

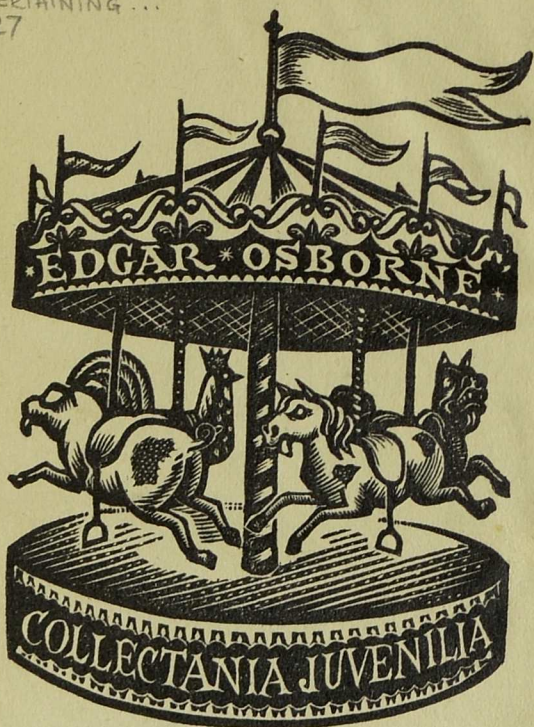


Wingfield
prize for
Geography

Mr. Frasier's School
Bath

Novr. 1829.

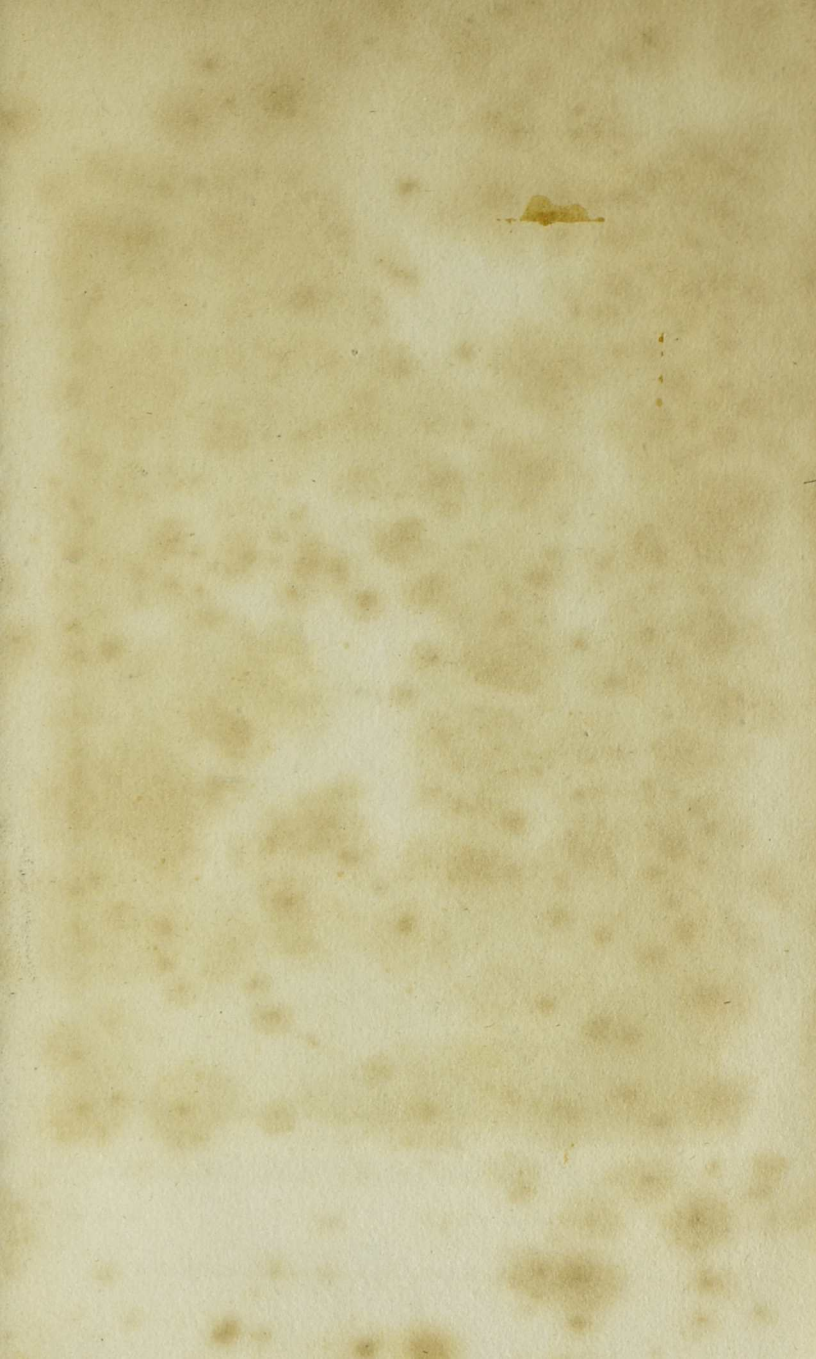
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ENTERTAINING...
1827



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MABEL OSBORNE



Instructive Rambles.



*"Lucy took William to the lake, where there
were some fine Carp."*

See page 85.

ENTERTAINING

AND

INSTRUCTIVE RAMBLES.

FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

“ To me be Nature's volume broad display'd,
And to peruse its all-instructive page
My sole delight.”

Thomson.

LONDON :

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1827.

PREFACE.

TO

PARENTS AND INSTRUCTORS.

THE little work which is here offered, with great diffidence, to the public, lays but slight claim to originality; the writer being indebted, for the most valuable parts of its contents, to the works of Smith and Phillips; and to the author of "Walks in a Garden," who has very justly remarked, that, "among the innumerable advantages to be derived from a knowledge of botany, however slight, may be mentioned the perpetual amusement it affords in scenes which, to

others might be only productive of *ennui*; the impressions of pure natural religion which it awakens; and the lofty and ennobling sentiments by which they are invariably associated. Nor do we need, for this purpose, the gardener's artificial embellishments, as the same sensations may be excited, even in a more striking degree, amid the most desolate scenes."

Though the subject of botany is calculated to produce both moral and religious reflections, the author has purposely abstained from interlarding this work with either; conceiving it best to leave these to be made by parents or instructors, agreeably to their own preconceived opinions.

ENTERTAINING

R A M B L E S, &c.

CHAPTER I.

THE day was beautiful, when Mrs. Mowbray and her three little playful children, William, Caroline, and George, set out on their usual morning ramble, through a very charming part of Surrey, in which Mrs. Mowbray's house was situated. Her cottage, though small, was neat and tastefully decorated; but her chief attention had been bestowed on her garden, which supplied ample

food for both the mind and the body. Though totally unacquainted with botany as a science, yet she took great delight in the practical part of gardening, and, like the greatest generals, consuls, and dictators of the Roman commonwealth, she did not disdain to turn up the earth with her own hands. Caroline, who was a gay little girl of warm passions and a good heart, was passionately fond of flowers, and, running up in great haste to her mother, said: "I know, my dear mamma, that *horticulture* has something to do with the cultivation of flowers; but will you tell me the difference between *horticulture* and *agriculture*, both of which you are so fond of?"

Mrs. Mowbray, who always liked to trace the source of the ideas of

children, in order to the right direction of their minds, instead of immediately answering the little girl's question, asked what made her think of horticulture at present.

Caroline. While I was waiting in the drawing-room for you, and putting on my gloves, which you desired me always to do before I go down stairs, I just looked at the last page of the "Review," where books are mentioned—new books I mean: only that last page, mamma; for I know you do not like me to read any books without your leave, but I thought there was no harm in just looking at that part; and I saw the words "Horticultural Society," when you called me to go out. I had one day asked William, who is more advanced in Latin than I am, the mean-

ing of horticulture, and he said it was the art of cultivating flowers; but then he began, in his preaching way, to tell me it was composed of two Latin words, *hortus*, a garden, and *cultura*, culture. Now I wished him to have said something about flowers, which you know I am so fond of; so, ever since I came out, I have been saying to myself, "Horticultural Society, Horticultural Society. I will ask mamma, and she will tell me something entertaining."

Mrs. Mowbray. My dear little girl, that word *entertaining* has put every thing of the kind out of my head; for I perceive that, unless knowledge is dressed in flowers and pink ribbons, or, to use your own word, "entertaining," you very soon grow tired of listening. I certainly

do not approve of William's manner of lecturing, or, as you term it, preaching, which he is too apt to assume, even when he is playing. But surely you could not be very much fatigued by listening to his explanation of *horticulture*.

Caroline. No, my dear mamma; but *that* made me afraid of asking him any thing more.

Mrs. Mowbray. There, Willy, I have often told you about your absurd love of showing off: your conduct will in time prevent your friends from conversing with you, and you will be left to wrap yourself up in your own self-sufficiency.

William knew that all his companions had complained of this fault of his, and he very properly did not, like

little Rosamond in the "Day of Misfortunes," attempt to offer any excuse; having been instructed by his attentive mother, to consider that an *excuse* is not a *reason*, and that our actions ought to be guided by the latter. His affectionate sister was extremely sorry that, by her imprudence, she had brought on this lecture upon her brother's failings; and she said to herself, "I ought to conceal my brother's faults, instead of telling them." They proceeded on their walk in silence, each thinking on what they *had* said, not on what they *should* say next; for their mamma, who had lived much in the best society of Edinburgh, and had observed that the Scotch are a sensible, well-informed people, and remarkable for not allowing young persons to talk

much, had always inculcated this maxim, "To think first and speak after;" being convinced that, if you can make a child listen instead of prate, it must in time gain knowledge.

Now, having let our young readers a little into what was passing in the mind of a *grown-up* lady, we will turn to Caroline, who was saying to herself, "How shall I get back into the garden?" when just at that moment little George took two apples from his pocket, and giving one to his sister, said to Willy, "I have only one more: will you cut it in two, and you can take one half and give me the other." This was a fine opportunity for Caroline to get back into the garden, as she termed it. "Apples grow in orchards as well as in gardens," said she: "should I say

they are *horticultured*, or *agricultured*?"

Mrs. Mowbray. Neither, my dear. But before she could say another word, Caroline returned to what she had read in the Review, "Horticultural Society." "What does that mean mamma, *garden society*? Society means company; but what is the meaning of garden company?"

William was beginning to tell her, but very improperly laughing at her, that *society* sometimes meant partnership, when his mother reminded him that it was rude to answer the question that was proposed to another;—that his sister had asked her; and that she intended giving them some information which he might not have known before. "You wish to know the meaning of *Horticultu-*

ral Society. Briefly, then, it is a number of gentlemen who have formed themselves into a body or society, for the purpose of improving the cultivation of flowers, fruits, and in short, all vegetable nature. When we get to our pleasant, retired seat which William is so fond of, I will read some extracts, which I took this morning (and which I have in my pocket) from one of Mr. Phillips's works." When they came to the seat, Mrs. Mowbray read the following account: "There is an Agricultural and a Horticultural Society. The Agricultural Society has succeeded in improving our farms, the very meadows of which are clothed anew. This meadow produces the grass of the Italian fields, and that, the pasture of the Netherlands; the chalky

hills wave with corn, our marshes are no longer stagnated; and famine, which formerly succeeded an unfavourable season, seems no longer to be dreaded. The Horticultural Society was established in 1809, in order to give further encouragement to this art, and to extend the best possible system to every part of the kingdom. By means of this company, what is discovered in one place, may be sent post, as it were, to others, though the remotest corners of the dominions, without travelling as before by ages. Besides this advantage, individuals have sent out men of science to every quarter of the known world, in search of plants, which have been since so diversified and multiplied as to make it almost difficult to discover more

varieties.' Now, my dear Caroline, I hope you understand the difference between horticulture and agriculture, which was the question you first asked me: agriculture means the culture of our farms and fields; horticulture, that of our gardens. You may not have understood what Mr. Phillips means by saying, that it is 'almost difficult to discover any more varieties.' He means varieties of the same plant. As, for instance, the apple that you have just eaten was a Ribston Pippin. Phillips says, in his Pomarium, 'The Ribston pippin is a native of Ribston Park, Yorkshire. This place is remarkable for the produce of a delicious apple called the Ribston Park pippin. The original tree was raised from a pippin brought from France, from which tree such

numbers have been propagated, that they are now to be met with in almost every orchard in this and many other counties. The old tree is yet standing, and, in the year 1787, produced six bushels of fruit. Mr. Speechly says he has seen the tree within these few years, and that it was without decay, or any indication of dissolution.' ”

Mrs. Mowbray. You have, I think, eaten of the golden pippin. “ This,” says Mr. P——, “ is a native of Sussex. The Dutch, who are great gardeners, and from whom queen Elizabeth used to get her salads and her green peas, which were seldom seen except from that country, call the golden pippin, *Engesche goud pepping*. The French call it *peppin d'or*. Catherine, empress of Russia, was so fond of this

apple, that she was regularly supplied with it from England; and in order that she might have it in the greatest perfection, each apple was separately enveloped in silver paper before it was packed."

