





Do not, unthinking Youth, too soon
engage,
In all the giddy vices of the age!
For he that enters on that beaten track,
Goes on without a thought of coming
back.

THE
SISTER'S GIFT,

OR THE
NAUGHTY BOY REFORMED

PUBLISHED FOR
The ADVANTAGE of the rising
GENERATION.

O now, while health and vigour still remain,
Toil, toil, my lads, to purchase honest gain.
Shun idleness! shun pleasure's tempting snare
A youth of folly breeds an age of care.

L O N D O N :

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Martha

Tones

July 5

T H E
SISTER'S GIFT;

O R T H E
NAUGHTY BOY REFORMED.

KITTY COURTLY, and her brother *Billy*, were the only children of Sir *William Courtly*. She was of a most amiable disposition; her mien was graceful, her manners gentle; and the beauty of her person was only to be outshone by the justness of her ideas, and the brilliancy of her wit. Master *Billy*, however, had not the

A 3 happiness

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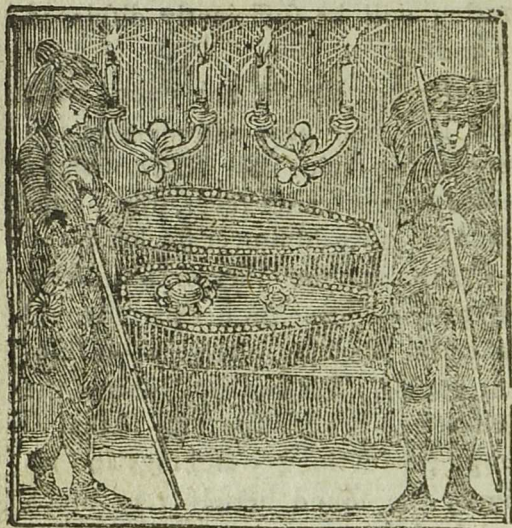
happiness to be held in so much esteem by the young ladies and gentlemen with whom he associated; he was so ill-tempered, that he had always a pleasure in mortifying his school-fellows; and had so little of the feelings of humanity, that he was frequently guilty of such acts of cruelty, as shocked the rest of his companions; yet he did not want sense, for he could generally construe his lesson, or finish his theme, before any other boy in the class, but never assisted any of them, in hopes of having the pleasure of seeing them whipped all round. Such are the faint outlines of the character of the brother and sister, who are the subject of this volume, and the heightening and colouring

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louring will be sufficiently displayed by and by.

Unfortunately for this young pair, they lost their papa and mamma at a very early period. Sir *William* being seized with a scarlet fever, the physicians all gave him over for lost; and his lady, that no duty or obligation might be wanting on her part, would suffer no nurse to attend upon him but herself. She unhappily forgot the delicacy of her constitution, so that at length, with long watchings and fatigue, she found herself very much indisposed; but what added to the distress of this once happy family, she soon after caught the feverish infection, which carried off both her and her spouse in less than half an hour of each other.

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Sir *William*, by his will, had appointed Colonel *Scar* and Admiral *Broadside* to be his executors, and joint guardians to his young children. But upon the breaking out of the last war, these two gallant officers, were

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were obliged to attend the calls of their country, and fight for its liberties; and Miss *Kitty* and Master *Billy* were each of them sent to different boarding-schools, under the care of other preceptors.

At this time Miss *Kitty* was about twelve, and Master *Billy* in the eighth year of his age. Upon their taking leave of each other when they were sent to school, Miss *Kitty* said to him;

“ Now, my dear brother, for the first
“ time we are going to be separated ;
“ we are but young, yet we have al-
“ ready witnessed the greatest misfor-
“ tune that could have befallen us,
“ in the death of our dear papa and
“ mamma ; and though I cannot men-
“ tion their names without shedding
“ tears, yet I hope I shall never forget,



“ that HE, who in his divine plea-
“ sure gave us all life and being,
“ has an absolute right, whenever
“ he pleases, to take them back again.
“ Nay, so short-sighted are we, my
“ dear

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“ dear little precious boy, that many
“ things, which, for the present mo-
“ ment we think the greatest calami-
“ ties that could possibly have attended
“ us, by the hidden operations of
“ divine providence, turn out to be
“ the greatest blessings. However, I
“ am confident, that an all-wise God
“ would create us for no other pur-
“ pose but to be *happy*, and we have
“ nothing else to do to make ourselves
“ completely so, but to be *virtu-*
“ *ous*.”

Billy burst out a crying; and could only say, “ Farewell, my dear sister;
“ I shall see you again in the *Whitsun-*
“ *tide* vacation.” But he no sooner saw his little galloway waiting for him in the court-yard, than he dried up his tears, mounted, clapped to his

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spurs, and set off a galloping as merry
as a *Greek*.



Miss Kitty went a few days after
to another school, along with Miss
Polly Scar, and Miss Nancy Broadside
where

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where she soon became the admiration and delight of every one that knew her. But Master *Billy*, as we have observed before, was quite of another cast; there was not a boy in the school for whom he had not a nickname; and he took a pleasure in setting his school-fellows together by the ears. But this was not all, rather than not gratify his inclination for mischief, he would stick at nothing: he once threw an ink-bottle into Master *Watkin's* bosom, and stained his shirt so abominably, that the poor washerwoman was never able to get it out. A thousand other such tricks he daily practised, which, for the sake of his reputation, I will not mention; but one among the rest must not pass unnoticed.

