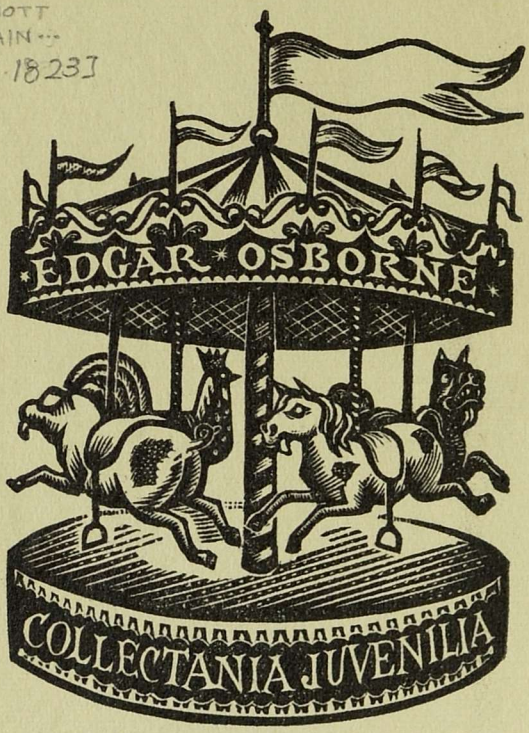

PLAIN THINGS

FOR

LITTLE FOLKS;

SEASONED

WITH INSTRUCTION

BOTH FOR THE MIND AND THE EYE.

BY THEIR FRIEND

MARY ELLIOTT.

LONDON:

WILLIAM DARTON AND SON,

HOLBORN HILL.

1. THE TENDER NURSE.

Our little nurse with pleasure eyes
Her Baby charge, and fondly tries
To wrap around its helpless form
Her shawl, to keep the darling warm.

2. CATCHING A HORSE.

Such tricks as these my neighing friend
Are sport to thee, but let me say;
Thy Master's patience soon will end
His time must not be spent in play.

PLAIN THINGS

FOR

LITTLE FOLKS.

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1. THE TENDER NURSE.

THIS careful little Nurse is highly favoured, for who would trust so precious a charge to any but the most discreet hands? And truly, if we may judge from the picture, no nurse of larger growth could perform her duties better. The smiling cherub seems well contented with its protector: its pretty face is clothed in smiles, as if aware that a fond sister shielded it in her arms. See how the young nurse folds her shawl round the baby, her eyes fixed on its laughing countenance! and what object can be more lovely to the partial eye of friends, than the helpless infant?

We read in the Scriptures, that the wicked King Herod gave orders to slay thousands of babes in one night, in the hopes of destroying Christ, then an infant,—him who loved little children, and rebuked those who would have checked their approach to him.

Some poor babes are orphans; that is, their parents are dead. How sad it must be to depend on strangers, at a time when a mother's love is most needful!

2. CATCHING A HORSE.

HERE is a troublesome playfellow. We who look on, are amused by his capers, but the groom holding the sieve of oats is, no doubt, pretty well tired of such freaks. There are few of us who do not like to sport in the meadows, when the grass is rich and green; and we must allow so noble a beast as the Horse to enjoy the fresh air likewise; but we cannot do without his services, and must therefore limit his rambles.

Sometimes, when in his wild mood, the horse will keep his pursuers at bay for hours, although tempted by a good meal of oats; yet this same lively creature will be gentle and steady enough when performing his labours: a good lesson to human nature; for if an animal void of mind can thus yield to the will of a master, surely mankind should submit to

3. CATCHING A WHALE.

Good seamen strike with skill,
For should you miss your aim
Yon Whale knows how to fill
Your boat, and sink the same!

4. COTTAGE GIRL.

This rustic maid enjoys her ride,
Her Donkey's sleekness is her pride:
If not the swiftest of his race
No beast can trot with surer pace.

one another, and youth should gladly receive the warnings of age and experience.

A self-willed animal can but trespass on our time, and cause slight vexation; but an obstinate child may become wicked and break a parent's heart.

