HARRY'S COUNTRY WALK

Price Sixpence Plain
One Shilling Colored

THE WOODMAN'S DAUGHTER.

See page 18.

SIXTH STEP.

HARRY'S LADDER TO LEARNING.

HARRY'S COUNTRY WALK.

With Twenty-one Illustrations.

LONDON:

DAVID BOGUE, 86 FLEET STREET.

1849.

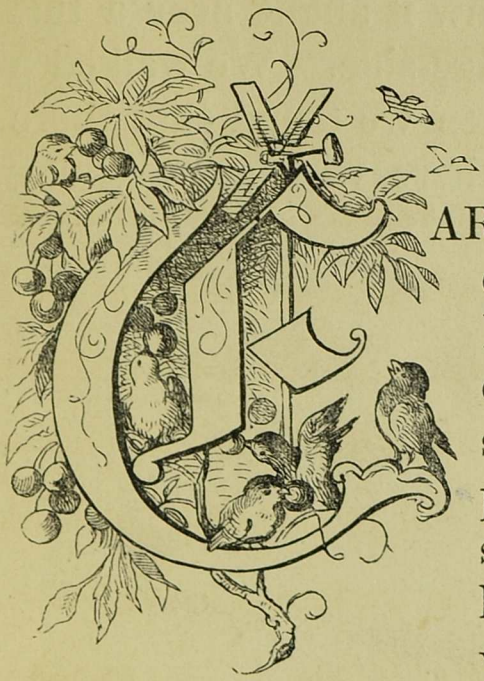
PRICE SIXPENCE, PLAIN; ONE SHILLING, COLOURED.

PREFACE.

As I find that nearly all children take great delight in stories about animals, I have given an account of some of the adventures which Harry and I met with in our rambles in the fields. Those children who live in towns will, I hope, be pleased with a description of a real country walk, as much as those who live in the country, who will often have seen most of the things I have written about.

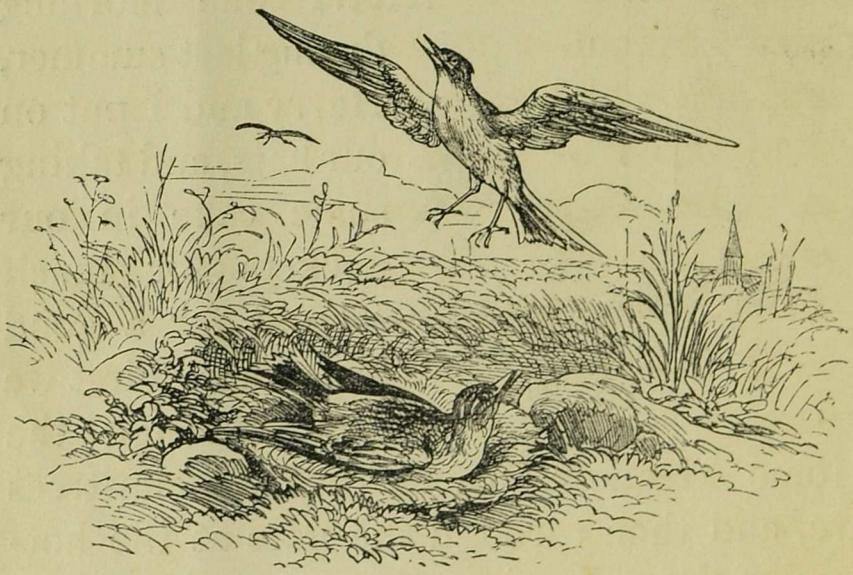
PATER.

HARRY'S COUNTRY WALK.



EARLY one morning during last summer, Harry and I put on our hats, and taking some cake in our pockets for lunch set out for a good long walk. First we went through the Home Meadow, where the tall elm-trees are, and then through the gate at the bottom of the valley into the corn-fields. The sun was shining bright and clear, and a lark was singing high up in the blue sky

almost beyond our sight. Harry and I stood still to watch its descent, and after many minutes we saw it alight near a tuft of grass by the hedge-side. We walked a little nearer, and then we found that there was another bird there with some young



