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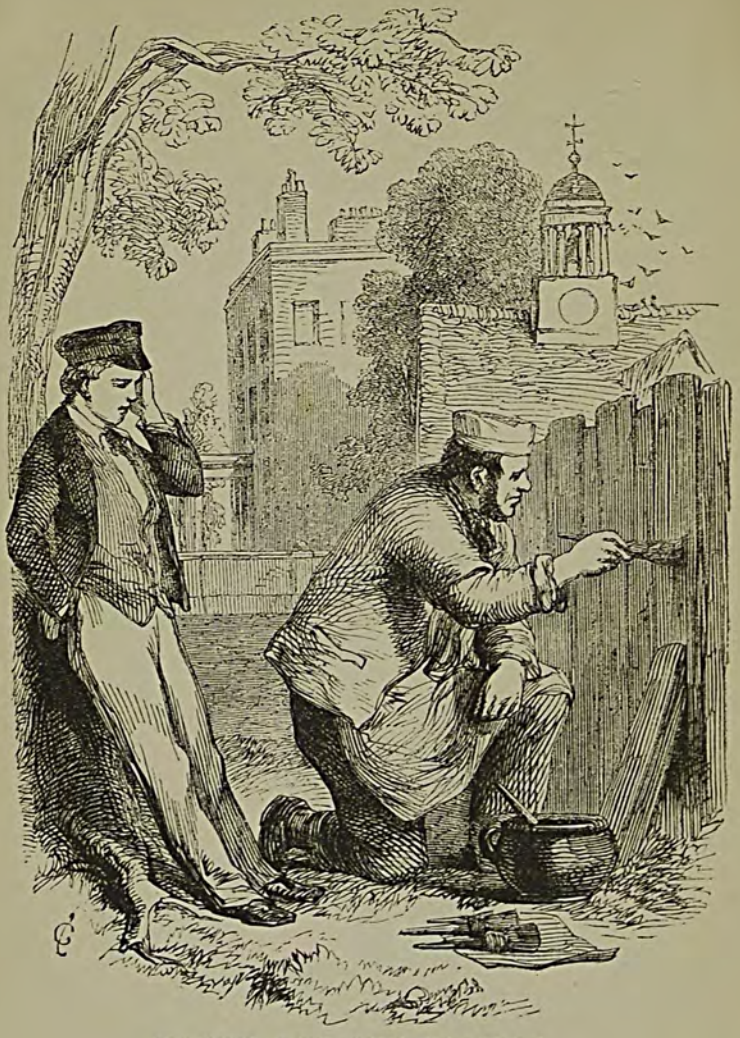

HARRY AND THE PAINTER.

Page 75.

TALES FOR BOYS.

HARRY'S HOLIDAY,

OR

The Doings of One who had Nothing to do:

By JEFFERYS TAYLOR.

NEVER WRONG,

OR

THE YOUNG DISPUTANT, &c.

LONDON:
GRANT AND GRIFFITH,
(SUCCESSORS TO NEWBERY AND HARRIS,)
CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

MY younger brother, the writer of the little book which is here presented to juvenile readers, feeling himself at present a stranger amongst them, imagined he might receive a more favourable reception if introduced by one who is already so happy as to enjoy some share of their regard.

With the freedom, therefore of an old acquaintance, I beg leave to commend this little volume to the favour of my young friends. Although it was chiefly composed during the weeks of a painful illness, it is hoped there will

not be found a deficiency of that entertainment which generally renders a useful moral most acceptable to the youthful reader.

Should it succeed in its design, and engage the interest of those for whose instruction it is intended, the writer himself will not be more gratified, though, perhaps he may be more surprised,—than his sister,

JANE TAYLOR.

ONGAR, *October*, 1818.

Extract from a Note to the Publishers.

"I HAVE struck out the too numerous abbreviations, remedied some inaccuracies, and made the book, I think, more acceptable.

"JEFFERYS TAYLOR.

"*Jan.* 16, 1851."

HARRY'S HOLIDAY.

CHAPTER I.

"How I should like to be Robinson Crusoe!" said Harry, who sometimes talked to himself, especially when he felt discontented.

"I doubt it," said his father, who, passing by just then, happened to overhear him.

This made Harry lift his head from his hand, on which he had been resting it, as idle people do, and he began to consider what else he might have said loud enough to be heard; for he knew he had been *thinking* a great many things which he should not at all like to tell

his parents. There was one sentence in particular which he was very uneasy about; for he was sadly afraid he had muttered it loud, and, even in his present discontented mood, he knew it to be untrue, unkind, and ungrateful.

"But I should not so much mind if he *did* hear *that*," thought he, referring to something in which he believed himself to be *really* ill used. "I wonder whether father was there before I said I should like to be Robinson Crusoe!—I did'nt hear any body."

After questioning himself a little more to no purpose, his thoughts turned to the old subject. —"Yes, I *should* like to be Robinson Crusoe," thought he; "father may doubt it, but I know it. I dare say I know what I should like myself; but he knows nothing about it; he does not want to be any body else, I dare say, because he can do just as he likes; and what is the reason I may not? It is doing as one *likes* is the thing; it is so disagreeable to be obliged to obey just to a minute, and to be forced to go

when that bell rings, let me be about what I will; as if I could not go to my lessons as well afterwards! How would papa like it himself, I wonder?" Harry might have recollected that his father was always one of the first to go when the family bell rang; but he did *not* recollect it; nor did he consider how lately his grumbling soliloquy had been overheard, but he began talking to himself again as he did before.

"I only wish," said he, "I could have my own way for one week; oh, if I could but be as Robinson Crusoe was, and they could see me!—they would envy me. They might keep their chairs, and their tables, and their beds, and their carpets! Why, if I were going to be like him, I would not have a thing that is in this house;—I know how to do without them."

His imagination then landed him, as if at one leap, on the desert island, where, he thought, he immediately saw a bread-fruit-tree, and some oysters, and that he presently found

a convenient sharp stone to open them with. He fancied himself, besides, just within sight of a snug cave to live in, when, alas! the *bell rang*, which made poor Harry start as if in his sleep. It is wonderful how truly miserable, discontented people often make themselves; for poor Harry felt really unhappy, though far less so than he would have done in Robinson's cave that night; however, he was but a little boy, and he did not know how very often little boys are mistaken.

He now felt reminded of his hard lot, in being obliged to obey every summons, and slowly paced towards the room in which the family assembled. But as he drew near, he began to think of what he had said, and of what his father might have heard, and he felt very uneasy lest it should be brought against him, as a serious charge, the moment he entered. The door being partly open, he looked in, and saw his father standing with his back to the fire, but not looking at all angry, he thought. However, he resolved not to venture in alone, but

to wait till others should come, that he might not be so much noticed. So when his brothers and sisters went in, he followed last of all, his heart beating so loud that he was afraid some of them would hear it. He was greatly relieved, however, to see his father stroking puss, (who lay before the fire with her kitten) and looking very good-natured.

Soon after his parents had a long conversation on the strength of maternal affection in animals, and Harry began to think that all was safe, when suddenly his father said—"Harry, *what was that I heard you*—read the other day about the bear that was shot on the ice with her young ones?" Poor Harry had been too much alarmed, by the sound of the first part of this question, to answer without some agitation; however, he repeated the anecdote as well as he could, and it all passed off. Now it really happened that his father had just then quite forgotten what he had overheard, so that Harry's fright was only the effect of his own

guilty conscience; nevertheless, he determined, for the future, not to talk aloud to himself, unless, indeed, like Robinson Crusoe, he could be certain of being alone.

CHAPTER II.

Some time after this, some one observed, during breakfast, that which Harry knew before very well indeed, that it was the first of August, and his birth-day.

"The first of August!" said his father; "so it is; the glorious first of August! hey, Harry? let us shake hands about it, however. Let us see; how old does this make you?"

"Eleven, sir," said Harry.

"Eleven! Indeed!" said his father; "well then, in ten years you are to *do as you like*, and have your own way, I suppose; but you must do something for me first; run and bring me that parcel from the library table."

Harry did not hesitate; but soon returned, feeling and looking a little conscious, though he scarcely knew why.

"Ah, that is it!" said his father; "now then, let us see!" All eyes, and, of course, both Harry's, were fixed on this interesting parcel, as it was turned round and round, like a joint of meat before the fire, while the well-tied string was undoing, which Harry longed, and even offered to cut. At last, however, it was untied, and the parcel began to unfold itself; and first one, and then another brown paper was dismissed; and then some white paper, and then some silver paper appeared, and then—A WATCH!!!—which watch Harry's kind parent made him a present of, without farther ceremony, merely advising him, in general terms, to take care of it; for he well knew that a long discourse, just then, on the value of time, would not be much attended to.

After this, his mother stepped forward, saying, "I am afraid my present will not appear to very great advantage after the watch; but as Harry, in general, seems to like books, and takes care of them, I thought one of this kind would not be lost upon him: this, Harry, is the

history of "The Boy Kings of the Seven Islands." It appears that they also were dissatisfied with their condition, and you will see by *their* adventures, how far they improved it.

"And now," said Mr. Stapleton, his father, "to crown all, Harry must have a holiday, I suppose?"

"O, certainly!" said Mrs. S., "he must have a holiday—to-day, at least."

"To-day!" said Mr. S., with a look which Harry knew meant something particular; "I'll tell you what,—he shall have a week's holiday!"

"A week's holiday!" said his mother, with lifted brow, "why, Harry, you will be almost as happy as Robinson Crusoe, to-day."

Harry coloured at the recollection of that which this referred to; and now he felt indeed ashamed of the unkind thoughts he had entertained of those who loved him so well; but they quickly changed the subject, as they did not wish to spoil the pleasure of his birth-day, and Harry soon recovered himself; but he

could not help wondering, that, as he must have been overheard when he was talking to himself, he should have so many favours heaped upon him, and that he should even be indulged with that very thing which he had wished for.

But Harry did not perceive that his father's principal reason for giving him this holiday was to convince him that he would not know *what* to do, if he *might* do as he liked. If he had been a little older, perhaps, he would have been reproved in a different way; but this method was chosen, because he was but a little boy, and because what he had said was so extremely silly.

The next question with Harry was *what* to do, now that he had *nothing* to do, and could do as he liked. A watch, and a holiday, and a birth-day, and a fine day! Indeed it seemed to be of very little consequence just then, what he did, or whether he did anything; for the mere thinking of all those advantages seemed happiness enough for the present. He turned heels over head, three or four times, upon the grass-

plot, by way of making a beginning, till he recollected his watch might not like that rotation. What, then, should he do? Should he fly his kite?—that was worth thinking of, as it made an excuse for his looking to know the hour, in order that he might be ready for his cousin Arthur, whom he soon expected. He found, however, that there was plenty of time; and his kite he determined to fly, that being a diversion he was always very fond of. So he took it under his arm; but as he passed the place where his rabbits were kept, he recollected they wanted feeding. He knew this ought to be attended to directly, and his conscience told him he was doing wrong, when he determined to fly his kite first; yet he left the poor hungry rabbits, although they were putting their noses through the bars as if trying to remind him of their wants; but it was of very little use to remind Harry of what he *ought* to do, when there was anything in the way that he *liked* to do; he had not yet found out that

there is real pleasure in doing a thing that is *not* in itself amusing, exactly at the proper time, and that there is certain disappointment in doing a thing that *is* in itself amusing, at an improper time.

As he sauntered down to the meadow where he was accustomed to play, he met an acquaintance whom he had often envied, because he had nothing to do; that is, he was not obliged to do anything all day long; and though Harry saw that he never played with the cheerfulness of other boys, and seemed to take no pleasure in anything, yet he thought that *he* should, if he had his time to himself. Harry was, certainly, a much better boy than this, his acquaintance, though their dispositions were very much alike; and the reason was, that he was not so much indulged, and that he had some regular occupation. This young gentleman, whose name was Edward Vowles, had no father or mother, they having died when he was very little; and so he had the misfortune to live with a relation, who said she was so fond of

him that she would never force him to do what he did not like. As he had no work-time, so he had no play-time; for as he could play always, he was always tired of play: he had, therefore, very few amusements, and was constantly cross, fretful, and discontented. His companions called him also very ill-natured, and this was true; for he was very selfish, and a selfish person is never very obliging, when another asks a favour of him.

"I'm going to fly my kite, Edward; will you go with me?" said Harry.

"Yes, if it is not too far," said Edward, gaping; "but I thought you were obliged to mind your books always at this time in the morning."

"But papa has given me a week's holiday," said Harry.

"A *week's* holiday!" said Edward, with a sneer, "and are you contented with that?—none of your holidays for me."

It was true indeed, that poor Edward never knew what it was to have a holiday.

"I would not be you for all the world," added he.

"But I have something besides a holiday," said Harry, who did not quite like this last speech; "my father gave me this new watch to-day."

"That can't be yours," said Edward.

"It is, though," said Harry, "and here is my name on the seal."

Now, though Edward had a great many fine playthings that Harry had not, he was nevertheless without a watch, and, this being a far more valuable possession than any he had himself obtained, he grew cross, and even angry with Harry, whom he now envied to a great degree, although he had said he would not have such a watch as that, if he would give it him. Very soon after this he parted from Harry and went home, determined to teaze one out of his aunt if possible; but this he did not find so easy as he expected; for, though in general she let him have what he asked for, or, at any rate, what he teazed for, she now said, that she was

sure a person could have no use for a watch who had no use for his time.

Harry walked more briskly after this, glad to find that he was really as well off just now as Edward Vowles, whose aunt he had often thought so much kinder than his own parents.

He soon found himself in the open field; there was a fine wind, and his kite took its whole length of string without running (a great thing to Harry). He sent up several *messengers*, on one of which he wrote, "Ten o'clock by my watch—birth-day." But somehow, although his kite flew remarkably well, Harry did not enjoy his morning quite so much as usual, for his brothers were at their lessons, and there was he by himself, and it was of little use, he thought, to be ever so happy all alone. He soon began to grow tired, and presently thought that this would be a nice opportunity to *alter* his rabbit-house, for he had no time in general to execute the grand scheme he projected. He determined, therefore, to set about it immediately, and, as he had no patience, he

could not wait to wind the string of his kite properly upon the stick, but pulled it in as fast as he could, and, gathering it up in a bunch, thrust it into his pocket, and set off home. Poor Harry forgot that the next time he wished to fly his kite he would have an hour's work to disentangle this string; but that he did not care about because it was not *now*, and, according to his present feelings, he might never wish to fly his kite again.

As soon as he reached home, he fell to work upon the rabbits' hutches, and having put his poor *bunnies* one upon another in a basket, where they were not very comfortable, he soon knocked the old boxes to pieces, and while he was doing that he felt very glad that he had thought of the employment.

To those who like *altering*, merely for the sake of it, there will always be a great deal more pleasure and amusement in destroying an old thing, than in making a new one; and so Harry found it; for while he was *rapping and rending*, he could make a great apparent dif-

ference with but little trouble, but this could not be the case when rebuilding

In order to do the thing thoroughly while he was about it, he pulled every part to pieces which he could possibly rend asunder, thus making a cruel quantity of work for himself when he should put it up again.

"I am afraid, Harry, you have made yourself a longer job than will suit *you*," said his father, when he beheld the wonderful clearance that had been made.

"O, I like doing it very much, papa," said Harry, "and I intend to make it a great deal better than it was before."

"I am afraid you will make it a great deal worse," said his father. "If you had asked my leave, I should not have consented to your pulling it to pieces, for this rabbit-place was built by a carpenter, and cost a great deal of money. Pray why did you wish to alter it?"

"Because it was so—it wanted to be—it was so very—the rabbits were never comfortable in it," said Harry.

"Well, Harry," said his father, "I see you had no other reason for pulling this down than the want of something to do; but observe, you have a much better reason for building it up again, and that is, that *I* expect it to be done, and that without delay; it is the least you can do to make amends for destroying what was mine and not yours; but pray where are your rabbits all this time?"

"In that basket, sir," said Harry, pointing to a small one that stood on the ground.

"In that basket! Well, I am sure they must be very civil to you, to remain there," said his father; "but, Harry, I see no rabbits."

Harry peeped into the basket, which was indeed quite empty!

"I fancy these rabbits are like some young folk, and thought they should like a change," said his father.

"Where *can* they be?" said Harry, moving the loose boards he had pulled down.

"I am afraid this will be an unfortunate affair," said his father; "however, now we must

make the best of it. I would advise you to look well for them about the yard and garden, and I will send your brothers to help you."

"How provoking it is!" said Harry, as soon as his father was gone; "I am tired enough already, and now I have to hunt, nobody knows where, for these rabbits."

"How stupid of you to let your rabbits out!" said James; "I shall not look much."

"Why, the rabbit-house is pulled down, I declare!" exclaimed Frederick, who happened to look that way.

"Mind your own business, will you?" said Harry.

"And I hope you will mind yours, when you are building it up again," said James, "and a nice task you will have, papa says; he told mamma all about it."

"And what was there to tell?" said Harry; "I thought you were come to help me to find my rabbits."

"I dare say they are in the potato-field," said Frederick.

"Then there they may be," said Harry; "I shall only look a little about the yard."

So saying, he stooped very low, to see if they were beneath the water-butt, and, while he was bending under the tap, a drop fell from it exactly into the nape of his neck!

"Ah, I will make you repent that," said Harry, thinking Frederick had done it, who stood close by; but, rising suddenly, he struck his head very hard against the tap, which, coming out, the water almost knocked him down. His brothers instantly ran in, to give information. Harry himself could not get by, as the stream reached quite across the narrow place where he stood. At last a servant came, who, after making many exclamations, endeavoured to replace the tap; but, in doing so, some of the water spirted with great force full in Harry's face. Thinking this, too, was done on purpose, and not waiting to consider conse-

quences, he pushed the servant down into the wet, and, rushing through the stream of water, ran in doors.

"Ah! Master *Hinry!* Master *Hinry!* I'll as surely tell your papa, sir, as ever your name is Stapleton!" said Ruth, who had fallen backwards, and was completely drenched.

"And so will I," said Harry, "I'm determined."

"What is all this?" said his father, hastening to the spot.

"He *shuffed* me down in the wet, sir, and I *an't* going to stand it," said Ruth, in a very angry tone of voice.

"Well, I only wanted to get by," said Harry.

"He *shuffed* me fairly down, sir, if I never speak another word. Oh! my good gracious!" said she, looking over her shoulder, "I haven't got a dry thread about me!"

"Well, and why did you splash?"

"Come in, Henry," said his father, who generally called him *Henry* when he was displeased.

Poor Henry followed, wet and woe-begone, saying, all the way, that Ruth splashed him on purpose.

"Now, Henry," said his father, "you need not trouble yourself to say how it was, because I saw the whole affair from the window. I have taken some pains to make this a pleasant day to you, so that if it is an *unpleasant* one it will not be my fault; but I am obliged to say, that, as you are completely wet, you must take your clothes off, and I think, too, it will be safest for you to go to bed. If this seems like a punishment to you, remember you have deserved it."

So poor Harry was really sent to bed, at twelve o'clock on his birth-day!—a circumstance so very disagreeable to his pride, that the thing he most wished just then was, that he might not meet anybody as he went up stairs.

In a little while, his cousin Arthur came, who had been invited expressly on Harry's account; and he had the mortification to hear

him playing with his brothers in the yard below, and seeming very merry, while he lay, wishing that he had not looked under the water-butt, or, at any rate, that he had not knocked the tap out, but never thinking about pushing Ruth down, or about going into a passion for nothing; nevertheless, the remembrance of his watch made great amends for all he had suffered. He knew that he would have consented to stand some hours in a pool of water, and to have lain in bed for a fortnight, if such a process could have obtained him *a watch.*

"But I wish," said Harry to himself, "I had taken that kite-string out of my pocket; if they see that, while they are drying my coat, I shall be scolded for it; it is very hard one may not do as one likes with one's own things, when one is in a hurry and all. Oh dear!" said he, as this brought the circumstance to his mind, "and there is that rabbit-house to do; I certainly wish I *had* let *that* alone; however," thought he, "if the rabbits are gone, I

don't see that I need do it; and so he almost wished that his rabbits, which a little while ago he was so fond of, might be lost, to save him trouble that he so much disliked. He was just thinking thus when somebody knocked at his room door.

"Who is that?" said Harry.

"It is I," said James; "and I have got something for you."

"Come in then," said Harry, who recollected this was his birth-day.

"Here is one of your rabbits," said James as he entered, holding it by the ears over Harry's face; "and papa says you may come down now, and begin building their house."

"Ah! I know all about that!" said Harry. "I think I shall put this one in a box till I find the others; papa said I should find the rabbits first; it is of no use building a rabbit place for one rabbit."

"Well, you had better ask papa," said James.

"I have a great mind not to keep rabbits,"

said Harry; "they are such a trouble always, and they cost so much."

"So papa said before you had them. Hark! I think you are called," said James.

"Here are your rabbits, all safe and sound!" said Frederick, bustling in with a basket; "where do you think they were?"

"Oh! I don't know!" said Harry; "I should not have cared if they had kept there, wherever it was."

"They were all under that water-butt as snug as could be; and so now you may set to work as fast as you please."

"That will not be very fast, then, I guess," said James.

"I think I shall sell them," said Harry; "what will you give me for them? They are of no use to me that I know of."

James smiled and said, that was not the way to make a good bargain.

"I am afraid I have not money enough," said Frederick, "or else——"

"Well, never mind the money," said Harry; "if you will let me have your guinea-pig, *box and all*, you shall have my four rabbits."

"But where am I to keep them," said Frederick, "now that their house is down?"

"Oh! why—you—can—you may—you must—keep them in the basket till you can think of something better."

"Well, I will ask papa," said Frederick; and he ran down stairs, not hearing Harry's remonstrances, who did not wish him to do that at all. He soon returned with—"Papa says you had better keep your rabbits, and I my guinea-pig; and he says too, that, let that be as it may, you must put up the rabbit-house again, because he says that is *his;* and he told me to say that you had better come down and do it now."

"Well," said Harry, "I am not to have much of a holiday, I see."

"Why, you will not be a week about it, will you?" said Frederick.

"No; but there will be something else,

you will see, to be done to-morrow," said Harry.

"Not unless you pull something else to pieces," said James, as he and Frederick left the room.

Some time after this Harry followed, and walked down the yard very leisurely, with his hands in his pockets; and thus he stood a good while surveying the ruins; but at last he really began to pull the boards about, though it was long before he could find out where to place one of them, so little idea had he either of what ought to be done, or of what he himself *intended* to do. However, at last he succeeded in patching up a place that would just hold his rabbits, though not nearly so comfortable nor so secure as it was before; for, instead of the door having two good hinges and a hasp, it was now only tied up with a piece of string, and where there had been open bars put to admit air, he placed a whole board, to save time, or rather trouble; and this was fixed so badly,

that the rabbits could have pushed it down themselves if they had tried.

This was the way in which Harry did everything that he grew tired of; and, as he never liked trouble, he always grew tired very soon, so that he seldom finished what he began; and when he was obliged to finish anything, he slighted it as he did his rabbit-house. On this account he seldom got any praise, though he was very fond of it; for what praise can be given to a thing that is left half done, or that is badly done, for want of pains and perseverance? Indeed, when people have no good reason for what they do, it is not likely that they will do it well; it is knowing a thing to be right and reasonable, that will, in general, cause those who undertake it to do it properly.

Harry, performing things in the way that has been mentioned, was in danger of being considered a blockhead; and certainly nobody would have said he was clever, who looked at his rabbit-house; and he was in danger too of being thought ill-natured, from his indolence,

which made him very unwilling to do anything for another person that required the least trouble; yet he was really neither ill-natured nor a blockhead.

CHAPTER III.

In the afternoon, James and Frederick had holidays given them for the rest of the day; and it would have been strange if they, with their cousin Arthur, and Harry, had not done several diverting things: indeed, there was seldom any want of fun where Arthur was; for he was always prepared, and always good-natured, and besides, he could see in a moment when a droll thing could be done, and he generally found a ready way of doing it.

James had seldom any objection to a little sport, but he had rather more prudence than the rest, being the oldest. Frederick was content at present to look on, or to fetch and carry, as the elder ones directed him; and if there was anything interesting in hand, which would not take long, Harry would do it as well as any-

body. With these qualifications they all walked into the yard, though none of them exactly knew what they were going to play at; but Arthur quickly espied the water-butt mentioned above, which, being quite empty, was laid down on its side. He instantly ran up to it, got astride of it, and put his head in and roared; moreover, he said, that, if anybody would get *quite* in and roar, it would be the oddest sound that ever was heard. There was something rather sly in his look as he said this, which, James perceiving, declined it, saying that he could guess very well, from merely putting his head in, how droll it would be.

"You can't, indeed, half tell from that," said Arthur; "why, it sounds like thunder, if you really get in, and roar properly."

"Then do you get in first," said Frederick, "and let us hear."

"That will not do," said Arthur; "it only sounds like thunder to the one that is in."

Arthur then turned to Harry, who he saw was almost persuaded; for though he well re-

membered a recent catastrophe with the water-butt, yet, as it was quite empty, he did not now see any particular objection.

