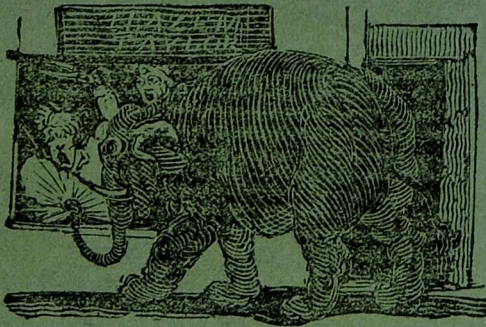


AMUSING ANECDOTES

OF VARIOUS

ANIMALS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE CORAL NECKLACE,"
"THE PEARL BRACELET," ETC.



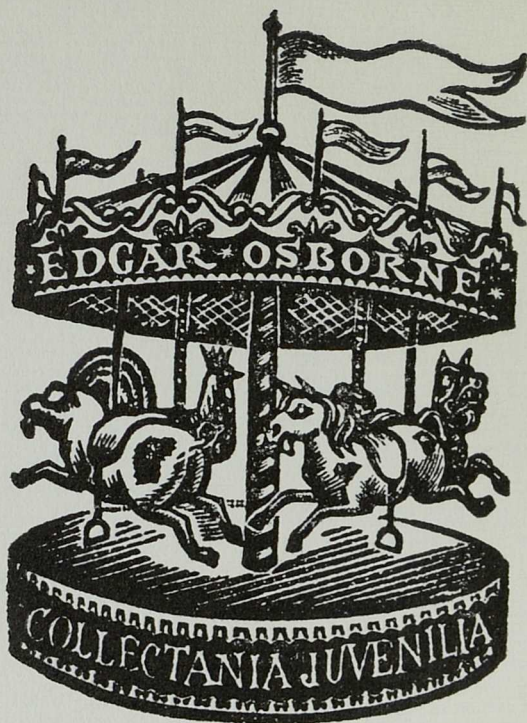
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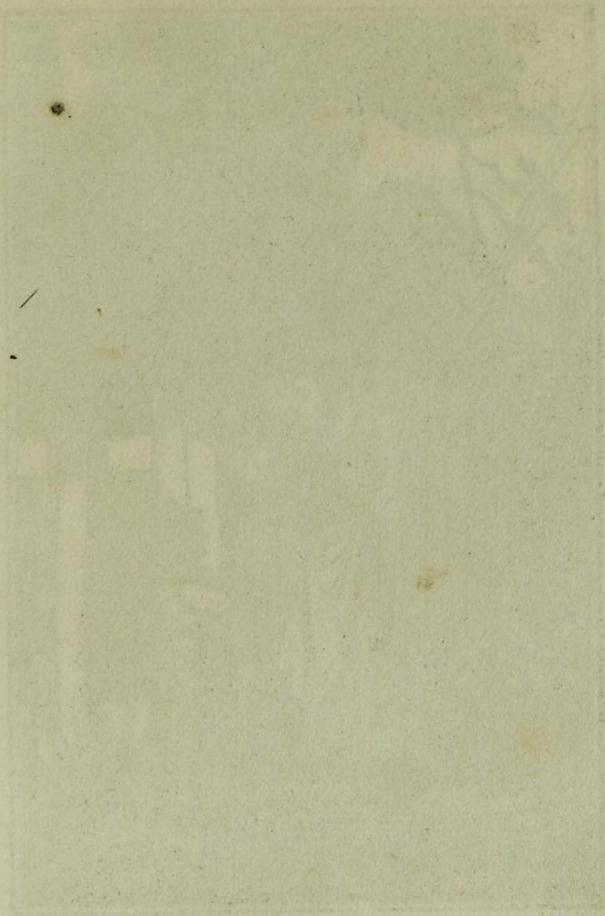
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EXHIBIT



"Your will be more open, I think," said little Richard to
his father, who was reading some paper that reported the
news of the day.

FRONTISPIECE.



“Your nails are gone again, Thomas,” said little Frederic L. to a carpenter who was mending some pales that separated his master’s orchard from that of an adjoining neighbour.”

AMUSING ANECDOTES
OF
VARIOUS ANIMALS;
Intended for Children.

—o—
By the Author of "The Coral Necklace," &c.
—o—

SECOND EDITION.



~~~~~  
Embellished with neat Engravings on Wood.  
~~~~~

LONDON:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. E. EVANS,

Long Lane, West Smithfield.

