CHIT CHAT.

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CHIT-CHAT
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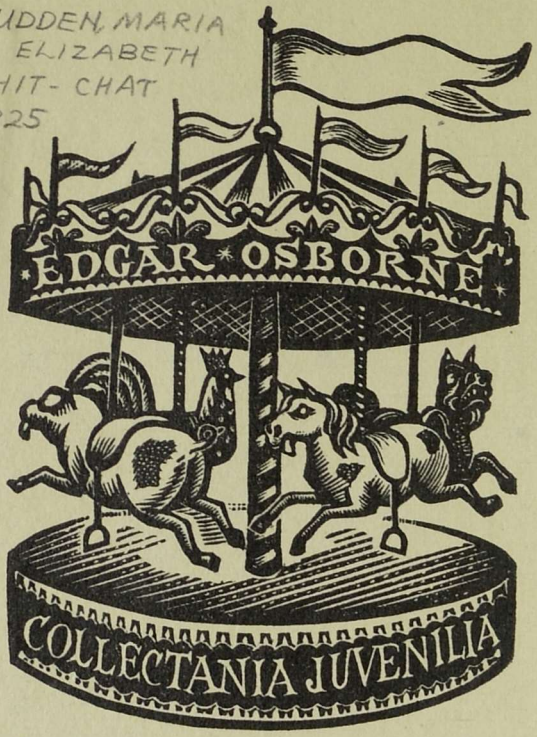

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Julia Catharine Hall

1825.

CHIT-CHAT,

OR

SHORT TALES IN SHORT WORDS.

WITH THIRTY-NINE ENGRAVINGS.

Our life is like a summer's day,
It seems so quickly past;
Youth is the morning bright and gay,
And if 'tis spent in wisdom's way,
We meet old age without dismay,
And death is sweet at last.

Hymns for Infant Minds.

By the Author of "ALWAYS HAPPY," &c.

LONDON:

JOHN HARRIS, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

1825.

LONDON:
COX AND BAYLIS, PRINTERS, GREAT QUEEN STREET.

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

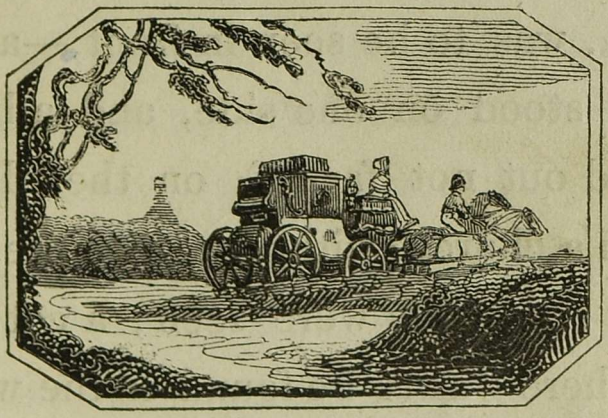
TO

THE DEAR LITTLE PARTY

AT

THE RECTORY.

London, 1825.



CHIT-CHAT.

PART I.

THE CHAISE BRINGS A FRIEND.

KATE dwelt with her Aunt in a lone cot, in one of the most sweet dells of Wales.—Cliffs rose in rude grace round their home, and the sea, with its smooth

beach, was to be seen in front,—a wild wood stood on one side, and a heath spread out not far off; on the edge of which a church, with its grey spire, and a few rude huts were seen; a cot here and there was to be found in the wood, by the side of a rough path.

The Aunt of Kate was not rich, but she had a kind heart, and when she heard of the death of a dear friend, she sent for the child of that friend and gave her a home in her lone cot. How glad was Kate when she saw the chaise that brought poor Blanche. It drove to the door in a cloud of dust, and the

noise of its wheels brought out Kate and her Aunt, and their maid to the gate.

The Aunt held the poor child to her heart, and gave her a fond kiss. Kate caught her in her arms, and, with smiles, told her how glad she was to see her. Blanche shed tears of joy and love, and the three friends were soon gay and dear, each to each.

The next day Kate led Blanche through the lane and fields, and down to the beach. The sea was bright with the sun, and the smooth sand shone as glass. They found shells, and weeds, and bits of red, blue, and green stones,

that in their eyes were rich gems. The gull, a sea-bird, with its large white wings, was seen to fly as if on the waves, and the tide as it rose on the beach, brought to the feet of the girls, amid the light foam, some fine plants just torn from the rocks hid in the waves.

These plants were not like the plants that grow on the earth, for they were made to thrive in the salt sea, and were strong and firm, though the sprays of some were as fine as threads, and the leaves of some as tough as skin. The friends took home a large hoard of all they could find.

THE GIRLS AT HOME.

The Aunt was at her desk when they went home, and she told them how to dry the weeds, and clean the shells; she told them too how to fix the weeds to boards with gum, and thus to make a kind of groupe of trees and shrubs.

She taught them how to bore holes in the shells, and then form them to neat shapes to deck the room, and to join them in the form of a box to hold pins, and such small things. Then she bade them write down the names of those she knew, and thus, when in the house, they were gay with what they had found in their walks. So when they went out, they took care to use their eyes: for each bud and blade of grass might hide something that would pay their search; a small worm, or a snail in its snug shell, or a grub in its folds; with the help of a glass these small

things would look so large that each part could be seen—The legs and all their joints and hairs, the small bright eyes, the trunk drawn up in a coil, or spread out at full length; what to the eye was dust on a moth's wing, through the glass, was found to be fine plumes, and the clear gauze of the fly's wing was quite a treat to look on; so thin, so light, so rich.

In a bud, they found a small white worm; an egg had been laid there by some kind of fly, and from this egg, the worm came out. It had fed on the heart of the bud, for the fly knew what

food its young would like, and laid the egg where this food could be found. Strange that so small a thing should know so well what was best to be done! The girls would think as well as talk of what they saw; hence their minds, in time, were full of thoughts, which could serve to please them when they were at home, and sat at work and did not talk. To think is one of our best joys, so we must hoard up, as fast as we can, good and wise, and gay thoughts.

TEARS OF JOY.

At noon as they sat at their plain meal, for in Wales they do not keep such late hours as we do in town, the three would talk of all they had seen, or heard or felt. They did not care much what they ate—they thought more of their

hearts and minds. Kate one day sat down with red eyes, and grave looks; her Aunt saw her state and was in grief for her.

"Dear Aunt, do not be sad for me," said Kate, "my tears were not tears of grief; as I stood at our gate, I saw a poor lamb in pain; it was in the ditch and could not get out, so I ran to help it, and took it out and saw it run in the field, so gay! Old dame Madge saw all this, it was her lamb, and she was full of thanks, 'and Miss,' says she, 'what shall I do to please you?' Now you know, Aunt, dame Madge is quite rich,

and old Grace quite poor, so I said, ‘ Madge, if you would please me pray give that fine jug of new milk, that you have on your head, to poor old Grace.’ Well, do you know she was all smiles at my words, and she said, ‘ come then, dear, go with me to Grace’s hut and I will do as you ask ;’ so with a jump, and a hop, and a spring, I ran to the hut, and I found the poor old soul in bed, not sick but sad, and she had no food, nor fire ; so judge how glad she was of the nice warm new milk, and I was as glad as she was when I saw her drink it, and I came out and left Madge with her,

for I thought a few kind words and some chat would do her as much good as the milk.

And as I came home I found my eyes wet, and tears on my cheeks; but I am sure, I do not know why they came there, for I was all joy, and felt my heart so gay and so warm; I am sure I did not cry, for I was glad then, and though grave as you say, I am glad now.

THE POOR GAY.

"THERE are tears of joy as well as of grief," said the kind Aunt, "such as I now shed; can you tell why?"—"I can tell," said Blanche, I know why you weep, you are so glad to find Kate's heart so good."—"Yes, I love her that she did not think of self, and I love you,

my Blanche, for your warm praise of her."

"So now let us run to the heath, to see the young men and maids dance," said Kate, and they set off for the heath. The old man was there, with a stone for his seat, and there were the lads, each with his lass, so blythe and gay. The turf was smooth for their feet, and the sweet herbs sent forth a mild scent. The air was calm and still, and the sun, as it set on the sea, gave a rich light to the scene. "I love to see the poor made glad!" said the Aunt, "they toil so much, it is right they should have a few hours of mirth."—"If I were rich," said Kate,

"I would think as much of the sports of my poor as of their toils; the song, and the dance on the fresh sod, in the cool air can do no harm: nor is that all —the breast that glows with pure joy, when a sky like this, with stars as gems, and a moon as a lamp, form the roof and the lights; when the smell of plants and shrubs is the scent, and the sight of woods and heaths, and all the works of God are the charms and graces of the spot; the breast that glows in such scenes must glow with good thoughts."

The Aunt spoke no more, but her looks said all she felt. The girls were as gay as those they saw dance, and

they gave a few pence to the old man, and they sent milk and bread, and fruit to the young men and maids.