"Come, Harry, now," said he; "why, it can't hurt you, man; just get in and try."

Harry, suspecting nothing, complied, and began to crawl in, but, not altogether liking to proceed, he asked if that was not far enough to begin to roar.

"Oh no, no—we will let you know when," said Arthur; "only get in, will you?"

Frederick clapped his hands for joy.

Harry crawled further, till his head touched the bottom of the butt. "Now then," said Arthur,—"no, stop a minute;" then, giving the others a hint, they rolled the butt, three or four times over, from the place where it lay, and, with their united strength, set it upright; and even James's prudence could not resist the temptation of aiding the conspiracy. Harry expostulated in the strongest terms. "Now, does it not sound awfully droll?" said Arthur.

"Oh! pray! pray!" cried Harry, who, stand-

ing upon his hands, found *in*version and *di*version two very different things, "my arms are so tired! and my watch will drop out."

This might have lasted some time longer, if Harry's father, hearing a strange noise, had not looked from a window, and seen two feet kicking about over the edge of the butt.

"Who is that in there?" said he, throwing up the sash. "Oh! 'pa! 'pa! it is I!—lift me out!" said Harry, in a voice which, as Arthur said, sounded very oddly from the bottom of the butt.

"And pray, may I ask, whose thought was that?" said Mr. S., liberating Harry, and looking very hard at Arthur.

"Why, uncle," said Arthur, "I—no—Harry got in himself, I believe."

"But did he turn the butt up himself?" said his uncle.

"Why, no, sir, just that, I believe, *we* did," said Arthur; "but we were going to lay it down again directly."

"Indeed! are you sure of that?" said his un-

cle; "but," said he, turning to Harry, "surely you could not have been *doing as you liked* when you crawled in there—were you?"

"I did not know they would roll it, and turn it up," said Harry.

"I am afraid," said his father, "if I had asked you to do it, you would have thought it very hard."

"Dear me! why, I didn't mind it," said Arthur, "when I was served so once; and the man who put me in said, that, while I was topsy-turvy, I might eat a piece of bread without its going *down* my throat, and so I did it to try; do you understand the joke, uncle?"

"I understood that joke some years before you were born, Arthur," said his uncle, "though, I suppose, *you* did not when you tried the experiment."

"No," said Arthur; "for certainly the bread goes *up* the throat of one who is standing on his head."

"With respect to such jokes," said his uncle, "I think, when they have to be explained in

the way that has just amused you so much, they have this grand defect: that there must always be *one* person to whom it can be no joke at all. For my own part, I think those are the best games to play, in which every one may have his share of the diversion; now, if the amusement of putting anybody into a butt consists in seeing them kick their legs about over the edge, you know the one who is in cannot enjoy that pastime; and as, besides this, he must be in a very uncomfortable situation, all your sport must be at his expense, which, to say the best, is very unfair. You did not, I dare say, think of that; but I can tell you of an excellent way to find out what is right to do to anybody:—Always think first, whether you should like them to do it to you; that is, do as you would be done by."

In order to make Harry's birth-day as pleasant as possible, a party of his young friends were invited to spend the evening with him;

and, notwithstanding the unpleasant occurrences of the day, Harry appeared as cheerful as if nothing had happened; indeed, it must be acknowledged that he soon recovered himself after having been out of humour, nor did he ever remain sullen or resentful after reproof, as some children do. His chief anxiety now was, that the adventures of the water-butt might not be known among his companions; for, as has been said before, he was very much afraid of being laughed at; and, as neither his brothers nor his cousin were ill-natured, a hint from him on this subject was sufficient.

After dinner, and when the subsequent entertainments were over, as the evening was very fine, it was unanimously agreed that they should take a walk towards the woods. While they were walking through the garden and other grounds belonging to the house in which Harry resided, several of the party said they should like to live there.

"Dear!" said one, "what a delightful place you live in, Harry!"

"Delightful!" said Harry, "I never thought it very delightful; what makes you think so?"

"What!" said his companion; "why, this beautiful garden, with the fine lawn in front, and those noble trees."

"Those trees are only elms," said Harry; "they bear no fruit; if it were not for them, I could fly my kite at home, without having to go to the meadow."

"I think they are more beautiful than fruit-trees," said the other, whose name was Edmund; "and then you have such a nice house, with a play-room and all; I think *you* ought to be contented."

"The play-room is of no use, unless it rains," said Harry; "and I am sure I always think any other house pleasanter than ours."

"Why, how would you like to live where *we* do?" said Edmund.

"O, I should like very much to live in your house," said Harry; "it is so different."

"It is indeed," said Edmund; "though I am

sure I do not wish to find fault with it; only, as it is in the town, we have scarcely any garden, and what there is in it will not grow; and then we can see nothing but houses from our windows; but you have such a fine prospect; and, besides, when it rains, we can never play at all, for want of a play-room."

"And yet," said Harry, "I know you like your house a great deal better than I do our's; it must be more comfortable—or something."

"I am sure it is not," said Edmund; "but I think you are more discontented.—Dear!" cried he, stepping back, "what is that under the rose-bush?—a little grave-stone, I declare!" The party now stopped to look at it; there were a few lines inscribed on it, as follows:—

"HERE lies, the theme of tearful song,
A rabbit tender, white, and young;
He died of *eating*, it should seem,
Or we might soon have eaten him!

And close beside, there lies his mother.
O Death! ere thou hast killed another
As old, and black, and tough as she,
Sure Time shall aim a shaft at thee!"

"But how I should like to see your *living* rabbits," said Edmund; "I hear you have got finer rabbits, and a better rabbit-house, than any of us."

"We have passed the place now," said Harry, "and it will spoil our walk to go back to it; and, besides, the rabbit-house has been altered, and is not quite done yet."

"Another time, then," said Edmund; "but I should like to know why you are not happy here?"

"Because I had rather be *Robinson Crusoe* than live in the finest house in the world," said Harry.

"Ah, *I* should like to be Robinson Crusoe!" said a very little boy, who was listening to their conversation.

"That is right, Philip," said Harry; "and

now don't you think," said he to Edmund, "that every one of our party would say the same? That is one of those subjects which *I think young* people understand the best."

"*I* do not know much about it, for one," said Edmund; "indeed, I scarcely know what to think—perhaps I might like it very well, if I could be as comfortable at first as he was at last."

"Comfortable! he was always comfortable," said Harry; "but now let us ask some of them —Charles Mason, you are the oldest—pray now, would not you like to be Robinson Crusoe?"

"After pausing a little while, as if to recollect something—"No," said he, "and I will tell you why: I should not like to be dipped in a pond; but Robinson Crusoe was half drowned in the sea: I should not like to be thrown against a wall; but Robinson Crusoe was dashed against a rock: I do not think I should like to live in a house all alone; but Robinson lived

in a cave all alone: I don't much like to *wait* for my dinner; but he was often obliged to go without it: I used to be sorry when the holidays were over, and I left home for a few months; but Robinson Crusoe, I believe, left it for ever."

"What a capital speech!" said Arthur.

"Ah! that's all—but I don't mean all *that*," said Harry; "nobody likes being 'thrown against a wall,' nor yet being 'half-starved,' nor 'half-drowned,' I suppose; but you know what I mean—Robinson Crusoe was very snug and comfortable at last, and enjoyed himself very much; and the reason was, he could do just as he liked always."

"Where did you read that?" said Charles Mason; "would he not have liked to come home, better than anything else in the world, happy as he was. Certainly he must have known best; and he thought it better to live in a family, and do what he ought, than to live all alone, and do as he liked—very seldom."

"What a fine finish!" said James.

"Why, if the truth must be spoken," said Charles, "*I* once thought I should like to be Robinson Crusoe, and I asked papa if he would not, and he said to me exactly what I have said to you."

"Oh, then, it is *only* what your father thinks, after all," said Harry, "and not your own opinion."

"But it *is* my own opinion, I assure you," said Charles; "and I think it would be your's soon, if you were tried."

"*I* know best about that," said Harry; "but let us ask the others—come, now, Jonathan Evans, would not *you* like to be Robinson Crusoe?"

"Why," said he, "I think I should have no objection just to try, if I could get there safely, and have a better place to live in than he had, and better clothes, and somebody to be with me, to do things for me; and then I should like to be able to come home whenever I was tired."

"I think we may say Jonathan Evans would *not* like to be Robinson Crusoe, then," said Arthur.

"Well, Arthur, how would *you* like it?" said Harry.

"Why, let me see," said Arthur, putting his head in a thinking posture—"half-drowned—dashed against a rock; half-starved—live all alone, as Charles Mason says; and then live snug, and do as one likes, as *you* say—No, I think I had rather not."

"What nonsense you talk!" said Harry. "Well, I know *one* of my opinion, however. Philip White, would you like to be Robinson Crusoe?"

"O yes, that I should!" said he.

"And pray do you know why?" said Charles Mason.

The little boy hesitated, and looked at Harry.

"He thinks exactly as I do, you see," said Harry.

"*I* think that *you* think that *he* does not know what he thinks," said Charles.

"And *I* know that *he* knows that *you* know nothing at all about it," said Harry; "but we will ask one more," added he, appealing to Edward Vowles, the idle boy whom he had met in the morning; "wouldn't you like to be Robinson Crusoe, if it were only for the sake of a change?"

"Who was Robinson *Whoso?*" said this blundering, untaught youth, who, as he never read anything, of course knew nothing of that story.

"Robinson '*Whoso,*' indeed!" said Harry, laughing; "why, really I cannot tell you who *he* was."

"Tell him who Robinson *Crusoe* was," said Charles Mason, "and how he fared."

"No, no; that would be of no use," said Harry; "and, besides, now I come to think of it, I am sure *Edward* would not like to be Robinson Crusoe, because *he* does not like trouble.

You would not like to have to chop a whole tree away to make a single board, would you, Edward?"

"No," said Edward; "but where do you mean to walk to? I am so tired!"

"We were going to the woods," said Harry: "will not you go?"

"No, I had rather not, I think," said Edward; and he took leave of the party.

The rest walked on; sometimes talking, sometimes running, or throwing stones, till they reached their destination. It was a little before sunset, and the woods were extremely pleasant just then. "How delightful it would be only to live here," said Harry, "if one could but get anything to eat, and to have a little hut, or a cave, or an old hollow tree to live in."

Charles replied to the same purpose as he did before; and thought, that, as they did not like small inconveniences at home, they would not like great inconveniences abroad. They kept

on talking in this way for some time, and had walked a considerable distance into the wood without knowing it, till a bunch of green nuts, which they espied, took them out of the path; and, in hope of obtaining more, they strayed far out of their right path.

"Well, but—where are we?" said Charles, looking round; "we have lost the path."

Harry directed them to the best of his knowledge; but he was quite mistaken, for they were then in the thickest part of the wood, and it began to grow dark.

"I think we shall be here all night," said James; "I don't know the way at all."

"Oh, what are we to do?" said Harry, throwing down the nuts he had gathered.

"Let us all shout as loud as we can," said Arthur.

They did so; but the echo rather frightened Harry, who turned a little pale.

"If we could but find a cave!" said Charles —"stay, surely here is one," said he, pointing

to a gloomy place among the trees—"now, Harry!"

"Oh, don't! pray don't!" said Harry; "I had rather not talk about that now."

It was curious to see (if anybody just then had been at leisure to notice it) how Harry avoided every dark appearance which reminded him of a cave, as they were breaking their way through the underwood; and how close he kept to his companions, although he had so much desired to live alone.

After having wandered about for some time to no purpose, they called a general council to consider what they should do; but, as nobody knew the way out, there was very little to be said. Frederick, indeed, mentioned climbing a tree, in order to look round; but then nobody wished particularly to do it.

They now all felt sufficiently uncomfortable; but Charles and Arthur were the least so; as for Harry, never did he regard Robinson Crusoe with less envy. He thought of a cave

with horror, and would not have been alone for the world!

But his companions were too much dismayed themselves at the prospect of spending the night in the wood to rally Harry about what he had said at the commencement of their walk: they would have found, however, if he had told them all he felt, that he shuddered at the idea of that which an hour ago he was pleading for, and which he was sure that young people understood so well. Now, indeed, his father's comfortable house, which he had so much despised, was the thing of all others he most wished to see. They made no doubt that they were in the middle of the wood, and had not the slightest idea where to turn, when, to their great joy, they heard a gate swing to, and could distinguish the rattling of the chain when it was locked. They instantly darted towards the spot, and soon found that they had been groping about some time very near the edge of the wood. Getting over the gate, they presently came into the lane

that led homeward; and glad were they, and glad was Harry, to enter a cheerful house, and to sleep in a comfortable bed, instead of spending the night in a wood, or lying in the snuggest cave in the world.

CHAPTER IV.

When Harry awoke the next morning, he felt a great deal of pleasure in recollecting, that, although his birth-day was over, his holiday was not, and that he had still such a substantial remembrance of it in his possession as the watch.

He lay awake some time listening to it, for he had put it under his pillow. At last, however, he took a hint that it gave him, and dressed himself. Finding there was time, he took a short walk before breakfast, and was greatly pleased when a poor man, whom he met, asked him what o'clock it was. Afterwards he compared *his time* with the church clock, and found the latter was five minutes too slow. When he had done that, he felt no inclination to continue his walk, and so he returned.

But, after all, Harry felt rather uneasy and uncomfortable this morning; he knew that his father's eye was upon him, to see what he would do now that he had his time at his own disposal; but, as he had formed no plans, and had no object in view, he was completely at a loss how to employ an hour in which there was nobody to play with. It is pretty clear, therefore, that, when Harry was talking so much about having his own way, "only for one week," he did not know what that way would be; it seemed that he only disliked his father's way.

Young people should always be able to tell what it is they would please to do, before they *complain* that they cannot do as they please. Indeed Harry would not have looked half so foolish as he did, while he was dozing away his time, if he had not said so much about having the entire management of it. It is certain he would have received the news of his holiday with much more real pleasure if he

had known that it would have enabled him to complete any undertaking already begun, or to begin anything, that, when done, would be useful and creditable to him. Any plan of this kind would have entirely prevented the misfortunes of the birth-day, as well as the constant trouble and inconvenience of appearing to be doing something, when in fact he was doing nothing.

"Well, Harry," said Mrs. Stapleton, who met him in the garden, "what fine weather you have for your holiday! I hope you will enjoy it, although Arthur is gone."

"I hope I shall, mamma," said Harry; "but"—

"But what, my dear," said his mother.

"Why, if—if there was anything you thought I had better do, I should have no objection to do it."

"You are to do exactly what you like yourself, Harry; you know this week is entirely your own."

"I wonder what James did with his week's holiday," said Harry.

"James can tell you, I suppose," said his mother; "but I should like best to see you act for yourself, and so would your father, for I believe that was the reason he gave you this holiday; but if you really wish me to mention anything for your employment, why, I will try to think of something."

"Well, mamma,—I shall see;—perhaps—I think—I know what I shall like to do *to-day*," said Harry, who began to fear his mother really *would* think of something.

"Very well, my dear," said she; "I tell you again, I do not wish to direct you; and then, you know, if, when you can do as you please, you do not please yourself, it will not be my fault, will it?"

"Oh no, mamma, it will not be your fault certainly," said Harry, "and I don't think it will be mine. I intend to read 'Rasselas' to-day."

"I am glad to hear it," said his mother: "I

think, if you understand it, you will see that it *was* Rasselas's fault generally that he did not please himself; and so it is everybody's fault when they are discontented with their situation, and wander about expecting pleasure from things that cannot give it."

It is very probable that there are some other lads besides Harry who wish nothing more than to be allowed to do always as they like, or, at any rate to have a time in which they might enjoy such a privilege. But let them be sure they know before-hand exactly what they would do, otherwise, like him, they might at last do nothing at all.

There was time after breakfast for Harry to have a good game of play with his brothers, before they went to their lessons; but when they were gone, and he was quite at liberty to act as he saw fit, and it became necessary to think of something for himself, he was considerably at a loss.

He continued, however, for sometime playing at trap-ball, but, being alone, there was

nobody to throw him the ball back again, so that the harder he hit it the farther he had to run and fetch it, and that did not suit Harry.

"Ah, well," said he, striking the ball with all his force, and throwing the bat after it, "I'm not going to do this all day—I wish Arthur was here;—let us see—oh,—I *can* fly my kite! Oh no, I can't though," said he, when he found the string tangled as he had left it the day before, so he was obliged to give it up; for to *un*tangle it was not the job for Harry. What should he do? Who can think of anything? Harry will be very much obliged to anybody who will tell him how to employ himself; Harry, who wanted so much to do as he liked, and to have his own way "only for one week!" But let us give him time: perhaps he has not thought about it yet; it is to be remembered that this holiday took him by surprise. Well, Harry *did* take his time, for there he stood a long while, with his peg-top in his hand, making marks upon the white wall, though he hardly

knew what he was about. Whilst he was doing this, there was a garden-spider close by him, very differently employed, for it was hard at work at its web, crawling round and round a great many times, to mend a large hole that Harry's trap-ball had made in it. Happening to observe it, he poked another great hole to see what it would do then, upon which it instantly ran up a single thread of its web a long way, and hid itself under a leaf. If Harry had been a little older, or rather a little wiser, he might have learnt something of this poor spider, for it soon returned to its web, and did not repair it in the way that Harry did his rabbit-house, but never left off till it had made it in every respect as good as it was before.

It being a very hot day Harry slowly walked in doors, and, throwing himself back in a chair, took a comfortable nap. It was the same place where he sat some time before, longing and grumbling to have a little time he could call his own. He sprang from his seat, however, in an

instant, on hearing a step which he thought to be his father's, and he narrowly escaped being caught sound asleep in this his own time, though he wished it to be thought that he knew better than anybody how to employ it.

Again resuming his seat, he was near beginning to doze when he thought he might as well do as he had said, and read "Rasselas." Accordingly he opened it, and, after trying a page or two, he began to skip a great deal. He soon after turned over the leaves very fast, in hope of meeting with something that he called *interesting*. His eye at last caught the words *One day*, which he very much liked to see at the beginning of a paragraph; however, as what followed did not please him particularly, after having dipped in several places not more to his satisfaction, he laid the book down, and thought it very dry. He then turned over some other books that he found on the shelves, and at last fixed upon "Æsop's Fables;" these detained him much longer, though he read them

very fast, and never troubled himself with looking at the applications. He had discernment enough to perceive the wit and beauty of many of them, but some others that were equally good, but above his comprehension, he pronounced to be very poor things. "*I*," said he, "could write as good a fable as that," referring to one he despised, and so he drew out his pencil to try, but he found that he could not make one at all, for he had (just then at least) no ideas, no thoughts to make it of. It is when people have real ideas or thoughts, and only then, that what they write or say is worth reading or hearing; but when they attempt to do either without ideas they can produce nothing but nonsense, and that of the most tiresome kind.

Harry, finding it did not suit him to *compose* a fable, thought he could, at least, turn one into rhyme; and he was so pleased with this scheme, that he more than half determined to versify the whole book. He accordingly attempted several, but did not suc-

ceed; at last, however, he began one which he contrived, with some difficulty, to finish, and, after reading it over a time or two with some little complacency, he thrust it into his pocket, quite contented with what he had done that morning.

"Why, Harry," said his father to him, at dinner-time, "you have been as still as a mouse this morning."

"Yes, papa," said Harry, "it has been so warm."

"You have dropped something," said his father; "a manuscript, I see!"

Harry coloured deeply as he took up his fable, which lay with the writing uppermost.

"So you have been scribbling this morning, Harry—no wonder you were so quiet; pray, may we be favoured with a sight of your composition?"

"Oh, I have only been—you may see if you please, papa," said Harry.

"Let me see, then," said his father, putting

on his glasses. "Verses! verses, I declare—Oh—Æsop in Rhyme!" said he, and read as follows:—

HERCULES AND THE CLOWN.

Says Æsop—A clown was driving to town,
But woe and ill luck overtook him:
He stuck in a slough, no mortal knows how,
And straightway his courage forsook him.

"Dear, dear!" says the rustic, "this wheel how it does stick!
Good Hercules, help me to turn ye!
Why, the cart may take root, and so may the brute,
Before I shall finish my journey!

"Each foot I extract like a *piston* doth act,
Though not on the usual construction;
(Which proves, by-the-bye, that which some would deny,
The doctrine and nature of suction).

"If thou wouldst extract me, 'twould suit me exactly!
Oh, Hercules! only pull gently,
By my limbs or my clothes, and not by my nose;
The same by my horse, and I'll thank ye."

Thus he proffered his suit, for himself and his brute;
But loud thunder would not let him go on;
Which uttered this stanza, and frightened the man, sir:
"You rascal! you scoundrel!" and so on—

"What 's all this preamble? don't grumble, but scramble,
And as for the clay, never mind it;
To your shoulders apply for your help, or you'll lie
And groan till you're dead, ere you find it."

Poor Harry scarcely knew how he felt while his father was reading his performance; he observed, however, that he smiled continually, and once burst out laughing.

"Well, Harry," said his father, folding up the paper, "this is droll, certainly; and you have contrived to express, I believe, quite as

much as ever Æsop intended. Some of your rhymes are rather roughly fitted; but that, perhaps, may be in character for a clown. There is one thing, however, that I like, which I cannot always praise you for—I mean your having *finished* it."

Harry thought this sufficient encouragement to him to try what more he could do; but there were no more rhymes to be had that day, and he gave up the task.

"Well, I am glad that I am not obliged to go to my lessons this hot day," said Harry to himself, leaning back in his chair, "so tired as I am—that is what I mean—when one feels so languid, it is very hard to be forced to do everything just the same as usual—papa ought to make some difference."

"I wish, though," thought he, "I could contrive something or other that would be clever to do in this holiday, if it were only for the appearance of it;—I know what will be said if I do not. So, after all, I can't do *really* as I like," said he, gaping. "Dear!" thought he,

and he closed his mouth in an instant, "I have a great mind to copy *that*—it is the very thing! and then hang up my nice new one instead of that old dusty thing." The dusty thing that had caught Harry's eye was Dr. Priestley's Chart of History, which hung against the wall opposite to him. Having been there many years, it was indeed discoloured, but it was quite whole, and, as to the use of it, was as good as ever.

Harry was very fond of *undertaking* great things; and though nobody had less patience and perseverance in overcoming difficulties than he, yet, while he was planning, the more difficulties there were, the better he was pleased with the scheme.

But he thought it best to consult his father on this business, and he never was afraid of doing so, unless his conscience told him there was something improper in what he wished to do; and so strong were his present impressions of the propriety, and even necessity of *this* undertaking, that he felt more than usual confi-

dence in asking his father's advice and assistance.

His father never forbade his children to attempt anything merely on the score of its being impossible for them to accomplish it; on the contrary, he would make it possible for them to *try*, in order to convince them, by the best argument in the world, their own experience, what the real difficulties were; and these he always represented to them before they began.

"Papa," said Harry, as he entered the family school-room, "may I have a large sheet of paper?"

His brothers looked up from their lessons, curious to know what Harry was going to do.

"*How* large?" said his father; "what is it for?"

"I want as large a one as there is," said Harry; "as large—as—the Chart of History."

"So you are going to copy that, are you?" said his father.

"Why, I was thinking, papa," said Harry,

"that that is very old and dusty, and—all that, and that a new one would look much better; and that *I* could make one if you had no objection."

"Why, my dear boy," said his father, "I will tell you what I think about it. It will cost you a great deal of labour and time to copy that neatly from beginning to end, (and you would not like to do it *unneatly* of course); and, when done, it would only be another of what we have already; it is something like copying a printed book, which would not be worth while, you know, because the time it would take must be more valuable than the money it would cost; and with respect to the *operation* of copying, I am afraid you will find it very difficult to draw all the lines in that chart without a blot or an error; and I can assure you it will be a very fatiguing task to write in *all* the names without a blot or an error; hey — what think you?"

Harry looked disappointed, and only said

how discoloured the old one was, and that his would be quite clean and new.

"Very well," said his father, "you shall have paper, and may begin as soon as you please; but bring me the chart, that we may see what size to make it."

Harry soon returned with the dusty scroll, which had stains and ink-spots before it and cobwebs behind it.

"Ah—this wants dusting, I see," said his father, brushing it briskly, and Harry was sorry to see how much better it looked.

"This roller, and the moulding at the top, will do very well for mine," said Harry; "I may as well take them off."

"Not at present," said his father, "not at present, I think: we had better wait till the new one is ready. Now, the first thing to be done is to join two sheets of paper."

"Dear! what! is there not *one* sheet of paper large enough?" said Harry.

"No," said his father; and do not you see *this* is joined?"

Harry saw that it was, but was sorry, because he knew he should have to wait till it was dry. That part of the business, however, was done sooner than he expected, and he had nothing to do but to begin. His father, who only waited till he saw he was wanted, then stepped forward, and advised Harry first to make a square, by the help of instruments proper for the purpose, and then to draw all the lines very correctly with a brass pen, before he attempted the writing. But, alas! poor Harry! he had not drawn half a dozen of these divisions, when a large drop of ink followed his pen along the ruler, which made a line almost a quarter of an inch broad; and, in dividing the distances with the compasses, he found that he had miscounted, so that he became quite confused.

