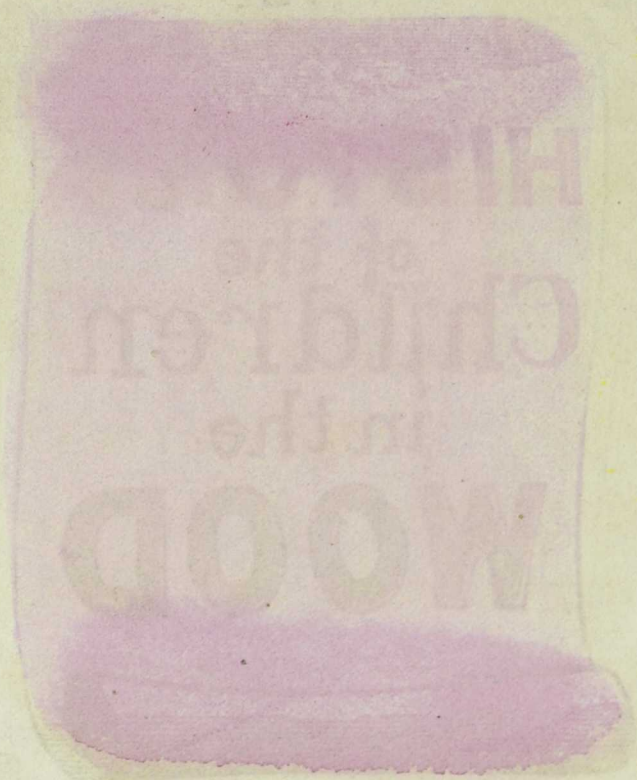




THE

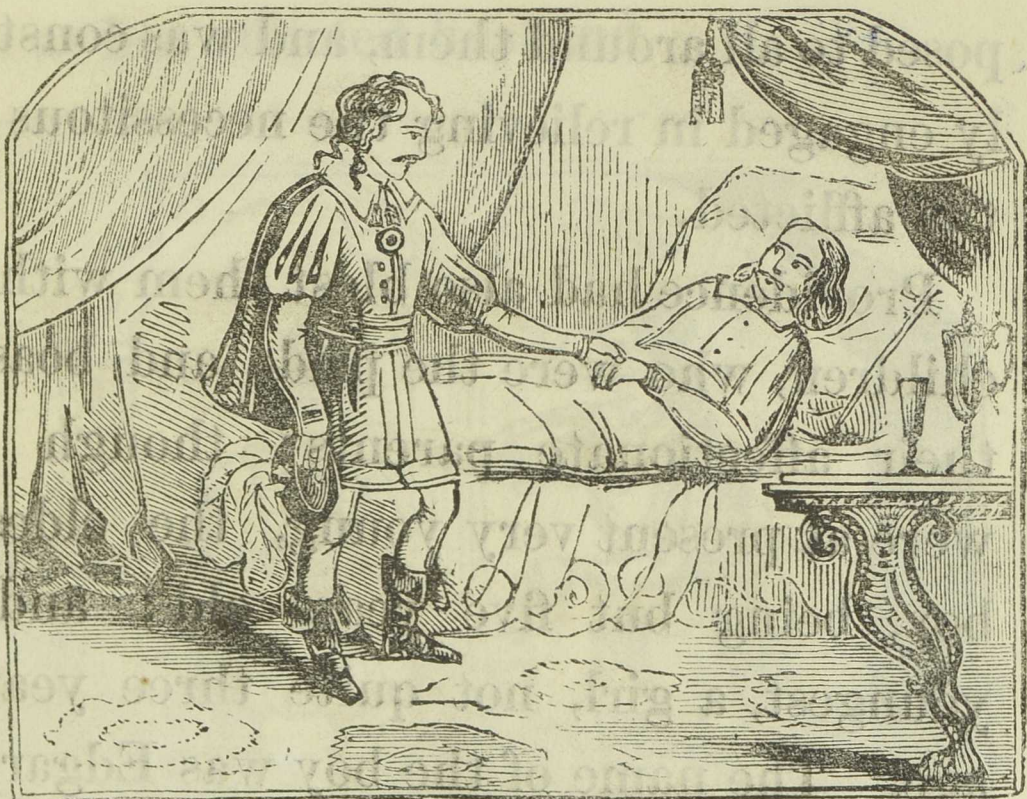
HISTORY
of the
Children
in the
WOOD

LONDON:—T. GOODE, PUBLISHER, CLERKENWELL GREEN.