—
Entered at Stationers' Hall.
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ANECDOTES OF ANIMALS.



“YOUR nails are gone again, Thomas,” said little Frederic L. to a carpenter who was mending some pales that separated his master’s orchard from that of an adjoining neighbour. “Your nails are really gone; but I am quite certain that I have not touched them, and not even a single person has been here since you went to dinner: I have been picking up damsons under the trees all the time, and I am sure I should have seen if any one came.”

Thomas’s surprise was equal to Frederic’s: —“the wind may have blown them out of the paper,” said he, “but there is no wind to-day —not even a gentle breeze sufficient to stir the leaves: it is very extraordinary; however, I must buy some more.”

Away went the carpenter to purchase his nails, and away went Frederic to pick up his

damsons. Thomas soon came back with a fresh supply, and recommenced his work; but unfortunately the hammer was forgotten, and left at the shop: he was, of course, obliged to fetch it; and on returning again in the course of a quarter of an hour, what was his astonishment! more than half of the nails had disappeared. Frederic assured him that he knew nothing of the matter, and poor Thomas, somewhat disconcerted, went on with his job. It however occurred to his recollection that his young master kept a tame magpie in the garden, and he therefore began to suspect the thief. He accordingly went on hammering the pales, but secretly watched the magpie, who soon came up, and taking as many nails as he could carry, went and hid them in a hole under an old apple-tree in the orchard. Thomas related this circumstance to Frederic, and they went together to the apple-tree, discovered the cunning magpie's hole, and, to their no small amusement, found the whole of the nails. *

* This is a fact.

“How droll!” said Frederic; “I really did not know my magpie was such a clever bird! I will run in and tell papa.”

Mr. L. was coming down the path towards the orchard-gate, to call his little boy to dinner, during which meal Frederic related the



wonderful achievement of his favourite. After looking very thoughtful for a few moments, “Do you think, papa,” said he, “that birds possess instinct as well as other animals?”

“Certainly, my dear,” replied his father. “I have so often told you what is meant by instinct, that I need scarcely describe it again. It is a feeling with which horses, dogs, birds, in short, all animals are furnished. It supplies the place of reason, and teaches them how to provide themselves with food, and to make themselves happy. You know very well what great care every parent bird bestows on its young ones, with what tenderness it rears, and feeds, and watches them; you have seen the old bird collect bits of stick, and moss, and horse hair, to build a warm nest as a comfortable habitation for its little family. Instinct alone could enable them to do all this. It is much more visible in some species than in others. I have heard of a bird called the *baya*, or bottle-nested sparrow, that builds pendulous nests; it is a native of Hindostan, particularly of Cape Comorin.”

“Cape Comorin! where is that, papa?”

“Answer my question,” said Frederic’s father, “and tell me what is meant by a cape.”

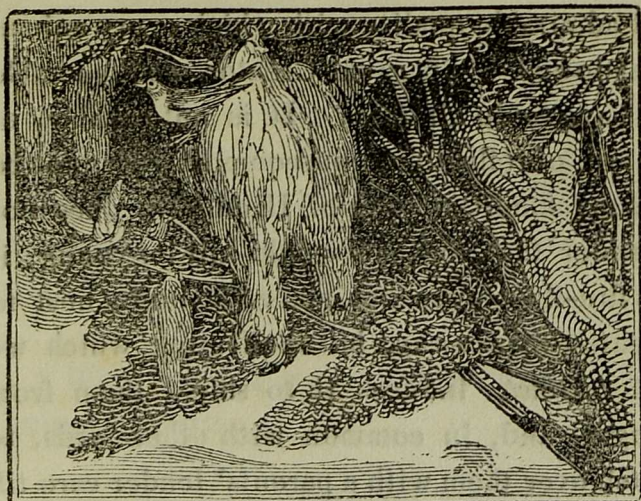
“A *cape*, or promontory, is a point of land jutting out into the sea, papa; but what has all this to do with the bottle-nested sparrow—and what do you mean by pendulous nests?”

