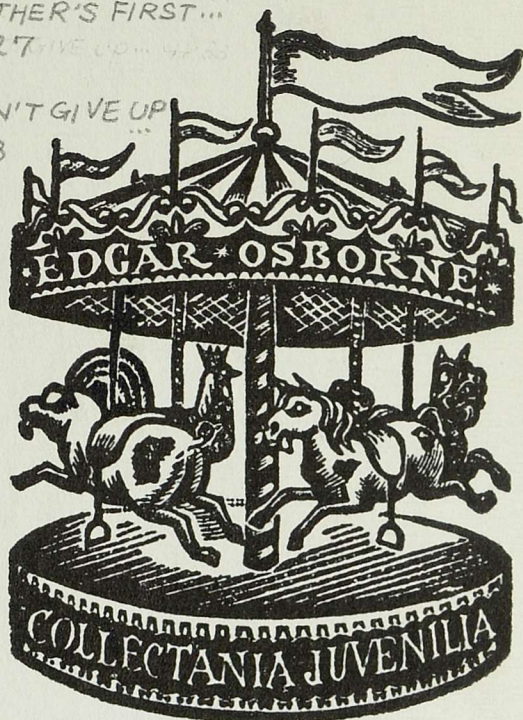


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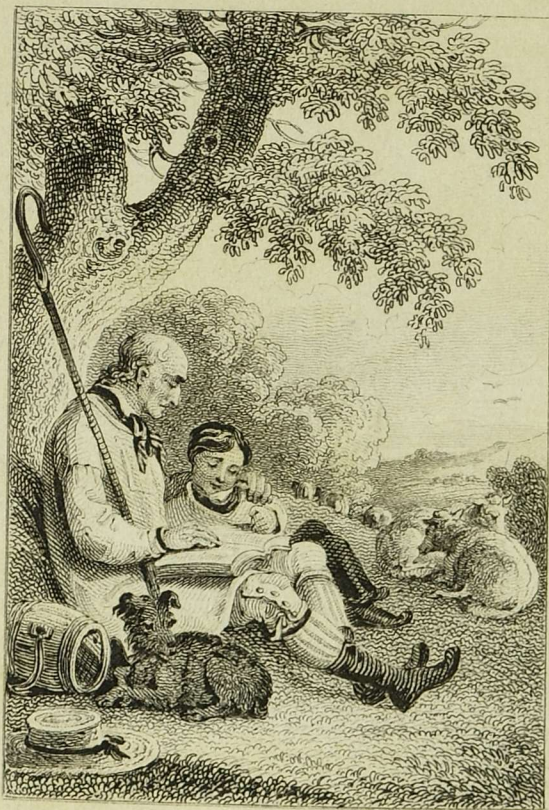
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The Good old Shepherd.

London. Published by Harvey & Darton, 1827.

See page 16.

A
FATHER'S FIRST GIFT

TO HIS
CHILDREN;

OR,
MONOSYLLABIC LESSONS,

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

BY
A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN.

“ Suffer little Children to come unto me, and
forbid them not.”

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HARVEY AND DARTON,
GRACECHURCH-STREET.

1827.

FATHER'S FIRST GIFT

TO HIS

CHILDREN

BY

MONSIEUR JACQUES

IN PROSE AND VERSE

BY

A. COCKFIELD GILBERTSON

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR

LONDON

PRINTED FOR HARTLEY AND HARTLEY
GRACECHURCH-STREET

1837

TO
MY LITTLE DAUGHTERS,
ANNA & EDITH,

This little volume is dedicated, by their affectionate Father, with the pleasing hope that, in future days, they may look back and find that his *First Gift* was not bestowed in vain; but was the early seed of that *profession* they live but to love and adorn.

Woodbridge Grammar School,
Feb. 3rd, 1827.

A SHORT ADDRESS

TO

PARENTS, AND ALL WHO HAVE THE
CARE OF CHILDREN.

A PARENT and a tutor myself, perhaps I may stand excused by those into whose hands my little work may fall, if I venture to give some brief explanation of my motives for making it public. In the mass of *elementary* publications, (although I trust my taste is not *unseemingly* fastidious,) I cannot say that I have yet seen one which I could place in the hands of my children, with full and perfect satisfaction. Too often I have found, where simplicity has

been aimed at, that intellectual improvement has been sacrificed; where amusement has been proferred, that the idle lessons of folly have been taught; and where mental instruction has been the primary object, that the end has been lost, from the ill adaptation of the means to the minds and understandings of the young.

In the little work now offered to your notice, my first endeavour has been to render the progress of my little readers, in learning, as easy as possible; my second, to rationally please and amuse; and my third, to implant some practical moral and religious precept in the youthful heart, at every resting-place in his journey: that simplicity may blend with amusement, and sound instruction be the natural result of their apposite combina-

tion. With the humble hope that my endeavours to do good may meet with your furtherance and favour, I “cast” the sum of my pleasing labours “on the waters,” under the cheering expectation that all who may choose to honour it with their notice, will find its utility evident in their little families *before “many days.”*

FATHER'S GIFT, &c.

LESSON I.

WORDS OF THREE LETTERS.

AN ant can run, a bee can fly, and a cat mew. The bat and owl do not go out by day, but sit and nap in the oak.

