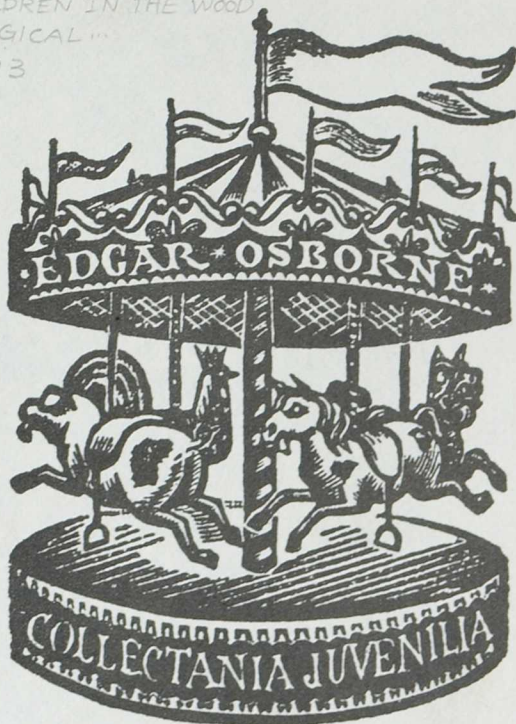


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CHILDREN IN THE WOOD
TRAGICAL

1793



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Baker & the band

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Mr. Belcher
1873

Long Lane
New York



*The tender tale must surely please,
If told with sympathetic ease;
Read then the Children in the Wood,
And you'll be virtuous, and be good.*

THE
TRAGICAL HISTORY
OF THE
CHILDREN in the WOOD.

CONTAINING
A True Account of their Unhappy Fate,
WITH THE
History of their Parents, and their Unnatural
Uncle.

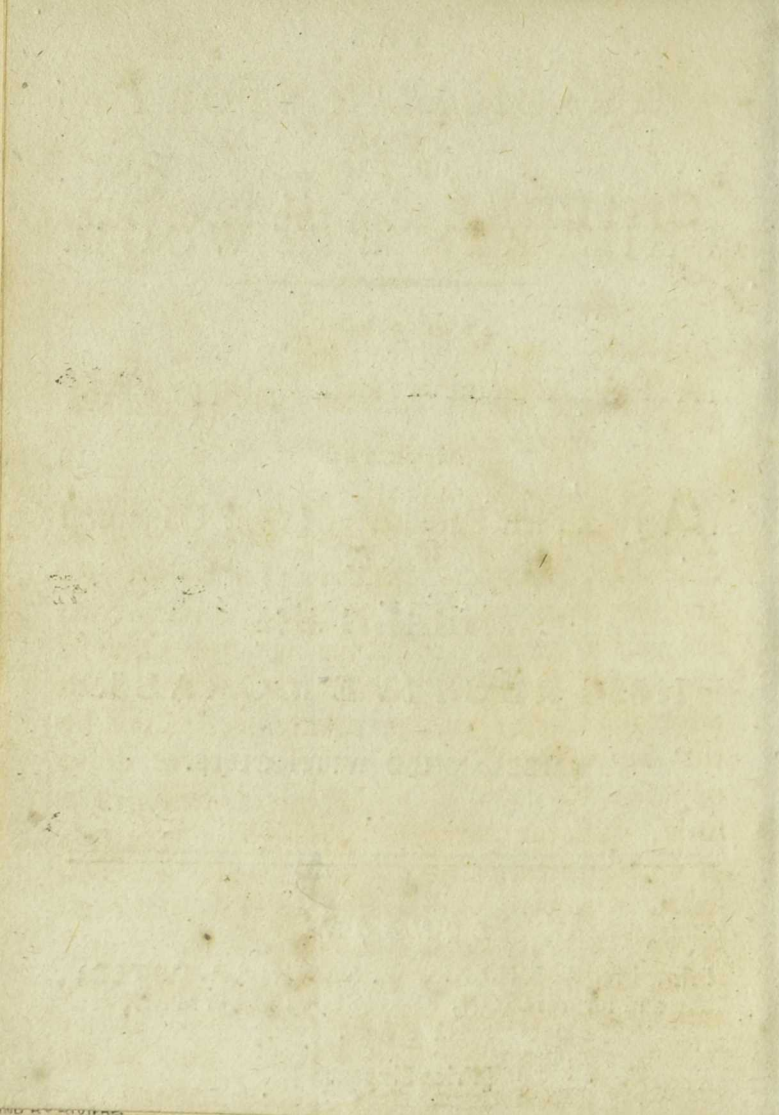
INTERSPERSED WITH
INSTRUCTIVE MORALS.

EMBELLISHED WITH CUTS.

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[Price Sixpence.]



THE CHILDREN in the WOOD.

CHAP. I.

Containing sundry matters necessary for the reader to be acquainted with.

A Gentleman in the north of England, who had gained great riches by merchandize, and great reputation for his honesty and fair dealings, had two sons, both grown to man's estate. *Pisarius* was the name of one, and *Androgus* the other; they were both educated alike, both were esteemed alike by the father, yet their dispositions were quite opposite to each other; *Pisarius* being of a mild, humane temper, always doing good, or endeavouring so to do, so that he was beloved by all who knew him, and so will every one be if they are good, and is not that a great happiness? no doubt it is; then who would not be happy when they may, at the trifling expence of being good? and as all certainly know how, they cannot pretend ig-

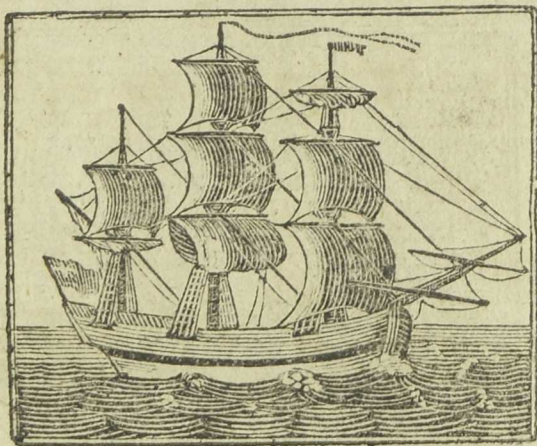
norance, and therefore are not to be forgiven for behaving otherwise.

His brother, *Androgus*, was quite of a different temper, artful and designing, spiteful,



revengeful, and cruel; he could not bear his brother at any rate, on no other account than because nature had so ordered it that he was his elder, tho' *Pisarius*, good-natured soul! would willingly have parted with the advantages arising from his seniority, for the sake of his love, but all his kindness was in vain; the thoughts of his being heir to his father's

estate, still rankled in the breast of his brother *Androgus*, so that he often contrived mischief against his brother, but without success, as Heaven still protected him from all his evil machinations; and we may be always sure of the Divine assistance, while we obey the dictates of virtue and honour.—The envy and malice of *Androgus* encreasing, at length was perceived by the good old man, who, greatly hurt in his mind to find such a difference between his sons, try'd, tho' in vain, by every means he could think of, to soften the wicked and dangerous temper of *Androgus*. At last, having a mind to send a ship to the East in-



dies on adventure, he persuaded him to take the command, which he did, thinking himself happy in having an opportunity of exercising his moroseness over the sailors, and the prospect he likewise had of gaining riches from that country, which abounds in gold and jewels. Every thing being in readiness, he went on board and set sail, to the great joy of his father, who had some hopes that travel and experience might soften his disposition; whether it did or not, will be seen in the sequel. Having thus far disposed of *Androgus*, whom we commit to the mercy of heaven, and the winds and waves, we return to *Pisarius*. He was now about two



and twenty years of age, tall, and very handsome in his person, and so was his brother; but the elder had the old proverb on his side,

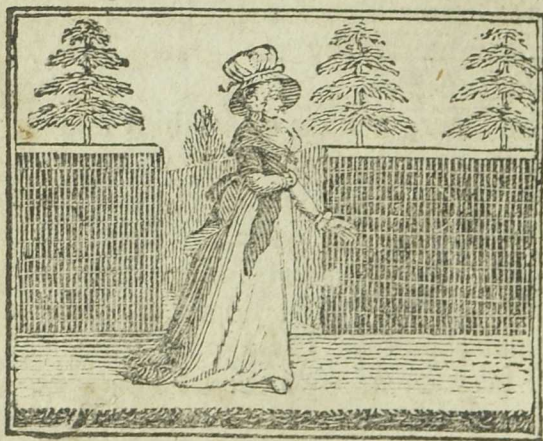
Handsome is as handsome does:

For the gracefulness of his person was not a little heightened by the gratefulness of his disposition.