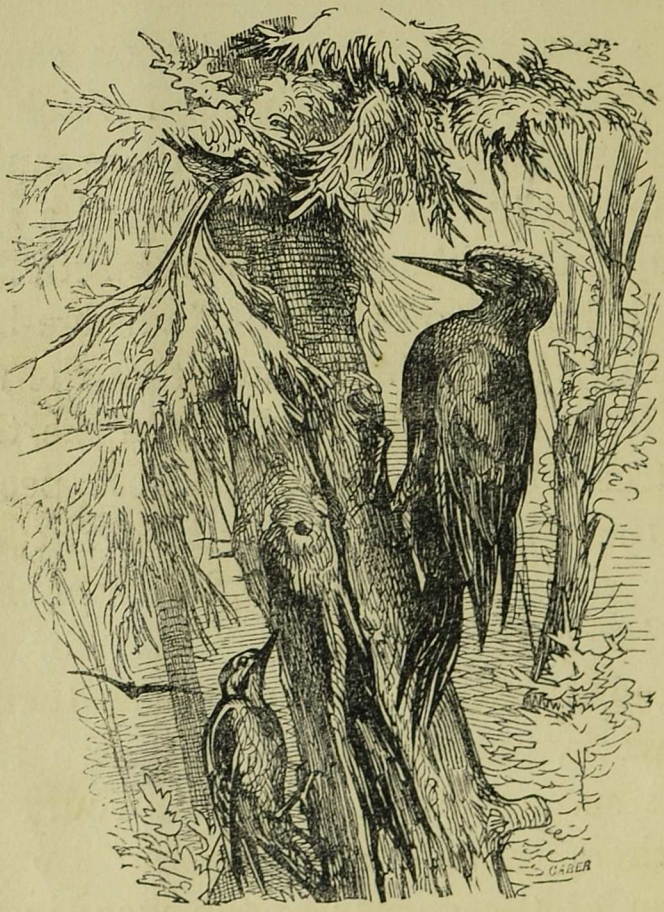
ones; so we thought that this lark had been singing its long, sweet song in the air

to cheer its mate, who was feeding their little ones in the nest.

We then walked on, and soon came to the skirts of the wood, through which runs a little stream. We thought there must be some one in the wood, for we heard a smart tapping sound, like the noise of a little hammer. I climbed on the top of a hedge-bank, and, after a little while, found that the noise came from over our heads. On the trunk of a tree were two wood-peckers pecking with their long beaks at the bark of a fir-tree, in which they find a number of little insects, which serve them for their food. I lifted Harry up to see them at their work, but he did not frighten them, and at some long way off we could still hear them tapping away.

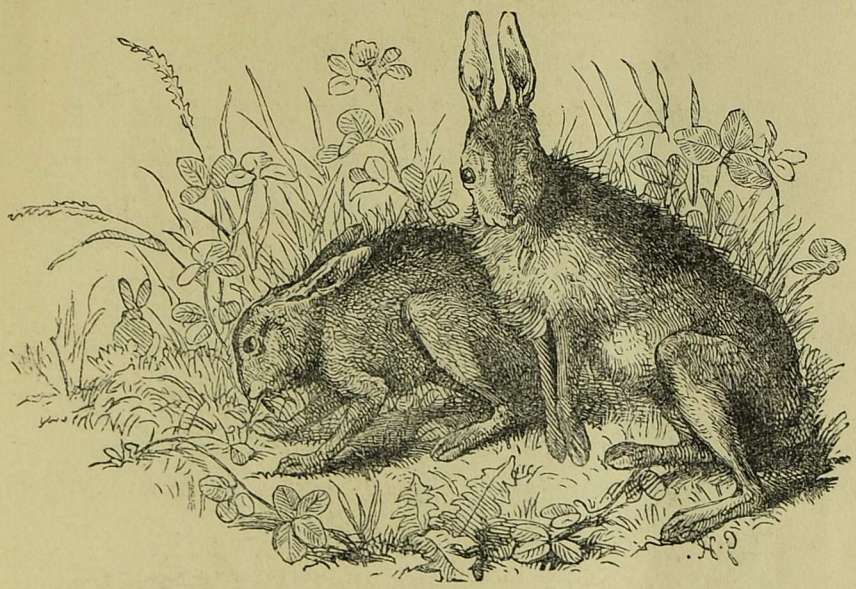
Just at the corner of the wood, as we were turning round by the side of the