It was customary on a play-day, when the young gentlemen went a bird's nesting, out of a frolick to change their coats. And once Master *Billy* and *Dicky Rooksby* having made an exchange for the afternoon, they went to amuse themselves in the fields as usual. But upon their return home, in the evening, coming by an honest farmer's garden, *Billy* clambered over the hedge, and pulled up about two hundred cabbage-plants that the poor farmer had industriously put in the ground for his future subsistence. *Dicky Rooksby* finding he staid longer in the garden than he expected, looked over the hedge, and seeing what he was about, called to him, and asked him if he was not ashamed, to injure the poor man of the house, merely for the

the sake of doing mischief? " If it
 " was an orchard, added he, and in
 " the fruit season, I do not know whe-
 " ther I might not be as forward as
 " you; but where is the use of de-
 " stroying these things, since you can-
 " not eat them when you have done?
 " Fie, fie, you may do as you please,
 " but I will stay no longer for you."

Master *Billy* followed some time
 after, but as he was getting over the
 hedge again, one of the farmer's
 men, who was coming over the field
 at a distance, observed him, and call-
 ed out to know what he had been
 doing there? Upon which *Billy* was
 obliged to run as fast as he was
 able, and indeed it was with great
 difficulty, that he got out of his
 clutches.

The next morning the farmer made complaint to the master of the Academy of the injury he had received; and declared that the culprit was dressed in a sky-blue coat. Search was immediately made, and as no other boy had a sky-blue coat except Master *Rooksby*, the unfortunate youth was horsed and severely whipped, although entirely innocent of the crime, and blameable only in having put it in Master *Billy's* power, by changing coats, to be guilty of crimes, for which, in all probability, he would not be punished.

If Master *Billy* had had either spirit or generosity, he would never have first injured the poor farmer, and then see an innocent person suffer for it: No, he would have stood forth,

forth, and taken the blame upon himself. But so far from this, he absolutely exulted in seeing the distress of Master *Rookby*, and was one of the first to assist in horning him, and to render his punishment as severe as possible.

Master *Rookby*, however, took the first opportunity of clearing up the matter among his school-fellows; he summoned them together in a body, and told them the plain truth of the story; every one believed him, because he was never known to tell a fib, and because there were very few to whom Master *Billy* had not at some time or other done an ill turn. They agreed, that every one should set down the injuries he had received in writing, to shew them

to

to the Master, and solicit for his being expelled the school. But Master *Rooksby* objected to this, and told them, that he thought a better punishment would be, for every young gentleman in the school to come to a resolution, never more to speak to him, to play with him, or to keep him company. This was immediately agreed to, and Master *Billy* had the mortification to see himself the outcast of all his former acquaintance.

When Whitsuntide arrived, according to custom, the young gentlemen were sent for home; and Master *Billy* spent the holidays with his sister at colonel *Scar's* country seat. Now it was, that Miss *Kitty* had an opportunity of observing the ill tendency of her brother's mind and disposition, and
to

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to apply those useful remedies, which were afterwards of so much service to him.

She frequently observed him catching poor innocent flies, through the bodies of which he would stick pins, and then fasten them to a coach made of a card; and would thus take a pleasure in seeing them drag it along after them, till they were quite dead with pain and fatigue.



Sometimes he would amuse himself with tying an old tin-kettle or cannister to the tail of any dog that was so unhappy as to fall in his way ; and then with a whip set him a running, and howling through the town,

to

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to the great fright and mortification
of the poor tormented animal.



The farmers all round the neighbourhood, complained several times that he abused their cattle, by sticking a sharp nail to the end of a long stick,

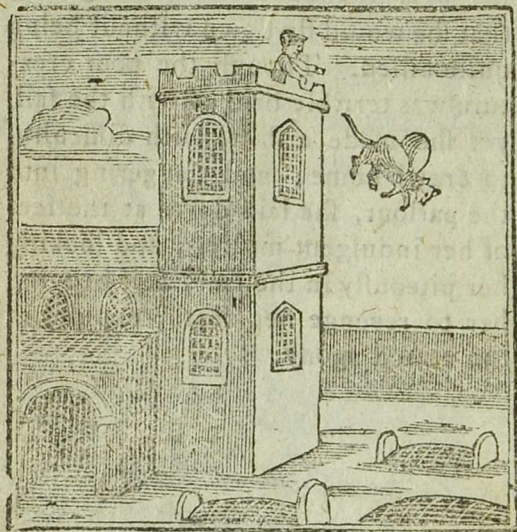
The Sister's Gift, or
stick, with which he used to gore
them, till they were almost mad;
or laming them by terrible and re-
peated blows upon the feet.