I can see a rat in the tub, and he has got an egg to eat; but, sly as he is, the dog or the cat may one day eat him.

Ann Pit had a cap and a hat; but, one day, the cat got the cap in

her paw, and it was not fit for her use. The hat, too, she put in the sty, and the pig bit it; so it, too, was of no use to her. Oh! bad Ann Pit.

Can six men sit in a gig? No, but two may. The men are wet; and so is the dog, for the dew of the fen is on him; but now the sun is hot, and it will dry him.

LESSON II.

IN WORDS OF THREE LETTERS.

A man who was old had a dog and a cow, a hen, an ass, and a pig. The dog he put in a box, for the cow he got hay, the hen sat on the top of the elm, the ass was fed on

rye, and the pig had its bed in the sty. One day the dog had a nap, and the cow ran off: an old fox ate up the hen, the ass was mad and bit the pig by the ear, and it too was mad. He was a bad dog to nap in the day and let the cow run off, and the hen, pig, and ass to die.

So the old man had no cow, ass, hen, or pig.

LESSON III.

IN WORDS OF NOT MORE THAN FOUR LETTERS.

THE POOR CAT WITH ONE EAR.

Ann Rose once had a cat with but one ear: it had lost one by a

trap; and John Bear, a bad boy, said to her one day, "Why do you not make both sides of the cat's head the same?" Ann rose said, "I do not know how." He then told her to cut off the ear poor puss had left. But she said, "No, I dare not do so vile a deed. I am sure it will hurt her and give her pain." Says the bad boy then, "I will do it for you." So he took up the poor cat to cut its ear off; but puss did not like him so well as to bear his rude hands on her soft fur. So she made him feel what her claw was made of on his face, till he bled and was glad to get rid of her. So the bad boy had not his will on the poor cat; and poor Ann Rose was more glad to see puss with one ear, than if she had lost it by such pain as she must have felt, if

the bad boy had cut it off. A good girl, not less than a good boy, will not hurt what is dumb, nor give pain to a poor cat or a fly.

LESSON IV.

THE BAD BOY.

A man had an ape in a box; but the box was so thin, that the ape soon made a hole in its side, and fled to a wood near by. The ape had not been long gone, when the man came to look for it. He then saw it was not in the box, and told his son to go and look in the wood for it, but not to try and get it, if it were on a tree. The boy went, and saw it

it on an oak ; and he was so base as not to mind what his sire had told him, but at once got up the stem of the tree to take it. The ape saw the boy on the look-out for him, and when he drew near, ran on a twig that was too weak to bear the boy. But the weak and bad boy went on it, to take the ape, when the twig bent and he fell. The spot he fell on was so hard, that it hurt his head so much that he died, with no one near to help him. Now, had he but done what he had been told to do, and no more, he had not met with so bad an end.

LESSON V.

By the word of God were we all made, by his hand we are all fed,

and by his love are we all kept to
this day. How good! and wise! art
thou, O God!

Who made the sun to rule the day,
The moon to ride on high,
When all is dark to shed its ray,
And gild the land and sky?

Who made the air, the wind, and sea,
The fowl of wave and wood?
Who made the fish, the worm, and bee,
And then did call them good?

Who bade the rain or hail to fall,
The wind or seas to flow?
Who bade the sun to rest on all,
And herb and tree to grow?

'Twas he who made us from the dust,
And life to all did give:
The Lord of all, the good, the just:
The God in whom we live.

LESSON VI.

THE OLD MAN AND HIS ASS.

I knew an old man once, who had a nice snug hut on a moor, that was not far from a town. He had, too, a yard with a turf wall on each side, and a hive of bees at one end of it, near his hut; and at noon, when the sun was out, he sat near it, to see them toil and hear them hum. His work was to cut turf for the fire, and two days in the week he took it to sell in a cart. An ass, that he kept on the moor in the warm part of the year, and in a shed in the cold, drew his cart of turf for him. The old man had a good home and a nice bed to rest in, and as much food as was meet for

him. He was a good man, and his love for his God was from the soul. He said to me once, when I met him in my walk: "Ay, Sir, God will bless them that fear him: he will love them and do them good; and I am sure he has done me much good." One morn, when the poor old man rose from his bed, his ass was gone. Some bad men had led it from its shed, and the poor old man was in much woe, as it was the prop of his life. I met him on the moor, and he wept for his loss; but still he felt sure that God would help him in his need, he said. And so it fell out; for when he rose the next morn, Ned, his ass, gave such a loud bray, as the old man came out, that it made him jump for joy.

The ass had made the best of his

way back from the bad men, who took him to the town near by to sell him; and was glad to see his shed, and the old man and the turf, once more. My dear boy or girl, you see here how God will help and save such as love and fear him; and how he will hide his face from them who love not his ways.

LESSON VII.

IN WORDS OF NOT MORE THAN FIVE LETTERS.

A TRUE TALE.