fence, we saw two hares and a rabbit feed-



ing among the clover; one of them pricked

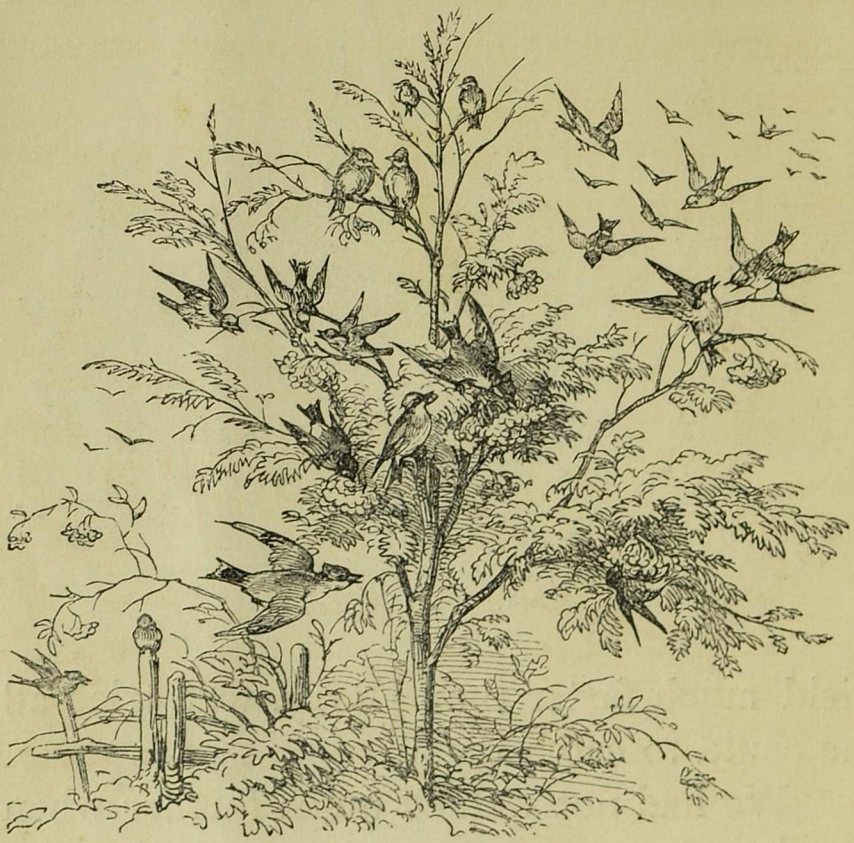
up his ears and looked at us for a moment, and then all of them ran away across the



field much faster than Harry, who tried all he could to catch them.

We had not walked much further when we heard a great chattering, and when we came to a young beech-tree close by the stile, we soon found the cause of the noise.

About two dozen or more of a little bird



called the titmouse had all perched on one tree, where they were pecking, and fighting,

and love-making, and noise-making, all at the same time. Except the noise made by sparrows when they go to bed on a summer's evening, I never heard the like.

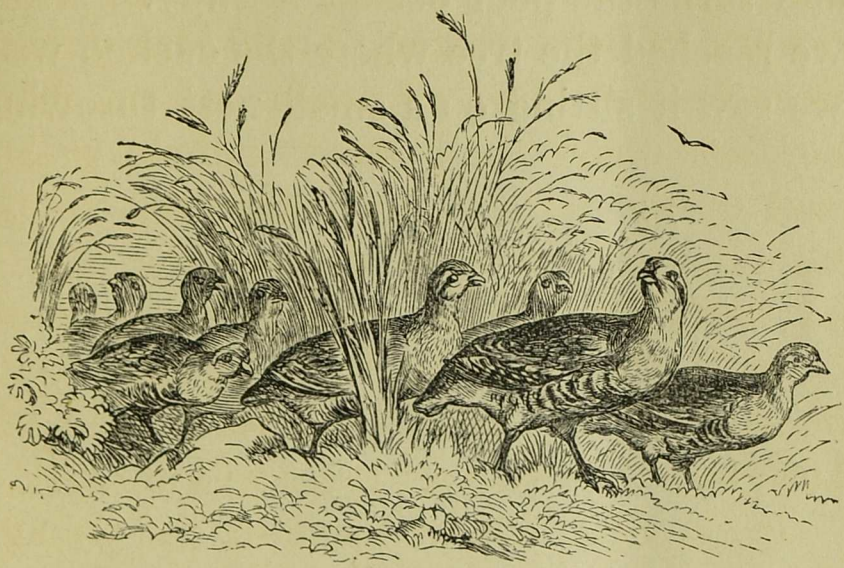
While I was amusing myself by watching the titmice, Harry, who had rambled on a

little way, came running back to ask me what the funny thing could be that he had

found. It was a mole that had been caught in a trap, and was dangling in the air with a swarm of bees around. I told Harry that the moles are blind, or nearly so, and that they live under the ground, and do great good to the farmers by eating the slugs and other things that destroy the corn; but that they turn up such great mounds of earth when making their tunnels, that the farmers are often glad to get rid of them, and therefore set traps to kill them.