His father, willing to see him settled, sent for him one day when he was alone, and spoke to him in this manner:—"My dear son, *Pisarius*, you alone are the comfort of my age; the goodness of your mind gives me the most pleasing hopes of your future happiness, and as I am convinced you can never be truly happy without a partner, from the joy I had with your dear mother while she existed—I, therefore, think it adviseable that you marry, if you can find one agreeable to your own mind, of a good and virtuous disposition; therefore, my son, tell me if you have yet seen the person you should like, and you need not fear my approbation."

Pisarius, after thanking his father for his tenderness and kindness, replied, "I must own there is a lady with whom I have often conversed on the topics of virtue and religion;

she is lovely and gentle in her manners, and has fortune sufficient; with her, I think, I could be happy:—but as I have never acted



any thing without your consent, I have never yet opened my mind to *Eliza*, for that is her name; but, as it is your desire I should wed, I will, with your permission, solicit her to that effect."

Accordingly that evening he waited on the object of his desires; he found her in a grove where they often used to walk, meditating on the goodness of Providence and the duty of religion; he entered the grove with-

out being perceived, and willingly retired awhile, as he heard her singing, with the



sweetest voice that ever was tuned to Divine praise, the following ejaculation:

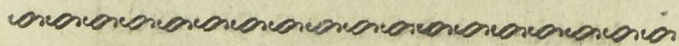
Pleasing all around the scene,
Soft, delightful, and serene;
Sweetly on the bending spray,
Hark! the linnet's tender lay.
Like the birds upon the spray,
Warbling forth the grateful lay,
Let us in the chorus join,
To the Power alone Divine.

Every heart and every voice
Should in gratitude rejoice;
Great, merciful, and benign,
Is the Power alone Divine.

Pisarius, when she had finished the strain, advanced to where she was sitting, and after the usual civilities were performed, they entered into discourse on various topics, till in the end he introduced the subject on which he came. *Eliza* received this declaration of his passion with a modesty, yet sweetness, peculiar to herself, and begged a little time, as the subject was serious; yet did not seem displeased, for indeed she had long conceived as tender sentiments for him as what informed his own breast. From this time their visits were more frequent, and they were more open in respect to their mutual passion; and in a very short time they agreed to be united



at the altar of Hymen. The wedding was celebrated with the utmost joy and decency, and honoured with the presence of the principal inhabitants; and the poor were made to rejoice on the occasion, as they were filled with plenty of good cheer; and all the country round demonstrated their satisfaction on the happy occasion. Thus far in regard to the wedding it was thought necessary to relate, as from this happy couple the unfortunate *Children in the Wood* had their existence: and in the next chapter we hope to give our reader a satisfactory account of the new-married couple, and so at present take our leave.



CHAP. II.

Containing conjugal felicity; the birth of a son, and death of a father.

BY desire of *Pisarius's* father, he resided at the family mansion-house, as their presence revived the spirits of the old gentleman, who, now in years, wanted company to keep him from falling into a melancholy

which was natural to him. *Pisarius* was truly happy with his amiable *Eliza*; every day added to their felicity. Contention was a stranger to them; or, if they contended, it was only which should most oblige the other, so that they were reckoned a pattern of conjugal felicity. Humanity and charity were their characters, and the blessings of all ranks attended them wherever they went; and cer-



tainly blessings always will attend the charitable and humane; as nothing can please the Almighty more than relieving the distressed,

feeding the hungry, and comforting the afflicted, which was always their care to do whenever they knew of it; and 'tis hoped our little readers (as for such it is chiefly intended) will profit by the example, remember to imitate such exalted minds, in doing still as they would be done by, and assisting others in distress, as they expect to be assisted should they be distressed. The great Creator of all things has so ordered it, that our very existence depends upon one another: and it is certainly our duty to watch over the unfortunate, and give them that relief which is not in their power otherwise to come at, and not only be charitable in your actions, but likewise in your judgments, remembering *to judge not, lest ye be judged*. Those who appear vicious, condemn not entirely, as they may possess some virtues; but remember the story of the good Samaritan, who, although a man of bad life, relieved the traveller who had been robbed and wounded by thieves, when even the Priest and Levite passed by on the other side of the way. But to return to the subject: The happiness of *Pisarius* and *Eliza* was uninterrupted; and, to increase

their mutual satisfaction, the charming *Eliza* became pregnant, and in time was brought to-bed of a fine boy, to whom they gave the name of *William*. But scarce was the rejoicing over when sorrow succeeded; but we must not complain, as our lives are checquered black and white; and as perfect happiness is not our lot below, we must expect our share of sorrow as well as joy.

The good old man was taken ill; and finding the hour of dissolution near, he called



his son and daughter to him, and spoke to them as follows: "My dear children, I find

that my hours of life in this world are drawing near; I have lived long enough, as I have, by the assistance of the Almighty, discharged my duty as a man; to you I recommend to do the same, and continue in that path in which you have so happily set out. I have one care that troubles my mind at my departure—(turning to *Pisarius*)—Should your brother return, endeavour to break his temper (if it continues the same) by kindness, and meet his passion with that philosophy which, I thank God, you are master of. If he should have met with misfortunes, let him share in your good; so that gratitude may oblige him to confess his errors, and make him renounce them:—promise me this, receive my blessing—and farewell for ever!” Here, with but just a groan, he expired;—leaving *Pisarius* and *Eliza* drowned in sorrow:—all the tenderness of his father came at once into his mind, and every virtue he possessed shone with double lustre. “Alas! my father!” he just sighed out, and then insensibly fell into the arms of *Eliza*, who was so much affected with the scene, that she

could scarcely support him : but, when he recovered, *Eliza*, in the tenderest manner, said, " My dearest *Pisarius*, resume yourself—consider how natural it is to die ; that it is what we are all born to ; the only certainty in life is death ; call to mind that philosophy which your late father said you was possessed of, and be comforted with the pleasing thought that you will one day meet him again in the regions of perpetual felicity." With such-like discourse she revived his drooping spirits, and brought him to moderate his grief, when he repeated the following beautiful lines :

O cease, my beating heart, to mourn !
O stop, mine eye, the tear !
The grave admits of no return,
And grief is fruitless here !

Thus speaks the philosophic mind ;
Thus nature's self repels :
But mine expands for human kind,
And what it feels it tells.

Lamented parent !—now, adieu—
Yet take this artless verse ;
The son you lov'd—who honours you,
Thus sorrows o'er thy hearse !

This comfort yet relieves my breast,
 A certainty I know;
 You dwell with angels ever blest,
 No cares, or sorrows know.

Oh! from those regions oft look down,
 My duty still to prove;
 And if you can, inspire your son
 To gain celestial love.

They now retired to a different apartment, where, after a discourse on the immutable ways of the Almighty, and an examination of their own hearts, whether their conduct would bear a conscientious examination, and being satisfied that they had acted right to the best of their knowledge, and with a real intent to do good, they retired to bed; praying to the Lord to support them under every calamity in the vicissitudes of life. So should every good boy and girl implore a blessing, every morning and evening, from the Almighty, (and they may rest assured they will have it) and then with songs of gratitude return thanks for the benefits received. If they accustom themselves to this when young, it will become habitual to them when they grow up; for, as the poet sings,

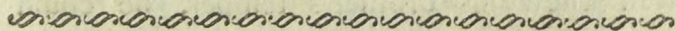
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd.

And it is the duty of parents as much to inculcate such lessons in early youth, as it is their duty to learn. The mournful pair were now retired to rest. When the mind is disturbed, strange phantasms will often perplex the sleeper, terrifying with the most horrid shapes of things, even so as to agitate the person for a considerable while after being awake. This was the case with poor *Pisarius*, who had in a dream the following frightful scene.



He thought that he saw the ship, which his brother was in, wrecked; and that he was

drowned, his body cast on shore where he was, but, by the help of a skilful physician, was brought to life again; and to his great astonishment, ran and laid hold of his little son *Billy*, and killed him with a sword, and then ran at him in an instant to kill him also, but was prevented: at this *Pisarius* awaked in the utmost horror; and to what his dream alluded, we may be able to determine before we have finished this history.



CH A P. III.