3. CATCHING A WHALE.

THIS cannot be a party of pleasure, or that foaming water a fountain: no, indeed, the scene before us is not of so pleasant a nature: the water here displayed, is that of the sea, spouted from the head of the mighty whale, and the men in the boat are sailors who have come all the way from the shores of Great Britain, to fish in the northern seas: neither voyage nor pursuit is such as we should desire to participate; yet we shall be glad of the oil from the Whale, to trim our lamps.

See one man is about to strike the creature with a dart called a harpoon, but he must be careful to give effect to the blow, for this huge fish is so strong, that it can do much mischief to him and his shipmates; it can toss over their boat like a cockle-shell, or sink it by a single stroke of its tail.

The Whale has foes amongst the finy tribe, as well as amongst mankind; there is a slender fish which tears pieces of flesh from the monster's body, causing so much pain, that it

often strikes itself against rocks with a force that has been known to occasion its immediate death.

4. COTTAGE GIRL.

How cheerful this rustic damsel looks, trotting away to market! We cannot say much for the trappings of her Donkey, but its well fed and sleek looks are proofs of its fair rider's kindness: her light weight and the pack behind cannot be a heavy burthen; so that her Donkey has not much cause for complaint.

The pretty girl herself is humbly clad and bare-footed, yet she does not look as if she coveted gayer garments, and this shews that dress is not required to make us happy. I wish she may make a good bargain at market, and return to her humble home, in the same spirits as at present. It would be pleasing to know that, poor as she seems, she enjoys the benefit of learning to read and write. Obscure as this village appears, yet *where* is the spot to which the branches of knowledge do not spread in these liberal times?

For where the precious seed is sown,
It never fails to thrive;
In village rude or polished town;
All honey from *one* hive.

7. A CHRISTMAS FIRE-SIDE.

Come draw round the fire and tell us a tale
We'll sing you a carol, and give you brown ale.

8. COTTAGE BOY.

Humble in dress and low in state
Behold our peasant boy,
Yet think not his the hardest fate
Who wears the smile of joy.

5. THE YOUTHFUL GARDENER.

WHAT a smart little Gardener is here! he does not look very fit for hard labour; but there are many pursuits in a garden that do not require much strength, and he seems to have chosen these light parts of the trade: he can water the sweet rose, the gay-streaked tulip, and young shrubs; rake up the weeds; and perform many other useful offices for the more able gardener.

I have known many young people eager and proud to have a garden of their own, and at first attend to it with great care; but, fickle as the shoots they reared, they soon grew weary of the task, the flowers drooped for want of water, the weeds sprang thickly up, and all the charms of nature withered.

When we see children fix steadily to any one pursuit, we may venture to believe they possess good sense and judgment: but those who are always changing and never long satisfied, give proof of bad taste and a weak understanding.

Long may our youthful Gardener be thus consistent! and we will give him encouragement, by wearing a nosegay of the flowers so reared.

5. TRAVELLERS RESTING.

"TWENTY-THREE miles to York," says the milestone. Well may these poor travellers stop and rest, when so long a journey lies before them; for it is plain, from their weary looks, that they have already travelled a great way. He who rests on the turf, seems as much at ease as if he were on a bed of down. The other traveller, sitting on the milestone, leans his head on his hand, in thoughtful mood; no wonder, for poverty, and fatigue are not cheering companions. How many great folks in gaudy equipages may pass them on this road, travelling only for pleasure, not deigning to cast a look on these poor wanderers! Yet we will hope, that some gentle heart may be awakened to a humane sense of their friendless state, and enable them to have a ride on the outside of a stage-coach, or a seat in the more humble waggon.

In the midst of our own enjoyments, let us never forget the sufferings of others.

See how ardently the sun beams on our poor travellers! I wish some friendly cloud would veil its brightness, while they enjoy an hour's repose.