Mrs. Mowbray. But these, my dear, are only two varieties. You will be surprised when I tell you that Mr. Lee, of Hammersmith, could show you a variety of five hundred different kinds of apple-trees. As we are talking of the variety of plants, I will tell you a story about one which I read in one of Mr. Phillips's works. There is a fine kind of tobacco, called Virginia, which was brought to this country by Sir Walter Raleigh, who, you know, was that very gallant gentleman that intro-

duced himself to the notice of queen Elizabeth in the following way. Her majesty was one day walking, when coming to a very dirty place, she hesitated whether to proceed or not, on which Sir Walter took off his new plush cloak, and spread it on the ground; the queen gently trod over the foot-cloth, and soon rewarded the sacrifice of a cloak with a handsome suit to the wearer. But to return to the tobacco-plant, which he first introduced. When in America he had learned to smoke; but when he returned to this country, not wishing that people should know that he did so, he used to retire to his dressing-room, where he locked himself up, and enjoyed this foreign amusement unobserved. One day he forgot to lock the door, when a servant coming

suddenly into the room, and seeing the smoke coming out of Sir Walter's mouth, instantly vanished, and, running down stairs, called out, "Help! help! fire! fire! Sir Walter has studied till he's all on fire."

When they had nearly finished their ramble, which had been through a beautifully wooded common, George drew from his pockets some acorns that he had picked up in the tool-house, where the gardener kept his seeds: "Look, mamma," said he, "how pretty these are."

"Oh," said William, "acorns! do you know, George, what tree they are the fruit of?"

"I dare say," said Caroline, "mamma can tell us something *entertaining* about acorns."

Mrs. Mowbray. Have you no

other word in *your* dictionary but *entertaining*? Will you listen attentively, though it should not turn out to be what you consider entertaining?

Caroline. Oh yes, dear mamma; for I like much to hear you, because you will always answer my questions without laughing at me.

Mrs. Mowbray. Well, my dear, I am sorry that at present I cannot continue to converse with you, as we are so near home; and you know, as soon as we return, I must give directions for our journey to-morrow.

Mrs. Mowbray had given strict orders to the nurse, when she first engaged her, to teach the children to take charge of their own things; they therefore knew what they had to do the moment they entered the

house. They did not, like some children, lounge about, and lay a glove on one chair, and a silk handkerchief on the sofa, and a hat on the table; but regularly walked up to the sleeping-nursery, and put their coats, hats, and gloves always in the same place; "for," said Mrs. Mowbray, when speaking to a friend one day on the various habits children should be taught, "every one who has lived through the period of the French Revolution, will feel the propriety of bringing children up with a certain degree of independence of the personal assistance of servants."

CHAP. II.

THE next day the young party and their mother set off on their journey to one of the most beautiful parts of the county of Kent, which has not improperly been called "The garden of England." The morning was gloomy, and the children were rather more serious than children usually are when they are setting off on a tour. William sighed as he seated himself with his back to the horses, and looking in his mother's face, whose eyes were filled with tears, said, "I know, my dear

mamma, what it is that makes your eyes look like a glazed picture; you are thinking of the very thing that made me sigh, and I will own, *cry*, when I was by myself.

Mrs. Mowbray. And why did you cry by *yourself*?

William. Because I thought it would be unkind to damp the pleasure of my sister Caroline, who, you know, is a joyous little girl, but who is very affectionate too; and, if she was in the highest spirits, would immediately look sorrowful if she saw me in tears.

“Well,” said Mrs. Mowbray, “that is a very proper reason for crying *alone*; but what made you cry at all?”

“Ah! my dear mamma, I think you can guess.”

Mrs. Mowbray. I may guess, as you say, but I may be wrong; therefore tell me, for you know I like to be told all your thoughts; and while you continue this good habit of telling your thoughts, I shall have an opportunity of advising you to do what Dr. Young recommends:

“Guard well your thoughts:

Your thoughts are heard in Heaven.”

William. I see, by your manner, that you will not guess; so I must tell you that I could not help feeling sorry, when the morning for our departure came, that my dear sister, who has been so long ill, could not be of our party. I know what I should feel if I were in her place; and *that*, you know, is the best way

of judging of the feelings of others. What a curious thing it is, that one can feel sorry and glad at the same time almost; for if you were to say to me, "William, are you glad you are going?" I should say, "Yes;" and again, if you were to say, "Are you sorry to leave your sister?" I should also answer, "Yes."

The road the travellers took was highly picturesque; and as they passed through the different places on their route, their judicious parent amused and instructed them with anecdotes and facts relative to each place. When she drove through Lewisham, she told them that on a hill in that parish there was an oak, called the *oak of honour*, because queen Elizabeth is said to have dined under it.

George. When I gave William

those acorns which I picked up in the tool-house, he said they were the fruit of the oak.

“ Oh !” said Caroline, “ I remember *that*. What a foolish thing it was of William to call acorns fruit.”

Mrs. Mowbray. There, my dear, you are mistaken: William’s expression was quite correct. I have brought Mr. Phillips’s “*Pomarium Britannicum*,” or history of fruits, with me, and I will read a little of what he says about acorns. You will be greatly surprised, I dare say, to hear that they were the food of our ancestors. William, do you recollect the Latin word for *oak* ?

William. Yes, mamma, it is *quercus*.

Mrs. Mowbray. I will now read a few passages from Mr. Phillips.

“ The acorn, which is the fruit of the oak-tree, was the food of the ancient Britons, and particularly of the Druids; who, says the historian, lived in caves and hollow trees. Their food was acorns and berries, and their drink water. The name of Druid seems to be taken from the Greek word *δρυσ*, an oak. They thought that whatever grew on the oak was sent from heaven; and nothing was held so sacred by them as the mistletoe of the oak, and they believed it to be the favourite tree of the Deity.

Content with food which nature freely bred,
 On wildings and on strawberries they fed;
 Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
 And falling *acorns* furnish'd out a feast.

OVID.

“ At the commencement of the

reign of the late king, barley, rye, or oaten bread was the universal food of working people. About fifty years ago, so little was the quantity of wheat used in the county of Cumberland, that it was only a rich family that used a peck of wheat in the course of the year, and that was at Christmas. Not much more than fifty years ago, barley-bread was the universal food in the western counties, not merely of the labourers in husbandry, but of those small farmers, *then* more numerous than at the present time, who tilled with their own hands the scanty portions of land which they occupied."

"I think," said William, "I have heard of a tree which is called the bread-fruit tree. Can you tell me, mamma, any thing about it?"

Mrs. Mowbray. Yes, my dear, I can. I have got a short account of it in my book-basket, and when we get to our inn I will read it to you, while the horses are resting. Look, William, at that old barn: it was once a stately hall, where Henry the Eighth created Sir E. Stanley, baron Monteagle, for his services at the battle of Flodden-field. In former times our princes often celebrated their festivals at Eltham, in great pomp.

George. Oh! is this called Eltham?

“Yes, it is,” said William. “Edward the Second frequently resided here. You remember, Caroline, he was confined in Berkeley Castle, and murdered in a shocking manner.”

Caroline. Oh! do not mention it: I do not like to think of it. Indeed, I am sorry that I ever read it. I think there are so many shocking stories in history, that I wonder children are allowed to read it.

Mrs. Mowbray. You seem to have been particularly unfortunate in the portions of history which you have read. I am puzzled to know where you could have met with them; for I never gave you the history of England to read, because I do not approve of a child of your age reading history.

Caroline. No, my dear mamma, you never gave me such very disagreeable books to read: it was when I was staying with my cousins that I read the history of England.

Mrs. Mowbray. Well, do not

think about it, since you seem to remember only the worst part, which I am afraid is generally the case when very young persons read such books, if not properly selected for them. Yet you shall, when we go home, read history; for there is an excellent work, written by Mrs. Hack, entitled, I think, "Stories from the History of England." Indeed, I mean to purchase all her works, for they will be an invaluable addition to our juvenile library. Pray, Caroline, what book is that which you have got in your hand?

Caroline. It is the road-book, mamma.

Mrs. Mowbray. Then look for the road from London to Maidstone: read the names of the places from Eltham to Wrotham.

Caroline. Sidcup, Foots-cray, Birchwood-end, Farningham, Kings-down, Wrotham.

Mrs. Mowbray. Well, Caroline, what does it say of Wrotham? Is there any thing worth seeing there? for as I shall stop to dine and refresh the horses at that place, we shall have time, while dinner is preparing, to walk about a little.

Caroline read the following short account of Wrotham. "It is a small market-town, with a large church, in which are thirteen stalls."

"Oh! mamma," said George, "did they keep horses in the church?"

Before Mrs. Mowbray could answer, William and Caroline burst into a loud fit of laughter at this question.

"No, my dear," said his mother: "what made you think so?"

“Because,” said George, “Caroline read, out of that book, ‘thirteen stalls;’ and what could they be for but horses? Thomas told me, one day, that *Lightfoot* got out of his stall and went to the corn-bin, and snuffed at it, as much as to say, ‘I wish I had some corn.’ Thomas says that *Lightfoot* is as fond of corn as I am of meat, but that he never eats too much; though he has, after a very hard day’s work, allowed him to eat as much as he liked. I told Thomas that I thought he must have more sense than some little boys. You know, Caroline, what I meant.”

Caroline. Yes, indeed, I do. I remember the roast fowl and cherry-pie day, when a certain little boy was obliged to drink rhubarb and

magnesia after dinner, instead of wine.

“ Pray,” said William, “ let us forget that day, for it almost makes me sick to think of it ; and do go on with the account of Wrotham.”

Mrs. Mowbray. Stop ! you have not told George that there are stalls for clergymen as well as horses. In churches, it means the seat of a dignified clergyman in the choir.

“ But what is choir ?” said George.

“ The choir,” said Mrs. Mowbray, “ is that part of a cathedral where divine service is performed.”

William. I really believe we shall arrive at Wrotham, if we talk much longer, before we know whether there is any thing worth looking at.

Caroline began to read again :
“ ‘ Wrotham is a small market-town,

with a large church, in which are thirteen stalls', for clergymen, not for horses."

"Oh! Caroline," said William, "you will never forget this question of dear George's. Pray do not put your own words into the book, but read exactly what is printed; for I long to know what we are to see at Wrotham."

"Well," said Caroline, "thirteen stalls, supposed to have been made for the clergy who attended the archbishop of Canterbury, to whom the manor belonged, and who had a palace here, till archbishop Islip, in the fourteenth century, pulled it down, and built another at Maidstone."

William. Is that all?

Caroline. Yes, every bit.

William. Then there is nothing worth seeing.

“Never mind,” said Caroline, observing William’s disappointed, grave looks, “mamma said she would *entertain* us with an account of the bread-fruit tree.”

The carriage now stopped at the inn at Wrotham, and Mrs. Mowbray having ordered dinner, desired the basket of books to be brought in; and the whole party sitting round the table, she read an account of the bread-fruit tree, which we shall give in the following chapter.

LETTER III.

“THE botanical name of the bread-fruit tree is *artocarpus*. In captain Cook’s Voyage it is observed, that the bread-fruit tree is about the size of a middling oak : its leaves are frequently a foot long, something like those of the fig-tree, which they resemble in consistence and colour, and in exuding a milky juice when broken. The fruit is the size and shape of a child’s head, and the surface not much unlike a truffle. It is covered with a thin skin, and has a core about as big as the handle of a

small knife. The eatable part lies between the skin and the core: it is as white as snow, and of the consistence of new bread. It must be roasted before it is eaten, being divided into three or four parts. Its taste is insipid, with a slight sweetness, somewhat resembling that of crust of wheaten bread mixed with the Jerusalem artichoke. The fruit not being in season all the year, there is a method of supplying this defect by reducing it to sour paste, called *makie*. This tree not only supplies food, but also clothing; for the bark is stripped off the suckers and formed into a kind of cloth. To procure the fruit for food costs the Otaheiteans no trouble or labour but climbing a tree. This most useful tree is distributed very extensively over the

East Indian continent and islands, as well as the innumerable islands of the South Seas. The wood of this tree is used for building boats and houses; the catkins serve for tinder; the leaves for wrapping their food in, and for wiping their hands instead of towels; and the juice for making bird-lime, and as a cement for filling up the cracks of their vessels for holding water."

