Jane E Blenkhorn
the gift of [illegible]
[illegible]
1848

Jane E Blenkarne

The gift

Aunt.

Harvey Darton

Jenny Blenhame

Jane Elizabeth Blenkarne
Present by her dear Mamma

Jane Elizabeth

FRONTISPIECE.

The Conversation.

p. 14

Pub. Dec 1 1815, by J. Harris, corner of St Pauls.

Whim and Contradiction;

OR,

THE PARTY OF PLEASURE.

A TALE FOR YOUNG PERSONS.

By the Author of Arthur and Alice.—Walter and Herbert.—
The Fishermen, &c. &c.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

London:
PRINTED FOR J. HARRIS,
CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

1815.

H. Bryer, Printer, Bridge-street, Blackfriars.

WHIM AND CONTRADICTION.

MRS. Howard had just finished her dinner, and was chatting with her three little pupils, Cecilia, Elizabeth, and Frances, whilst the servant was removing the cloth, when a loud knock at the door obliged him to leave the room, but soon returned with a

basket, which he put upon the table near his mistress, and said it came from Mr. Henley.

Mrs. Howard not being acquainted with that gentleman, concluded it must be a mistake, but seeing a direction tied to the handle of the basket, read as follows.—"For the young lady at Mrs. Howard's who so kindly engaged herself as guardian to my fruit trees; which trifling acknowledgement of my obliga-

tion to her, shall be continued weekly.—I. Henley."

Elizabeth and Frances looked very significantly at each other, and then at Cecilia, and Mrs. Howard at all three, hoping to read in their countenances the meaning of the present, and the direction; in the mean time the servant had brought in a large dish, desiring his mistress to empty the basket, because the man who had brought it, was waiting, and had said, he believed

it was to come again the following week.—It was many years since Mrs. Howard in better times and happier days, had seen such a dish of fruit, as now stood before her; there were the finest bunches of grapes that could be seen, as well as a good number of peaches, nectarines, apricots, and plums.

Mrs. Howard sat some time admiring the beauty of the fruit, but at length said, she believed she should be under

the necessity of putting it away, till the owner of it could be discovered; "*I* have no claim to it," said she, "for I never undertook the care of Mr. Henley's trees, neither did I know that he had such fine fruit.——You certainly know better than I do, my dear little girls, who it is meant for, therefore you had better tell me, that I may deliver it to the right owner."

"It belongs to Cecilia," said Elizabeth and Frances,

hoping to taste the fruit, whoever it was intended for.

"But pray," enquired Mrs. Howard, "when did Cecilia undertake to protect Mr. Henley's garden, or if she did do so, how could he possibly know it?"

"I dare say," replied Elizabeth, that he rode down the lane, when we were sitting in the arbour, under the hedge yesterday, and were disputing so loudly about it, I thought I heard a horse pass by, but

Cecilia would not mind what I said, and I attended to nothing but trying to make her of my opinion, so I did not think about the horse, or the rider."—Mrs. Howard said she was very sorry to find her so indifferent to what opinion strangers might form of her, and to perceive that she was not yet likely to get the better of the inclination she always showed to contradict others, and expose her own conceitedness. She then desired to

be informed of the cause of their dispute, and how it had happened that three young ladies had so far forgotten themselves, and given way to so much noise and clamour, as to be heard by any one riding down the lane; adding, that she was greatly mortified at their having so much exposed themselves.

Elizabeth now wished she had not said a word about it, but having shown that she knew something of the matter,

was obliged to proceed; therefore told Mrs. Howard in as few words as possible, that she and Frances, had only said if they were boys, they would not leave a bit of fruit in Mr. Henley's garden; and that Cecilia had declared if she knew of any boys, or girls either, who were going on such a scheme, as that of taking what did not belong to them, she would immediately tell her of it, that she might acquaint the owner with their wicked intention, and so prevent it.

"And because I said, ma'am," continued she, "that there was no wickedness in it,—she wasquite angry, and said we had no more right to Mr. Henley's fruit, than to his money; but I told her I knew better, and so, ma'am, the more I contradicted her, the more angry she grew—and so, ma'am"——Mrs. Howard interrupted her in this place to express her displeasure, and called upon Cecilia for a more circumstantial account of what

had passed in the arbour; but she good-humouredly begged that no more might be said about it; that Elizabeth had only been in one of her contradicting fits, and Frances a little peevish; that it was now all passed, and they had better eat some of the nice fruit, and let the subject drop.

The truth was that Mr. Henley, riding slowly along the lane, and hearing his own name loudly pronounced by a female voice on the other side

of the hedge, had stopped his horse, and the dispute growing louder and louder, he could not resist the desire he felt to know what he could possibly have to do with their quarrel; and the little girls continued it without any kind of restraint, for they had no suspicion that the person most concerned in it, was overhearing every word they uttered. It was then he became acquainted with Cecilia's just and proper way of thinking, and admired her

highly for it, as well as for the patience with which she bore being twenty times contradicted by Elizabeth, without common sense or reason, and teazed by Frances, she hardly knew herself why.

He had gone home to his family full of this little adventure, and Mrs. Henley was the first to propose the weekly basket of fruit for the young lady she thought so deserving of it, although they were not acquainted with Mrs. Howard,

neither did they know the names of her pupils.

Mrs. Howard was an amiable and respectable woman; the widow of a clergyman, who had left her so ill provided for, that she found herself under the necessity of adopting some means by which she might add to her narrow income. She had received an excellent education, and had in early life been accustomed to that kind of society, which at the same time that it

polishes the manners, also improves the mind and understanding.

The greatest comfort she felt was, that when she was obliged to quit the Parsonage House, where she had spent so many happy years, she had a habitation to go to, which she could call her own. It was a neat little cottage, pleasantly situated, with a small shrubbery, a garden, a field, and an orchard, and had been

bequeathed to her by an uncle.

Having more room in it than she required for herself, she willingly accepted the proposal which was made her by one of the friends of her youth, who well knew her worth, of taking the charge of three or four little girls, to educate; and her friend having immediately made known her intention, Mrs. Howard had scarcely been three months settled in her new abode,

when Cecilia, Elizabeth, and Frances were sent to her; but though they became inmates of the cottage almost at the same time, they were strangers to each other, and had been procured by the friend above mentioned, from acquaintance who resided in different counties.

My young readers have, I dare say, already formed some idea of the dispositions of Mrs. Howard's three pupils, from the anecdote of Mr. Henley,

and his fruit, and wish perhaps to know a little more of them; if so, I beg the favour of them to accompany Mrs. Howard in a party of pleasure, which she was kind enough to propose as an indulgence and an amusement, to her three little girls: how her intentions were answered, the following pages will fully make known.

The cottage was situated at the distance of half a mile from a small river, and about two miles from thence on the

Rachael's visit to Mrs. Howard.

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pleasantest part of its banks, in a neat little farm-house, lived an old house-keeper of her uncle's, who had been some years married and comfortably settled.

As soon as Mrs. Howard came into the county, Rachael paid her a visit, and humbly hoped she would have the goodness to do her the honour of spending a day at the farm before the winter set in; her husband had a very good boat, she said, and would, with his

son, come to fetch her, and bring her home in the evening.

Mrs. Howard fearing a refusal might be attributed to pride, promised to comply with her request, and now that she had young people with her, who would be delighted with such a jaunt, she fixed the day with Rachael, and told the little girls, with all the pleasure she felt at having it in her power to oblige them, of the pleasant day she hoped they would spend at the farm.