Giving an account of the funeral, and part of the adventures of Androgus.

PISARIUS related his dream in the morning to his wife, who was not at all pleased with it, yet dissembled her uneasiness to quiet the mind of her husband, who seemed to be very uneasy at it; and told him that dreams were not to be looked upon as omens, but phantasms of a disturbed mind, and that his father's death, no doubt, was the cause

of the disturbance in his sleep in the night; and moreover, that it was impossible that any such thing should come to pass, for if his brother should return in distress, and he received him with that friendship which his father had recommended, that he could never be so unnatural to return such goodness with such horrid evil as the murdering of innocents. Such words pronounced with such tenderness, which was peculiar to *Eliza*, at present calm'd his troubled mind. Yet as he well knew his brother's temper, he could not help sighing often to himself at the thoughts of his return; but this he did so secretly, that he thought his wife would not perceive it, but he was mistaken; the eyes of such connubial tenderness as she possessed are too piercing to be long deceived; yet she forebore to say any more at present, hoping to find a better opportunity when his father was buried, to wean him from so melancholy a disposition: the time fixed on for the interment arrived, when the friends and relations of the deceased, a very numerous train, followed the corpse carried on men's shoulders, to the church, which was above a quarter of

a mile off; the charity children, dressed with clean bands, walked before, and sung a *requiem*, which was composed on purpose for the solemn occasion.



When the corpse arrived at the church, it was met by the minister, and read into the church, when an excellent sermon was preached upon the following text: *And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the spirit,*

that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow after. Rev. xiv. 13.

He left in his will a number of legacies, all for charitable uses; among the rest, the sum of 100*l.* to the school; another sum to build some alms houses for decayed tradesmen, with proper endowments; with gifts to the poor inhabitants every Christmas, such as cloaths, linen, shoes, stockings, and bread and meat, which renders his name still dear to all in the place. Here's an example for religion and virtue! his life was spent in acts of charity, and fortune having crowned his labours with success, he left his power behind him still to continue his bounteous inclinations.—Having deposited the corpse in the vault, we shall return to the mansion, and find *Pisarius* rather more comforted, after having paid the last duty to the ashes of his father. And now it will not be amiss to look a little after *Androgus*, who went to the Indies some time before his father's death:—he had now been gone near two years, and no account of him had been received, when a young man, a sailor, brought a letter intended for his father, if living; the contents

of which were, That he was in prison at *Spithead*, did not mention on what account, but desired assistance of money. *Pisarius*, after reading the letter, desired the stranger to give him an account of his brother's adventures as far as he knew, which he did as follow:

You must know, that I sailed in the ship *Good Intent*, with your brother, whose moroseness of disposition soon gained him the ill-will of the ship's crew; and had it not been for the Lieutenant, whose name was *Goodwill*, every one would have left the ship, but was prevailed upon by him to pursue the voyage, which we did with much regret, as every day produced a quarrel of some kind or other, to the great danger of a mutiny; as he would order the best man in the ship to be punished, for nothing more than to please his cruel disposition, and would often take upon him the office and do it himself, to the great scandal of his dignity, as well as the disgrace of humanity. This behaviour was often censured by Mr. *Goodwill*, who expostulated with him, but to no effect: his answer was, "He was commander, and if he did amiss he

must answer for it." In a very great storm, which happened in the course of our voyage, he distinguished himself by many acts of cruelty, and the most unaccountable blasphemy that ever was heard; and it is (I am afraid too justly) imagined that he pushed his cabin boy overboard, who was found some hours after drowned, with a great contusion on his head: but of that we are not certain. After many difficulties, we gained our destined port, disposed of our merchandize to advantage, and shipped again sufficient to produce ample satisfaction for the dangers of such a voyage; but he seemed as though designed by nature never to be pleased or contented with any thing. After some stay in the country, where we were in continual danger of our lives, through his behaviour to the natives and settlers, whom he treated with the utmost contempt and indignity, which would certainly have been punished, had it not been for the good offices of the Lieutenant, we set sail again with a good wind, which bid fair for a safe return; but were no sooner at sea again, but he resumed his former behaviour, even with more vehe-

mence and cruelty than before, as though his success only served to wet his appetite to wickedness ; so that he became entirely hated by all, and the Lieutenant began to speak in a more manly tone to him, and that very often, which so exasperated him that he would have shot him, had not one of the men (observing his evil design) snatched a pistol out of his hand, just as he was going to discharge it at the back part of his head.



Dinner being now ready, the narrative was dropped for the present, but shall be resumed in the next chapter.

CHAP. IV.

Containing the conclusion of Androgus's adventure, the departure of the stranger, and the birth of a daughter.

AFTER this detection, it was thought too dangerous to let him go at large, and he was therefore confined in his cabin; in which situation he continued near a fortnight, in all the agonies of rage. At last, one morning he sent for Mr. *Goodwill*, that he had something material to say to him: accordingly the Lieutenant went to him, when he expressed an earnest desire to be reconciled to him, pretending he was very sorry for his behaviour, alledging, in his vindication, that it was owing to a degree of insanity, which he had long laboured under, but now he thanked God the cause, he believed, was totally removed, and he protested he was again in his sound senses. The manner in which he delivered this, seemed to corroborate the declaration, and the Lieutenant was induced to let him have his liberty, and at the same time gave private orders to others

to watch his motions. But this precaution was entirely unnecessary, as his behaviour was so much altered for the better, so that those in the ship could hardly believe him to be the same man; and so far had he preposessed them in his favour, that they actually imagined his former conduct proceeded from an unhappiness of mind, which he could not account for; but all was false and deceitful: for when he was speaking the fairest that could be imagined, he was meditating mischief in his own poisonous breast, which will be found in the sequel.—For about three weeks he continued to act with the utmost good humour and good sense; but one day, being a little becalmed, the Lieutenant expressed a desire of going on shore to a little island they discovered about three leagues off, and asked him in a very friendly manner to accompany him, which he agreed to; accordingly the boat was manned with sufficient oars, and straightway rowed on shore. The island they found was a very fertile spot, abounding with the most delicious fruits, as well as the most beautiful to the eye; likewise a number of wild goats and deer, and

other animals; with birds, whose plumage was the richest that ever was beheld: in short, it seemed to be a kind of paradise, and the few inhabitants that were found, from the simplicity of their manners, to be the immediate children of nature. In a place so delightful, where the great and benevolent Author of the Universe had so particularly distinguished his power, one would have imagined that every other passion but gratitude had been kept in subordination, and that the heart could not have suffered any other thought to have entered but that of pleasure and wonder: but, alas! the devil, who first defiled God's own paradise, had twisted himself in serpentine folds round the heart of *Androgus*, that every gratification was shut out but those of cruelty and revenge—than which nothing is more disgraceful to human nature; and it is earnestly hoped that our young readers will take care to drive such destructive passions entirely from their breasts; for if they once get but the least hold, they will insinuate themselves farther every hour, till in time they have driven out every sentiment of principle and honour.

While the sailors were busying themselves with plucking fruit, catching birds, and picking up some trifling curiosities, the Lieutenant and *Androgus* strayed, in a meditative



mood, about half a mile up the country, sometimes in the woods, and sometimes in the open lawn, which terminated in the most beautiful landscapes. Having been gone about an hour, the sailors all of a sudden heard the report of a pistol, at which they were not a little alarmed, when presently they beheld *Androgus* running in the utmost astonishment towards them: when he came up

to them, almost breathless, he declared that the people of the island had set upon them, and had killed Mr. *Goodwill*, and were pursuing him, and desired them to get into the boat with all speed; which they did, though they suspected the truth of what he had asserted, yet thought it best to be secure, lest there might be danger in staying to search further into the truth: so they rowed again to the ship with all expedition, and related the whole affair to a gentleman on board, who (suspecting *Androgus* to be the murderer) told the crew what he thought, and advised them to take proper arms to defend themselves against any enemy, and to go again the next day in search. This advice put *Androgus* again into a terrible passion, so that his rage had no bounds, and in a manner proved him guilty—'twas thought proper once more to confine him; and the next day, according as it was proposed, they went again to the island, where (after searching some time) they found Mr. *Goodwill*, sitting up with his head against a tree, faint and speechless, but not dead. As soon as they saw

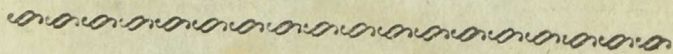


him in this situation, the surgeon who went with them searched for his wounds and dressed them, and found them not mortal, and that his faintness proceeded from his loss of blood and the want of refreshment; after binding up the parts, and giving him a cordial which they had with them, he began to revive, and they carried him to the boat, when, having recovered his speech, he informed them that *Androgus* (of whom he had not the least suspicion of harm) on a sudden pulled out a pistol and fired it at his head,

but it luckily only went through his cheek and stunned him, which made the other suppose him dead and make off. When they arrived at the ship, they were all surprized and rejoiced to find the Lieutenant alive, but *Androgus*, who, with a fullness entirely his own, seemed sorry for being mistaken. The stranger then concluded with the ship's being come home safe, and of his brother's being confined, and to take his trial for his behaviour.