LONDON: T. GOODE, PUBLISHER, CLEVELAND STREET, LONDON.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.



The dying Parent and the Uncle.

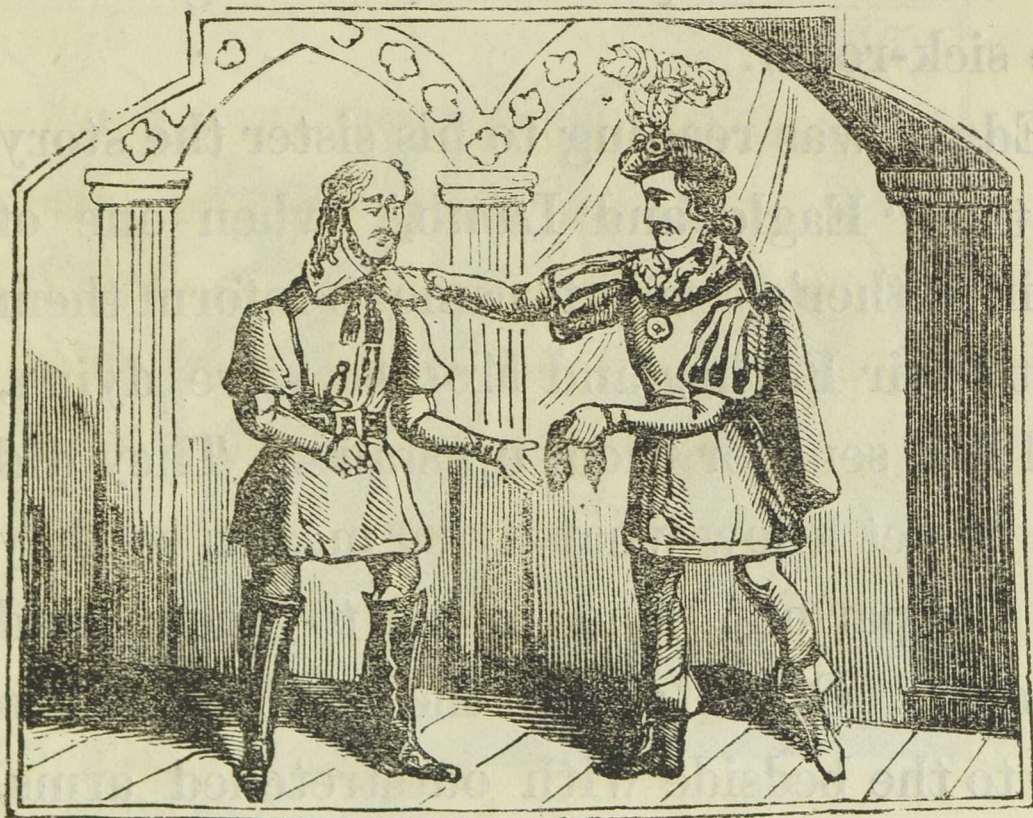
MANY years since there lived in the county of Norfolk, a gentleman of family and fortune, who had married a lady of equal rank and property. Having a particular regard for each other, they enjoyed that true happiness which is the result of a

mutual attachment. But they were not satisfied with being happy themselves, it was their wish that others should share in the blessings which God had bestowed upon them. Hence they were charitably disposed to all around them, and was constantly engaged in relieving the necessitous and the afflicted.

Providence had also blest them with two children, who were the pride and boast of their affectionate parents; though they were at present very young, the eldest, a boy, being but five years old; and the youngest, a girl, not quite three years of age. The name of the boy was Edgar, and that of the girl, Jane.

Things were in a prosperous state, when it pleased God to afflict the gentleman, with a disorder, which confined him to his bed; and notwithstanding the best advice, he became so much worse, as to render his lady very uneasy; who constantly attended his sick-bed by day and night, and could never

be prevailed on by him or any one else to leave it. But this confinement and anxiety had soon a very serious effect upon her own health; for she was seized with a fever, which rendered her as much an object of compassion as her afflicted husband.



