

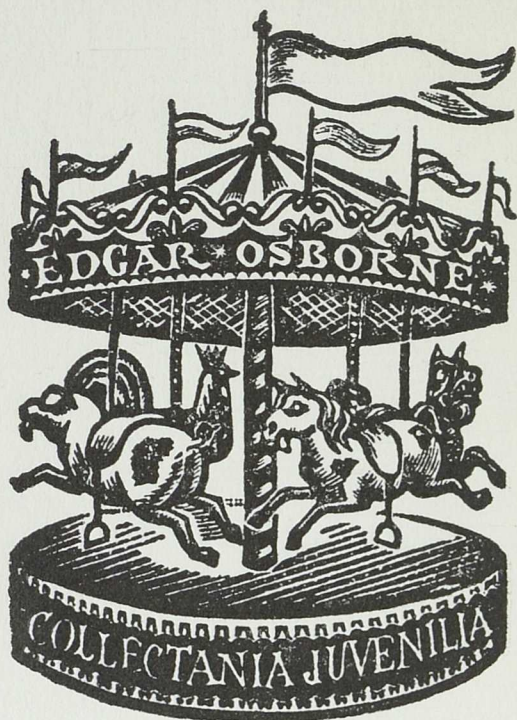
MAMMA'S
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OR
DAILY READING
FOR
LITTLE CHILDREN

THE TWO BROTHERS;
OR
The Little Cowslip Gatherers.



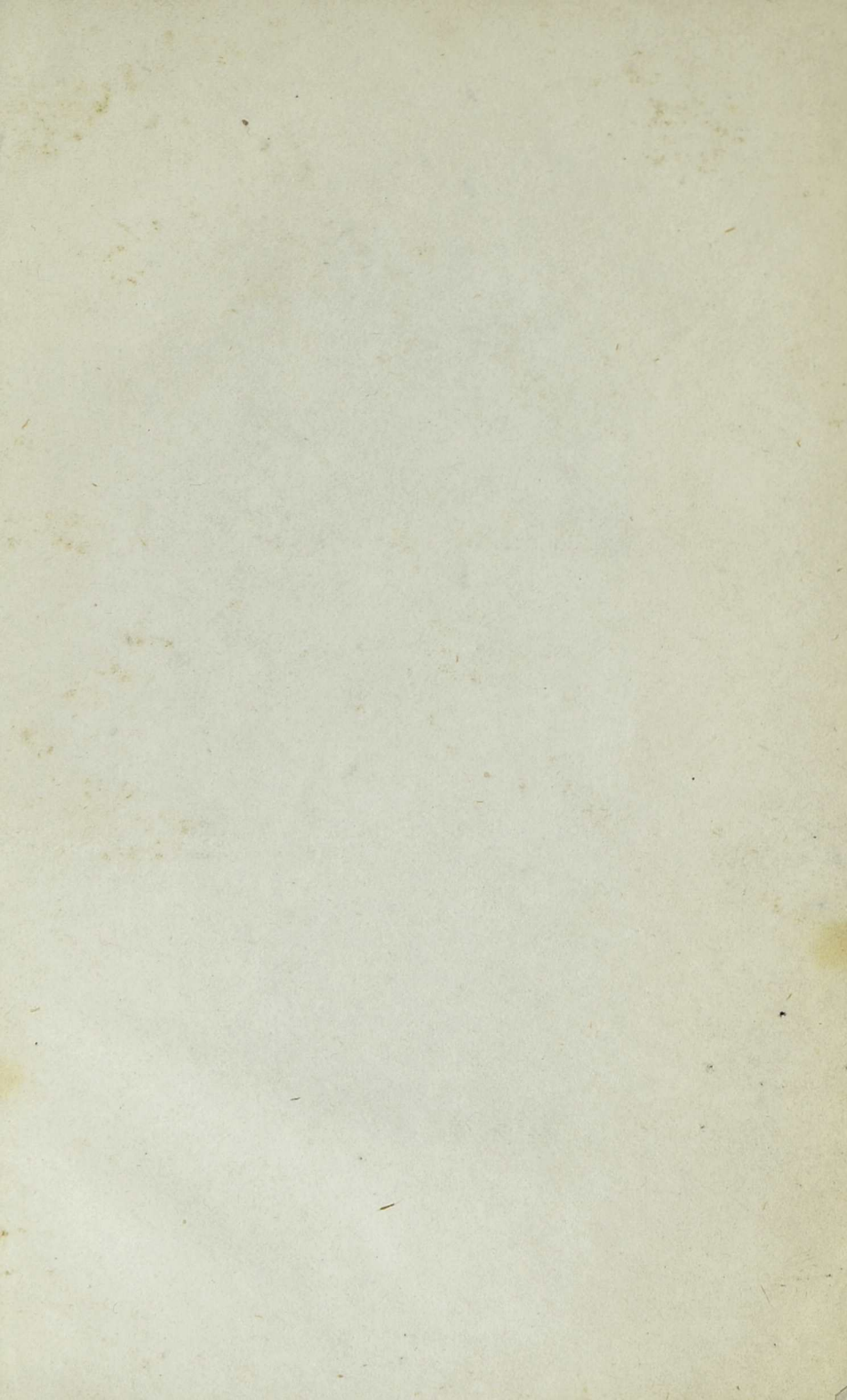
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The Dinner Party in the Cowslip Field.—Page 46.

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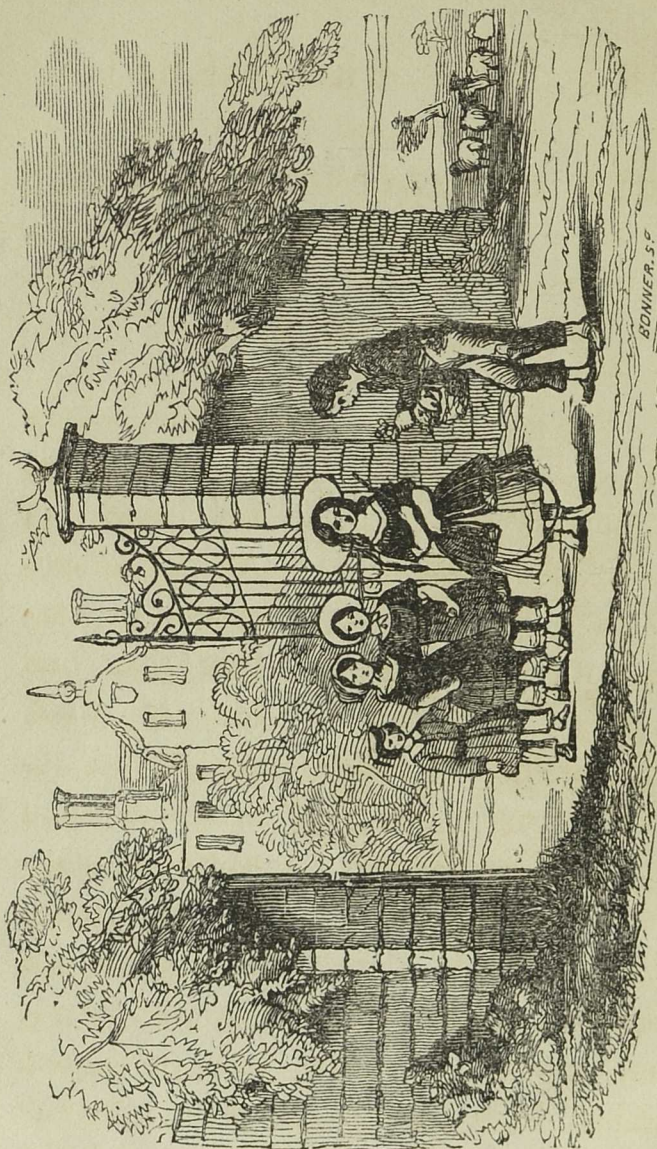
LITTLE COWSLIP GATHERERS.