"I wish I could see some *vessels* for *holding* food, on that table, for I am extremely hungry," said William. "You did not, mamma, finish reading Mr. Phillips's account of the acorn: if you are not tired of reading, will you be so kind as to let us hear the rest of it."

Mrs. Mowbray. I will, my dear. "Acorns were not the food of the

Britons only. The inhabitants of Chios, in ancient times, held out a long siege, having no other food but acorns. Acorns are eaten, to this day, in Spain, where they long remained a delicacy at desserts; but the Spanish acorns are certainly of a sweeter nature than those of England. In times of scarcity and dearth of corn, they have been ground and baked into bread, both in this country and in France. The study of botany, and the encouragement given to agricultural and horticultural pursuits, have so wonderfully improved the state of this country, that what, in early ages, a king would have feasted on, a beggar now refuses; and the acorn is scarcely known as affording nourishment to the human species, even among the

vagrants who pitch their tattered tents, and cook their scanty fare, beneath the branches of the tree that produces them."

"Do you not think," said William, "that Mr. Phillips means gipsies?"

"Yes," said his mother. "Should there remain any persons so ignorantly obstinate as to exclaim against the study of botany as useless, let them, instead of their plentiful desserts, be furnished with a scanty supply of acorns, and let their wine be exchanged for the beverage of their fore-fathers; and soon would they join in the praise of science, and of all those who have given their time and talents to improve the health and add to the luxuries of man, by this interesting and beneficial study, which,

next to astronomy, carries our thoughts to heaven, and causes us to join the Psalmist in his exclamation, 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all.' It was an oak that caused the death of the son of David, in the battle of the wood of Ephraim. 'And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth, and the mule that was under him went away.' A periwig-maker in the town of Lewes, in Sussex, made use of this story to recommend the sale of false hair: he had a sign painted on the front of his shop, representing the rebellious son of David hanging on the oak by the

hair of his head, with this whimsical couplet below :

“ O Absalom ! unhappy sprig,
Thou shouldst have worn a periwig.”

“ The oak is a tree of slow growth, requiring a century before it will arrive to its full perfection. Pliny in his natural history states, that hard by the city of Ilium there were oaks, near the tomb of Ilius, which were planted from acorns when Troy was first called Ilium. He also adds, ‘ The great forest of Hercynia is full of large oaks, that have never been topped or lopped. It is supposed,’ says this naturalist, ‘ that they have been there since the creation of the world. The roots of these trees run and spread so far within the ground, that they meet each other, in which

encounter they make such resistance, that they swell and rise upwards to a great height, in the form of arches. In some instances,' he says, 'they were so high and so large, that a whole troop of horsemen could ride upright through these natural portals, in order of battle.'"

"I think we may call this encounter of the roots of the oak," said William, "*the battle of the trees*; for it must have been the strongest that mastered the weakest branches."

The master of the inn at this moment appearing with the first dish in his hand, Mrs. Mowbray smiled, and said to William, "There, your wish is accomplished: there is not only a vessel for holding food, but, what is still better, there is actually food in it."

“Pray, Sir,” said Mrs. Mowbray, addressing the landlord of the inn, “is there any thing curious, or worth seeing, between this and Maidstone?”

“Not any thing, madam.”

Mrs. Mowbray. Maidstone is about ten miles from this: is it not?

Landlord. It is, madam.

He then left the room, when William laughed, and said, “A most laconic gentleman.”

“A very discreet man, I should say,” observed his mother.

Dinner being concluded, “Ring the bell for the carriage, George,” said Mrs. Mowbray; “and Caroline, do you collect the books that have been taken out of the basket. Remember, I appoint you to the office of book-collector.”

“And what am I to be?” said William.

“You,” said his mother, “are to be master of the horse; therefore, go and tell Thomas that I think he had better have another pair of horses added to our own, as I wish to get to Maidstone early.”

“You have not told me what I am to be,” said little George to his mother.

“Oh! you shall be bell-ringer; and you shall pull the check-string, provided you will promise not to pull Thomas’s thumb off when I wish to stop.”

“Indeed, my dear mamma, you have no occasion to ask me to make such a promise as that; for I love Thomas too well to hurt him.”

Mrs. Mowbray. But if you did

not love him, what would you do then, my dear?

George. Why, perhaps I might be careless.

As Caroline seated herself in the carriage, her mother observed that she had a nosegay in her hand.

Mrs. Mowbray. Where did you get that pretty nosegay, Caroline?

Caroline. I got it from that civil landlord, whom William called *laconic*. Does not that mean a person of few words?

Mrs. Mowbray. It does, my dear. There is, I see, a *convolvulus* among your flowers. Do you know any thing about that flower?

Caroline. No, mamma.

Mrs. Mowbray. Then take out of the basket a book with a green paper cover, and I will read an ex-

tract from "Walks in a Garden," where that very pretty flower is noticed.

"But see, this *convolvulus* begins to shut up its flowers, a sure indication of approaching rain; and the *calendula pluvialis*, commonly called the *poor man's weather-glass*, has already closed its petals, in anticipation of an April shower. These barometers of nature are seldom mistaken. The big drops are falling around. Run, run: let us seek the shelter of the house; and at our next walk we will take the opposite side of the garden, in the hope of gleaning some reflections from its variegated borders."

"I like that book very much," said William: "have you any more extracts, my dear mamma?"

“ I have, my dear. The next is about the sun-flower.”

“ Oh ! pray read it,” said Caroline :
“ I dare say it is very entertaining.”

“ I cannot promise that,” said her mother.

“ In our last walk, we discovered the approach of the rain from the shutting up of the convolvulus. The rain is now over ; but as the clouds have not yet dispersed, we can derive no assistance from this sun-dial, in ascertaining the time of the day. However, we need not be at a loss : this *helianthus*, or annual sun-flower, is not only

True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not shone upon ;

but enables us to form some estimate of the hour, even when the great lu-

minary is invisible: an advantage we cannot obtain from the dial. See, its large radiated disc already inclines westward, whence we may be sure the afternoon has commenced. It will follow the setting sun; and at night, by its elasticity, will again return to the east, to meet the morning sun-beams.

“ But one, the lofty follower of the sun,
Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
Drooping all night; and, when he warm returns,
Points her enamour'd bosom to his ray.”

“ What a treasure this plant would have been to Robinson Crusoe,” said William: “ you know we were playing Robinson Crusoe the other night.”

“ Well, my dears,” said their mother, shutting up the book, “ as the setting sun has lighted us to our inn,

we will bid him good night, promising to greet him with an early salutation in the morning; for I intend to go a stage before breakfast, as I have written to Mrs. Barton that we shall be at her house before dinner."

"Oh!" exclaimed the young people, "that will be delightful; for then we shall have time to see the grounds which Lucy Barton described when she was with us."

"And often have I wished," said Caroline, "that I could but see that beautiful rose-plot."

George. What is a rose-plot?

Caroline. I hardly know how to make you understand it, my dear little brother. Oh! I think I can. Do you not remember a large, old-fashioned tea-board at grandmamma's, on which there was a painting,

which you used to be so fond of looking at?

George. Yes, my favourite tea-board.

Caroline. Well, the rose-plot is a place in the garden, just in the shape of that tea-board. Suppose then, George, the tea-board were filled with earth, and that roses were planted all over it, do you not think it would look very pretty? and with a border all round of dwarf sweetbrier, like the rim of the tea-board?

George. Yes, very pretty, indeed! And is there a rose-plot at Mrs. Barton's?

Caroline. Yes, George; and rose-hedges and sweetbrier hedges; but the roses will not be in flower while we are there.

George. Then I think it must be a very sweet place indeed, when the flowers are in bloom.

The carriage at this moment drove up to the inn at Maidstone.

CHAP. IV.

MRS. MOWBRAY, after seeing the beds, said to the children, that, as the evening was rather cold, she should not walk out.

Caroline. I am sorry for that; for I have been reading the road-book, in my way here; and it says, that Maidstone is a large, populous, and agreeable place;—that a branch of the river Medway runs through it; and that, in the time of the ancient Britons, it was their third chief city:—that, afterwards, it was a Roman station, and has been a considerable

town in all ages since;—and that there are paper-mills, and a manufactory of linen-thread. Oh! my dear mamma, how much I should like to see all these things.

Mrs. Mowbray. I wish, my dear girl, I could comply with your desire; but we have arrived too late to see any manufactory, as they are all shut up by this time, and all the poor tired workmen are gone home, to enjoy their frugal meal, which they call supper; and that is what we never have, and, I dare say, you have never seen in your life.

Caroline. Yes indeed, mamma, I have.

Mrs. Mowbray. Where did you see a supper?

Caroline. When I was with my cousins. They were invited to a

ball and supper, and I went with them. The whole *entertainment* was beautiful. There was a profusion of flowers, and such fine plants beautifully arranged in the landing-place; and all the windows were filled with green-house plants, and all the dishes ornamented with flowers.

Mrs. Mowbray. Ah! my dear Caroline, how unlike the poor man's supper, which generally consists of potatoes and salt; no butter, but perhaps a small bit of bacon, as a treat.

Mrs. Mowbray finding the cold of the evening increase, desired George, whom his brother and sister now called the bell-ringer, to perform his office. He accordingly rung the bell; and Mrs. Mowbray ordered a

fire to be lighted, and requested the waiter to desire the person who lighted it to bring some logs of wood.

William. I am glad, my dear mother, that you have ordered a fire; for I have been trembling with cold ever since that heavy shower of rain. I am also delighted that you have ordered a log of wood; for I shall hear it “groan, and sigh, and hiss,” and see it “die,” to warm a poet.”

Mrs. Mowbray laughed at William’s quotation, and said, “I never knew that you were a poet.”

“I am no poet, dear mamma,” said William.—“Oh!” he added, laughing immoderately when he at length discovered his mother’s meaning, “I should have stopped at *hiss*.”

Caroline, who was reading, now looked off her book, and said, "What are you laughing at? I heard the words *sigh* and *groan*; but I did not attend to the meaning. But when you both laughed, after William had repeated these words, I began to think it strange that his having said *groan* and *sigh*, should make mamma laugh."

William. Indeed, Caroline, mamma did not laugh at *groan* and *sigh*: she laughed at *die*.

Caroline. I did not hear that word. How very puzzling you are, William. Mamma could not laugh at a person dying.

William. It was not a person.

Caroline. Well, any animal.

William. It was not an animal.

Caroline. Then, what could it be?

William. You shall hear, if mamma will give me leave: will you, mamma?

Mrs. Mowbray. Yes, my dear.

William then repeated the following lines, which he had learned out of "Gaieties and Gravities."

TO A LOG OF WOOD UPON THE FIRE.

WHEN Horace, as the snows descended
 On mount Soracte, recommended
 That Logs be doubled,
 Until a blazing fire arose,
 I wonder whether thoughts like those
 Which in my noddle interpose,
 His fancy troubled?

Poor Log! I cannot hear thee sigh,
 And groan, and hiss, and see thee die,
 To warm a poet,
 Without evincing thy success,
 And, as thou wanest less and less,
 Inditing a farewell address,
 To let thee know it.

Peeping from earth, a bud unveil'd
 Some "bosky bourne" or dingle hail'd
 Thy natal hour;
 While infant winds around thee blew,
 And thou wert fed with silver dew,
 And tender sun-beams oozing through
 Thy leafy bower.

Earth, water, air, thy growth prepar'd;
 And if perchance some robin, scar'd
 From neighbouring manor,
 Perch'd on thy crest, it rock'd in air,
 Making his ruddy feathers flare
 In the sun's ray, as if they were
 A fairy banner.

Thou grew'st a goodly tree, with shoots
 Fanning the sky, and earth-bound roots
 So grappled under,
 That thou, whom perching birds could swing,
 And zephyrs rock with lightest wing,
 From thy firm trunk unmov'd didst fling
 Tempest and thunder.

Thine offspring leaves, death's annual prey,
 Which Herod Winter tore away
 From thy caressing,
 In heaps, like graves, around thee blown,
 Each morn thy dewy tears have strown,
 O'er each thy branching hands been thrown,
 As if in blessing.