"Oh! we will help the poor to be gay when we can; why should they not be so, as well as the rich?" These were the words of Kate, as she heard the sounds of the songs and the dance, of the blythe groupe they had just left. Ruth brought back the warm thanks of the poor she had been sent to cheer; joy is good for the heart, it is said so in the first and best of books: grief may help to cure faults, but mirth tends to nurse good thoughts, and to cheer good hearts.

LOVE, THE SOURCE OF JOY.

The two girls were good friends, and it was rare for them to frown or scold: one day, to be sure, they had a few harsh words, and Kate gave Blanche a blow on the face. The blow hurt Kate's heart more than it did the cheek of Blanche, for she was sad all the rest of the day,

and so was her poor friend; both had been to blame, for Blanche had been in a great rage, and had said some harsh things to vex and fret: so good bye to all peace and joy! They took a walk, but in vain the sun shone and the birds sang; they saw not the beam, they heard not the strain. They ate some fine fruit, but its rich sweet taste was lost on them, dry bread would have done as well.

The Aunt saw something was wrong, and soon found out the cause of all their grave sad looks; she told them to come to her, and then she took a hand of each,

and with mild words strove to bring them back to love.

" Blanche, you were wrong the first; rude words are as bad as harsh blows, for our words are as blows on the hearts of our friends, and what can be worse than to wound a friend's heart. Kate, you too have been much to blame; you ought to rule your mind, and curb it when it is prone to fly out in rough acts: you know you can rule your thoughts as well as your limbs; you would not strike me, were I to fret you more than Blanche did. Come, ask your friend to kiss you; she must cease to

think of your blow, and you must cease to think of her words."

Blanche flew to Kate's arms, and Kate caught her to her heart with joy: both gave more than one kiss to their best friend. At once what a change took place in all things to them: how bright the sun! how sweet the birds! how good their lunch of brown bread!

"Dear girls," said the Aunt, "such is the charm of love! It is the source of our best joys, the balm of our worst woes; she who is blest with one true friend, has a sure shield to guard her from harm, has a sure spring of joy!"

HOW TRUTH IS LOST.

"Oh Aunt," said Kate one day, "do tell Blanche that droll tale, with which you made me laugh so much, when she was not here." "Yes, pray do," said Blanche, and she took a chair by her friend, whilst Kate stood by full of smiles and winks. The Aunt was on a

seat by the glass-door, and soon did as she was bid in these words :—

THE THREE CROWS.

There was once on a time a poor man, who was sick, and the poor folks who dwelt near him knew he was ill, and would talk much of his sad state. One night strange news were heard of him; a man said, he had been sick and had thrown up *three* crows, for so his wife told him. When they spoke to the wife, "yes," said she, "three *black* crows; it is all true, quite true." "Did you see the crows, wife?"—"No, my dear, but Joan at the mill told me

she did."—Some one went to the mill to beg Joan to shew the crows. "I have not seen them" said she, "nor did I say three crows; I said two, and I am sure that is right, for Sue at the shop has them, so do not laugh all of you, but go ask Sue."

They went to Sue, she had no crows to shew, and was cross, and said, "who dares to tell me of two crows? I did but say one; one I did name, and that was all, on my word."—"Then who spoke of two?"—"Not I, good folks, trust me, I am too fond of the truth—the mere truth."—"But there was one crow?"—

"Yes, yes, that is sure, the man's wife's old aunt told me so." They ran to the man's wife's old aunt; she swore her niece had told her of one black crow; that the poor man had thrown up: "go to the cot," said she, "and see it." The folks flew to the cot and told their tale; the sick man could not but smile when he heard them, and he was fain to laugh, when his wife set all to rights and said, "good folks, there are no crows at all in the case; I did but say that my poor man had been sick all night, and had thrown up some stuff, as *black as a crow.*"

A KISS AND GOOD NIGHT.

By the time the tale was done, and the laugh was done, it was the hour to go to bed, and the maid came with a light for the young girls. They each gave a kiss and a kind good night to their dear friend, and ran off to their own snug room. The cot had but three

small rooms on the ground floor, and three small rooms on the first floor, and that was the whole of the house.

There was a nice piece of ground round it: part was a lawn to play and run on, and part was a court for fowls and ducks, with a small pond in it, and nests for the hens to lay their eggs in; and part was full of fruits and flowers, and beans, and pease, and greens of all sorts, and each girl had a plot of her own, for pinks and such plants, and each had a rose-bush full of buds. Then there were pears, and plums, and nuts, and a vine full of

grapes that hung on the walls, and the roof of the low cot ; and a clear stream, with its soft turf bank, ran by the side of the lawn, and a hedge with wreaths of hops bound the end of the lawn. The boughs of trees hung on a seat made of roots, which in the hot months was a cool nook to work and read in, and drink tea in, and, more than that, to *think* in. For who could be there, and see the sun rise or sink with mild beams, but felt their thoughts rise to the great God who made the sun? who could feel the soft breeze waft health and strength, and not bless him who

gave the pure gale? who could taste the juice of fruits, and smell the scent of buds, and not send up their hearts to him who made fruits and buds. Then would the mind pause and think, "all things are made for the good of all: these for me, and I for them; they serve me, and I must serve them; I must be of use, as well as they; so let me make the best of life, and use my mind and my limbs, whilst I am young and strong, and can do good. By-and-bye I shall be old, and weak, and not fit to work: then it will be too late to mourn the loss of time. This, this is the hour when I must toil with head, and hands, and heart; and think, and work, and feel."

PART II.

THE FALSE BEGGAR.

"My dear madam," cried Blanche one day, "do listen to a poor woman in the hall, who is telling such a mournful story."—"And she begs you to read this paper," added Kate, running in with a dirty crumpled letter in her hand.

The kind lady read the paper, and heard the woman's story. Then said, "poor creature! your state seems very wretched, I will inquire about you, and come and see you, and try to serve you." The stranger begged hard for present relief, but the lady said she made a rule never to give aid until she knew the facts of the case. It was some time before the woman would give an address; at last she did so, and went away.

"Dear Aunt, why did not you give the poor thing some money?"—"Because I was not sure money was the best

thing I could give her; by seeing her, I shall best know how to serve her."—"But just one shilling?"—"I can afford to give that I own, and it would have saved me trouble, but it is my duty to do the most good in my power, and that can only be done by going to the scene of woe."

In the course of the day, (for we ought not to defer a duty) the three went to inquire about the poor woman; she had called herself a widow, with five children starving in an old barn; no such place was to be found. By accident she was seen standing at the door of the inn, and though she tried to hide herself, the Aunt found her out; what was the surprize of the girls to see the feigned

beggar, in good clothes, in a good room, and with a table on which were tea things, a loaf, and butter, and white sugar. The Aunt waited to hear the meaning of all this, and the woman began a speech; but as it was plain she did not speak the truth, the Aunt shook her head, told her to give up her wicked course, and left her.

"My dear girls," said the good Aunt, "this woman's cunning is a proof that all who beg do not deserve, or require relief. But as there is much real distress in the world, those who truly desire to relieve it must not fail to visit the scenes of sorrow named to them, that so they may serve the unfortunate and detect the guilty."

THE TRUE BEGGAR.

"ANOTHER tale of woe, Aunt,"—cried Kate, a few weeks after the visit to the false beggar. "But I suppose, this also is not true, and therefore you will not give any help."—"My dear Kate, all persons claim our belief till we have proved their falsehood. This

may be true though the other was false . never let us decide till we have found out the real truth, which can only be done by going to the spot."

The woman named the cot in which she lived; it was far distant, but nothing can be done without trouble, and our three friends set out for the distant dwelling. The day was stormy and the road dirty; but, in the work of pity, who would be stopped by such evils! Besides, the badness of the weather was the very reason why want and sickness most needed succour.

It was after much trouble and many

mistakes that the cottage was found, and Blanche was fearing this also was a fraud; but when they did enter the hovel, how glad were they that they had not given up the search: it was all true. The sick husband was trying to warm himself by a small fire; two little children, with no clothing but a ragged shirt each, were on the floor, thin and pale from hunger; the woman had a baby in her arms, crying for food.—Blanche and Kate shed some tears, for their hearts were full; but, drying them quickly, they thought it was better to act than to weep. The kind Aunt calmly thought over all that was best to be done, and then set about it. She got food for the children and their

mother, and wine and physic for the poor father. Then they all went to work, and made clothes for the naked little ones. It was more than a week before all they wished could be done; but it was done. Those who were ready to perish were fed and cured, and clothed.

"Now you see, my dears, how right it is to visit the cases of distress, of which you hear; *some are true.* By seeing them with our own eyes, we know what is most wanted. It is seldom wise to give money to the poor; they don't know how to make the best of it, and by not giving to all, we have more to give to a few."

HOW TO DO THE MOST GOOD.