There was a girl whose name was Jane Hurd, and she was so fond of toys and sweet-meats, that she spent

all her pence to buy them with. One day it so fell out, that she went by a shop on her way home, where dolls, and tarts, and bunnns were sold. When she saw the dolls so smart, and the bunnns so nice, she felt a great wish to have them. She put her hand in her bag, to feel if she had aught there to buy them with, but she could not find one coin. She cast her eye in the shop, to see if the man who kept it was there; but he was not. She then said, "There is no one here to see me: I have a great mind to take that nice bunn and eat it. There is no one to scold me if I do take it; and if I eat it now, no one can say that I took it." So she put her hand out to take it, when a great dog that lay out of her sight, in the shop, to watch it, flew at her and bit her.

The noise she made with her cries, from the pain she felt, soon told the man that a thief was in his shop. He came, and saw Jane on the floor with her frock in the dog's mouth. He took her up in his arms; for she was so weak, from fear, that she could not stand, and her hand bled and gave her great pain.

The man took her home, full of shame and grief. But she saw that she had done wrong; and when she got well, she said she would no more steal, or wish for what was not her own. She kept her word; and as she was so good from that time, the man gave her a bunn once a month, as she went to school, for the hurt she met with at his shop, when she was a bad girl.

My dear child, learn from this, not

to take what is not your own; for good boys and girls, who fear and love the Lord, will not steal, or lie, or do wrong, for fear they should vex that kind God, who gives them all the good things they have need of.

They will not do wrong if no one sees them; for they know that the eye of God is on all men, and that he sees in the dark as well as the light—in the night as well as in the day.

LESSON VIII.

BED-TIME.

There is a time to wake, and a time to sleep.

Your play must end, my girls and boys,

The sun is in the west:

Now clean your shoes, put by your toys,

The time is near for rest.

spare times, when he went forth to watch and keep his flock, he would teach him, at times, to read it too. James found, as he grew up and read it more, that he was not born to play and romp with dogs and lambs, or to lead a life of sloth; but to work, to learn to do what God told him must be done, and to be good. He knew the few things that were his, a kind and good God, who gives us all the good things we need, had put into his hands; and he did not wish for more.

Though poor, he did not crave for things which he had not; nor would he tell a lie to hide a fault, since he knew that God saw all he did, and would not love him if he did not speak the truth. But one morn, when James rose from his bed, he

found his old friend dead: his life had left him in his sleep. James had now no friend but the Lord: he had no home, and no one to buy him food or dress. But the good man, whose flock the old man had kept, had seen James, and knew him to be a good boy, and he took him to live with him; and in time James was fit to take the old man's place with the sheep, and his life was one of peace with God and man.

Learn from this, my dear child, to be true and just in all you do; to love and fear the God that made you; and to trust in him at all times, all the days of your life; for he will not leave such as seek to him, and read and know his word of life.

LESSON X.

IN WORDS OF NOT MORE THAN SEVEN LETTERS.

MORN.

Wake, my child, 'tis time to rise ;

See the sun has left its bed :

'Tis a sin to close our eyes,

When the Lord, "*Get up,*" hath said.

See the flock has left the fold,

And the horse hath gone to plough :

In the meads, through cups of gold,

Jane hath gone to milk the cow.

Crows and rooks are on the wing,

And the larks are in the sky :

Hear them, how they rise and sing

Songs of praise to God on high.

Then, my child, get up and dress :

Wash, and then kneel down to pray,
That the Lord your soul may bless,
And be with you through the day.

LESSON XI.

————— “ Not a spring
Or leaf but hath his hymn of morn ; each bush
And oak doth know *I AM*.”
—————

It is a great sin to spend so much of our time in bed, when we are well in health. Sleep is good, but if we take too much of it, we are like men who drink more wine than is fit for them : our heads are dull, our eyes red, and our minds far from clear or quick. Boys and girls, who

are so fond of sleep as to be in bed when they ought to be up, cannot hope to do well in the world. God tells them they ought to rise when he sends his sun to bless them; but they say, "No, it is not time yet:" as if they, and not He, knew what was best. The cock crows to break their sleep, the birds sing to call them out of bed, and the sun shines to give them light and joy; but they will not hear, and sleep on till they lose all sense of what is good.

The beasts of the earth, and the birds of the air, will not sleep when they ought not. Why then should we, who are of so much more worth than beasts, in the sight of God?

If then, my dear boys and girls, you wish to serve *Him*, and please your friends, do not waste your time

in bed ; but rise with the lark, and let your song of praise, for the sweet sleep of the night past, rise to God on its wings.

LESSON XII.

WHAT IS A WITCH ?

There are some weak boys and girls, who call an old dame who is deaf, and lame, and blind, and bent down with age and pain, a witch. Now, my dear child, there is no such thing as a witch in the world now.

The word of God tells us, in days long gone by, there was a bad and vile wretch, who wrought bad things

and had that name. But it is not the case now.