Intending to procure them an agreeable surprise, she said nothing of the boat, but left them in the idea of having to *walk* to Rachael's, and heard them talk of taking their little baskets to fill with hedge flowers, without saying a word in contradiction of it. Not so Elizabeth,—*she* would not be plagued with a basket, she was very sure there would be no flowers, and she had no doubt but that the road lay over the downs, where there could be

nothing worth gathering.—"And will it not be very warm?" enquired Frances. Mrs. Howard told her that she did not think it would. "Then perhaps, ma'am, it will be very cold; and perhaps I shall be tired, and may be I shall want something to eat before I get there, and when we arrive, there may not be any thing I like, and Elizabeth will call me *teaser*, and if I say the bread is brown, she will say it is white, and if I say the

garden is pretty, she will tell me it is an apple orchard; that is her way, she always does so."

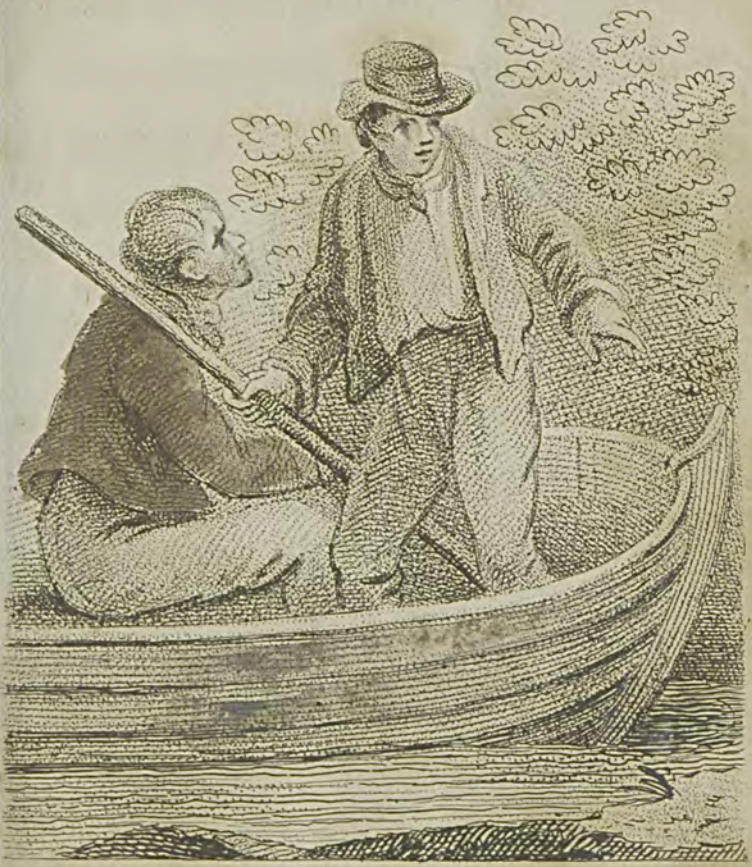
Elizabeth was preparing an answer for Frances, but Mrs. Howard imposed silence, and insisted on hearing no more jarring, which as they dared not disobey her commands when she was present, put a stop to it at the time; but she saw with pain the faults which had been allowed to take root in their dispositions, and often pondered on the means she

would adopt in order to extirpate them. In this little jaunt of pleasure she determined not to interfere unless she found it unavoidable, but to leave them in some measure to themselves, hoping that something or other might happen which would make them feel the consequences of their wayward dispositions, for the fault itself producing the punishment would probably be of more use than any thing she could say on the subject.

The happy day being arrived, they all met at breakfast with cheerful countenances, and prepared for their departure with the greatest gaiety; Elizabeth almost forgot to contradict, and Frances to apprehend difficulties. The morning was very fine; Mrs. Howard and Cecilia really enjoyed it; the latter pleased with the prospect of an agreeable walk, took her little basket on her arm, for she thought it not so impossible, as Elizabeth

chose to believe, but that she might find something worth her notice.

In the mean while John, who had been some time waiting, hearing the voices of the ladies, made ready his boat; and Mrs. Howard and her little party having crossed a large field, and walked down a lane, which they had named honeysuckle lane, they entered a meadow which led to the river side; although Elizabeth repeatedly told her that she had mistaken



John's Boat ready for the Ladies.

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the road, and would have disputed the point an hour or two, but that lady answered her only with a smile, and walked on, until having passed a small plantation at the bottom of the meadow, the river opened to their view as smooth as a looking-glass, with Rachael's husband and son in a pretty green and white painted boat, waiting to receive them.

Cecilia jumped and clapped her hands with delight, when Mrs. Howard told them they

were to go to the farm in the boat; but Elizabeth without any ceremony, said she hoped she should not be made to go with them, that she was sure it would be very disagreeable, and that walking on the banks of the river would be twenty times pleasanter. Mrs. Howard did not, however, think proper to indulge her in this fancy, but told her, she must either go *with* her, or return to the house with Sally, who had accompanied them so far, with

their clokes, that they might have them ready to put on in the evening if they found it necessary.

Elizabeth affected great indifference, but had not the least inclination to lose her jaunt; and, therefore, though not without a little muttering, seated herself with the rest of the party in the boat.

Frances now took her turn, desired Mrs. Howard would hold her fast by the hand, lest she should fall into the water,

said she should never bear the *jolting* of the boat, for she had heard her brother say, who had been at sea, that the ship sometimes *tumbled about* so much, that they had had all their crockery broken. Mrs. Howard, who thought it possible she might be afraid, took the trouble to convince her, there could be no danger on a small river scarcely wider than twice the length of their boat, and that what she had heard from her brother, related to ships on

the wide ocean, where the waves in stormy weather tossed them about so much, that it was no wonder their crockery was broken: but they had scarcely moved from the land, when Frances continued—— "Oh dear, ma'am, how that man has splashed me! I felt water upon the tip of my nose." Mrs. Howard, and Cecilia, could not help laughing, but Elizabeth only said, "*So*"— and Frances went on complaining, first of one thing, then

of another, and finished by wishing herself walking on the banks of the river. Elizabeth, quite forgetting herself, said it was a very silly wish, for she thought the boat a thousand times pleasanter, than hobbling along that rough road, and Frances did not fail to remind her of the objections she had herself made to the boat, not a quarter of an hour before.

Mrs. Howard took no notice of them, but conversed with Cecilia, and pointed out, and

explained to her, every thing she saw worth noticing.

When they arrived within half a mile of the farm, Frances said she was hungry, and Mrs. Howard, taking up a basket, which was near her, gave her a cake, and a peach from Mr. Henley's weekly present, and offered the same to the two others, which Cecilia accepted, but Elizabeth declared, that it was impossible to be hungry so soon after breakfast, and that she could not eat; but she said

it in so doubtful a tone, and at the same time advancing her hand to take the peach, that Mrs. Howard was well convinced the spirit of contradiction had made her refuse what she wished eagerly to accept, and that she would recal her words in a moment; in order therefore to punish her, she returned the cake and the peach into the basket, as quickly as she could; and she had scarcely time to say, "well, ma'am, if you please, I think, I"—before

both were vanished, and she was ashamed to ask to have them taken out again.