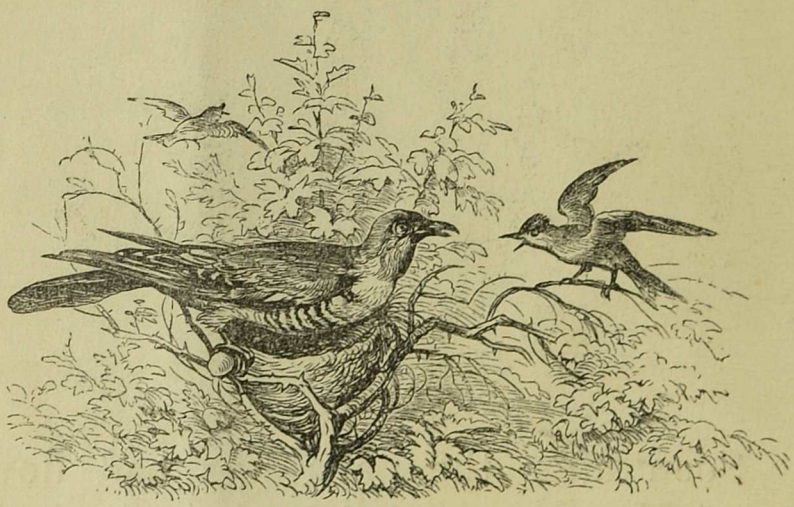
In the next field we came to, the young wheat had grown up higher than my knees, and Harry was greatly pleased at running down the furrows and making the blades of corn bend before him. Presently he stopped and peeped through an opening, whence he discovered a whole covey of partridges, the two old birds and seven young ones; they all rose with a whirring noise,

and flew into the field we had just left.



Soon after the partridges had flown away, Harry was delighted to hear the well-known voice of the cuckoo; it sounded so near us that we both started at the first voice, and we soon found out where the cuckoo was. Like a lazy tyrant, instead of making a house for himself, the cuckoo

takes the first little bird's nest he can find, and turns the poor occupant away. When we reached the tree where the cuckoo was, we saw it sitting on a small nest throwing

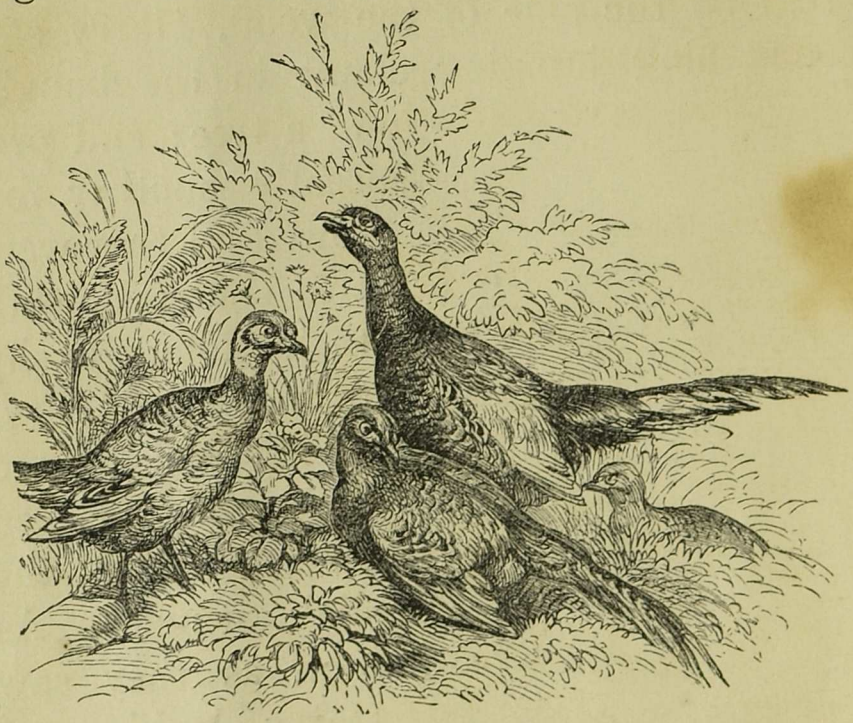


out the eggs of a poor little bird, who was screaming in anger at the intruder.