How oft thy lofty summits won
Morn's virgin smile, and hail'd the sun

With rustling motion:

How oft, in silent depths of night,
When the moon sail'd in cloudless light,
Thou hast stood awe-struck at the sight,
In hush'd devotion.

'Twere vain to ask; for doom'd to fall,
The day appointed for us all

O'er thee impended:

The hatchet, with remorseless blow,
First laid thee in the forest low,
Then cut thee into logs; and so
Thy course was ended.

But not thine use; for moral rules,
Worth all the wisdom of the schools,

Thou mayst bequeath me;

Bidding me cherish those who live
Above me, and the more I thrive,
A wider shade and shelter give
To those beneath me.

So, when death lays his axe to me,
I may resign as calm as thee

My hold terrestrial:

Like thine, my latter end be found
Diffusing light and warmth around,
And, like thy smoke, my spirit bound
To realms celestial.

Mrs. Mowbray. And now, George, to your office.

George instantly pulled the bell, and the waiter appearing, she ordered tea, and bid him tell the chambermaid that the beds would be wanted very soon after tea.

George. Ah then, I suppose we are to go to bed.

Mrs. Mowbray. You are right, my dear boy: we shall all retire very soon.

George. *We:* surely, my dear mamma, you do not mean to go to bed at the same time that I shall.

Mrs. Mowbray. Indeed, George, I do, for I am very much fatigued.

George. I wonder how you can be tired: you have only been sitting in a carriage all day.

Just as he said this, the waiter brought the tea-things, which gave a pleasant turn to George's thoughts; and Mrs. Mowbray observing that Caroline still continued reading, said mildly, "Caroline, I do not allow reading at tea-time." Caroline instantly rose and put away her book. After tea, Mrs. Mowbray told Caroline, that, as they were to set off early in the morning, she must collect all the books and put them into the basket, before she went to bed.

Mrs. Mowbray. William, go and tell Thomas that we shall want the carriage by seven o'clock, and desire him to get proper directions which road he is to take, and which will be the best place to breakfast at.

Caroline. There goes "the mas-

ter of the horse." I suppose we shall have a full account of the health of the horses, and how many miles they will be able to travel to-morrow. I cannot remember the name of the place which Mr. Barton's house is near.

Mrs. Mowbray. Winchelsea, my dear.

George. Is not that in Sussex, Caroline?

Caroline. Yes, George, it is.

As soon as "the master of the horse" returned, Mrs. Mowbray desired George to ring for the maid, as they must all go to bed. Caroline was therefore not annoyed with the lecture on horses, which she expected to hear from William: he had only time to tell his mother how much the horses were admired.

Mrs. Mowbray. I am glad to hear it, my dear, as I know you like to hear them praised. Good night, children.

CHAP. V.

WHEN William met his mother in the morning, he was in high spirits; for he had been promised that, if the day proved fine, he should ride on the box. After giving his mother the usual morning kiss, he said, "What a beautiful day it is!"

Mrs. Mowbray. It is indeed, William, and your bright eyes remind me of my promise.

William. Oh, thank you, thank you: you never forget to make us happy. You will allow me to hand you and Caroline into the carriage before I mount.

Mrs. Mowbray. Certainly, my love; and I am happy to find that you have not forgotten those pleasing attentions which Caroline and I expect to receive from you.

The happy party drove off in high spirits. The rain of the preceding evening had laid the dust, and every thing looked fresh and beautiful. Caroline took out the road-book, to see what places they were to pass through, desiring George to let her know, if he saw any thing worth looking at while she was reading.

George. My dear Caroline, how can I tell what *you* would think worth looking at: you are so much older than I am, and have seen so many things that I have never seen. You have seen a peacock, and I never have; and if I were to see

one, and to call out, "Look, look at that beautiful thing!" I dare say you would laugh and say, "Oh, George, it is only a peacock."

Caroline. Well, George, you need not be afraid of being laughed at on that account; for I assure you peacocks are not so plentiful, as to be straying about the road like sparrows.

George. Do sparrows *stray*? Where do they stray from?

Caroline. Nowhere, George. The word was not a proper word to use in that sense, but I did not know what word to choose. Sparrows hop; but it would have been extremely ridiculous to say, "there are no peacocks" hopping about the roads like sparrows, for peacocks never hop.

Just at this moment William struck his fingers against the front glass, to make Caroline look at him, and requested her to lend him six-pence, as they were very near a blind man who was sitting by the road side. Caroline was going to ask him a great many questions about the man, when Mrs. Mowbray desired her to give him the money ; and said, “ Do not talk to him, for I am always afraid of his falling off the box, when you take up his attention by conversing with him.”

Caroline. I wonder how William can, at such a distance, know that the man is blind.

Mrs. Mowbray. Indeed, Caroline, I cannot tell ; but you will soon have an opportunity of asking him, as we shall all walk up that hill.

When they arrived at the foot of it, George pulled the check-string, and they got out; when Caroline immediately joined William, and asked him how he could know that the man was blind, when he was at so great a distance that she could scarcely see him at all.

William. My dear sister, you shall hear some part of the history of that man, if you will have a little patience.

Caroline. Indeed, William, I think I have had a great deal of patience, for I have waited ever since I gave you the sixpence.

William made no reply to this, as he saw his mother looking very grave, which he well knew arose from her being displeased at them for carrying on an argument about such a trifle.

William. Well, we will say no more about patience. When I was in the stable at the inn, telling Thomas about the horses, the landlord of the inn came in, and I asked him whether there was much game in this part of the country. "Pretty well," he said; "but now that you have asked me that question, it reminds me, that on the road you are going, there sits by the four-mile-stone, a poor old blind game-keeper, who lost his sight by the bursting of a gun, and his unfeeling master parted with him as soon as the wounds were healed."

Caroline. Oh, what a hard-hearted master, to part with a servant who had met with such a misfortune, and had got it while in the very act of serving his master.

William. So I think *now*: I wish I may think the same when I am old enough to have servants of my own.

Caroline. Why, William, do you really think that growing older will make you have less feeling: if that is likely to be the case, I shall never again wish to be older, which I am constantly doing; for I really hate unfeeling people.

William. Well, Caroline, I hope it will not be *the case*, for I should be sorry to do any thing to make my dear sister *hate* me.

Caroline. I know, by your manner, that you think that a very strong expression. I am glad my mother did not hear me, as she has a great dislike to violent language, and I believe I am often too warm.

The carriage now stopped to let the horses take breath, as the coachman called it; and George and Mrs. Mowbray, who had been walking behind, soon joined them, saying, "Well, Caroline, have you had the story of the poor blind beggar?"

Caroline. Oh, yes; and I will tell you all about it when we get into the carriage.

Mrs. Mowbray. Which we shall do immediately, for we are near the top of the hill.

George, now beginning to feel very hungry, asked his mother where they were to breakfast.

Mrs. Mowbray. At Stilebridge.

George. How far are we from it?

Mrs. Mowbray. Not far, I believe; but Caroline has the road-book, and she can tell you exactly.

Caroline looked, and told him it was about a mile and a half.

George. A mile and a half! Oh, what a distance! what a time we shall be before we get there!

Caroline. I dare say we shall be there in a quarter of an hour, and perhaps sooner; for that would not, I believe, be considered quick travelling. Now, George, if we go a mile and a half in a quarter of an hour, how many miles would that be in an hour?

This *puzzling* question occupied the attention of George so completely, that he forgot his hunger, and he was really surprised when the carriage stopped at the inn. Mrs. Mowbray having ordered breakfast, then asked William how the horses seemed to be, and whether Thomas

had said any thing about another pair of horses. William said he had not.

Caroline. Is not Mrs. Barton's house between Cranbrook and Winchelsea?

"It is," said Mrs. Mowbray.

As there was not any thing worth seeing at Stilebridge, they left it immediately after breakfast, and proceeded to Cranbrook, William still occupying his seat on the box.

George. Pray, Caroline, can you tell me what the name of the place is, after Stilebridge? What a strange name Stilebridge is: do you not think so, Caroline?

Caroline. No, George: stile is to get over, and bridge is to get over; the first, from one field to ano-

ther; the latter, over a river, from one place to another.

As Mrs. Mowbray was reading, Caroline put her finger to her lips, which soon silenced George, as they had been taught not to talk when they saw any person reading. Mrs. Mowbray now desired Caroline to take out the road-book, as they were approaching Cranbrook, and read the account of it. Caroline read as follows:

“Cranbrook is the place where the first woollen manufactory was erected, by those Flemings who were encouraged to settle here by Edward the Third; but that trade has long since decayed.”

Mrs. Mowbray. You may read Winchelsea.

“Winchelsea is one of the Cinque

Ports, and was built in the reign of Edward the First, when a more ancient town of the same name, which had eight parish churches, and was distant about three miles, was swallowed up by the sea in a terrible tempest. The new town being sacked by the French and Spanish, and deserted by the sea, soon fell into decay; and it is now dwindled to a mean place, though it still retains its privileges, and returns two members to parliament. It is seated on a rocky cliff, on an inlet of the sea, and had a haven, now choked up. Three of its gates are still standing, but much decayed, and near three miles asunder, over the fields. Here are many ruinous materials of ancient structures, which

are so buried, that the streets have been turned into corn-fields, and the plough goes over the foundations."

Caroline looked very grave and thoughtful when she laid down the book. "Could any thing be more dreadful?" said she: "a whole town to be swallowed up by the sea. I think they were right to build the new town upon a rocky cliff.

George. I dare say the builder had been reading the Bible before he began; for there is something about a wise man who built his house on a rock, and there was another man who built his house on the sand, and it fell. Do not you think, Caroline, that the old town had been built on the sand?

Caroline. Perhaps so, as the sea swallowed it up.

William now struck against the glass, and told Caroline that they were only two miles from Mrs. Barton's house. This information delighted Caroline and George extremely.

Caroline. Mamma, the day is so beautiful, may we go into the grounds as soon as we arrive?

Mrs. Mowbray. That must depend on Mrs. Barton and Lucy. When we go to visit our friends, we leave them to amuse us in the way they like best. They know that you like a garden.

Caroline. Yes; and as Cowper says,

“Who loves a garden, loves a greenhouse too.”

I am sure I am one of those.

“Now, George,” said Caroline,

“you can look on your side, and I will look on my side of the carriage, for the house.”

George. But how shall I know it?

Caroline. Indeed, George, I never thought of *that*. I dare say William will see it first, and will make a sign to us.

George. Then I ought to keep my eyes fixed on the front glass.

Just as he had said these words, William made a sign, which they understood; and they clapped their hands with joy, at the thoughts of having arrived at the end of their journey for this day.

CHAP. VI.

THE carriage drove up to the house, and the party were greeted by Mrs. Barton and Lucy with every demonstration of affectionate regard. As they had numberless enquiries to make after absent friends, and Mrs. Mowbray, who had ordered her letters to be forwarded to Mrs. Barton's, had several to read, the grounds were not mentioned for some time after their arrival. At length, Mrs. Barton said to Mrs. Mowbray: "I know that my young friend Caro-

line is very fond of a garden: are you too much fatigued to take a ramble through the grounds?"

Mrs. Mowbray said she was not. As they walked out, Lucy asked her mother whether she might take Caroline to the greenhouse.

Mrs. Barton. Certainly, my dear.

Mrs. Mowbray and Mrs. Barton then left the young party to make themselves happy in their own way, while they strolled to some other part of the grounds. After walking for some time, the children joined them; and Caroline said, "I have just been into the greenhouse, and Lucy has shown me the *mimosa*. What a curious plant it is! how strange that the least touch makes it shut its leaves!"

"Oh," said William, "had you

never seen the sensitive plant, for that is the other name of it."

"Yes," said Caroline; "I had seen it with my eyes, but not with my understanding, until Lucy made me stay and look at it, while she made the leaves close."

Mrs. Mowbray. I am glad to hear you make use of such an expression; and I hope you will remember that pretty story of "Eyes and no Eyes," in "Evenings at Home:" *that* story will be of great use to you on your journey now, and through life.

They were now joined by Mrs. Barton, who had staid a few minutes to speak to one of the gardeners. Caroline, whose head was full of the sensitive plant, asked Mrs. Barton

whether she could tell her why the leaves closed when they are touched.

“There is,” said Mrs. Barton to her friend Mrs. Mowbray, “a shady seat, a short distance from this, and, as Caroline is anxious to know something of the natural history of the *mimosa*, we can send our active beau William to the house, for Dr. Darwin’s account of it.”