"You see, Kate, to do real good one must not mind some trouble, for you know, my love, it is our duty to detect and prevent error, as much as it is our duty to cherish virtue."—"But, Aunt, when one inquires too closely one finds out sad faults."—

" Right, my dear, and we do good even by that discovery. For, perhaps, we stop the guilty from going on in their course of crime, and that is no small service."—" True, Aunt, and besides that, we save the money of the kind for the good and honest, by keeping it from the bad and artful."

" Of two cases of distress named to us, you know one was false and the other was true. This should teach us never to relieve want till we are sure of its being true ; this should teach us never to pass by a demand without notice; for fear we thereby doom a

fellow creature to want and sickness, and it may be death."

"You have cured the poor man, my dear Aunt, and fed his wife, and clothed his children; but they will soon be in distress again, and you said you could not afford to keep them."—"I cannot afford it indeed, my child, and I ought not to do it if I could, for these people can now earn their living, and must not live upon my small poor purse."—"No, because that would prevent your helping any other poor person."—"Right, Kate, so I have been thinking to ask Lord Glenmore to let the man have work in his grounds."—"But you won't like to go and ask such a favour of Lord Glenmore."—"I am not fond

of asking favours; but this is more for the poor man than for myself, and shall I not be doing his Lordship a favour, in shewing him how he can do a good act?"—"To be sure you will, and he has a kind heart, and loves to do good. Pray let us go, Aunt, I am sorry Blanche is ill and cannot go with us."—"You and I have been chatting and standing here, Kate, and have almost passed the hour, when our dear sick girl should take her physic. Ruth is with her, go to her and I will fetch the phial and the cup and follow you to her chamber." Kate ran off to the room of her sick friend.

BLANCHE LEARNS WISDOM.

"Oh! really I cannot, cannot take this horrid physic, dearest Madam!" cried Blanche, as soon as she saw her kind friend appear with phial and cup. "Fie, Miss!" said Ruth, and she leant on the back of the young lady's chair, and, in a whisper, besought her to

behave with more sense and spirit. Kate kindly took her crying friend's hand, and spoke to her with so much mildness and reason. "My best Blanche, you are very ill, you know you are, and you cannot be better till you have taken something to relieve your fever."—"Oh, but that is such nasty vile stuff!"—"Do not call what will ease your pain by such harsh names: are you not in great pain?"—"Yes, yes, my head aches, and I feel sick, and so ill, so very ill."—"And do you really prefer bearing all this, to a minute's bitter taste of physic in your

mouth? why, Blanche, are you so very foolish?" and Kate smiled as she spoke, and held the cup to her friend. Blanche dashed away the cup and all the physic was spilt. "What have you done, wayward girl?" cried the Aunt; "this was the only dose proper for you in the house, and we live so far from the town. Ah! when and where shall I get you some more?" At first Blanche was glad that the physic was spilt, but when she found herself getting worse, she began to wish she could find some cure for her ailments. The kind Aunt sent all round the village, no one could giveher the physic she wanted. It was dark, Ruth could not go alone to the town. The poor man, that had been helped

and cured, heard Ruth as she passed through the village speak of her young lady's illness, and he begged to go to the town for the physic. He walked as fast as he could, and came back with the dose the very moment he got it. But how did poor Blanche long for his return! Every minute seemed an hour to her; how gladly she took the mixture which before she had scorned. In a very short time it soothed and eased her; she fell asleep, and awoke almost well; her first words were: "I hope I never again shall be so very, very childish."

BE KIND TO SERVANTS.

The next morning, when the Aunt went into the room, she found Ruth helping the girls to get up, and both of them in high health and spirits. But, as she came in, she thought she heard some harsh words from Kate and Blanche to the maid, and asked what

was the matter? It seems that Ruth had not mended a gown for Blanche, as she had been bid to do, and as she had given her word she would do. Ruth said she was sorry, "but I forgot it, miss." She was about to receive a smart answer, when her mistress mildly bade her put down the gown and go away; as soon as she was gone, "how is this, girls?" said the good Aunt; "so cross to Ruth, who but last night was so good to you." Blanche blushed and turned away her head; Kate said, "Ruth always forgets all that is told her."—"That is more her misfortune

than her fault. Pray, do you never forget, Kate, that you are so harsh to one who does?" It was now Kate's turn to blush, for she was apt to forget. "But, why was Ruth to mend this frock; surely, Blanche, you are old enough to do it yourself?"—"Yes, ma'am, but it is work I don't like; I don't like darning and mending."—"I dare say Ruth dislikes it also; servants have their feelings as well as we." Kate and Blanche began to see how selfish and unjust they had been, and their Aunt went on to say—"Pray, who tore this frock?"—"I did, ma'am, two days ago when I was at play in the garden."—"Indeed, and so what you tore in the midst of your pleasure, Ruth is to

sit down and mend, though ever so much against hers. Really, this is a new mode of acting fairly and justly."

The girls were quite hurt at themselves, and began to declare how fond they were of Ruth, and how civil and kind she always was to them. "I quite agree with you that she deserves your favour; but do not let caprice make you sometimes behave well to her and sometimes ill; a steady system of kindness does more to gain friends than all the ardour and warmth in the world. Nothing is so bad in our intercourse with our fellow creatures, nothing is so bad as caprice."

THE VILLAGE SHOP.

Now Blanche was well again; they all walked to Lord Glenmore's, and he kindly gave his promise to employ the poor man in his gardens or grounds. As they came back they called in at the village shop to buy some things for the poor man. The old woman, who kept

the shop, came to serve them, and she was wiping her eyes, and could scarcely speak for crying. "What is the matter, dame Hodge?" said the good Aunt, and went up kindly to the poor woman, whilst the two girls staid behind the counter. The old dame sighed, and said her daughter had just left her service, and she was afraid it would be long before she got so good a place again. The Lady said she would inquire among her friends for a place for Belle, and then they proceeded in their walk. The girls talked of the difference between all they saw at Castle Glenmore,

and what they saw at the shop. "Yes," said the Aunt, "and you may also observe how little alike is the life of a rich lord and our poor dame. He and his lady have no care, but to please and amuse themselves just as the humour takes them, from morning till night; whilst dame Hodge has, even in old age, to work for her food, and to cook it before she eats it. She must make her bed before she can sleep in it; in short, she must labour before she can possess any one thing. Then again, humble as is her lot, there are others who have a still more lowly fate; for instance, the poor man we have just helped to save

from want. How much worse off is he, than our weeping old woman!"—"Aunt," said Kate, "I had been thinking with envy of Miss Glenmore: her toys, her books, her fine dress, but I shall do so no more; for, oh! how well am I off, when I compare my lot to the poor children we have been clothing."—"You are right, Kate, be grateful for your lot, and reflect, that all have their share of good; what we do not prize is perhaps a joy and a pleasure to those who are below us in life; your old bonnet you know was a treasure to the poor man's child."

THE FARM-YARD.

When Kate's Aunt made a promise, she always took care to perform it, and now for many days looked about to find a place for Belle. At last she went to a farmer's, where she and the girls were much pleased to see the farmer's wife feeding the pigs. They looked over

the rails, and saw the fat grunters feeding away, all in a row, whilst milk and barley were poured into their wooden trough. A farm-yard had many charms for Kate and Blanche. The cows, lowing amid the clean deep straw, and the young calves standing at their sides; the sheep feeding on the short sweet grass of the home-field, and the pretty lambs skipping and jumping about. The great mastiff, chained to his house, growling at each stranger. The threshers in the barn, thrashing out the corn, the thatcher on the cottage roof mending the thatch. Then the pretty garden,

full of pease and beans, and leeks, and carrots; with one corner, gay with flowers, such as stocks, and pinks, and roses; all seemed so pleasant and pretty about the farm, that they were quite glad to hear the farmer's wife say, she wanted a maid, and she would be glad to try Belle. "How happy Belle will be in this charming place."—"That must depend upon herself," said the Aunt; "my dear girls, it does not matter how many blessings fall to our lot, if we do not make the best of them; I agree with you that Belle has a fair chance of comfort here, she will have much to do, and much to enjoy."—"That you often tell us is the best

chance to be happy," said Blanche, " to have much to do, and much to enjoy."—" I can enjoy nothing when I am idle," cried Kate. " Because you have been taught to be busy, Kate," said her Aunt, " and it is perhaps happy for you, that you are forced to employ yourself; your state in life demands it. Those, whose fate does not oblige them to work, are often wretched, because they are idle, this is one of the evils of wealth; so you see all states have their evil and their good. Let us be thankful for our share of good; let us be willing to make others the sharers of our blessing. 'To enjoy is to obey.'"

PART III.

THE HAPPY PARTY.