Frances examined what Mrs. Howard had given her, with great attention, and at length returned both; saying that the cake was not baked enough, and the peach had a number of little black things about the stem of it, which she believed were alive, and she was afraid to eat it; if Mrs. Howard would be so kind as to look for another cake, a little

better baked, she should be very much obliged to her, for she had not touched her milk in the morning, it was musty, or sour, or smoaky, or something; and she had not been able to eat any breakfast, and she was now so hungry that she did not know what to do. Mrs. Howard once again visited her basket, and picked out one of the brownest of her cakes, which she gave to Frances, but she had no sooner put a bit of it into her mouth, than whim

got the better of her hunger, and she declared it tasted so much of the boat, that she could not eat it. Mrs. Howard thought she had already humoured her too much, and therefore said no more; and Frances continued very fretful, till they arrived at the place where they were to quit the boat.

Rachael came down to the beach to meet the ladies, and offer her assistance; and her husband and son, were so care-

ful of them, that Mrs. Howard had no kind of trouble; she only wished to see her three little friends safely landed, before she quitted the boat herself, and desired them to sit still, until they could be helped out, one after the other. Cecilia, as usual, was ready to comply with Mrs. Howard's wishes; and Frances, half sick and languid, would just as soon have remained where she was, as to take the trouble to move; but Elizabeth, according to custom,

opposing whatever was proposed to her, and always, as far as she dared, acting in contradiction to it, said she wanted no help, and before Mrs. Howard had time to lay her commands upon her to sit still, jumped up on the side of the boat, and making a sudden spring, found herself lying on the bank, with her face scratched in such a manner, that the blood flowed over her tippet, the front breadth of her frock so torn, that it hung in tatters, and

one of her shoes having hitched in a rock, when she scrambled to get up, it was split quite down to the toe, and the hind quarter torn in such a manner, that she could not put it on, so that Rachael's husband was obliged to carry her up to the house.

Mrs. Howard perceiving that she had received no material injury, determined to hide the alarm her fall had at first given her, and only said that when people were head-strong, and

above being directed, she could never be sorry when she saw them suffer by it: and Elizabeth, a little mortified at having failed in her attempt, as well as at the ridiculous figure she made, besides smarting with the pain in her cheek, her knees, and her hands, having nothing to say in her own defence, for once was glad to hold her tongue; though if she had been in less pain, she would most likely have endeavoured to prove, that she had done right.

Seated in Rachael's little parlour, which was filled with flowers in honour of her visitors; they perceived that Elizabeth's shoe was torn past mending, and she must either accept of one of the apprentice girl's, or content herself with sitting still all day in the chair she had been placed in; which would not have suited her at all, for she wanted to visit the dairy, and the poultry, as well as the garden, and fields: yet she would perhaps have pre-

ferred remaining where she was, rather than put on such a shoe as that which was offered her, if Mrs. Howard had not made an observation on the clumsiness of it, and that was quite enough to determine the little contradicter to say that it was very good, and she liked it as well as her own. When she stood up in a shoe large enough to hold both her feet, with a high heel, and a sole so thick, that it raised her from the ground a full inch above the

other, it made her walk so awkwardly, that even Cecilia, who never wished to offend, could not help laughing; add to this, that it was made of hard thick leather, and buckled with a large brass buckle; for Rachael had old fashioned ideas, and did not like, she said, that her apprentice should follow the fashions, and tie her shoes with ribbons.

Rachael and her family did their best to entertain their company: the good woman

was busy in the kitchen, preparing the dinner, whilst a servant girl placed an oak table in the middle of the room, and laid the cloth.

Mrs. Howard proposed a walk, and the farmer offered to show them round his little property, but Frances was sick, for want of eating, and from whim and caprice, she would taste nothing that Rachael proposed to her, not even the nice seed cake, and currant wine, as the rest of the party had done, on

their arrival. Mrs. Howard, without showing any pity for her, left her to herself; and Elizabeth, fancying when she reached the door that her limping gait drew a smile from Cecilia, refused to accompany them any further, and returned to the parlour, where she seated herself opposite to her sorrowful companion; but being both completely out of humour, they neither of them spoke a word; though each thought within herself, without giving the

Ill humour its own punishment.

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blame where it was due, that if this was a *Party of Pleasure*, she never desired to see another.

In the mean time Mrs. Howard and Cecilia, had a very agreeable walk, and the honest farmer pleased at Cecilia's questioning him, explained many things to her which she was very glad to know, particularly the names and properties of the different herbs with which his garden was well stored, and from which he said his old dame knew how to dis-

til simple waters, which she found very useful in her own family, as well as among her neighbours.

On entering the house they all sat down to an excellent, though not an elegant dinner; the fear of not making her guests welcome, had induced Rachael to provide meat enough for ten persons, in addition to the present party. Mrs. Howard and Cecilia enjoyed the hearty welcome; and Elizabeth, though she denied the possibility of being hungry

in the boat, acknowledged herself now very well pleased to have something to eat; but Frances, had been so long without eating, that she had no relish for any thing; and Mrs. Howard, notwithstanding her determination, was obliged to insist upon her taking a bit of bread, and half a glass of wine and water.

A large hot apple pye, was now placed on the table, with the appearance of which all, even Frances, appeared to be

very well pleased; but Rachael had no sooner began to cut it, than, as if recollecting herself, she laid down her knife and fork, exclaiming, " bless me, what a stupid woman I am! I have not put a bit of sugar in the pye,—there it is as sure as you are alive, John, out in the kitchen cupboard, in a tea-cup."

John was very much vexed at his wife's forgetfulness, but Mrs. Howard and Cecilia said, it was of no consequence, and only requested to have the cup

of sugar, which they said would be just as good if added to it now.

Frances declared she could not touch it, and said she had once heard her mamma say that an apple tart was never fit to eat, unless there were plenty of fine sugar *baked* with it; but Elizabeth always differing in opinion, from others, persisted in saying, that hot apple pye was better without any sugar, than with it; and desired to be helped before it was sweetened.

Dame Rachael would have expostulated on this extraordinary taste, telling her that the apples, though very fine ones, were not ripe, but as sour as verjuice: but Mrs. Howard made her a sign to say no more, and immediately helped Elizabeth to a plentiful share of the apple pye, which she, not chusing to contradict herself after she had so warmly disputed the point, could not avoid eating, though she made a thousand grimaces at every bit she put into her mouth, for it was even sourer

than Rachael had imagined; and another full cup of sugar was necessary to render it even palatable. It was very long since Elizabeth had had so disagreeable a task, but she was too obstinate, and too proud to acknowledge that she was wrong, and therefore swallowed the sour pye in silent vexation.

After dinner Mrs. Howard said she should very much like to walk to the river, and follow its windings as far as the village; and John, having taken down his hat from the peg on which

it hung, and Cecilia's bonnet being tied, Mrs. Howard asked Elizabeth and Frances, if they did not mean to accompany them, but the former said she should have liked the walk very much indeed, but would rather stay at home, than make a show of her ragged frock, her scratched cheek, and her high heeled shoe; and Frances, who by this time was become extremely cross, besides feeling herself indisposed, only answered by wishing herself at home, or that she had never

come on this Party of Pleasure.

Mrs. Howard having desired Rachael to remain with them, walked out with Cecilia and John, and they returned full of admiration at all they had seen; having visited the neat little village church, and been invited by the clergyman to walk round his garden, and to partake of some of his fine fruit. John had also taken them to see his brother, who lived in the village; and his wife having a large garden, and being very fond of

flowers, had given them a basket full of very sweet ones, which they said they would take home with them to ornament the parlour; and Mrs. Howard was beginning to give Elizabeth some account of what they had seen at the village, when she perceived that with a countenance more clouded than even when she left her, she was endeavouring to pin together the remains of her straw hat, which was really almost torn to pieces. She blushed extremely when she was asked how this new ca-

lamity had befallen her, but Rachael willing, as well as she could, to soften down another proof of the young lady's obstinacy, said that she had walked out a little way with her, where they were not likely to be seen, and miss, thinking she could get into the field by a shorter road than she did, (who had always chosen the old way through the gate,) had scrambled over a thick hedge, and jumped down on the other side, by which means she had torn her bonnet a *little*, and had left

part of her frock among the brambles; but poor little soul, she dared to say she was very sorry for it, and hoped madam would not be angry.