They walked on while William went for the book. Having arrived at the seat which Mrs. Barton had mentioned, they were all delighted at the beauty of the prospect from it. The alcove was large enough to contain a table, on which lay books and work, and some drawings, one of which Lucy had been copying. There was also a book of prints, which Lucy had collected in various ways,

and had pasted them on sheets of paper, and made a book of them, for the amusement of her young friends when they visited her. While they were looking at these, William returned, and gave the book to Mrs. Barton, who read the following extract :

“ Naturalists,” says Dr. Darwin, “ have not explained the immediate cause of the collapsing of the sensitive plant. The leaves meet and close in the night, during the sleep of the plant, or when exposed to much cold in the day-time, in the same manner as when they are affected by external violence ; folding their upper surfaces together, and in part over each other, like scales or tiles, so as to expose as little of the upper surface as may be, to the air, but do

not indeed collapse quite so far; for when touched in the night, during their sleep, they fall still further; especially when touched on the foot-stalks, between the stems and the leaflets, which seem to be their most sensitive or irritable part. Now, as their situation, after being exposed to external violence, resembles their sleep, but with a greater degree of collapse, may it not be owing to a numbness or paralysis, consequent to too violent irritation, like the faintings of animals from pain or fatigue? A sensitive plant being kept in a dark room till some hours after day-break, its leaves and stalks were collapsed as in its most profound sleep, and, on exposing it to the light, above twenty minutes elapsed before

the plant was thoroughly awake and had quite expanded itself."

It is a species of mimosa, or sensitive plant, which produces gum-arabic.

Dr. Darwin has thus characterized these plants :

"Weak with nice sense the chaste Mimosa stands,
From each rude touch withdraws her timid hands;
Alarm'd she trembles at the morning shade,
And feels alive, through all her tender form,
The whisper'd murmurs of the gathering storm;
Shuts her sweet eyelids to approaching night,
And hails with freshen'd charms the rising light."

Caroline. What is *collapse*?

Mrs. Barton. Collapse is to close, so as that one side touches the other.

Lucy. May we try that experiment with one of the sensitive plants to-night? We could place one of them in the drawing-room, and request the maid who opens the window-

shutters, not to open them until we go to breakfast, and then Caroline and I can go and watch its opening.

Mrs. Barton. You may, Lucy.

Lucy and her young friend having left the alcove, Mrs. Barton remarked to Mrs. Mowbray, that, if Lucy had read the sentence which she had just spoken, she would have instantly detected the tautology she has made use of: I mean her having used the word *open* so often.

The two ladies continued conversing on many subjects which our young readers would not comprehend: we shall therefore leave them, and follow the young party in their rambles through the grounds and gardens. Caroline took George to look at the rose-plots, rose-hedges, and sweetbrier-hedges.

Lucy took William to what she called the lake, a large piece of water, where there were some fine carp. As they returned, they met Caroline and George. The former said to her friend Lucy, "How delighted I am with this beautiful place! I wish mamma was not going to Hastings: I should like so much to stay here with you, dear Lucy."

Lucy. I can second that wish, for I have not been so happy for a very long time.

Caroline. I am afraid we shall leave you to-morrow; and lest that should be the case, I should like to take my farewell walk through the greenhouse in the evening, when the gardener is going to water the plants.

Lucy. I will ask mamma's leave.

Caroline. Oh do! my kind Lucy.

Caroline then remarked, that she had not seen her favourite little flower, the violet.

William. Though I do not know much about flowers, yet I can tell why you have not seen any violets.

Caroline. Is it because I have forgotten the story of "Eyes and no Eyes?"

William. No, Cary, it is because they are out of bloom: you know, they blow early in the spring. You have forgotten that pretty poem which I lately learned, in which I put the name of "Mary," my sweet sister, instead of "Anna," which is in the poem.

Lucy. Pray, William, repeat the verses; and when you have finished,

I will show you a bank that was
sweet with violets this spring.

William. The verses are, "To
a tuft of early Violets." They were
written by Mr. William Gifford.

Sweet flow'rs, that from your humble beds
Thus prematurely dare to rise,
And trust your unprotected heads
To cold Aquarie's wat'ry skies.

Retire! retire! these tepid airs
Are not the genial brood of May;
That sun with light malignant glares,
And flatters only to betray.

Stern Winter's reign is not yet past;
Lo! while your buds prepare to blow,
On icy pinions comes the blast,
And nips your root and lays you low.

Alas! for such ungentle doom!
But I will yield you and supply
A kindlier soil on which to bloom,
A nobler bed on which to die.

Come, then, ere yet the morning ray
Has drunk the dew that gems your crest,
And drawn your balmiest sweets away,
O come and grace my Anna's breast.

Ye droop, sweet flow'rs; but did you know
 What worth, what goodness there reside,
 Your cups with loveliest tints would glow,
 And spread their leaves with conscious pride.

For there has lib'ral nature join'd
 Her riches to the stores of art,
 And added to the vig'rous mind
 The soft, the sympathizing heart.

Come, then, ere yet the morning ray
 Has drunk the dew that gems your crest,
 And drawn your balmiest sweets away,
 O come and grace my Anna's breast.

Caroline. Pray, William can you tell me what "Aquarie's" means?

William. I can only tell you that it is one of the signs of Zodiac, rising in January, and setting in February, and——

Caroline. Thank you, William; that will do. I now can tell how early the tuft of violets came out: I suppose it was the latter end of February.

They returned now to the alcove, and found Mrs. Mowbray and Mrs. Barton still there; though the latter said, "If my young ramblers had staid a few minutes longer, they would have been too late to accompany us back to the house; for I was just saying to Mrs. Mowbray, that it was dressing-time, and that, if they did not return soon, I must send a servant for the books and work: now you shall be my little carriers."

In their walk back to the house, Lucy joined her mother, and requested her to allow them, instead of going into the dining-room at dessert-time, to go and see the gardener water the plants, as Caroline wished to take another peep at the greenhouse before she left them.

Mrs. Barton. And when is that, Lucy?

Lucy. I am afraid, to-morrow; for Caroline has been telling me that she believes her mother intends setting off immediately after breakfast.

Mrs. Barton. What will Caroline say, when she hears that I have prevailed on Mrs. Mowbray to stay two more days with us?

Lucy did not stay to answer her mother's question, but flew off to her young friends, who had got on a considerable way before her, crying out, "Joy! joy! Caroline, William, George, stop, stop; I have good news to tell you: your kind mamma has consented to stay two days longer with us. Oh! I am so very happy! but I have run till I am so out of

breath that I cannot tell you all my plans."

Caroline. Pray, dear Lucy, do not talk any more till you have recovered your breath. I *can, sometimes*, have patience for a very long time; though I shall be delighted to hear your plans.

Caroline, however, quite forgetting her boasted patience, said, "But why did you not say any thing about them before? Have you had a plan in your head ever since we have been with you, and have not said a word about it? Oh! but perhaps you told it to William, who, mamma says, has more discretion than I have. But I hope, Lucy, that you quite understand the meaning of the word *discretion*; for I assure you that I do not wish you to think that William is

fond of mystery, or keeping secrets—
I should say, making secrets; for, if
a secret is told us, we should keep it.

Lucy. Oh! I quite understand
you. I dare say he never teases you,
in the way that I have seen a boy of
my acquaintance torment his sister.
If he happens to be told by his papa
of any amusement which he is going
to give them, instead of running to
his sister, to make her happy with the
good news, he goes to her with his
eyes sparkling like diamonds with
the pleasure that he feels; and walks
up and down the room, saying, “I
know something: I know something,
but I will not tell you.”

Caroline. Well, Lucy, I think he
must be a very ill-natured, unkind,
disagreeable boy.

William. And I think he must

be a very silly fellow. But I suppose he is not so old as I am.

Lucy. He is ten years old. But if he was only seven, that would be no excuse for such conduct; because, whenever a brother knows that what he is doing makes his sister uneasy, whether he is in play or earnest he should leave off.

Caroline. I think you are quite right. And now, Lucy, what is your plan?

Lucy. I suppose you have heard your mamma, and other ladies, talk of the distress of the poor Spaniards who are at present in London.

William. Indeed we have heard some sad tales of their sufferings this winter.

Lucy. Well, you know there is to be a sale of fancy things for them;

and all mamma's friends are very busy in making different articles to send to the sale, and all the money they may produce is to be divided among these poor Spaniards. Those drawings that you saw me copying are for the sale; and mamma and I have been making needle-books, and moss-baskets, and screens, and dressing costume dolls: in short, I never was so busy in my life, and certainly never so happy. It is so very pleasant to do things when one knows that they will be of use. When I finished my screens, I said to them, (for I was quite alone at the time,) "Go, my pretty screens; you will, perhaps, enable some poor Spanish lady to buy a bonnet and tippet for her dear little girl, who has very likely been kept at home because she has not any to put on."

George. What! are any of them without bonnets?

William. Yes, George; and, what is worse, there are many of them who have hardly any clothes, and very little food: and some have been, during part of last winter, which, you know, was very cold, entirely without fire. I am sure my heart ached for them, poor creatures.

Caroline. Well, I am glad, for their sakes, that the weather is now warm; for they will not have that misery to endure.

William. You are right, Caroline; not till next winter.

Lucy. I have been very foolish; for all this time I have been talking about myself, and what I have done, instead of telling you how very active and kind Jane and Harriet Melmoth

have been ; and that I intend asking mamma to let us have the jaunting-car to-morrow, to go to Mr. Melmoth's.

Caroline. Oh ! that will be delightful. But what is your *plan* ?

Lucy. My plan is to take you all there, to see the pretty things they have made for the Spanish sale. And now, Caroline, we must put on our bonnets, if we intend to be in time to see the plants watered ; for there is the gardener going to get his watering pot.

George. I wish I had brought mine with me ; and then, perhaps, he would let me water some of the plants.

Lucy. The gardener has a small watering pot, which I will ask him to lend you.

They now scampered off to the garden.

CHAP. VII.

UPON their return to the house, after seeing the gardener water the greenhouse plants, William said, "I never thought I could be so much amused by a greenhouse, as I have been this day. The gardener told me many things that I did not know; and he has promised to show me another house, where he has some very beautiful heaths. I always thought that heaths were wild plants, which grew on commons, and were not worth looking at; but he told me

that, if mamma would give me leave to take a walk with him, he would show me what he called a *heath-house*, belonging to a nurseryman, where there were four hundred different kinds of heaths; and that, after I had looked at a few of them, I should be able to tell one of the heath-family from any other plants."

George. What could he mean by that? I thought *family* meant *persons*.

William. You are right, George; but that is the gardener's way of speaking. He seems to be as fond of plants, almost, as a mother is of her children; for he said he must go and give his plants their supper, meaning that he must water them, for that is part of their nourishment or food.

Mrs. Barton. Though the gar-

dener is quite right in what he said about the plants under his care, yet you will be surprised to hear that plants which belong to hot climates do not require water at all, and will only grow in soils, or sands, from which no moisture can be extracted: they are even destroyed by a full supply of wet in a rainy season; therefore it has been supposed that they derive the whole of their nourishment from the surrounding atmosphere, and that the only advantage they obtain from thrusting their roots into the sand, or soil, is that of preserving an erect position.

William. I do not think, ma'am, that I quite understand this last part of what you have been telling me.

Mrs. Barton. Do you mean *erect position*?

William. Yes.

Mrs. Barton. If you were going to play at cricket, and wanted your wickets to stand upright, or, in an *erect position*, (for it is the same thing,) what would you do?

William. I would stick them in the ground.—Oh! now I quite understand you.

Mrs. Barton. Some animals seem to derive nutriment in the same manner. The bradypus, or sloth, never drinks, and trembles at the feeling of rain. Among plants possessing the same properties, is the *aërial epedendrum*, a native of the East Indies, where it is no uncommon thing for the inhabitants to pluck it, on account of the elegance of its leaves, the beauty of its flower, and the exquisite odour it diffuses; and

to suspend it, by a silken cord, from the ceiling of their rooms, where, from year to year, it continues to put forth new leaves, new blossoms, and a new fragrance, excited alone to new life and action by the surrounding atmosphere.

“Where did you gather that flower, George?” said William.

“I did not gather it, William; for you know mamma has forbidden us to gather flowers; but I asked the gardener for it, and when he gave it to me, he said, ‘So, Sir, you admire wolf’s-bane.’”

“Monk’s-hood, you mean, George.”