When I was a boy, I knew an old dame, who dwelt in a small hut near the church, and had the name of a witch. I know I had a great dread of the old dame: I dare not go near her house, much more speak to her. She was old and weak: her hair was grey: her face full of seams: her mouth without teeth: her nose so long and thin, that it might seem to touch her chin. She had with her in her walks a black cat, and she could not go a step from her door without a crutch and a stick. We all had great fear of her, till one day, when some bad boys met her in the streets and threw sticks and stones at the poor old dame, so that she fell to the ground in tears and

pain. We stood by her till she got up ; and when she could find breath she sat down, and, as well as she could speak, said these words to us :
“ Boys and girls, I am a poor old dame, whose days are all but gone ; but you seem to wish to make my grave for me, and not wait till it shall please God to call me. I am old : how can I harm you ? If I would beat you, I am too weak to lift up my arm : if I would run and catch you, I am too lame to go more than a walk, and that with great pain. Then how can I hurt you ? You call me a witch, and lay bad things to my charge. God knows, my boys and girls, I would not hurt a hair of your heads. You say I am a witch, and have a black cat. Can the poor cat help his dark

fur? He has been a good friend of mine for years, and kept the small store of bread and cheese I have from the mice. Shall I hang or drown him for his black coat? I am old and weak, lame and bent with age; and for these things you call me a witch. The time will come when you will be like me: will you then like to hear such bad names, and feel such blows as I have felt but now, from hands that ought to lead and guard old age? May God, my girls and boys, teach you to feel for those who are old; and shed his love in your hearts, that you may treat the grey head of age as it is fit and just you should. I hope you have done me all this wrong but for want of thought, in sport, and that you will do it no more. You are young. Be

good then, and do no one wrong—no, not those who harm you; and the old dame who speaks to you will hope to meet you in that state of bliss, she trusts is so near at hand.”

I heard all this, and was in pain for her; and so I think were all, for she met, from that day, with no more ill words or deeds. And when she was dead, the tears of boys and girls were shed on her grave.

She had much wealth laid up, that no one knew of; and in her will she left it to build a school for the boys and girls of her town, and to give such as were good a treat, once a year, of books, and fruit, and clothes. When you hear folks talk of a witch, think of this tale, and be wise.

LESSON XIII.

A SEA-SIDE WALK.

Now, my dears, as you have been so good in school to-day, and as it is warm, we will take a walk down to the sea-shore. The breeze from the sea will cool us; and the shells you may pick up, and the sights you see, will, I trust, please you all.

What a grand scene is this! How the huge waves roll and dash on the sands of the shore. See that wave now, as it comes with foam on its head; and what a dash it breaks with on the strand. Look at those large ships, how they ride on the face of the deep, with their full-spread sails swollen by the wind!

How they dash through the waves, as they sweep on their way to their ports in lands far off!

Look through this glass, and you will see some men in a boat, now on the top of the waves, and now lost to sight; and yet they seem not to move from that one place. They have spread their nets out to catch fish, and they will stay there till it is time to take them up.

Can you not see a speck far off? That is the top of the mast of a ship, but the hull or ship you cannot see. And why! Can you tell me, John? "Yes, Sir, the earth is round, like a ball, and this is a proof of it; for if it were flat, like a floor, we should see the whole of the ship at once; but as it is round, we cannot see the whole of it till it comes near." The

dot on this pretty round shell I cannot see till I turn it round ; and that I do not see all at once, but as it gets on a line with my eye.

How salt the sea is : taste it, and you will find it like brine. In some parts they make their salt, or leave the sun to make it for them, from the waves of the sea. They let them flow in a kind of pond ; and then, when the tide goes down, the sun dries them on the ground, like hoar frost, or bright and pure snow. This they take up and use as salt.

Pick up those shells that look so bright there, with that sea-weed, and when we reach home I will tell you their names. When you take a walk, you should pick up what you can find that is rare ; and then try to learn, when at home, what their names

and use may be. There is much to be learnt in a walk, though it be in a lane, a wood, a field, or on the shore.

But now the sun is near the end of its race; it bends down its course to the sea, and the waves are bright in its beams.

The wild fowl are gone to their beds; the night breeze will soon be cold; the moon will soon be out; and the stars, with their bright lamps, will fill the sky with their soft light. Let us then go home, and with hearts full of joy and free from guile, praise God, who hath made such good things for our use, and such grand scenes for our sight.

We cannot praise him too much; for he is *good*, as well as *great*. We cannot love him more than we ought;

for he, great as he is, loves us. He has made all things, great and small, rich or rare. Then let all things yield him praise. He has made all for our use. Then, through the use of all, and not the abuse, let us praise him.

He is great, and wise, and good—full of love, and truth, and grace. He knows, hears, and feels for all. Can we then praise him too much, who has done, does, and will do, such good things, for our health, peace, and joy.

“Let all things that have breath praise the Lord.”

LESSON XIV

A HYMN OF PRAISE.

Lord, teach my tongue to praise thy name,
My heart to feel thy grace ;
My lips to speak thy pow'r and fame,
Mine eyes thy works to trace.

Oh! teach me how to praise thee best,
How best my love to show ;
For thou art *He* in whom I rest,
My God, in weal or woe.

I bend my knees to thee on high ;
Oh! hear my words of praise :
Though but a babe, my mouth may try
A song of joy to raise.

Since thou wilt hear, from lips like mine,
A cry, a lisp, a word ;
Then praise on praise, from all, be thine,
My life, my light, my Lord.

LESSON XV.

A SPRING MORN.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morn, O Lord! in
the morn I will pray to thee, and will look up.