In coming from the farm they saw a very pretty sight. A lady, who lived in a pleasant cottage in the valley, was seated in her garden playing on a guitar, whilst her three children were dancing before her. In a moment Blanche and

Kate had run through the gate to look at them. Their Aunt stopped at the paling but told them to go on, and join the merry dance. "May we, Aunt?" asked Kate. "Surely, my love, we know these children and their mother well, and it is as much our duty to rejoice with them that rejoice, as to mourn with those who mourn."—"I am mighty glad of that," said Blanche, and behold them footing it away on the soft green turf. The Aunt joined the lady, and sang the merry air the latter played; the guitar sounded better, when joined by the voice. The dance was more mirthful

when five instead of three threaded its mazes. It was a fine summer's eve, cool but dry, balmy and mild. Time passed away quickly; after having been pleased and made others pleased, the groupe parted. The widow, cheered and happy, led her merry little ones into the house. The Aunt, gay and content, walked home with her young charge. "What a pleasant dance we have had!" cried Blanche. "Yes," said Kate, "I am glad we joined the party, we made them joyous and ourselves so too. I am glad we joined them, are not you, Aunt?"—"Yes, my dear,

very glad. Be happy and make happy, is you know my merry motto."—" I thought you meant to soothe woe and relieve distress when you talked of making happy."—" That is one of the modes by which we can dispense gladness, to be sure; but it is not the only one. I am a great friend to harmless mirth, it gladdens the human breast and opens the heart of man to man. To be cheerful together, is a sure and pleasant way of joining ourselves to our neighbours and friends. He who made the world so smiling, formed us also to be gay."

THE HEN AND CHICKENS.

THE visit to the farm-yard made the girls turn with fresh pleasure to their own little court and their own poultry ; whilst Kate fed the larger fowls, from a basket under her arm, Blanche knelt down, and held a dish of softer food, for the hen and the young chickens within

their wicker coop; this little brood had been a source of much pleasure. In a corner of the cow-house, Kate had first found their pretty white hen sitting on five eggs; her Aunt told her some more eggs had better be placed under her, as she could cover, and give warmth to twelve or fourteen. "But, Aunt, she will not let any one approach, and pecks at my fingers, even if I try to feed her."—"Well, we must see what can be done," was the Aunt's reply, and she took a basket full of fine fresh eggs and went to the nest. The hen, at first, seemed ruffled and angry,

but when an egg was held out to her, she raised her breast a little, and with her bill, helped to receive and place the egg under her bosom. In this manner she took ten eggs, and then would have no more. "She finds she has now as many as she can cover and keep warm," said the Aunt, "therefore she will not receive any more."—"What sense, what instinct!" cried the girls, charmed with the scene, "how useful her bill is to her."—"Yes, it is her third hand," said the Aunt, "with her bill she will daily turn each egg, so that each part shall be duly warmed; and she will never quit her nest for more than a few minutes at a time, for fear

her eggs should be harmed by the cold." —" Oh! the good creature," cried Kate. " She will do all this for three weeks," added her Aunt, " for three long weeks, and nothing will divert her from her duty; nothing will draw her from her loved nest, and she will become thin and weak from watching and little food, yet she will fulfil her duty. Such is the instinct given her by the great Author of nature! I often think that human mothers would act better towards their children, did they listen more to the dictates of their hearts, their hearts which our Father in heaven warms and inspires."

THE WELCH HARPER.

From the court-yard a wicket led into a green wooded lane, and as the three rambled forth, careless whither they roved, sure of finding beauty in all around, they came at a turn of the path in view of a strange object. It was a very old man, seated beneath an

oak tree ; his hat lay on the violet bank on which he was placed, and he was playing a Welch air on a Welch harp. He was no beggar, his dress was decent, and his figure robust. When his song was ended, for he sang as well as played, the ladies went up to him and heard his story. He was one of the few harpers that were yet to be found in Wales, the sad remnants of those aged bards, who, in times of yore, were so dear and so common in that land of vales and mountains. His cot, on the brow of a cliff, far away among the rocky wooded heights, had been blown

down one stormy night. It was old, he said, like himself, and like himself no longer able to withstand the tempest's power. "So, lady, I am come, in my old age, to seek a shelter in these more peaceful valleys."—"And have you found a refuge worthy your grey hairs?"—"Aye, lady, indeed have I, our young Lord Glenmore has given me a cot, in that snug nook, in the deep forest, there, where the clear spring trickles, and the high trees meet." —"You speak like a poet, good harper."—"I was one once," he said, and sighed and then played a soft dirge on his wild harp. The tears came into his eyes, and into those of his hearers,

on a sudden he dashed away his tears, and his fingers struck a sprightly measure "Why should I weep," he cried as he finished the gay air, "I, who have so much to make me rejoice? Come to my cottage, lady, my dame will welcome you, and you will see what comfort my young Lord has heaped on me. He is young and gay, but he does not forget his poor tenants; he has the power and the will to do good; he wrote, with his own hands, his orders for my comfort; it was little trouble to him; but how great, how very great the blessing to us! Oh! if all lords were so thoughtful and so active!"

THE HARPER'S COTTAGE.

The ladies did not forget the old harper; and not many days passed before they sallied forth to search for his lowly cottage. They wound through the mazes of the wood, treading on dry leaves and crackling boughs, and scaring the squirrel from its nook, and

the dove from her lone haunts. The sound of the gurgling stream, dashing down the mountain's side, guided their steps, and drew them to the very spot. The harper and his aged wife were seated by their blazing fire, and the ladies were soon seated with them. Both looked cheerful and happy, though both had known much sorrow; but just ready to finish the journey of life, they said they had done with this world's care. Nothing can be more cheering than the sight of a gay old age! It seems to speak a long and blameless life; it seems to speak, a body unhurt

by vice and folly, a mind unstained by crime or guilty thoughts. "And have you no children?"—"We have had three; two gallant boys, who died for their country, and our youngest son, now a brave sailor."—"And you see him sometimes?"—"Always, when he can come to us, and he never comes with empty hands: that shawl, his mother wears, he brought her, and this purse with gold in it, he gave me, oh! he is a dear good boy."

The happy parents were never tired of talking of this loved child, and Kate and Blanche smiled and wept, as they heard of the comfort and joy, a kind son could dispense to his aged parents.

As they slowly walked home, they spoke of all they had seen and felt, and the good Aunt made many remarks. "You see, my dears, how the pains and weakness of old age can be soothed, by the love and duty of tender children; you see that when all other feelings have passed away, a parent's love survives. Ah! nor time, nor absence, can destroy a parent's love! children should bear this in mind, and omit no chance of giving joy to those, who perhaps depend on them for all their joy, who once were the source of all their own."

THE POACHER.

In the wildest part of the wood, just where it bounded the heath, the party were started by seeing a man rush out before them. He had a gun in his hand, and would have fled, but in his fright he had broken his wooden leg, and soon fell to the ground.

The kind Aunt drew away her girls from the presence of the rude clown, and calling out to him, that she would send some one to succour him, she moved forward as quickly as she could. From the village they sent a peasant to this helpless cripple, and, as they paced homewards, the Aunt told her girls his story. "That young man was once rich and honest. He is the son of a worthy farmer, whose fate I will tell you, when I have done telling that of his son. Young Godfrey, for that is his name, gave way to habits of sloth and self-will; of course he soon became

tired of having nothing to do, so he wanted to find them who would talk to him and amuse him. The busy would not give up their time to this slothful youth, so he went among the idle, among those like himself. He rambled about all day, and spent the night in drinking, and all sorts of folly; his health was lost, his money was spent; he became sickly and feeble, poor and wretched; his temper was spoilt: the merry boy became the peevish brutal man. In vain his friends prayed, and his father wept; he heeded them not, and going on from folly to crime,

he became a poacher. A poacher is a lawless person, who kills and steals game. In one of his nightly prowlings, he was caught in a trap, set for such thieves, and his leg was broken, so it was cut off, and he had a wooden leg; all this pain and disgrace did not cure him; you see he goes on in his wild career, and I tremble to think how it will end. Ah! the first step in vice is the first step in sorrow. Happy they who listen to advice, and stop short whilst they can."

THE UNHAPPY FATHER.

"And now for the father's sad tale," added the good Aunt. "One very cold day last winter, when the ground was frozen hard, I went out to visit a sick child in the village. Crossing the heath on my return home, I saw, beneath a tree, the figure of an old man. On hear-

ing my approach he arose, and, kneeling before me, he besought my pity. A few rags barely hid his frozen limbs, and want and sorrow wrinkled his time-worn face. I stopped to hear his story, and learn how I could best serve him. Alas! it was the wretched father of Godfrey. 'He has spent all my money, madam, but that I could have borne, had it gone by ill-luck, or in any honest way, but he has brought my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave by his vices. Oh! when I held him in my arms, my first pretty baby, when I saw him on my knee, my loved and only son, I little

thought of all the sorrow he was to heap upon me! His mother died whilst he was an infant, and I mourned for her, but now I am glad she did not live to see what I have seen. And I have nobody to blame but myself, I was too good to him; I let him have his own way too much; all my friends said you indulge the lad too much; you will repent it, and so I do, so I do.' His tears here choaked his voice, I tried to comfort him, he shook his head, and said, 'what comfort is there for a father, whose only child deserts him, whose only child is a disgrace to him?

there is no comfort for me on this side the grave; if I had but a hovel, where I could hide my wretched head, and not shew the world to what my son has humbled me.' Love, you see a father's love was yet alive, and willing to shield the very child from whom sprang all his woes.