7. A CHRISTMAS FIRE-SIDE.

IT is not easy to decide who looks the happiest in this domestic circle: even the dog

5. THE YOUTHFUL GARDENER.

Young as our Gardener may appear
Yet do not spurn his care;
His hand the drooping plants shall rear
And make them bloom more fair.

6. TRAVELLERS RESTING.

Poor weary men here rest awhile
Your journey yet, owns many a mile.

London: William Darton; 58, Holborn Hill. 6th Month 14th 1828.

stretches himself out, as though he felt it were holiday-time: indeed here is every thing to make home look comfortable; a blazing fire, a fine ham and onions hanging from the ceiling, and no want of good ale, if we may judge from the foaming pot which that merry fellow holds, while the man standing by his side chants the Christmas carol.

The good host and hostess know how to welcome their guests, sparing neither fuel nor good cheer. Christmas is truly the season for joy, when all are disposed to feel happy, and make others so.

Winter with its stern aspect does not damp the gay spirits of youth, or rob the rich of a meal; but alas! there are thousands who have not the means of enjoying its comforts. How sweet to feed the hungry, and gladden the hearts of the afflicted! One great event must ever render Christmas dear to the Christian: the birth of our Saviour happened at this period of the year, and thus it became the great holiday for mankind.

8. COTTAGE BOY.

LITTLE boy! is this your holiday suit? and are you going abroad for pleasure, that you look so smiling? But I see my mistake; you are a peasant lad: that ragged hat, those wooden shoes, are the usual dress of country lads; and I hope your pleasing smiles form

a part of the same, for they are most becoming to the wearer. We may conclude from the fork in your hand, that you are going to work all day; and that small barrel, no doubt, contains your beverage. I fear it is only water, or very poor beer. Our townfolks would look very sickly, if obliged to partake of such coarse fare; yet it does not pale your pretty cheeks, or cause one look of discontent: happy, happy lot, may you never learn to despise it! Providence has surely placed us in that rank most suited to our powers, and we should submit to its decree without repining. Yonder cottage is your home, to which you will return at sunset fatigued but cheerful. Though few may covet your frugal supper, all would be glad to share your peaceful slumbers.

9. THE LITTLE SEMPSTRESS.

NEVER did Industry shew itself in a prettier form: such a picture as this would tempt any one to employment.

This young Sempstress seems a good workwoman, and sews with perfect ease: and observe how upright she sits,—which should be well noticed, for many little girls acquire very awkward habits when applying to the needle; yet surely we may as well do our duties gracefully as otherwise. All is order here: the work-box at her feet contains all things

9. THE LITTLE SEMPSTRESS.

This pretty sempstress who can see
And not admire her industry
As thus upright she sits to sew,
Not stooping as some children do.

10. THE MOLE CATCHER.

This trade, all do not understand
But explanation is at hand.

London: William Darton, 58 Holborn Hill. 6th Month 14th 1823.

needful for sewing, but she keeps them in their proper places, and never strews them about, so that they are always at hand when wanting. It is more than two hundred years since needles were first made in England; but scissors it appears are a very early invention indeed, having been in use before the Christian era, (or birth of Christ,) nearly two thousand years back. It would no doubt make us smile, could we compare the ancient, with the modern ones; the improvement would be striking; and I trust we excel in other things as well as in manufactures.

10. THE MOLE-CATCHER.

"As blind as a Mole," is an old saying; but it is a mistake to suppose this creature to be blind, though its sight is very dim. The mole is a small animal, yet can do much mischief in the fields: for it lives underground, and feeds upon the roots of corn, grass, and vegetables: it is never idle, working nearly from morning until sunset. In forming a hole for their homes, the Moles throw up small mounds of earth, which guide the mole-catchers to the spot.

The man before us is one who thus gets his living; he forms a trap with a piece of board and hooped sticks, and the hazel twig you here see, hooked at one end, with a noose of string or horse-hair fastened to it, which if

the snare takes, secures the creature round the neck or body.

The picture shows two Moles so caught.

Poor animals! we are sorry for you, but we cannot allow you to destroy the produce of nature and man's labour; no, the mole-catcher is our friend though your enemy.