Elizabeth was beginning to prove that she *had* taken the shortest road, when a scream from Frances, who had hitherto lounged in old John's easy chair, without taking notice of any of them, called off Mrs. Howard's attention, who, on enquiring into the cause of alarm, was informed that there were two wasps in the window, and that

The Bonnet & Frock torn in the hedge

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she should be stung to death if they were not killed directly. It was useless to tell her that if she would only sit still, they would not molest her; she flew to the other end of the room, stuck herself in the corner, and hid her eyes with both her hands, as if she thought that even the sight of them would hurt her.

Elizabeth had now a fine opportunity to show her disposition, which, notwithstanding the forlorn state she had brought

herself to by indulging it, and which it might have been reasonably supposed would have been a warning to her, she could not withstand.

Rising therefore from her seat with a look of some disdain on Frances, she limped towards the window, declaring that the wasps were no more than large flies, and that she would rid the room of them in two minutes, she accordingly began beating them about the window with her tattered bonnet till she whisked one of them

upon her face, when the enraged insect stung her violently on the lower part of her cheek, and in five minutes it was so much swoln that her mouth became quite distorted, which completed her ridiculous appearance.

Mrs. Howard now lost all patience, and far from pitying, severely reprimanded her, endeavoured to make her see that however her spirit of contradiction made her disagreeable to all who knew her, she had a

much greater punishment to apprehend, as she seldom contradicted, without being guilty of a *wilful falsehood*, and enumerated how many she had uttered only from the time of their leaving home in the morning, besides the last glaring one, "which has shocked me so much," added she, "that although I had determined to leave you as well as that whimsical peevish child in the corner, to your own-selves all this day, that you might both feel the consequences of your humours

(which have really surpassed my expectations) I can no longer contain my indignation—for Elizabeth, you knew as well as all present that the insects in the window were wasps and not flies, though you so firmly declared to the contrary."

She then ordered them to prepare for returning home, but Cecilia requesting leave to go into the garden to gather a few flowers, which Rachael had offered her, and promising to be

very expeditious, she made no objection. Elizabeth and Frances, glad to avoid Mrs. Howard's company at that moment, followed Cecilia, who having filled her basket, was returning to the house, when Rachael exclaimed, "dear me! well, here's Mr. and Mrs. Henley! they often come round by the village over the bridge, and call to see how we are, John is a great favourite of the Squire's; he always consults him about his farming," and away she ran to

open the gate of the little court, and to introduce them to her guests.

Elizabeth and Frances would have crept into a gooseberry-bush had it been possible, to have hidden themselves from this gentleman and lady, but they both stood directly opposite to them as they entered the court, and as Mrs. Howard was calling them from the window, and pressing them to get ready, they could not retreat, but were completely ex-

posed to their view. Frances was pale, sick, and cross, and her frock so tumbled by lounging about, that she appeared dirty and neglected. The figure Elizabeth made, was still worse, with her clumsy high heeled thick shoe and brass buckle her frock a complete rag, and her bonnet scarcely holding together, her nose and left cheek scratched and bloody, and her right one so swoln that, as I before mentioned, her mouth appeared quite crooked.

The dress exposed.

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Mr. and Mrs. Henley, after paying their compliments to Mrs. Howard, could not help fixing their eyes on the two disconsolate girls, and enquiring into the cause of their lamentable appearance, Mrs. Howard gave them some account of the disasters which had befallen Elizabeth, and the reason of Frances' woeful looks, by which they guessed that these were the two young ladies who would have been dangerous neighbours to their fruit, if they

had been at liberty, and that their strength had equalled their inclinations.

They both shook hands with Cecilia, and renewed their promise of the weekly basket. Mr. Henley saying, with a glance at Elizabeth, that he did not think her companion was expert enough either at jumping or climbing to rob him of the means of fulfilling his engagement.

They soon took leave, as did Mrs. Howard, of Rachael; John

and his son waiting on them to the boat, into which they all stepped, and had a very pleasant row home, at least it was so to Mrs. Howard and Cecilia, the former of whom flattering herself, from the silence and downcast look of her two other pupils, that by continuing to set before them the ill consequences of indulging in such humours, she should have the happiness in a short time of seeing them thoroughly changed, and that the next time they

visited Rachael, it would prove without any alloy, a Party of Pleasure to all.

THE END.

H. Bryer, Printer, Bridge-street, Blackfriars, London.

ARTHUR AND ALICE;

OR,

THE LITTLE WANDERERS.

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THE LITTLE WANDERERS.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ELEGANT ENGRAVINGS.

London:

PRINTED FOR J. HARRIS,

CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1815.

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ARTHUR AND ALICE;

OR,

THE LITTLE WANDERERS.

"WHO do you think I saw this morning?" said little Alice to her brother: "Why, Patty Webber! I did not much like to stop to speak to her, because mother does not like that I should be acquainted with

her; she says she is not a very good girl; but I do not know why she thinks so, for *I* think she is very good-natured, and she gave me an apple, and one for you;—here it is;—she told me they were the last of her mother's hoard."

"I know why mother says she is not a good girl," replied Arthur; "it is, because she has been told that she does not obey her parents; and you know, that in the catechism we are ordered to honour our father and mother, and if we do that we must obey them, you know."

Alice said, if that were true she should not like her at all, but that she did not believe it, for Patty had told her, that her father and mother were never angry with her, and that she very often left her work to go and ramble in the lanes and fields, and they never found fault with her. "She also told me," added the credulous child, "that she had left the house at the first peep of morning last Monday, and had stayed out till dark night, but neither her father nor her mother had asked her any questions when she returned, and

she had past the pleasantest day that could be; that the woods were full of strawberries, and the hedges of primroses; and she advised me to ask you to take just such a ramble with me; so I said I would ask my mother's leave, and if she consented I should like it very much; but," continued Alice, "she said we must not ask, on any account, for she was sure we should not have leave, though both father and mother will be quite delighted when they see us come home in the evening, with my little basket full of strawberries,

and will be so pleased, she said, to hear of all the pretty things we shall meet with. Shall we go, Arthur?"—"With all my heart," answered Arthur; "I shall like it of all things. *I* will take care of you, with a good stick in my hand to keep off the barking curs we may chance to meet with: I think you will have nothing to fear; and we will carry the basket by turns."

Now my dear little readers, I think it is necessary before I proceed with my story, to tell you, that this mighty champion, who was to defend his

sister from barking curs, and all other perils, was just seven years old; and I very much doubt, if you are a wise child, as I suppose you are, whether you would like to trust yourself to so poor a safeguard in a ramble of some miles, and they fully intended to spend the whole of a long summer's day, in wandering about from one place to another, without once recollecting that their little legs (for Alice was a year younger than her brother) would not carry them half so far as they proposed to walk in the course of so many hours; but they

were, I am sorry to say, not only foolish, but in this instance very naughty children, and well deserved all they met with.