Third Edition.

LONDON:

HOULSTON & STONEMAN, AND WERTHEIM & MACINTOSH;
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1854



Frank offering his Cowslips for Sale.—p. 14.

THE TWO BROTHERS; OR, THE LITTLE COWSLIP GATHERERS.

CHAPTER I.



COLD windy day towards the end of April, had succeeded to weather that had for a week past, rather resembled such as we commonly experience in June, than the more fickle temperature so frequently met with during our spring months; several showers had prevented little Alice from taking her usual exercise in the morning; but about three o'clock,

the clouds dispersed, and though still blustering and disagreeable, Mrs. Grantham, her grandmother, and at whose house she was on a visit, desired her maid Bentley, to prepare the child for a walk, and advised her grand-daughter to go and trundle the hoop up and down on the downs, immediately in front of their pretty villa. Alice would have preferred remaining within doors, working at a slipper she had commenced for her Papa, and listening to a story Mrs. Grantham had been reading to her, about two poor orphans ; but she remembered how often her mamma had told her that children should *obey*, without raising objections to the orders and wishes of their elders ; so, merely expressing regret that they had not had time to finish the tale, and that it was too cold for her to hope for the society of her grandmother on the downs, Alice put away her work neatly, and hastened away to get ready, that she might not detain Bentley longer than necessary from the sewing. Before leaving the house, she ran into the drawing-room to kiss her grandmother,

when this latter kindly smiling on her cheerful countenance, observed:—

“Alice, my dear, when your mamma asked me to have you at Clifton for a couple of months, she assured me I should find you a very obedient child; and I can say with sincere pleasure, that during the fortnight you have already spent here, I have found you a very good little girl: for a moment, I did fear that you were about to object to going out this afternoon, but after an instant’s struggle between duty and inclination, I was glad to see the complete triumph of the former over the latter: not only did you go off without making useless objections, but you went off at once, and cheerfully. Heaven grant, my child, that you may always thus prevail over your evil passions—And now, what little gratification can I afford you this evening?—You need not remain out above an hour, and then you can return, and I will conclude the story; or, I have been thinking, would you like the young Hayworths to be invited for a couple of hours? you have frequently

seen them on your former visits here; and they returned last night from London: Mary and Emma are nearly of your own age."

"Thank you, dear grandmamma, I should like nothing better than to see them again: I was very much disappointed when mamma told me I should not find them here, and I was going to ask her to let me come some other time, but I heard papa say I ought to leave home at once, and then I knew it was useless to speak to mamma on the subject, though I could not understand why father thinks Oak Farm too cold for me during the spring months. Do you think if I were to ask for them, Mrs. Hayworth would let Emma and Mary come out with me? we should have such a nice race."

"I know not, indeed, but you can try. Ask Bentley to be so good as to go with you, and here is a shilling you can spend in some cakes for a tea-party, which you will of course have on your return from your race."

"Oh, this will be delightful indeed:

Bentley and I will go to the confectioner's, whilst they are getting ready to come out :” and away ran Alice, to inform Bentley of her grandmother's wishes.

On their obtaining Mrs. Hayworth's consent to Emma and Mary's accompanying Alice, Edward begged so hard to be of the party, that his mamma consented, on condition of the three girls promising to take care of him ; but Alice found that she must defer purchasing the cakes until later, as Bentley wanted to hasten home to finish half an hour's work that was wanted before her mistress could dress for dinner.

So the children played on the green—sometimes they would all race after each other, at other times one of them would trundle Alice's hoop, whilst another would toss up Edward's ball. They never wearied of play till past five o'clock, when suddenly Alice recollected her cakes, and having informed her companions of the necessity of their seeking Bentley to make the required purchase, they turned their steps homewards. As they approached Mrs. Gran-

tham's gate, a poor boy with a large basket of cowslips begged them to buy a bunch of his pretty yellow flowers: the children, however, had no pennies to spend on the contents of his basket, for they had only the shilling with which they were going to buy their cakes, and they had already decided to purchase three different kinds, which would use up every farthing of their money: so, good-humouredly telling the lad they did not want any flowers, they hurried to the house, and Alice having called Bentley, they again sallied forth to make the purchases for their tea. This being done, they returned to Mrs. Grantham's, but on again drawing near the gate, Bentley desired them all to run in, as she had forgotten to execute a commission her mistress had given her, and she had to go back to the shop they had just left.

The next moment, Edward, who had run forward, screamed out, "look here! look here!" at the same time holding up a couple of bunches of beautiful cowslips.

"Where did you get them?" cried out

the girls, hastening up to him, when they immediately beheld the basket they had previously seen the little boy carrying."

"Where can the lad be?" said Alice. "So strange of him to leave his flowers here."

"He cannot be far off, I should think," answered Emma, "perhaps he has gone up to the house to enquire if any one will buy from him there."

"But how silly to leave his treasures here in the road; so careless of him!"

"Here he is, here he is, said Edward, running back from the shrubbery which led from the gate to the house, and where he had gone, on Mary's beginning to speak."

"Where, where," cried all the girls; "asleep on the grass, behind the old chestnut tree: he never stirred when I went near him: there he is, there, see!" and the children beheld the little sleeper; he was lying at full length on the soft turf, his arms serving for a pillow, his hat had fallen off, and a profusion of light curly hair, blown aside by the gentle breeze, exhibited

a forehead as fair as its proportions were well formed. The little fellow slept soundly.

“How pale he looks ;” said Emma : “he did not look thus, when he spoke to us.”

“No, he looked rosy then ; but now, he not only appears pale—he is skin and bone!”

“Just look at his fingers, Alice, dear ; he does not seem to have a bit of flesh either on them, or on his cheeks : poor child, how tired he must be, to sleep so quietly.”

“Yes, and we all talking ! and so much noise in the road, and on the downs this evening. I could not sleep so fast, were I in his place : but what has made him so pale all of a sudden, I am afraid he must be very ill.”

“No, no, Edward ; I fancy, that when he appeared so rosy to us, he was only heated : he ran quickly to get near us, and that large basket must be very heavy.”

“I never thought of that, Emma ; but what can we do, we ought to go in ; grand-mamma will be expecting us, it is getting late, and yet I do not like to leave this poor

boy asleep here, and his flowers outside the gate."

"No indeed, some one may steal his cowslips, and then when he wakes up, he will be so disappointed. Could not we and Mary help each other to bring the basket within the gates? I think we might, though it is so very large."

"But you forget, Emma, that he is losing his time, he may sleep on here for an hour, and then it will be nearly dark, and he will find no one about to whom he can sell his flowers, and they will not be so fresh to-morrow."