11. NURSE OUTWITTED.

On a first view of this picture, one would suppose the little runaway to be a self-willed and disobedient girl; but upon a second glance, it appears, she is a merry good-humoured child who but plays a joke with Nurse, and does not mean to give trouble by so doing. We cannot say she is fond of fine clothes, for Nurse holds a handsome robe in her hand, such as many vain children would be proud to wear. Sportive and innocent child! may you retain this cheerful temper through life! But do not, in the present instance, forget that your maid is not young and active like yourself. Yet, when I look at your shoeless feet, I know the freak will soon be over; for you are bred in affluence, and know not the hardships of wandering barefooted and without warm clothing; besides, every little girl knows that her own friends love her best, and therefore she will not desert them. Who would seek the care of strangers, when a fond parent or a kind Nurse is at hand?

11. NURSE OUTWITTED.

Your best leg first good nurse I pray
For see how fast I run away;
That pretty dress yourself may wear,
Nurse in a frock, will make folks stare.

12. THE HUMBLE REPAST.

No eggs or rich fruit in our pudding you'll find
But our sauce is the best, contentment of mind!

13. THE THIEF ENSNARED.

Alas! how sad an end
To man's dishonest gain;
But crime must always tend
To lead us into pain!

14. YOUTHFUL HAYMAKER.

Pretty damsel rake away
Lest a shower spoil the Hay.

London William Darton 58 Holborn Hill, 6th Month 11th 1823.

12. THE HUMBLE REPAST.

WHAT a smoking pudding! and a large one too. This good couple look so good-natured, that I think they would spare us a slice of it, though it seems the only dish on table. But, before we ask to partake this humble fare, let us consider if the pudding would suit our palate: it may be a common suet or an apple one, made with coarse flour and butter, and no fine powdered sugar to sweeten it.

Then how is it that this healthy-looking pair are satisfied with such a meal?

They are used to no better; labour gives them an appetite, and content makes the plainest food sweet to the taste and good for the stomach. That pretty babe, sitting on its father's knee, knows not the many nice things of which you partake; yet is it not as healthy and happy as any of you?

Keep this simple and pleasing scene in your minds; and, when tempted to be displeased with the good things wealth procures, compare this poor repast with your rich one, and blush at your own want of gratitude.

13. THIEF ENSNARED.

HERE is the sad consequence of crime: the object of the theft seems to be but trifling fruit, yet is the act a robbery: he who takes

one apple not his own, is a thief, and defies the command of his Creator.

Wretched man! we can see how much pain you suffer, added to the fright of being detected: nay, it may be that the wound caused by the teeth of the trap may occasion the loss of your leg, if not of your life; and think how dreadful it would be, should you be cut off in the midst of your errors! But I wish you had been caught by any other means; for it is a shocking custom for man to secure a fellow-creature as he would a wild beast, and must harden the hearts of those who do so. To watch and detect crime is right, but we may be humane even in the method of securing a thief.