The first fault I have to accuse them of, is an act of disobedience. Their mother had told them, that Patty Webber was a naughty girl; and that she did not approve of their being acquainted with her: yet Alice presumed to think that her mother was mistaken, and not only stopped to converse with her, but listened to the bad advice she gave her, and told it to her brother, and he,

although he knew *why* his mother had a bad opinion of the girl, foolishly believed all she said, and was fully as desirous as his sister, to begin their journey.

Every instant that Arthur and Alice could contrive to be together was now spent in settling how, and when they were to set out.

Their father rented a few acres of ground, which by cultivating with his own hands, without any assistance, he found very profitable; but in order to do this he was obliged to work early and late, and he

looked forward with pleasure to the time when his son would be able to lend a helping hand. His wife was a careful industrious woman, who endeavoured, as well as she could, to teach her children to know good from evil, and to keep them out of the way of all those in the neighbourhood, whose behaviour was not to her liking. She regularly attended the market, and her butter, eggs, and poultry, never being left on her hands, she always brought home a little sum of money, or else provi-

sions for the week, which made them happy and comfortable.

The Friday following being market day, when they knew they must be left as usual, some hours alone, Arthur and Alice fixed upon it for sallying forth to see the world; and it is, in my opinion, no small addition to their fault, that two such little creatures should have been artful enough to hide their intended project from their father and mother; they did, however, hide it so well, that neither of them had the smallest suspicion of their design,

and their poor father went out into his fields at the dawn of day to labour for their subsistence, and the mother a couple of hours later, mounted on the old horse, rode off for the market with the produce of her dairy and hen-house, thinking within herself, that if her things sold well, she would purchase gingerbread for her children, that they might have something to amuse them, after having been left so many hours alone.

In the mean time these two naughty children were settling a plan which would give both

her and their father a dreadful alarm, and the instant they were left to themselves, lost no time in putting it into execution.

Alice took up her basket, tied on her bonnet, and a little handkerchief which her mother had given her the day before; and Arthur put on his hat, and took the club in his tiny hand, with which he fancied himself at least equal to Jack the Giant-killer, and having locked the house-door, he carried the key to a neighbour, begging her, if she saw his father come, to give it to him,

Arthur & Alice setting out on their journey.

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and say that they were gone on an errand for their mother.

I see my little reader start at this wilful falsity of Arthur's: but what was to be expected? when children will not attend to the advice of those who are older, and have more experience than themselves, but run headlong into faults by following their own inclinations, they too often, rather than confess what they have done, add a greater fault to the first, in attempting to hide it by an untruth; and it is well, when another, and another, does not follow for the same purpose.

Alice having thought it would be a good plan to take a couple of thick slices of bread in the basket, to eat when they reached the wood, where they were to find so many strawberries, had endeavoured, as well as her brother to cut the loaf, but neither of them were strong enough; they did, however, contrive to break off some pieces, and looked forward with pleasure to the nice repast they should have under the shade of the high trees.

"Take me by the arm, Alice," said Arthur; "we shall look so comfortable, like old

John and Mary Simmonds when they go to church."

Alice did as she was desired, and they ascended a steep hill, which brought them to a wide common, on the other side of which lay the wood where they hoped to feast, and gather a basket of strawberries for their mother.

The wood lay directly before them though pretty distant; and they walked forward at a good pace till they reached the end of the common, when they found themselves at the entrance of a long lane, and

perceived that the wood was still far from them.

Alice now desired Arthur not to walk so fast, and began to complain of a pain in her legs; Arthur would not own it because he thought it would make him appear silly, but he was not sorry to slacken his pace, and when they heard the rumbling noise of a cart, and that a large dog jumped over the hedge into the lane, he drew himself up till he looked two inches taller than usual, and brandished his stick so boldly, that almost any other

The Dog seizing the Bread from Alice.

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dog would have been frightened; but this monstrous animal, perceiving the bread in Alice's basket, snapped it out in an instant, snarling at Arthur, and showing his long white teeth, in so frightful a manner, that he was glad to lower his weapon, for he would certainly have bit him if he had touched him with it.

The two children were terribly frightened, even after the great dog had left them, and had carried away their bread into the field from whence he came, and poor little Alice lamented the loss, for she said

she was beginning to want something to eat. They were soon overtaken by the cart, and seeing no one in it but a boy, who sat sometimes whistling, and sometimes talking to an old horse, who was drawing it, they said they should very much like a ride, and proposed asking him to take them in.

Arthur spoke to him on the subject, but the lad refused to comply with their request, unless they would pay him for his trouble, and when they said they had no money, told them he would accept of any thing they had to part with,

but would not take them for nothing. "Give me that pretty handkerchief," said he to Alice, "and I will carry you on your journey as far as I can without my master's seeing me."

I am sorry to be obliged to acknowledge here, that another falsity had been uttered, when the boy in the cart asked them where they were going, and where they came from. To see their aunt at the next village was the answer, for they were ashamed to say that they had left their home unknown to their parents.

Alice gave her handkerchief to the boy, who put it into his pocket, saying it would do for his little sister, and having assisted our two wanderers to get into the cart, began a new chat with his horse, desiring him to jog on a little faster, and promised him some corn for his dinner, and a good drink at the brook the moment he got home.

As soon as they reached the end of the lane, he turned off into a road, which carried them far away from the wood, and Arthur perceiving it, desired him to stop and let them out,

saying they only wanted to go to the wood in search of strawberries; however, he neither listened to them, nor appeared to remember that he had any one with him, but whistled and talked to his horse louder and louder every time they spoke to him, and whipping up old Dobbin till he got him into a trot, they were so jolted, that what with pain and fright, and the idea of the boy's taking them so far from home, poor little Alice began to cry, and Arthur to beg he would stop, if but a minute that they might get out of the cart.

All was to no purpose, he neither spoke to them, nor stopped his cart till he had taken them nearly three miles from the common, but trotted on, up one hill and down another. At length he pulled up the old horse, and telling them he was near home, and that as he did not chuse his master should see how he had been filling the cart with such rubbish, they might get out and go to their aunt's as soon as they pleased.

Arthur helped his sister to get down from the cart, and then asked the boy why he had

been so ill-natured as to bring them so far away.

"To punish you for telling a story," said the boy: "first you said you were going to see your aunt at Stoke, and Stoke lies exactly on the other side of the common, so I thought that could not be true: for you would hardly have been sent out without being told which way the village lies—soon after you said you were only going to the wood to gather strawberries; so one way or the other you have told a thumping fib, and now you may turn back and walk home, whilst I

carry my pretty handkerchief to my sister." Saying this he touched Dobbin with his whip, and was out of sight in a moment.

The little wanderers began now sorely to repent of their frolic; they were more fatigued by the jolting of the cart than if they had walked; they knew not where they were, though they were sure they must be a long way from home, and were so hungry that they would have given any thing for the bread the dog had taken from them.

They turned back, but had

very little hope of finding the road, and indeed had not proceeded far before they perceived that they were quite wrong, and found themselves in a broad open plain, which they did not in the least recollect; on the contrary they were certain they had not passed it in the cart.

Not knowing which way to go they determined to walk straight forwards, but in about a quarter of an hour they met with a new difficulty. A broad stream lay directly in their way, and though they looked as far as they could see, both

to the right and to the left, there appeared no end to it, nor bridge nor stone by which they could cross it. Arthur's tears now flowed as fast as his sister's, for they began to have a sort of dread that night would come before they could find their way, and also felt that they never should reach home without assistance, being already too tired to be able to walk much further.