“The meaning of the word pendulous, is hanging down, suspended,” said Mr. L. “and Cape Comorin is a lofty mountain in Hindostan, whose rocky head seems to overhang its base. They bayas are very numerous there, and not there only; for these birds, remarkable for their brilliant plumage and uncommon sagacity, are found in most parts of that extensive country. They resemble a sparrow in shape, and their feathers are of a brown colour; the head and breast are of a bright yellow, and when the sun shines, they present a splendid appearance, thousands of them flying about in the same grove: they make a chirping noise, but have no song: the trees of various sorts—the palmyra with its wide-spreading, fan-like leaves—the acacia with its sweet-scented and rose-coloured blossoms, and the date tree with its delicious fruit, are almost covered with their nests.”

“Pray, papa, describe these curious habitations,” said Frederic. “I have seen a goldfinch’s nest, for we had one in the elder tree in the orchard, last summer; and I have seen a sparrow’s nest, for there was one in the cedar tree by my little garden, and several young ones were hatched in it; but I cannot imagine how birds can build *pendulous* nests. I cannot think how they can fasten them to the boughs of trees.”

“They are formed in a very ingenious manner,” said Mr. L. “by long grass woven together in the shape of a bottle, with the neck hanging downwards, lined with wool and hairs, and suspended by the other end to the end of a flexible branch, the better to secure the young brood from serpents, monkeys, squirrels, and birds of prey. But what is most curious of all, at night they light up their little habitations as if to see company.”

“Oh, papa! you are only joking; it cannot be possible,” exclaimed Frederic.



“It is very possible and very true, my dear,” said his father. “The sagacious little bird fastens a bit of soft clay to the top of its nest, and then picks up a fire-fly, an insect somewhat like a glow-worm, and sticks it on the clay to illuminate the dwelling, which consists of two rooms. Sometimes there are three or four fire-flies, and their blaze of light in the little cell dazzles the eyes of the bats, which often kill the young of these birds.* What but instinct,

* Buchanan.

that admirable quality with which every animal is endowed by its great Creator, could enable the baya to do all this? It is not capable, as we are, of reflection, consequently it cannot be reason: the little baya of Hindostan does not consider that the bats would kill its young, if the fire-flies were not placed upon its nest to frighten them away, but the feeling which we call *instinct*, induces it to shield them from danger, and, in common with other birds, to watch over them with a parents' tender care till they are ready to fly and seek food for themselves."

"Thank you, dear papa. I see that instinct is to animals what reason is to us, and I like your account of the bottle-nested sparrow very much. Cannot you tell me something about some other birds?"

"Whilst we were talking of India," said his father, "the banyan tree occurred to my remembrance. This very large tree, in itself resembling a grove, flourishes and comes to

perfection in that country ; its branches growing downwards, strike into the ground and take root there, whilst others springing out, increase and form a forest, as it were, from one parent tree. There are most delightful walks between the trunks, for the foliage is extremely beautiful."

"What do you mean by the foliage?" enquired Frederic.

"The foliage signifies the leaves, my love," said Mr. L.; "those of the banyan are large and of a bright green ; and the fruit which this tree bears, are like little figs, and of a rich scarlet colour, affording sustenance to monkeys, parrots, squirrels, peacocks, and birds of various kinds which dwell among the branches."

"Ah ! what do the parrots we have sometimes seen, come from India?"

"Very frequently," said Frederic's father ; "they are of various sorts, and can be easily

tamed and taught to speak, and the degree of memory which they possess, is not a little surprising. I will, if you like, relate an anecdote concerning one of these talkative birds, which you will, I dare say, call very entertaining. — A parrot belonging to King Henry the Seventh——”

“Henry the Seventh:—let me see,” said Frederic, “who was he? Oh, I recollect—he succeeded Richard the Third:—then,

“Henry the Seventh was prudent and sage,
But Henry the Eighth kill'd his wives in a rage.

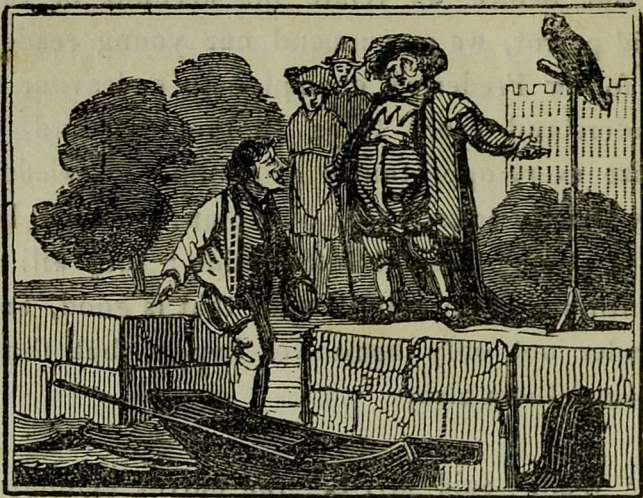
How long is it since he began his reign, papa?”