“No, indeed,” said George, “the gardener called it wolf’s-bane.”

“I am sure,” replied William, “mamma called that flower monk’s-

hood. I will ask her whether I am not right."

"Indeed I am sure you are wrong, George."

They both began speaking at once.

"Am I not right? Is not this monk's-hood?" said William.

"Is not this wolf's-bane?" said George.

Mrs. Mowbray. You happen to be both right as to the name, but very wrong in disputing; for the flower is sometimes called monk's-head, and sometimes wolf's-bane; and it is confidently affirmed that the huntsmen in the Alps, who hunt wolves and other wild animals, dip their arrows into the juice of these plants, which renders the wounds occasioned by them mortal.

The servant now came for George to go to bed, saying to Mrs. Barton, "Shall I come for the young ladies when I have put Master George to bed?"

"Yes, Spencer, you may."

When Caroline and Lucy retired to bed, Lucy began to talk about the plan for the next day, and said, "We shall have a large party to-morrow."

Caroline. Then you have got your mamma's consent to our having the car?

Lucy. Yes; and Mrs. Mowbray says that if the letters are brought in time, and that the account of your sister is better than that of to-day, and that the letters do not require an immediate answer, she will go in the carriage with mamma.

Caroline. Ah! my dear Lucy, now that you have told me all this, I am much afraid that mamma will not be able to go with us; and I am sure, if she is prevented from going with us on account of worse news of my dear sister Mary, I shall not enjoy the party at all. You know, Lucy, that mamma is going to Hastings, to take a house; and that grandmamma is to bring down my sister as soon as she is able to travel. We have heard of a very pretty cottage, about a mile from Hastings: there is a very good garden, and a greenhouse full of plants. The gentleman whom the cottage belongs to is gone to France, and the house is to be let furnished. But, Lucy, you said we should have a large party to-morrow: if Mrs.

Mowbray and mamma go, that will only be two more.

Lucy. And two more will make four. We are to call and take two young ladies, who have been waiting for a long time to go and see all the pretty things which I mentioned to you. They also have made a great variety of little pincushions: some in the shape of a half-boot, others like an arm chair; and card-cases, and court-plaster cases, and work-bags.

Caroline. But, Lucy, you have not told me the name of those young ladies who have made the half-boot pincushions, and the arm-chair pincushions.

Lucy. Louisa and Wilhelmina Maberly. I believe general Maberly

intends taking them to London to see the sale.

Caroline. Is he their papa, or their uncle?

Lucy. Their papa,

Just as she said this, the maid came to tell Caroline that her mamma was waiting for her in her bed-room.

The little girls then wished each other good night, and parted. Caroline ran back to Lucy, to remind her about the sensitive plant, which was to be kept in the dark till after breakfast.

CHAP. VIII.

THE next morning, after breakfast, Lucy and Caroline went to awaken the sensitive plant, which had been placed in the drawing-room, the window shutters of which had not been opened till they went in. Caroline took her mother's watch with her, to observe how long it would be before the leaves opened, after the light was let into the room, and it was nearly twenty minutes. "How curious!" exclaimed Caroline. "Now I will go and tell William; for I want to make him as fond of natural history as I am myself."

Lucy. I thought he seemed to like one branch of natural history very much, when he was talking, the other day, of the sagacity of dogs, and their faithfulness to their masters; and of the memory of horses. There was a story which he told me, of a little boy whose papa allowed him to take a ride on a pony, by himself, in the Regent's Park; (and you know there are several different roads in it;) and the little boy, when he wanted to return home, forgot which road he ought to take. He was so sadly puzzled to know what he should do, that the tears came into his eyes, it being the first time he was ever allowed to ride alone. However, as he was a sensible little boy, he began to think that crying would not take him home, and that he had

better compose himself, and think seriously how he was to get out of the Park. At last he recollected that his papa had told him that horses had very good memories. So he thought to himself, "If I lay the bridle loose on Bessy's neck (that was the name of the pony) she will find her way home." He did so; and the pony carried him safe out of the Park, and exactly to that part of the New Road which he wanted to find; for when he got there, he knew his way quite well, to Russel-square, in the neighbourhood of which his papa lived.— And there were several other stories he told me, about the memory of horses; therefore, he does know something of the nature of horses and dogs, though he seems not to take

much interest in learning the natural history of plants.

Caroline. That is what I mean. Oh! here comes William. Do you know, William, that the sensitive plant was nearly twenty minutes before it quite awoke, after the light was let in?

William. And do you know that the car, with a beautiful horse, is just coming round from the stables? Therefore run and get your bonnet; for the groom who is to drive us says, that his mistress does not like her horses to be kept standing at the door.

Before Caroline got into the car she went to her mamma, to enquire whether there were any letters from home.

Mrs. Mowbray. No, my dear; the postman is not come.

Caroline. Then are we to go without you?

Mrs. Mowbray. Yes, my love; but probably I shall follow you with Mrs. Barton.

“I am glad of that,” said Caroline; and away she ran, to join her brothers and Lucy, who were waiting rather impatiently for her.

When they were all seated in the car, William asked Lucy how many miles it was to Mr. Melmoth’s. “About five,” said she; “but we shall have to go six miles, as we are to call at general Maberly’s, which is half a mile out of the road.”

Caroline. George, what book is that you are reading?

George. It is one which Lucy has

made me a present of. Are you fond of pets, Lucy?

Lucy. No, indeed, I am not.

George. Then why do you keep a monkey?

Lucy. Because one of my uncles brought that monkey on purpose for me, and therefore I must take care of it. Indeed, it was a great trouble to me when I first had it; but, most fortunately, it has become a great favourite with one of the servants, and it is now her pet; and as I am certain she will take great care of it, I seldom see it. I suppose you saw it as you passed the laundry windows to go to the stables, when you went to look at my pony.

George. That was the very time; and there was a very good-natured

maid-servant, who asked me to come and look at the monkey.

Just as he said this, he turned over a leaf of the book he had in his hand, and in a few minutes he burst into such an immoderate fit of laughter that he could not speak.

William then gently took the book out of his hand, and looking at the picture which had made George laugh, began laughing too.

Caroline was so impatient to know what it could be that made her brothers so merry, looked over William's shoulder: "Oh!" cried she, "that is Philip Thicknesse, Esq. in his cabriolet, travelling through France and Spain." She then read the following sentence, out of the little book which is entitled, "A Present for a little Boy."

“My monkey, with a pair of French boots on, rode postillion upon my horse, some hours every day.”

George. Oh! Lucy, if we had borrowed a pair of boots from the groom, and tied them on your monkey, and placed him on the horse, as Mr. Thicknesse did, how droll he would have looked!

Lucy. Yes; but I am afraid the English children, who might pass us on the road, would not behave so well as those young foreigners whom he mentions; for he says that, though they all ran out to look at him, and to laugh, they did not hoot, or insult him.

George, taking the book out of his sister's hand, just as she was holding it out towards him, said, “Lucy, those are not the words.”

Lucy. Perhaps not, my dear George; but I believe they are the sense.

William. Exactly, Lucy; and it ought to teach all children to copy those well-behaved foreigners; and never to laugh at strangers, only because they happen to dress differently from us, which is a trick that some children have.

“But, George,” said Lucy, “I can tell you that monkeys are often very mischievous animals. One of my uncles, who has been at the Cape of Good Hope, told me that, as he was riding on horseback from a place called Simon’s Bay (where his ship lay at anchor) to Cape-town, which is the principal town there, he had to pass the foot of a steep mountain, where the monkeys and baboons were

in great numbers; and that he was so pelted with stones, he was obliged to ride as hard as he could till he got past the mountain. And at the house where he lodged, in the outskirts of the town, the garden was quite destroyed, in one night, by a visit from the baboons."

"Oh!" said George, "the maid-servant told me the monkey was very mischievous; for, one day, he gnawed all the buttons off the footman's livery-coat."

They were now arrived at general Maberly's, and found the young ladies quite ready.

Before they got into the car, Lucy told Caroline that Mrs. Maberly had shortened Wilhelmina's name, by calling her Mina.

Carolina. I am glad of that; for I

think poor George would never have been able to say, "Miss Wil-hel-mi-na, how do you do?" the name is so very long.

The happy party, thus increased, now drove off again, and in about three quarters of an hour reached Mr. Melmoth's. Harriet and Jane were delighted to see them, and, soon after their arrival, asked them whether they would like to view the grounds.

Lucy said she knew her young friends would like much to take a walk through the garden, and to the greenhouse. "But indeed, Harriet, we are impatient to look at your *Spanish work*, as I call it."

"Very well," said Harriet, "then you shall go to Jane's work-room."

Jane. And I am happy to tell

you, Lucy, that we have got a great addition to our collection, since I saw you; for a young lady, an acquaintance of ours, has sent a great many beautiful things, and has requested us to send them to London, with all the things that we have made. But I believe papa intends taking us to London; for he has heard that there will be a number of beautiful things, which we never could see in any other place, that the Spanish ladies are to make, quite unlike any English *nick-nacks*.

The young party were highly pleased and astonished with all they saw. There was a very beautiful little cottage, made of card-paper, which delighted George. It was intended to serve instead of a weather-glass, where a woman looking out

of a window was a sign the weather would be fair; and when she put her head in, a man with an umbrella came out of the door, which foretold rain. There were dancing dolls, French singing girls, women on stilts from the Landes, figures dressed in all the different female costumes of the cantons of Switzerland; in short, we cannot describe this exhibition of taste and ingenuity.

William at last began to feel rather tired of looking at ladies' work, and went to the window: then immediately beckoning to his sister, he said, "Look at those three boys on horseback, how much they are like my cousins: if they were in this part of the country, I should really be certain it was them." Caroline and William watched them as they rode slowly up

to the house; and, as they approached nearer, the former clapped her hands and said, "Oh! it is Charles, and Edward, and Henry Somerset."

Jane also came to the window and kissed her hand to them; then, turning to William and Caroline, said, "Did you not know that your cousins are on a visit to general Maberly?"

"How strange," said Caroline, "that Lucy did not tell us, and especially as we were this day there."

Lucy, who had been intent on trying to find out a puzzle that was among the things, did not listen to this conversation, till, hearing her name mentioned, she ran up to ask what they were saying about her.

William. Caroline is quite surprised that you did not tell us that

my cousins are staying at general Maberly's.

“Oh!” said Lucy, laughing, “I kept it from you on purpose, that the surprise might be the greater.”

“But come,” said Harriet, “we will go and meet them. And there are some other persons who will be here by the time we reach the lawn; for there, I think, is Mrs. Barton's carriage.”

“And my dear mamma in it!” said Caroline. “Now I am sure my sister is better than she was when grand-mamma wrote last.”

Harriet. How can you be sure of that, by only seeing your mother in the carriage?

Caroline. Because she said, unless she received better news of dear Mary

than there was yesterday, she should not come.

A servant now came to say that his mistress was waiting for them on the lawn. The youthful group instantly obeyed this summons, and found the party much increased. There were (besides Mrs. Barton, Mrs. Mowbray, and Mrs. Melmoth) William's three cousins, the Somersets, two Masters Melmoth, and a very fine-looking boy whose name was Fitzherbert, whom they saw walking down the steps with general Maberly.

“That boy,” said Jane, “is only thirteen: he has been living in a part of France where he could not have the advantages of education which my brothers have had, who are about his own age; and yet, William, you cannot think what a beautiful trans-

lation he has made of the first Pastoral of Virgil. Papa has shown it to several friends of his, good scholars, and they are quite astonished at it.

William. How much I should like to see it.

Jane. If there is time before you go, I will ask papa to read it to you. But see, (said she, quickening her pace,) they are getting far before us.

William now observed that there was a pretty little carriage, drawn by a beautiful pony, following the party. "Whose carriage is that?" said he.

"That," replied Jane, "is my mother's park sociable. Do you not observe how the pony follows her, like a dog?"

"Indeed I do," said William, "and I have been smiling at all the zig-

zags he has made. But who is that smart, groom-looking little boy, walking behind the carriage?"

"Oh! it is little James. He has the care of that carriage and pony; and he sits on the little box in front, and goes through the ceremony of driving."

William. Why do you call it the *ceremony* of driving?

Jane. Because that sweet, sagacious animal does not require a driver. If you were to get into the carriage, and merely hold the reins loose in your hand, he would take you to all the best views in the park, and stop at each of them a proper time to allow you to admire them.