Pisarius, whose tender heart wept during the recital, dismissed the person with sufficient money for his present occasions, and a promise to come to him as soon as possible. When the sailor was gone, he went to his wife, who soon read something terrible in his countenance, which he thought it was in vain to conceal from her: as soon as she had heard the account, she turned pale, and was near fainting, as her husband's dream came now afresh in her memory. She complained of being ill, and went immediately to her chamber; where, after a considerable time in the utmost agonies, she was brought to bed of a daughter: her dangerous situation

hindered *Pisarius* from visiting his brother so soon as he expected; but being assured she was out of danger, he straightway went to him. What passed between them may be seen in the next chapter, which you may peruse if you think proper; nay, I advise you to it, as it contains some reflections well worth your notice.



CHAP. V.

What passes between Androgus and Pisarius in the prison; the arrival of them both at the mansion-house; with other matters.

THE reader, perhaps, will begin to think us rather too long before we speak of what our title more particularly promises, namely, *The Children in the Wood*; but it was necessary to give some account of this unnatural uncle, that they might not be surprized at his cruelty towards these two sweet babes; and at the same time to shew the difference in the characters of the two bro-

thers, so that the justice at length which overtakes *Androgus* may be the more striking, and the moral be more forcibly impressed on the minds of those who peruse this terrible catastrophe: and as the sentiments, morals, remarks, and reflections, are all instructive and entertaining; and at the same time, as the whole is connected with the main design, it is hoped the reader will have patience a little longer, when we promise to give him entire satisfaction in regard to our little unfortunate babes; their pleasing prattle shall be related, their pastimes shall be noted, and many pleasing tales, (which they had got by art, and used to tell to each other) which rendered them the joy of their parents, and the delight of every body else, before the death of their parents, when this tragical story more particularly begins.—Let us hasten after *Pisarius*, who, you may suppose, is gone to see his brother in prison; where he found him in a most deplorable situation, a dark and dismal dungeon being the apartment where he was confined. When first *Pisarius* entered this house of despair, the creaking of hinges, the lifting of massy bars,



the clinking of chains, joined together with the native gloom of the place, had such an impression upon him, that he could scarcely support himself. "Good God! he cried, how terrible is this residence! Alas! how can any mortal be guilty of crimes sufficient to condemn him to a place so forlorn, and full of wretchedness! Gracious God! guard me at all times, and in all places, from hardness of heart and uncharitableness, and ever fill my mind with love and kindness towards

my fellow-creatures. How shocking is the very idea of it to any thinking being!—But ah! how much more so to me, to find my own brother in such a deplorable situation, and for a crime so atrocious as murder!—Murder! the sin which cannot be forgiven. Murder! which has God's earliest curse on it! the offspring of *Cain*, first prompted by the devil. Alas! my poor brother, what can I do for you? how shall I solicit the Divine Being in your favour?"—Here he quite fainted in the keeper's arms——Such was the difference between these brothers, that even he, whose life was so eagerly sought after by the other, was now fainting at the thoughts of his destiny, and in his mind begging of Heaven to have mercy upon him! even him, who was (in time) to be his murderer, and the murderer of his helpless orphans: even here one would be almost ready to conclude, that Heaven was unjust to suffer such villains to gain their ends, and such goodness and innocents to suffer; but we must beware of indulging our thoughts on such occasions, or censure the unerring ways of

Providence, who always acts with justice and impartiality; for, as the Poet says,

The ways of heaven are dark and intricate,
Puzzled with mazes and perplex'd with errors :
Our understanding traces them in vain,
Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search,
Nor sees with how much art the regular
Confusion ends——

Pisarius, coming to himself, was led by the keeper to his brother, who received him



with a surly kind of civility. When they were alone, *Pisarius* informed him of the death

of his father, and of what he had left him in his will, and how happy he should have been if it had so happened that he could come and live with him :—here he paus'd—when *Androgus* (with a dissembled penitence) said, “It might be so yet; for altho’ circumstances seemed against him, he protested he was innocent, and was certain he should be cleared.”—*Pisarius* said, “He heartily wished it might prove so, for nothing could give him more satisfaction;” at the same time informing him, that he was married, and had got two children, that his company and friendship would make his whole family the most happy of any in the world: and after some discourse, and many friendly admonitions, he took leave of him, to visit Mr. *Goodwill*, whom he heard was near at hand, promising to be with him again as soon as possible.

Androgus, when his brother was gone, began in a most terrible manner to blaspheme his Creator, that he was now confined; as he was determined to have massacred his brother, if he was at liberty, that night, for all his friendship; but upon recollection that he had got a son and heir, he thought a future

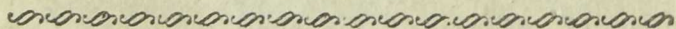
opportunity might offer which might be better, as he might then find means to destroy his family also, because he was pretty certain he should get off, as Mr. *Goodwill* was alive and likely to do well, and our laws are so mild as never to let any one suffer death for an attempt, if death does not follow; and tho' he was conscious of his being the cause of the boy's being drowned, yet he well knew there was no evidence against him to prove it: thus did this wretch sooth his own wicked mind, and make a merit of murder, because he could not be detected. To what an abandoned pitch must he be arrived, who could (while in prison) contrive future murders, and even that of a friend and brother, and little helpless innocents! But to return. *Pisarius* waited on Mr. *Goodwill*, who was walking about in his chamber, and informed him who he was. Mr. *Goodwill* was a man of an open plain countenance, with an air of such affability and good humour in his manners, that one would wonder how any body could harbour a thought of harm against him. After some conversation, he learned from the Lieutenant that he never



intended (on account of his family) to prosecute him, as he had not gained his wicked purpose. *Pisarius* was not a little glad of this; and made use of this opportunity to solicit his future friendship, assuring him whatever was in his power he might command. *Mr. Goodwill* replied, "He was much obliged to him, that he would do himself the pleasure of waiting on him sometimes, but did not think proper to be in his brother's company."

In a little time *Androgus* was at liberty, and set out with his brother to the ancient

manſion-house, where, in a ſhort time, they arrived ſafe: what is the conſequence of his being there, ſhall be ſeen in the next chapter.



CH A P. VI.

A chriſtening; various reflections; Androgus's behaviour; tittle tattle for children, &c.

BEING arrived at the manſion-house, *Eliza* met her huſband and brother with the utmoſt affability, when *Androgus* put on the moſt complaiſant and engaging behaviour, ſo that all bid fair for peace and quietneſs; nay, *Androgus* ſeemed particularly fond of his little nephew *Billy*, who could now run alone, and prattle in a moſt engaging manner. This gave great pleaſure to *Piſarius*, who imagined that the infant's pleaſing, winning, and innocent way, would certainly go further towards ſoftening his brother's diſpoſition than all that he could ſay to him would; however, the more to engage him, he begged he would look upon himſelf as maſter in every reſpect—to order the ſervants to obey him, and whatever he thought

proper to have, to command it. This indulgence (one would imagine) would have been sufficient to have gained on the most obdurate heart; but it had not that effect on that of *Androgus*; for even while he was smiling and playing with the child, he wished in his mind to cut his throat.—However, he dissembled in his mind, and every day gained more and more on the good and unsuspecting *Pisarius* and *Eliza*, insomuch that they could not make themselves easy if he was absent.



We have mentioned before that *Eliza* was brought to bed of a daughter, who (as yet)

was not christened ; but the day being fixed on for that ceremony, a number of guests were invited, and the little image of her mother was called (after her) *Eliza* ; the entertainment was grand, and the company gay ; *Androgus* was particularly merry, and so open in his disposition that every one was delighted with him ; the evening was spent in the utmost harmony and good humour. When night and safety told them that repose was necessary, they all withdrew to their pillows, to receive the benefit of that refreshing power, sleep ; which is elegantly and poetically mentioned by the celebrated Dr. Young, in his Night Thoughts.