When I told Harry what the cuckoo had been doing, he wanted to throw a stone at it, but I told him that this cuckoo

was only doing what all other cuckoos did, and that the poor little bird would soon build itself another nest. As we walked on, still by the side of the wood, Harry saw something jumping about in the boughs of a tree; and presently another followed it: they were two squirrels, with their long bushy tails curled over their backs, and their ears pricked up to hear the slightest noise. As soon as they saw Harry looking at them they both leaped away, and we lost them in the branches of a large

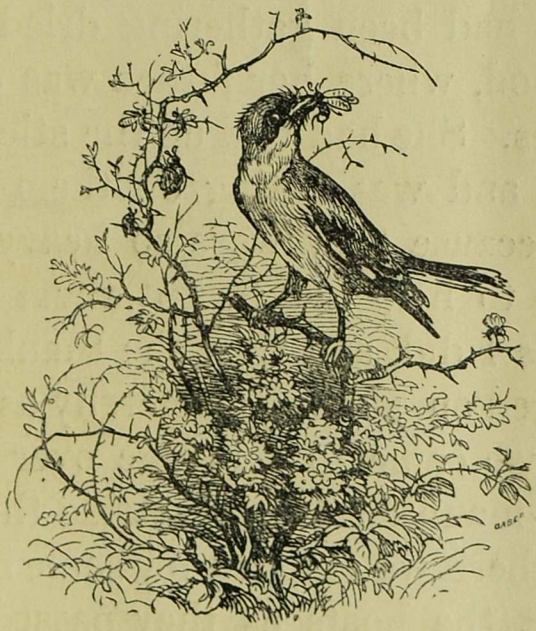
oak. To look after the squirrels we had climbed over the hedge, so we were walking a little way in the wood. Presently I



heard the call of a pheasant; and as we walked further, we came to some brushwood, under which were two old birds and

their young ones. They all flew away at our approach; but the old cock-pheasant left two of his tail-feathers in the brushwood, which Harry soon picked up to decorate his hat with.

The next bird that caught our notice



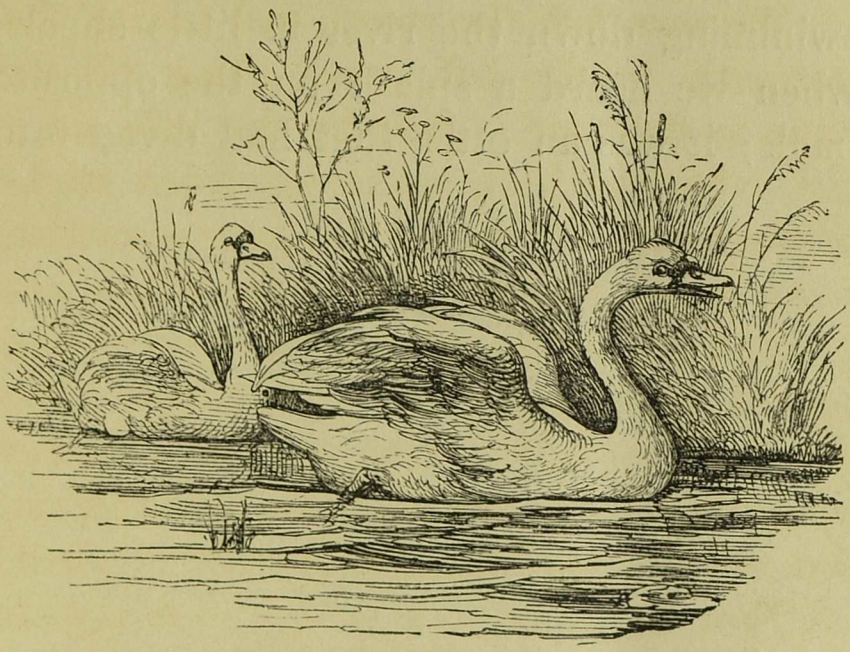
was a fly-catcher. It was sitting on a bramble catching bees and flies, and so

intently was it watching for them, that it did not even notice our presence, till Harry tried to put his hand on it.

We now left the wood, and taking the foot-path to the left, went along till we came to the road. Just by the stile sat a girl, who had been gathering dried sticks in the wood, where her father was cutting down trees. She had tied up the sticks into a bundle, and was sitting on them to rest herself, because they were so heavy. She asked me to help her to put them on her head; this I did, and then she thanked me, and trudged on, singing as merrily as a lark.

Now we came to a bridge over a wide river. I mounted Harry astride the parapet, and there we stopped for some minutes to look at the boats as they passed under us, and to watch two swans which were sailing up the river with their great wings

spread out for sails, and their necks so proudly bent that they looked like the king



and queen of the river. Harry would have stayed for hours to look at them.