"I don't see much use in all this measuring," said Harry; "why cannot I copy it as one should anything else?" So he ruled his lines, one after another, by his eye, and it is asto-

nishing how much faster he found he could do it.

"Now," thought he, "I may just as well begin writing some of the names in; "I don't see why I should wait till *all* the lines are done." So he wrote as many names as filled up the spaces made by the few lines he had drawn. Then he thought he might just as well colour a little bit of it, to see how it looked. When he had thus done all the different sorts of things that there were to do, he left off to rest himself. "Ah, well," thought he, "I needn't do any more *now:* there is plenty of time to finish it before my holiday is over." So saying, he rolled up his chart, wet as it was, and, hiding it up, ran down stairs.

"Well, Harry, how does your Chart of History come on?" said his father.

"Oh, papa, I've done a good bit of it," said Harry.

Just then his father was called away; so Harry escaped farther questions for the pre-

sent. But he now saw that he had brought himself into a disagreeable dilemma; for, as he knew his father would ask to see his chart, he must either work regularly at it, and take great pains with it, or suffer the disgrace he had so often incurred, of not finishing what he had begun. He comforted himself, however, with thinking that he was not obliged to do it *now*.

Soon after, as he was walking in the garden, a man came with some paint for the pales, and this was a welcome incident to Harry, who did not exactly know what he was to do next, and it relieved him for the present from that disagreeable state of mind in which the attention is engaged upon nothing.

After watching the man for some time, Harry longed for some paint himself, to try what *he* could do; for it seemed the easiest and pleasantest work he had ever seen performed. "Can you let *me* have some of that paint?" said Harry, at last.

"Yes, sir, certainly," said the man. Harry hastened to fetch a vessel, which the man readily filled, at his employer's expense, with the aforesaid paint.

"Can you lend me a brush?" said Harry.

"There's a very nice one," said the man; "perhaps you'd like to buy it—it's only a shilling, sir."

"I *will* buy it, then," said Harry; and the bargain was concluded immediately.

With his paint and brush Harry set off, highly pleased, though he did not recollect anything just then that wanted painting.

"Let me see," said he, walking slowly round the yard, and looking up and down for something to begin upon,—"I don't see why this wheelbarrow should not be done;" and that, to him, seemed equivalent, at the time, to why it *should* be done; so, muddy as it was, he painted the wheelbarrow, inside and out—wheel, handles and all; indeed, if it had been full of coals

gravel, or potatoes, it is not unlikely that he would have painted them also; such are the silly, useless, or mischievous things that occupy idle people.

CHAPTER V.

ALTHOUGH Harry contrived to amuse himself, after he had left his chart, with painting a wheelbarrow, he found himself quite out of work when he arose next morning. But this was not the worst, for, as it did not suit him to finish the chart, there was no good reason why the old one should not be hung up in its place; but this would be telling everybody that he did not mean to complete his own; however, he recollected that he need not decide about that *at present.* "Indeed," thought Harry, "I don't mean to trouble myself with any more of those great undertakings; —why should I work so hard in my own holiday?—I know what I will do to-day;—I will prove that there is no need for so much *bell-ringing* to tell me what to do, or when to do it.

I will somehow get all my lessons and other books away out of the school-room, and do just the same as if I had no holiday. Let me see: then at eleven o'clock I begin; but I will not spend quite so much time in ciphering,—that, I am sure, is of no use at all,—nor yet get the rules by heart. Now we shall see if I don't do as well by myself as if there were twenty people looking over me." So Harry had fully made up his mind what to do, and felt confident that he should perform his tasks far better in his own way than in his father's; but the thing he was most desirous of proving was, that he did not require to be told when to begin and when to leave off. With this persuasion, he waited for the time that he had fixed upon for beginning his studies.

As he was arranging his books before him, and was just going to apply himself to them, there appeared before the window an old pedlar, who, in a very droll voice, was singing something in praise of an article he held in his hand.

Harry looked up, and as the man evidently addressed himself to him, he paid sufficient attention to distinguish these words:—

"Come, leave your star-gazing, there's no fun in that,
And you that are counting the joints of a fly;
Why, what do I care for the bones of a gnat,
Or what the moon's made of,—how distant or high!

"But here,—tol de rol,—a great mystery lies:
Flies, earwigs, or gnats will be turn'd into stars!
(If they be but put in it). Come, use your own eyes:
There 's never a spy-glass with this that compares!"

The man, seeing he had gained Harry's attention, touched his hat, and held out one in his hand. Harry took it, and asked him what it was for.

"If you'll please to look through it, sir," said the pedlar, "you'll say, if you havn't seen one afore, you never *see* such a thing in your life."

As Harry had *not* seen one before, his curi-

osity was highly excited, and he took one to try it.

"What 's *that* all?" said Harry, who was not aware that it should have a rotatory motion.

"Please to turn it round and round, sir," said the man.

"Oh, I see!—ah, that will do!" said Harry, who instantly drew his head in, and ran, with this new wonder, to show his brothers and sisters.

"There's a man at the window," said he, "with a number of these things to sell. Now, only look through this hole, and keep turning it round."

They did so, and were all as pleased as Harry.

"Suppose we buy it?" said he; "they are only seven shillings a piece; let me see,—four of us,—that is,—let me see, four of us,—that is—

"One-and-ninepence a-piece," said Harriet.

"Yes, only one-and-ninepence for each of us," said Harry; "suppose we do?"

"Suppose we ask papa?" said James. So they all appeared in a body, with this kaleidoscope, in the garden, where their papa and mamma were walking.

"What have you there, Harry?" said his father.

"Oh, it's a kaleidoscope; I saw them in London, and was almost inclined to buy one for you."

"Then you have no objection to our buying this, papa?"

"I have no objection to your *having* it," said his father; "and I suppose you will have no objection to my *paying* for it?" added he, giving him the money; "but remember it is to be *pro bono publico*."

"I certainly think," said Harry, as he returned, after having paid the man (who was almost tired of waiting),—"I certainly think it is the best thing I ever looked through."

"I had rather look through a microscope," said James.

"Or a telescope," said his father.

"Oh, yes; only they are so common," said Harry.

"But the things they discover to us are not common, I think," said his father; "at least they are not so to me. Pray, have you looked at Jupiter's moons; or Saturn's ring; or at the eyes of insects; or the down from their wings, till you are tired?"

"Oh, no, papa," said Harry; "I like that very much; and it is very curious to look through the telescope, and see what's o'clock by the church five miles off; and certainly one could not do that with a kaleidoscope."

"No, Harry," said his mother, "you could not do *even that* with a kaleidoscope."

"But I should like to know how it is that the figures are so very regular in their shape, and yet so different every time," said James; "it really is very curious."

"Yes, it is curious, I will allow," said

his father; "and if Harry will lend it me a few minutes, I will endeavour to explain it to you; but you will find it appears to *less* advantage when taken to pieces and examined; and that, perhaps, makes the grand difference which exists between the works of nature and art."

Harry then gave the kaleidoscope into his father's hands; and they all drew near to hear and to see.

Their father then showed them that the variegated figures they so much admired were composed of nothing but a few pieces of coloured glass and gilt paper; and that the regularity of the form was only caused by the multiplied reflection in two pieces of looking-glass, placed in a proper angle with each other. When it was put together again, each of them gave another look through it; but it was evident that they, none of them, felt quite so much respect for it as at first; for they had expected to find very curious and complicated machinery inside, instead of what was really there. Harry took

it last, and after his brothers were gone to their usual occupations, he still continued to amuse himself with it.

This affair having detained him so long, he determined not to attend to his lessons till the afternoon. After having fully satisfied himself with the kaleidoscope, he laid it down and felt quite ready for any new engagement; so he stretched himself on the garden-seat till something should occur to him; and, whether it was that he really could not think of anything, or that he happened to go to sleep, is not known, but he never stirred from that spot till he was called to dinner.

"Harry," said his father, "will you be very busy this evening?"

"No, papa—not *very* busy," said Harry.

"Not *very* busy," said his father; "but if you have *any* plans for the evening, I have no more to say; you know it is your own time."

"Yes, sir, but I had really not thought of anything particular that I wanted to do."

"Well, then, I suppose you will thank anybody to think of something for you. We are going this evening to hear a philosophical lecture, in which many of those experiments will be performed which you have so often read about. What say you?—will you not like it?"

"O yes, papa, very much," said Harry.

"Then I would advise you to read a few pages beforehand, in 'Gregory's Economy of Nature,' especially on the subjects to be treated of to-night; for I suppose you do not wish to be classed amongst those very young, or very silly folk, who care only to be amused."

"I think that *I* should like to do the same," said James, taking up the prospectus; "let us see what the subjects are to night.—'General Properties of Matter, Pneumatics, Hydrostatics, &c.'"

But Harry did not see the necessity for taking so much trouble; indeed, he generally accounted the books in which sciences were ex-

plained disagreeable and tiresome, or, as he used to say, "very dry." So that he must be numbered with all those ignorant little boys who only want to be amused, and do not wish to be instructed; however, Harry was very much delighted with the idea of going; not, as is plain, because he was much of a philosopher, but merely because he expected to see something new or diverting.

Whenever he was in expectation of any pleasure, he considered the time before it arrived not only as of no value, but as so very disagreeable, that he would gladly have destroyed it all in a moment, if he could. This being the case, he did not feel much inclined towards his lessons that afternoon, but resolved to let them quite alone till to-morrow. Harry did not know that *idling* an afternoon away makes it as long, tiresome, and disagreeable as it is possible for it to be, and that the only way to make time seem short is to be *doing* something.

However, at last the hour *did* come, and they

all went in time to the appointed place. It was a large room, in which was a very large table, covered with a great many known and unknown things. As nobody had arrived but this family, their father, with the lecturer's permission, suffered his children carefully to approach and survey the table. The air-pump, electrical machine, and orrery, with many other things, were recognised immediately by these young folk; but, at the greater part of the apparatus, they looked with profound wonder.

"Is that a bit of meat, papa?" whispered Frederick, pointing to something in a wine-glass.

"That, my boy, is part of a frog," said his father, "which you will presently see leap out of the wine-glass; although, as you may suppose, it has been dead some time."

"Will that be done by galvanism, papa?" said James.

"Yes: you are right," said his father.

"Will it leap towards us, papa?" said Harriet.

Just then another party entered, with several young folk, who crowded directly round the table, and very rudely began to handle the lecturer's apparatus.

"La! good gracious! what's that?" said a young girl, looking into the wine-glass.

"It is a dead frog," said the lecturer.

"Patience! alive! *'ma!*" said the girl, starting, horror-struck, from the table; "let us sit as far off as we can."

"Ah! for goodness' sake, my dear children, all of you come away," said their mother; "one never knows what one may touch in these kind of places."

The philosopher had often found a dead frog very useful in driving away persons who were rude, ignorant, and silly.

But he now began to be a little anxious about his company, and often looked at his watch, and then at the door.

The week before, a conjurer from Bartholomew-fair had exhibited in the same room, and half an hour *before* the time, a seat could scarcely be procured; but now, half an hour *after* the time, only two families were present: so that it seems some people, taller than Harry, like being amused better than being instructed.

After some delay, however, a few stragglers made their appearance; and with less than half a room full the lecture began. Several of the persons present, during the ten minutes occupied by the introductory remarks, wished they had not spent their money to hear them; and there were others who whispered or talked so loud, that those who tried to attend could not. However, as soon as the lecturer touched his apparatus, all was mute attention; and, in order to rouse it effectually, he exhausted the air from a glass vessel covered over with a piece of leather, which, on being punctured with a needle, produced so loud a report, as to

convince every one that the philosopher was no impostor.

"How do you like that?" said somebody, who touched Harry from behind. It was Charles Mason.

"O! are you here?" said Harry; "come and sit by me; there's plenty of room;—it's capital!—it is really capital!"

"Having thus clearly proved," said the lecturer, "the gravity or weight of a column of atmospheric air, I will now proceed to shew its elasticity." He then, by a very laborious process, in which some thought he bowed to the company, and others that he looked like a sawyer,—forced a great volume of air into a small copper ball, and then screwing it on to a gun,—after having explained to the *ladies* that *no gunpowder* was employed,—discharged it several times; and, as Harry said, it sounded more like *sneezing* than anything else. Then he aimed it at one of the candles, which it extinguished so admirably, as to produce a

buzz of applause from *almost* the whole assembly.

After having performed various pneumatic experiments, and briefly noticed several other sciences, he introduced the subject of galvanism, on which, having said a very few words, as he found very few persons paid any attention to him, he proceeded to the marvellous experiment of making the dead frog (and, sympathetically, some living ladies) to jump.

"By means of this wonderful principle, so analogous, it should seem, to the nervous influence," said the philosopher, "the muscular system of dead animals is acted upon so as to produce what some might be tempted to say, are the most unequivocal signs of life. Ladies," said he, seeing them slightly agitated, "I pledge myself that its motion shall be confined to the table." Saying this, he just touched the frog with the wire of the galvanic trough, when, to the astonishment of every-

body who was not aware of the principle, or who did not think it was a trick, it jumped out of the glass, and fell on to the floor.

The same experiment was likewise performed upon a rabbit, which also jumped, and appeared to struggle.

The company were then requested to dip their hands in basins of water, connected with the galvanic apparatus; which the few who ventured to do it found to produce an indescribable sensation in the joints of the arm.

Electricity was next introduced, and many found time for a nap whilst the philosopher was talking about Thales, *electron,* and Dr. Franklin. Finding his audience wished for *positive electricity,* he shortened his oration, and proceeded to perform the usual routine of experiments. There were *some* who were interested in hearing of Franklin's grand and fearful experiment with the thunder-cloud; but the greater part preferred the luminous chain

or the electrical bells to all the explanations in the world.

After as many other sciences had been introduced as the time admitted, the lecture closed, and the company departed, some tired, some amused, and some highly interested and instructed. Among the latter was Charles Mason, who accompanied Harry and his brothers part of the way home.

"I will tell you what I am going to do," said Charles; "I mean to try and make an electrical machine, and I think I can, because I know somebody who did, and he is no older than I am."

"Well," said Harry, "and I will tell you what *I* have a great mind to do, and that is to make an air-pump."

"Do you think you can make an air-pump?" said Charles.

"Why not?" said Harry, "it only wants care and patience, and for me to understand what I am about."

"Very well," said Charles, "we shall see whose is done first; I shall begin mine to-morrow."

"And so shall I mine," said Harry; and they parted.

CHAPTER VI.

HARRY lost no time in commencing his operations; for early the next morning he went to the blacksmith's, and ordered a winch to be made—not, as is usual, to fit a machine, but intending the machine to fit the winch; he thought it would be wasting *his* time to make what a *blacksmith* could do just as well.

"I hope you were pleased with what you saw and heard last night, Harry," said his father.

"O yes! very much indeed, papa," said he; "and particularly with the air-pump."

"The air-pump was, perhaps, altogether the most interesting instrument on the table; and I should think, on account of the nicety of the workmanship, it must have been the most expensive."

"Is an air-pump so *very* difficult to make, papa?" said Harry.

"It must require great skill and perfection of workmanship," said his father, "especially in the tubes and pistons, because of the resistance made by the external air."

"Charles Mason says he thinks *he* can make an electrical machine; and I thought perhaps *I* — perhaps *I* could make an air-pump."

"You know, Harry," said his father, "there have been some things which you have wished to do that I have told you would be tiresome, fatiguing, or difficult; but I assure you, that to make an air-pump you will find *quite impossible*. I think it *is possible* to make an electrical machine, because care, patience, and neatness in constructing the various parts will be sufficient; but then no one can do *that* who is *not* careful and patient, and neat in his workmanship."

Seeing that there were so many difficulties

in the way, Harry, for once, was persuaded to relinquish his scheme, and determined, instead of an air-pump, to make an electrical machine. It must be observed, however, that the *winch* he had ordered was the *turning-point* of the business, for *that*, he recollected, would serve as well for one as the other.

"Well, then, papa," said he, "you think I *can* make an electrical machine?"

"I said, Harry, that I thought a careful, patient person, who could work neatly, might make one. What think you *now?*"

"I think, if Charles Mason tries," said Harry, "I may as well."

"Very well," said his father, "try;—I will give you all the advice I can while you are doing it,—but pray where is your cylinder?"

"Oh dear! I forgot that," said Harry; "I wonder what Charles Mason will do?"

"I cannot deny," said his father, "that I have by me such a thing as a glass cylinder, made on purpose for an electrical machine; and I will make this proposal to you, Harry:—

if you will really put together and *finish* all the other parts, so that they will probably serve the purpose, I will give you the cylinder; and if, in any particular part, you find a difficulty which you cannot overcome, I will procure you assistance, provided I see that you are really taking pains, and persevering; but lest, in the meantime, the cylinder should be broken, I shall keep it myself till your task is completed."

"I think I *shall* try now," said Harry.

"But I must give you the dimensions," said his father, reaching down the cylinder from a high shelf; "you see it is ten inches long; that is all that is necessary for you to know;" and he replaced it immediately.

The sight of this cylinder, which, to be sure, was exactly the thing, was sufficient to make Harry extremely impatient to possess it.

His father not only procured all the materials, but gave Harry so many directions, and was so ready to assist whenever there was any

real difficulty, that he had a very fair opportunity of succeeding; and as, at present, he felt a great deal of interest himself in the undertaking, there were some who really thought that, for once, he would.

Although it is known to be a fact, that some lads, not much older than Harry, have contrived to make an electrical machine, yet it must be confessed that it is rather a difficult undertaking for one so young, and that it would not have been much disgrace, if, after having done his best, he had been obliged to give it up. However, giving it up was the last thing that anybody thought of at the end of the first day of his operations, for he had got so forward, and what he had done looked so well, that there appeared little doubt of his success.

In the evening, after having accomplished more that day than in all the former part of the week, he set off in high spirits to his friend Charles Mason, to see how he was going on, and to converse with him on the subject.

"Ah, Harry, how do you do?" said Charles; "how is your air-pump?"

"Oh, my—ah, my air-pump," said Harry, who had quite forgotten that he had ever intended to make one; "why, papa said that it was impossible for me to make an air-pump, and I shall make an electrical machine instead."

"Will you?" said Charles; "now you shall see what I have done, and what a nice cylinder I have got."

"Oh,—but it's only a bottle!" said Harry, rather agreeably surprised.

"Well,—a bottle, I know it," said Charles, "but it is quite straight, and quite large enough;—what have *you* got, may I ask?"

"A cylinder, ten inches long, made on purpose," said Harry; but it slipped his memory just then that *he* had not yet obtained it.

"Well, how do you like my machine," said Charles, "as far as it is done?"

It was not apparently so forward as Harry's,

but an accurate observer might discover signs of more substantial workmanship.

"I dare say that will be a very good one," said Harry, who could not help thinking his own the best, because it was the largest; "but I should like you to see mine; when will you come?"

"When I have done my own," said Charles; "and I will bring it with me."

Harry now returned, more than ever satisfied with his own machine, and longing much for the time when he might compare it with Charles Mason's.

"Now," thought Harry, as he was dressing himself next morning, "I have two whole days left to finish my machine; I can do a great deal in two days. Let me see;—to-day I shall do *that*, and *that*—and then to-morrow I shall be ready for the cylinder. Oh, but there is the *conductor* to make, and to cover it with

tinfoil—what is the use of not letting me have the cylinder *now?* Papa thinks, I suppose, that I shall not finish it; but, for once, he is mistaken." So saying, Harry ran down stairs to his work, and did something considerable before breakfast.

"Did you see Charles Mason last night, Harry?" said his father; "has he begun his machine?"

"O yes, papa," said Harry, "but it is a very small one, and he has only got a bottle for a cylinder."

"Well, I have seen a very good electrical machine, which had only a bottle for a cylinder."

"But certainly my machine will be the best, papa?"

"I cannot say anything about that at present," replied his father; "it must depend upon which of you takes the most pains, and who is the most persevering. From what I know of Charles Mason, I have little doubt of his making a very neat electrical machine, whe-

ther he has only a bottle, or a cylinder made on purpose; and I hope you will do the same."

But Harry intended to do a great deal better, and wondered that his father seemed to have any doubt about it. He was pleased to see how much like an electrical machine his work began to look, and only wished for the cylinder, that he might just hold it in its place for a moment, to make it look still more like one.

But Harry's machine was not really so forward as it appeared to be, it having been roughly and hastily put together, that it might have the *form* of a machine as soon as possible, to gratify his impatience; so that the cutting and clipping, and filing and fitting were all to come.

It is true, his father had promised him assistance, in case of any grand and insuperable difficulty; but the greatest difficulty of all to Harry, which was the trouble and labour, no one had offered to take off his hands; however,

his patience lasted pretty well, till it fell to his hard lot to file a large piece of iron much smaller, and to make it square, for the winch to turn it.

At last, taking this for one of the impossibilities his father had mentioned, he determined to claim the promise.

"Papa," said he, "here is a thing I cannot do; I can't file this piece of iron at all, and it must be square to put the winch on."

"And why *cannot* you file it, Harry?"

"It is so hard, sir, it is impossible. You know you said, papa, you would help me when anything was impossible."

"And so I will, Harry, depend upon it; but this requires nothing but a little patience; perhaps you mean it is impossible for anybody to do it without patience? I would strongly advise you to persevere, and *then*, if you find it to be impossible, I promise that you shall be assisted. Remember Hercules and the clown, Harry."

With this answer he returned, and, after a great deal of lazy kind of labour, he reduced it to such a size and shape as he thought perhaps would do; he then, for the first time since this affair had been in hand, left off to rest himself; just then the blacksmith's boy came with the winch, which Harry was very glad to see; but, alas! when he came to try it on the pin he had been filing, it was so much too large as to be positively of no use at all.

"Now, how stupid and provoking!" said he, as he applied it to the machine; "if I had not worried myself so long in filing that pin away, it might have done."

"This winch is of no use," said he to the boy; "your father has made it large enough for the mangle."

"If you please, sir, my father says, you didn't mention no *purtiklar* size."

"But he was not obliged to make it too large, was he?" said Harry; "if he had made

it too small, it would not have signified so much."

"No, sir, 'twon't so," said the lad.

"Then tell your father he must make one *a great deal* smaller, and you may take this back; it's of no use at all," replied Harry.

"Yes, sir," said the lad; and with this wise message he departed.

"Now," said Harry to himself, "I suppose I shall have to wait nobody knows how long for this stupid winch. However, it is of no use being in much of a hurry about the machine; for if it was done now, I could not use it."

So, what with fatigue, disappointment, and indolence, Harry was contented to allow himself to rest all the morning.

After dinner he felt so little disposed to his undertaking that he would certainly have rested himself again, if he had not recollected that there was but one day more of his holiday left; and as he was not *yet* so tired but

that he fully intended and expected to finish his machine, he determined to see what more he could do before the winch came home.

But Harry did not yet know how to *determine* against his inclination; for, not being disposed just then to exert himself, he rather played with his tools than worked with them. He could not prevail upon himself to *finish* any part he took in hand, but as soon as he met with any difficulty, or grew tired, he laid that part aside, and began another; so that it was with this as with the Chart of History, when there was nothing *new* to begin upon, he grew tired of his undertaking altogether.

"Now," thought Harry, "the cylinder is exactly the thing I want; and yet I know if I were to ask for it now, I shouldn't have it. I don't think there would be *much* harm in my just getting it down to look at. I could go on as well again then—in short, I don't see I can go on at all without it."

How easily persons may know whether the thing they are meditating to do is right or wrong! Who was it that Harry was talking to when he said "much harm?"—he was talking to his conscience; and people seldom talk much with their consciences, except to quiet them.

Thus Harry, not contented with wasting his own time, and spoiling his own things, did not scruple to make free with what belonged to others; so, having had the last word with his conscience, he went softly to the place where the cylinder had been laid, and reaching it very carefully from the shelf, (for he seemed much afraid of a disaster,) he put it under his coat and returned.

"This," thought Harry, "is just the thing—who will say I can't make an electrical machine?" said he, as he held the cylinder in the frame. "They are always saying that I never finish anything; but now, for once, they will see—why it *is* just finished." And so a person standing at some distance might

almost think, while Harry was holding the cylinder in its place; but a closer examination would have shewn that there was a great deal to do, and much to undo, before Harry could see a spark from it.

But he thought differently; indeed, his machine seemed to him so near being completed, after he had seen the cylinder in it, that he fell to work with new spirit, thinking that his labour would soon be over.

But though he worked for a little time with something like industry, he did not prosper from the moment he had the cylinder in his possession; and this was probably owing to his excessive hurry and impatience. Twice did part of the frame give way, while he was forcing it to fit this cylinder, and as often did he repair it with nails and glue, and then, without waiting till the glue was dry, force it again; so that all his work became ricketty and unsound.