Pisarius said to his wife, when in bed, “ My dearest *Eliza*, how happy are we in this change of mind in my brother ; he seems not to have the least tincture of his former disposition ; besides, his fondness for the children is a plain proof that he no longer envies me for being his elder ; he is now sensible of his faults ; and I doubt not but the rest of his life will be as exemplary good as his former has been abandonly bad, which will go a great way towards reconciling

himself to Heaven; as it is said, "There is more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner that repenteth and turneth from his wickedness, than over ninety-nine just persons."

"No doubt, said *Eliza*, but the change in his disposition is wonderfully for the better; and if it continues so, it shall not be wanting on my part to do him any good office; and I think I have observed something which may, it is possible, fix him for ever." "What is that?" said *Pisarius*. "Why, replied *Eliza*, I think, and verily believe, that his mind is taken with the fair *Eugenia*, who was so



pleased with his mirth at the christening of little *Eliza*; for since then I have often observed them walking in the garden, and discoursing very familiarly together. Now I would have you to hint it to him, as though you had taken notice of it yourself, and enquire if his inclinations are towards her, and offer your service towards accomplishing his desires; which, if perfected, I make not the least doubt but he will continue the same as at present." In this manner they discoursed, until morning. *Androgus*, on his bed, was employed with quite different thoughts; but as his disposition is at this time pretty clear to the reader, we shall say little further about it at present, only that destruction was his meditation.—The lady mentioned, he had a liking for, but had no thoughts of matrimony; however had no designs to the contrary, if he could not gain his desires any other way, especially as she had a good fortune. The morning came when they were soon joyful and pleasant: at breakfast little *Eliza* was smiling on her mamma's knee, and *Billy* was prattling with his uncle; nothing could be more pleasing; the mother,

the babes, the father, and the uncle all cheerful together.

Says *Billy*, "Pray what sort of a thing is a ship?"—"Oh! (said his uncle) a large thing like a house, with trees on the top, and it swims in the middle of the sea."—"And pray how big is the sea? (says *Billy*) is it as big as our great pond?"—"Oh! my dear, (replied his uncle) a great deal bigger, for it is so big that you cannot see across it: but I will make you a little ship, and shew you how it is to swim."—"O la! (says *Billy*) if you will, I will give you my hobby-horse to ride on, and whip too."—"Well, I will do it," said his uncle. Such sort of prattle passed away the morning, when *Eliza* withdrawing, *Pisarius* thought this a proper time to speak with him concerning the lady before mentioned; when *Androgus* owned he was not at all against such a union, if the lady was not averse. "Be that my task, said *Pisarius*, I will speak to her on that head for you, and doubt not to give you a satisfactory answer"—which he accordingly did the next morning, and received no dissatisfactory reply; which account was very pleasing to *Eliza*. But a sudden illness, which seized on *Androgus*, filled the whole family

with consternation. He had for some time looked pale and thin, but was now taken all at once. A physician was sent for, who, finding he had been abroad, told him he was poisoned, and that he must, if he expected a cure, return to the place from whence he imagined he might receive it. This was a stroke little expected—however, it was determined to try the experiment; a ship was got with every accommodation for him, and he once more set sail for the Indies, where we shall not at present pursue him, but content ourselves with what we can find at home, especially along with our two little babes, who (ere 'tis long) are to make a material, yet so unhappy, a part in this little history.

Their little pretty sports and plays,
Which still to innocence is dear,
The pleasing smile shall present raise,
Before we ask the tender tear.

CHAP. VII.

Containing some mirth, together with some moral adventures at home, and some news from abroad.

HAVING once more sent *Androgus* abroad, the reader no doubt expects to be entertained with something more pleasing than can be found in his character at home; and we will endeavour that he shall not be disappointed. *Billy* was now a very pretty boy, about five years of age, and was taken out of his petticoats to wear that sort of dress which custom has provided to distinguish the sex, and a very pretty figure he cut: his mamma had ordered his cloaths in the fashion of *Robin Hood*, with a round cap and a feather in it; this, with a little bow and arrow, made him look the sweetest little creature that ever was seen: (see how pretty

he looks). He used to run in and out among



the walks and groves in the garden so nimble, that he was the delight of his father and mother, his face glowing with the most vivid colour: nor was he only expert in his sports, but very fond of his book; which it is greatly hoped every little boy who reads this will be, and then they may have a green dress, and a bow and arrows, and range in the woods and groves as well as he: he was of a very pleasant disposition, and very sagacious for his age. When first he went to

school, tho' so very young, he in a little time was master of his horn book—no little acquisition, let me tell you, in the science of reading, as all words are composed of letters, and from words all learning is derived; the philosopher, the moralist, the divine, and the poet, are all indebted to that ancient and noble code, the horn book. The tutor of our little hero was (to be sure) no more than an old woman; but what of that? though the horn book was all she could boast of herself, yet she had such a good-natured way of teaching, that had she received a more liberal education, she would certainly have been superior to a great many pedagogue masters, who torture those who are so unhappy as to come under their preceptorship, 'till they make dunces of many whom nature intended for superior geniusses. Master *Billy* was no little favourite with his mistress, who was cunning enough to distinguish the son of a person of fortune from the rest of the poor children of the parish; well knowing, for every sweetmeat she indulged master *Billy's* sweet tooth with, she should receive seven fold from his kind and indulgent parents;

though he had once like to have overfet his governess's good humour towards him, and that in a very odd manner. He had got his horn book, and (in a very careless manner) was tearing off the gilt covering, for which she chid the child very severely; when, poor little thing, sobbing, said, "He was very sorry, but he wanted another book, as he knew all that very well." This stung the old woman not a little, well knowing that it was not in her power to teach him much more; and if he made the same complaint at home, he would certainly be taken away, which she did not desire at any rate, as he was more towards her support than all the rest of her scholars; so, for the present, she got him a spelling-book, and made believe to instruct him in that, which she did not understand herself: but this fallacy was soon discovered; for one day, when *Billy* was at play along with his little sister *Eliza*, his papa, among many other questions, for the sake of hearing his answers, put this: "*Billy*, pray who is the greatest dunce in your school?" after some little pause, the child very pertly replied, "*My*

mistress." Not a little surprised at this, and at the same time laughing very heartily, he asked him, why he thought so? "Oh!" said he, because she has given me a book which she cannot tell how to read." This was a shrewd observation for one of his age. In a little time after they sent for the old woman, and examined her in regard to her capacity of instructing him further; and she, finding it was in vain to equivocate, confessed the truth, that her skill would go no farther, but that she was loath to part with him; tho' the truth is, she really would not have grieved half so much for his absence, as for what she got by him: however, her pretended fondness for him answered her purpose very well, as they took her into the house to live with them. No small comfort for an old woman.

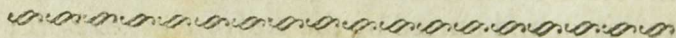
Master *Billy* was now sent to a master just by, with whom he improved daily, to the great satisfaction of his parents and master. But to return to his sports—he pursued his play (when he was at it) with the same assiduity as he did his book; he could trundle a hoop with great skill, was master of taw, and could play a little with a ball; all which

he was proud of, and not at all to blame; for depend upon it, those children who pursue their play with alacrity, will be as eager in pursuit of their learning: the relaxation from that to amusement, makes them go to it with redoubled vigour, and they receive it with more pleasure.

Little *Betsy* now began to tattle and waddle about, which made her very pleasing company: two more such pretty babes could not be found any where; so smiling, sweet, and innocent, that they looked like cherubs: poor little hearts! never did they think they should be exposed in the wood, and starved to death, and buried by the *Robin Red Breasts*; but so it was, as will be seen ere long. But it will likewise be seen, that the all-watchful eye of justice will overtake the cause of it, as it always will; when the wretch, who has dared to offend and deviate from the sacred dictates of humanity, will meet the reward he has deservedly merited. Many were the idle stories that the old woman used to tell to divert them, which had been told a thousand times before, and so long before her

time, that (I dare say) it would be impossible to tell from whence they originally came; yet from all their antiquity, it will not be at all out of our plan to give the reader a few of them, by way of amusement, before we come to the more tragical part of this history, which we promise to do in the next chapter.