"It would be a pity to wake him out of such a sound sleep:" expostulated Edward. But he expressed himself in so loud a tone, that the object of his remark began to move, and turning round on his side without opening his eyes, he murmured a few broken sentences, such as, only one penny all to-day—I have only sold—only two—two bunches—I must, must, sell the rest—and here, he would have again dropped off to sleep, but Alice gently touched his arm,

saying kindly as she did so: "little boy, you have left your basket of cowslips in the road, you will be losing them, wake up, and try and sell them."

The child started to his feet at once, and blushing deeply, began stammering out an apology for his having fallen asleep on their turf; he moved towards the gate as he spoke: but Alice seeing him walk as though he were still tired, said:—

"You appear fatigued yet; how have you got so knocked up to-day?"

"Please my little lady, I went off early this morning, but I could not get cowslips enough to fill my basket, until I had walked a distance of seven miles; Tommy was with me, and he got so fatigued before we got back again, that I was obliged to carry his basket as well as my own. I have been out all day."

"And who is Tommy, pray?" cried Emma. "My little brother, Miss; he is quite young."

"How old is he?" asked Edward. "Six years old last month, young master; but he

is not so strong as other boys of his age are ; he had scarlet fever last winter, and he has never been quite well since. Dame Hill says he will not get well she thinks :” and here, a tear gathered in either eye, but was hastily brushed away.

“ And who is dame Hill ?” demanded Edward, as he felt in his pocket for a couple of walnuts he just remembered his mother had given him that morning, and which he thought might as well be given for little Tommy as be eaten by himself. “ Who is this dame Hill that thinks your brother will not get well ?”

“ Please, sir, she is a very good old woman with whom Tommy and I live.”

“ But why do you not live at home with your father and mother ?”

“ Oh sir, father and mother have been dead many years ; at least, I can only just recollect father, he must have been dead nearly seven years since ; and mother caught a severe cold some three years ago, and then followed father.”

“ And who has taken care of you two

ever since your mother's death?" continued Mary. "Have you lived with dame Hill all this time, nearly three years?"

"Yes, indeed, miss: though very poor, she offered to let us sleep in a closet she has, and said we might have the good of whatever little firing she might contrive to get, and she promised she would never turn us off, so long as I could manage to procure food sufficient for Tommy and myself."

"But you are too young to get food for yourself and your brother," urged Alice.

"No, Miss, I am not so young as I look. I was eleven years old last November."

"And have you always had enough for yourself and Tommy to eat?" said Emma, surprised that a boy only two years older than herself, could obtain by his own work food for himself and his little brother; "quite enough to eat?"

"We could often have eaten more, miss, but we have managed very comfortably on the whole, until Tommy caught the fever: then I lost a good deal of time in nursing

him, at least, I could not earn so much money as formerly ; and since that time, I have not felt so strong myself, and dame Hill says Tommy wants nourishing food, and I cannot get him enough, I am afraid, but I do not like to part with him."

"Part with him !" exclaimed the children in one breath, "why part with him ?"

"The neighbours say, that if I would let him go into the *house*, he would obtain better food than I can get for him, but he cries if I speak of letting him go there."

"But your brother's crying at the thought of leaving you, should not deter you from following the advice of your neighbours, when they speak so wisely. Perhaps your sending Tommy to the workhouse may be the means of saving his life ; he probably requires more food than you can give him."

The children turned towards Mrs. Grantham, as she stepped out from her drawing room window on to the piece of lawn. She had, unknown to the little party outside, heard much of the foregoing conversation, having been sitting behind the

Venetian blinds : and her benevolent feelings were quickly interested in the poor little fellow who stood trembling before her, for the wind was high and very cold, whilst the boy, whose story had so touched the kind hearts of his sympathizing hearers, was very scantily clad, though his dress was extremely clean, and much patched.

Alice and Edward now vied with each other in endeavouring to prove to the kind old lady the cruelty of its being expected that the elder brother should send the young one from him. Mrs. Grantham good-humouredly answered,

“ I am very sorry my advice don't please you : I am afraid I shall be considered cruel, in recommending that we should no longer continue on this turf, which is rather damp after this morning's rain ; and further, if I dared, I would humbly recommend that we retire within doors, for I am certain it is both too late and too cold for Alice to continue exposed to this chilly atmosphere. I hope no offence.”

A gay laugh from Alice and the Hay-

worths followed the above speech, but the next instant they all looked anxiously at the little stranger, when Edward, who stood nearest to Mrs. Grantham, said in a low voice, "But this poor boy ! what will become of him then ? and his poor little brother ?"

"I will invite him to come in also, and we will talk over his affairs quietly. I do not like being out this disagreeable evening, and I dare say you also will not object to the warmth of a good fire, and a bowl of bread and milk ; pray what is your name, my little man ? I always like to know the names of those I speak with," added Mrs. Grantham in a kind voice, as she motioned to the boy to enter her house. The latter bowed most gratefully, as he replied, "My name is Francis Wentworth, ma'am : neighbours generally call me Frank, but Tommy always calls me brother Frank."

"But the basket ! the basket !" cried out several of the children, as they saw Francis crossing the threshold, without apparently thinking of his property.

"My cowslips ! please ma'am, excuse me

one moment, whilst I go and fetch them :” and Frank, having ran down the steps with this view, was quickly followed by Edward, who insisted on helping him, though the young gentleman was far more likely to mar than forward the task ! However, the basket of cowslips was brought within the garden gate, and safely placed beneath the tree where their little owner had so lately obtained a sound sleep. In the mean time Mrs. Grantham had informed her old manservant, Wilcox, of the expected guest, and when the two boys entered the library, a large bowl of new milk, and a huge slice of home-made bread, stood on a small table near the window, where a chair had been placed by Alice, for the little hungry boy.

CHAPTER II.



RANK was soon seated at his post, and the children prepared to arrange their evening meal; for their anticipated pleasure consisted mainly in spreading bread and butter, putting the cakes in their respective dishes, making the tea, and setting forth to the best advantage a new service of china, which had been presented to Alice by her papa on the day of her leaving home. These different matters occupied their time for a full quarter of an hour, Edward being employed by each in turn; when Alice, who by Mrs. Grantham's advice had left Frank to eat his supper in quiet during the interval, now advanced to his chair to see if he would have anything more; but what was her surprise to find that he had made away with

scarcely a fourth of the bread, whilst the bowl was nearly as full of milk as in the first instance : and yet he still kept nibbling at his bread, and sipping the rich beverage that stood so temptingly before him.

“Why you have eaten nothing, hardly, Frank, nor drank your milk.”

These exclamations brought the rest of the party to the spot at once.

“Is not the milk good, Frank? the weather is damp to-day,” urged Emma, as, with a spoon she held in her hand, she took a few drops to taste. “Excellent! why do you not drink it, and eat your nice piece of bread?”

“Perhaps he don’t like milk,” said Mary, who was not very partial to it herself.

“Oh yes, young ladies, I like it very much indeed:” interrupted Frank.

“You would perhaps like a cake,” put in Edward, as he hurried off in direction of the tea table, to obtain one for the poor boy.

“No sir, no!” cried Frank; evidently distressed at the mere suspicion that he

should not be quite satisfied with what had been provided him: "indeed, young master, the bread is the best I have tasted this long time, and the milk too, only—only—" and here, Frank hesitated, as though unable to explain himself; when fortunately, to the relief of all parties, Mrs. Grantham having dined, appeared within the door.