We next turned down the pathway by the river-side, and soon we came to the

wide marshes, which are only two miles off the sea. There we were standing under a willow, watching for the fish which were swimming down the river in little shoals, when we heard a splash on the opposite bank; it was an otter that had dived into

the river, and caught a fish, with which we saw it climb on to the bank again. Men

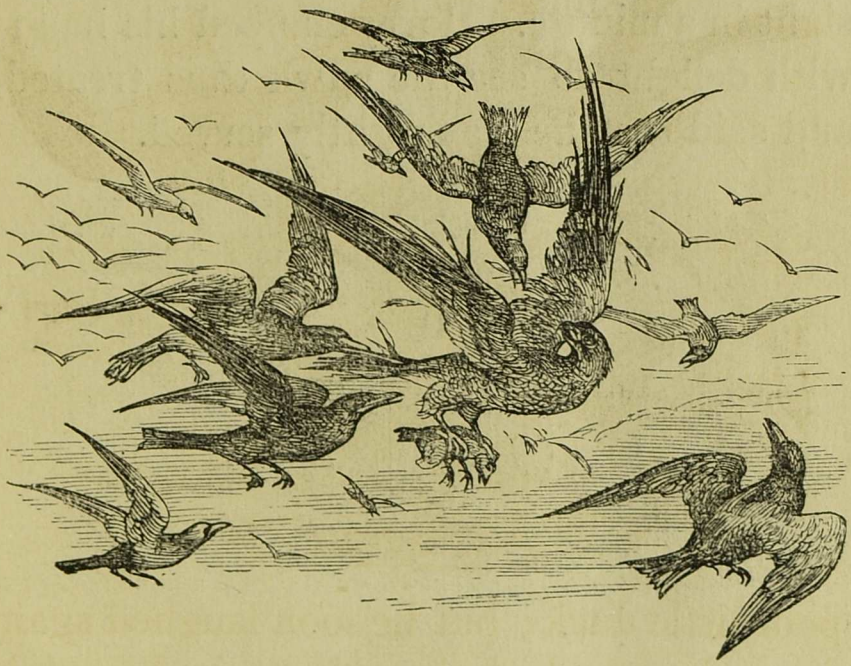
used to hunt the otter with dogs and spears; and sometimes otters have been trained to catch fish and bring them to land, but we do not often find them in England.

As we walked on by the river-side, we noticed a hawk flying swiftly over us; afterwards we saw him balance himself on his wings, and keep for many minutes in exactly the same place. Presently, with a loud scream, he darted down into some rushes a little way before us, and then we heard a most furious quacking, as if there were fifty ducks there. We ran on and saw a drake flying at the hawk and pecking at its wings, and the duck, quacking in the utmost alarm, tried to get all her little ducklings under her wings; but, alas! one little truant ran into the weeds, and the hawk caught it in his claws, and, in spite of all the efforts of the poor drake, flew away with it.

Harry was greatly excited at this scene, and cried to see the hawk carry away the

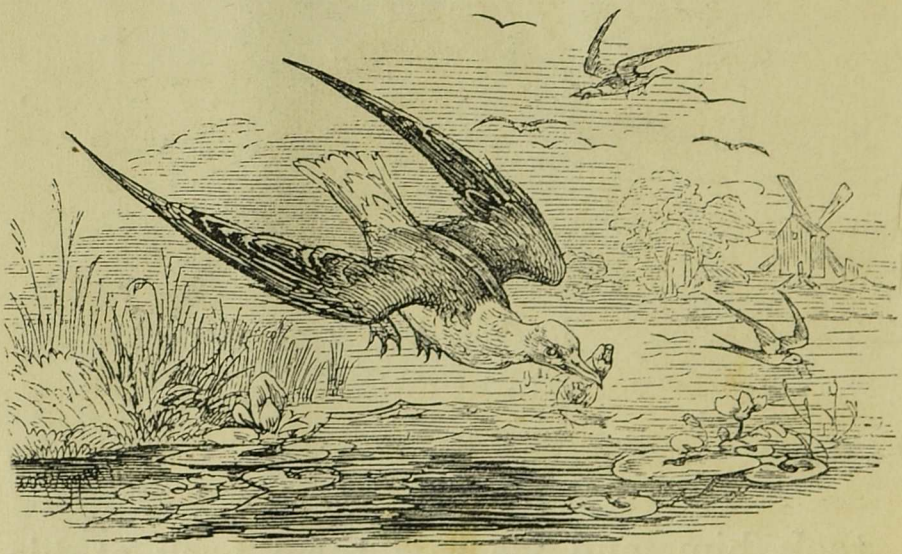
poor little duck; but he soon laughed again, for as he watched the robber in his flight through the air, he saw a number of little birds fly after him,—sparrows, swallows,

finches, all chirping at him and mocking him; then a tribe of bigger birds, blackbirds, magpies, rooks, and jays, flew after him also; and as the hawk could not fly fast with the duckling in his claws, they soon over-



