and Emily ran up once more to their little room to cry again. Bessy followed them to comfort them, though she herself was very sad.

John Trueman, who was at the house with his wife to take care of it till Mrs. Goodriche took possession, now brought out the old horse and carriage, in which John and Betty were to travel; and there was a great deal of packing and settling before anybody got in, for there were nine persons to go. The two Mrs. Fairchilds, and the two little girls, went inside the coach; Mr. Fairchild sat with Henry in an open seat in the back; and Mrs. Johnson was to go with Betty, John, and the magpie, in the old carriage. It was large and of the old fashion. When the old lady had taken her place, Lucy and Emily were called: they kissed Bessy again, and Henry

reminded her of the robin. Then they ran down and kissed Mrs. Goodriche, and without looking round at any dear tree or window, or garden-seat or plot of flowers, they sprang into the coach, and felt for the first time that riding in their father's carriage was no cure for an aching heart. Their hearts ached, and their eyes continued to flow with tears, till they had passed the village and left it at some distance behind them; but as they were dragged slowly up the steep hill, beyond the village, they took courage and looked out, and could just see a number of persons standing beneath the beech-trees on the top of the round hill. Someone was waving something white, and Henry was answering it by waving his handkerchief. Tears soon blinded the eyes of the little girls, and they drew back again into the coach, and did not look out again till they had got beyond the places which they had been well acquainted with in the young happy days which were now shut up in the past.

When we leave a place which we have long lived in and much loved, how very soon do all the things which have passed begin to seem like dreams and visions; and how will this life, with all its pains and pleasures, troubles and distresses, seem to us when death is swallowed up in victory, and we shall be with the Saviour where sorrow never more can come?

"Someone was waving something white."

Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., 3, Paternoster Buildings, London

Transcriber's Note

Inconsistent hyphenation of words such as band-box, play-ground, school-room, maid-servant, farm-house, bed-time, play-room, post-boy, school-fellow, corn-field, store-room, tea-cup, and work-bag has been retained. Minor typographical corrections are documented in the source code—search for "<!--TN:"

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