"Grandmamma, he has eaten nothing, scarcely:" cried Alice, on seeing her venerable relative come into the room; and Emma says the milk is excellent, and Frank says the bread is the best he has eaten this long time; then, why does he keep them standing there, as though the milk were sour and the bread hard? and we have been so busy, thinking he was eating his supper all the time! and Alice stopped speaking for want of breath; when Frank, who had risen on Mrs. Grantham's entrance, now advanced towards the spot where she stood, surrounded by the children:—"If you please ma'am, I have eaten a tolerable good supper."

"But you were hungry, so why have you taken a *tolerable*, instead of a very good

supper, my little man?" demanded his kind questioner; for, from his hesitating manner, and his varying countenance, she at once perceived, that there was a *something* which he either could not, or did not like to explain; but summoning courage, he began:—"Indeed ma'am, I would have eaten more, only—only I just thought, that if I did not eat up all the bread, and drink all the milk, you might perhaps—perhaps, let me take it home for poor little Tommy."

A pause of a couple of minutes ensued, after Frank's avowal—the four children were silenced by a combined feeling of admiration at the boy's fraternal affection, and of wonder at the necessity of its display in such a manner; for though they had often heard of poverty, never had it been so forcibly presented to their notice, as at the present moment; whilst Mrs. Grantham was rapidly considering in her mind, how the scene might be turned to the greatest advantage of all parties concerned. Having decided, she replied:—"Well Frank, you can take it home if you like; I do not how-

ever think you have as yet taken a fair portion for yourself! but no matter, you can take a little more with your brother, I suppose, if you like."

"But dear grandmamma, Frank is hungry, I know he is; surely he ought to eat that bread and milk himself! it was meant for him."

"I could eat three times as much as he has taken! little fellow as I am:" and Master Edward Hayworth eyed with great contempt, the remaining bread and milk: when Mrs. Grantham mildly observed:—"But if he would *rather* give what remains to his young brother, I imagine you would not be so cruel as to forbid his doing so."

"No, no, certainly not, dear grandmamma, only—only, I was thinking;"—and Alice looked from one to the other of her young companions in silence.

"What were you thinking about? something about us, I am sure," said Emma, who had been watching the puzzled expression of Alice's countenance.

"I have it! I have it!" exclaimed Mary: "it is about the cakes, is it not?"

"Why yes," answered Alice with a smile; "I was thinking, if I dare propose, that we should give up part of our cakes for Tommy."

"And this loaf of bread," chimed in Edward; "Wilcox will bring us another."

"Stop, if you please, young ladies and gentleman!" observed Mrs. Grantham: "I cannot allow of that loaf of bread being given away, because you must all have some supper, *as* well as Frank and his brother, *I* have given away all I can to night, not *only* have I provided suppers for you five young people, but there are two little girls expected momentarily in the kitchen, to whom I have promised a shilling's worth of meat, for their poor old mother, who is a great invalid: but I tell you what I can allow, and that is, that you should give away the cakes, the bread and butter you have spread so nicely, and also the sugar, with which I see Bentley has filled your sugar-bowl. These I am willing you should give

away, they are not necessities to you, and you can *exist* for one night on plain bread and milk, if you choose to do so. Are you all agreed?"

"But grandmamma, how can we drink tea without sugar?"

"Oh, I forgot the tea! but why not drink it without sugar? many people do so: or, which would be the wiser plan, you can give it away also: I dare say Frank has rarely tasted it, and though not particularly good for him or his brother, they may for once like to enjoy such a luxury; what do you say Frank?"

"Thank you ma'am, kindly; but I would not deprive the young ladies and this little gentleman of all their good things, this nice bread and milk will do very well indeed for Tommy, and I have already eaten enough."

"But you could eat more, I am sure, were it not for your brother," said Alice.

"Perhaps, Miss, I might; but then I took a penny as we were returning to town; a gentleman bought a couple of bunches for two little girls he was driving in a pony-

carriage: with this I can buy more bread if we want it."

"And is that penny all the money you have, my poor boy?" asked Emma.

"Yes, my young lady, all I have to-night, but to-morrow we will be out early, calling our cowslips, and I hope we shall make as much as a whole shilling in the course of the day, or perhaps even more. But I forgot! we met a gentleman and lady walking by the church, and their little dog caught hold of Tommy's dress, so the lady kindly gave him a halfpenny."

"How many bunches have you got?" demanded Mary.

"I have twenty-four in my own basket, little Miss; and Tommy's holds about eighteen; but sometimes, when any one buys a large quantity for wine, we let them have the cowslips for less than a halfpenny a bunch; I would willingly let the whole we have, go for fifteen or eighteen pence. We could then go off and gather more at once."

"And do you always go so far as you did to day?" asked Edward.

"Generally speaking, sir ; but I have never before taken Tommy such a distance ; and I will not again do so, till he is stronger ; when we have sold off one basket-full, I shall leave him to sell the other, whilst I can go off, and gather another supply. This will be the best plan."

"Grandmamma, do you never have cowslip-wine made ?" whispered Alice.

"Every year, my dear, till the present one ; but I have had so many calls on my purse for charitable purposes, within the last seven months, that I decided to do without all home-made wines this year."

"What a pity ! would it not have been fortunate, if we could have taken all his cowslips for wine, this evening Frank might have taken home eighteen pence ?"

"Well, if you and your little friends are willing to deprive yourselves of your cakes, sugar, and bread and butter ; I will undertake to pay Frank his eighteenpence. But consider well, before you decide. Can you eat a bread and milk supper, contentedly, at what was intended to be a Tea Party ?"

"Now I should much like to know what you intend doing with it? but of course you need not tell me unless you like."

"Oh ma'am, this eighteen pence, I shall keep if possible, till I have sufficient to buy Tommy a pair of stout shoes. The bread and milk here will make us an excellent supper, and we can start in the morning to our work with a halfpenny roll a-piece, as soon as we have brought you the other basket of cowslips. We will eat our dinner when I have gathered some more cowslips and sold some. I shall leave Tommy to help dame Hill."

"But *your* shoes are full of holes," observed Mrs. Grantham. "You want new ones."

"Yes, ma'am, but I can wait a little longer; Tommy has none, for I have never been able to buy him but two pair, and they are quite worn out."

"But two pair cannot have lasted him all these years. What has he done?"

"Without, ma'am, great part of the time, and as long as he could stay at home in bad weather, it did not so much signify, but now

he has to work, and he must have shoes, for he very easily takes cold. Where shall I put the cowslips, ma'am? or would you rather that I leave them in the basket to-night, they will keep very well where they are, I think."

"Then leave them as they are. You can take your basket when you bring the other cowslips; here is a pitcher in which you can take your milk, the bread and butter you can put in your pocket."

"But how will he take the tea? the tea for Mrs. Hill."

"Ah! I had nearly forgotten that, Edward. Run and ask Wilcox for a common jug.....there, that will do admirably. Now bring both back to-morrow morning when you come with your basket of cowslips."

"Many thanks, ma'am, many thanks, young ladies, and you too, young master, for all your kindness; neither Tommy nor I shall forget it."

And Frank left, laden with his provisions, but not until Mrs. Grantham had ascertained where Mrs. Hill resided.

Left to themselves, the young people now sat down to their supper of bread and milk, which they ate with as much relish as though cakes and tea had formed a part of it. Their whole conversation turned upon Frank and Tommy, nor did they separate for the night without its being decided that each should try and think of some means which might tend to better the condition of the orphan boys ; Mrs. Grantham saying she would willingly share any expense necessary to carry out their project.