"You may be sure, I found a shelter for the poor man, and he died soon after, with his last words, sending his blessing and his pardon to his cruel son. Such is the force of a parent's love! such are the evils a child may inflict!"

THE PINK AND WHITE TULIP.

The sad story of guilt and grief had so much hurt the two girls, that for some days they could think of nothing else, and became grave and mournful. To revive their spirits, their Aunt took them to walk in the noble gardens of Lord Glenmore; among the beds of

flowers was a plot of tulips of the finest forms, and the brightest colours; one of the tulips the Aunt picked, and gave to Kate. It was a double one, of a snowy brightness, with the edges tinted in shades of the richest crimson; nothing could be more lovely, and Kate said she would draw and paint it, as soon as she got home. "That is one of the uses of drawing and painting, Kate, to preserve an image of the lovely objects that nature scatters around us. When you have done this piece, we will take it to our friend, the widow; she is fond of flowers, and will value

your sketch. Thus by your skill, in this charming art, you will not only preserve a picture of this lovely flower, but you will please one, who has pleased you, and deserves this mark of your regard."

Many other fine shrubs and plants were seen in the grounds and gardens; but no object gave them more joy, than their poor man digging away in one corner. He looked well, and seemed happy, and was kindly spoken of, by the bailiff of Lord Glenmore, who told them the poor fellow worked hard and was very grateful. And the man took off his ragged hat, and made a bow so humble, so thankful, it was cheering

to look upon him. It was cheering to think a fellow creature had been saved from sorrow, and placed where he could earn his bread with decent pride. "Do not let us think how often we have been misled by the poor," said the good Aunt, "let us only think of such as this man, who was a real object of distress, who has proved honest and grateful. It is better to take any trouble than to let *one* case of real distress pass without aid. How great is the reward for all our trouble, when we can gaze upon one eye lighted up to gladness through our efforts!"

THE DEAD GOLDFINCH.

KATE and Blanche had a bird, which they had long fed and nursed with the tenderest care. One day it was found dead on the floor of the room, its little feet shrunk on its body, its wings outspread and its head bloody; how did this happen? Blanche wept and blamed

Kate; Kate wept and blamed Blanche. Nothing but reproach and mourning was to be heard: the Aunt came in to inquire into the matter. Both the girls began speaking at the same time, each blaming the other. "I do not like this," said the Aunt, "this is neither just nor kind; I do suppose you both have been to blame, and I must tell you, that in this instance as in all others, it does not lessen our own faults to prove that others have erred with us. Indeed, I think it adds to our fault thus to accuse and reproach others. One of you left the cage on the very edge of

the table it seems, and the other forgot to fasten the door of the cage, with the care it ought to have been done. Thus both were to blame, and it would please me more, and be more a sign of virtue in you, if you would each lament your own error, and not rudely upbraid each other."

The two girls felt the good sense of their dear friend's remarks and saw their error. The very last Sunday they had heard a fine sermon, on the text of the mote and the beam, and they had said at the time, what a good sermon it was, and how just, and wise, and true was every part of it. Yet, behold! within

a little week, each word and sentence in it was forgotten. Such is often the fate of good advice. It is hoped the advice given in this little book will not so soon pass away, but that all those who read of Kate and Blanche, and their good Aunt, will bear in mind their sayings and their doings; and then, like them, they will learn to profit by what happens around them. They will learn to turn each event of life to some good purpose, either for themselves or others, and thus earn that cheerful old age, which they have just had described to them in the harper's tale.

PART IV.

THE GOOD SISTER.

"COME, Charles, and I will tell you all the tales I can think of, so be still and hear me."

Janet was left an orphan very young, and she had a little brother and a little sister to share her sad fate. It was a pretty sight to see her and them; she, working at a table, with a basketful

of work upon it, little Paul trying to read, and little Jessy standing by him helping him to spell, and find out the hard words. Janet, when she found herself alone in the world, was very sad, but she had no time for sorrow, she had to take care of her dear little ones, teach them, work for them, play with them; she hired a small neat room in which they all lived, and the smiles and kisses of Paul and Jessy were her sweetest comfort and reward. She used to rise early, and whilst they yet slept, she was busy. Jessy was very proud when she could do anything to help her dear

sister, and Paul was all joy, when he had a job to do for her, or an errand to run. The neighbours were very kind to the orphans, for when people behave well and help themselves, every body is willing to help them. What a seeming small service is welcome to the poor and friendless! a basket of fruit, a half worn garment, even a few kind words. But Janet was not idle, nor wholly leaning on her friends for food and raiment. No, she earned a little money by her needle, and she made the best of all that was given her, and an old uncle used to send her a crown every Monday. How much good did this crown produce! part of it paid the rent,

and the rest was spent in bread and milk, and fuel, soap, and candles. Ah! how many things we want before we deem ourselves in comfort. Janet was thankful to procure those most needed, and without a sigh gave up all else. "If I can but keep myself in health to work for my two dear ones, and if I can but see them well and merry I shall be content." So said Janet, and when the weather was fine she would send the children out to play in the fields, and sometimes go with them herself, as a treat. I think we must call this story, "The good Sister."

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

I ONCE knew two charming little girls, and a smiling boy, who were so happy, so happy. They loved each other fondly, and what was the joy of one was the joy of all. I can fancy I see them now, seated all three at a table, their heads closely meeting, as they all read the same book, or looked at the same pictures. Their parents were rich, and

could afford them many fine things, but their chief good arose from love, and concord.

If one was in trouble, the others would unite to help him out of it; and, if one was sick, he was sure of at least two good nurses. Had one a toy or a cake, it was worth nothing till shared with the other two, and if you pleased one, you were sure to please all. No noise, no murmurs were heard, where they dwelt. There was much laughing indeed, and some singing; much chatting, and much dancing. If one played a tune on the piano, the other two would stand

by and sing to the merry music. All three could dance in a reel, so a reel was the chosen dance, and for the tune, all sung it as they danced. Was a letter to be witten, one would write and the others help to spell the words, and think what was best to say. Was a lesson to be learnt, there was such hearing and prompting, and helping, that the lesson was soon learnt by all. With the early lark they sprang from their beds to meet each other, and not till the glow-worm was shining on the dark turf did they part, with many tender good-nights, always at peace with each

other, they were so with all the world. No harsh words passed their lips, no dark frowns gloomed their brows. They were not pretty, but people thought them lovely, because their looks were so sweet and gentle. They were not very clever, but people called them very clever, because their manners were so mild, and frank, and pleasing. By their conduct these three dear children caused their own bliss, and gained the love and esteem of all around them. I should think to copy them would be very easy and very pleasant; suppose, Charles, you try!

THE OLD GRANDFATHER.

Once upon a time, as the story-book says, there lived an old man, in a snug little cottage. There was only one room, and one door, and one window, and a small garden on the side. Old as the poor man was, he used to go out to work in the fields, and he would come home at night so tired and so weak, with his tools on his shoulder, and his hard-earned loaf tied up in his bag. And

who do you think used to meet him at his cottage door? two children, the little ones of his son, a boy and a girl. They were too young to work, except to weed the garden, or fetch water from the brook, or pick up stones in the meadows. For such little jobs, the farmers would pay them with a few old clothes, and the bread the aged grandsire earned, with what fruits and things grew in the garden, just kept them from starving. In winter, when it was cold, they had no lamp and very little fire, so they used to huddle close to each other for warmth, the girl on

one knee and the boy on the other, and listen to the old man. Sometimes he would tell them droll tales, sometimes he would teach them a prayer or a hymn, sometimes he would talk to them of their father, who was at sea, and of their mother who was in the grave. And then they would nestle in the old man's bosom, and so lying down on their straw pallet, they would all fall into sweet slumber.

Each year the old man grew weaker, but then his children each year grew stronger; as he ceased to labour, they began to toil. Oh! what joy to work for him, who had so long worked for

them. Things were mending each day at the cottage, for four young hands could do more than two old ones, but yet they were badly off.

One stormy night a stranger knocked at the cottage door. It was the sailor, the long absent son and father. He had saved a little money, and was come to live and die in his native cot. What joy! what comfort! The old man worked no more. His son and grandson worked for him, and his girl nursed him, and all loved him, so his life was calm and blest, and his death was holy and peaceful.

THE KIND FATHER.

In one moment joy may be changed into mourning; but let us never forget that in one moment also, mourning may be turned into joy! I will tell you a story to the point.

A woodman, called Wilfred, had an only son, named Maurice. Maurice was the comfort of his father, and the delight of all his friends. He was humane, active, cheerful; where he worked,

labour was soothed by mirth; where he was present, leisure was cheered by sport. He always hoped the best, and was ready for the worst; gay yet prudent, careful yet generous.