The poor little wanderers sauntered along the side of the stream not knowing whether they were right or wrong, till they came to a part which was

not quite so wide as that where they had first met with it, and Arthur soon perceived that it was so shallow that they could very easily walk to the other side.

This was a delightful discovery, for the stream which separated the little plain, appeared to them like some terrible thing which stood in the way of their ever more seeing their dear father and mother, or the happy home they had so foolishly and imprudently quitted.

Frightened at their situation how often did they blame themselves for having listened

to the bad advice of the wicked Patty, who they now began to think had invented all the tale she had told Alice, purposely to draw her and her brother into an act of disobedience; and they lamented the folly which had led them to listen to her, longed to ask forgiveness of their parents, and determined never more to do the least thing without their advice and permission, but they had given up all hope of ever seeing them, when Arthur happily discovered that the water was so shallow that they might easily walk through it, and

Crossing the Brook.

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their courage being a little revived, they sat down, pulled off their stockings and shoes, and Arthur with his trowsers turned up, and Alice holding up her petticoats so as to keep them from being wet, boldly walked into the stream, which fortunately was very little more than ankle deep, and in that manner, though not without some fear of plunging into a hole, or finding the water deeper than they expected, they proceeded cautiously through it, and arrived safely on the other side.

They smiled upon each

other, and Arthur gave his sister a hearty kiss the moment they found themselves on dry ground; but this joy was momentary, for they almost immediately perceived that they had left their shoes and stockings and basket on the other side!—What was to be done? Arthur said he would return for them, he was a boy, and did not mind it; but Alice was afraid to stay alone, and declared she would go back with him. This he would not hear of, so she at length consented to wait for him, and he immediately walked a second

time into the stream, but had not taken ten steps before a drove of oxen came galloping over the plain, and rushed towards the stream in so wild a manner, that instead of advancing he flew back to his sister, whom he seized by the hand, and ran with her as fast as their poor tired legs would carry them to the other end of the plain among some trees, where they both threw themselves upon the ground almost breathless, and so terrified that they could not for some minutes speak a word to each other.

When they were a little recovered from their fright, they again began to reflect upon the situation they were in, which was now rendered still more distressing by the loss of their shoes and stockings, for neither of them dared to return to seek for them. Their hunger also increased every hour, and they saw no house where they might hope for shelter, no creature of whom they might ask assistance; if they had, they would no longer have been ashamed to confess their faults, instead of endeavouring to hide them by telling stories but

would have begged for their compassion, and to be conducted to their parents, that they might, on their knees, implore their forgiveness.

Alice's tears flowed apace, but Arthur tried as well as he could to devour his, and to hide from his sister the terror he felt, lest night should come on before they could meet with some person to take them home; he had heard that boys should neither cry nor be afraid; and he could not bear the thought of looking like a little girl; he therefore asked her if she would rise up and

try to get through the clump of trees, that they might see what was on the other side of them. "Who knows but there may be a house very near to us at this time," said Arthur. "Come, rise up, we will walk slowly; if we stay here, we must remain all night under this tree." Alice cried and sobbed more than before, calling upon her dear mother and her father, and wishing she had never seen that wicked girl who was the cause of their distress; but Arthur wisely observed, that she had better wish they had not been so foolish as

to follow her advice, and taking her by the hand he led her slowly along, recollecting the want of her shoes, for though they were the children of a labourer, they had never been used to hardship, or to want any article of necessary clothing; and their poor little feet were never till that day exposed to be cut by the stones on which they trod.

On passing to the other side of the trees they perceived the high road, which gave them some little comfort, and they crept towards it as fast as they could, but they were no sooner

got there than Alice perceived blood upon the side of one of her feet, and continued to cry so bitterly that Arthur could not pacify her. Not knowing what to do, yet willing to ease her if he could, he gathered a large dock leaf, which he bound round it with the ribbon of her bonnet, and she fancied he had cured it and made her well. At this moment a girl mounted on a donkey with a basket on her arm came ambling up to them, and asked what ailed them. They told her they had lost their way and were very hungry, begged her earnestly

Arthur binding up Alice's foot.

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to be so good as to tell them which way they must turn to go to the village where they lived, or to show them any cottage where they might stop to rest themselves, adding that they were almost famished for want of something to eat, not having tasted food the whole day. The girl said she knew nothing of the village they enquired about, but told them if they would walk on about half a mile on the road, they would see a house, by the way side, where an elderly man and woman lived, whom she had heard were good sort of people, and

would surely not refuse them shelter. As to their hunger she said she did not very well know what to do about that, she had, it was true, a basket of small bread on her arm—but—"Oh! for pity's sake," cried both the children, "give us some or we shall die of hunger."—"I was going to tell you," said the girl, "that my mistress knows exactly how many there are; I have been into town to fetch them, on purpose to put in her little shop, and unless you have money to pay me, which I suppose you have not, how can I part with

a single loaf?—why she would beat me black and blue."

The poor starving boy and girl acknowledged that they had not a halfpenny; but begged and entreated her to give them something to eat—offered her any part of their clothes, if she could satisfy her mistress by that means for a couple of two penny loaves.

The girl, who appeared really to feel for their distress, but afraid of her mistress (whom we may suppose to be a hard-hearted woman) and doubtful whether she would not be displeased with whatever bargain

she made, at length thought she surely could not think fourpence too much for Alice's bonnet, and that she would be glad to have it for her daughter; she therefore offered the two loaves for what, even without the strings, was well worth four shillings, and Alice, who would have given her frock into the bargain for a two-penny loaf to stay her hunger, readily consented to the exchange, and the bread was half devoured by the two hungry wanderers before the girl was well out of sight with the bonnet.

Arthur now insisted on put-

ting his hat on Alice. "Your handkerchief is gone already," said he, "but I have all my clothes except my shoes and stockings; put on my hat, sister. I should look foolishly in a girl's bonnet, but you may wear my hat very well. I have often seen ladies in riding habits wear such." "I should care little how I looked," replied Alice, "if I had but my shoes; but my poor feet are so sore! how can I walk half a mile further?"

Arthur said they must try for it; any thing was better than being all night under a

hedge, and Alice had so great a dread of night coming on, that she once more took Arthur under the arm, and walked on, picking out the most dusty part of the road because it was the softest, and her good natured brother for the first time found the stick which was to enable him to protect her of any use to him. It now served to push away the stones which lay in the way wherever he saw she was going to step; and in this manner, without minding his own feet, which were cut and bleeding in many different places, he thought of nothing

but how he could ease his dear Alice, whom he would have carried in his arms if he had been a year or two older.

They had not proceeded above half way to the place the girl had directed them, to when hearing a great noise behind them, they turned round to see what it was, and perceiving above a hundred prancing steeds coming along the road, and the riders heads shining, like gold in the full blaze of the evening sun, they concluded it must be the people whom they had heard of, who go about the country with wild

beasts, and afraid of being either trampled to death or devoured, thought they had best hide themselves till they were gone by; as fast therefore as they could hobble along, they went towards a gate which opened into a large field. The gate was locked, but that was a trifling difficulty to a country boy and girl. They were soon over it, and creeping into the hedge behind some bushes, sat very quietly, and glad to be out of the way of so many horses and strange looking men.

Some time elapsed after the

Arthur & Alice frightened at the Men's conversation.