The following morning, long before Alice was awake, Frank and Tommy had brought the cowslips and pitchers, when they took away both their baskets, and whilst Frank had turned towards the country, his younger brother had sorrowfully bent his steps homewards in a contrary direction. This was all the information Alice could obtain of Wilcox, who kindly answered her innumerable inquiries with the utmost possible patience. In the evening, the Hayworths made their appearance, saying, their mamma would take as many as eight shillings' worth

of cowslips, for wine, but they were to tell Frank that they must be picked as quickly as possible, for their housekeeper wished to make the whole at once. Alice exclaimed,

“Oh Grandmamma! what a pity Tommy cannot help him: how I wish we could! do you not think we could walk as far as Frank, Grandmamma?”

“No, my dear, certainly not. You are none of you accustomed to such long walks, but I am willing to spare Bentley for a day, and to provide donkey carriages to convey you to the cowslip fields and back again; on condition that you do not merely make a play of it, but work as hard at filling your baskets as you can without over-fatigue; otherwise it is a pity to spend so much money.”

“But indeed, dear grandmamma, you may depend on our being industrious; will we not work hard, Emma? but, can you all get leave for to-morrow?”

“May I not run home and ask mamma?” cried the eager Edward.

“Yes, my dear; and tell your mamma,

that my maid Bentley will accompany the party; so that she will have no cause for uneasiness."

"Grandmamma, we might take Tommy with us, might we not?"

"I think so, he might sit in front with one of the drivers, Edward must sit with the others, and Bentley and you three girls will have ample room."

"Hurrah! hurrah! mamma says we may go, and that she is very much obliged to you, Mrs. Grantham; and here—holding up a coin as he spoke, is a new two-shilling piece, for cakes, or whatever we choose to buy."

The above news was heard with unfeigned satisfaction by the young people.

"A two-shilling piece!" said Mary, "but Edward, did mamma give this money?"

"No, mamma said she would give us a plain dinner, only she knew kind Mrs. Grantham would do that—Uncle Charles gave this piece, it was his dog, you know, that caught hold of Tommy's dress!"

"Your mamma is right, I will give you

a dinner, a plain one—plenty of cold meat and bread, with a rhubarb pie as dessert.”

“That will do capitally, but ma’am, may we not give Frank some?”

“Certainly, my dear boy; and Tommy also, for it is settled Tommy shall go in front with one of the drivers; whilst you go with the other one.”

“Both Frank and Tommy can go if you like, I am sure there would be room, and it would save him a long walk for once, poor boy.”

“But some of the donkey boys are so disagreeable, they might object to two going in front and two behind, Edward; do you not think so, ma’am?”

“They might object; and yet, you are all little things, but Bentley.”

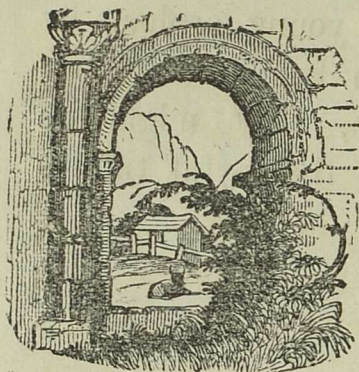
“We will not have a disagreeable boy! we will, if you say so, Mrs. Grantham; go now at once, and engage a couple, and if two in front should really be too heavy, if you are willing, I will take it in turns with Frank to walk and ride; may I not? I am nearly as stout as Frank!”

“You are nearly as stout, certainly ; but considering that you have a long day’s work before you, I think it would be imprudent that you should tire yourself before you commence ; however Alice, tell Bentley I will thank her to accompany you all to where the boys stand, and then see what bargain you can make ; tell her also about to-morrow, I know she wants to go.”

Away ran Alice, followed by the rest of the children ; they were soon on their way to the spot where the donkey boys and their patient beasts were standing, nor was much time lost in making an arrangement with a couple of them, to convey the *whole* party on the morrow to the cowslip fields, about seven or eight miles distant. Seven o’clock was the time appointed to set off, and having taken a run on the downs, the children returned to Mrs. Grantham’s, when the Hayworths at once took leave, and Alice retired early to bed, that she might be ready in the morning for her work ; her grandmother, promising to send a message, that Frank and Tommy were to be at her

house at seven the following morning, when the children could tell them of their good fortune; for so delighted were they at the thought of assisting the young orphans by the labour of their own hands, that they begged Mrs. Grantham, they might be allowed to communicate the joyful tidings to the two boys.

CHAPTER III.



BEFORE half-past six the following morning the whole party were assembled. We need not tell our readers that the excursion was one of enjoyment, fortunately the weather had cleared off beautifully, baskets had been begged and obtained, until Wilcox and Robert had both declared no more could be got—there was not one left in either house! One was wanted for the eatables, whilst five were required for the labourers! for of course, Bentley must have one! and of course Emma, Alice, Mary, and Edward, each must have one! since Frank and Tommy had each one; and a couple of small ones had been put into the first donkey-chair by Edward, who wisely declared that he knew they would be glad enough with little ones, when their large ones

got nearly full, so he had slipped into Mrs. Pry's sanctum sanctorum, and had slipped out again in the utmost haste, carrying off in triumph two convenient sized baskets the old housekeeper kept for her own especial use ; and away he had ran to Mrs. Grant-ham's ; only turning round once, to take a peep at Mrs. Pry shaking her hand at him, and hear her threaten he should have no cakes on his birth-day ; a threat which did not occasion him much fear. A pleasant drive of a couple of hours took them to the desired fields, when they set to work in real earnest. It was a pleasant cool day, the birds were singing charmingly, and the cowslip gatherers were all in such spirits, that to see them begin, one might have supposed that they intended to clear the whole neighbourhood of its coveted treasures in the way of cowslips ; but at the end of a couple of hours, all but Frank and Tommy felt more or less fatigued : indeed it is probable the two latter would willingly have ceased gathering for a time, but they did not complain, whilst the others were

compelled to take a short rest. They then again picked away until twelve o'clock, when hunger was now the general complaint! So the basket of provisions was brought from its shady concealment, a clean apron of Bentley's was turned into a tablecloth, knives and forks were soon called into service, and Frank having fetched a jug of clear water from an excellent spring, the party sat down to their well earned meal; Frank and Tommy following the example of the others, on being told to do so, but respectfully keeping a little in the back ground. All did full justice to their dinner; the chicken disappeared in a very short space, whilst part of a cold tongue, lingered no long time behind; but part of a cold leg of mutton offered a more formidable resistance, and the greater portion of it remained when Edward proposed that they should commence work again. Bentley now produced a bottle of currant wine, which was hailed with acclamations of delight by the girls and Edward; who exclaimed:—

“Who could have sent it? just the

very thing. Who sent it, Bentley?"

After a long time Bentley admitted that Mrs. Pry had sent it, whilst she herself had contrived to hide it in the last donkey chair, at the moment Edward was so busily engaged concealing his stolen property.

"Just like good old Pry! I knew her indignation would not last long."

"But Edward, don't you be waving the bottle about in that way; you will be breaking it, and I should be more sorry for little Tommy than for ourselves: did you notice how pale he looked after sitting down?" said Emma.

"Poor boys, they both of them look delicate enough, but a glass of this will do them good," and Edward pulled out the cork, which had already been drawn.