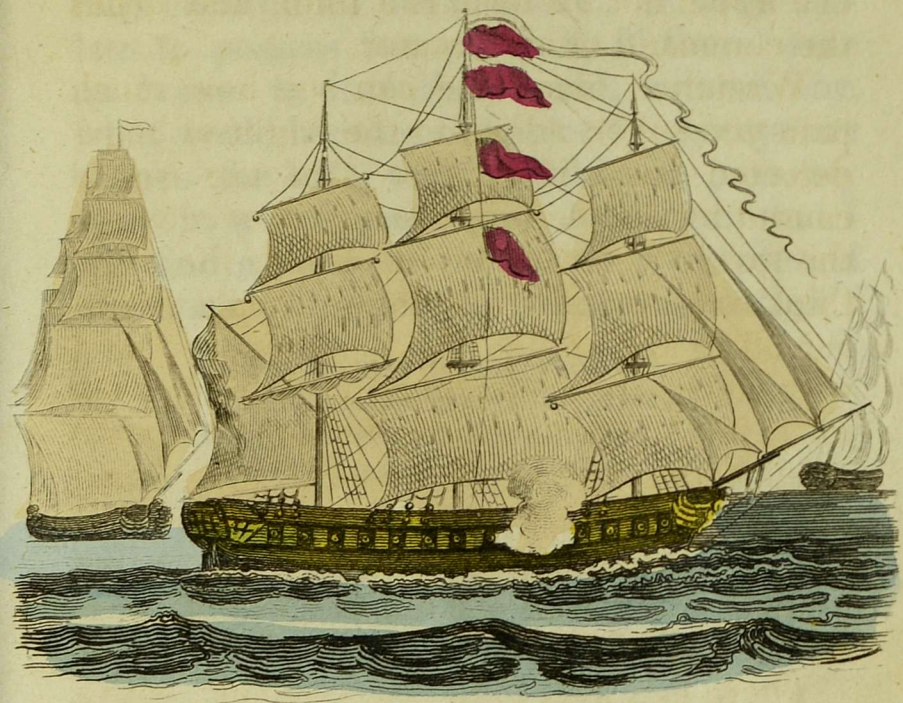
There is a man in the back-ground, with a gun in his hand; let him not presume to fire it, though the object of pursuit be a criminal. The laws will do him justice: *he* is forbidden to commit murder.

14. YOUTHFUL HAYMAKER.

PRETTY HAYMAKER we wish you success, and that your labour may not be lost by unwelcome showers. It would, indeed, be a pity, after your having been exposed so many hours to the sun, should the hay get wet; the farmer, too, would look grave, as well as yourself and companion. I fear we Londoners do not think half enough of the

15. SHIP IN FULL SAIL.

Go not on board this man of war
Its freight is only wounds and scars.



16. THE UNWILLING TENANT.

The only trap I wish to see
Is one to catch the mind;
Knowledge, the tempting bait should be,
And all, a bit should find.

toils endured for our comfort. It were useless to possess fine coaches, if there were no horses to draw them; and, without hay, what would become of horses? Accept my thanks for all; and, should you pass my door in a helpless season, be certain that I will find a meal in return for your present exertions. "One good turn deserves another."

"When the season proves unkind,
And the rain destroys the grass,
Where can you employment find,
You and yours my pretty lass?

"Sad, indeed, your lot will be,
If no helping hand be near;
Come, then, damsel, come to me,
I thy piteous tale will here."

15. SHIP IN FULL SAIL.

A SHIP in full sail is a grand, impressive object; it shews the great skill and powers of man, and, still more, the wonderous works of God; for it is *he* who gave us the strong and foaming ocean which bears on its bosom our stately vessels; his power sends forth the swelling gale that wafts them to their desired ports. How many comforts and improvements depend on the success of such voyages! But, alas! our perverse nature is not content with these benefits; we do not confine ourselves to commerce, but cruelly seek to destroy each other, by the very means intended to link all nations together in friendship.

In this picture behold a Man-of-war, fitted with great guns, to kill many at one moment; and within this noble machine are hundreds of human beings, ready to obey the word for slaughter; yet these very men have tender hearts when on shore. I wish all kings disliked war as much as our own monarch, William the Fourth; mankind would then live in peace, and we should not need these dreadful guns and destroying gunpowder.