When the sun at first doth rise,
And his light is in the skies ;
When the heath, and lawn, and wood,
Vale and hill, and field and flood,
Look so rich, and all the air
Smells so sweet, and fresh, and fair,
How I love to hail the day,
As I walk through meads so gay:
How glad am I the lark to hear,
In the sky so blue and clear ;
And the birds, on tree or thorn,
Sing their song to bless the morn.
Then I think, as on I go,
How good is God, to bless us so ;

How kind to please my ear and sight
With things so fresh, and fair, and bright :
Till at last I fain would be
Where that God mine eye could see ;
And my soul be pure and blest,
In his world of joy and rest.

LESSON XVI.

A WALK ON A SPRING MORN.

As the morn is so mild and fine,
we will, if you please, my dear boys
and girls, walk forth to breathe the
fresh air, and hear the birds sing.
How pure and clear the sky is : not
a cloud is to be seen ; and the beams
of the sun are so warm and bright, as
to make all things wear their best
dress. The leaves of the trees are
all so green, that they look as if the

dew had made them clean ; and the birds look so fresh, as if they were glad, as well as we are, to see the sun in his strength once more.

The lambs too are full of glee and sport. See how they leap, and skip, and jump in the fields ; whilst the old ewes, their dams, eat the grass and look grave, as though they could wish to check their mirth. See, there are the men with their ploughs : how they turn and root up the earth ! And there goes the maid, with the pail in her hand, to milk the cows.

You see, my dears, what a great change an hour has made. A short time back all was dark, and, as it were, dead ; but the sun rose, and then all burst to light and life. The birds which sat still, woke and sung. The sheep, which were in the fold,

were let loose; and their lambs ran, and filled the air with their bleats, for joy.

You wish to know why these men turn the earth up with their ploughs. If you will give ear to me, I will tell you. You know what bread is, I dare say; but do you know what it is made of? It is made of flour; and flour is made from grains of corn, ground to dust in a mill. The dust is then shook through a sieve, which lets the flour, or fine part, pass through, and leaves the coarse part, or bran, for the food of hogs.

The flour is then mixed up with yeast, and made into loaves and cakes of dough: this dough is baked by heat, and then we call it bread.

Now we know what bread is, and how it is made, let us see where the

corn comes from ; that we may trace the first cause to God, who forms it in the earth ; and know to whom our thanks are due, for our chief stay, and cause of life and strength. You see the ploughs at work. They turn up the ground, or earth, to make it fit to grow seed. This seed is grain, or corn, which they sow in some parts by the hand : it falls on the fresh earth ; and great rakes, with strong teeth, spread the earth on the grains of corn. It is then left to God, who sends his rain from the clouds, to make the grain swell and grow in the land.

When some few days are past, the grains burst, green shoots or blades spring from them, and the roots strike deep in the earth. The fields then look green with the young corn.



*The lame man and the blind; or, two heads
better than one.*

See page 39.

Well, it grows up into stems or stalks; and as the spring gets up, the stems have a small, long bunch, or head of grain, on the top of each of them.

This bunch, or head of grain, is an ear, and has more than a score of grains of corn in it. The grains, by the heat of the sun, are made ripe: the wheat is then cut down and made into sheaves. The sheaves are then borne to the barn, where men thrash and beat them with flails, till the grains of corn fly from the ears which held them. The corn is then put on one side, to be ground into flour for our use; and the straw is thrown out for the beds and food of the beasts, cows, and calves, and pigs.

Thus you see how God cares for

all—how he bids the earth yield food for man. He makes the rain fall from the clouds; the heat of the sun to warm the earth; and to fill, with the fruit of one grain of corn, the mouth of a child.

Let his praise be in our lips then, all the days of our life; for we owe all things to him—our life, our food, our health, and strength—our good things in this life, and our pure joy and bliss in the next.

Now let us turn our steps home, my dear boys and girls, for I think the church clock will soon strike eight; the time for bread and milk, and cakes, and tea, our first meal of the day.

LESSON XVIII.

THE LAME MAN AND THE BLIND;

OR,

TWO HEADS BETTER THAN ONE.

James Brown was a poor old man, who was lame of both legs, and went with a crutch and a stick. By the aid of these, he would go from town to town, to sell small books for boys and girls.

One day on his route, or way home, he came to a part of the road that he could not pass, from a great flood which crossed it. He then saw that there was a bridge by the side of the road, for such as went on foot when the floods were out; but he was

so lame, and the plank by no means broad, that he did not dare to go on it.

Whilst he thought what was best to be done, a blind man came up, who was no less at a loss what to do than his friend the lame one. “ Well, my friend John Smith,” says the lame old man, “ what shall we do in this case ? for I am too lame to trust my crutch and stick both to this plank, not a foot wide ; and you are so blind, God help you, that you will not be able to keep your legs on it. What is to be done, friend John ? ”

The blind man had the gift of a sound mind, and his good sense had been as eyes to him in past days ; so he thought a short time, and then said, “ Why, my old friend James, it is true I am blind ; but, thank God,

I am not lame, for if I were, I fear our case would in truth be bad. I have a good strong pair of legs, and a broad back, to *bear* me on the plank ; but then, I have no eyes to guide me. Now you have eyes, but no legs, as it were ; for they are of no use to you. Now, James, if you can guide *me* with your eyes, I can bear *you* on my back : so get up, and let us try to cross the bridge, which I dare say will bear both of us."

" Well," says the lame man, " that is a good thought of yours, John ; so now for the bridge." And on they went, the lame man on the back of the blind. From the strength of the blind man, and the eye-sight of the lame, they both got safe to land.