But what provoked the young la-
dies most of all, was his taking
Miss

Miss *Scar's* favourite cat, and carrying her to the top of the church tower, from whence, after tying two bladders about her neck, he cruelly threw her over the battlement, imagining that she would fly down without being quite killed. Though the poor creature was terrible bruised with the fall, yet she made a shift, with difficulty, to crawl home; and staggering into the parlour, she laid down at the feet of her indulgent mistress, and looking her piteously in the face, as if begging her to revenge her death, expired in the utmost agony.

Miss *Kitty* immediately imagined who had been the author of this cruelty: And taking her brother aside, she remonstrated with him to the following effect:



“ My dear Brother, said she, it
“ is with great uneasiness of mind

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“ that I have observed your vicious
“ disposition, which, left in time, by
“ a too frequent repetition of your
“ naughty tricks, they may become
“ habitual, I am determined to let
“ you see them in such a light as shall
“ chill you with horror.

“ Can you imagine that those little
“ insects which you so cruelly tor-
“ ment for mere sport, have no feel-
“ ing, or that they are void of the
“ sensation of pain?—Suppose some
“ great giant was to run a sword
“ through your body; I dare say,
“ you are sensible that it would give
“ you unspeakable torment; and is a
“ common sword any more in your
“ body, than a small pin in one of
“ those little flies?—Believe me, my
“ dear, the smaller an animal is,
“ the

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“ the quicker and more acute is
“ its sensibility, because its organs
“ are so much more delicate and
“ tender.

“ All your other frolicks are equal-
“ ly cruel and insupportable. Do
“ you love to be frightened? If you
“ do not, what pleasure can you
“ take in frightening so many honest
“ and faithful dogs as you do; per-
“ haps till they run mad with fear?
“ —Suppose I was to prick your side
“ full of holes with one of my needles,
“ would you not think me very hard-
“ hearted? And are not you equally
“ cruel, who, for a wanton amuse-
“ ment, can gore all the cattle in the
“ common fields?—And lastly, your
“ brutality is attended by the most
“ odious ingratitude. You have de-
“ stroyed

“stroyed the favourite kitten of Miss
“*Polly Scar*; wantonly sported away
“the life of a little playful innocent
“animal, although its mistress is every
“day bestowing apples, oranges, and
“sweetmeats upon you.—Is this the
“return for all her civilities towards
“you?——Fie! fie!”

Master *Billy* blushed, and seemed confounded; when Miss *Kitty* thus continued her discourse.

“It is universally allowed, that
“you do not want sense; and there-
“fore what I have now said, I would
“recommend to you to apply to
“your own understanding: What
“I have to add, I shall enforce by
“the principles of christianity and
“virtue. You cannot suppose that
“the divine Being created these
“poor

“ poor creatures merely to please
“ the whim and caprice of man-
“ kind ! He has breathed the same
“ spirit of life into thousands of
“ animals, as that by which you
“ ~~exist~~ ; and though he has made man
“ master of all, yet it is only in a
“ limited sense. He has appointed
“ certain creatures for the support
“ and sustenance of man, yet when
“ we take the lives even of these, it
“ ought to be with the greatest de-
“ cency, and even with compunc-
“ tion. All noxious animals also,
“ that is to say, such as we have a
“ natural antipathy to, and shudder
“ at the sight of, as snakes, toads,
“ serpents, &c. may be destroyed from
“ the laws of nature ; but shall we
“ for the same reason kill a fly, a
“ worm,

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“ worm, or such inoffensive insects,
“ as cannot in their consequence do
“ us any mischief? It is not in our
“ power to give life to any thing; and
“ therefore what right have we to
“ destroy an existence, which we can-
“ not restore? The man who without
“ remorse can wantonly do these
“ things, ought to be banished to the
“ desarts of Arabia, there to live
“ among lions, wolves, and tygers;
“ for he is not fit for society.

“ You know very well, that your
“ fortune will be ample; and that
“ you must figure in the great world
“ as a gentleman: And the truest
“ mark of gentility is a noble gene-
“ rosity of mind, and a tender feel-
“ ing for the distresses of our fellow-
creatures. But if you still continue

“ to persecute every unhappy being
“ that comes in your way, you will
“ in time (for the transition is very
“ easy) be led to exercise your cruel-
“ ties upon your own species, and,
“ Nero-like, rejoice in the blood of a
“ parent or a friend!—horrid thought!
“ —Will your fortune then protect
“ you from the censures of the good
“ and the virtuous? And will you
“ not be the out-cast of society?

“ He who is not endowed with the
“ delicate touch of compassion sinks
“ even below the brutes themselves,
“ for they are sometimes known to
“ help and assist each other. The
“ heart that feels no anxiety for ano-
“ ther's misfortunes, is destitute of
“ the very grounds and principles of
“ virtue. And the wretch who can-
“ not

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“ not weep for the griefs of a friend,
“ is blind to his own interest, and
“ will ultimately be punished for his
“ cruelty.”

Master *Billy* wept bitterly, and declared to his sister, that she had painted the enormity of his vices in such striking colours, that they shocked him in the greatest degree; and promised ever after to be as remarkable for generosity, compassion, and every other virtue, as he had hitherto been for cruelty, forwardness, and ill-nature. It is with pleasure we can add, that he faithfully kept his word, and is now one of the very best little masters in the whole universe.

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