“Henry the Seventh ascended the throne of England in 1485,” said Mr. L.

After some little calculation, Frederic found that three hundred and thirty-seven years had elapsed since that event. “And now, papa,” said he, “I am ready to hear about his parrot.”

But before we relate the account of this said parrot, we recommend our young readers to follow Frederic's example—to endeavour to understand every thing thoroughly, and to seize every opportunity of gaining knowledge. By strictly adhering to this plan, they will lay in a store of useful information; they will be continually improving in all that is good, and render not only themselves happy, but those around them also.

“Well,” said Mr. L. “the parrot belonging to Henry the Seventh, who then resided at his palace of Westminster, by the river Thames, had learned to talk many words from the passengers as they happened to take water. One day, sporting on its perch, the poor bird fell into the water, and immediately exclaimed as loud as possible, ‘A boat! a boat! twenty pounds for a boat!’ A waterman who happened to be near, hearing the cry, made up to the place where the parrot was floating, and taking him up, restored him to the king. The bird was a great favourite of the king's, and the



man therefore insisted that he ought to have a reward more equal to his services than to his trouble; and as the parrot had proposed twenty pounds, he said that his majesty was bound in honour to grant it. The king agreed to leave it to the parrot's own determination; which the bird hearing, cried out, 'Give the knave a groat.' " *

Frederic clapped his hands when he heard

* Mavor.

this amusing tale; and although he was anxious to watch the carpenter at his work, he felt unwilling to leave the table, and begged his father to try to think of some other story as entertaining as that of King Henry's parrot.

“ You are a great friend to horses, I believe, (said Mr. L.) so I will tell you something about a horse which had an uncommon share of sagacity and instinct.”

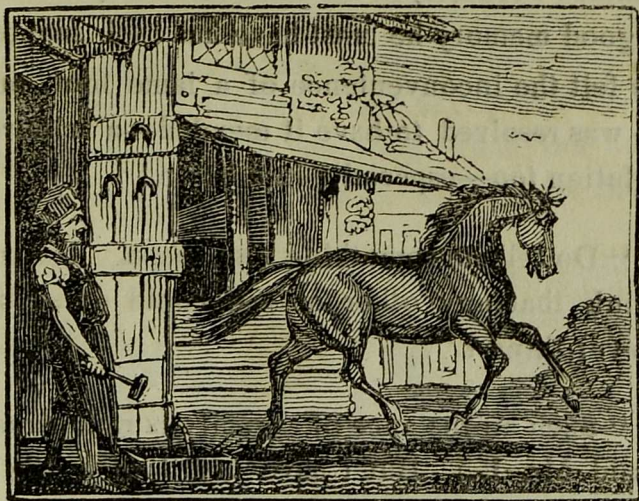
“ Do, dearest papa,” said Frederic. “ I was thinking just now that I liked magpies and parrots better than any living creatures; but I quite forgot horses. Horses, of all things, are what I delight in.”

“ A gentleman of my acquaintance went to market one day as usual,” said his father, “ and upon his return home, turned his horse into a small field near his house, in which it had been accustomed to graze. A few days before this, the horse, whose name was Blackbird, had been shod, all-fours, but unfortunately had been

pinched in the shoeing of one foot. In the morning my friend, who wished to ride out early on business, missed the horse, and supposing it was stolen, caused an active search to be made in the neighbourhood, when he was amused by this singular circumstance: The animal, as it may be supposed, feeling lame, made his way out of the field by unhooking the gate with his mouth, and went straight to the same farrier's shop."

"How far off, papa?"

"A mile and a half—quite at the other end of a long village. The farrier had no sooner opened his shed, than the horse (which had evidently been standing there some time) advanced to the forge, and held up his ailing foot. The farrier instantly began to examine the hoof, discovered the injury, took off the shoe, and replaced it more carefully, on which poor Blackbird immediately turned about, and set off at a merry pace for his well-known pasture.