At last, tired, hot, disappointed, and cross, he resorted to his old expedient of leaving off

for the present; and without making any reflections on the disgrace he must incur if he suffered his whole week's holiday to pass without having done *one* thing worth doing, he gave himself what he called a *real* holiday for the rest of the evening, and that always consisted in doing literally nothing. So ended the fifth day.

CHAPTER VII.

"I WISH that troublesome old chart were safe up again," said Harry, as he passed the vacant place next morning; "what could I be thinking of to begin it? Now, if I put it up, I shall be asked if the new one is done; and so I shall if I don't." So he thought it most prudent to replace it, and then took care to destroy his own. Thus was that scheme entirely relinquished; and so disgusted was he now with it, that he would rather have learnt by heart half the Latin Grammar at once, than have been obliged to proceed with it for an hour.

It would have been well if Harry's present undertaking had concluded like the last, and like most of his former ones, with

merely growing tired, and giving it over peaceably.

It had been observed, though not mentioned, at breakfast, that he appeared unusually sullen and discontented: he was *unusually* so; for he frequently thought he had occasion to seem slightly offended; and this he imagined was best made known by silence and sullen looks.

If Harry, and all other little boys who very much dislike being laughed at, did but know how really ridiculous they look when *sulking*, they would find out some other method of shewing their displeasure.

With whom he was displeased, or what had displeased him, nobody knew;—how should they? for he was displeased with himself:—not that he *blamed* himself, but he felt somehow disappointed that the last day of his holiday was come, and that he had *not* done as he liked after all, although he certainly had had the opportunity, and that he had still a long,

difficult, and now disagreeable job before him. This being the case, it may be supposed that his electrical machine was not much the forwarder for what was done that day.

As soon as Harry lost his relish for the undertaking, he determined, the first time he went that way, to return the cylinder as silently as he had procured it; for he knew that his father would be really displeased, and shew himself to be so, if he found it had been taken without leave; but this, though *determined* upon, like many other things, was not attended to, but delayed from time to time, because it could be done at any time, till it was too late to do it at all.

In the evening, as Harry was still doing, or seeming to do something to his machine, his brother James came into the room, and not observing, or not recollecting Harry's ill humour, began, in a good-natured way, to make certain remarks.

"Why, Harry," said he, as he entered,

"you are up to your knees in shavings and saw-dust!"

"Well, they don't hurt *you*, do they?" said Harry.

"Nobody said they did," said James; "pray, have *I* hurt *you?*"

"You will hurt *that*, if you pull it about," said Harry, seeing James take up his electrical machine; "I wish you would just be so good as to let it alone."

"What! is it so very tender?" said James, a little louder, as he held it up out of Harry's reach—"No; now we will have a look at it—the tenpenny nails have split your work, Harry," said he, carrying it to the window.

"Nobody wants you to mend it," said Harry.

"Oh, and you have taken the cylinder down!" said James, who saw it glisten through some shavings with which it was covered; "I don't believe papa gave it you, though."

"It is no business of yours who gave it me," said Harry.

"No, very true," said James, taking it up and examining it; "but you don't suppose that your machine will fit this cylinder, do you?"

"I wonder how you came to know so much about it," said Harry; "I think that *I* ought to know best."

As he said this he placed the cylinder in its frame, and attempted to fix it.

After some time spent in pushing, pulling, and squeezing, he took up the hammer, which he knew was useful to produce compliance of some sort, and being a little impatient and a little angry, he administered two blows so much to the purpose that the whole concern fell to pieces!

"Well done, Harry, boy!" said James, who immediately burst into a violent fit of laughter.

"What business have you to insult me?"

said Harry. "I won't stand it! I won't!" So saying, furious with passion, he dashed the machine, cylinder and all, to the ground!

Here James, whom we cannot now commend, thought proper quietly to issue at the nearest door.

"What is that broken?" said Harry's father, who, although at a distance, had heard the crash.

"'Tis something betwixt Master James and Master Henry, sir, I think," said a servant.

Harry trembled, as he heard his father's step approaching.

"Is there anything broken here?" said he, mildly, as he entered.

Harry said nothing.

"What *is* all this?" said his father; "glass! broken glass!—the cylinder! How came *that* here? Harry, *now* you must speak to me;—is this an accident, or what?"

"James made me do it; he has been insulting me all the evening," said Harry.

"James must be called, then," said his father.

He soon arrived, and, although he appeared concerned at the catastrophe, yet he did not seem as if he thought that he had much to answer for.

"Now I must have this business explained to me," said their father.

"James, Harry says you have been insulting him; let me hear fairly how it was; you will find it the best way."

James and Harry then began, at the same instant, to tell each their own story.

"No, Harry," said his father, "you have accused James, and now he has a right to defend himself."

James then related exactly what had passed, and he did not forget to mention the circumstance which appeared to have occasioned his brother's anger, namely, his having laughed at the fracture of the machine.

"I confess," said his father, "had I been here I should not have laughed, because I

should not have been glad; I cannot conceive of rejoicing at other people's misfortunes. However, James, you may now leave us."

"And so this, Harry," said his father, shutting the doors, "this is the conclusion of your week's holiday?"

Harry burst into tears.

"I have not been at all surprised," said his father, "to see the many vain attempts you have made to employ yourself, or even to amuse yourself, during this week, because it was the very thing I expected, and it was, too, the very thing I wished you to find out; and I thought it very likely you would be more than ever discontented and out of humour at the close of it. But I *am* surprised and disappointed at what I see before me; for, I confess, when I promised you that cylinder upon certain conditions, I had not the slightest suspicion that you would think of taking it without leave. I did not think it necessary to lock it up or conceal it from you, because I

did not believe that you were in the smallest degree dishonest; for, let me tell you, it is a degree of dishonesty even to borrow what belongs to another without his consent, and you must have had the same kind of excuses to make to your conscience as if you had intended to steal it. I hope, however, Harry, that I need not say much more upon this subject to you, because you appear willing to condemn yourself, and I believe, for the same reason, that I need not say much on another subject—I mean the best and *pleasantest* way of spending time, and the best and *pleasantest* way of doing what we undertake. I did, indeed, overhear something you said to yourself one evening, by which I understood that you were discontented with *my* way, and thought my treatment unkind; I think, however, you cannot say that I have taken an unkind method to convince you of your mistake."

"You have been very—very good to me, papa," said Harry, sobbing.

"And are you convinced, then, that it *was* a mistake?" said his father.

"Oh yes, papa," said Harry; "indeed it is much the pleasantest to spend my time in your way."

"Then," said his father, "my purpose is answered, and this week has not been wasted after all—for it has corrected a mistake which is not easily done by words; and, however painful many circumstances of it may have been to both of us, we shall, I trust, have no real cause to regret hereafter in looking back to HARRY'S HOLIDAY.

THE END.

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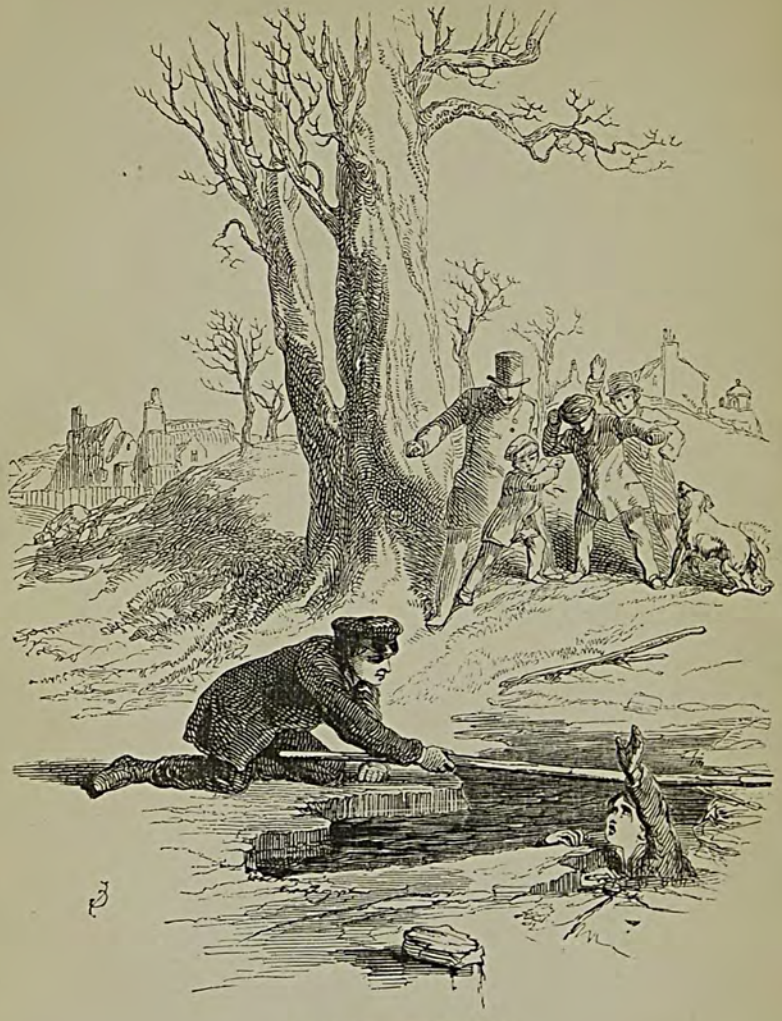


NEVER WRONG.

Page 50.

NEVER WRONG;

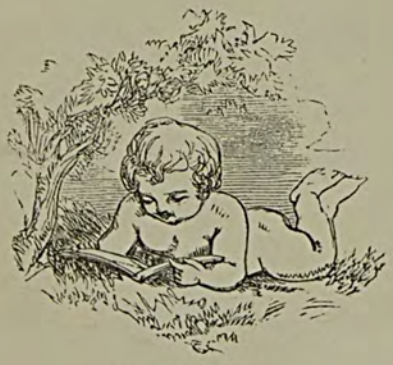
OR, THE

Young Disputant.

AND

"IT WAS ONLY IN FUN."

TALES FOR THE YOUNG.



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CONTENTS.

NEVER WRONG, &c.

CHAPTER I.

"WHAT are you so busy about?" inquired Walter Sedley of his cousin Edmond Hargrave, whom he found sitting alone in the school-room, a pencil in one hand, and with the other turning over the leaves of a book nearly filled with writing. "You know, Walter," returned Edmond, "that I, being the eldest boy in the school, have been chosen by the rest to decide who is right and who is wrong in any dispute or misconduct that may happen out of school hours, and this being the beginning of a new year, I have been looking through my book of trials and cases that have occurred during the last, that I may make out a fair account of improvement or the contrary."

"Well, and which do you find the most of?" asked Walter, impatiently, for the subject was anything but

agreeable to him, as my young readers will quickly discover. "I am sorry to say," answered Edmond, "that, with regard to yourself, there is little or no improvement at all; for though in three cases out of every four you, Walter, are the principal person concerned, and proved to be in error, you have never, in any one of them, signed your name as acknowledging yourself to be in the wrong; I have the names occasionally of all the other boys in the school, but you have as yet never owned a judgment just that has been given against you" "That is, given by you, and set down in your wise book," said Walter, contemptuously; "and pray, cousin Edmond what does that prove?" "Only this," returned Edmond, very coolly, "that you, Walter, either are or believe yourself to be INFALLIBLE, which word you will find, on looking in your Dictionary, to mean, 'INCAPABLE OF MISTAKE.'" "Do you think I don't know that without your telling me?" again interrupted Walter, petulantly; "considering how much younger I am, I dare say I know the meaning of dictionary words as well as you do." "You ought to do so at least," replied Edmond, "for, according to your own account, you know everything, not only as well but a great deal better than other people do; and that is the reason that it has been determined to give you the name of

'Never Wrong; or, The Young Disputant,' till you prove you have no claim to it. You know we do it all in good humour: it is only a sort of play: so you need take no serious offence at it; and if by our game of 'Judge and Laws' we cure one another of any fault or folly, we are surely doing each other a service; you will own that to be correct, I suppose." "Of course I do," returned Walter, "but I can't see that I deserve to have a nickname, and I am determined that I will never answer to it; it is not right for one boy to make fun of another: I hate all such stuff." "So you do, when you are the boy to be made fun of, as you call it," replied Edmond; "but you did not say so, Walter, when we named Master Willoughby, the other day, Don Bombastes Furioso, because of his extravagant way of speaking, such as calling his pens horrible, wretched, and miserable, because they are a little too soft or too hard for him; you thought nicknaming him a good joke, and laughed as heartily as any of us."

"And suppose I did, what does that prove?" asked Walter, again. "I saw that he laughed himself, and didn't mind it, so there was no harm in making fun of him; besides, everybody could see that he had the fault, and that it would be a good job to cure him of it." "And suppose, Walter," said Edmond, "that everybody can see you have

the fault of thinking yourself always in the right, would it not be a good job to cure you of it?" "To be sure it would, if I had it, but I have not," replied Walter, angrily. "Just prove now, cousin Edmond, that I am never wrong, and you may call me 'Infallible' or anything else you please." "It is not my business now," returned his companion, "to prove that you are never wrong, but that you never think yourself so." "That's not quite true, Edmond," said Walter, "for I have often declared that everybody that ever lived must be wrong sometimes; so of course I must be wrong occasionally, as well as the rest." "Aye Walter," replied his cousin, laughing, "but the 'rest' seem often to know when their '*sometimes*' take place, but we never can find out when your '*sometimes* wrong' happens. If you break anything lent you, it is sure to be an accident; if you don't keep to the rules in or out of school, the poor rules are to blame, not you, of course,—they are bad ones; if you quarrel with us, it is all our fault, and not yours,—we ought to know better than to say or do anything to offend you, however unintentional; and, added to all this, when you make complaints of us to our master, you excuse yourself by saying he has undertaken to educate us, and if he don't know our faults, how is he to cure them? It is a good thing

for us that he has more sense and justice than to encourage idle tale-bearing and misrepresentation even from you, who are his own brother; and I really believe, Walter, that you would not make such foolish complaints to him as you do, when you are cool, but only when you are in a passion." "No, to be sure I would not," eagerly exclaimed Walter, ever delighted to get rid of censure, and as constantly insensible to its justice; "and of course, cousin Edmond, when I am in a passion I ought not to be blamed for anything I do, for then people scarcely know what they are about or what they say."

"There again, Walter," exclaimed Edmond, "quite right as usual, NEVER WRONG, of course; and yet there is one thing you have mentioned that I think you will hardly venture to defend." "And what is that?" inquired Walter. "The being in a passion." "And so, cousin Judge," cried Walter, in great wrath, "I am to put up with all manner of ill treatment without being angry, just as though persons could help being angry when they are offended." "Perhaps not always," said Edmond, "but then people ought to be sure they have sufficient cause of offence before they get into such passions as you do, Walter, even supposing it to be right to be in a passion at all."

"It is mighty easy to say; but I fancy it is a great

deal harder to do," grumbled Walter; "but I can't see any reason, though you are my cousin, and older, for your schooling and lecturing me in the way you do; if I had not the best disposition and temper in the world, I should never bear it, that I shouldn't; you are always trying to pick a quarrel with me. One does not expect to find an enemy in one's relation," added the perverse boy, becoming thoroughly excited; "but I don't care for anything you can do or say; I know that I hav'n't any one of the faults you have told me of, and the moment my brother comes home I will tell him all about it." "Well done, 'Never Wrong!'" exclaimed Edmond, again laughing; "not one of the faults I have been telling you of! and intend complaining to your brother as soon as he returns from his walk. But come, cousin Walter," he added, more seriously, "I cannot endure that you should call me your enemy; you should recollect that it is your brother's wish, on account of our relationship and difference of age, that I should assist, to the best of my ability, in pointing out what may be of advantage to you. You ought to know by this time, that, from the circumstance of your being born so many, many years after my cousin Mr. Sedley, that you were a great pet with both father and mother, who did their best, with the help of grandmamma, to spoil you; so that there has been not only a great deal to learn, but

a great deal to unlearn you; all you want is to have a little more candour, more ingenuousness,—I mean that openness of temper which would incline you to believe yourself wrong when told that you are so, without such long arguments to prove it. You are always ready enough to say that you must be sometimes wrong, because no one is always right, as though such an acknowledgment as that could be of any use. But now, Walter, I will make a bargain with you: the first time, upon any occasion, you really and seriously own yourself in error at the moment of being told so, I will erase the name that so much offends you from my book, and, what is more, will challenge the whole school, one by one, (as your champion,) to single combat with snow-balls, if they should presume to again call you 'Never Wrong,' 'the Young Disputant,' or 'Infallible;' this is a capital opportunity for you, being the Christmas holidays, which you, and I, and some others, are to spend at school; so let your reformation take place before the time for snow-balls goes over."

CHAPTER II.

About an hour after the conversation between Edmond and Walter, Mr. Sedley returned home. His first inquiry was for his young brother. "Do you want me, Alfred?" asked Walter, somewhat impatiently, at being interrupted in his play. "If I did not, I should not have sent for you," returned Mr. Sedley, mildly. "Of course I knew you must have some reason in sending for me, brother; but then, you know, I could not tell that you wanted me particularly, so that I need come to you directly," said the young disputant. "We will not argue that point, Walter," replied Mr. Sedley: "whilst you are under my care, it will be better that you should always come immediately, whatever may be my motive in desiring to see you. I sent for you now that you might bring me the book you promised to cut open for me against my return. Where is it? I expected to find it here." "'Tis on my desk, I believe, where you placed it," returned Walter, in some confusion, "but I have not opened it." "And why did you not?" inquired his brother. "Be-

cause I forgot it," returned Walter, boldly. "How many times more," said Mr. Sedley, "am I to be told of this forgetting, when I inquire, Walter, for what you have been desired to do, or promised you would do?" "Well, brother, you needn't be so angry," answered Walter, who always mistook admonition for severity and injustice; "if I have a bad memory, it is my misfortune and not my fault; and I am ready to say again, as I have done before, I am sorry my being unable to recollect should put you to inconvenience; and what's the use of my saying more?" "There is certainly no use in saying more, or so much either," said Mr. Sedley, "if it is mere words, as I think it is in your case, for I do not believe your memory to be at all in fault; you were inclined otherwise to dispose of your time, and so you forgot what you had promised to do, and this you call want of memory." "It is not very kind of you to say so," answered Walter, much offended; "you wouldn't speak to little Henry that way; when he said he was sorry about something the other day, you didn't make the same answers to him as you do to me." "Certainly not," returned his brother, "because I have no occasion to do so, for I have always found, when Henry has said he is sorry, he has, at the same time, been convinced that he was in fault, and has, moreover, taken care to avoid a repetition of it."

"But, perhaps, Henry being such a little boy, is very much afraid of you," observed Walter, unwilling to give up the point as long as he could maintain it. "Which it is very clear that you are not," said the patient Mr. Sedley; "but I must explain to you that there are two kinds of fear: one, the fear of being in the wrong, arising from a sincere desire to do rightly, and engage the respect of ourselves as well as that of others. The fear that you allude to, in speaking of my little boy Henry, could only exist in a nature like his, where the parent or teacher is of a tyrannical, severe, or passionate temper and disposition. Now, as I am neither of these, but have, I trust, proved myself to be an affectionate father as well as brother, I can see no reason for your suggesting such an inducement for the good behaviour of Henry. My poor Walter," he continued, with great emotion, "what a pity it is that our parents suffered you to reason, as you call it, where they ought to have commanded and you to have obeyed; what a hard task they have given me to correct this habit in you, and the wrong judgment it has induced you to form upon almost every point of conduct that interferes with your inclination." "And I am sure," sobbed Walter, "I have as much to bear with, for I am always being scolded for something or another; and I know I don't deserve it, for I never had a cross

word said to me till I came here, and I feel just as good now as I did then." "I have no doubt that you do," returned Mr. Sedley; "but the truth is this, Walter, you had precisely the same faults then that you have now: the only difference with regard to them is, that now you are told of them, and then you were not; but you make a great mistake in saying you are scolded, for, in fact, you are never scolded at all." "Well, brother, I don't know what you may call scolding," exclaimed Walter, with a look that said, as plain as look could speak, I think now, at any rate, I must know better than you do. "I will explain myself," resumed Mr. Sedley, "for I see you have mistaken the meaning of the word. Scolding signifies not only chiding, but quarrelling, and is a vulgar expression, wholly misapplied in your case. I undertake to teach you the difference between right and wrong; I endeavour to make you love the one and shun the other. If you mistake admonition and reasoning for scolding, the fault is your's."

"Poor me!" exclaimed Walter, catching at the last words, without considering what preceded them: "the fault is mine, as usual; but I do think it very hard to have a long lecture all about such a trifle as forgetting to cut open a book." "There you mistake again, Walter," said his patient instructor; "your neglecting to cut open

the book began the lecture, as you term it; but that circumstance has nothing to do with its continuation; all that has followed is owing to your habit of arguing and defending, instead of acknowledging and amending your faults." "I am sure I don't mean to say I am never to blame," replied Walter; "I know, of course, that I must be in the wrong sometimes." "That useless and oft-repeated *sometimes*," sighed Mr. Sedley; "and why not wrong now, Walter?" "O! not now, brother; I am quite sure I can prove that I am not, though I did forget the book," said Walter eagerly; "it was all owing to cousin Edmond; he has been lecturing me in such a manner on what he calls my faults." "And receiving a lecture on your faults, you give as a reason for repeating one immediately—I mean that of forgetting what you ought to have remembered," said Mr. Sedley; "this is a curious argument, almost too ingenious even for you, Walter; but we will pursue this conversation no farther at present. It was my intention to take you out with me for a ride to-morrow; but I hope, if your memory is really what you declare it, it will shew its unfortunate deficiency by forgetting to remind me of the engagement; for, to prove it capable of retaining what is agreeable to yourself, and not what is useful and pleasing to your friends, is an inconsistency that, with all your fancied

skill in argument, you will, I think, have some difficulty in reconciling."

Walter, however, was of a very different opinion. He thought there would be no difficulty at all. "My brother," said he to himself, on reaching his own room, "is a good-hearted fellow, but he quite forgets that he was once a boy, the same as I am; and, forgetting that, he expects me to be just as thoughtful and serious as he is. A precious stupid sort of a young-old figure I should make of myself, going about all day thinking! thinking! thinking! afraid to play, lest something I have to do should escape my memory; and then if I remind him of his promise for to-morrow, he will say I can recollect just as well as he can, as though it was not a great deal more natural for me to remember that, than the cutting open of a stupid book. He ought to know that it is, instead of blaming me in the way that he does."

Such, and many more like them, were the wise reflections of Walter on what his brother had said to him. Instead of profiting by the good advice he was in the daily habit of receiving, he had long been inclined to regard those who told him of his faults, as enemies more than friends; and, by the same perverted mode of reasoning and judging, he deemed those boys to be hypocrites whose uniform and steady good conduct set him an example he

greatly needed, and would have done well to have followed.

Now, as Henry was a remarkably quiet child, and the best behaved of all the little boys, he considered him to be more pretending and deceitful than any of the others, and often suspected that the motive of his strict obedience to Mr. Sedley was that that gentleman might make comparisons in his favour against the rest, and he (Walter) in particular. The consequence of this unfounded and illiberal opinion was a secret ill will, and often an openly unkind and pettish behaviour towards the child, who bore it with great patience, never for a moment thinking it possible that so near a relation, and one he had early been taught to love, could have any worse inducement for his conduct than the momentary hasty feeling arising from some outward cause. Young as he was, he had refrained from angry words or unkind actions in return; practising the excellent and pious principle early inculcated, of endeavouring to overcome evil with good.

But to return to Walter. That ingenious reasoner in his own favour, having come to the decision that he was, as usual, blameless, instead of repairing his error, ran the risk of again forgetting, by resolving first to indulge a sudden fancy to draw a caricature resemblance of what he chose to imagine little Henry would be at his age,

that is, if he did not become wearied of being so amiable before that time, or rather, as Walter believed, so hypocritical. The figure of poor little Henry was soon sketched, with an enormous wig on his head, a beard down to his breast, and a pair of spectacles across his nose; a large volume was under his arm, on the outside of which was written "An Abridgment of all the Learning in the World. By Master Henry Sedley, aged twelve years."

Walter was so much pleased with what he considered to be his cleverness, that he sat chuckling over and gazing on his picture, whilst his brother's book, that he ought to have been employed on, remained still on his desk, in the far end of the second school-room. How long he might have continued thus lost in self-admiration, had nothing occurred to disturb him, it is impossible to say, for he was still contemplating his performance when he heard two or three voices at once calling him by his name of "Never Wrong." Walter, exceedingly angry, started up, intending to leave the room and avoid them; but before he could do so, four or five boys entered, amongst whom was Edmond and Willoughby. "O! here you are," said one of them; "but why didn't you answer us? we have been calling to you for an 'eternity of time,' as 'Bombastes' here would say." "You didn't call me by my right name," replied Walter, indignantly, "and I shall,

of course, never answer to any other." "O! but you must, though," said Pemberton, the boy who had spoken first; "the laws and decrees of Judge Hargrave are never to be disputed." "Then he should make them better," answered Walter, sullenly. "That's what you always say, when they are against yourself," retorted Pemberton; "but you must learn to own them just, the same as we do. I had a nickname last year, but I soon got rid of it; and so may you, if you like to do so." "I only wish that grandmamma could hear you," said the petted boy; "she would soon let you know what it is to treat me in this abominable manner." "To be sure she would," responded Pemberton; "she would first trim our jackets, and then pin us together in a corner with her knitting-needles, and tell us we should have no sugar on our bread and butter, till we consented to spoil her darling, and make him more disagreeable, as a play and schoolmate, than he is already."