"Perhaps," cried Mary, "it will do them more good than us: don't you think so, Bentley? I have often heard mamma and papa say that wine was not necessary for children, unless they were ill, and we are none of us ill, are we?"

"No indeed, Miss Mary, and I dare say

the wine would do those two poor boys more good, than any of the rest of the party: suppose you put it to the vote, that after we have each had half a glass in as much water, we give the rest to Frank, with directions to give his brother half a glass daily with his dinner."

"But Bentley, do you not think Frank needs it as much as Tommy does?"

"Not exactly, sir. The little boy is only just getting over a serious illness; a few glasses of wine may help him to recover his strength; now Frank is well enough, but he works too hard, and evidently, from what you all tell me, he feeds his brother only half, but then, that half is at the expense of himself: he is much to be pitied, poor boy, but less work and more food, would be better for him than wine, I should think. They seem very good boys, both of them."

"Yes, and they appear so fond of each other, particularly Frank."

"Oh, Edward! that, I think, is only, because, as eldest, he has to take care of him."

“Yes, Emma, and if you noticed, when Alice helped Tommy, he did not eat until Frank had got his portion; and when Edward handed the plate of bread, Tommy gave his brother the largest piece, though he did not know we had more in the basket for him; and see, there he is, picking away, though I heard Frank tell him he had better go and lie down for an hour: he keeps as close to him all the time as he can; I think that he works very hard, too.”

“Perhaps I am mistaken, but shall we follow Bentley’s advice about the wine?”

“We need not vote, I suppose that we are all agreed on the subject.”

“You are right, Emma, there. Well, as I am the only gentleman of the party, I will pour out the wine. Here, Bentley, is a bumper for you, you are no child.”

“Stop, stop, master Edward. Though no child, I do not require more than the half glass, I had rather Tommy had it: here is enough for two.”

“Shall we give that to Tommy now? Frank, Tommy, come here quickly.”

the time; (at any rate, judging from what we have done this morning;) you see, he gathers faster than any of us, and twice as fast as some of the party do."

"But Bentley, of course Frank meant that it would take *us* three hours, did you not, Frank?" and the eager Edward turned to the boy.

"Yes, sir, I considered that I could fill the two young ladies' baskets, whilst they could gather into the small ones; in the mean time, Tommy can finish filling up his own, and afterwards help you if necessary."

"No, no, I will fill my own as well as Bentley and Alice; now Bentley, are you satisfied? we shall soon have finished."

"Yes, yes, good Bentley, let us stay; dear grandmamma will not mind our being a little late for once, do consent, we *must* finish."

"Yes, indeed, set to work, girls, and then you know, Bentley cannot but follow."

"And thus saying, Edward pushed Emma's and Mary's baskets toward Frank, gave the two little girls the small ones,

and walked off with his own, when he immediately began gathering cowslips. The children followed his example, and Bentley, who had wished to stimulate their industry, smiled contentedly, and pursued Edward with her own basket, and whilst working near each other, occasionally cast a few cowslips into his heap. At the end of three hours and a quarter, the baskets were all full—a piece of news proclaimed by a general hurrah from the young people, but now a serious misfortune threatened them; they all felt very hungry—if we except Frank and Tommy, who had rarely before had so good a supply of food as they had enjoyed that day; but even they would not have objected to a little more.

“What shall we do Bentley? I am ravenous, and I am sure every one else is the same; Emma, there, has been complaining this last half-hour.”

“Indeed, Master Edward, I scarcely know what to do; I cannot give you meat and wine a second time in one day, nor would you take it if I did, I suppose.”

“Why no, you know who the meat and wine are for! but we cannot starve.”

“Of course not! Frank, do you know where we can get some nice milk?”

Frank volunteered to call the donkey-boys, and to purchase a loaf of bread, and a pitcher of new milk; and these good things being divided among the party, the donkey-chairs were again loaded, and the joyous party set out on their return home, quite contented with their day's work. On approaching the downs, they saw the flock of sheep, which the next day, through Mrs. Grantham's influence, Tommy was hired to assist the shepherd in watching; his wages were to be eighteen pence a week; was he not happy?

CHAPTER IV.



IN their return, they found Mrs. Grantham had been busy. She had paid an early visit to Dame Hill, where all she had heard of Frank, was in his praise—his dutiful affection to his poor mother, during her short widowhood—his almost parental care and devotion to his delicate brother—and his gratitude to the only being on earth who had befriended the helpless orphans, had so won the heart of the old woman, that she never wearied of repeating his good actions.

“Indeed ma’am, he is the very best boy that ever was; there, only lately, when his brother fell ill, he would watch over him at nights just as though he had been Tommy’s mother! and he would not forget me either, but would come to my bed-side half-a-dozen

times before the morning, to see if he could give me any help ; but little, he or any one else could do for the benefit of a rheumatic old woman ! ”

“ He appears almost as delicate as his brother,” observed Mrs. Grantham.

“ Ah, that is only since he has worked so hard, to try and afford Tommy better food than formerly ; and then, to see the two poor things trying to persuade each other to eat ! Frank pretending he has had enough, whilst Tommy does not like to take the food, believing, (I fancy the truth,) that his brother leaves it on his account. Sometimes, they have scarcely had a bit of bread for a couple of days ; when if they get an old crust, Frank will soak it, and put a bit of salt with it, to make it palatable for his brother. Theirs has been a hard fate so far, indeed, and I now much fear that Tommy will not recover his strength ; should he die, I think his poor brother will never survive the loss.”

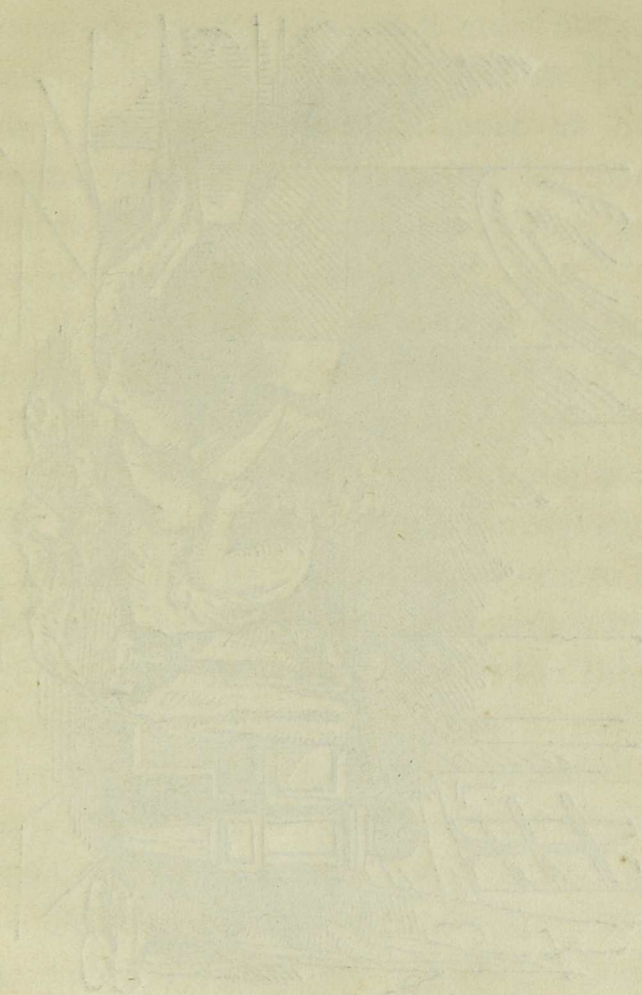
Such was the character which was given of Frank to Mrs. Grantham ; and this kind