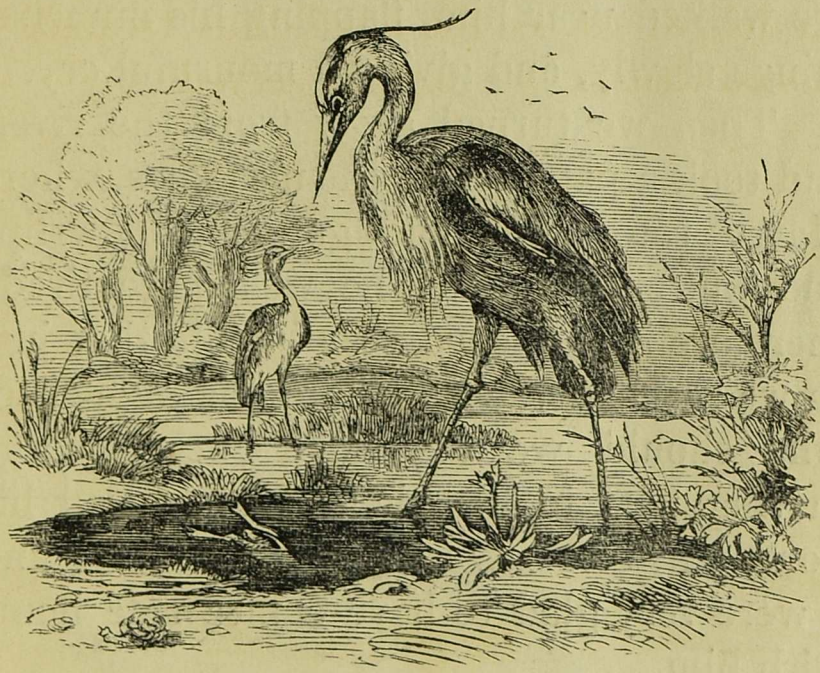
took him, and we saw them peck at his wings and his tail, and pull his feathers

out; and they all screamed and chattered at him till at last the hawk let the poor duckling down into the marsh, and then, rising much higher than the other birds, flew away so quickly that he was out of sight in a minute. Harry clapped his hands with delight to see the hawk thus treated, and said that he was rightly served.



Now we walked on again by the river-

side. The swallows skimmed along the surface of the water, and caught the insects that hovered over it, and now and then a sea-gull came with its great wings, and diving into the river, bore away a poor fish in its beak to swallow at its leisure.



Then we came close to a solemn-looking

heron, who stood so still that we could hardly tell if he were alive, till we saw him suddenly dive his head in a pool of water and pull out a frog, which he swallowed at one mouthful; and then he stood as still and solemn as ever. He flew away when we walked near him, flapping his immense wings slowly, and giving a mournful cry.

Then we turned away from the river, and took a path across the meadows, where Harry ran about and gathered cowslips and buttercups until he was quite tired; therefore it happened very luckily that just as we reached the gate into the high-road, who should we see but Uncle George driving past in his gig! He stopped his horse when he saw us, and both Harry and I were very glad to have a nice ride home with him.

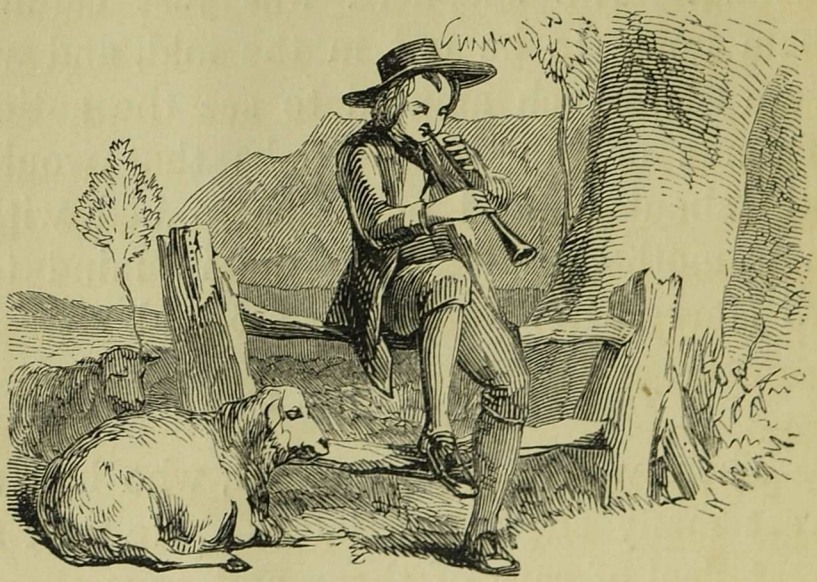
In the evening Harry and I went for a

stroll in the fields near home, and presently we came to one where the sheep were feeding. The shepherd was just calling them home to be put in the fold, and we were very much amused to see the antics of some of the young lambs that would skip about instead of going to bed with their mothers. This put me in mind to tell Harry Mrs. Barbauld's story about

THE SILLY LITTLE LAMB.