"Order, order, Master Pemberton," said Edmund Hargrave, who never suffered their joking or finding fault with each other to be disgraced by ill nature, "I must have no rough speaking; we must recollect, in our game of Laws, that we merely mean to break ourselves of foolish or bad habits, so that we may live the happier together, as well as grow up wiser; but this must be done with

perfect good humour, or else it is no longer play, and had, therefore, better be let alone. You must apologise to Walter for speaking disrespectfully of his grandmother, who has meant to be very kind to him, though, perhaps, she has a little mistaken the right way in showing it." "I own myself wrong, and beg your pardon, Walter," said Pemberton, with great good humour; "but you must not mind being laughed at a little, any more than 'Don Bombastes' does; if you do, you have only to make the greater haste in getting your new name crossed out of Judge Hargrave's book." "I am in hopes," said Willoughby, "that I have already made TREMENDOUS!—O no, that is a mistake, I mean to say great—progress in getting mine of 'Bombastes' erased. I am sure everybody who has heard me lately must perceive that I take care to use only the prettiest little quiet words; I expect, when I go home for the Midsummer holidays, I shall express myself as though I had learnt to talk out of a baby's primer, something in this fashion, all in one syllable:—

How are you, dear pa?
And how is my ma?
And where is puss cat?
Can she catch a rat?
And Wasp, the old dog,
Does he bark at the hog?

I now have left school,
Where I kept to each rule;
So can write, read, and spell,
And have learnt to speak well
In all that I say,
As you hear me to-day;
Which I did not do once,
But I now am no dunce."

"If that is the way you mean to express yourself," said Edmond laughing, "you will only exchange the name you have at present for another you may not like so well; therefore be warned in time."

"You see now, Walter," said one of his companions, "how good-naturedly Willoughby takes our laughing at him; that is just what we want you to do: and here, too, is 'Valiant' or 'Alexander the Great,' as we sometimes call him: he is as little offended at having those names given to him as 'Bombastes' is."

"I see no 'Valiant' here, or 'Alexander' either," returned Walter; "I only see a young gentleman who *I* call Master Melville, but who *you* have thought proper to affront, the same as you have me." A loud peal of merry laughter burst from the boys at this grave speech, delivered too, as it was, with great dignity of manner. "I will bet you anything," cried

Pemberton, "that Melville, instead of being affronted, is as much amused as any of us at the joke upon him, and, I dare say, won't object to my telling you how he got his title, for I don't think you know, being on a visit at the time." "With all my heart, Pemberton," said Melville, "you may tell Walter the whole particulars, if you please."

"Well then, Walter," began the narrator, "you must know that, once upon a time, (as the story books say) 'Valiant' was seated at a table, on which was a green baize, and in this green baize was stuck a pin with the point upwards; now this terrible and deadly weapon, being of the smallest kind, was quite unseen by poor Melville, who in a very brave humour was descanting on all the great heroes he had read or heard of, from Alexander the Great down to Jack the Giant Killer; at length he became so animated with his subject, that he suddenly raised his hand in an ecstasy, his eyes looking as bright as the sword he imagined he was grasping, and declared that he should like, of all things, to be a great warrior, and die covered with wounds on the field of battle! So far, so good; but unfortunately for so heroic a spirit, these words were no sooner uttered than, in order to testify his earnestness, he gave the table a great thump with his up-

lifted hand, just where the unseen pin was, upon which this gallant candidate for glory halloed out in a loud voice, *Murder! fire! fury! I've pricked my little finger!* and he has gone by the name of 'Valiant' ever since, and so he will, till he leaves off his sudden and violent exclamations on meeting with such trifling hurts; for, as we are not so brave as he is, we are afraid that he will frighten us some day out of our wits; and we shall call Willoughby 'Bombastes,' till he gets rid of his *horribles, miserables,* and *abominables,* and such like superlatives, all about nothing." "Here's some lines in character for 'Bombastes,'" said Melville, "against Twelfth-night, as his mother has promised him a cake. Shall I read them?" "Not till I have seen them," interposed Judge Edmond, "for I must be certain they will not offend before I give permission, and not then, unless Willoughby allows it too." The lines were accordingly handed over to Hargrave, who, when he had looked them through, gave them to the youth for whom they were intended, telling him to do as he pleased about them.

"O do let us hear them!" cried several voices at once; and Willoughby, after shaking his head in pretended displeasure, and saying it was a great deal too bad of them to expect it, read as follows:—

"'I'm so TERRIBLY hungry, it's so DREADFULLY late,
And what an IMMENSELY long time I must wait,
Before this ENORMOUS—this WONDERFUL cake
Will be made, and the HORRIBLE baker will bake;
And when it at last from the oven shall come,
It p'rhaps will be WRETCHEDLY—MIS'RABLY done;
Or Ma' may forget, and with a *great* key
In the ABOMINABLE cupboard lock it from me;
Or, if I should get it, the next HORRID news
Will be, I've a character HATEFUL to choose,
Yet no anger I'll feel, but of my cake nice
Give all the boys round a TREMENDOUS large slice.'

"I am sure that will be very generous of me," said Willoughby, "after your making so much fun of my favourite words, as you call them. What do you say, Judge Hargrave?" "I say that I think so too," returned Edmond; "yet I give it as my further opinion, that there is no offence to be taken against Melville, for, by shewing Willoughby how absurdly such expressions sound, as applied on common occasions, we shall not only greatly help to break him of them, but deter others who might, from his example, acquire the same habit." "And I think it a great affront," chimed in Walter, "to have such rubbish as that written upon anybody, and I only wonder that Willoughby has not

more spirit than to put up with it; for my part, I am glad that I have too much proper pride and good sense to be so easily and so ill-naturedly amused;" and so saying, he turned to leave the room with a look of great contempt at the other boys.

"O don't stalk off in that way, like a tragedy king," exclaimed Pemberton, placing his back against the door; "you know we came here on purpose to seek you; we want you to tell us what sort of weather it will be the day after to-morrow." "There's a question for people who think themselves wiser than everybody else!" cried Walter, exultingly. "Not than everybody, only everybody but you, Walter," said Hargrave; "you, you know, are never wrong." "And, therefore, must be always right," interposed another of the boys; "and, that being the case, we thought we could not do better than ask you what sort of weather it would be the day after to-morrow, because of settling our skating party."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Walter. "Not at all nonsense," said the other; "for we have often heard you say, when your walks over to your grandmother's has been put off for another week, that you knew it would rain or snow on that particular day to which it was put off; so we were thinking that, if you could tell us on one Wednesday or Saturday what sort of weather it would be

on the Wednesday or Saturday following, you would be still more certain as to what it will be on the day after to-morrow: this is what I was calling to you for." "And I wanted to tell you, Walter," said Melville, "that my ball, which you lost the other day, has been found in Farmer Blake's kitchen; you had thrown it through a pane in the window, which he says you must have mended." "I dare say, indeed!" replied Walter, ever ready at self-justification, "as though I could see his window with all those ridiculous shrubs about it." "Those ridiculous shrubs, as you now term them," observed Hargrave, "I have heard you say, were the prettiest group of evergreens you had ever seen." "Well, and if I did," answered the young sophist, "I never said it was right to hide a window with them." "But you knew that they *did* hide a window," rejoined Edmond. "But if I did," replied the uncandid boy, "how was I to know that he had glazed it with such stupid thin glass, that such a light ball would break it? Besides, after all, it is only an accident, and who can help an accident? I neither expect to pay for it, or to be blamed either."

"To be sure you don't," said Melville; "you never do for anything. When you lost my ball, instead of owning yourself in fault, you told me I made more fuss about it than it was worth, and that was all the consolation I got;

you answered my complaints by telling me you couldn't help it, it was an accident." "Well, and so it was," reiterated Walter; "and who, I should like to know, can help meeting with an accident?" "Those who bestow a little more care and thought than you do on what they are about," remarked Hargrave. "Don't say another word upon the subject, Hargrave," interrupted Pemberton; "I am delighted to hear 'Never Wrong's' opinion concerning the excusable nature of an accident, and that nobody can avoid meeting with them, for I have been distressing myself very much about one that has happened to the kite he lent me."

Walter turned very pale on hearing this, for his kite was a valuable one, and he wished he had not spoken so decidedly. "What has happened to it?" he faltered out. "Why, somehow," replied Pemberton, "the tail must have got loose after I had placed the kite upon the desk and against the wall; I am afraid it attracted the notice of my cat, who was playing in the room at the time, for when I returned there an hour or two afterwards, I found it on the ground with Mistress Puss frisking over it, and three large holes made in the middle of it." Walter was for some time silent; he was searching his mind, or more properly speaking, his imagination, for arguments by which he might prove, that though his own case of the

ball and broken window was an accident, that of his kite was not. To do this he found a more difficult attempt at reasoning than any he had yet made; but he had been so long accustomed to consider himself in the right and others in the wrong, that he felt no doubt as to the fact, and trusted he should be able to prove that it was so to the rest. Luckily for him in his present dilemma, Pemberton spoke again, before receiving an answer, and, by what he now said, gave Walter an opportunity for his false mode of reasoning. "I am very sorry that your kite has got torn," resumed Pemberton, "though I don't think I am much to blame about it, for you will remember being in the room at the time that I folded the tail as it is usually done, and very carefully, as I thought; and"—"As you thought!" interrupted Walter; "now I know how my poor kite became torn; the tail was not folded carefully, and so puss got hold of it; you ought to have been sure that you placed it safely, and not trusted to thinking that you had done so." "You speak," replied Pemberton, "as though you understood I was only thinking now that I had secured it, and not at the time, which is what I meant: it is then that I thought it was quite safe; but cats are often ingenious in their play, as well as mischievous." "And if you know that they are so," rejoined Walter, "I can't think how you can call what has

happened to my kite an accident, and I see no excuse at all for it."

"No more than there is," interposed Hargrave, "for you carelessly playing at ball close to shrubs, behind which you know there is a window." "I don't see any likeness at all between the two cases," replied Walter, impatiently. "I dare say that you do not," said his cousin, "because in the case of the kite you are the injured party, and in that of the ball the injurer."

"I have not yet finished what I was saying. When Walter interrupted me," said Pemberton, "I was going to remind him that I placed his kite where I did at his own desire. You will remember, Walter," he added, "that you said, 'Let it be there, Pemberton, and, when I go up stairs, I will take it with me, and put it away.'"

Walter was not at all pleased with this finish of what he had so exultingly broken in upon. Wilful falsehood was not among his faults; and, perfectly recollecting that he had thus spoken, he immediately acknowledged that he had. "But," added he, "I forgot it then, and how could I help that? Pemberton is still to blame, for he knows what a bad memory I have, and he ought, therefore, to have reminded me to take my kite up stairs before he left the room, and not let me run the risk of forgetting it."

"Well done! 'Never Wrong' again," shouted the boys.

"I wonder, Walter," said one of them, "if the bell didn't ring for our meals, and nobody called you, whether you would remember in what order they came. I should not be surprised to hear you ask for breakfast at tea time, and fancy supper was dinner." "Or," said another, "with such a dreadful bad memory as you make yours out to be, that you should forget to take some of your clothes off when you go to bed, and so lie down with your boots on, as winter socks, and your hat, instead of a night-cap, wondering all night what makes you so uncomfortable. Perhaps, by and by, you will be like the absent man, who, entirely forgetting what he was about, put his wet umbrella into the bed and himself in the corner."

"I am not going to answer any such nonsense as that," returned Walter, angrily; "and as for you, Pemberton, I can't think why you should be allowed to have such a mischievous beast as a cat."

"You forget, in your displeasure about your kite," observed Hargrave, "that it was yourself who begged Mr. Sedley to let Pemberton keep poor puss, when he so humanely saved it from the cruel boys who were going to destroy it." "Then, as I did that," replied the young disputant, "it ought to have made the cat's master more careful that she shouldn't do me a mischief, whatever she might the others: it is very hard that what I meant

as a kindness to him should be a vexation and a loss to me. I never saw anything like you all," he added passionately; "let me reason ever so well, there is no convincing you. I wish there was not a cat in the whole world." "And yet you are afraid of rats, and dislike mice," said Hargrave. "And I know that you like plenty of light," observed Willoughby. "Yet, for all this," rejoined Hargrave, laughing, "Walter would have windows glazed with horn, that he might play near without danger of breaking them, and have the house overrun with vermin, because it is too much trouble for him to remember and think of consequences, as other people do; and this he calls reasoning well." "You are all mighty clever, I dare say," cried Walter, with increasing displeasure; "and you are, every one of you, ready enough to blame me,—that I will say,—but I know better than to mind you; for though, of course, I must be wrong sometimes, the same as you and everybody else in the world is, I am not wrong now, except, indeed, in being too good-natured; for there isn't a boy anywhere would bear such lecturing from his school-fellows as I do; but I'll take good care to mend that fault; and to begin, I declare, from this moment, I will never lend anything to anybody again, let them ask me ever so." "Then, of course, you don't mean to borrow," said Hargrave; "and in that case, cousin Walter, I fancy you will be the greatest loser;

for where you lend one thing, you generally borrow at least half a dozen." "Come, Walter," said Pemberton, good-humouredly, seeing he was about to leave the room much offended, "don't let us part in anger; you pay Farmer Blake for his broken window, and I will buy you a new kite."

"You may buy me a new kite," answered the self-sufficient boy, "if you think you ought to do so: I don't want it, unless you do; and when I feel certain that it is right for me to have the window mended, I will have it done, but not before."

"O! poor, poor Farmer Blake," cried several voices. "If he waits for 'Never Wrong' to glaze his broken pane," said one, "he won't have to complain of want of air in his kitchen during the winter." "Or dust in the summer," observed another, "if that is any advantage to him." "You may say whatever you please: I don't care," replied Walter, going; "but I shall remember you all, that you may depend upon." "We will hope, at least, Walter," said Hargrave, "that, as you are so apt to forget, you will not remember anything that has seemed unkind or ill-natured towards you, and that, when you join us in the playground, as we hope you will, we shall all meet again with the good feeling that schoolboys should bear to each other."

CHAPTER III.

WALTER, dissatisfied with his companions, and altogether in a very uncomfortable state of mind, went into his own room. When there, he began, as soon as his agitation subsided, to reflect on the loss of his kite, and that, in all probability, he should have to pay Farmer Blake for his window, in spite of his recent determination not to do so. Though in the heat of his anger he thought he could justify himself, and avoid the consequences of his thoughtlessness and pertinacity, yet, as he began to cool, he could not help acknowledging to himself that he was, perhaps, not always so entirely free from blame as he had hitherto imagined. He, for the first time, began to think that it might be taking too much credit to himself to suppose that the whole school, with the teachers, and his brother at the head of all, must be wrong in their judgments, whenever faults were attributed to him, and yet right, when they imputed blame to others. He was aroused from these meditations, so fortunately at last begun, by a gentle touch on his arm, and, raising his eyes from the

floor, to which they had been directed, he beheld his little nephew Henry.

"Dear Walter," he said, with great earnestness, "I wanted so to see you when nobody was by." "I wish you wouldn't come teasing me just now," returned Walter, with his usual pettishness, and forgetting at the moment all the wise reflections he had been engaged in. "Don't be angry with me," said the child, his eyes filling with tears; "I have only come to tell you papa has just desired me to go into the school-room, to see if the book he gave you to cut open is still lying on your desk undone, for, if it is, he said I was to do it, and bring it him afterwards."

"Oh, dear, dear!" exclaimed Walter, "I have quite forgot it again. I do think there's a spell set on me." "A spell! what's that?" inquired Henry. "You won't understand me, even if I take the trouble to explain it," returned his ungracious young uncle; "it's a fate,—a sort of power that makes everything go wrong, and we can't help ourselves."

"I should think that couldn't be," said Henry, "only that, you being so much older than I am, I suppose you must know best." "And why do you think it can't be?" inquired Walter. "Because," replied the well-taught child, "I think if I was told to do anything I was able

to do, nothing would put it out of my head, for two good reasons." "And what are they, pray?" asked Walter, with his usual habit of disputation. "The first reason would be," answered Henry, "because I was desired to do it; and the second would be, if I had promised to do it, that I ought to keep my word." "But suppose you were ever told to do what you thought a hard task, or perhaps something wrong?" rejoined Walter, in a true spirit of cavilling. "Why, then," replied the little boy, "I wouldn't trust to my thinking so, but I would ask papa, or somebody else wiser and older than myself, whether it was wrong or not; but as for spells and fates hindering me, I never heard of them before, and I don't know what they mean." "So much the better for you," said Walter, with a long-drawn sigh. "I wish that I could say the same; but with me everything goes wrong."

"Perhaps, Walter, that is because you don't try hard enough to make everything go right; but you will say, as you have done before, that it is very impudent of me to seem to teach you, who ought, of course, to know so much better than I do."

"Ought, indeed!" repeated Walter to himself; "but do I?" This was the only time he had ever so questioned himself, and it led him into a long train of thought,

which the child again interrupted. "Instead of cutting open the book," he said, "I have brought it up to you under my pincloth, that, if I met anybody, they might not see it. I thought you would feel vexed at having it done for you, and perhaps, too, papa might be angry, and it would then be too late to make amends by remembering it."

"And are you so willing," inquired Walter, as he took the book, "to give up the praise I know my brother would bestow on you, and, perhaps, reward, too, for doing what he told you with once bidding?" "I hope, Walter," replied Henry, colouring, and with a gravity beyond his age, "that you think better of me than to suppose I can have any pleasure in being praised for doing what you would be blamed for leaving undone. I could not bear to be so ill-natured, and to you, too, who I could love so very much, if you would let me." The eye of Henry at that moment resting on a piece of paper Walter had unconsciously held half-folded in his hand, he asked him to permit him to look at it, for he saw that it was a drawing.

A blush of shame burnt on the cheek of Walter at this request; it was the first time so deep a colour had appeared there, arising from such a cause. He looked for a moment at the caricature, and then at little

Henry, and he thought that the right-minded, warm-hearted boy, and his sensible father, both deserved something better of him than to be made subjects for his ridicule and ill-humour, and that he would have been more properly employed in doing what his brother had requested of him than in wasting his time on the performance that had, an hour ago, given him so much satisfaction.

"Never mind," said Henry, perceiving an unwillingness in Walter to show the picture; "perhaps you had rather not let me see it. And now I must go, for I should not like papa to know I brought you the book, and I shall be so pleased to tell him you are doing it; so pray begin at once, that I may say so with truth; there's the paper-knife in it; and, as your memory is so bad, Walter, wouldn't it be a good way for you to do everything you are told directly, instead of trusting to it? But don't be angry with me for saying so." Henry now quitted him, and Walter was left again to his own reflections, as he pursued his long-neglected task.

It is said that Experience keeps both a very dear and a very severe school as to discipline, yet, I am sorry to say, there are many little folk who refuse to learn in any other; and so it was with Walter Sedley. Precept, admonition, and example, had long been thrown away up-

on him; but to-day seemed fated to give him a lesson he could not mistake. He was rejoiced at being saved the mortification of having the book opened by Henry instead of himself, and his heart, in consequence, warmed with a feeling of thankfulness and affection; all the unjust suspicions, and the unkindness of his conduct to the generous and affectionate child, rushed upon his mind, and inflicted a severe pang of self-reproach. He could no longer resist the conviction that he had at least judged wrongly of his young nephew, and he asked himself whether he might not also be mistaken in thinking his brother severe, Hargrave his enemy, and the other boys all disposed to treat him ill; he could not but perceive that the rest of the school bore with perfect good humour the judgments and names awarded by his cousin, and made them a sport amongst themselves, instead of a mortification or punishment; in addition to all this (for Walter was much humbled in spirit), he felt that it would be shabby to expect a new kite from Pemberton, and that he would, in all probability, be obliged to have Farmer Blake's window mended.

He was ashamed to remind his brother of the engagement for to-morrow, since he had again forgotten the book, and he thought how false and mean-spirited it would be to take any commendation from him for having

done it at last. Such was the wholesome train of thought that now passed through the mind of Walter.

Had Pemberton, on the accident happening, supplied him with a new kite,—had the farmer not demanded payment for his window, and, above all, had Henry cut open the book, instead of bringing it to him, no such ideas as those with which he was now impressed, would have occurred to him, and he would still have been the wrong-judging, disputatious, and petulant boy we have hitherto seen him; yet, though such a change had come over him, his reformation was by no means complete; old habits, especially bad ones, are not so suddenly got rid of. Walter was still too anxious for the promised ride, to act as he ought to have done; that is, to have acknowledged his inattention to Mr. Sedley, and to have told him of how much more Henry deserved his commendation than he did; such a piece of open and good conduct was more than he had resolution for at present; but he satisfied his conscience for concealing the fact, in a better manner than he had hitherto done in persuading himself that he was in the right, though, in order to do so, he had affirmed all those who gave judgment against him were wholly in the wrong; he, on the contrary, this time, resolved that the next praise he obtained should be fairly earned, and that he would, in the meantime, endeavour to find

out whether his memory was in truth so bad as he supposed it. Here was another step gained on the road of improvement.

Mr. Sedley, in the course of the evening, discovered, by Walter's giving him much more than usual of his company in the parlour, by his frequent allusions to the weather, and other indications, what was passing in his mind with regard to the ride for the morrow; but he resolved not to notice them openly, hoping that the feeling of shame, which was so evidently struggling with the fear of losing the promised indulgence, would gain the victory.

It happened as he wished it should: Walter went to bed, without reminding him of the engagement. It was not Mr. Sedley's intention to try his strength too far: satisfied with the progress he had made in one day, he would not expose him to the temptation of breaking his good resolution on the next; he therefore, at breakfast-time, spoke of the ride himself, and desired him to get ready, and this, too, in a manner that showed Walter it was meant to be considered as encouragement for further good behaviour. Walter, delighted, not only spent a very pleasant day at the house of one of Mrs. Sedley's relations, but thought proper to behave to that lady and his brother with something more like respect and humi-

lity than he had hitherto done; and, besides, treated Henry (who accompanied them) with a show of affection and kindness that made the good little boy perfectly happy. But still, Walter's reformation was, as yet, only in progress.

CHAPTER IV.

THE frost having now set in for some time, the following day was fixed on by the young gentlemen of the village for the skating party, and all the boys who were spending their holidays at Mr. Sedley's set off, under the care of a trusty servant, who was directed to see that they went into no danger, but kept to the one pond they were accustomed to, the water of which was exceedingly shallow. All went on very well for the first hour, but, at the end of that time, Walter proposed trying another pond, of which there were many, and much larger than the one they were on. "See," he said, "how nicely those boys get on out yonder; this is so narrow; we shall have so much more room at the next, and there is nobody there to interrupt us." "All that is very true, to be sure," replied Pemberton, to whom he had been speaking; "but, then, you know, Mr. Sedley told us only to skate here, because the water here is shallow, and there it may be very deep." "Of course," rejoined Walter, "it is very right of my brother to be careful of us, but then there is

such a thing as being over careful, you know." "No doubt there is," returned Pemberton, "but that, if a fault, is, at least, one on the right side; so we will stay where we are."

Walter was in high spirits from the effects of exercise in the open air. He was, though so young, a good skater, and had received several compliments, that had not only increased his exhiliration, but created a strong desire to give a further display of his cleverness. The wise reflections and good resolutions of yesterday were alike forgotten, and his long-indulged propensity to argue that he was right, because he wanted to do what was wrong, again took possession of his mind.

"My brother," said he, "tells us to go to this pond, as a general rule, without considering it sometimes freezes so hard that it is as safe on another as it is on this; and that is the case to-day." "That is very likely," replied Pemberton; "but for all that, as Mr. Sedley desired us to skate here, in order to prevent even the possibility of an accident, this is the pond for us; we ought certainly not to attempt any other; neither do I think John would let us, if we designed to do so."

"That's well thought of," cried Walter: "if we go we must give the old fellow the slip." "Indeed I shall do no such thing, nor let you either," said Pemberton.

"It's very hard indeed," returned the wilful boy, "to be always thwarted in one's pleasures for nothing; I am sure if my brother was here he would make no objection, and therefore it is just the same as though he was here." "Not quite, I should think," observed Hargrave, who had been listening to the dialogue; "for in one case we should have Mr. Sedley's own word, and in the other we have only Walter's opinion of what that word would be." "I am sure of one thing, however," cried Walter, angrily, "and that is, cousin Edmond, that you are always willing to prevent my having any pleasure that I set my mind on." "I must still bear with your ill-will and pettishness," returned Hargrave, mildly, "for the sake of serving you, for I shall continue to point out where you are wrong, to the best of my ability, till you have the good sense to perceive it yourself. A direction given to us by my cousin Mr. Sedley ought not to be departed from, unless he is on the spot to sanction our doing so; though all appears safe and right on the other ponds, yet who can tell what may possibly happen should we disobey the orders we received at setting out?"