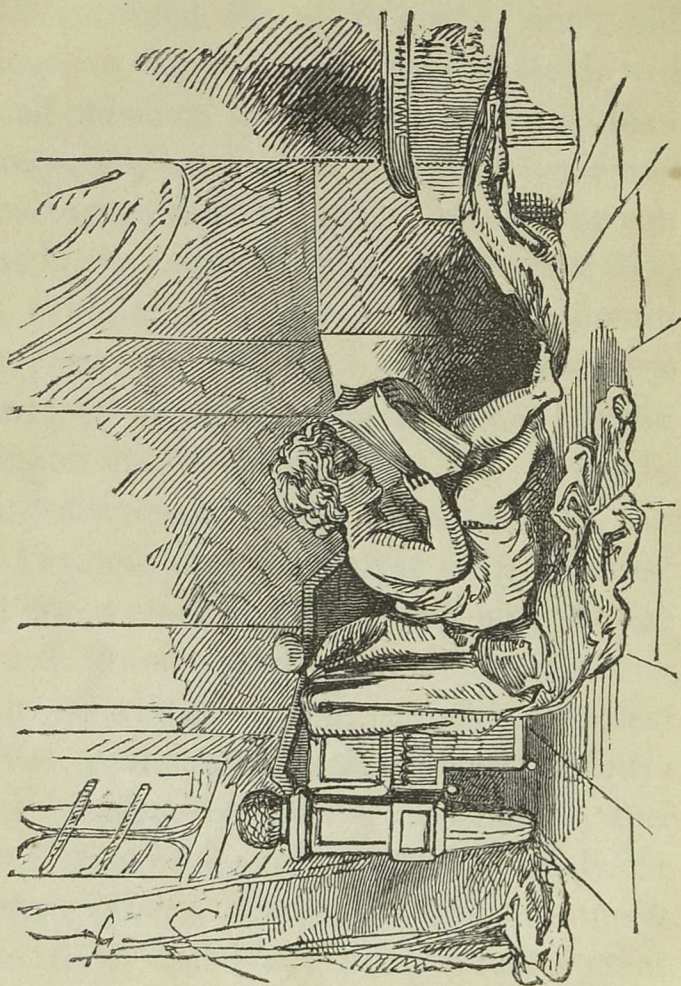
lady lost no time in exerting her influence to improve the condition of the two little orphans. Before the return of the cowslip gatherers, arrangements had been made with Farmer Wilson for Tommy, who was to be assistant shepherd, till he should be old enough to learn a trade; whilst several friends of the benevolent applicant, stimulated by the representations of Mrs. Grantham, had given large orders for cowslips; and our young readers may believe, that during the following twelve months there was no scarcity of cowslip wine in Clifton.

At the end of the cowslip season, Frank appeared before his kind benefactors, and produced forty-eight shillings, the result of his industry. Mrs. Grantham had expected him, and had given Alice leave to invite her little play-fellows to tea; the children had saved up twelve shillings amongst them, which they now added to Frank's fortune; when this latter, respectfully asked to be advised as to how he had best apply so large a sum for the mutual benefit of his brother and himself.

“I do not see that there is any necessity of sharing these three pounds with Tommy, he is provided for at present; when old enough to be bound out to a trade, I will myself advance the money which may then be required; trusting to his returning it me, whenever he shall be able: all that he can want in the mean time, is a little more food and clothing than his wages will obtain him; but you will best procure him these articles, by applying your money to obtain some profitable employment for yourself; have you thought on the subject?”

“Yes, ma'am; I thought of purchasing fruit for a stall, and trying my luck in that way: I know some persons who make a good deal of money from the sale of apples, cherries, pears, &c. I also thought of buying a number of baskets or brooms, and taking them round the country, but I like neither plan: I do not understand much about fruit, and I fear I might lose a great part of my earnings, before I should acquire the requisite information: whilst the selling brooms or baskets through the country, is a





kind of wandering life, which, though it would prove any thing but disagreeable, as far as regards myself, yet it must inevitably lead me much from home, and as Tommy takes his breakfast and supper at home, besides dining and spending his sunday afternoons with us, I do not like to be absent more than I can help."

"But does not your brother go to the sunday school, and to church?"

"We, both of us used to go to church twice on sundays, and also to the school; but now Tommy is engaged every sunday morning; but he has the afternoons to himself, when he always goes to church; and on our return home, he or I, read the Bible to our kind old friend, or learn a psalm or a hymn, we both know our catechism perfectly, and hitherto I have attended sunday school regularly; but should I accompany old Peter in his selling expeditions through the country, I may not always get back on saturdays, and though I can always go to church, wherever I may be, yet I fear I shall have to give up the sunday school,

which would prove a serious loss both to Tommy and myself; for now, I instruct him during the evenings, in whatever I have learnt on the sunday."

"An excellent plan! and we must try and contrive that it should be continued—have you ever driven a donkey? there are numbers about."

"Yes, ma'am; Will Spears was ill not very long ago, and I drove his donkey-chair for a whole week; his master said, I only wanted a little practice to make me a very good driver, and regretted he could not employ me."

"Supposing you were to purchase a donkey and chaise, do you think you could manage to keep them clean and tidy?"

"Certainly ma'am, if I had the means; but though the donkey would feed partly on the downs, yet in cold weather, it could not pick up much: I have no shelter for it, or the chaise, nor would three pounds buy both, as well as the harness, though I were to get a second-hand chaise."

"But I am so pleased with all I have heard of your character, and with all I have

seen of your conduct, that I am willing to aid you in any plan that you may adopt to better yourself—your three pounds will go far towards buying a good donkey I should think, would it not ? ”

“ Oh ma’am, I can purchase an excellent one for two pounds five.”

“ Then you will have fifteen shillings remaining to buy my little poney-chaise, it is very light, and I am willing to let you have it a bargain, as I think you will make a good use of it. The harness, you had better have new : I will order it to day, and you must pay me its cost by small portions. Now this scheme will enable you to keep at home, where I will order the carpenter to put up a cheap shed for your chaise and donkey in very bad weather.....No more thanks, my little man—in assisting two young orphans, I am only doing my duty; whilst your own admirable conduct, renders the obligation a sincere pleasure. You are now reaping the reward of virtue—go and inform Tommy of your good fortune—a good fortune which I hope may prove of advantage

to you both ; I saw him a few minutes since with his sheep on the downs : here, take these two rolls, you can give him one of them."

" But Mrs. Grantham, may he not stay one moment, until I give him mamma's message ; I am sure it will please him so much, and you too, and Alice, will be glad to hear of the good luck in store for him : I was just going to inform you of it, when Frank came in, and we have been so busy since, that I had nearly forgotten to mention it at all."

" That would have been a pity, indeed, Mary, but what is your message, dear ?"