Just as she had finished this eulogium on her favourite pony, William heard a burst of laughter from the

advanced party, who had stopped at an alcove; and when he reached it, a voice roared out, "Pray remember me!" This was a beautiful parrot, which spoke so plainly that he thought it was a human voice. Mrs. Melmoth then desired the little groom to put the bird on the pony's back, and the cage into the carriage. And now the amusement of the young party was very great; for Poll's spirits were so elated by seeing such a number of gay-dressed young ladies (for Harriet had furnished them all with nose-gays) that she began to sing and whistle. At one time she sung, "*God save the king*;" then she would whistle a *quadrille*; then "*Rule Britannia*;" till at last, becoming tired of sitting on the saddle,

she said, "*Good bye, ladies;*" and the groom put her into the cage.

The party all strolled on, in groups, except George, who chose to get into the carriage with Polly, who, after looking and bobbing at him for some minutes, just as if she was making a bow to him, said, "*Fine day!*"

George. Very fine, Polly.

Then she sung, "*Molly, put the kettle on, and we'll have tea.*"

Jane, who was walking with William close to the carriage, told him that the groom had taught the bird this song; and that she sung it better than any other which had been taught her.

"I suppose," said William, "because he has taken more pains with her."

"Very likely," said Jane; "for

when I was ill, mamma was obliged to send Miss Polly to the laundry; and the boy's aunt is the laundry-maid, so I suppose she indulged him with visiting pretty Poll."

In a moment after she had said this they came within sound of music; and William and Jane ran to join the rest of the company, who were again laughing immoderately. They entered a long covered room, at the end of which was exhibiting a fantoccini accompanied by a hand-organ. A number of remarkably well-dressed puppets were successively made to dance with admirable precision and grace: a rope-dancer with his balance-pole, was particularly well executed; and the elder spectators appeared to enjoy and to applaud the exhibition as heartily as the younger ones. While

all this was going on in the room, something had taken place outside which greatly astonished the young strangers. When the performance was over, and they opened the door of the room to pursue their walk in the park, they found a very handsome *marquée* pitched on the lawn, with tables and forms. The tables were loaded with delicious fruits, cakes, and sandwiches; and though the little party were really hungry, some of them having taken a long ride since breakfast, yet it was remarked by all the older persons present, how extremely well they conducted themselves. There was no excessive haste to be seated; no squeezing to get next a favourite; no eagerness to be helped, which we have sometimes seen at juvenile sup-

pers after a ball; but all was gentleness and politeness. Caroline happened to be seated next her cousin Charles, of whom she was very fond. She asked him a great many questions about the different persons present, as they were all strangers to her. And after he had answered them, she said, "But I thought Mr. Melmoth had six children."

Charles. So he has.

Caroline. There are only five here.

Charles. Oh, then you have not seen the youngest: she is a sweet little girl of five years old. She sings uncommonly well. I dare you will see her before you go."

He had scarcely said this, when Caroline, turning her head, saw a little figure dressed in the uniform of a general in the army, with a little

sword in its hand, and exclaiming, "My tent is my castle, I pray you decamp." Then it brandished the sword, as if going to attack them, which made them all fly in every direction. Charles ran up to Caroline, and said, "I am sure that is little Sophy." He then called Jane to him, and questioned her. She said, "You have guessed right: it is she. My aunt, who is staying here, has been busy all this morning, making that dress, I suppose, for her; but it was a great mystery, which neither we nor mamma were to know any thing of."

The young general had gone on charging and routing the flying groups, till they had nearly reached the house, where we shall leave them to get into their different carriages and return home.

As it was near six before Mrs. Barton and her party reached home, she requested Mrs. Mowbray to allow the young folks to dine with them. "Indeed," said the latter, "after the very ample tiffin which they had at Mr. Melmoth's, I think they will not require any dinner."

"Oh," said little George, "not any dinner? Why, mamma, I am quite hungry now."

"Well, do not be alarmed," said Mrs. Barton, "we do not mean to starve you: I dare say your mamma is only joking."

"I am glad of that," said William; "and I do not care how many jokes we have, provided mamma does not joke us out of our dinner; for I am really of George's opinion, that to go without my dinner would not

be very agreeable, and would be rather a dull finishing to a very pleasant day.

Caroline. Oh, William, what a cold expression. I should say we have spent a delightful day!

Mrs. Mowbray. Well, Caroline, I cannot say you look very delightfully, for your hair is blown about your face, and you seem to be much tired: however, make haste and change your dress, and that will refresh you greatly. Remember, the dinner-hour is half-past six, and you must be in the drawing-room *before* the dinner-bell rings.

Caroline. Yes, mamma, I will try to remember.

Away she went to Lucy's room, and found her nearly dressed. When

Caroline saw this, she said, "My dear Lucy, I wish I was like you.

Lucy. In what way.

Caroline. In being always in good time.

Lucy. I owe it all to mamma: she is so steady in all her plans. I had a habit of doing what I am afraid will make you too late for dinner this day.

Caroline. What is that?

Lucy. Putting off this necessary trouble to the latest moment, and then talking instead of beginning to dress.

Caroline. Thank you, Lucy, for reminding me of that. I will now make haste: only tell me what cured you of these habits.

Lucy. I think you had better

not ask, for that will take up your attention; and I see you are not doing any thing but brushing that one lock of hair, while all the rest are neglected, because you are listening to me. And hark! there is the first dinner-bell.

Caroline was so convinced that her friend was right, that she did not say another word; but made such rapid progress in dressing, that she entered the drawing-room two minutes before the last bell, and was rewarded for her diligence and attention to her mother's wishes, with such a look of approbation, that she whispered to Lucy, "I am glad that I made haste. See, how pleased mamma seems to be with me." The party were too much fatigued to go out in the evening; therefore, when

they retired after dinner to the drawing-room, William took a book, and Mrs. Barton requested Caroline to play a duet with Lucy; and so we shall leave them to pass a quiet evening.

CHAP. IX.

THE following day, Lucy asked William and Caroline whether they would like to go to the second greenhouse, which they had not yet seen; “as I wish to show you,” said she, “a little plant, of which I am so fond, that the gardener has raised a great number of them, and placed them all along the lower shelf of the stand, and they form a beautiful bordering for the taller plants which are ranged above them.”

“Thank you, my dear Lucy,” said Caroline: “I am delighted with your

proposal, for you know I am so passionately fond of flowers ; and perhaps William will be able again to find some amusement in a greenhouse, which, until he came here, he seemed never to take any pleasure in."

" But first," said Lucy, " we must take a ramble through the garden, to look for the gardener ; for as William is very fond of gaining knowledge, he will not take much interest in merely looking at the plants, unless he can learn something of their nature."

The three friends now strolled away in quest of the gardener, whom they soon found looking over his melon and cucumber plants. William looked over the frames, and remarked to the gardener, how much they resembled each other.

“ Why yes, Sir, there is a strong family-likeness, as the saying is.”

William. I do not quite understand you.

Gardener. Why, Sir, the melon is a species of cucumber, and so we say it is of the same family.

William. I never knew that before.

Caroline. I wonder why mamma has such an objection to our eating either melons or cucumbers.

Gardener. I think, Miss, I know why.

Caroline. I did not know that you had ever seen my mamma.

Gardener. Yes, Miss, I have seen Mrs. Mowbray many a time, but I never heard her talk about melons and cucumbers; and yet, for all that, I know why she does not like you to

eat them: it is because they are thought to be a very cold fruit, and oftentimes disagree with people. Pray, Miss, do you know the Frenchman's receipt for dressing a cucumber?

Caroline. No: oh do tell me.

Gardener. Well, then, take your cucumber, peel it very carefully, cut it in slices, pour oil and vinegar over it, with plenty of pepper and salt, and then—— throw it away!

They all laughed heartily at the old gardener's joke, and then walked off with him to the greenhouse. The moment the door of it was opened, Caroline and even William were in raptures at the beauty of the plants, and the tasteful manner in which they were arranged; but the border

which Lucy had described engrossed the whole of Caroline's attention.

"Lucy," said she, "you have not told me the name of this beautiful little plant."

"That," said the gardener, "is the *cyclamen*;" and then turning to William, he remarked, "it is curious to know how that plant is propagated. When the seeds are ripe, we do not collect them, but leave them to sow themselves, which they do in this way: The flower-stalk gradually twists itself spirally downwards, till it touches the ground, and, forcibly penetrating the earth, lodges its seeds, which are thought to receive nourishment from the parent-root, as it is said they cannot be made to grow in any other situation."

William's eyes were now fixed on a

beautiful white flower with very dark green, thick leaves.

“ I see, Sir,” said the gardener, “ you are admiring that fine *camellia japonica*.”

“ I am, indeed,” returned William : “ where does it come from ?”

“ That which you are now looking at is called the Japan rose, because it comes from that country. My mistress tells me that it is greatly esteemed by the people there, for the beauty of its flowers, of which there are a great variety of colours ;—that it grows to be a large tree, and is common in their gardens from April to October. It is also a native of China.”

“ How many different kinds of roses are there ?” enquired William,

“There are eight hundred,” answered the gardener.

“Is it possible!” exclaimed Caroline.

Gardener. So my mistress says, who has read it out of a book, that my kind young lady there, comes and reads to me sometimes, when she finds any thing very curious, as I have not much time to read myself. I cannot tell you the name of the book, but Miss Lucy knows.

Lucy. Indeed, Jenkins, I do not: I have been trying to recollect the title, ever since you began talking of roses. Mr. Phillips has written several works on Botany, which mamma admires. Do you think it was out of his “History of cultivated Vegetables.”

“Ay, that is it, I am sure,” said

Jenkins; "and, Miss Lucy, will you read to this young gentleman about the moss-rose?"

"I will," said Lucy; "and I think it would be prudent to return to the house immediately, for look at that dark, lowering cloud: do you not think, Jenkins, we shall have rain?"

Gardener. Yes, Miss, there will be a heavy shower soon, though I do not think it will last long."

They all three departed to the house, to listen to Mr. Phillips's account of the moss-rose, which Lucy was to read to them. On entering the house, Lucy said, "If you will go to the work-room, I will fetch Mr. Phillip's book from the library;" and she tripped off, and returned with it immediately, and, having

found the page, read the following account of the moss-rose :

“ The moss-rose is supposed to be the offspring of the Provence rose. It was unknown to the ancients. It appears to be a fortuitous child of England : it loses its mossiness when planted in Italy. The saw-fly is a great enemy to roses : it pierces the tender flower-bud, and thrusts an egg into every puncture, which soon becomes a caterpillar, that eats away the heart of the young flower. It may be seen in a summer's morning, working on the branches of the rose-tree : the branches are so vitiated by it, that they are easily discovered, as they generally swell to a greater size than the parts above or below, and they often become black on the underside.”

When she had finished, William asked his mother to read that extract from "Walks in a Garden," about the rose, which he saw in her scrap-book. Mrs. Mowbray sent Caroline for it, and read the following remarks:

"How benignant indeed seems the Creator, in thus rendering this sweet flower at once the most beautiful ornament of nature, and the cheapest and easiest of cultivation. I never see a rose at a cottage-door, but I think it designed by Heaven itself as the poor man's regale."

William then told his mother what Jenkins had mentioned to them relative to the seeds of the *cyclamen*.

Mrs. Mowbray. That is certainly very curious. The author from whom

I copied the extract which I have just read to you, has made some remarks on vegetable locomotion, or, to make the word more plain to you, power of changing place, that is to be found in the awn or beard of barley, "which, like the teeth of a saw, are all turned towards one end of it. As this long awn lies upon the ground, it extends itself in the moist air of night, and pushes forward the barleycorn which it adheres to. In the day it shortens as it dries, and these points prevent it from receding: it draws up its pointed end, and, creeping like a worm, will travel many feet from its parent stem." Our author also gives another instance: "These vine-leaves in the greenhouse, which were suspended yesterday by a thread, with their under surfaces turned towards

the windows, have already recovered their natural position, although detached from the stem; whence we not only learn that light acts beneficially upon the upper surface, and injuriously upon the under side of leaves; but we have proof that the turning is effected by an impression made upon the leaf itself, and not upon the footstalk."

Mrs. Mowbray. Do you think you understand this?

William. Oh, perfectly: the leaves had been pulled off the vine, and suspended by a thread with their wrong side to the windows, but of themselves turned their right side towards the window; which proved that the light was disagreeable to the wrong side of the leaf, and that turning did not depend on the stem.

Mrs. Mowbray. Well, I think you understand it. But why do you say the wrong and the right side of the leaf?