There was once a shepherd, who had a great many sheep and lambs. He took a great deal of care of them, and gave them sweet fresh grass to eat, and clear water to drink; and if they were sick he was very good to them; and when they climbed up a steep hill, and the lambs were tired, he used to carry them in his arms; and when they were all eating their suppers in the

field, he used to sit upon a stile, and play them a tune, and sing to them. And so



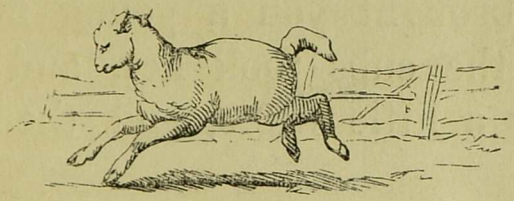
they were the happiest sheep and lambs in the whole world. But every night this shepherd used to pen them up in a fold. Do you know what a sheepfold is? Well, I will tell you. It is a place like the court; but instead of pales there are hurdles, which

are made of sticks that will bend, such as osier twigs; and they are twisted and made very fast, so that nothing can creep in, and nothing can get out. Well, and so every night, when it grew dark and cold, the shepherd called all his flock, sheep and lambs, together, and drove them into the fold, and penned them up, and there they lay as snug and warm and comfortable as could be, and nothing could get in to hurt them, and the dogs lay round on the outside to guard them, and to bark if any body came near; and in the morning the shepherd unpenned the fold, and let them all out again.

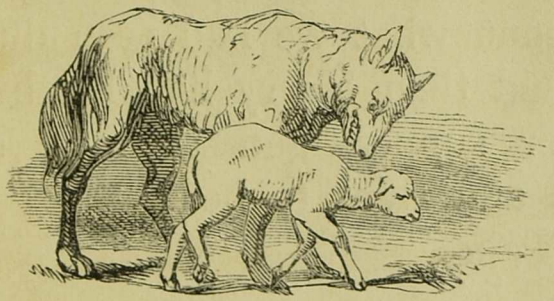
Now they were all very happy, as I told you, and loved the shepherd dearly that was so good to them—all except one foolish little lamb. And this lamb did not like to be shut up every night in the fold; and she

came to her mother, who was a wise old sheep, and said to her, "I wonder why we are shut up so every night? the dogs are not shut up, and why should we be shut up? I think it is very hard, and I will get away if I can, I am resolved; for I like to run about where I please, and I think it is very pleasant in the woods by moonlight." Then the old sheep said to her, "You are very silly, you little lamb, you had better stay in the fold. The shepherd is so good to us, that we should always do as he bids us; and if you wander about by yourself, I dare say you will come to some harm." "I dare say not," said the little lamb. And so when the evening came, and the shepherd called them all to come into the fold, she would not come, but crept slily under a hedge and hid herself; and when the rest of the lambs were all in the

fold and fast asleep, she came out, and jumped, and frisked, and danced about;



and she got out of the field, and got into a forest full of trees, and a very fierce wolf came rushing out of a cave and howled very loud. Then the silly lamb wished she had been shut up in the fold, but the fold



was a great way off. And the wolf saw her and seized her, and carried her away

to a dismal den; and there the wolf had two cubs, and the wolf said to them, "Here, I have brought you a young fat lamb." And so the cubs took her, and growled over her a little while, and then ate her up.

Harry said that was a very naughty lamb.

It now began to be quite dark, so Harry and I returned home. Then we had a long talk about what we had seen during the day; and then Harry had his bread and milk for supper, and then he said his prayers and went to bed.

London:—Printed by G. Barclay, Castle St. Leicester Sq.

BI

37131 009 549 653

III

HARRY'S HORN BOOK

HARRY'S PICTURE BOOK

HARRY'S NURSERY SONGS

HARRY'S SIMPLE STORIES

HARRY'S NURSERY TALES

HARRY'S COUNTRY WALKS

Price Sixpence Plain
One Shilling Colored