" My uncle, Major Bradshaw, has requested mamma to engage a person to clean Robert's pony every night and morning, and in fine weather it must be saddled and bridled before breakfast. Aunt Fanny presented it to him, on his birth-day, on condition that he rides it every day, if the weather admits of his doing so ; poor Robert has been very ill, and his papa and mamma think he does not get out enough in the fresh air. It is quite a little creature, my cousin writes us, but then it requires to be

taken care of, just as if it were a big horse, you know. Now mamma thought Frank could rub it down and feed it quite as well as any one else, as she understands he is so steady and trustworthy. They return from London on Friday next, when Frank must be in attendance, unless his donkey and chaise should prevent his undertaking the care of little Leapwell."

"No, miss, no, I am only too glad to do anything—I might be out driving, I did not remember this. It is unfortunate: what had I better do, ma'am?"

"First let us hear at what time you would be wanted, then we can decide."

"I do not think there need be any difficulty about the time. My uncle's gardener, mamma said, can saddle the pony, should Robert require it at any moment when Frank might be elsewhere; all that this latter would necessarily have to do, would be to attend to master Leapwell night and morning. A few minutes are easily found."

"Yes, Mary dear, but would they be the

right minutes ? that is the question, for perhaps Frank might be driving, when he ought to be attending to the toilet of master Leapwell. What do you think, love ? for it is better the boy should lose a job, than break an engagement."

"But mamma said she would explain matters to uncle Bradshaw, who is very kind-hearted, and we all believe that he will employ Frank if possible, even though it should be at some slight inconvenience."

"Please ma'am, it is not very likely that I should be out with my donkey-chair late, and if it should occur, I am sure the gardener would kindly rub down Master Bradshaw's pony for me, if the Major would allow him to do so."

"Then you know Major Bradshaw's gardener, do you ?"

"Oh yes, ma'am ; I often help him to water his plants of an evening, and he has occasionally given me a threepenny piece for weeding or picking up stones."

"Well children, then I think we have done all we can at present do, towards

making Frank and Tommy comfortable ; the rest, must depend on themselves : and let me observe, that their present good fortune, is, under Providence, wholly owing to their own excellent conduct ; and more especially to that of Frank, who as the elder, has set an admirable example to his brother, which this latter has not been slow to follow. You, my dear child," pursued Mrs. Grantham, addressing Frank, "have indeed followed the precepts of the gospel ; you have proved yourself, and that under the most trying circumstances, a parent to the orphan ! for young as you are, your brother has found in you, through your kindness, consideration and industry, both a father and a mother ! Pray to God that you may continue in the course you have began, and doubt not but the blessing of our Heavenly Father will ever attend you ; whilst your endeavours to obtain a virtuous independence, will, as in the present instance, be assisted by friends whom He provides you ; or should it be His pleasure that you should be disappointed in your

hopes, be certain, that He will not forsake you, but that His Holy Spirit will comfort you in whatever troubles you may have to bear—and you, my dear children, never forget that even a *child* can please God, by loving its neighbour as well as itself! During the last few weeks, you have each of you, in different ways, sacrificed SELF, for the benefit of others. True, the sacrifice has not been great—opportunities for *great* sacrifices are of rare occurrence, whilst *trifling* ones, can be made frequently; and these, you have fortunately been enabled to make, and with a cheerfulness which I hope will increase as future occasions may present themselves for its exercise. By a little self-denial, children may often influence the happiness of others to a degree, of which, in their early age, they can themselves, form no just estimate; but when, *unselfishly*, they yield their own interest or their own pleasure, for the interest or the pleasure of another, they may ever feel assured, that they are following at an humble distance, the example of their Lord and Saviour.

Mrs. Grantham and the children having wished Frank good night, this latter hastened home that he might communicate to Tommy and their friend, the joyful tidings that henceforth he should be able to provide for himself and Dame Hill, whilst he might at the same time add a trifle to his brother's small earnings, and thus provide him with a few additional comforts. Never had the three passed a pleasanter evening together, nor did they at its close, forget to thank their Heavenly Father, for having provided them such kind friends as they had lately found.

The following day, Frank purchased his donkey, being advised in his selection of one by Will Spears, and the next evening the shed was completed, and the little chaise was removed to its new quarters. Frank gave great satisfaction to Master Bradshaw, whose pony was kept in the best order ; it is true, Frank could not always be on the spot to saddle Leapwell, but the gardener was always ready to do any thing to assist the good-natured boy, who had so often helped him to water his plants of an evening. Frank he-

came one of the teachers in the Sunday school he had so long attended as a scholar; whilst neither he nor Tommy ever omitted going to church, unless *unavoidably* prevented.

In the course of four or five years, Frank by his civility and industry, had contrived to amass money sufficient to apprentice himself to a cabinet maker; and so admirably has he conducted himself since his apprenticeship, that his master has promised to give him a share in the business, when he shall have served out his time.

Tommy remained as assistant shepherd for three years, when Mrs. Grantham requiring a boy, she kindly engaged him, and he is now learning his business under an excellent man who has for many years been Mrs. Grantham's head gardener, and who has promised that, should Tommy continue as attentive and industrious as he has been hitherto, he shall be fit in a couple more years to take entire charge of Major Bradshaw's garden; as his present gardener is getting too old for the situation.

Dame Hill is as happy as any good old woman can possibly be ; she mends and washes for Frank and Tommy ; cooks their meals for them, and always has a nicely swept room against their return, after they have finished their day's work. Were they her own sons, they could not be more attentive than they are, to obtain for their kind old friend, all the comforts her age and infirmities require. Before going out in the morning, Frank gets her whatever water she may want during his absence, whilst Tommy never fails to bring in the little fuel she may require. Nor are *any* of their kind friends forgotten ; indeed, when Alice last paid a visit to Clifton, Frank presented her with a beautiful little mahogany box, the work of his own hands ; and a new flower pot, containing a very fine rose, was Tommy's acceptable gift to the delighted Hayworths.

The little Hayworths were so much pleased at the successful result of their *first* savings, that they have continued to set apart a portion of their pocket money, in order to help their poor and necessitous neigh-

bors. Two families have already benefited from their charitable contributions; and when last I spent an evening in their society, I heard them discussing a point on which there appeared to be much difference of opinion.

Edward thought they should do more good by giving the seventeen shillings they had saved, to a lame man who wished to purchase toys for a stall; whilst Emma and Mary had set their hearts on relieving a poor woman, whose husband was just dead, and whose young and helpless children were very badly off for food and clothing. Mr. and Mrs. Hayworth being from home, my advice was requested, and that I might be able to form a clear judgment on the subject, I was taken to visit both the parties in question.

It was very hard to decide which of the two stood in most need of the assistance my kind little companions were so anxious to offer, but seeing that the widow's recent loss had raised her up several unexpected friends, whilst poor Joe Thomson's sudden lameness seemed to have created less sympathy, I could not but decide in favor of

Edward's wishes ; advising that the toys should be purchased with the money now in hand, when, in case the widow's present friends should tire of affording her requisite help, the *next* savings of these benevolent young people could be devoted to Mrs. Meekim ; and to this counsel the girls cheerfully yielded, and the more gladly, that their brother proposed only *half* the money should be *given* to Joe, the remainder being considered as a loan, which he was to return by small portions.

Alice puts her savings also to a good use, but I understand from her grandmamma, whom I frequently visit, that she spends them in a different manner from her young friends, the Hayworths. Mrs. Grantham tells me that two little girls and a boy owe their schooling to the generosity of her favorite grandchild. The example this good child sets to her brothers and sisters, has likewise been the means of inducing them to follow so excellent a pattern, and, as they are older than Alice, they are often possessed of much more money, and are thus more

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