One stormy winter's night, all of a sudden, he was missing. No friend, no neighbour, knew what was become of him, his father sought for him in each hamlet, and village around. No tidings of him could be any where gained, except that a cotter's boy thought he had seen him on that fearful night, on the top of the cliff that hangs over the sea. It was enough; all now believed that

he had fallen from the awful height, and was lost in the wild waves below. His father pined and became ill, his friends mourned. "Ye should not thus mourn, as those without hope," said the worthy pastor of the parish, "he may be yet alive."—"That is not possible," cried the weeping parent. "All things are possible," was the pious answer of the curate. Sick, weak, and hopeless, Wilfred took to his bed, and was thought to be dying. The doctors said so, his nurse said so. "Perhaps, he may revive," said the curate. "That is not possible," cried the nurse and the doctor. 'All things are possible," was again the reply of the good pastor. One calm night in spring, the curate was called

to pray with the dying man. His friends were weeping around him, he himself thought he had not an hour to live, but the curate did not think so. Some one knocks, the latch is quickly raised, the door opens, in an instant Maurice is in the arms of his father! Oh, joy, oh! bliss! how can this be! Maurice it seems had fallen into the hands of smugglers, who kept him at sea with them, till by a lucky chance he made his escape from them. The sight of him, was as if life had been poured into the veins of his father. Did he die? no, he lived to prove and to own, that in one moment our sorrow may be turned into joy.

THE POOR WIDOWER.

When poor Mary died, her husband was wild with grief, for she was young and tender, and good, and he looked forward to many years of happy life. He would not hear the voice of pity, nor listen to the words of comfort. At first, his friends did not blame his grief, for they knew how much he had lost; but when against reason, and against duty, he would indulge his regrets, they

ceased to pity, and began to reprove. This made him worse, till at last he sank under the struggle of his feelings, and became very very ill. His was a sickness, no doctors could cure, no nurse assuage; yet he had a good nurse, and a good doctor, who did all they could for him. But what can be done for one, who would take no advice, and profit by no kindness? The mind and the body depend much on each other; when the one droops the other soon sinks. The senses of the mourner became weak and clouded, and his reason seemed shaken. He had one child,

but he would never see her; he said the sight of her would kill him, she was so like her dear mother. Thus he shut himself out from all the comforts yet left him, and then said he had no comforts. This was all very weak and very wicked.

One morning, when his doctor was sitting with him, trying in vain to reason him out of his folly, and his nurse was coaxing him to swallow some broth, his little girl by chance passed by the room. The door was a little open, so she came in, and took the bason of broth from the table, and, holding it to her father, she lisped the words she heard the nurse saying. "Do take some, pray do, for the sake of your

poor child." She did not know who he was, but she saw he was pale and weak, and she knew the nurse well, and she thought to please and help nurse. The sick man started at hearing the soft low voice of the little creature, and the tears came into his eyes, as he looked upon her tiny figure and smiling face. He caught her in his arms and kissed her, and felt all the folly of which he had been guilty, in shutting his eyes to the comfort his Mary had left him, in not having done his duty to the child given to him. He soon began to revive and to repent of his past weakness. He soon felt that all blessings were not lost in one; that all duty is not comprised in that of mourning for the dead.

THE GOOD LADY.

" Seeing is believing; I never will believe any one, until I know her distress is real. But I never will turn any one from my door, without trying to find out the truth of the story," so said a lady, and putting on her bonnet, she went to seek the abode of want. Down this dirty lane, and through that miry alley, and up a dark passage, and across a muddy court, and into such a filthy

hovel, and up such crazy stairs. Her limbs were quite tired, and her spirits quite worn out, but her heart was as warm and as fresh as ever, and her wishes as kind. "Never, never, let us stop short in the course of duty, in the efforts of pity." Such were her thoughts as she paced forwards towards the scene of distress. She was there at last, and what a scene! Six children and their starving mother, without food, without fire, almost without clothing, so thin, so pale, so haggard. "And, I was eating a hearty breakfast when this beggar came to my door, oh! if I

had sent her away without hope and left her without help! The lady's heart beat fast, as these thoughts passed through it, and she heaved a heavy sigh, and wiped away a few bitter tears. But then rousing herself, she felt there was much to be done. Two babies, twins, were in the woman's arms as she rose from her only chair to welcome the lady. The eldest girl was seated on the only stool, holding a cup of cold water to a sickly infant on her knee; a boy was mounted on a piece of wood, trying to find something to eat on the shelf; and a younger girl was running to hide herself in the ragged bed, having only a scanty garment thrown about her chilled body.

The woman had no need to beg for pity, her state besought it, claimed it. "Were you at my house this morning?"—"Ah! no, madam, I could not crawl so far; besides how could I leave my little ones? It was a kind neighbour that spoke for me, heaven bless her!" —"Thus the poor can help the poor," said the lady, "and thus it is that real distress is found in holes and corners, unknown and modest." This lady was not rich, but yet she placed this sad groupe in a state of comfort. She had old clothes to give, and she could contrive cheap broth, and she could spare a little money. I think one never misses what one gives to the poor and needy.

POOR HANNAH.

Fanny, and her brother Horace, were walking in the fields near their house, when they saw a little girl crying very much. She was all in rags and tatters, and looked very pale and half starved. "What is the matter, poor child?" asked Horace. "Oh! I am a wretched creature," said she. "Where do you come from?" asked Fanny. "From the village of Moswood," said the child. "From that village beyond the forest?" said Horace, pointing to the place he

meant. "Yes, Sir."—"Bless me!" cried Fanny holding out her hand with surprise, for Moswood was the village whence they had just come, after spending a pleasant week at their Uncle's who lived there. "Do tell us your story," said Horace. The girl between her sobs told her little tale of woe, in words like these. "I am a poor orphan, but a rich farmer took me into his service, where I lived content, and healthy. I used to weed the garden, pick up stones, gather wood, and do a hundred other jobs; I was not idle, so they gave me clothes and food. But a week ago they scolded me, and beat me, and turned me out of the house, and since then I have lived on turnips, and ber-

ries, and water, and I am dying of hunger; for now I have no friend in the wide world, and have lost my all, my good name!"—"And how did you lose your good name?"—"I do not know, miss, they were all so angry and so rough, I only heard some words about a silver thimble and some scissors, and then they called me a thief, and I cried out I am no thief, and then they beat me and called me a liar, but, oh! I am no liar!"—"Tell me your name, quick, quick," said Fanny. "Hannah," said the child. Fanny turned pale, and her brother said, "Surely this is not the girl that our Uncle's Bailiff Andrew—" "Yes, yes, I am that poor, poor girl."—"And it was I that lost

the thimble, and it was I that said in a careless way, that I dared say the young weeder had got it," cried out Fanny bursting into tears. "And you found the thimble again?"—"Yes, in my work-box up stairs."—"And you said nothing of having found it?"—"No, I did not, I did not think I had done any harm; dear Horace, do not look so angry, I see I have been very cruel and very wicked. With my careless words I have been the ruin of this friendless girl. But let us go home and explain all, and save her from further hurt, and oh! *never*, *never*, let us speak ill of the poor and the friendless, unless we are quite, *quite* sure they are to blame."

FEARFUL FANCIES.

Old Mathew, and his young neighbour Joe, were coming home from the fair one night, loaded with some things which they had bought. It was a lovely moonlight night, and the air was soft, and the dew was cool upon the turf on which they paced. They walked on stoutly, speeding the time with droll stories and merry chat, till they came in sight of a house that had long stood empty, and

was half in ruins. All at once Mathew became grave, and Joe silent, and they passed the house as quickly as they could. When they had quite passed it, "I wonder why you are so grave all of a sudden, Mathew!" said Joe. "And I wonder why all at once you are so silent, Joe!" said Mathew, and both made believe to laugh and be merry, but both cast a look behind at the house, and both began to walk quickly and almost to run. A sort of crackling noise was heard: "Dear me," cried Joe, "what a horrid sound!" Soon after a kind of twitter was sounded: "Mercy upon

us," cried Mathew, "what dreadful notes." Cold, trembling, aghast, afraid of they knew not what, these two stout men, who would have braved the cannon's mouth, quaked, and tried to run away. Just at this moment, the clouds lightly floating away, the moon shone in a flood of glory, and all around was clear as on a sunny noon. The panting men stopped to take breath, and threw a fearful glance behind. Mathew beheld a scathed oak, the dry and leafless boughs of which swung and crackled in the breeze. "Ha! ha!" he said and laughed, "your brittle sprays, Mr. Oak, have made this fine brave fellow shake and tremble thus!" and he jeered poor Joe. Mathew's

loud laugh scared a bird from its secret bower, and as it flitted past them, it sounded again its soft low notes. "Ho! ho! cried Joe," it is your strains, Mrs. Bird, that have frighted this gallant hero, this merry Mathew." The friends now both laughed, and owned the folly of their fancies. "What a sad thing is fear," said Mathew; "when once we let it come over us, how quickly it masters us! Fear made a tender oak-spray seem to crackle with horrid sound. Fear made a timid bird seem to utter dreadful notes. Well, we shall be wiser the next time, and think, and look, and feel, before we yield ourselves to fear, and on such a glorious night too!"