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dragoons were passed before they dared to venture from their hiding place; but all was quiet, and they longed to reach the cottage, where they hoped to meet with compassion and assistance, they therefore arose, and were just going towards the gate, when they heard the sound of voices, and though an hour sooner they would have been happy to see any human being, they were now so frightened at the men with the golden heads, and the lions and tygers they supposed to be with them, that they got back as fast as they could to their

hiding-place, when, peeping through the leaves, they saw two countrymen with guns on their shoulders, leaning on the gate, and looking around the field, when one said to the other, as if in answer to what he had been saying. "My boy Tom says, there are two young ones in this field; I wish I could see them, I would shoot them."

Arthur's heart beat so violently when he heard this, that he could hardly help screaming; and Alice was so terrified that she fell back into the hedge. The other man made

some answer, but they had not attended to it, if they had they would have known that the men were not shooters of children but of ferrets, and other small animals which molested their poultry in a barn at the bottom of the field; but the poor things were worn out with fatigue, and frights of one kind or another, and were alarmed at every thing; and besides they knew how much they were in fault, and expected to meet with all sorts of distress to punish them as they deserved.

They were, however, so sor-

ry for what they had done, and so determined never more to hold any conversation with Patty, or any other person, when forbidden by their father and mother; but to be obedient to them at all times and in all things, that I am sure my young readers will join with me in pitying their sufferings, and in wishing to see them once more restored to their happy home. I shall therefore proceed without further delay to shew how that agreeable circumstance was brought about.

As soon as they were con-

Alice leaning against the Garden rails.

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vinced that the men whom they had expected would shoot them, were gone away, they crept cautiously to the gate, and looking about them, and seeing no one on the road, ventured once more to pursue their way, though scarcely able either of them to drag one leg after the other.

It was almost dark, when, on turning an angle in the road, the welcome sight of the habitation they had been directed to, cheered their hearts, and gave them a hope that if the old man and woman were really possessed of any feeling,

they would find some means of conveying them home, for as to walking they felt that if their village lay even but half a mile farther, it would be out of their power to reach it.

The good dame had been spinning at her door, but as the evening was closing in rather suddenly, had just gathered up her things, and carried them with her wheel into the house. Arthur and Alice felt no small pleasure at the sight of a cottage, and even the poultry before the door of it, was a comfortable sight to them. Alice, leaning against the rails of the

garden, said she could hardly stand, and desired her brother to go and knock at the door, which he did immediately, and the mistress of the little habitation coming out, and seeing the two disconsolate looking children, and observing their naked feet smeared with blood, and their forlorn countenances and tearful eyes, "Bless me," she cried, "my poor babes, where do you come from, and where are you going?" At this instant, a good-natured old man came to the door, in time to hear Arthur answer (for Alice sobbed so much that she

could not utter a syllable). "We are naughty, disobedient children; we have not listened to the advice of our parents, but to a wicked girl, who told us that we should find it a very delightful thing to ramble away by ourselves from our home and our best friends, without asking their leave, and made us believe that she often did so; but we are now convinced that she told us many falsities; and have suffered so much since this morning that we left our home, we have had so many frights, and been so sick and faint for want of some-

thing to eat, that I am sure it will be a lesson to us as long as we live. I hope you will take pity upon us, and not turn us from your door."

"Turn you from my door!" said old Sarah; "no, my poor helpless creatures, who could be hard-hearted enough to do that?"

"I could," said Jonathan, somewhat sternly, "if I thought they were not quite repentant. However, come in, and let me hear all your story, without any disguise; if you do not tell me the exact truth, I will put you

out of my house, and you may get home as you can."

"Oh, he will, he will," sobbed out Alice. "We never told fibs before to-day, and we never will do it again, indeed we will not; we have been punished and frightened enough for what we have done."

The old man, smiling kindly upon them, said, he hoped he might trust to their promises; and taking a hand of each led them into the house, where, after Sarah had given them something to eat, and had bathed their feet in warm water, and made them a little

more comfortable, Arthur recounted the whole history of their walk, the difficulties they had met with, and the trick the boy in the cart had played them, which, however, he acknowledged he had well deserved for the untruth he had told him.

Jonathan was well pleased with the boy's account, and though he dwelt long on the crime he had committed, expressed great satisfaction at finding both him and his sister so sorry for what they had done, and hoped he should never hear that they had been

guilty of any thing of the kind in future.

He then informed them that they were full two miles from their village, therefore he had no way of conveying them home, but by saddling his old horse, and taking Alice before, and Arthur behind him; and that point being settled, he went out to prepare for their little journey.

It is now time to look in upon their poor father and mother. The former having a dinner with him for himself and the children, as he usually had on market days, in sum-

mer, for it was a treat to them to dine with him under a hedge, did not go home; and when his wife returned, as it was a little later than she was accustomed to stay, she thought the children tired of waiting for her, had returned to their father in the field, and was very much surprized when her neighbour, giving her the key of the door, repeated what Arthur had told her to say to his father; adding, that the children left the house the moment she sat off for the market. This news gave her some alarm, but it was greatly in-

creased when, on seeking her husband in the field where he was at work, he told her, that he had seen nothing of them, and that as they did not come to partake of his dinner, he concluded she had given them something to eat at home, and that they were playing with the neighbours' children; he, in short, had been so extremely busy, he said, having a mind to finish the work he had in hand before night, that he had never thought of any mishap having befallen them. The case was now altered; the poor man and his wife were in ago-

nies; they ran one way and another without knowing which way to seek their children, whom they called incessantly to no purpose. A man had seen them in the morning going up the hill towards the common, and thither the father bent his steps, but could get no tidings of them, there were several roads which branched out from the top of the hill, and not knowing which to take, he returned to the village, hoping to hear something of them there; but all was to no purpose: the mother was scarcely in her senses, and neither of

them could bear to enter the house, but ran out wandering about from one lane to another. At length, to their unspeakable joy, they saw old Jonathan, with Alice seated before him, coming towards them, and in an instant Arthur hap let himself slip down from the horse, and was on his knees at his father's feet. Little Alice, less strong, and much more fatigued than her brother, dropped into the arms of her mother, and it was not till they were all seated in the cottage, and had for a few minutes given vent to their tears

that they could either speak themselves, or listen to Jonathan.

At length, however, being a little composed, he repeated to the father and mother all that he had heard from the children, who immediately renewed the promises they had made of never more being guilty of the same errors, and begged so earnestly to be forgiven, that they obtained it from both their parents, and never from that time gave a moment's uneasiness.

THE END.

Walter and Herbert;

OR,

PRECIPITATION AND SLOWNESS

EQUALLY SUBVERSIVE

OF

GOOD INTENTION.

Walter and Herbert;

OR,

PRECIPITATION AND SLOWNESS EQUALLY SUBVERSIVE OF GOOD INTENTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF ARTHUR AND ALICE.

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WALTER AND HERBERT.

"I must send this letter by the market boat to-morrow morning,"—said Mr. Maynard to his wife, as they sat at their tea.—"My friend R— sets off for town in the afternoon, and I would not miss the opportunity of sending it to him on any account."

"Oh! what I would give if you would allow me to be

the bearer of it,"—exclaimed Walter with the greatest eagerness.—" Do pray sir let me go, you know how exact I am, and that you may depend upon my care; I dare say that Herbert will be delighted to go with me, and we will be up early, and reach the White Rock long before the market boat passes."

" My dear Walter," replied Mr. Maynard smiling, " I know that you are a lad of honour and probity, but at the

same time so volatile that I am afraid my judgment might be called in question by all prudent and observing persons, if I were to entrust any thing to your care which requires dispatch."—Here Walter interrupted his father by observing that he appeared now to accuse him of a fault quite opposite to that for which he was continually reprimanded.