“ While the gentleman’s servants were searching about, they happened to pass by the forge, and on mentioning their supposed loss, the farrier replied, ‘ O, he has been here, and shod, and is gone home again ;’ which, on their return, they found to be actually the case—for Blackbird was grazing very contentedly in the field by his master’s house.”

“ Instinct, sagacity, wisdom indeed, papa ! I wish Blackbird had been your horse ! ” ex-

claimed Frederic, in an animated tone, "What a good memory he must have had! I suppose he felt the inconvenience of a lame foot, and so was resolved to have it mended—a wise resolution too—especially in a horse!

"Do tell me something else, papa. Do you think that any other animal could do such a clever thing?"

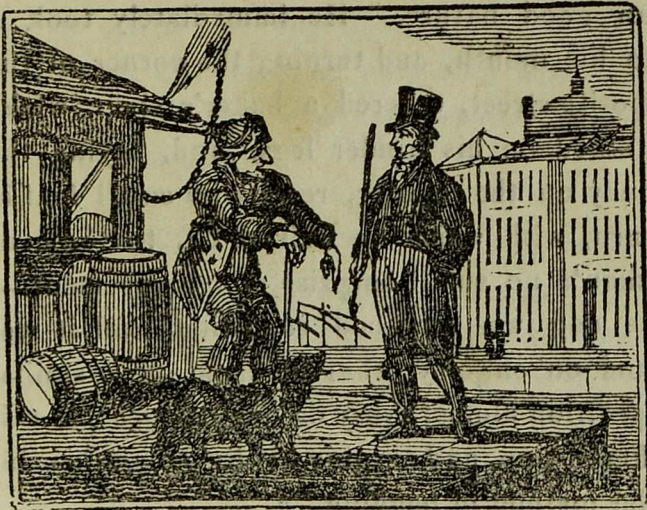
"Such an instance of sagacity is rather rare, (said Mr. L.) But I have heard of a dog at Rome, that earned its livelihood in a curious manner."

"Go on, papa. When I said that I liked magpies and horses, I quite forgot dogs. Dogs, of all living animals, are my favourites:—most little boys are fond of dogs and horses."

"As a person was one day standing on the quay at Rome——"

"Rome is a city in Italy, is it not?"

“Yes : the person whom I mentioned was accosted by a fierce-looking dog, which looked very gruffly in his face, and began to bark.— The gentleman not knowing what the dog wanted, was rather alarmed, but an old man



who had resided many years in Rome, and was well acquainted with the dog's sagacity, informed him, that the only way to get rid of him was, to give him a penny.

“A penny! well, I never heard of a dog

begging for money before. What did he do with it?"

"The gentleman threw the penny on the ground, as the most prudent method, as the animal's countenance denoted rather fierceness than good nature. He immediately took it into his mouth, and turning the corner of the opposite street, entered a baker's shop, where he stood on his hinder legs, and, laying the money on the counter, received a small loaf in return, with which he walked off, to the gentleman's no small surprise and amusement.—The dog was in good condition, and it was found on enquiry, that he came on a similar expedition almost every day in the week to this baker's shop, and earning his living by this singular method of begging."*

"He well deserved it," said Frederic, "and if I had lived in Rome at the time that clever dog did, I think I should have given him all

* Milford.

my pocket money, for the sake of seeing him buy his penny loaves. — Can you tell me any more anecdotes about dogs ?”

“ I do not just now recollect one about dogs, (said Mr. L.) but whilst talking about the manner in which this dog at Rome procured its livelihood, the mode of obtaining food, practised by a bird called the honey-eater, occurred to my remembrance.”

“ The honey-eater !—that is a droll name for a bird ! oh, it eats honey, I suppose. Well, what have you to tell me about this honey-eater ?”

“ The Hottentots, who have a very quick sight, try to observe a bee flying home with the honey which it has collected from different flowers, and pursue it, in hopes of finding the spot where it deposits its burden, and of robbing it of its food ; but they often would not succeed in following the bee, were they not assisted by the honey-eater birds, which seem to perceive the intention of the men.”

“Stay a minute, papa : bees in England have hives to put their honey in, you know ; I went with my mamma to look at a bee-hive in old Mrs. Burton’s garden, last summer, and the busy little creatures were all at work. Have the bees, in the country you are talking about, no hives ?”