The Uncle bribing the robber.

In this melancholy state they both continued for some time. They daily grew worse and worse, and at length became so dangerously ill that the gentleman expressed a wish

to have his only brother sent for. It was not long before he arrived, and appeared overwhelmed with grief at seeing the dangerous condition to which the lady and gentleman were now reduced. Having expressed their thanks for his kind attention, the children were requested to be brought into the sick-room.

Edgar was reading to his sister the story of the "Eagle and Lamb," when one of their Father's servants came to inform them that their Father and Mother were dying, and had sent for them up stairs. They did not as yet know what dying meant, so they left the parlour, glad to go to their kind parents. On entering, the pretty children ran to the bedside with outstretched arms, when their parents most tenderly embraced them. "My dear children," said the Father with a faltering voice, "I sent for you to receive my last blessing, as it is the will of the Almighty that I should shortly leave you; pray to him night and morning. Such

my dears, I have often told you to do, but I now tell you for the last time."

Then turning to their Uncle, who stood by, he said,—“ My dear Brother, death will soon separate me from everything precious on earth; and all hope of the recovery of



The duel.

my loved wife is at an end. Our peace is made with Heaven; but what still afflicts us, is the idea of leaving our helpless offspring to

their fate, exposed to the snares and corruptions of the world. Look then, dear brother, with compassion on our poor children. Train them up in the paths of religion and virtue.

“My dearest brother,” replied the Uucle, seemingly affected, “Let not your last moments be perplexed on account of your dear littles once ; I will consider them as my own and will be their Father and friend. But be comforted, you may yet recover.” Never, rejoined the dying man ; I have no hopes of recovery. “Here, Brother, is my will ; you will see I have done my best for the dear babes and made you their guardian.”

His feeble voice was now nearly exhausted ; but, after another pause, he added, turning to his infants, “When I am in my grave, your Uncle will take you to his own house, you must then obey him as you have obeyed me ; and I hope you will be good and happy.” Scarcely had he uttered these words, when he closed his eyes on this world.

CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

Shedding an abundance of tears, it was now that the dying Mother tried to bid Edgar and Jane farewell. Claspings them in her arms, she reclined her head on her pillow, repeatedly exclaiming at times, God bless you my dear children. After this she was never heard to speak again.



The robber taking the Children in the wood.

The Uncle shed a few tears at this sad sight, and then broke open the will; in which he found that his brother had left the