Thus you see how we may aid each other in the hour of need, if we will but put our sense and strength to the proof. The weak may aid the strong; the lame, the blind; and the poor, the rich. This should teach us, though we may be poor, and weak, and lame, and blind, to use such gifts as we have, to the good of all men.

We are not to sit and sigh, and weep, when the hour of need may come; but do our best to meet it well; bear it with a stout heart; and make the best use of our strength of mind, to prove that we have not had that good gift in vain.

LESSON XIX.

THE BURNT CHILD;

OR,

THE FATE OF THE BAD GIRL WHO WOULD
PLAY WITH FIRE.

As I wish you, my dear boys and girls, to pass through life as free from pain, or grief, or shame, as you can, I will tell you a tale, to warn you from one great source or cause of fear to your friends, and harm to you. God, in his love to man, has put in his hands great and wise gifts. One of these gifts is fire, or the cause of heat. By it, man may dress his raw food, warm his frame when cold, dry his clothes when wet, and cheer his house with warmth and light.

Now you all know that fire, though it may be the means of life, may be, too, the means of death. It will seize on all things in its course, and bring them to dust: nay, our limbs, in its flames, would burn, in great pain, till they came like the dust of the earth.

If you but hold your hand in the flame of a lamp, it will sear and burn it, till your pain is so great that all the tears and salves in the world cannot soothe or heal it.

Well, I knew a girl, who, when her friends were not with her, though they had told her she should not do so, would put things in the fire, and play with them as they burnt. She would burn the leaves of her books, to watch their sparks as they went out, one by one. She would put a stick in the fire to burn, and make

the end look red with heat, like a piece of coal in the fire ; and then throw it here and there, to make it look nice and bright, as she said. Now, her friends had caught her at this poor sport, and told her how wrong it was.

They had kept her shut up in a room, one cold day, that she might know how to feel the want of fire, and find its true use. But she was such a bad girl, that she would not mind what they said ; but thought she was quite as wise as they were, and that all they had told her was, as she said to the maid one day, a “ pack of stuff.”

Well, one night at bed-time, when the maid had left the room to fetch her night-clothes, she got on a stool to take a shell from the shelf over the

fire-place, when her frock, drawn by the air to the flames, caught fire, and she was soon all in a blaze. Her shrieks brought the maid and her friends to her aid; but her hands, face, legs, and breast, were so much burnt, that she died, to their great grief, in such pain, next day, that her screams were heard, to the last hour of her life, by all the folks near her home.

Do you not think, my dear young friends, that she was a bad girl to treat the words of her friends as vain and light, when they, in their love to her, spoke for her good? I should hope you will not act like her: if you do, let me tell you that you will slight God too, as well as those who wish to save you from harm, and guide your feet and ways in the right

course. Think what harm you may do to all friends round you, as well as to your own self, when you wish to play with fire; and I trust you will then be led to use it but as a good gift, not a thing to toy and sport with.

You may, by a stick or a coal of fire, set in a blaze the whole house: the fire may reach to some house near; and so on, from this house to that, till a whole street may be in flames, lives lost, and goods burnt; and you the cause of the whole. I beg you then, my dears, not to play with or touch the fire; but to do, at all times, as your friends wish and teach you to do.

If you wish for the love of God, the peace and joy of your friends, and your own good, give heed, at all

times, to your ways ; and do nought but what God may teach, and your friends wish you to do : so shall you have peace in life, and joy in death.

LESSON XX.

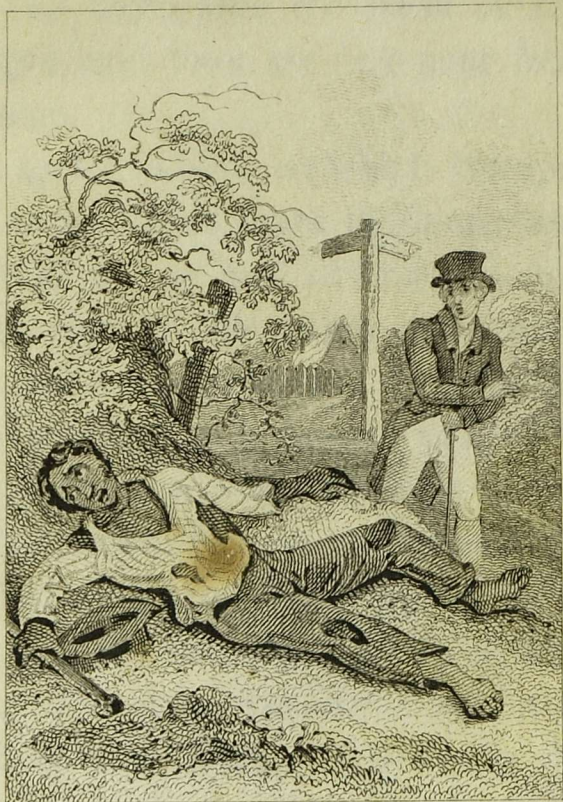
THE POOR SLAVE.

“ Look not on me in that I am black, for the sun hath looked on me.”

We have no slaves at home, then why abroad ?