William. I thought Caroline would understand me better, as she hears you say the wrong and the right side of your petticoat, which is suspended from your shoulders by braces, as the leaves of the vine were by threads.

Mrs. Mowbray. I do not think the comparison a good one. I will now read a little more from this instructive author. "But *apropos* to the vine," said Mrs. Mowbray, "as we are talking of that tree, I will tell you a curious fact which came under my own knowledge. A lady of my acquaintance having made some grape-wine, ordered the bruised fruit-skins and refuse to be taken away, which

being accordingly done, and thrown upon a heap of rubbish, in a corner of a yard allotted to such purposes near the garden, about a year after, the gardener going to this heap one day, in order to use some of it, by mixing it with manure for the garden, observed a very fine young vine growing up from the rubbish. He immediately recollected that the refuse from the bruised grapes had been thrown on this spot, and conjectured, and very properly too, that this new plant was the offspring of a seed that had escaped being bruised in the process of expressing the juice from the grapes. He directly transplanted it into a warm situation against a wall, and it became in a few years one of the finest vines in the garden.

“How very curious!” exclaimed

George : “ the next time we have any grapes, I will save one of the little seeds and sow it, and try if I cannot raise a vine.”

“ Do so, my dear,” said Mrs. Mowbray. “ But to return to our book : ‘ Light gives the green colour to leaves ; for plants raised in darkness are of a sickly white, of which the common practice of blanching celery in gardens, by covering it up with earth, is a proof under every one’s observation. How utterly vain and insignificant appear all the laboratories of chemists, when compared with the innumerable exquisite and unfathomable processes which nature, in silence and without effort, is at this moment elaborating within the precincts of our little garden. From the same mysterious earth, planted in

the same pot, her inscrutable powers will not only concoct various flowers, utterly dissimilar in form, odours, colours, and properties; some, perhaps, containing a deadly poison, others a salutary medicine; but she will even combine all these discordant secretions in the same plant. The gum of the peach-tree, for instance, is mild and mucilaginous: the bark, leaves, and flowers abound with a bitter secretion, of rather a dangerous quality.'”

William. What is *mucilaginous*?

Mrs. Mowbray. Slimy, or glutinous. Perhaps you do not understand the word *secretion*.

William. Not perfectly: *secrete* means, to put aside, to hide.

Mrs. Mowbray. Well, my dear, to put aside, will do; for secretion is

separating the various fluids of the body. I have an extract, which I think I took from Phillips's "Pomarium," which will give you a better notion of what I have trying to explain, than any words of mine.

"The pear-tree, in its wild state, has strong thorns, which have entirely disappeared, from culture; whence Linnæus denominated such plants *tamed*, or deprived of their natural ferocity, as wild animals sometimes lose their horns by domestication. The analogy between vegetable and animal life approaches much nearer than is generally imagined. Recent observation has traced the progress of the sap, from its first absorption by the roots, through the central vessels of the plant, into the annual shoot, leafstalk, and leaf;

whence it is returned, and descending through the bark, contributes to the process of forming the wood; thus describing a course, and fulfilling functions, very nearly correspondent to the circulation of the blood. Plants are provided with muscles, by which they open and shut their flowers; turn their leaves to the sun, even if they have been repeatedly folded back from it; and perform more complicated motions, as may be witnessed in the *dionæa muscipula* (or fly-trap) and many others. A hop-plant turning round a pole, follows the course of the sun, and soon dies when forced into an opposite line of motion; but remove the obstacle, and the plant quickly returns to its former position."

When Mrs. Mowbray had finished

reading, Caroline said, “*That* threatened shower, which Jenkins told us was just coming down, has not paid us a visit. Do not you think, mamma, the weather looks quite settled?”

Mrs. Mowbray. Yes, my dear, and I dare say you would like to go to the garden; and when Mrs. Barton returns from writing letters, we will, if she is inclined, join you.

“Thank you, mamma,” said Caroline; and they all ran off.

“Oh! William,” said Caroline, soon after they had entered the garden, “look, what a number of bees there are at that flower!”

William. Yes, I see them. Mamma told me, in her droll way, the other day, that we shall generally see a set of determined toppers round the nectaries of the holly-hocks, quaffing

the sweet juice. You have just put me in mind of a question, which I wanted to ask her about wax.

Caroline. There is mamma, just coming through that part of the shrubbery. My dear mamma, you are the very person we want to talk to.

William. We have been looking at some bees, and I have been thinking that, as wax-candles are much used, where can people get all the wax from, to make such a number of candles?

Mrs. Mowbray. My dear, there is hardly bee-wax enough produced in England, to answer the demand for lip-salve alone; but importation from America supplies all our wants, for the quantity in that country is annually increasing. A few years ago, the

hum of a bee had never been heard on the western side of the Allegany mountains. A violent hurricane carried several swarms over that lofty ridge; and finding a new, unexhausted country, singularly favourable to their propagation, they have multiplied, until the whole of these boundless savannahs and plains have been colonized by these indefatigable emigrants. Lavender and rosemary afford a wax already prepared, as may be easily perceived on a close examination of the leaf; and, on this account, are particularly acceptable to these winged marauders. It has been held a gross libel on animals to say, that a man has made a beast of himself, when he has drunk to such excess as to lose his reason; but we might, without injustice, say,

that he has made a humble-bee of himself, for they are particularly prone to intoxication.

“ My dear mamma,” said William, “ I should think intoxication is not confined to the humble-bee ; for yonder is one of the common sort, which I have been watching within that flower, where it seems to be motionless and insensible.”

“ Look attentively, William,” said his mother, “ and you will find your eyes have deceived you. That is the *ophrys*, commonly called the *bee-orchis*, which grows wild in many parts of England, and whose nectary and petals closely resemble, in form and colour, the insect whence it takes its name. By this contrivance, the flowers have the appearance of being

preoccupied, and often escape those hourly robbers.

“ So, where the humming-bird in Chili’s bowers,
 On murmuring pinions robs the pendant flowers,
 Seeks where fine pores their dulcet balm distil,
 And sucks the treasure with proboscis-bill;
 Fair *cypripedia*, with successful guile,
 Knits her smooth brow, extinguishes her smile;
 A spider’s bloated paunch and jointed arms
 Hide her fine form and mask her blushing charms:
 In ambush sly the mimic warrior lies,
 And on quick wing the panting plunderer flies.”

DR. DARWIN.

[*Note by Dr. Darwin.*] “ The similitude of this flower to the large American spider, seems to be a contrivance to prevent the humming-bird from plundering its honey.”

Mrs. Mowbray. I see, Caroline, by the expression of your face, that you hesitate to ask the name of that flower on which your eyes are fixed, being uncertain whether it is a flower or a weed. I have not made up my

mind as to which are the most beautiful, the wild flowers, or those that are cultivated; but the little tuft upon which you are gazing with evident admiration, is the pretty weed, *forget-me-not*. I will repeat for you some sweet lines on it.

Thanks, Mira, for the plant you sent :

My garden, whenso'er I enter,
'Twill serve at once for ornament,
And for a vegetable mentor.

If duty's voice be heard with scorning,
Or absent friends be all forgot,
Each bud will cry, in tones of warning,
"Forget-me-not! Forget-me-not!"

A nobler theme its flowers of blue
Inculcate on the thoughtful gazer,
That the same hand which gave their hue,
Painted yon glorious arch of azure.
Yes, He whose voice is in the thunder,
Planted this weed beside the cot,
And whispers, through its leaves of wonder,
"Forget-me-not! Forget-me-not!"

A poor return your gift ensures
 When paid in this poetic greeting,
 The flowers which I exchange for yours
 Are less delightful, quite as fleeting :
 Yet, when the earth my bones shall cover,
 Some few may live to mark the spot,
 And sigh to those that round it hover,
 " Forget-me-not ! Forget-me-not ! "

Caroline. Why does the author use the word *vegetable* mentor ? I thought the word *vegetable* applied only to things to be eaten.

George. Oh ! Caroline, do you think the gentleman who wrote those verses could mean that ? How droll it would sound, to say, ' Pray, Sir, will you have some boiled *forget-me-not* ? '

They all laughed very much at this remark of little George.

Mrs. Mowbray. My dear Caroline, you do not understand the word

vegetable. Any thing that has a root, stem, leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds, is a vegetable. The stem is that part which comes up from the root, and supports all the other parts of the plant. When the stem is large and solid, as in trees, it is called the trunk.

Lucy. There comes the servant, with letters in his hand. I suppose the postman has been here.

Mrs. Barton. Mrs. Mowbray and I will move to the alcove, and read our letters there; and, Lucy, you may take your young friends to see the dairy-house.

“Oh! thank you, ma’am,” answered Caroline and George. William preferred staying, to hear the news from home.

The next day, Mrs. Mowbray and

her children took their leave of their kind friends, Mrs. Barton and Lucy, and the good old Jenkins, and pursued their journey to Hastings.

THE END.

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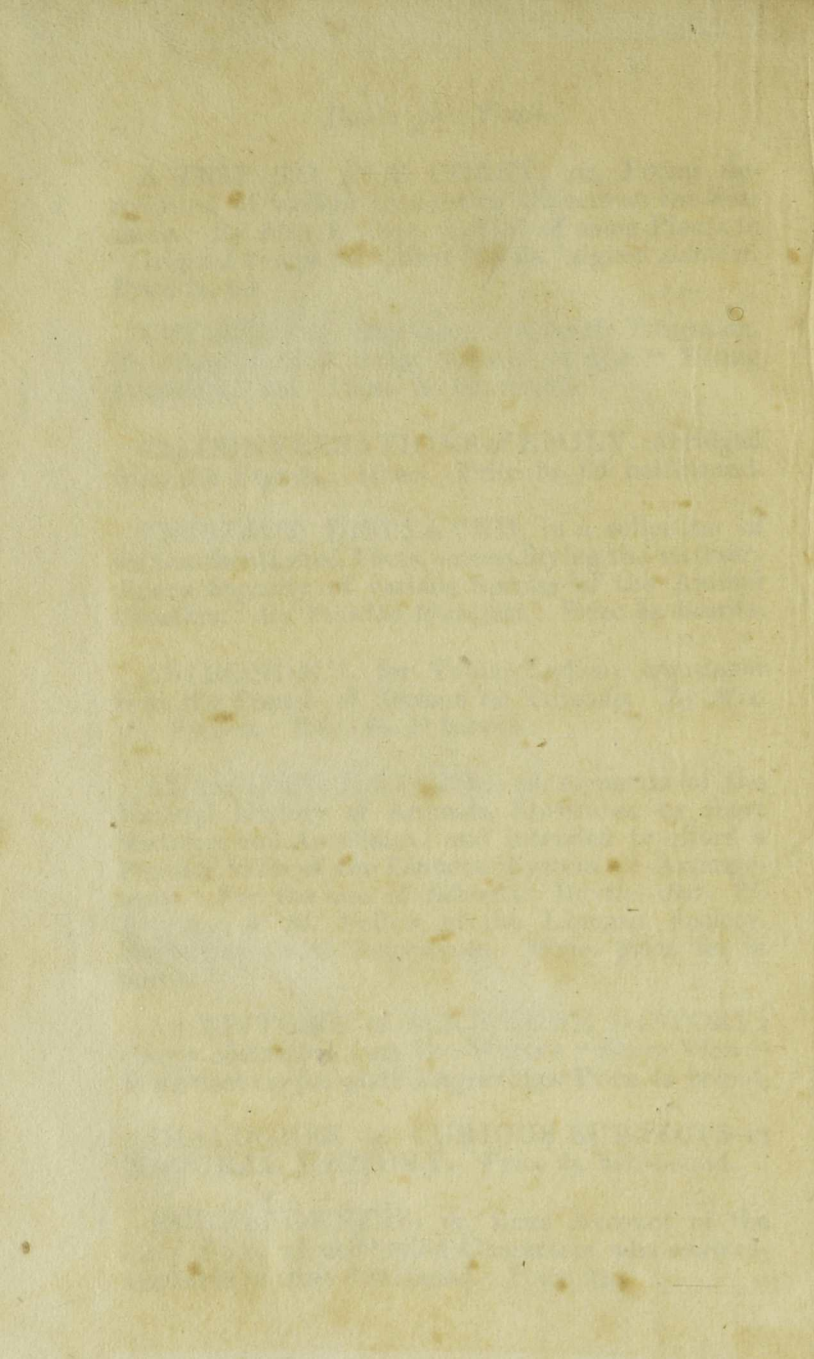
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