'Tis necessary now to tell the reader that *Androgus* is coming home in good health, and that he brings with him what will be the end of his kind and hospitable brother and sister; and leave him to exercise those cruelties which will wind up the woeful catastrophe. But of that in another place.



CHAP. VIII.

Containing the stories of Goody Gossip, as told for the amusement of Master Billy and Miss Betsey.

STORY I.

O that I had had a wife of my mother's choosing.

THERE was a young man must needs marry contrary to the advice of his mother, who was a very prudent woman, and

could see as far into a mill-stone as those that pecked it; deny it who can. It is very wrong, we all must own, not to do as our parents would have us, especially when their advice (we may be certain) is for the best.

The person on whom this young man had placed his affection, was none of the brightest of her sex, in regard to her understanding, though she had a good round, plump, cherry-coloured face; yet, although his mother told him that beauty was no more than skin deep, he did not give any heed to what she said; for which, we must all agree, he was very much to blame: but let that pass for the present.

He was married, and he brought his wife home to keep his house, without enquiring whether she was capable or not. Going out one morning to his usual employment, he asked his spouse, whether she could brew: yes, husband, replied the simpleton: so he left her malt, and bid her go brew against he came home at night. When he came home, he asked her if she had brewed: yes, she said: but, upon examination, he found she had forgot to put the malt in, and only

brewed the hops: on which he told her, her folly would ruin him; and exclaimed, *Oh! that I had had a wife of my mother's choosing.* She promised, however, to do better for the future.

The next morning as he went out, he asked her if she could bake: yes, husband, said she: so he left her flour and whatever was necessary, and went to work. As soon as he was gone, she went about her business, taking the flour into the yard, where the wind, blowing very high, blew it all away against the wall; which, when her husband came home, he cried again, you will be the ruin of me, and added as before, *Oh! that I had had a wife of my mother's choosing.*

The next morning he ordered her to water the hogs; which she promised to do, and which she did by driving them all into a pond, where they were drowned: when her husband came to be acquainted with this, he said again, he should be ruined; and cried as before.

One day he brought home a flitch of bacon, and hung it behind the door; she asked him what he put it there for? he said to keep

it till *winter* comes; and went out to work: he had not been gone long, before a man came to enquire for her husband, but not finding him at home, bid her to tell him his name was *Winter*. Oh! said she, here is a flitch of bacon he left for you, and accordingly she gave it to him, who went away with it: when her husband came home, and found what she had done, he said again, he should be ruined; and *Oh! that I had had a wife of my mother's choosing.*

Finding his wife so very silly, he did not know what to do with her; he was afraid she would, some time or other, give away all the money he had: to prevent which, he put it all in a bag under a till in the kitchen, and on her asking him what it was, he told her it was nothing but old iron, which he put there till he had an opportunity of changing it away: Oh! that's all, is it? said she; and away went he to work. By-and-by came an old woman, crying "Have you any old rags, or old cloaths, or old iron to sell, or change for earthen ware?" on hearing this, she called her in, and picked out half a dozen cups and saucers, and some plates: she took

the till and gave her the bag of money for old iron; who seeing it shine through the bag, never staid to open it, but went away. At noon comes her spouse, to whom she presented her bargain, and told him what she had done; this put him into such a passion that he broke all the crockery ware, crying, *Oh! that I had had a wife of my mother's choosing*; at the same time telling her, it was his money; and that, as she had entirely ruined him, he was determined to leave her, and accordingly he went away; but she ran after him, and would go with him. Well, said he, if you will, pray go and pull the door after you; upon which, she went back and took the door off the hinges and pulled it after her; while all the way he went, he cried, *Oh! that I had had a wife of my mother's choosing*. As night came on, they had got into a great tree, which was in the middle of a very large and lonely wood, to rest themselves till morning, she dragging the door up after her. In the middle of the night there came a number of thieves with a light, and spread a cloth under the tree, and then went to feasting; after which they pulled

out a great deal of gold and other riches, which they began to divide, but soon fell a quarrelling about their honesty, as is common among rogues; when, after a great many terrible and horrid oaths, one of them wished the devil might fly away with him, if he had cheated any one: just at this time, the wife in the tree, being heartily tired of holding the door, let it fall, which put out their light,



and made them all scamper as if Old Nick had really been among them; which, as soon as they perceived, they descended to the

place, took up all the riches, and then went home, having got ten times the value of what he had lost; and which, in some measure, made him amends for *not having a wife of his mother's choosing*; yet it was but mere chance, and no cunning of his wife's, who was still as big a simpleton as before; so that I would advise every one to take advice of their parents, and not run hand over head to their ruin. This was the first of *Goody Gossip's* stories, told to Master *Billy*, to encourage him in his duty towards his parents, and to shew the consequence of not taking their advice. The second was told to little *Betsy*, and is as follows.

The Sisters; or, Honesty the Best Policy.

STORY II.

THERE was a person who had two daughters, named *Sally* and *Polly*.—*Polly* was a beauty in features and proportion, but of a proud and insolent disposition; which was not a little heightened by the partiality shewn to her by her mother, whose darling

she was. Poor *Sally* was rather more homely in her person, but of a sweet disposition; yet she was kept in great subjection, and almost hated at home, tho' every body else loved her: at last she begged of her mother to give her what she could for her portion, and let her go and seek her fortune. Her mother, who (altho' she did not like her) was always (out of spite) starting difficulties, told her, she should go, if she could bring her a sieve full of water from the neighbouring well. Away went *Sally* to the spring, but finding she could not get it, she was vexed in her mind, when a little bird seemed to sing to her, *clay it, pretty maid, clay it*. Thank you, sweet bird, said *Sally*; and accordingly she covered the bottom with clay, and carried it home full of water: when her mother saw it, she gave her a bit of brown bread and a bottle of water, and sent her out to seek her fortune. She had not gone far before she met with an old man, who said, Where are you going pretty maid? To seek my fortune, said she, can you tell me of a place? Yes; there is a giant a little further, you'll have nothing to do but to comb his head, make

his bed, and lay him down gently; and what have you got there? said he: Some brown bread and water, will you have any? Thank you, pretty maid, it shall be the better for you. A little further she came to a pastry cook, who asked her the same question, and she answered as before; but the man asked her to have some of his cheesecakes and tarts, or else his oven would burn. Yes, said she. It shall be the better for you, said he. Away she went to the giant, who took her up stairs



to shew her all his treasure, and told her if she was honest, she should have a good deal

of it; but if she robbed him, she should be served as others were: then he took her into another room, where there were many young women hanging by the hair of their heads, because they were not honest to him. But *Sally* was faithful, and lived with him a year, when she begged he would let her go home and see her mother, and she would send her sister to him 'till she came again; which he consented to, giving her (when she went away) two horses loaded with money, and other rich presents.

Her mother and sister were not very glad to see her, but were very much surprized at her good fortune; and *Polly* was determined to go herself, and get riches as well as her sister: she first went through the same ceremony as her sister did; but she told the bird she would not clay the sieve; and said to the old man, the pastry-cook, and the gardener, what is that to you? Who all said, it shall be the worse for you. The first night that she was at the giant's, she took an opportunity of robbing him, and setting those at liberty who were fastened by the hair of

their heads, and took two of his best horses, and ran away. As she passed along, she desired the gardener not to say he had seen her, if the giant should come after; but he said, he would, because of her ill-nature as she came along. The giant soon pursued her: when she saw him coming, she hid herself behind the pastry-cook's oven; when the giant came to the pastry-cook's, the man told him where she was; so he took her, and carried her back, and hung her up by the hair of her head. *Sally* going to see her, prevailed upon the giant to let her go, which he did; but she never dared to shew her face again, as every body called her thief. After *Sally* had lived a great while with the giant, he gave (her as a reward for her honesty) as much more riches, and she was married to a Squire. Such is the difference (that will always be) between pride and humility, and honesty and knavery. So much for *Goody Gossip's* tales.

Now let us inform our readers that *Andro- gus* is come well home; and that he has found means to kill his brother and sister by poison, and is left sole guardian to his niece

and nephew, whose fatal catastrophe will be the entire subject of the following pages; which, (I doubt not) will melt the heart of every one who reads the tragical end of the *Children in the Wood*.