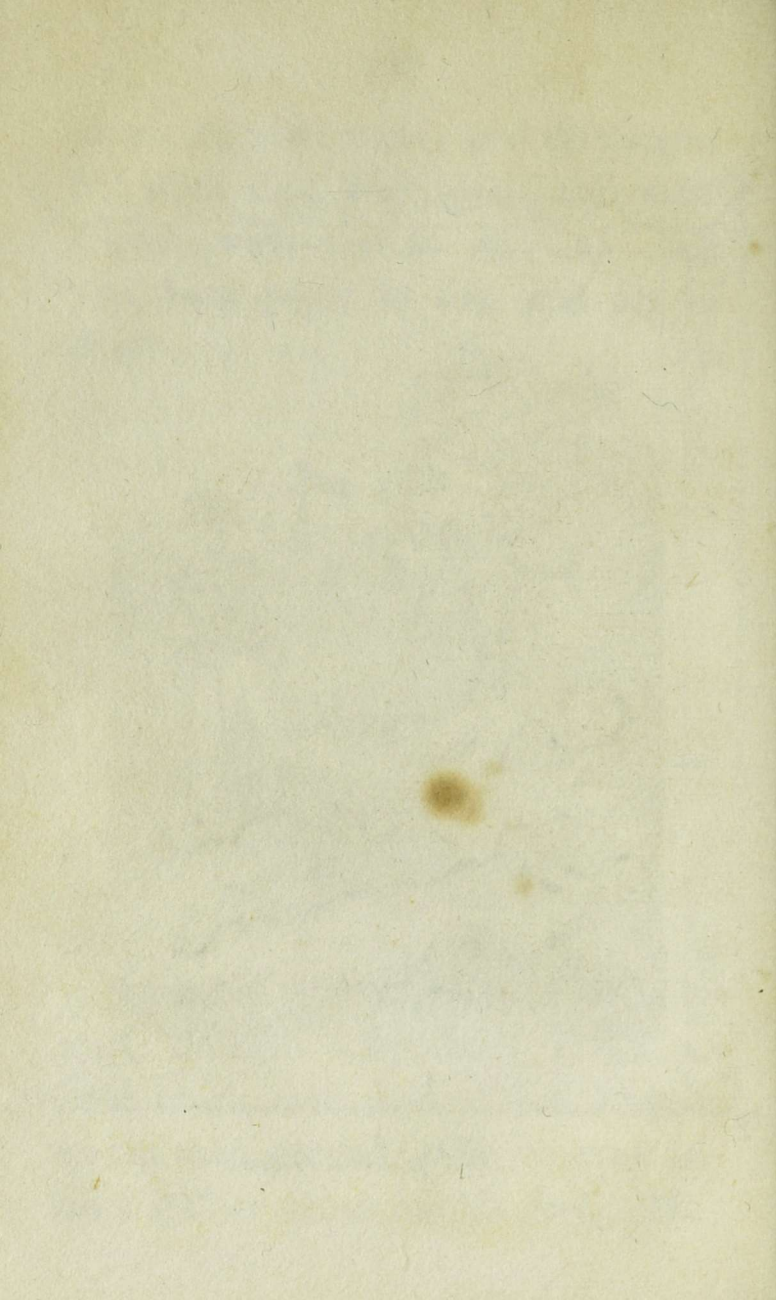
COWPER.

Some few days since, as I took a walk through a bye-lane, I saw a poor black man, laid at full length on the cold ground, with no coat to his back or shoes to his feet. He



The poor Slave.

See page 48.



had sunk to the earth from want, as no food had passed his lips, he said, for two days, save the haws of the hedge; and they are but poor food for man.

I spoke to him, on which his eyes fell on me, with tears in them; and he told me, as well as he could, the short tale of his griefs and cares. He had been born, and brought up from a child, in a part of the world where the sun casts his rays so full on the heads of these poor men, and so hot on their skins, as to make them, as it were, black, or of a dark hue. His hair was short and stiff with curls, to shield his head, by the care of God, from the heat of the sun's beams or rays. Well, in his youth, some bad men, who make a

trade of these poor men, for gain, and sell them to work for those who will not work for themselves, stole him from his friends, and sold him to spend his life in toils and stripes.

They tore him from his home, from his hut, his birth-place, and his dear friends; put chains on his legs and his arms, and bound him down to the deck of a ship. They took him far off from home, sold him for a purse of gold, and then left him to starve or die. He knew not how to work; and they then bound him to a post, and with a whip of sharp cords, cut his poor back till it bled, and he fell to the ground as though dead, from pain and woe.

When he had spent some years in toil and bonds, worse than death, he fled from the bad man who bought

him, one night, and went on board a ship, to work his way to our isle, or to his home. When he came near our shores, the ship was cast on the rocks, and the sea made a wreck of it; that is to say, broke it, piece by piece, and spread its boards, masts, and goods, on the waves. The men on board were all lost, but this poor man: he got to land on a piece of the ship, and, when I found him, he knew not where to go for food, rest, or clothes.

I see tears in your eyes, my dears; but grieve not, for I gave him what he stood in need of, and sent him, by coach, to a friend of ours, (your old play-mate when he comes to see us,) Captain John Studd.