SPEAK THE TRUTH.

"IT is my doll, and he wants it," cried Susan, running to her papa and mamma, all in tears and anger. "I only wanted to look at it, you cross girl!" said Edmund, running after her, and trying to snatch the doll from her. "Hollo, young man!" said his father, "do you use your strength only to oppress the weak. Fie! I thought it was the first duty of a man to protect a woman,

not abuse her."—"Yes, papa, but Susan is such a pet, and such a peevish little girl."—" No, Sir," said Susan, " it is you who are a tyrant, and a rude, rude boy."—" I am no tyrant, miss"—"Yes, Sir, you are."—" Silence if you please, both of you," cried their father, and their mother drawing Susan towards her asked her how the fray began. Now Susan was a girl of truth, and when she began to think over the matter, she found she had been cross, as her brother said; and like a noble child, she would not change the truth to hide her fault, so she blushed, and was silent and cast

down her eyes. Edmund therefore came forward to speak, and he did say a few words bold enough at first, as thus, "Papa, now I will tell you all about it, I wanted to see Susan's doll, and so I, I," here he began to stammer. "Speak on," said his father, "you wished to see Susan's doll, and you asked her to let you look at it." Edmund was now quite silent, he too blushed and cast down his eyes, whilst Susan peeped at him slyly through a corner of her eye, and smiled upon him, with a pretty saucy smile. He felt willing to smile also, but he tried to look grave. "As Edmund does not go on to tell us *all about it*," said his father archly, "suppose, my little Sue, you begin the story where he left

off," so Susan said in a kind of whisper. "I would not have kept it, if he," then she stopped and added. "I believe I was cross."—"No, no," cried Edmund loudly, "you were not cross, till I was rude. Papa," said he, firmly, "I wanted to snatch the doll from her, and that's the truth of the matter." His father shook hands with him and said, "That's my fine fellow! always speak the truth even when it shews your faults." Susan held up her little mouth to her brother, and he kissed her, and called her his pretty little Sue, and their mother said, "There is nothing like speaking the truth for ending quarrels, and making us all live in peace."

FIRST TRY GENTLE MEASURES.

WILLIE, and his cousin Grace, were coming from church one fine Sunday morning, when, in crossing the meadow, they heard and saw strange things. Three idle boys were playing at marbles, and swearing at each other in a most dreadful manner. Willie drew his cousin's arms closer into his, and led her as quickly as he could from the horrid scene. But it took some minutes to get out of sight of them, and still more time to get out of the way of hearing

them. Grace saw they were dirty and in rags, and she heard words which made her shudder with horror and with pity. "Poor creatures! they do not know what they say," cried she, as she moved past them. "I dare say they have no friends to teach them better."—"They ought to be soundly thrashed," said Willie, "I dare say that would do them good. I know them, they are sad rascals, Grace, my dear, and do not deserve your pity."—"Do not say so, Willie, perhaps a little pity and kindness would be of more use to them than all your thrashings."—"Perhaps it would, my sweet Grace, if you were the speaker," said Willie; "for I know when I am in a rage, your gentle voice

softens me down in a moment, and all my master's frowns do not touch my heart, half so much as one of your little angry shakes of the head." Grace smiled and said, "If you find gentle means are best for yourself, why do you not try it for others?"—"Because I am a man, Grace."—"But you might be a *gentle*-man," said Grace, with an arch look. Willie laughed, and they talked on, and it was agreed between them that the word *gentle*-man came from *gentle*, to be mild, and humane, and kind, and not from *genteel*, to be polite, civil, graceful. When this was settled, which took them all the time they were crossing the meadows, and going down the hawthorn lane, they

began to speak again of the poor boys, and by the time they had reached their home they had also settled, that they would try all manner of gentle means of curing these wicked idlers of their bad habits. Grace was to ask her papa to speak kindly to them and to send them to school, and Willie was to stop and reason mildly with them, and both Grace and Willie were to give them little presents of good books, and decent clothes to go to church in. "Well, Grace, dear," said Willie, drawing himself up, and looking like a man, "we must see what can be done for these poor children, at all events their is no harm in trying to help and reclaim them."

SMALL FAULTS OFTEN END IN GREAT ONES.

Eve used to laugh when her mother told her, that if she desired to grow up in goodness, she must avoid the smallest faults, "for, my dear Eve, people do not become bad all at once. No, they begin with thoughts of evil, and making excuses for evil, and doing little things that are not quite right, and so go on in error, till all their virtue is fled." In time Eve found out the justness of her

mother's remarks, and the goodness of her advice. Eve was very fond of fruit, but, for all that, she would not have touched a pear or a plum that did not belong to her, for all the world; and, as for lying and stealing, she thought they were crimes it was not *possible* she could ever commit. But we shall see. Eve very often asked for more fruit than her mamma chose to give her. "There is plenty, mamma, why may I not have more?"—"My dear Eve, learn to restrain your wishes even when you can indulge them. Learn to see things you like, without wanting them, that you

may be able to govern your desires." Thus, when you grow older you will find it easy to exert self-control when needful." Eve felt the good sense of this speech, but she did not allow it to guide her. She used to indulge each whim that came into her head; would eat all the sweet things she could obtain, and buy all the toys she could afford. Soon she had no thought to deny herself any fancy. From eating all the fruit she could buy, or slyly coax out of friends, she went on to pick a peach here, and an apple there. "I will tell if they ask me," thought she; and thus she cheated herself to do what she knew was wrong. No one asked her, and she went on picking and eating

till she had got the habit of helping herself to all she liked, whether she had a right to it or not. It was soon noted that fruit did not remain safe on the side-board, or in the open closet, so her mamma and the servants ceased to leave it about. Eve had got such a habit of eating fruit, that she felt as if she could not now do without it; so at last she stole the key of the store-room, and went in there to eat apples. She ate in such haste and horror that they almost choaked her; her eyes were staring; her heart beating; her limbs trembling. Poor wretched creature! could she call this pleasure? her mind all the time full of that divine command, "Thou shalt not steal!"

GEORGE THE HERO.

When George and his sisters were going to school they all cried as if their hearts would break. Their mother tried to console them. "I know this parting of friends is one of the cruel sorrows of life," said she, "but do not forget, my dear children, that this pain brings us our sweetest pleasure."—"Oh! mother, what is that?"—"The joy of meeting." George wiped his eyes, and

looked as cheerful and as manly as he could to calm his sisters. For he was a dear boy, and always tried to be kind to all and to do good to all When his mother left the room, he took her place, and went on with her efforts to soothe, and comfort the weeping girls. Emma and Lucy could not hear his cheering words, could not look on his rosy face, with a tear in his eye and a smile on his lips, and not be soothed. "We are so happy at home!" said Emma, "and it is such pain to part!" cried Lucy. "I know all that very well," said George, with the air of a

sage, and the firmness of a hero; "I know all that very well, my dear girls, but I also know that our home will seem dearer after this absence, and then the sweets of return will make up for these moments of anguish." The girls smiled upon him, and thought him a very fine fellow; so, to finish their regrets, he added, "winter is not pleasant, but its rigours make us enjoy with double relish the charms of spring." All the party laughed at this sage speech, and George owned that he had learnt it from papa. They went to school; they were so busy there, and had so many playfellows, that time passed swiftly. Easter soon came, and George called to take his sisters home with him. The

chaise rolled quickly along; soon they were at the well-known gates; soon George ran up stairs after his sisters; soon sprang after them into the dear room. Mamma was there and dear papa. The girls were in a moment hugging their mamma, whilst the sage and the hero, master George, stood one instant at the open door to exclaim, "did I not tell you, girls, that the joys of meeting would repay the pangs of parting?" This was all he had time to say; for he, too, wanted to be in mother's arms, and prest to mother's heart. He, too, wanted to feel father's clasping hand, and hear father's dear welcome-home!

THE FAIRING.