16. THE UNWILLING TENANT.

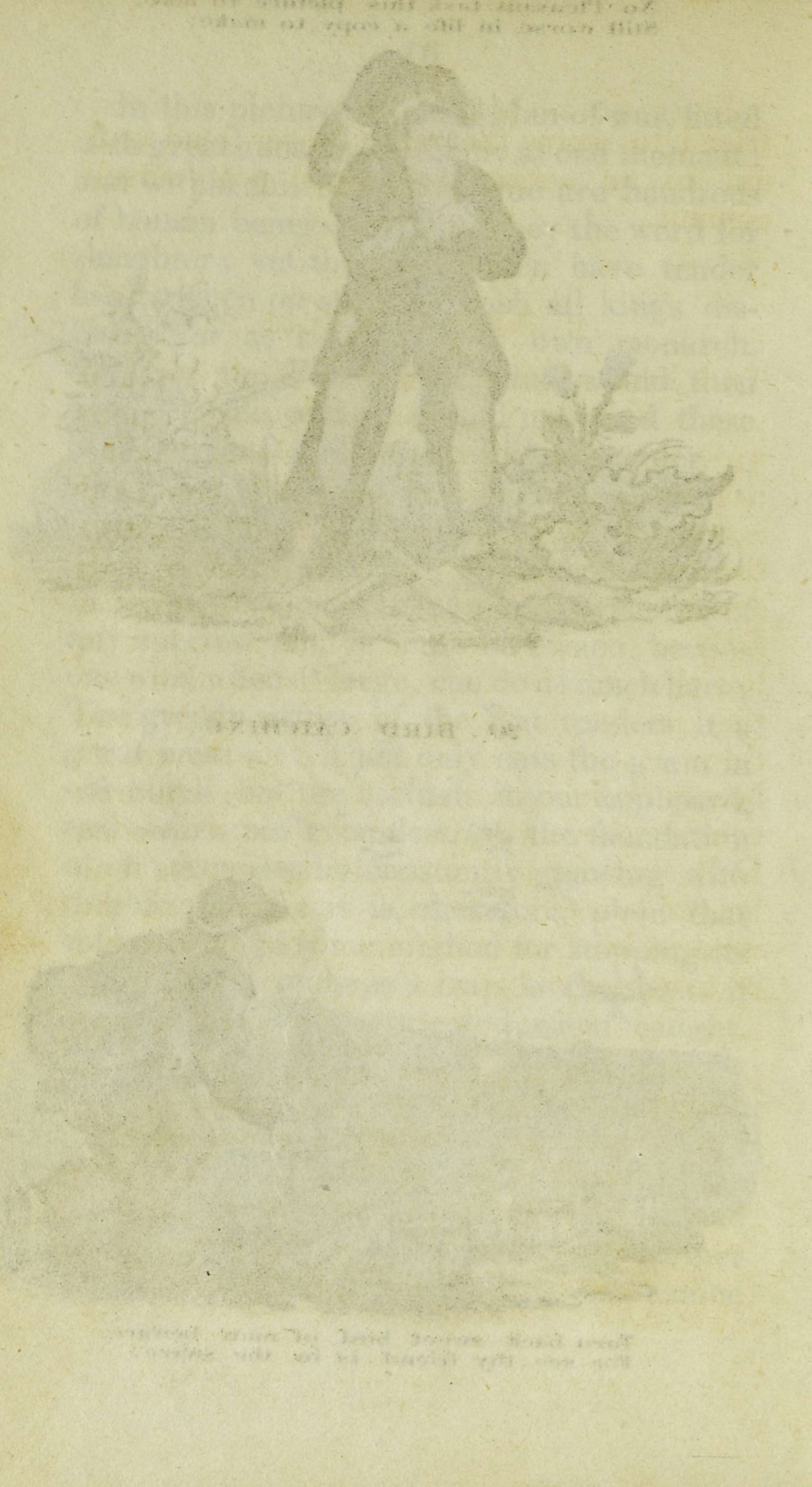
It is not very pleasant to view a prisoner of any species, but, it must be owned, here is one who, when at large, can do us much harm. The greedy nature of the Rat renders it a great nuisance: it not only eats the grain in our barns, but the victuals in our cupboard, and sometimes even destroys the foundation of our premises by constantly gnawing with its sharp teeth: it is, therefore, plain that we must adopt some method for stopping its ravages, and perhaps a trap is the best, if the creature is not tormented when caught. To kill it at once is mercy; but never, my young friends, be tempted to prolong the life of a poor animal, to sport with its pains; such conduct is barbarous. The boy in the picture appears pleased with his prize, and so does his dog; but we hope the former will take our hint, and not allow his canine

19. EFFECTS OF IDLENESS.

No Pleasant task this picture to take,
Still worse in life a copy to make!