Androgus, soon after his arrival, renewed his addresses to the lady before mentioned. After the death of his brother and sister, he took the children home, to whom he was appointed sole guardian. The children being in his possession, he committed them to the care of his wife, who (having no children of her own) was not a little fond of them; and would often take great delight in praising their wit and their beauty to her visitors, telling them many diverting stories about them. This was not altogether so pleasing to her husband, though he forced a kind of applause, the better to conceal his intended wickedness, as he was determined to make away with them at any rate, tho' (at present) he had not fixed on the manner; but this (the reader will guess) was an easy matter for the cruelty of his disposition to get over. To drown them he was afraid, lest

their bodies being found might lead to detection, as the memory of their parents were still dear to every one in the place. Many judged that they had suffered foul play in regard to their death, but were afraid to speak openly on account of the great power of *Androgus*, who (having his brother's fortune, as it were, in his own hands) was more worshipped for his wealth, than honoured for honesty. Sometimes he would continue as if stupid, being lost in thought on the means of destroying the two pretty babes, whose winning smiles made him, sometimes, half afraid: however, upon recollection that the estate would not be entirely his own without the death of his nephew, he steeled his heart against all remorse, and cast out every tender idea from his breast. In vain it was that his wife (who not knowing the cause) would reason with him on his melancholy disposition; his answers were churlish, and all her love was in vain: at length his brow began to clear up, and his eyes began to sparkle with pleasure, on the prospect of killing the pretty infants; which happened as follows:

One morning early as he was walking by the side of a thick wood, (which was his



custom) whose deep embow'ring shade seem'd form'd by nature to cover dark deeds, he overheard two rough ill-formed fellows discoursing about a murder and a robbery they had committed: this conversation soon caught the ears of *Androgus*, who immediately determined on hiring these ruffians to murder the innocent babes. He accosted *Killchild* and *Badthought*, (which were their names) and asked them, if they would go

and drink with him: this they consented to; and they all went together to an hedge alehouse; when, after having drank a pot or two, he addressed them in the following manner:

“I know (by what I overheard of your discourse by the side of the wood) that you are a couple of very honest fellows, that would do any thing rather than starve, for which I much commend you, and would very willingly employ you to your advantage.” “With all my heart, says *Killchild*, what is it?” “You must know, says he, that I have been a long time troubled in my mind, on account of a quick-set hedge which stands between mine and my late brother’s estate.” “Indeed! said one of the villains, you need not let that grieve you long, since it is an easy matter to grub it up and burn it, and then the passage would be free.” “If that could be done, I would give one hundred pounds directly:” they immediately promised to do any thing for so great a reward. Finding them fit for his purpose, he let them into the truth of his intentions, that was, he wanted them to murder the children, which they without the

least hesitation consented to do. Having settled that point, the next consideration was how to deliver them into their hands without suspicion, as his wife would hardly ever trust them out of her sight. To bring this about, he pretended that he had received a letter from a relation in *London*, requesting him to send them to town to be educated along with some cousins. His wife was a long while before she could consent to part with them; but, fearing her husband's displeasure, she gave way. He had agreed with the men that they should come dressed like waggoners



and take them away, which they did; and promised *Androgus* that they would lead them into a wood, then kill them, and afterwards throw their bodies into a deep pit, to prevent their ever being discovered. This being so contrived, *Androgus* began to make himself quite happy and secure in his villainy; and his wife thought the poor children were in *London*. In the mean time, the villains having got the promised reward, kept on their way with the two little ones, who prattled as they went along about their playthings and their nurses, and what they should see when they came to *London*, and what pleasure they should have when they were with their cousins. Thus they went on 'till they came into a great wood, when *Badtbought* was touched with their innocence, and advised *Killchild* not to murder them, but to leave them in the wood, and get off with the money they had got; but *Killchild* would not consent to do so, saying his honour was concerned, and he would not take the gentleman's money for nothing, and that he positively would kill them; the other insisted as strongly that they should not be killed: at

length, (after a great many words) being both in a violent passion, they drew their swords and went to fighting, when *Bad-thought* ran the other through the body, and killed him on the spot; after which, he buried him in a pit and went away, leaving the children behind, telling them, he was only going to get them some food, and he would return again.

They sat down on a little tuft of grass, to wait for his return; where they passed



away some hours in telling little stories and tales to one another. As night approached,

they began to be very penfive and melancholy, and to cry bitterly, being both cold and hungry; and if it was light they could not find their way out of the wood. They could think of no stories now but what were terrifying to them, and added to the dismalness of the night; at last they cried themselves to sleep. In the morning they wandered up and down in the wood, endeavouring to find the way out, but all in vain. In their wandering about, they fed upon blackberries, dew-berries, and whatever other wild fruit they could find: and in this shocking manner they subsisted for the space of three days. They would sometimes make little nosegays of wild flowers, and sometimes sing little innocent songs. But having eat all the berries they could find, they grew very faint, and laid themselves down on a green bank, and with grief and hunger died in each other's arms; and their bodies were discovered some time afterwards covered over with leaves. Thus perished these two pretty little babes through the treachery of an unnatural uncle. After their bodies

were found, they were buried together, and the following verse written upon them:



*Beneath this turf in peace is laid
A helpless pair, who were betray'd
By a most cruel uncle's will,
Who ever sought their blood to spill;
In a lonely wood resign'd their breath,
And grasp'd each other at their death:
The pious Red-Breasts mourn'd their fate,
And bury'd them in simple state:
Leaves in their little mouths they bring,
And over them a requiem sing.*

Androgus having got rid of them, enjoyed all the estate, giving out that they were dead of the small-pox, which was readily believed, but justice will be sure to overtake such villains at last. However the guilty may triumph for a while, yet the day of reckoning will come, when Providence will be sure to punish, to the utmost, all those who so wickedly offend the laws of nature and humanity. The conscience of *Androgus*, which had slept so long, began now to awake him in a most terrible manner, so that he was afraid of being by himself. Strange and frightful apparitions appeared to him in the night, that would make him shudder, and sometimes start and call out, to the great astonishment of his wife, who was innocent of all his wickedness, she being of a most humane and benevolent disposition, and behaved to these two little orphans as if they had been her own. But the all-sufficient hand of vengeance overtook him at last; nothing prospered with him, his cattle died of distempers, his barns were set on fire by lightening, his tenants failed, and he became

so poor as to be cast into prison, for a small debt, which he could not pay, nobody taking



pity on him, as he never deserved it. While he was in this situation, *Badthought* was taken up for a robbery, and condemned to be hanged; but before he left the world, he confessed how he had left the children in the wood, and that they were starved to death, and that he was hired to murder them by their uncle. When *Androgus* heard of this confession, he, in a fit of madness, immediately dashed his brains out against the wall.

Such was the last of this unnatural brother and uncle; and it is hoped his fate will be a warning to all to shun cruelty, and behave charitably, seeking for the blessing of God, by the assistance of virtue and honesty.

A tale well known to those of old,
In many a winter's night been told;
While gaping children round appear,
And drop the sympathising tear:

When the dread tale was understood,
Of children starving in the wood,
Our grandfires each have wept ere now,
Our grandfires and our grandams too;
And shall to ages yet unborn,
Who read the tale of these forlorn,
Still cause the tender tear to flow,
And melt the breast with others' woe.