"O, 'Never Wrong' can tell, to be sure," said Pemberton, laughing: "the next pond is as safe as this, of course, if *he* wants to go on it." "If I am to have that stupid name, I may as well have it for something," cried Walter,

reddening with passion, "and I'll go, if it's only to convince Pemberton that I am right now, at any rate, in reality." "Worth while, to be sure," replied Pemberton, "for you to risk incurring your brother's displeasure, and perhaps an accident, for the sake of convincing me. Come, Walter, don't be wilful and foolish; forget and forgive, you know." "*You* forget to call me by that foolish nickname, and then, perhaps *I* may forgive your ill-behaviour," replied Walter, magnificently; "but for all you can say, I won't believe that the next pond is less safe than this is. What should make it so?" "I will tell you," said Hargrave: "this is more shaded by trees, and that is more exposed to the sun."

This was indeed the case, and, owing to that circumstance, some of the neighbouring cottagers had chosen that pond in preference to the others, for the purpose of supplying themselves with water, and had broken the ice at the far end of it, so that they could throw a pail in with a string to it, and pull it out again without danger to themselves. This was of course unknown to the little party from the school.

"However," resumed Hargrave, again addressing Walter, "as it seems impossible to convince you by argument of either the propriety of doing as you are bid, or that the other pond may be less safe than this, we will, for

your satisfaction, just go and try its strength." "That's right," cried Walter, triumphantly; "I thought I should be able to shew you the folly of not doing so." "Softly, Master Watty: not quite so fast, if you please," said Hargrave; "I may perhaps be able to shew you that the folly is all your own."

He then called to the other boys and John, and told them, that, to please Walter, he was going to try the ice on the next pond with some long poles they had with them, and stones,—not that he, or any of them, he assured John, meant to go on it, however firm it might be found. They then all proceeded together. Walter had by this time not only worked himself into a full conviction of being right, but was bent on the triumph of proving that he was so; therefore, the moment that they reached the edge of the pond, he threw his skates upon the ground, and, before any one could be aware of his intention, he had slid into the middle of it, when, waving his hand exultingly as he turned his head towards the companions he had left, instead of looking before him, he gave another slide, and in the next moment wholly disappeared, having slid into the hole already mentioned.

Hargrave, only waiting to rid himself of his shoes,—his worsted stockings enabling him, with the help of a

pole, to walk on the ice, lost not an instant in hurrying to his assistance, regardless of danger to himself. Fortunately for Walter, who might otherwise have been drowned, some boys had early in the morning amused themselves with throwing heavy stones around the hole previously made, so that the ice there was broken to a considerable extent, and was floating about in large fragments. Walter had risen near the same spot at which he had gone down, and had instinctively caught at a long slip of ice, over which he got his arm just as Edmond came up; another moment and his brittle support might have broken from the main body, to which it was still attached, and have sunk with his weight. Hargrave placed his pole across from the ice on which he stood, to a firm piece opposite, and then, trusting his weight to its support, let himself down into the water, moving with his hands along the pole till he reached Walter, whose grasp he directed to the same object. By this time the rest had ran round the pond, to the same spot, and by their assistance, though not without considerable difficulty, both Walter and his preserver were extricated from their perilous situation, amid the tears of joy and exclamations of thankfulness uttered by the attached group that thronged around them; for Hargrave was, as he well deserved to be, a most especial favourite, and Walter's faults and ill beha-

viour were almost forgotten in their rejoicing at his safety. More dead than alive, through terror and mortification, the so lately exulting and self-sufficient boy was almost carried home by John, one of the boys running on first, to tell what had happened, in order to prevent unnecessary alarm on their arrival. Both Edmond and Walter were put into warmed beds, and a medical man directly sent for. On his arrival he gave it as his opinion that a fever would be the consequence of Walter's folly and misconduct, owing to the state of excitement he had been and was still in; Hargrave, he said, was in no danger. Both judgments proved correct; for some days Walter's life was nearly despaired of; but the skill of his physician, and the great attention he received from everybody, even those he had in his perverted judgment called his enemies, at length restored him, after a confinement of many weeks to a sick chamber.

In the course of this tedious period, he had plenty of leisure to reflect on his past conduct; he shuddered when he thought of how nearly he had lost his life, by his habit of arguing falsely; he could no longer conceal from himself, that in reasoning he had allowed inclination rather than judgment to suggest what he said; he perceived, too, that he was equally in error in the character and motives of conduct he had attributed to others; Hargrave, whom he had long thought to have ill-treated him,

had risked his own life to save him; little Henry had clearly proved himself to be his friend, even before that never-to-be-forgotten day of the accident; and, then, his brother! his patient, sensible, and good brother! "How," said Walter, to himself, "shall I ever be able to make up for my ungrateful conduct to him?" That brother whose understanding he had often dared to treat as inferior to his own, whom he had believed capable of allowing himself to be prejudiced against him, and whom he had often designated as harsh and severe, and consequently unjust; that brother had attended him through a long illness, with the patience and solicitude of a parent, sitting up with him for several nights, to the injury of his own health, forbearing to reproach him with his misconduct and disobedience, though he was so extremely culpable, but, on the contrary, only kindly encouraging his reformation.

The veil of self-deception was at length completely withdrawn, and Walter, far more exalted by his humility than he was in his arrogance, saw all his conduct in its true light; nor was he backward in acknowledging that he did so.

More than two months elapsed before he was able to rejoin the boys in their pastimes, and when he did, the first thing he observed in their play-room was Hargrave's

book of cases and judgments, with the offensive name completely erased, and a challenge written, to fight with snow-balls any boy who should presume to again call Master Walter Sedley

"NEVER WRONG;" or, "THE YOUNG DISPUTANT."

"IT WAS ONLY IN FUN."

"IT WAS ONLY IN FUN."

CHAPTER I.

"Do you know, Miss Vernon, whether any accident occurred from the log of wood being thrown across the railway yesterday?" inquired George Markham, as he was walking with that lady and her pupil, his little cousin Mary. "I hope, and, indeed, believe not," replied Miss Vernon, "for it is said that some one saw it in time to remove it before the train came up; otherwise several of the carriages might have been overturned, and then, perhaps, even loss of lives might have been the consequence." "How lucky!" exclaimed George. "In speaking of so serious an event as escaping such dreadful mischief," rejoined Miss Vernon, "you should call it providential." "Well, perhaps I should," said young Markham, carelessly, "but one can't always think of the right word."

Miss Vernon looked grave, and even sad, for she had

frequently before remarked the light manner in which this youth was inclined both to think and to utter his thoughts. Referring to what he had said, she replied, "Perhaps not, Master Markham, when speaking on trifling subjects; but on such an one as this, where a number of persons might have been killed, and whole families, in consequence, be plunged in sorrow and poverty, I should suppose the right expression would naturally arise in your mind, in preference to any other. Let us imagine, for a moment, that Mr. Jolliffe, who you know lives with your uncle, instead of returning from London a fortnight ago, had come yesterday, as he had first intended, and had been overturned in one of those carriages, and, at least, seriously injured, how would you have felt then?"

"O! I should have been most dreadfully sorry," replied George, earnestly, "for if Mr. Jolliffe had been laid up ill, or lamed, the house would have been dull indeed, he is always so good-humoured and merry. I don't know, I'm sure, how I should get on a whole summer in this stupid village uncle has fixed on to reside in, without Mr. Jolliffe."

"As you value that gentleman so much on account of his being MERRY," replied Miss Vernon, "I hope you have remarked and set some store on his being WISE at the same time. 'Merry and wise,' you know, should always go together." "I dare say they should," returned

George, in the same careless tone as before; "but as long as I can have the 'merry,' I don't care over much about the 'wise.'" "Perhaps that," said Miss Vernon, "was the feeling of the wicked boy who placed the log across the railway; for, on being found out, and asked why he did it, he said, 'It was only in fun.'" "Good gracious!" exclaimed George, indignantly, "what a stupid and bad fellow he must be! What fun could there possibly be in risking people's lives and limbs in that way?" "None at all, certainly," replied Miss Vernon; "neither did he think there was any. It is evident, from his examination, on being found out yesterday, that he had no intention of such serious mischief as might have happened, but merely meant to frighten the people in the carriages by a sudden jolt in crossing over the log. Like many other persons who are fond of playing tricks, he did not give himself the trouble or care to consider what might really be the consequences of it." "I can see no joke in it at all," persisted George. "As you said before, only think how shocking it would have been had Mr. Jolliffe been hurt by it. He must be a very good-for-nothing boy, and ought to be well punished." "Your indignation is very just, and I am pleased to see it," returned Miss Vernon; "any person who, for the sake of a jest, does that which may produce injury to another, however unpre-

meditated the evil, is guilty of a wicked act, and ought not to complain, even should he be punished as though he had designed all the mischief his thoughtlessness may lead to."

"And yet," said little Mary, who had listened attentively, "Cousin George will scarcely believe that; for I have often heard him say, when, by some trick or rough play, he has frightened or hurt any of us, that we shouldn't make a fuss about it, for he only did it in fun." "Just the same as that boy," said Miss Vernon. "Yes," cried George, "I know I have; but then I never did, nor ever thought of doing, anything so stupid or wrong as throwing a log of wood across a railroad." "If it be wrong," interposed Miss Vernon, "to play off a trick that may end in mischief, on a railway, it must be wrong to do anything in 'fun,' as you call it, which may produce mischief, however trifling, anywhere else. Besides, Master George, the habit is a bad one; and, though begun at first in a game of play, may, if indulged in, finish in something very serious. I dare say the boy we have been speaking of had played many pranks of a lesser kind, before he became thoughtless and wicked enough to risk overturning a train of carriages at full speed. Few persons arrive at a great height of vice or folly at once, but go quietly and slowly on, step by step, though some much faster than others."

At this moment their attention was diverted from the

subject on which they were speaking, by the sound of angry voices at no great distance. On turning round a corner of the road, they saw two boys struggling together; the biggest had got the head of the other under his arm, and was cuffing him on the back with hearty good will.

George, forgetting in a moment what little gravity Miss Vernon's last address to him had occasioned, burst into a loud laugh. Little Mary shrunk away frightened, whilst Miss Vernon, going up to the boys, desired the big one to let the other go, and then inquired what was the matter? "Matter enough," replied Tom Hobbs, the big boy, angrily. "He left the gate open of that field you see there, and, by doing so, has let the horses, and cows, and donkeys out, that it was meant to keep in."

"Well, and if I did, I only did as the gate told me," replied Soft Johnny,—for that was the name the very simple younger lad was known by in the village; "mother can't afford to pay my schooling for nothing, and Dame says I must do as I'm bid." "What do you mean by the gate telling you?" inquired Miss Vernon. "Why, it's writ on it," returned Johnny, "'Please not to shut this gate.'" "It's no such thing," eagerly interrupted Tom Hobbs; "and if you will just take the trouble, ma'am, to come and look, you will see, that, instead of 'NOT,' the words are 'Please to shut this gate.' It is done with a

piece of red stuff, in great letters, as big and as plain as the nose in his face." "And nothing can be plainer than that, I'm sure," said George Markham, staring at the poor boy, and looking as though he had some secret cause of merriment besides.

Now, whether Tom Hobbs felt some shame for his behaviour to Soft Johnny, or whether, though he had no objection to treat him roughly himself, he did not choose that any other boy should do so, I cannot tell; he was, perhaps, merely offended, and resentful at George laughing when he was vexed. But, however all this may be, he turned sharply round to that young gentleman, saying, "I suppose, sir, he is as God made him, and you are no better;" adding, in a muttering tone, to himself, "and, very likely, a great deal worse."

Miss Vernon, though she heard these words, forbore to notice them, aware that the reproof was well merited; and, in order to prevent an answer on the part of George, that might lead to something more angry from the young peasant, she immediately, with the rest, crossed over to the field spoken of. She wished, too, to gratify the lad, by seeing what was really written on the gate. When there, to the great astonishment of Tom Hobbs, she saw that Soft Johnny had read aright; there it was, in great red letters, "Please NOT to shut this gate." "It is very strange," she said, "for I think I have noticed this gate

before, as having a very different direction on it, indeed, quite a contrary one; and, now that I look at it more particularly, I can see that the word 'NOT,' though done with the same material and colour, is in another hand-writing. I believe," she added, after a pause, "I can guess all about it. When the direction was first written, the word 'Please' having been placed a good way off the word 'to,' some mischievous person has put 'NOT' between; and this poor boy, knowing no better, but thinking he was doing right, left it open, instead of shutting it after him."

"Whoever it is that has done it," said Tom Hobbs, rubbing out the word as well as he could with the sleeve of his jacket, and then scratching it over with a stone, "I only wish that I could come across him; see if I wouldn't serve him as I did Soft Johnny here, only a pretty deal worse." "What a fuss about nothing!" cried George Markham, contemptuously; "and what a stupid fellow you must be not to see, in a moment, that, whoever has done it, has done it 'only in fun.'" "You may call me stupid, sir, if you please," replied Tom Hobbs, "but whoever calls mischief 'fun,' is, I think, a pretty deal stupider; even Soft Johnny knows better than that, and is too fond and proud of his schooling not to have learnt it, if he didn't." "O, I'm sure, Tom Hobbs, I didn't

do it," cried Johnny; "I don't go to school for nothing; and Dame says, 'We mustn't do evil, even though good may come of it;' so I'm sure I ought not to do wrong, that mischief may."

"This poor boy, with all his simplicity," said Miss Vernon, addressing Tom Hobbs, "is more truly wise than many amongst you who call him by so offensive a name; I hope you will leave it off yourself, and persuade others to do the same." "I owe him a good turn for having thrashed him for nothing," replied Tom Hobbs; "and that puts me in mind again of this trick. Whoever has put that word in, has done mischief enough for one morning: Farmer Hedges can't find his best cart horse, and a cow and two donkeys have got into mother's garden, eat up her cabbages, and trampled down her pease and beans, that were just getting strong." "It's a great pity they were not a little stronger," observed George, looking still much more amused than he ought to have been; "but I suppose a rake and a hoe, and a shilling to buy more cabbage plants, will soon set all to rights again."

Tom Hobbs's temper, not a little ruffled by his late vexation, was still more annoyed by having his grievances treated in this light and unfeeling manner. "A lot of cows and donkeys getting into a garden may seem very

funny to you, sir," he said; "and, if the garden belonged to rich folks, it mightn't be of much matter: a loss of cabbages is not much to them; but, though you mayn't know it, to lose anything that grows in poor people's ground is to lose great part of their living. Such troubles as these may make young gentlemen laugh, but they are serious enough to us, when we are obliged, through them, to go with half a dinner." "Besides thumping me, when I was only doing as I was bid," chimed in Johnny. "I'm sure, Johnny, I'm very sorry for having done so," replied Tom Hobbs; "and, as I said before, only wish that I could catch the right one to give it to." And, whilst he spoke these last words, he looked suspiciously at young Markham. "You can't give him the same thumps you gave me, if you did," said Johnny, "so don't mind any more about it; Dame says, folk should 'forget and forgive.'"

Tom Hobbs seemed not at all inclined to follow this Christian precept, and Miss Vernon having noticed the suspicious glance he had cast on George, hastened to put an end to the dialogue. Taking two half-crowns from her purse, she put them into Tom's hand, saying, she hoped that it would be sufficient to repair the injury done to his mother's garden.

The lad, with Johnny, then went away, still not very

well satisfied, though respectful to the lady, who, with her young companions, passed on for some distance in silence. Miss Vernon looked extremely grave, and George was the first to speak. "I am sorry, ma'am," he said, "that you should think it necessary to give that fellow so much as five shillings; it is a large sum for you to lose." "It is not my intention to lose it," replied Miss Vernon; "I gave the money on your account, and, therefore, Master Markham, expect that you will repay it me directly on reaching home." "On my account! and why?" exclaimed George, in a faltering voice, and the colour forsaking his cheeks. "Simply for this reason," she replied: "I feel certain that it was you who occasioned the mischief those two half-crowns are meant to repair, and you may consider yourself fortunate should they prove to be a sufficient sum for the purpose." "Me! Miss Vernon?" exclaimed George, again in a tone he intended to sound like surprise. "Yes, sir," returned Miss Vernon; "and do not add to the fault already committed, by attempting to deny it. It was you who wrote in the word 'NOT,' filling up the space between the 'Please' and 'to.' I knew in a moment the particular kind of 't' that you make, looking more like a cross than a well-formed letter; but, even had I not known it, your manner was enough of itself to convince me. I would not,

of course, express my opinion before the two boys, fearing the bigger one might tell it to the whole village on account of his resentment, and the other through his straightforward simplicity."

George was, by this time, aware that whatever he might say, to throw a doubt on the subject, would not be believed, so he held his tongue; he was in hopes, too, by thus silently admitting the truth, he should prevent anything more being said about it now, and, perhaps, at home. Judging Miss Vernon by the common rules he had used on other occasions, he further thought, that, if he repaid the money readily, it would be all right, and no more worry (as he termed admonition) about it; and, having a purse unfortunately too well filled for a boy of his thoughtless disposition, the loss of five shillings was not so great a punishment as it would otherwise have been. It was, at least, very far from sufficient to break him of the bad habit he had long indulged in of playing tricks, regardless of consequences, excusing himself, when found out, by saying, "it was only in fun." And this was the justification he made in the present instance, when pressed by Miss Vernon to own the truth, on being asked why he had altered the direction on the gate.

"I wonder, Master Markham," she said, "that you, who can see so clearly how wrong the boy was in throw-

ing the log across the railway for the sake of a jest, do not perceive how blameable you are yourself." "I don't think," returned George, "that what I have done ought to be compared with what he did; my putting the word 'not' in could never cause such harm as his trick might." "Perhaps not," said Miss Vernon; "but, as I remarked to you before, we should avoid doing anything, even in jest, that may end in mischief, however slight; and you ought to have learnt, long ago, that there is no true wit in either saying or doing what may injure or give pain to any one." "Well, there's no great harm done this time, at any rate," cried George, impatiently, and somewhat wearied of the longest lecture he had ever received: "'it was only in fun' that I put the word in; and that impudent boy, and the old woman his mother, in having five shillings given them, have got, I dare say, more than twice the value of the damage done, so they'll have a double stock of cabbages and everything else; I think I have the most reason to complain this time, at least." "If so, that is just as it should be," replied Miss Vernon; "and I hope all persons who do things in fun, without first considering consequences, will always find themselves the greatest sufferers by them."

"Perhaps, Miss Vernon," said George, as they drew near the house, "you will be kind enough not to say

anything of this business at home; I don't want to be teased about having lost five shillings. And I'm sure dear little cousin Mary," he added, to the child, coaxingly, "won't speak of it. Some day I may, very likely, tell Mr. Jolliffe, because he is so merry that I know it will be just the thing to please him." "I dare say you think so, but I doubt it very much," returned Miss Vernon; "I never can persuade you to believe that Mr. Jolliffe is not only merry but wise, at the same time."

"How glad I am that the walk is over!" said George to himself, as they entered the avenue leading to the house. "Women have no fun in them: whilst they are children, they care for nothing but dolls and baby-houses; and when they grow older, they are always for lecturing and hectoring over boys."

George Markham had only very lately formed this opinion, for he had had, unfortunately, but few opportunities of female tuition, or, indeed, any instruction at all fitted to correct his errors. His mother had died whilst he was an infant, and his father, the captain of a merchant vessel, being scarcely ever at home, left him to the care of his housekeeper, an ignorant old woman, very ill qualified to instruct and manage him. This person, with a footboy to assist her, named Bob, completed Mr. Markham's household. It is true that George, when old

enough, went to school, but then he begged so hard to be only a day scholar, that his father, more of a rough seaman than an educated and judicious parent, granted his request. Thus he still continued to pass the greater part of his time at home, with Bob for his chief companion, practising between them unnumbered pranks on old Betty, who, instead of complaining, as she ought to have done, when Captain Markham came home, generally bore their behaviour very quietly, fearful, if she did not, she might lose her place, in which, being the greater part of the year her own mistress, "was a thing," as she said to herself, "not to be thought of."

Thus was a love of mischief, disguised by the name of fun, early created and encouraged by the ill-judging and cunning old woman, who, however, contrived to avoid any very serious annoyance to herself, by threatening Bob with dismissal if he didn't mind what he was about.

Mr. Ingram, the brother-in-law of Captain Markham, whilst on a visit to him a few weeks before the present period, noticed the familiar terms on which Bob seemed to be with his young master, and, fearful of what might be the result of such an improper intimacy, had, in order to check it, invited George to spend the summer with him in Hampshire, saying to his father he thought, too,

that a little better female society than that of old Betty might be of service to him. Captain Markham readily assented, and Master George left his home at Greenwich, accompanying his uncle to the retired, or, as he called it, the stupid village in which that gentleman had fixed his residence.

On reaching home, not a word was said by either Miss Vernon or Mary of what had occurred during their walk. Though he felt as though he was a good deal ill used, in being obliged to give so much, George was anxious to repay the five shillings. "Then," thought he, "she can't pester me any more about it. I only wish Miss Vernon was like old Betty; but I suppose governesses never are, and to be fault-finding and lecturing is part of their trade; that may do, perhaps, very well for girls, for they are all just as stupid; but it won't do for boys, at least not such famous fellows as I have been used to at Greenwich."

Miss Vernon made no hesitation in taking the bright five-shilling piece offered her, though she could see that Master George, on presenting it, would have been better pleased if she had. And now, that affair settled, he went to the drawing-room, in which he found Mr. Jolliffe, alone and reading a letter. "I have some capital news for you, Georgy, my boy," he said, rubbing his hands, his

cheerful, round face beaming with delight. "The good ship 'Hope,' of Calcutta, has safely arrived, and my man James, whom I left behind me in London for the purpose, will be here with little Julian and his Indian nurse Mima, to-morrow." "Is that all?" inquired George, disappointedly. "Is that all!" repeated Mr. Jolliffe; "to be sure it is, and what more would you have? But perhaps you would like him to bring, instead of his nurse, a lion or Bengal tiger, to put in the forest here." "I think I know better than to have such a fancy as that," replied George; "but what a famous sport those tiger hunts they have in India must be, mustn't they, Mr. Jolliffe?" "I think hunt the slipper a much better game," replied that gentleman; "for sometimes, in tiger hunting, the tiger takes it into his head to hunt the man, and that, you know, the slipper never does." "Oh! but you are top of an elephant," said George; "that's the way in India." "Yes, I know that it is," replied Mr. Jolliffe, "at setting out; but, perhaps, before your return, instead of the elephant's back, you may be on the tiger's; for I believe they don't expect you to walk to their dens when they catch you, but are polite enough to carry you there on their backs or between their jaws, whichever may be most convenient to themselves. When little Julian comes he will tell you all about it, and then we will make a

game of it. As I am bigger than anybody else here, I will be the elephant; Julian shall be the huntsman, mounted on my shoulders; you shall be the tiger, and we will hunt you all over the grounds, and, to make the play complete, lock you up in the village cage afterwards, if you wish it."

George considered himself rather above entering into such a game of make-believe, and thought he should really feel a little tiger-like, if expected to play it for the child's amusement. "I hope," resumed Mr. Jolliffe, after a pause, "that Julian is a brisk little fellow; I never could like a stupid milk-and-water sort of boy, though, of course, I would do my duty, after having promised his father to take charge of him." "What fun it will be, if he is one of that sort," said young Markham to himself, —"a capital joke, indeed, for a man like Mr. Jolliffe to have such a lad as that sent him all the way from India; but, if he is not, it will be good sport to make him for a while, just a little while, seem as though he was stupid and milk-soppish. Mr. Jolliffe will know afterwards that it was only done in fun, and then he will laugh at it himself."

Master George Markham, in thinking thus, only proved how little he really knew of Mr. Jolliffe's true character; for in wishing to find Julian a brisk, intelligent child, he had

motives far deeper than the mere desire of being amused by him. Possessing a large fortune, and without relations to claim his assistance, he had long devoted himself to purposes of benevolence. Mr. Selby, Julian's father, had been the dearest friend of his boyhood, and he had afterwards, at his own expense, fitted him out, and provided for him in India. There Mr. Selby had married. Julian was the youngest of several children, and the climate not agreeing with his constitution, a change had been recommended. Mr. Jolliffe no sooner knew this, than he determined on adopting him, if his parents would consent; and, if the child proved capable of receiving it, he meant to give him a first-rate education, thus fitting him to do credit to some high profession, and to the fortune he intended to bestow on him. Of this George was then, of course, entirely ignorant.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. and Mrs. Ingram had been chiefly induced, in the choice of their present residence, by their long intimacy with a family who had retired to the same village. This family consisted of Mrs. Maitland, a widow lady, with a grown-up son and daughter, and two or three other younger children. They lived in a house called the Priory, about a mile distant from Mr. Ingram's. On the morning following the incidents related in the previous chapter, Miss Vernon and Mary intended calling at the Priory; and, as both his uncle and aunt were from home, and Mr. Jolliffe engaged in writing, they again invited young Markham to go with them, as being the best method for keeping him out of the stables, well knowing that he would much have preferred the companionship of the groom, or even the stable boy, to theirs.