20. BIRD CATCHING.

Turn back sweet bird, of man beware
For see! thy friend is in the snare!



friend to worry the rat. Never lend your aid to an action you would not yourself commit.

17. DRESSING A DOLL.

THIS little maid is pleasantly employed, and proves likewise that she can be useful more ways than one, for there is no doubt that she has made the clothes in which her Doll is dressed; this shows both skill and industry: the ready manner in which she arranges each article gives an idea that she could dress a little sister or brother, if either were left in her charge. Some weak girls soon tire of this pretty plaything, use it roughly, and throw it aside when they have destroyed its beauty by such usage. I like to see children consistent even in the choice of a wooden Doll; besides, to dislike a thing because it no longer attracts the eye, is a foible of the weakest kind, and such as a girl of sense would be ashamed to betray.

> "The fairest face by nature form'd,
> Sickness, or age, will make deform'd;
> Then shall the Doll be thrown aside,
> Though time has dimm'd her painted pride?"

18. RABBIT SNARING.

We may readily understand what is going on here. That poor little Rabbit lying dead is a sample of these men's trade.

The net is called a purse net, and indeed is shaped like a purse. The animal in that man's arms is a Ferret, a great foe to these pretty, soft-skinned creatures; and when the Rabbit-hunter seeks his prey, he sends the cunning Ferret into the warren, first muffling its mouth, lest it should kill the pretty creatures.

Think what a fright the presence of such a visitor must cause to the innocent party; who, in alarm, run helter-skelter to the entrance of the warren, in the vain hope of escaping; but here the net is placed to receive them, and they are at once in the power of man, as you may observe one is, in the picture, which he holds by the ears. Rabbits are delicate food, and are, no doubt, intended as food for mankind; yet, however sweet their flesh when nicely cooked, we have no wish to see the process of snaring them actually performed.

19. EFFECTS OF IDLENESS.

Is this a fellow-being we behold, so ragged in garb, so degraded in appearance? What

17. DRESSING A DOLL.

This is a baby Fanny cries,
One may indeed caress,
Say what you will, she ne'er replies
Or is she proud of dress!

18. RABBIT SNARING.

Poor rabbit now too late afraid
Had you but in the warren stay'd
This had not proved so sad a day
But those who peep, are sure to pay!

can have caused a change so sad? Alas! the worst of all habits—Idleness. This wretched man would not attend either to learning or labour; he wished others to do for him what he ought to have done himself; all persons despising such meanness of spirit, turned their backs upon the Idler, and in course of time even his best friends cast him off. Thus he wanders, unpitied, unclothed, and unfed. Look at that broken spade on the ground: he once might have earned a living by its use; but it is broken, and no longer an implement of labour: the sight of it ought to awaken shame in this abject creature, whom we cannot bear to view.

O better far to eat the bread
  Of Industry, though hard,
Than with the daintiest bits be fed,
  By others' bounty spared.

From poverty and real distress
  We should not turn our eyes;
But those who beg from idleness,
  We cannot but despise.

20. BIRD CATCHING.

Look at this flight of warblers; listen to their sweet notes; and wish they may escape the snare laid for them.

What pains the man takes to entice them to his net! See the cages placed around, in

which some pretty captives (before deceived) are singing, as if to assure those at large that they are happy; but it is all a cheat. What does a prison offer, in return for the beauties of nature? One hour's ramble in the open air is worth a year's luxuries in a gilded cage. Good Bird-catcher, be content with the victims already in your power, and I fear there is one more than I hoped you would gain; for, see, a little songster is just dropping into your net; ah! foolish bird.

This is a way of living I would never adopt. Had this man been an honest tradesman, he might have served others by his labour; as it is, he only robs the woods of their harmless tenants, and tempts people to share in his faults, by offering his prey for sale.