He owns a ship, and I am sure, from his good heart, will do all he

can to serve the cause of him who was once a slave, the poor black man. Think, my dears, what your case would be, were some bad men to come from lands far off, and steal you from your home and your friends. Think how you would cry, till your hearts were like to break, and what the grief of your friends would be.

Oh! my dears, what tears would be shed for, and by you. And think you not that the friends of these poor black men grieve as much as we should, and the poor slaves themselves weep and mourn as you would, were you in their case? Their skin is black; but they are men, as we are: their hearts are the same; and with God there is no more love for a man in a white skin like ours, than with a dark one like theirs. He looks

but at the heart: the face, or form, or hue, is of no worth in his pure sight. Shall we then dare to take the poor black man, and call him our slave? Shall we take him from his home and say, "You are mine by right. I will make you work for me, by night and day. You shall have food, but the worst I can give you; and if you will not do as I wish and tell you, you shall have stripes. I will flog you, load you with chains, and then you may die?"

Think of these things, my dears; and when you hear of a slave in his bonds, pray to your God to loose him from his chains and make him free. Thanks to the great and good men of this land, we have no slaves

here. And the chains of those far off shall soon fall from their limbs too ; for the grace and might of God must go with them, in their wish and will to set all bond-men free.

LESSON XXI.

A SPRING SONG.

“ The sound of birds is in the land.”

The ice and snow are gone,
With the days so short and cold ;
And the Lord hath bid the sun
Spread wide his beams of gold.

The vales are clad in green,
And the larks are on the wing :
The trees with leaves are seen,
To bless the months of spring.

The sheep have left the mead,
O'er heath and wild to stray:
The lambs do nought but feed,
And bleat and sport all day.

The earth so green is spread
With the buds so bright and fair;
Whose scent so sweet is shed
On earth and in the air.

All things now seem to praise
The Lord of earth and sky:
Shall man then pause, nor raise
A song to God on high?

No, let the mouths of all
Be full of praise, and sing:
On Him let all men call,
The God that makes the spring.

LESSON XXII.

NUMBERS.

“ Who shall count the gifts of God ? ”

There is but ONE God, who made all things, the earth, sea, sky, and air—the world, and those things that are in it. He made the beasts of the earth ; the fish of the sea ; the birds of the air ; and the sun, moon, and stars in the sky.

He gave us TWO bright globes, or balls of light : one to rule the day, which is the sun ; and one to rule the night, which is the moon.

He made the THREE parts of day : morn, when we rise from sleep ; noon, when we rest from toil to take our food ; and eve, when we go to bed to sleep, till the next may rise.

He bade the moon to go round the earth in something more than *four* weeks, to give us light when the sun has left us. These FOUR weeks are what we mean by a month.

FIVE zones, or bounds of heat and cold, he set round the earth on which we live. One, at the north point of the earth, is known by the name of the cold zone, or clime ; as is that at the south end : there frost, and snow, and ice are to be found through all the year. Still folks live in them ; for God hath not left

them to die : his hand gives them what they need for food, health, and strength. There are two zones, or parts of the earth, called mild zones, or climes, on one of which *we live* ; and the fifth is the hot zone, or mid-part of our globe or earth, where the sun is so hot as to parch the skin of the men who live there.

In SIX days the Lord made the whole of the earth, man, beast, bird, fish, fowl, herb, tree, wind, rain, light, heat, cold, and all the things we know, see, feel, and taste.

On the seventh day he thought fit to rest from his great and grand work. For this cause we do not work seven days, but six ; for on the seventh we praise God, and rest from toil as he did. For this cause

too, it is known by the name of the Lord's day.

He gave man *two* eyes to see with, two ears to hear with, two hands with which to work and feel, two feet to walk with, a nose to smell, and a mouth to eat and speak with. These are the EIGHT great parts of our frame.

If you add the tongue, whose use is to taste and speak with it, you will have NINE.

He gave us too, TEN laws, or rules to go by, that we might know what we ought to do, and what we ought not. These I will now point out to you, in as brief and clear a way as I can.

THE TEN LAWS OF GOD.

The *first* law of God, or rule of life, is: There is but one God; for he hath said, "I am the Lord your God, and but me shall you serve."

SECOND.

You shall praise, pray to, or serve no one but God. You shall not make aught like God to kneel to, or serve in your heart or soul.

THIRD.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the

Lord will not hold him free from guilt, who takes his name in vain. That is to say, you shall not swear, use God's name when you ought not, nor speak what is bad or wrong.

FOURTH.

You shall keep the Lord's day, as a day of rest, peace, and praise. On it you shall do no work your self, nor shall you make beast or man to do it for you; for on that day your God did rest from his work of love, and told you to keep it in like manner.

FIFTH.

Love and mind your friends, who brought you up from the first day of

your life, who *have* done, and *still do*, such good things for you; that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

SIXTH.

You shall do harm to no one, in thought, word, or deed.

SEVENTH.

You shall not serve the lusts of your flesh, but God.

EIGHTH.

You shall not steal, or take what is not your own.

NINTH.

You shall not speak what is false; but the truth, at all times, and of all things.

TENTH.

You shall not wish for what you have not, or for that which you may see some one else have. To wish for it may lead you to take or steal it; to steal it may lead you to tell a lie to hide it; and to lie may lead you, at length, to the wrath of God, and the loss of your own soul.

FINIS.