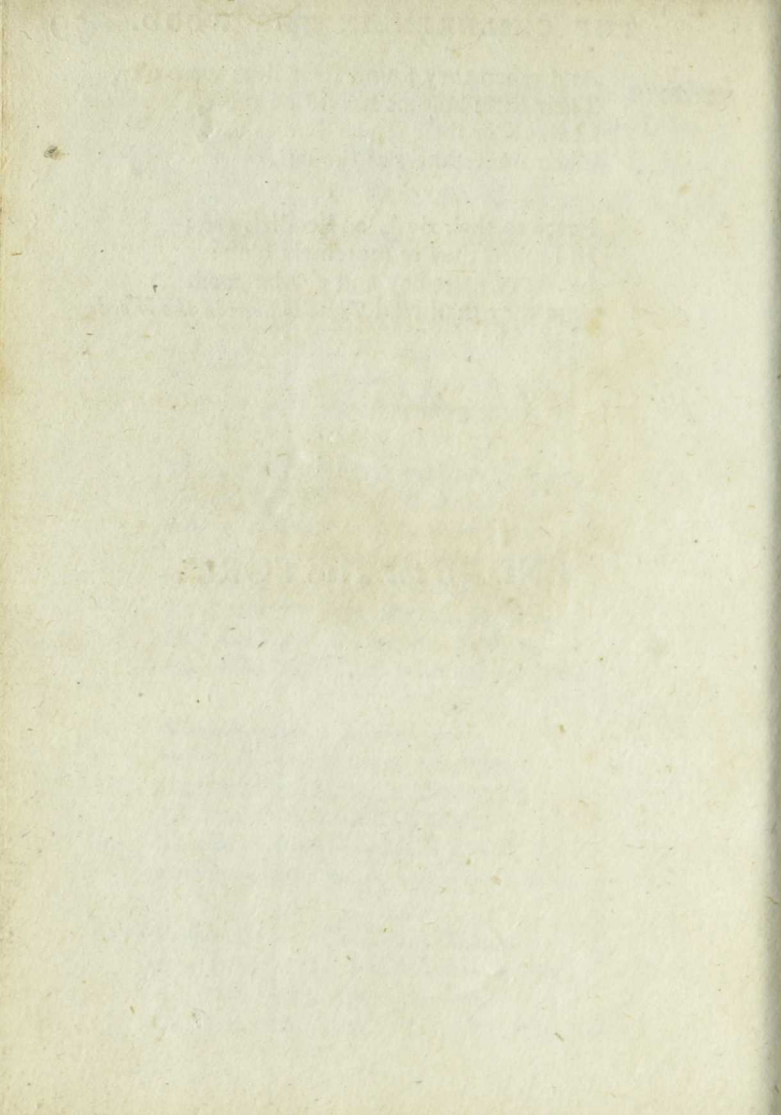
A cruel uncle's wicked hate,
With all the terrors of his fate,
Shall strike a moral in the breast,
And make us cruelty detest:
The little *Red-Breast* still preferr'd,
And honoured yet as *God's* own bird.


Sweet bird! who spread its tender wing,
And stretch'd its little throat to sing
A pleasing note above the head
Of those sweet babes who now were dead;

And when they found their lives were o'er,
Their little bosoms heav'd no more,
Leaves o'er their tender bodies cast,
Their undertakers at the last.

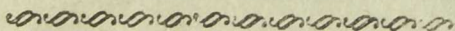
Peace to their dust, and endless rest;
In heaven they're supremely blest:
Let ev'ry little boy and girl be good,
And they shall read *The Children in the Wood*.

END *of the* HISTORY.



 *As it is our ardent wish to oblige
our young readers upon all occasions,
we have thought proper to
subjoin the following favourite
BALLAD, which, we flatter ourselves,
will prove acceptable to
them.*

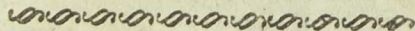
It is a new order of things
our young people must all con-
form, we have thought of it
long, the old way is obsolete
Baltimore, Md. 1888
John, and John, Jr. to
them.



THE
CHILDREN

IN THE
WOOD.

A FAVOURITE BALLAD.







THE
B A L L A D
OF THE
CHILDREN in the WOOD.

NOW ponder well, ye parents dear,
The words which I shall write:
A dismal story you shall hear,
In time brought forth to light;

A merchant of no small account
In *England* dwelt of late,
Who did in riches far surmount
Most men of his estate.

Yet sickness came, and he must die,
No help his life could save;
In anguish too his wife did lie,
Death sent them to the grave.
No love between this pair was lost,
For each was mild and kind;
Together they gave up the ghost,
And left two babes behind.

The one a fine and pretty boy,
Not passing six years old;
A girl the next, the mother's joy,
And cast in beauty's mould:
The father left this little son,
As it doth plain appear,
When that his childish days were gone,
Three hundred pounds a-year.

And to his daughter, we are told,
Six hundred pounds to pay
In value full of *English* gold,
Upon her marriage-day:

But if these children chanc'd to die,
As death might soon come on,
The uncle then (none can deny)
Made all the wealth his own.

Pisarius call'd his brother near,
As on his bed he lay:
Remember, oh! my brother dear,
Remember what I say:
This life I quit, and to your care
My little babes commend:
Their youth in hopeful virtue rear,
Their guardian, uncle, friend.

Their parents both you must supply,
They do not know their loss,
And when you see the tear-swoln eye,
For pity be not cross:
'Tis in your power (now alone)
Their greatest friend to be;
And when that we are dead and gone,
Give bliss, or misery.

If you direct their steps aright,
From God expect reward;
All actions are within his sight,
Of which he takes regard.

With clay-cold lips the babes they kifs'd,
And gave their last adieu!
A heart of stone would melt, I wist,
So sad a scene to view.

With tears, *Androgus* made reply—
Dear brother, do not fear;
Their every wish I will supply,
And be their uncle dear:
God never prosper me or mine
In whatsoe'er I have,
If e'er I hurt them with design,
When you are in the grave.

The parents being dead and gone,
The children home he takes,
And seems to soften all their moan,
So much of them he makes:
But had not kept the little souls
A twelvemonth and a day,
But in his breast a scheme there rowls
To take their lives away.

He bargain'd with two ruffians strong,
Who were of furious mood,

To take away these children young,
And slay them in a wood;
Then gave it out, both far and near,
That he them both did send
To Town for education there,
To one who was their friend.

Away the little babes were sent,
Rejoicing at the tide;
Which gave them both no small content,
On horseback for to ride:
They prate and prattle pleasantly,
As they ride on the way,
To those who should their butchers be,
And work their lives decay.

The pretty speeches which they said,
Made one rogue's heart relent;
For tho' he undertook the deed,
He sorely did repent:
The other, still more hard of heart,
Was not at all aggriev'd,
And vow'd that he would do his part
For what he had receiv'd.

The other won't thereto agree,
Which caus'd no little strife;
To fight they go right suddenly
About the children's life:
And he that was in mildest mood
Did slay the other there
Within an unfrequented wood,
The babes did quake with fear.

He took the children by the hand,
While tears were in their eyes;
And for a scheme which he had plann'd,
He bid them make no noise:
Then two long miles he them did lead,
Of hunger they complain,
Stay here, says he, I'll bring you bread,
And soon be here again.

Then hand in hand they took their way,
And wandered up and down;
But never more did they survey
The man come from the town:
Their pretty lips with black berries
Were all besmear'd and dy'd,
And when the shades of night arise,
They sat them down and cry'd.

These pretty babes thus wander'd long,
Without the least relief,
The woods, the briers, and thorns among,
'Till death did end their grief.
These pretty babes from any man
No funeral rite receives,
But Robin Red-Breast forms the plan
To cover them with leaves.

But now the heavy wrath of God
Upon their uncle fell;
The furies haunt his curst abode,
His conscience felt an hell:
His barns consum'd, his house was fir'd,
His lands were barren made,
His cattle in the fields expir'd,
And nothing with him stay'd.

His ships, which both were gone to sea,
Were on their voyage lost,
And fate did order him to be
With wants and sorrows crost:
His lands both sold and pawned were,
Ere seven years were out:
Attend, and you shall quickly hear
How all things came about.

The fellow who did take in hand
The children for to kill,
To die, was judged by the land,
For murder—by God's will;
The guilty secret in his breast
He could no more contain;
So all the truth he then confess'd,
To ease him of his pain.

The uncle did in prison die,
Unpity'd was his fate;
Ye guardians warning take hereby,
And never prove ingrate.
To helpless infants still be kind,
And give to each his right;
For if you do not, soon you'll find
God will your deeds requite.

CONCLUSION.

AS we have now recited every particular which relates to *The Children in the Wood*, we shall offer a few considerations for the perusal of our young friends.

As you must feel the utmost hatred for the conduct of the unnatural *Androgus*, it greatly concerns you to guard against the passions of avarice and ambition, which are two of the most detestable crimes that can pollute the human heart, or debase the character of a reasonable being. Whenever you give

way to the dazzling and deceitful pleasures of pomp and greatness, then it is that you violate the dictates of conscience, and treasure up a baneful source of misery and wretchedness. But when you presume to offend your Maker in a still more daring degree, and proceed to commit acts of cruelty, revenge, and even *murder* itself; when you calmly and deliberately perpetrate the most horrid deeds, and gratify the most licentious appetites, how must you dread the all-searching eye of that BEING who can *bring to light the hidden things of darkness*!—Let this important thought have due weight with you, so that your conduct may at all

times be influenced by it, and then you will reap the advantage of it both here and hereafter. All your worldly transactions will prosper, and your eternal state will amply reward you for your chearful obedience to the laws of HIM who made you.

F I N I S.



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