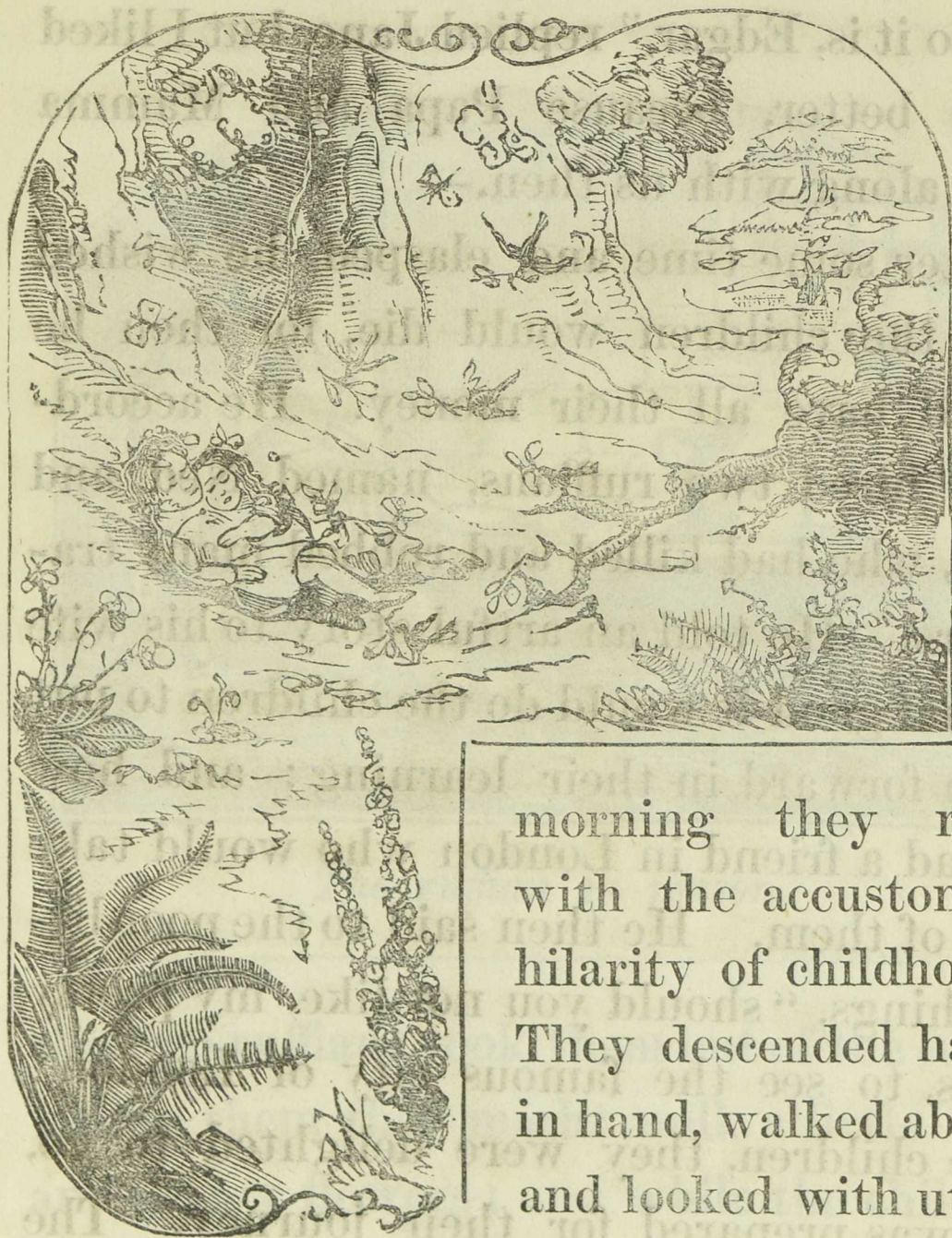
little boy Edgar, the sum of three hundred pounds a year, when he was twenty-one years of age; and to Jane, the girl, the sum of five hundred pounds in gold, to be paid her on the day of her marriage. But if the children should die before they came of age, then all the money was to belong to their Uncle.

Having buried the gentleman in the same grave with his dear wife, the two children were taken home to their Uncle's house. They remembered their Father's dying admonition to them, which charged them to obey their Uncle in his place; so they endeavoured to cease from crying, though they remained very sad for a long time afterwards, and often thought of home.

The coach drove fast; and it was evening when they reached an elegant and spacious mansion, situated in an extensive park. Wearied with travelling, the two Orphans, Edgar and Jane, asked permission of their Uncle to go to bed. Like good children

CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

who had been properly trained up, they both knelt down to pray before they got into bed. Many a tear did they shed when in bed, but sleep soon overpowered them, and the next



morning they rose with the accustomed hilarity of childhood. They descended hand in hand, walked about and looked with utter

The robins covering the Children with leaves.

astonishment at the spacious halls, lofty rooms, and extensive gardens around them.

“How different is all this,” exclaimed Edgar, from our Father’s little house, his nice orchard, and pretty corn fields.

“So it is, Edgar,” replied Jane, but I liked home better, because Papa and Mamma were along with us then.—

After some time and elapsed, he wished that the children would die, for then he should have all their money. He accordingly hired two ruffians, named Ned and Dick, who had killed and robbed many travellers. He told an artful story to his wife of what good it would do the children to put them forward in their learning; and how he had a friend in London who would take care of them. He then said to the poor little things, “should you not like, my pretty dears, to see the famous city of London? Like children, they were delighted to go, and was prepared for their journey. The harmless little ones were put into a fine

coach a few days after, and along with them the cruel wretches who were soon to put an end to their innocent prattle. When they had reached the wood, where it was planned by the Uncle they should be put to death ;



The ruffian in prison.

the two ruffians took them out of the coach, telling them they might walk a little way, and gather flowers ; and while the children were at play, the ruffians began to consult.

“In good truth,” said Ned, “now I have seen their sweet faces, and heard their pretty talk, I have no heart to do the cruel deed ; let us send the children back to their uncle.”