Arrived at the Priory, they were shewn into a parlour, in which they found Miss Maitland alone, sitting at her desk, with two letters before her that she had just written, put into their envelopes, and directed. "I am afraid," said Miss Vernon, when the first words at meet-

ing had passed, "that we interrupt you." "O! not at all," she replied; "I had just finished as you came in; and glad enough I was, for two such different kind of letters I don't think any poor girl ever had to write at the same time." "Then, I suppose I ought to congratulate you, not only on having completed a task, but on your ingenuity," said Miss Vernon. "Well, I think I almost deserve that you should," replied the young lady, laughing; "for one is all form and ceremony, written from my poor head, and the other all affection and nonsense, and that one comes from my heart; and, after saying so much, I certainly ought to say a little more, and explain what I mean." "Pray do not think that necessary on the score of politeness, my dear," said her friend. "O no, not on that account; and now I must tell you: this letter," holding it up as she spoke, "is to one of the most precise old ladies in all England, or anywhere else, I believe: it is to my godmamma, Lady Strickland, and begins with 'Most respected and honoured Madam;' whilst this," showing the other, "is to Nurse Higgins, and begins, 'You dear, darling, old nuzzy,' for that is what I used to call her before I could speak plain." After a few more minutes spent in conversation, Matilda—for that was Miss Maitland's name—observed to her lady visitors, that they had not seen her sleeping room since it

had been newly fitted up; "and you can have no idea," she added, "of how pretty it now looks to what it did. If this young gentleman will excuse being left by himself, and you will take the trouble of walking up stairs, I shall like to show it you." George, in his plain, rough way, said, he did not care at all about being left, and his three companions then quitted the room together.

At first he amused himself tolerably well, in looking through the window into the garden; but, soon tired of that, he glanced round the room in search of some better entertainment, and, in so doing, his eye rested on the two letters already mentioned. A bright thought, according to his own idea, immediately arose in his mind, and, without pausing for a moment to reflect before he acted on it, the two letters were taken out of their envelopes, the one intended for Lady Strickland put into the cover directed for Nurse Higgins, and that for Nurse Higgins placed in Lady Strickland's. Using his favourite examation on such occasions, "What fun!" he cried, in great glee, "wouldn't I give more than five shillings, this time, if I could but see that stiff old lady believing herself, even for a moment, to be called, 'a dear, darling, old nuzzy;' and then the old nurse herself puzzling and spelling word by word over the grand, formal letter. Matilda Maitland, if she ever finds it out, will think she

has made the mistake herself, and she is such a merry creature that I know she will only laugh at it. If all girls were like her, I shouldn't care if I had happened to have a sister or two."

George had just come to this complimentary conclusion of what he had been saying to himself, when Matilda, with her two visitors, re-entered the room. "I ought to beg your pardon, Master Markham, for having left you so long," she said; "but I hope you did not find the time tedious." "O! not at all," replied George, with more sincerity than politeness: "I should have been sorry, if you had hurried yourselves to come before." This was said with a sort of suppressed chuckle that did not escape the notice of Miss Vernon, though she made no observation on it at the time. "Shall I not have the pleasure of seeing your mamma?" she inquired of Matilda. "I believe you must excuse her this morning. In the first place, I do not think she knows you are here; and in the second, I must tell you, though it is at present a secret, she is exceedingly busy in preparations for a grand fête, to be given in honour of my eldest brother being of age, and to which you must all come, for there is to be entertainment for little folks, as well as bigger ones; but though so intimate with you, and all dear Mrs. Ingram's family, you must expect to receive formal cards of invitation in due

time, the same as our other acquaintances." "I can only say, on my own part," replied Miss Vernon, "that I thank your mamma very much for the invitation, let it come in what ever shape it may, knowing that it is always a kind one." "We are to meet early in the day," said Matilda "and I only hope it may be a fine one. There is to be ar-, chery and cricket, and a great many other games for the boys. So, Master Markham, as I understand you are very clever at those sort of things, we shall particularly depend upon you to conduct them."

George was delighted at the promise of being made of so much consequence, and the prospect, too, of such a day's pleasure. "For," said he to Miss Vernon, as they returned home, "I suppose an entertainment like what Mrs. Maitland is going to give, don't come more than once in fifty years in this stupidest of all stupid places. Ah! Miss Vernon, you should come and see us at Greenwich in the fair-time." "And take a run down the hill, I suppose," she replied good humouredly; "thank you, Master George, for the invitation, but I would rather be excused, if you please." "I can't think," resumed young Markham, "how the people here can amuse themselves all the year round. I wonder what such boys as I have been used to would say to such a dull place." "Perhaps it would have been better for those famous boys you so often speak of,"

replied Miss Vernon, quietly, "if they had been born and bred in this stupid place, as you call it, and never quitted it till they had been confirmed in good habits, instead of bad ones."

"Another lecture! so I'll say no more," thought George; and the rest of their walk home was passed in silence, little Mary amusing herself in gathering wild flowers, and Miss Vernon feeling as disinclined to speak as young Markham himself, though he entirely occupied her thoughts. She was trying to find a meaning for what his manner and countenance had expressed upon her returning to the parlour at Mrs. Maitland's. It was impossible, without some very plain evidence to judge by, that she could suspect he would be guilty of so disgraceful a departure from principle and good breeding, as even to touch a letter written by another person, and that he knew was not intended for him, much less could she imagine that he would venture to do what he had done. She, therefore, this time supposed she must have been wrong in suspecting him, and on entering the house, dismissed the subject from her mind.

It was rather late in the afternoon when Julian Selby arrived, with Nurse Mima and James. Mr. Jolliffe had been for more than an hour looking anxiously out for them, and so had George Markham, though from very different

motives and feelings. The wholly inexcusable trick he had played Miss Maitland in the morning, instead of satisfying him for one day at least, had only increased his inclination for another; so true it is that, in the pursuit of EVIL, the race is so much more rapid than in that of GOOD. Therefore, I should advise, and, indeed, earnestly entreat my young readers, if they should ever be disposed to follow so bad an example as that set by George Markham, to shrink with terror from taking the first step, for they know not where it may lead; but of this they may, at least, be certain, that the more they advance the further they will go, and consequently, the greater difficulty they will have in returning to the path from which they stray, or, to speak in plainer language, of regaining the love and esteem of their friends, as well as their own self-respect, without which their lives can never be deservedly prosperous, or really happy.

"Well! here they are at last," cried Mr. Jolliffe, turning from the window and hastening down stairs to receive his little friend, as the carriage drew up to the hall-door. George, eager for anything new, followed, offering to assist in unloading the chaise.

Julian was the first to alight; he was a very delicately formed small boy for his age, looking pale and fatigued; he spoke scarcely above his breath, and his hand trembled

as he put it into Mr. Jolliffe's. After desiring James to see that Nurse Mima was properly attended to by Mr. Ingram's servants, Mr. Jolliffe led Julian up stairs to the drawing-room, where he was warmly received by the kind, though, till then, unknown friends awaiting him.

Julian Selby was one of those kind of children whom it takes some time to thoroughly understand and love, at least by persons who are hasty in forming their opinions. He was not only an affectionate, but a clever and high-minded boy; incapable of misleading, or telling a falsehood himself, he seldom or never suspected it in another, and had, indeed, so great an abhorrence of that vice, that he could scarcely believe it, when found out in any one he had trusted; he was good-tempered, docile, and quick at learning, and would, perhaps, have been more lively in his manners, but that he was painfully shy and timid, this nervous feeling always acting as a check upon him. His delicate health, and the weakening nature of the climate he had hitherto lived in, might, perhaps, in a great measure account for this defect.

After Julian had partaken of some refreshment, Mr. Jolliffe tried to draw him into conversation, but the child shrunk from him as a stranger, and his thoughts were in the home he had left; but, fearful of seeming ungrateful

if he said so, his manner was confused and awkward, and his answers not so clear as they would otherwise have been; thus Mr. Jolliffe's first impression of poor Julian was not very favourable. Never having lived where there were children, excepting Mary, he was more than usually slow at understanding them, and he could not help wishing the little boy had been more like George Markham; for, only having spent the last fortnight with that hopeful young gentleman, and never having heard of any of his pranks at home or elsewhere, he appeared to him as a fine spirited youth, allowing for some occasional roughness or folly in speech, by saying he perhaps was a little too merry sometimes. George, too, was a handsome, well-grown lad, such as he had pictured to himself his expected pet;—not that Mr. Jolliffe thought outward beauty of any value, when compared with that of the mind and disposition; but Julian seemed to him very much the reverse of even a manly boy, so that he could not help feeling a little disappointed on that account too, besides the other. Mrs. Ingram saw that Julian's eyes were constantly turned towards the door, and, better able to judge of what was passing in his mind than Mr. Jolliffe could be, she asked him if he would like to be taken to Mima, for perhaps he was tired, and would like to go early to bed. The little boy, still fearful of offending

in saying what might be thought wrong, answered, "I will do as you please, Ma'am." "Then my dear," said Mrs. Ingram, a little puzzled by his reply, "I think you had better go: Mima, too, will perhaps be glad to have you with her, for all here must be as strange to her as it is to you; to-morrow, I hope, we shall be better acquainted."

The bell was then rung, and the servant who answered it desired to take him to the rooms prepared for his and Mima's use, in which she was already comfortably seated, with no want of companions, curiosity leading all the other servants to spend as much time as they could spare with her; and when Julian entered, there were wonderful stories being told about India, and many questions being asked as to what sort of a country England was; but there was a speedy stop put to all this, upon his coming, for, running up to Mima and throwing his arms round her neck, he eased his overcharged heart by a flood of tears. This little incident was told in the drawing-room on the servant's return when the bell was again rung. It chanced soon after, that no one was left there but young Markham and Mr. Jolliffe, who had been walking to and fro for some minutes lost in thought.

"I am afraid," said he at length, as though thinking aloud, "I shall be disappointed in him, and that will be

a great pity; for I intended to make him a clever and a rich man." And now Mr. Jolliffe suddenly paused in his walk, opposite where George was sitting, and looked at him for a few moments with evident admiration. George easily understood the look; he had, besides, eagerly listened to the few words that had been spoken, and, ever rapid in his conceptions, a new idea suddenly darted into his mind. Hitherto he had excused his tricks by saying they were mere pieces of fun: he would have been very much offended, as well as surprised, if anybody, in judging of them, had accused him of lying, and yet they would have been perfectly right in so doing. Thus, whilst he was deceiving himself as to their true character, the first great principle of Integrity, which is a love of Truth, was every day becoming weaker and weaker, whilst the habit of making his inclination the rule of his actions strengthened in proportion. He perceived that Mr. Jolliffe was wishing Julian had been such a boy as himself, and that, on the contrary, the child had appeared unfit for the good intentions he had in store for him. "If Mr. Jolliffe likes me best," reasoned George within himself, "why should not I have my fortune made instead of this baby, who don't even look as though he would live to be a man? He is no more a relation of his than I am; besides, his father is rich, and able to give him a fortune himself,

(here George was mistaken,) whilst mine is only captain of a ship, that may go to the bottom of the sea any day, with everything in it, even my father and all, and then what is to become of me?" At this selfish and unfeeling conclusion of his meditations he looked up, and saw that his unsuspecting friend was again gazing earnestly at him. "Why should not Mr. Jolliffe," he added, still speaking inwardly, "make a clever and a rich man of me?" Had Mr. Jolliffe known the real character of George Markham, he would have tried to do even more for him than making him clever and rich: he would have used his best endeavours to make him good."

"Georgy, my boy," said Mr. Jolliffe, at last, "I am afraid this little lad is not quite so brisk as I could wish, and, as I suppose he will naturally like better to be with you than anybody else here, I shall take it as a favour if you will try to make him a little more like—in fact—a little more like yourself." Poor Mr. Jolliffe, so kind and confiding! could he at that moment have known what Master George Markham was really like, how shocked he would have been at having made such a request; for, even had Julian been the milk-and-water little fellow he thought him, how much to be preferred that would have been to the hitherto thoughtless and unfeeling, but now wickedly disposed youth before him. Some others of

the family entering the room, nothing further was said upon the subject. George was glad of this: "for," thought he, "that prevented my giving any promise:" just as though that could make his conduct less guilty, in the deceit he meant to practise.

CHAPTER III.

JULIAN arose early on the following morning, refreshed by a long sleep, and, with a natural curiosity to see more of a place so new to him, was walking in the garden, when George saw him from his bedroom window and ran down to join him. His first idea of "what fun it would be" to make him appear, "just for a little while," different to what Mr. Jolliffe wished to find him, was certainly uppermost in his thoughts; but then, the wicked idea of taking his place in that gentleman's favour was there too. He soon perceived that Julian was only shy and fearful, instead of stupid; so, as a first step to what he intended, he set about making him familiar with himself.

Little Julian had never told an untruth in his life, and had, moreover, been taught that telling falsehoods in fun, for the sake of a joke, was lying too. Having so just a detestation of this disgraceful fault, he was, as before stated, slow to suspect it in any one, and therefore readily believed all that George Markham thought proper to tell him.

After a little while he owned his fear of not behaving properly where he was so great a stranger, and begged George to direct him, particularly in what way he could best please Mr. Jolliffe. "For Papa told me," he added, "that he had been such a kind friend to him, he hoped I would do everything I could to make him like me." "That is, because, not contented with being made a rich man himself, he wants him to make his son a rich man too," thought George, who, having no generous or grateful feelings in his own mind, never gave other people credit for possessing any. "O! Mr. Jolliffe," replied young Markham, "is a very good man indeed; but though he is very fond of laughing and joking himself, I don't think that he would like little boys to do so: you had better, therefore, be very quiet when you are where he is; he lets me do as I like, because I am a big boy: besides, I don't belong to him, as you do." The falsehood contained in the beginning of this speech was exactly that he meant to make use of in his first design of only deceiving in fun; but its effect was of so much importance, as he afterwards found, that he was easily induced to follow it up, in order to carry on his second and more culpable plan of stepping into Julian's place.

"I am sure," said Julian sighing, "I shall find it very easy to be quiet and silent; if I feel at all merry, I shall

only have to think of my own dear home, so far, far, away, and I shall be dull enough then to please anybody." This success in his first attempt was a strong inducement for George to go on. "That's a capital idea of yours," he said: "keep to it, and you'll do very well; but as that must be a very dismal way of spending time, you had better be out of the parlour as much as you can; Mima, you know, will be glad enough of your company, for she must feel even stranger than you do, and some of our servants, if you are not with her to prevent it, will lead her a precious tormenting life of it; besides," he added, after a pause, "Mr. Jolliffe may think better of you for shewing great fondness and liking to be with her, instead of staying with him and uncle and aunt." George, in uttering these words, felt his cheeks tingle with the deepest glow of shame that had ever come into them. It was impossible, though, misguided as he had been all through life, that he should become so suddenly bad as not to feel in some measure shocked at his own conduct; he had now told three or four barefaced falsehoods, for a purpose for which he knew he could not offer an excuse even to himself, by saying "it was only in fun." Such is the natural progress of error when once begun. They now went in to breakfast; Mr. Jolliffe, seeing the two boys enter together, felt assured that George had attended to

his request, and that all would go on well, and, in order not to interfere in the task he had set him, he spoke but little to Julian; yet he noticed, with great vexation, that he seemed the same kind of boy that he had done on the evening before.

It is not necessary that the occurrences of every day should be detailed; and a space of three weeks may be passed lightly over. Little Julian acted on the advice he had received, and Mr. Jolliffe, in consequence, was confirmed in his first impressions. George Markham, continuing as he had begun, sometimes indulged in what he called fun, and sometimes in more intentional mischief,—the one fault, as I have already endeavoured to show, growing out of the other, that is, of telling falsehoods in jest.

Although Mr. Jolliffe was still deceived by him, there was, however, one person in the family who was not, and that person was Miss Vernon; but as she did not hint her suspicions even to himself, George was deceived in his turn, and spent his time in a manner highly agreeable to his taste in the present, though not in a way that was likely to produce him any good in the future, at least such good as he had marked down for himself, and that was to be admired for his talents, and to be made a rich man by Mr. Jolliffe.

One morning, about this time, Matilda Maitland called at Mr. Ingram's, when the family were met together at luncheon: she looked pale, and out of spirits. "I hope, my dear, you are not ill," inquired Mrs. Ingram." "O no, ma'am; but I am sadly vexed: you remember those two letters I had been writing, when I last saw you, Miss Vernon?" "Perfectly: one was to Lady Strickland, and the other to Nurse Higgins." "Just so," said Matilda; "but, somehow or other, they were sent in the wrong covers. I can't think how it could happen, for I am certain they were right when I directed them. However, I had a terrible reprimand last week from godmamma, who says the reason of my not hearing from her before, is, that she was ill when my letter arrived, and not sufficiently well till then to answer me as I ought to be answered, for my disrespectful carelessness; adding, as a punishment to make me more thoughtful for the future, she should not send me a very pretty present she had intended to surprise me with, on our little festival on my brother's birthday." "That is very hard indeed," said Mr. Jolliffe; "but never mind, Matilda, other folks can make presents as well as Lady Starchington, (I beg pardon,) I mean Lady Strickland;" and the kind-hearted old bachelor felt as grieved for Matilda's disappointment as though she had been his own daughter, and busied his

thoughts in suggesting what sort of a gift would be most agreeable to her. Little Julian's mind was the same way occupied, and a curious small desk, of Indian workmanship, intended for his own use, was speedily fixed on.

"What I have already told you," resumed Miss Maitland, "is not the worst consequence of this strange circumstance. Lady Strickland, not knowing that Nurse Higgins had gone to live with her relations in Scotland, but thinking she was still in Wiltshire, sent her letter on there instead of back to me; so, when it will find her, or whether it ever will, I can't tell, there being so many Higginses in that part of the country. I should not care so much about this, because I could write her another letter, but in the one I sent her I had inclosed a five-pound note, hearing she was very much in want of money. Not having had an answer, I am afraid some dishonest person of the same name may have had the letter, and been tempted by the money to say nothing about it. I have, however, written to Nurse again." "It was a most unfortunate mistake that you made," observed Mr. Ingram. "I can scarcely believe that I did make it," said Matilda; "yet I don't know how I can otherwise account for it: it's very odd! You did not leave the room whilst we went up stairs, Master Markham, did you?" Miss Vernon's eyes were immediately upon him.

"O no," said George, not venturing to look up, "I was there all the time;" adding, (for he was now wholly regardless of truth,) "I amused myself by looking into the garden through the window, till you came down." Had he merely said "No," in answer, it would have been better for his wish of avoiding suspicion; his desire to prove that he had been but in one part of the room all the time, and that part the farthest from where the desk was placed, convinced Miss Vernon of the fact, especially as she had her knowledge of his character to judge by, besides remembering his look and words when Matilda apologised for having left him so long.

"I asked you the question," rejoined Miss Maitland, "because it suddenly occurred to me that one of the children might have come into the room whilst we were gone, and playing, as sometimes children will, with what they ought not to touch, might have pulled my two letters out of their covers, and then replaced them each in the wrong one."

George wished now that he had said he had left the room, but it was too late.

The subject was dropped, and Matilda soon after left. On returning home, she ran up to the nursery, Mrs. Maitland being there. "Dear mamma," she said, "I am more than ever puzzled about my letters: George Markham says he never left the room whilst we were

gone, but stood at the window looking into the garden the whole time." "That I am sure he didn't," cried one of the little Maitlands, a remarkably sharp-witted child." "How do you know, Lizzy dear?" inquired Matilda. "Because, when I knew Mary Ingram was here, I ran down to gather her some of the flowers she likes so much, and that grow under the parlour window, and I looked into the room and there I saw him standing at the table where you had been writing; his back was to me, so I couldn't see what he was doing, but in a minute or two he cried out quite loud, 'What fun!' and then he burst out a laughing." "Well, dear, and what next?" asked her sister, very much surprised, but feeling certain that the riddle might now be easily guessed. "O then," said Lizzy, "I was afraid he would turn round and see me and think me rude, so, having gathered my flowers, I ran away up to Mary in your bedroom."

Matilda, knowing she could have perfect confidence in Miss Vernon, and Mrs. Maitland thinking it right that a boy who could be guilty of such disgraceful conduct should have his friends informed of it, they took the first opportunity that offered of repeating to that lady what Lizzy had told them, leaving her to act with regard to it as her judgment might direct. They, however, determined, on their

own part, to shew him their knowledge and opinion of his behaviour, by not sending him a card of invitation to the birthday fête, hoping, by thus proving to him he was thought unfit to be received into the company of persons of integrity and respectability, they should give him one of the best lessons for the future he could possibly have.

George, finding more than a week pass by, and hearing no more about the letters, felt safe with regard to them, and, caring but very little for anybody excepting himself, went on as usual; but Miss Vernon, though he did not know it, was still silently watching his conduct. Naturally fond of children, and easily understanding their different characters, she soon found out the excellent disposition and mind of Julian; but there was one thing about him still puzzled her, and that was his always being silent and quiet in the presence of Mr. Jolliffe, however cheerful or playful he might have been, perhaps only a moment before, when he was out of the room. "There must be some cause for this," she said to herself, "and I am afraid George Markham has more to do with it than he would like me or any one else to know."

Impressed by this suspicion she questioned Julian upon the subject. It was so perfectly natural to this truthful boy to answer every inquiry in a straight-forward

way, that Miss Vernon soon learnt all that had passed between him and his pretended friend. "It is, then," thought she, "just as I expected to find it, and that ill-educated and still more ill-disposed youth, if something is not done to check him, will finish in wickedness and ruin, what he has begun in folly and in play. She knew that Mr. Jolliffe, through George's artifice, was as much prejudiced in his favour as he was against Julian; but she saw both the boys in their true light, and resolved that he should do the same. Therefore, the first morning she found him alone, she spoke to him upon the subject.

Mr. Jolliffe was delighted with her account of Julian; but when she told him her opinion of George, and all she knew of his conduct and intentions, he was too much shocked and surprised to readily believe she was not mistaken. "However, I will take the first opportunity," he said, "of trying the selfishness and want of principle you are so persuaded of; for I agree with you in thinking there is but little difference in doing wrong in fun and in earnest, more especially as the one is pretty sure to lead to the other, and truth is always disregarded in both cases."

In less than an hour afterwards, George himself furnished Mr. Jolliffe with the opportunity he wished for. Young Markham had often said how much he should like

to have a Newfoundland dog, ready trained to fetch and carry, and other accomplishments of the same kind, but it was too expensive for him to think of buying one. Mr. Jolliffe, ever ready to gratify his young friends, had in consequence given one of the villagers, named Brown, who dealt in dogs, fancy rabbits, and birds, an order to procure him such a Newfoundland as George described, charging the man on no account to mention his name if asked who the dog was for, lest George should hear of it, and, guessing it was for him, spoil the agreeable surprise intended, on the animal being brought home.

Whilst Miss Vernon had been speaking to Mr. Jolliffe, George had, in strolling about the village, seen the dog, without any suspicion of its being meant for him, tied up in Brown's front yard, he having just returned with him from a neighbouring town, where he had made the purchase.

As soon as he came in he hastened to Mr. Jolliffe, exclaiming, "Brown, who lives down the village street, has got amongst his dogs one of the finest Newfoundlands I ever saw, just the sort I should like to have; and you were kind enough one day, sir, to say you would perhaps buy me one." "Is this for sale, then?" inquired Mr. Jolliffe, knowing of course that it was not, but he wanted to hear what George would say. "I questioned him a good deal

about it," he replied, "and all I could get from him was, the dog was bespoke, and he was to keep it till sent for." "If that is the case," said Mr. Jolliffe, "there is of course an end of the matter." "I don't know that," cried George, eagerly; "'bespoke' does not exactly mean 'bought.' I dare say the dog is not yet paid for, and if Brown was offered a few more shillings for it, he would contrive somehow to get off the first bargain, and be glad to make another." "But if he is an honest man, he will do no such thing," replied Mr. Jolliffe. "We can but try," cried George again, thrown off his guard in his eagerness to obtain what he wished; for it seemed to him that there was not such another dog to be had anywhere; "that is, if you, sir, are willing." "But I am not," returned Mr. Jolliffe, "for I consider the dog to be already purchased. Did Brown tell you who it was for?" "No, that he would not, though I pressed him very hard; he only said it was for a young gentleman who didn't live in these parts." "Well, George, from what you tell me I think you must give it up," rejoined Mr. Jolliffe; "for even if Brown was willing to let you have it for a better price, what excuse could he make to the first purchaser?" "O!" cried George, "he would soon think of something to say." "Or perhaps you could for him," observed Mr. Jolliffe. "Easy enough," said George; "he might tell

him, that, as he lived at a distance, and the time uncertain when the dog was to be sent and paid for, he thought he might as well oblige a customer nearer home, and get him another." "Suppose," said Mr. Jolliffe, "we have Julian's opinion on the subject." "That will be of no use," cried George, impatiently, thinking he had nearly brought his indulgent friend to the point he wanted; "I know exactly what he will say; he is such a spiritless little creature, if he wanted the dog ever so, he would give it up directly." "I suppose he would," replied Mr. Jolliffe, disguising his real thoughts and feelings by a tone of indifference." "Perhaps," rejoined George, still persevering in his aim, "that fine animal is to have for a master such a boy as Julian, who won't half care about him." "Or one," chimed in Mr. Jolliffe, "who is fond of fun, and will play all manner of tricks with him."