21. THE DUNCE.

THERE is no one part of this scene to approve: the boy is a painful object, and the scolding school-mistress a very vulgar one. It is pleasing to think that such modes of disgrace and punishment are not adopted in modern times. Harshness may curb the temper and depress the spirits, but it will never improve the mind or better the heart. It is now our study to exalt the youthful scholar not to debase him; and, if he possesses feeling, the shame of being called a Dunce, and of seeing others get the start of

21. THE DUNCE.

This is a sight to give us pain,
Once seen ne'er wished to see again.

22. THE OBEDIENT CHILD.

This docile little maiden shows
The worth of cleanliness she knows.

London: William Darton, 58, Holborn Hill, 6th Month 11th 1832.

of him in knowledge, will be quite disgrace enough, to urge him to amend his ways.

Away, then, with the fool's-cap and the rod; emulation and deserved praise of friends is all the reward we covet; and it is not to be supposed that any one of our readers is so weak as to turn from the path of wisdom, to incur the title of Dunce.

In the reign of King Alfred, a very large estate was given in exchange for *one* book; *now*, we, may purchase one as low in price as a penny! Surely these are not the days to speak of Dunces!

22. THE OBEDIENT CHILD.

THIS is a mild looking Child, and one who does not require to be told twice to do the same thing, which shews her good sense. Combing the hair sometimes causes a little pain, but it is a process so necessary to health, and makes children look so neat, that it seems strange any of them should resist the kind attention of their female friends, who will take the trouble of keeping their hair clean.

Do but look at the savage tribes in Africa and other distant parts; how disgusting appears their matted and greasy hair! Who would desire to look as they do, or not willingly submit to the chance of a slight scratch

from the comb, rather than lose the clean and wholesome appearance of a native of Great Britain ?

"If the person be neat, though homely the face,
We always can something agreeable trace.
What features look pleasing, that are not quite clean,
When the dress or the hair in disorder is seen?
To be *constantly* neat, is a charm in itself,
And Beauty without it may lie on the shelf."

23. THE LAUNCH IN MINIATURE.

THIS gay little fellow is all delight as he launches his trim vessel into the water; and, if he be the builder, he may be proud of his work, for it is a tight little sailing-boat. Should there be any tiny mariners on board they have the prospect of a pleasant voyage; but I imagine the ship-owner is the only part of the live stock: so much the better; there is but one person to be pleased, and we cannot doubt that he is amply gratified in watching its progress down the limpid stream. The cargo is not very heavy, or perhaps very rich; so our youthful merchant may spare himself the expense of insuring.

A real ship-launch is a grand spectacle, and excites much interest. We gaze in wonder to see so vast a body glide from the stocks (on which it was built) into the open river, which is usually covered with boats filled with gay company, all alive to

23. THE LAUNCH IN MINIATURE.

No ship-builder famed for his skill
Can feel more delighted than Will,
Thus launching his tight little ship
Prepared for a fresh-water trip.

24. THE ARTIST AND HIS PARROT.

To paint from the life, all Painters agree,
Is always the best, but here we shall see,
That though such a copy may add to one's fame,
A bite from the subject is not quite the same!

the beauty of the scene. Our British Ships are the noblest in the world.

24. THE ARTIST AND HIS PARROT.

One would think this young Artist were a dancing-master, by the capers he cuts; but, I believe, we shall find pleasure does not cause these fine steps; for, see! the spiteful Parrot is biting his fingers.

The gentleman painting at the great easel, has taught the pleasing art to his son, who, it may be seen, knows how to copy from nature, for there is a fair likeness of the Parrot done by him; but, not content with taking a copy of Poll's handsome form, he would tease the testy bird, (whose temper is soon ruffled,) and the result is, that she makes him pay for such freedom.

Parrots, though amusing, are fickle in their regards, and will be fond of you one minute, yet, in the next, will assault you with spite.

This picture proves that they have no respect for talent.

Zeuxis, a painter in ancient times, copied a bunch of grapes so well, that the birds mistaking them for real fruit, came and pecked them.

Should our kind Young Friends like the juice of onr present information, they are welcome to extract all its worth and sweetness.