Bridget had been a very good girl, and her mamma wished to reward her; so she gave her some money to buy herself what she liked at the fair. This was a double pleasure for Bridget, that she had pleased mamma, and that she could please herself. We shall soon see how she added a third pleasure to her list. It was a fine day, and crowds of people were seen in their best attire, passing

along the lanes and meadows to the fair. Bridget went there with her mother, and saw much to amuse her; besides, she found it a cheering sight, to look upon so many merry happy faces. Friends were meeting friends, some giving presents, some telling the news, some shaking hands, all were gay and blithesome, and a bright sun beamed on many a joyous face. Bridget's mamma led her to a stall where toys and books were sold, and left her to buy what she chose, whilst she herself passed on to chat with a friend she saw in the crowd. Bridget had a pretty baby sister, and

her first purchase was to find some toy for her. When she had bought a book full of pictures for the little Alice, she began to see what she should like best herself: after much thinking and looking, she settled to have either a work-box, or a lovely dressed doll. As she looked at the charming doll, which the woman held in her hand, she heard a plaintive voice behind her, and turning round she saw a very very old man. He was trembling with age and weakness, and held out a ragged hat, saying, "I am poor, and old, and needy!" Poor Bridget felt her heart fill with pity, and she turned from the tempting stall, when thinking she had given the woman at the stall much trouble, she began to reflect whether she ought to

leave it without buying something. So she said to the woman, "I have only bought this book from you, and I have given you some trouble, but I want to let this poor old man have my money." —"Do so, dear child," said the woman kindly; "he wants it more than I do." Bridget with joy gave all the money she had left to the beggar, and he said, "God bless you!" in a tone that came warm from his heart, and went warm to hers. How often did she recall that fervent, "God bless you!" by night and by day it was with her, blessing her, cheering her, making her gladsome. What toy could have given her, half so many pleasant thoughts! half so many real joys! half so many mirthful feelings!

MISTRUST YOURSELF.

THE bells were ringing gaily for church, and the village was pouring out its tenants; all were bound to the holy fane, whose lofty spire was to be seen peeping from amidst the trees. Constance and Basil tripped lightly on the green sward, each with a book under the arm, and beguiling the time with blameless chat. As they moved forwards, Alfred, a worthless youth,

passed them; instead of a book he bore a hoop in his hand: his dress was shabby, and his look mean. "Basil," said Constance, "do not notice that idler; he may do you some harm, but he will not let you do him any good."—"Nonsense, my girl," cried Basil, "he cannot, shall not lead me astray."—"Do not be too sure," said Constance. "You shall see," was the answer. "Good morrow, Alfred."—"The good day to you," said Alfred. "Whither so fast this fine May morning? to church I warrant; and my pretty Constance too." Constance turned away

and walked off to a short distance, then stopped to wait for Basil. But Basil was deep in converse with the new comer, trying, as she thought, to coax him to the church; but, at the end of a few minutes, Alfred drew him from the path and led him off to join some sports. Poor Constance wept, and went alone to church, and when there prayed for her dear Basil. At night he came home, with a broken head and an empty purse. "Ah! Basil, dear, where have you been?"—"To no good, Constance, you may be sure, when Alfred led the way. My dear girl, what a fool I was to rely on my own strength, and put myself in the power of the artful and the wicked." And Basil was

very wretched and blamed his own folly and conceit. Constance sought to console him, and spoke kindly to him thus. "Basil, the past is past for ever, we cannot call it back; but, we can take care, that it shall not happen again. You must never more depend too much upon yourself, for you see you can be tempted to do wrong, even when you know it is wrong; now, if, in future, you avoid Alfred, and mistrust yourself, you will be all the better, for what you have felt to-day. Thus good can be drawn from evil." Basil kissed her, and told her that her advice was very good, and he would follow it, "and your smile, Constance, shall draw me to virtue and to peace."

THE EVENING DUTY.

"How happy we have been all this day," cried Edith to Clare, "so healthy, so busy, so merry. How hungry we were for our nice breakfast of milk and bread, and for all our meals. What a charming walk we had with uncle, and to-night what merry tales he told us. How happy we have been to-day." Now Clare was the eldest and was a very nice girl, and when her sister was

silent she began her account of the day. "We have indeed been two merry damsels since rising morn to latest eve! Our lessons passed the time charmingly, and that new song I learnt is I think the sweetest I ever heard; and how you were pleased with that pretty drawing which mamma said you did so well. But, Edith, I think our greatest pleasure to-day, was taking the broth, and clothes, to that poor widow."—"Yes, that to be sure was one of our best jobs, and I had not forgot it, nor, dearest Clare, have I forgot the little girl, who gave her only sixpence to the

widow's sickly baby." Clare blushed, for it was she who had given the sixpence. "I am thinking,' 'said she, "for people who have been so lucky all the day as we have been, there is one duty above all others to perform."—"I know what you mean, Clare," said Edith, "we ought to offer our thanks to the great God, who has blessed us through the day, and we will do so my dear sister."—"Yes, Edith," said Clare, "and we will make a rule, that during the time we are in our chamber, curling our hair and taking off our clothes, we will always talk of the pleasures of the past day, so that our hearts may be full of thankful feelings."—"True, dear girl, and we will not only talk of the good

we have had, but of the evil we have been saved from. This day we have been free from all pain of body or of mind. This day we have tasted many delights." Their little bosoms glowing with grateful feelings, the two fond sisters knelt down by their bedside, and poured out their hearts in praise and prayer. It was a touching sight to behold them thus kneeling, and in low accents breathing forth their artless praises, their hands clasped, their cheeks flushed, their eyes turned to heaven. All was still around them, and it was holy to think that the low murmurs of these feeble children were wafted to our Father in heaven.

THE JOYS OF SELF-WILL.

"THERE is no joy in life, but in doing just what one pleases," said Conrad. "I don't think so," was the wise answer of his friend Albert. "We shall see," said Conrad. "Now, here is a bitter cold morning, so, as I do not like to be cold, I shall not stir out of the house, but have a fine roaring fire all day, and some clever witty book to amuse me." Saying this Conrad slipt on

a loose but warm dressing gown, poked up the fire, and hung his hat and stick upon the peg behind him. "No cold walking in the mire, no plague of dressing for me. Here I am snug, and sure of being well and free from aches and ailments." Albert laughed to see him so selfish, and so foolish, and left him. Young Albert was active, and willing to serve and oblige, so when he quitted his churlish friend, he walked to see his sick uncle, and to carry him some game he had killed very early in the morning. His uncle was much cheered by his visit and his chat, and

whilst he was with him, he wrote some letters for him, and did many other odd jobs. They dined upon the game, and his uncle said, the pheasant Albert brought was the first meat he had tasted for a long while. After dinner, Albert, leaving his uncle better for his visit, went to his father's farm to give some orders, and took home good accounts of all that was going on there. He then went into his own chamber, and had two hours of close reading, of a book his father wished him to study. By this time tea was ready, and his mother and the little ones were always glad when Albert joined the tea table, he was so merry, and so handy, and so funny. When tea was over he took a

lesson upon the flute, and with the help of his master they had some good music. At nine at night Albert jumped up and said, "I will just run down the street and peep at my *happy* friend, Conrad." When he reached his room the door was locked, so he peeped in at the key hole, and there he saw the *happy* Conrad in a fit of rage and shame. His book had been dashed on the floor, and there it lay; a cup and a bottle, as of physic, stood on the table near him, and he was holding his head as if it ached very much. The servants said Conrad had been cold all day for want of exercise, and he had been sick for want of air. "Poor fellow!" cried Albert. "So much for the joys of the selfish and the idle."

THE WINTER EVENING.

The night was dark and stormy, the wind howled among the trees, and the rain beat on the casements. Phœbe and Mabel were alone; their parents had been called to a sick friend at the next town, and they did not expect to return till morning. At first the poor girls felt sad and lonely, and looked upon each other with mournful eyes, and both sighed, and both were silent. At length, after a long pause, Phœbe roused herself, and said to her sister,

" Really, Mabel, you and I are a couple of silly girls. Here we are in a warm room, with a blazing fire, and a cheerful light, and yet we are mournful. What for, I wonder? because we are idle: come sister, come to the table and the candle and let us employ ourselves." As Phœbe spoke these words she drew her sister to the table, and Mabel was glad to follow her, and to find something to do. It was not long before both were busy; Phœbe was netting a purse, and Mabel had a drawing to finish, and both chatted away all the time, so blithely! they talked of what they had seen and heard, of what they had done, and what they would do; of what they had read of

in books, and of what they had met with in their walks. "This chat makes us recall many thoughts," said Mabel. "Indeed it does," said Phœbe, "and papa says there is no better way of fixing knowledge in the mind, than by talking about it to a dear friend such as you are to me, Mabel."—"And mamma tells me," added Mabel "that it is no bad plan, when one is alone, as when one is in bed for instance, to think over any knowledge one has gained during the day."—"That I know is true," said Phœbe, "for last night I thought over the names of the English kings, from the conquest to the present time, and it was quite a pleasant puzzle for my mind, to arrange them in their

proper places."—"And now," said Mabel, "just now that we talked of the meaning of some hard words, as *Island, land with water all around it*, and other such terms, how our chat fixed the sense in our minds!"

As thus they prattled, the clock struck nine, and the girls owned that the time had passed very quickly, and that they had been merry though the storm raged and the rain fell, so they went to bed, in peace with themselves, and in good humour with all around them.

FINIS.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY COX AND BAYLIS, GREAT QUEEN STREET.