"As likely as not," exclaimed George, persuaded he was now making a great step in advance," and that would be a pity; would it not, sir?" "I think it would," he replied, gravely; "and therefore, I will take some pains to find out the true character of the lad for whom the dog is intended; and, if I find he is undeserving of him, I shall most likely be able to give him a better master, and that, too, by fair and upright dealing, and not by the means that you propose, of tempting the man to commit

a dishonest act, and being guilty of one myself." So saying, Mr. Jolliffe quitted the room, leaving George both astonished and in some measure alarmed, though he scarcely knew what he had to fear, unless it was that he had given offence by speaking so slightingly of Julian.

Mr. Jolliffe, in passing up stairs, met Julian coming down with a large packet in his hands. "Where are you going, my boy?" he asked. "George is to take Mary and me for a walk till tea-time," he replied. "But what parcel is that?" "A desk, sir," replied Julian, "I should like, if you please, to give to Miss Maitland, because her godmamma disappointed her; it is a very pretty one, and I thought, being different to what is made in England, she might like to have it, and I was taking it to Miss Vernon, to send it for me by one of the servants, with a letter she has written about it. I hope," he added, his natural timidity and fear of displeasing returning, "I have not done wrong." "Quite the contrary," said Mr. Jolliffe, patting his head; "you have only shewn that you are a fine, warm-hearted, little fellow, and I wish very much that you and I could be better acquainted, for I notice that you scarcely ever speak when I am in the same room with you. Now, I should like you to talk, and be as playful, and as much at ease with me, as you are with any one else." "Would you indeed, sir," ex-

claimed Julian, his whole look and manner brightening up; "I am very, very glad of that." "To be sure I would," returned Mr. Jolliffe. "What made you think I should not?" "George Markham," said Julian, "has been kind enough to tell me what to do, whenever I have asked him, and, believing you would like me best to be very quiet when I was with you, he told me so." "Perhaps he did not believe any such thing, but told you so 'only in fun,' as he calls it." "O! no: I am sure he would not do that," cried Julian, "for that would be telling a falsehood." "For the future," said Mr. Jolliffe, "when you want to be told what is right, or what is wrong, ask me or Miss Vernon, instead of George Markham. I suppose he knows your intention of giving the desk to Miss Maitland? I should like to hear what he said about it."

Now, what that young gentleman had said about it was this: "he thought it great nonsense to make presents to rich people, and, if Julian didn't care about keeping the desk for himself, he had better give it to him!" The little boy, though so fearful of judging wrong in what might be pleasing to his new friends, with regard to manners, was never at a loss to determine for himself in actions directed by good feeling and right principle; he had, therefore, resolved to send the desk, in spite of what his

selfish adviser had said to the contrary; but, generously averse to telling what he thought might make Mr. Jolliffe displeased with George, he remained silent, instead of answering. That gentleman, easily guessing what was passing in his mind, forbore to urge him, and after again assuring him of his wish to see him cheerful and happy, said he would no longer detain him; so Julian took up his desk, which he had placed on the stair-head whilst talking, and then went down to Miss Vernon, where he found Mary waiting, ready for the promised walk. Young Markham soon after coming to them, they set out together.

Mr. Jolliffe, during their absence, expressed to Miss Vernon the entire belief he now felt in all she had said to him of the character and conduct of the two boys. He then related to her the trial George had brought on himself with regard to the dog, and spoke with great approbation of Julian's so promptly parting with his desk on hearing of Matilda's disappointment.

Meanwhile, the two children, under the guidance of their elder companion, went merrily on, for George was, as usual, in a frolicksome mood, believing he should soon be as good friends as ever with Mr. Jolliffe, and that he would really try to get him that one particular dog; and this he judged from the readiness he had always shewn

to oblige him on other occasions. They had set off with the intention of going to some meadows on the other side the village, but George had already been there in the morning, and, always thinking of his own enjoyment, instead of other people's, he turned off towards some hills about half a mile distant, on which was a very large wood. Mary and Julian were disappointed, but they gave up their wishes to his, as they had often done before.

"We must take care we don't lose ourselves," said Mary, as they entered beneath the shade of the thickly growing trees. "If we do," cried George, a sudden thought striking him under the usual impression of its being 'only in fun,' "you and Julian will make as pretty a pair of 'Babes in the Wood' as can be found anywhere." "We had better not go very far in," said Julian. "But if we don't," returned George, "we shall get none of the wild strawberries that grow amongst the fern; and I have come here on purpose to have a feast of them."

After they had gone a little way farther, crossing from one path into another, and occasionally passing between the trees where there was no path at all, Mary became frightened, and begged George not to proceed. "Well, then," said George, pointing to a stump covered with moss, "you can sit down here with Julian till I come back: I shan't be gone long; but some strawberries I

must and will have." "Never mind the strawberries," cried Mary; "let us go out of the wood at once." "But, perhaps, that is easier said than done," replied George, his first idea of pretending he did not know the way back, coming to his aid; "we have been going in here and out there in such a zigzag way, that I don't feel at all sure of which path to take; but sit quietly down for a few minutes, and I will climb up one of the trees, and then I shall soon find out where we are." And, without waiting for another reply, he disappeared through the opening that admitted them to the little plot of grass on which they stood.

"Those two pretty babes," said George, laughing to himself, "will know, of course, that I can't get up and down a tree in a minute; however, I won't keep them long waiting for me. I will just find out where some strawberries grow, and then run back and fetch them; and, if that won't make up for such a slight fear of having been lost, they must be silly indeed; besides, they will be sure to guess that what I said about not finding my way was 'only in fun;' they must know that I can't be such a stupid as to lose myself in a wood I have been to so often, and at the beginning of it, too." George had just come to this conclusion, when he heard voices on the opposite side of the path he was in, and, looking through the trees and underwood that skirted it, he saw,

at a short distance, three or four little boys stooping down gathering strawberries into a basket. Thinking it would be good fun to frighten them away, and so get what fruit might be left ungathered, he hid himself from their view, and then began to bellow like a bull. The noise coming so suddenly, and in such a lonely place, was more likely to deceive than it would have been in the open fields; the children started up, and, in their hurry upsetting the basket, hastened out of the wood as fast as they could go. Before he returned to Julian and Mary, George stayed to pick up a handful or two of the fruit that was dropped; he then went back to the spot where he had left them, but when he came there, he found they were gone. Having called several times without receiving an answer, he supposed they had been tired of waiting, and, by going out the same way he had gone, had found, that, instead of being lost, they were just near the broad path leading out of the wood. "And I dare say," said George to himself, "thinking it would be a good joke to frighten me in their turn, have gone home without me." But in this conjecture he was wholly mistaken; they had sat patiently where he had left them, till they heard the horrible noise he had thought proper to make. Julian knowing that there were wild and dangerous animals in the jungles of India, thought there might possibly be the

same in the woods of England, and, seizing the hand of Mary, he broke away through the underwood into a path in a direction directly opposite to that which would have led them home. Without knowing whither they were going, but only anxious to escape the supposed danger, they ran on for a considerable distance out of one path into another, till they were completely bewildered, and little Mary obliged to stop for want of breath. They now began to reflect a little on what had so much alarmed them. "There are no such animals here," said Mary, in answer to Julian; "and I shouldn't wonder if it was only some rude boys playing together, or trying to frighten one another." "I wish I had known that before," replied Julian, "for, now that we have run away in such a hurry and fright, I am afraid we shall not find our way back again. I am so sorry, dear Mary, on your account." "It was more my fault than yours," returned the good-natured child; "you were, of course, too much frightened to think or ask questions at the moment, but I ought to have known better." Let us stay where we are for a little while," said Julian; "George will, of course, look for us, and the farther we go, the longer he will be in finding us." Mary agreed, and they passed the time in listening and calling as loud as they were able, in hopes of being heard; and so at last they were.

George, meanwhile, believing he should find them at home, went on at his leisure, eating the strawberries the terrified children had dropped. He had not, however, left the wood many minutes before he almost stumbled against Tom Hobbs, who was hurrying up the hill in the same narrow path. "Why don't you look before you?" cried George, angrily. Tom Hobbs might just as reasonably have asked him the same question, but he did not, for he had another in his mind of more consequence. "I have just met my little brother, and two or three other children," he said, "who had gone to the wood to pick strawberries for Madam Maitland, but some fellow there has been bellowing like a bull, and they have run home frightened, leaving all they had picked behind them. Perhaps, sir, you saw or heard him?" "I certainly heard him," replied George, "though I can't say that I saw him; but perhaps you may, if you look sharp, and go a good way in." "I mean to do so," returned Tom Hobbs. "What fun!" thought George, as he passed on, —"a capital joke, indeed! Wouldn't Bob enjoy it?—to send that great looby all through the woods looking for what is not to be found."

But Master George's fun was drawing to a close. On reaching home, he learnt that Mary and Julian had not returned, and, being obliged to tell he had taken them

to the wood, instead of the village, and had left them though only for a *few minutes* (as he said) by themselves, he received a severe reprimand from his uncle, who had been informed by Mr. Jolliffe, in his absence, of his disregard of truth, and the disgraceful and dangerous career he was running.

Mr. Ingram, with his friend and two or three servants, now set out in search of the two children, taking George for their guide; but they had scarcely reached the bottom of the hill, when they saw Tom Hobbs leading Mary, and followed by Julian, coming down towards them. Anxious to get Mrs. Maitland the strawberries she had ordered, he had gone farther into the wood than he would otherwise have done, for he had soon found out who it was that had frightened his brother and the other little boys. Just on the spot where they had described the sound to come from, he had picked up a pocket handkerchief having the name marked in full length in the corner. After he had told the two gentlemen why he had gone to the wood, and how he had been guided by the children's voices, till he had come up with them, he turned to George and said, "I think, sir, this is your handkerchief; but I suppose, if you had known where you lost it, you wouldn't have tried to send me on the fool's errand that you did; it's pretty plain now who the bull is." "What is

the meaning of this?" inquired Mr. Ingram. Upon which Tom Hobbs spoke again, and having heard from Mary and Julian the cause of their losing themselves, that story was told, too, as well as the one of frightening the little strawberry-pickers, and the loss they had met with in dropping their fruit.

George was now fairly caught, and that, too, in traps laid by himself, and, having nothing better to say, he ventured on the old excuse of its being "only in fun;" but it would not do, and his uncle told him so, in a manner not to be mistaken.

CHAPTER IV.

NEXT day, the whole story, with that of the gate, and one or two others in which young Markham was concerned, became known throughout the neighbourhood; in consequence of which, Farmer Hedges called on Mr. Ingram, to tell him that the cart horse he had lost, when Soft Johnny had left the gate open, had strayed to a place six miles off, and there been pounded; so that, reckoning what he had to pay, and his loss of time, he was not less than five-and-twenty shillings out of pocket; and, as Dame Hobbs had been satisfied for the damage done her garden, he hoped the young gentleman would be made to do something for him.

Here, then, was a new complaint for Mr. Ingram to hear, and a new lesson for Master George to receive; for, though his uncle did not ask him for the money, but paid it himself, he gave him a lecture on his conduct that made him begin to wish he was anywhere but where he was; for he was still a great deal more vexed at being found out, than he was sorry for any mischief his pranks had occasioned.

He soon after went down to the village to buy something he wanted. When he got there, he found he was stared at and noticed by everybody, though not in a manner at all flattering, and more than once heard observations made on him that were anything but agreeable. Passing by a cottage that stood a little way back, in the thick of the place, there came out an exceedingly big woman, with an angry countenance, who, seizing him by his two shoulders, gave him a shaking such as he had never had or expected to have in the whole course of his life. "So," said she, "you are the young gentleman, as you call yourself, who got my Johnny the thumping he had for nothing from Tom Hobbs. I'll soon let you know what it is to play your monkey tricks upon him, that I will, because folks say he is silly; but, even if he was, he'd be a great deal wiser than you are, for there's nothing in the whole world half so foolish as wickedness." George, with some difficulty, tore himself away from her grasp, for he seemed a mere infant in her hands, and would have gone quietly home, but a group of boys had collected around, who were by no means disposed to let him do so; for the little strawberry gatherers were amongst them, and the bigger ones, taking up their cause, followed him with taunts and laughter, for they had been greatly diverted by the punishment he had received from Johnny's mother.

George entered his uncle's house in a very sullen humour, more disgusted with the village in a ferment than he had been when he thought it merely stupid. The first person he saw was Brown, standing in the hall, with the Newfoundland dog by his side; on the collar was tied a card of direction. George had no doubt but that his name was upon it. "Well, here's something, at least, to make up for all I've gone through," said he, to himself. "I'm not going to stay here to be hooted by a parcel of rabble, that don't know what 'fun' is; you and I, old boy, will be off to Greenwich in no time, see if we aint;" and he stooped down to pat the dog's head, and, in so doing, read on the card, "From Mr. Jolliffe, for Master Julian Selby." "You seem surprised, sir," said the man; "and well you may be, for I suppose you know the gentleman ordered me to buy him for you, though he changed his mind afterwards; but don't be downcast: perhaps he means to give you a better one." And there was a grin on his countenance, as he spoke, that mortified George, disappointed as he was, more than anything he had yet met with.

What Brown had said was not owing to anything Mr. Jolliffe had told him, but what George had himself expressed when he saw the dog on the morning before; for he had then stated, that, if he could get off the first bargain, he

thought he could bring him a customer who would give him a higher price. On Mr. Jolliffe directing the card to Julian instead of George, Brown, being a sharp-witted fellow, guessed nearer the truth than he would otherwise have done.

George now went up stairs, intending to spend the rest of the day in his own chamber, packing up his clothes, meaning to return home on the morrow to old Betty and Bob; but, on reaching the drawing-room, the door was opened by his uncle, who was there with Mr. Jolliffe, and he was desired to come in. The cards of invitation from Mrs. Maitland were lying on the table. "I am sorry, George," said Mr. Ingram, "on unclosing the packet containing these cards, to find there is not one amongst them intended for you, though even Julian and little Mary have been favoured with a separate one; and I am still more sorry to think, from what I have learnt of your conduct within the last two days, that you must be fully aware of the reason for leaving you out of the invitation."

George perceived that he was again discovered, but by what means he was puzzled to guess. His uncle soon explained the riddle, by telling him what Lizzy Maitland had seen and heard through the parlour window. "I am willing," he continued, "to make what excuse I can for

your disgraceful and ungentlemanly conduct, in the circumstance of your having been left so much to your own guidance and that of your father's servants, two persons wholly unfit to have the care of you. I shall, therefore, as Captain Markham has just sailed on a long voyage, act as I am sure he would approve of, if he were here to be consulted. Your education has been too long neglected, both morally and otherwise. I mean, therefore, to place you, during his absence at least, and at my own expense, with a clergyman who lives about ten miles from here, and who, taking but four pupils, will have more time to attend to your conduct as well as instruction, than the master of a large school would. You will there have the advantage of companions who will set you a good example, instead of being, perhaps, with boys of as bad and as dangerous habits as those I now trust you will lay aside."

Mr. Jolliffe then spoke to him kindly, though seriously, pointing out the necessity of the step his uncle was about to take for his future good. And happy would it have been for him, if what they both said had made a better impression on his mind; but George, instead of taking pains to find out the truth, which he might have done by asking a few questions, chose to think his uncle meant to shut him up with what he called a "lot of stupids," and

that there must be an end in such a place to all liberty and enjoyment.

He made no reply, but in a moment determined what he would do, and that was (as there was now no chance of being allowed to return to Greenwich) to run away; though where he was to run to he could not exactly tell. When he went up to bed, which he did early, he had more time to think of where he should go, for he was still resolved to trust to his own guidance, instead of that of his uncle and Mr. Jolliffe; and, recollecting the address of one of his father's friends, an old sea captain, who lived in a small town on the coast of Sussex, and who was unknown to Mr. Ingram, he determined on going there, hoping to persuade him, from the account he meant to give, to let him stay at his house till the search for him was over.

In pursuance of this plan he was up by daybreak, and, only taking a change of linen and what money he had left, stole out of the house and was some miles on his foolish journey long before he was missed. When he was, Mr. Ingram immediately prepared and set off for London, and thence to Greenwich, having no doubt but he had gone thither. This George had expected and guarded against, so he went on his way without fear of being overtaken, and by sometimes getting a chance ride

till he reached one of the railways, arrived at the end of his journey sooner than he had calculated. But here a disappointment awaited him: Captain Hardy, his father's friend, had left the place more than a year ago, and gone to live with a married daughter in London, nobody knew where. So here was George in a strange place, with scarcely any money, and no one of whom he could ask assistance. Hungry and tired, he went into a common-looking alehouse near the beach, where he got some coarse food for his supper, and a still coarser bed for the night, not having the means of paying for anything better. He rose early in the morning, unrefreshed and spiritless; taking his bundle in his hand he went down stairs, paid his bill, and then strolled out upon the sands in hopes the sea air would cure his headache. The coast on this part of Sussex is very lonely, and George continued to walk on for above an hour without meeting any one.

He now came to a small bay, or rather inlet, amongst the cliffs, which here were high and craggy; still spiritless and tired, he sat down on a fragment of rock, and leaning his head back against another, began to think of what he had best do; but as the idea of the only thing he ought to do, which was to write or return to his uncle, never entered his mind as being the best, he could come

to no determination, and at last, wearied with useless thinking and want of rest in the night, he closed his eyes and fell fast asleep. When he awoke the tide had risen so high that he could neither go forward nor return by the way he had come. He was not willing to remain till it turned, so he set about climbing up the cliff to the open country above. When he had got half way he stopped to rest, and, looking where next he should put his foot, touched a stone that was loose; moving it aside, he was surprised to see, by the light of a candle that was burning at a great depth under it, a large cave, in which was a number of casks, or tubs, as they are called by the smugglers; presently he saw a boy, and that accounted for the candle, the place being otherwise too dark to work in, and he was busy heaping sand upon the already nearly hidden property. "What luck!" thought George, brightening up; "this is a smugglers' hiding-place. When I get back to the town, I'll just let the magistrate know it, and I shall get money enough to keep me for a long while to come." But George, as usual, was making himself too sure. On looking round towards the sea, he saw a man just landed from a boat, in which a lad was left to take care of it, and, in the distance, a small vessel at anchor, he had not before noticed. The man, when near enough to be heard,

civilly begged him to come down, telling him it would be dangerous to go farther up, and that, seeing him there as he was passing by in his boat, he had come to save him from breaking his neck, and was willing to row him wherever he wanted to go.

Young Markham was completely deceived by this show of respect and kindness, and came down directly. "You seemed, sir," said the man, "to be looking at something very hard up there, for you never heard me coming along. Is there anything very curious grows there?"

George, being so much in want of a friend, thought it would be a good thing to make one of this person, by telling him of what he had really seen, and what he meant to do in consequence; for though, in that case, he must share the money with him, yet, knowing better than he did how to set about the business, they might, perhaps, get more. He therefore, in a whisper, lest the lad in the cave should hear, told him all about it. His new friend then asked him some questions regarding himself, but in a manner so respectful and kind that George stated exactly how he was situated, only withholding his and his uncle's names. The man listened with more satisfaction to this part of the communication than he had done to the other, for it proved to him that

George was entirely in his power, instead of he being in George's.

"The secret of the cave is safe this bout, at any rate," he said to himself, as he followed him into the boat and rowed towards the anchored vessel, which, as may easily be guessed, was no other than the smugglers'. "This young runaway by his folly has put it out of the power of his friends to find him here, even if they think him worth looking after. We will just go on board that craft," he added aloud, "and get a bit of something to eat, and then, sir, we'll be off to the town in less than no time."

This proposal was very agreeable to George, who, having had only a biscuit for breakfast, was beginning to feel hungry, and a good meal at somebody else's expense was just what he wished for; so, in high good humour with himself, thinking he had begun his new career in a very clever manner, he sprung up the side, and stood on the deck of the vessel he would of all others, had he known the truth, have most wished to avoid.

"So you thought to make money of us, did you?" said the man who had tricked and brought him there, speaking in a tone not quite so respectful as that he had hitherto used. "Now if you had wanted to betray us from an honest motive, such as serving her Majesty, I shouldn't

think so bad of you; but that, you know, you didn't; so, as I don't believe you are fit to be trusted, we must keep you snug till the cargo's disposed of, and we can find a new hiding-place; though I don't think, after this lesson, you will want to come in our way again." He then turned round to the wondering crew and told them the whole story, for they were looking as much astonished as George did.

"What FUN!" exclaimed one of the listeners.

Poor George! he never thought to hear his favourite word sound so hatefully as it then did, followed up, too, as it was, by a boisterous laugh from all present. He knew it would be of no use to complain; and, having no offer of reward or threat of punishment to make, that they would at all care about, in the friendless condition he had chosen to place himself, he tried to awe them by a dignified look, which they treated as a sullen one, and laughed the more. However, as they only wanted to keep him out of the way of informing against them, they neither meant to ill-treat or starve him, so he was taken down into the cabin, and shared at meal times with the rest.

Soon as the tide had turned, they had set sail for the opposite coast, where, after a short voyage, they arrived at an obscure fishing town. Here George found himself in a worse condition than in the place he had been taken

from, for he was now across the sea in a foreign country, without any knowledge of the language, and he began to have a pretty correct idea of what running away was, without any certainty of where to run to. He soon felt the distress of his situation so keenly that he bitterly repented the step he had taken in leaving Hampshire; for how was he to get back to England? Those who had brought him would not let him go with them, nor indeed with any one else, if they could help it; he had only a few shillings left, and if willing to beg his way to some sea-port, knew not what to say, or how to find it; and when there, if he should ever reach one, he might not find a vessel for England; or if he did, his story might be disbelieved, and, having no money to pay his passage, he would perhaps be still left to take care of himself.

Meanwhile the smugglers, anxious to keep him out of their way for some months to come, spoke to a French captain with whom they did business, and who wanted an English boy to sail with him to the West Indies. This gentleman's vessel was expected round to call for him at the town they were then at, in a few days, and the offer of the berth was made to George.

It was a roundabout way of getting home, but he could think of no better, so he accepted it, further induced to do so by finding that the merchantman, for such it was,

traded to the same island as his father did, and he hoped that he might possibly meet with him there.

During this voyage he had to bear with a great deal of rough treatment, as well as insult and tricks, from those who understood the ways of a ship better than he did, and was quite as fond of what is called 'FUN' as ever he was himself; but he being now the one played upon, the sport appeared to him in a very different light to what it had done before.

The thought of all his troubles having been occasioned by his misconduct, added greatly to his suffering, and this conviction tended more than anything else to reform his character. Had he not been so self-willed as he had hitherto been, he might have gained all the knowledge he was now acquiring, in a happy home, instead of where he was, for such he would have found the clergyman's house, to which he was to have been sent; but he had chosen a school of his own, and that was the Great School of the World! and very dear and hard he found the lessons it taught him.

On landing in the Island of Jamaica, he heard that his father's ship had not yet arrived, though it was expected; so he resolved to stay there till it came, doing the best he could to maintain himself in the meantime; and a great many shifts and difficulties he had to meet

with in order to provide even the commonest food and lodging. When Captain Markham did come, his surprise at finding his son there was beyond all power of description, though he had received a letter at another port, telling him of his having left his uncle's house, and that he had been sought for in vain. George was now so altered a character, that he readily owned the truth of all that was brought against him, and made no attempt to excuse himself; he then gave a faithful relation of what had since befallen him; and his father, feeling that he too was to blame for the over indulgence that had left the boy so much to his own guidance, was very mild in his reproof.

The first thing George did on his return home was to write a penitent letter to his uncle, and another to Mr. Jolliffe, stating his sincere desire to do whatever they and his father thought best for him. So he was again taken into favour, and passed two or three years with Julian, (now growing a fine healthy boy,) under the care of the gentleman to avoid whom he had so needlessly run away. In this new home he found no want of either amusement or mirth, having at last learnt the truth of what had been told him so long before, that "merry and wise" should go together.

And now, on taking leave of my young friends, let me

hope, that, in reading this little story of George Markham, they will not, in seeking for amusement, pass over without attention those parts designed to convey useful instruction: nor forget that more serious mischief than that related in this tale, has often happened from what was meant at first—

"ONLY IN FUN."

THE END.

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