“No, they deposit their precious loads in cavities of rocks, or in trees, and other suitable places. When they are flying home with their honey, the bird pursues the bee, and gives the Hottentots, who pursue both, a signal by a whistle, where the honey-comb is ; and when they have taken out the honey, they throw some to the bird, as a reward for its service. Thus it earns its livelihood by as ingenious a method as the dog at Rome gained its living.” *

“Ha ! ha ! very cleverly indeed, papa ; but I should like to know where these Hottentots live who are so fond of honey.”

* Kotzebue.

“ I believe you know that the world we live in, is divided into four quarters,” said Frederic’s father, “ and that these quarters are called Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The



country in which the Hottentots reside, is a large region in the South of Africa, and as their mode of living is very different from ours, I think you will like to hear something about them. The climate of Africa is extremely warm, and its inhabitants are not fair like the Europeans, but of a brown complexion, and

they have woolly hair, like the negroes you sometimes noticed when we were walking about the streets of London. They are a lively and inquisitive people; their dress consists of sheep skins, the wool being worn outward in summer, and inward during the winter. The ladies of that country are very fond of ornaments; they wear necklaces, not like your sister Ellen's, but made of shells—little white shells, called *cowries*. They live a wandering irregular life, and their dwellings are not half so good as the hut in which the gardener keeps his tools; they are something in the shape of great bee-hives, and the roofs are so low that a man cannot stand upright in them?"

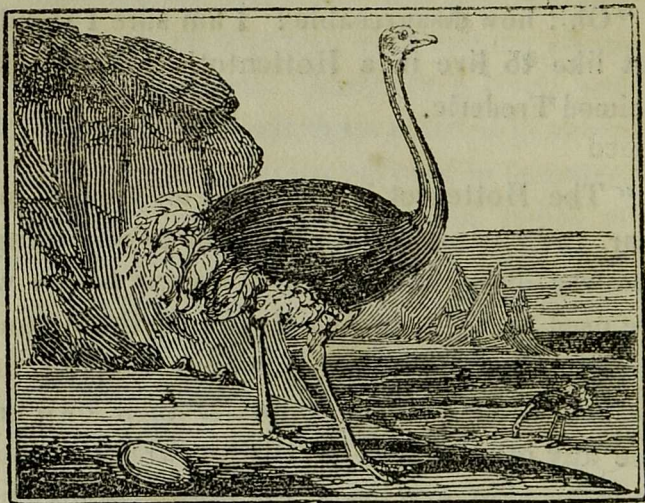
"What! do they always sit, then?"

"No: but they creep on all-fours, and they are so accustomed to it, that they do not think any thing about it. The fire-place is in the middle, and they sit in a circle around it. A little door is the only place that admits the light, and at the same time serves as a chimney to let out the smoke."

“Oh ! how disagreeable ! I am sure I should not like to live in a Hottentot’s hive !” exclaimed Frederic.

“The Hottentot is used to it all his life, my dear, and custom can reconcile us to any thing, however disagreeable it may appear before we *are* used to it. It is a common case throughout the world, and a very happy one too, for the natives of one country to prefer their own before any other. The Hottentot wraps himself up in his skin, and lies at the bottom of his hut, quite at his ease, amidst the cloud of smoke, except that he is now and then obliged to peep out from beneath his covering, in order to stir the fire, or perhaps to light his pipe, or turn the steak that is broiling over the coals for his dinner. Their plates and dishes are curious things —instead of China basons like those we use, they employ the shells of ostrich eggs to carry their milk or water, and their dishes are made of dried gourds or seal-skins.”

“What ! great ostriches live in that country, do they ?”



“ Yes, they lay their eggs on the sand, where the Hottentots find them, and take them home for their use, as they are excellent food. There are many other curious birds and animals in that country also, especially a species of bird called the *loxia*, which builds its singular nest in the mimosa-tree, where it forms a kind of thatched-house, with a regular street of nests on both sides, at about two inches distance from each other, and containing under its roof several hundred, or a thousand birds. Many animals are found in the land of the Hottentots

—the wise and sagacious elephant, the huge rhinoceros, the monstrous hippopotamus, or river horse, the fierce lion, the savage tiger, the koedo, an animal of a mouse colour, with very large twisted horns, and the beautiful striped zebra, are all natives of that hot and sultry climate.”

“ Oh, papa, out of so many, you can surely remember an anecdote respecting one of these animals, to tell me.”