“Indeed I will not,” replied Dick, “what is their pretty talk to us? and who will pay us for being so tender hearted?”

“Think of our own children at home,” said Ned.

“Yes, but I shall get nothing to take back to them, if I turn coward as you do” replied Dick.

At length the ruffians fell into a passion and began fighting ; after fighting some time, Ned made a desperate thrust at Dick that laid him dead at his feet ; and he buried his body in a deep pit in the wood.

Ned was now quite at a loss what to do with the children, since he wanted to escape, for fear of being discovered. He at length resolved to leave them in the wood, trusting to the kindness of any traveller passing by.

“Come here pretty ones,” said he, “you must take hold of my hands, and go a little way with me.” In this manner he led them further into the wood; and told them to wait there till he came back from the next town, where he would go for food.

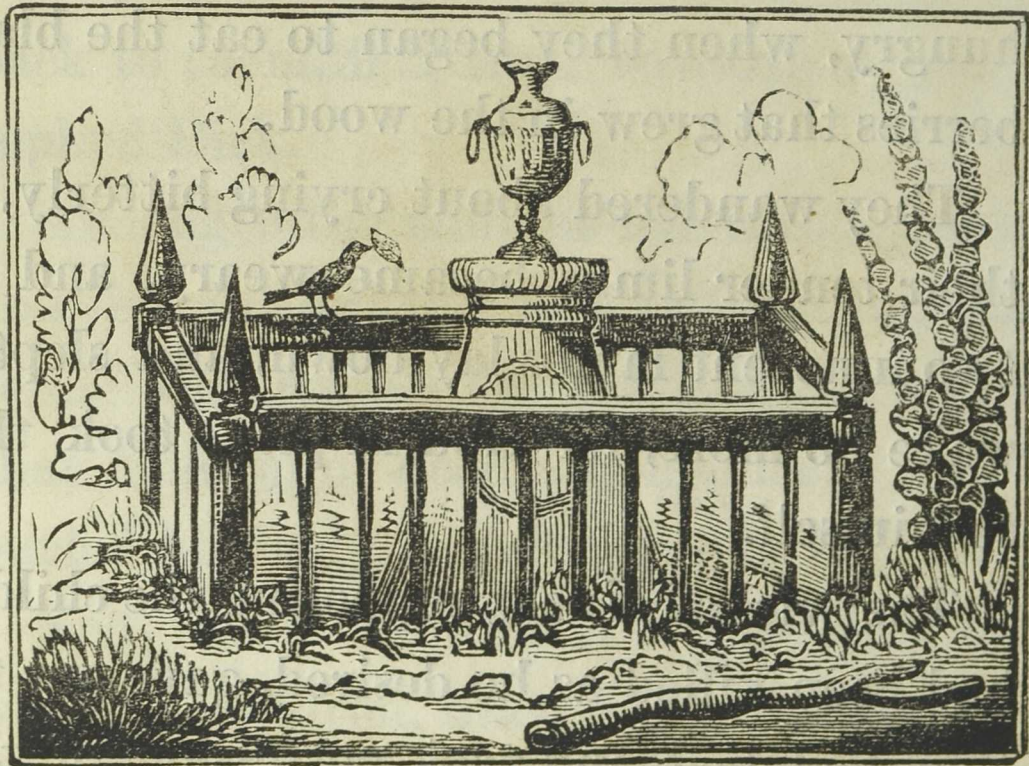
Edgar now took his sister by the hand, and they walked about in fear. Will the strange man come back with some cakes, Edgar? said little Jane. “Bye and bye, Jane,” said he. They waited till they were hungry, when they began to eat the blackberries that grew in the wood.

They wandered about crying bitterly, till their tender limbs became weary, and the two innocent lambs lay down, and slept to wake no more, for God in pity, took them to himself.

The wicked Uncle, supposing the children had been killed as he desired, gave out that they had died, and took possession of their fortune. But the vengeance of God fell upon him, for in a short time his wife died,

his corn was blighted, and his cattle died in the fields. Soon after, the ruffian committed a robbery, and was condemned to be hung. While in prison, he made a full confession, which so terrified the wicked Uncle, that he died raving mad.

The two poor babes were found enclosed in each other's arms, covered with leaves, for the Robin Red-breasts had brought the leaves that covered them.



The monument erected in memory of the children.