“ Your magpie’s achievement seems to have excited your curiosity,” said Frederic’s father. “ We were talking about the Hottentots; I can, if you like, relate an adventure that an elderly Hottentot once had with a lion.”

“ Do if you please, papa; I like escapes and adventures uncommonly.”

“ Well, then, now for one: This old Hottentot was walking one day, when he observed a lion following him at a great distance, for two

hours together: he of course concluded that the lion only waited the approach of night to make him his prey; and as he was a very long way from home, with no weapon of defence except a staff, he gave himself up for lost.—Being, however, well acquainted with the nature of the lion, and his manner of seizing his prey, he availed himself of the leisure he had, to consider what were the most likely means by which he would be destroyed; and at last happened to think of a method of saving his own life.”

“How, papa?”

“He looked out for what in that country is called a *kliprans*, which is a rocky place level at top, and having a steep precipice on one side of it, and sitting himself down on the hedge of this precipice, he observed, to his great joy, that the lion also made a halt, and kept at the same distance as before. As soon as it began to grow dark, the Hottentot, sliding gently forwards, let himself down below the upper edge



of the precipice, upon a projecting part of the rock, where he had but just room enough to keep from falling: but in order to deceive the lion, he set his hat and cloak on the stick, making with it a gentle motion just over his head, a little way from the edge of the precipice. This happy and cunning plan had the desired effect; the lion soon came creeping softly towards him like a cat, and mistaking the skin cloak for the Hottentot himself, took his leap with such exact precision, that he fell

headlong down the precipice, and this relieved the poor creature from his fears and danger.”*

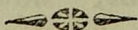
“What a clever scheme! I am very glad the old Hottentot escaped. It is just such an adventure as I like, papa. Pray tell me another.’

“I have been chatting to you till I had really quite forgotten how time passed,” said Mr. L. pulling out his watch; “it is actually five o’clock already: I must leave you.”

Mr. L. rang the bell for the servant to remove the dessert, and rose to resume his business: and away ran Frederic to the orchard, to see whether his magpie had stolen any more of the carpenter’s nails.

* Church’s Cabinet.

ALFRED AND DORINDA.



MR. VENABLES, one fine summer day, having promised his two children, Alfred and Dorinda, to treat them with a walk in a fine garden a little way out of town, went up into his dressing-room to prepare himself, leaving the two children in the parlour.

Alfred was so delighted with the thoughts of the pleasure he should receive from his walk, that he jumped about the room, without thinking of any evil consequence that could happen; but unluckily the skirt of his coat brushed against a very valuable flower, which his father was rearing with great pains, and which he had unfortunately just removed from before the window, in order to screen it from the scorching heat of the sun.

“O brother! brother!” said Dorinda, as she took up the flower which was broken off from the stalk, “what have you done!” The sweet girl was holding the flower in her hand,

when her father, having dressed himself, came into the parlour. "Bless me, Dorinda," said he, in an angry tone, "how could you be so thoughtless as to pluck a flower which you have seen me take so much care to rear, in order to have seed from it?" Poor Dorinda was in such a fright, that she could only beg her papa not to be angry. Mr. Venables growing more calm, replied he was not angry, but reminded her, that as they were going to a garden where there was a variety of flowers, she might have waited till they got there, to indulge her fancy. He therefore hoped she would not take it amiss if he left her at home.

This was a terrible situation for Dorinda, who held her head down, and said nothing. Little Alfred, however, was of too generous a temper to keep silence any longer. He went up to his papa, with his eyes swimming in tears, and told him, that it was not his sister but himself, had accidentally beaten off the head of the flower with the flap of his coat. He therefore desired that his sister might go abroad, and he stay at home.

Mr. Venables was so much delighted with the generosity of his children, that he instantly forgave the accident, and tenderly kissed them both, being happy to see them have such an affection for each other. He told them that he loved them equally alike, and that they should both go with him. Alfred and Dorinda kissed each other, and leaped about for joy.

The flower Mr. Venables had lost would have given him some pain had it happened from any other circumstance; but the pleasure he received from seeing such mutual affection and regard subsist between his two children, amply repaid him for the loss of his flower.

I cannot omit the opportunity that here presents itself, of reminding my young friends, not only how necessary, but how amiable and praise-worthy it is, for brothers and sisters to live together in harmony. It is not only their most important interest to do so, but what should be a still stronger argument with them, such are the commands of Him who made them.



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