"I understand you perfectly well,"—replied Mr. Maynard, "but it is that hare-brained

impatience which accompanies all you undertake to do, that generally defeats your intention of doing an obliging or a praise-worthy action, for you set about every thing in so much haste, and in so very heedless a manner, that you are always involved in some difficulty or other, before you have time to get half through it."

Walter looked a little conscious, but unwilling to give up what he so much wished to do, again named his friend Her-

bert, who measured his steps so exactly, and never changed his pace beyond an amble, said he was sure that if *he* were to be the companion of his little jaunt, and partner in the care of the letter, there could be no fear for its safety or of their not being in time to deliver it.

"Herbert is a very well disposed boy,"—said Mr. Maynard, "but he is as much too slow as you are too quick,—if it were possible to give him a little of your vivacity, and that

he could in exchange bestow upon you a small matter of his solidity, *you* would be a fine brisk boy always ready to oblige, and never losing a moment when you could render service to any one, and *he* would do a number of good actions which he now always finds himself too late to execute, although the goodness of his heart ever prompts him to begin them ; in short you would be less precipitate, and he no longer a loiterer."—Mrs. May-

nard here interfered, and offered to be answerable for Walter's punctuality, said she was persuaded that however unthinking he might be on trivial occasions, he would be more exact when he was employed on serious business, and particularly if his friend were to accompany him; but his father shook his head, and plainly showed that he had great doubts of both of them. Mr. Maynard was perfectly well acquainted with the dispositions of the two

boys; he was not blind to the faults of his son, nor to those of the son of his friend and neighbour, but he also knew how to estimate the good qualities of both; and as they were not at the same school, but now at home during the midsummer vacation, he rather wished they should be as much together as possible, hoping that one would in some measure correct the errors of the other.

My young readers will be at no loss to guess from what they

have already read how differently these two youths conducted themselves upon all occasions, and will allow that it was scarcely possible to meet with greater opposites in the point above mentioned, though in every other respect they were equally good and amiable.

If Mr. Maynard were to be at the furthest end of his garden and seeing his son enter the gate were to call to him,—Walter, like lightning, or like an arrow shot from a bow,

would dart across every thing to obey the summons, spring over beds and borders, flowers and shrubs, nor, should the skirt of his jacket meet with the straggling branch of a gooseberry bush in his way, would he stop to disentangle himself from it, though he were to perceive that he was dragging the whole tree up, root and all out of the ground and carrying it with him.—Herbert on the contrary on such an occasion, would have walked slowly and care-

fully with the skirts of his *short* jacket tucked under his elbows, round and round, and in and out, through all the old fashioned stars and moons, ovals and zig-zags in his father's old fashioned garden, all the while using the utmost precaution that the point of his shoe might not touch the box edgings, and in about ten minutes after the thing was done for which he had been wanted, would have arrived on the spot,

ready to do whatever was required of him.

Thus Walter and Herbert, though great friends, seldom agreed, yet never had any serious quarrels, and the latter happening to call at Mr. Maynard's in the evening after tea, and the conversation being renewed about carrying the letter to Mr. R— he so well seconded Walter, that they obtained the permission they wished for and before they parted for the night, had fixed upon the hour in

which they were to set out in order to catch the market boat.

Walter was too impatient for the morning to be able to compose himself when he went to bed, and three hours after he had been there, (which time he had slumbered away rather than slept,) perceiving a great light in his room, he started up and began to dress himself in the greatest haste, for he would have been very much mortified if Herbert had been ready before him, and now, thought he,

I am sure I shall be first, for it cannot have been long daylight, and Herbert will take so much time dressing himself! *I* am half dressed already—let me see what jacket shall I put on?—when stretching out his arm to take up a blue jacket which lay on the chair—Let me *see* repeated he to himself, why I can see nothing! for the room is quite dark,—how can this be all at once?—I have surely mistaken the light of the Moon for the light of the

Sun, and that black cloud is now passing over it, and leaves me in total darkness,—so I have nothing to do but grope my way to my bed once more, and try to sleep away the tedious time between this and morning.

Poor Walter who had really been dressing by moon-light, laid his head once more on his pillow, where, fatigued from want of rest, he soon fell into a heavy sleep, which, contrary to his usual custom, held him so

long, that the sun was high before he awoke, when dreading lest his friend should have to reproach him with laziness, he told a servant to say he was gone on before, that he might stop the boat, and darted out of the house with his jacket on his arm which he put on and buttoned as he ran along.

Nothing could now impede his course, he flew rather than ran along the road, brandishing the stick he held in his hand, and frightening and oversetting

"He dash'd out of the House with his Jacket on his arm." p. 2

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every thing he passed ; doing all sorts of mischief without intending it, or even perceiving it when done, and arrived at the White Rock long before the market boat was expected to pass it.—There, seated on the bank of the river, he waited some time the arrival of Herbert, but his patience being soon exhausted he thought he had best run back a quarter of a mile to see if he were coming, and this he did repeatedly, now watching for the boat, now

for his friend, and equally vexed with both for disappointing him.

In the mean time Herbert rose nearly about the time he intended to do, but he was so long dressing and brushing his hat, that he was rather later than the hour appointed for calling on Walter, though not very much so, and when he found that he was gone was not at all displeased, for he would have been extremely sorry if they had been too late

for the boat, well knowing who would probably deserve the blame.—He now turned from the house meaning to follow his friend immediately, when the servant ran after him with the letter which was the object of their little excursion, and which Walter had never thought of.

Herbert sat off at what he called a good round pace, and might soon have joined his friend, if he had continued to walk on steadily; but although

he met with many things which prevented his advancing, and in which when he had an opportunity of being of use he was much to be praised for; it certainly was not a proper time, when he was going on an errand of some consequence, to loiter by the way in search of pebbles in a brook, or the different kinds of feathers which were scattered in the hedges and lanes.

On he trudged, however, sometimes one pace, sometimes

"Herbert kindly enquired into the cause of her tears." *page 25.*

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another, as best suited his fancy; when coming into a narrow road he saw a girl weeping bitterly, and wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron; an old grey horse was stretching his long boney neck to reach some weeds on the top of the hedge, and two large sacks of corn lay in the middle of the road.

Herbert kindly enquired into the cause of her tears, and how the sacks came on the ground.—"Why, sir,"—said

the girl sobbing all the time, " you never in all your life saw any body fly along as he did, he was enough to frighten any other body besides old Dobbin,—I thought sure he had been bitten by a mad dog, brandishing his great stick as if he were going to beat down the hedges."

" But who is *he*," asked Herbert, " who are you speaking of ?"—

" Dear me," answered the girl, sobbing still louder, " why

he with the blue jacket and nankeen trowsers, a mad headed cub; away he went round the corner and never looked back though he had frightened the old horse so that he got up in the hedge, and down came the two sacks, and so here have I been the best part of three quarters of an hour or an hour and a half—I do not know how long not I, and not a soul has passed in all that time that I could ask to help me to put on the sacks again,

and I shall be finely rated for being so long—I might have led Dobbin by the bridle down to the mill ten times since I have been standing here crying. —Oh dear! how dame will thump me, and master will beat me, and the miller will scold me, because I am so late —pray, sir, be pleased to try if you can help me with the sacks."

Herbert was certain from the girl's account that Walter had been the cause of her ac-

cident, at any rate whatever his haste had been, he could not have prevailed on himself to pass on and leave her or any one in distress, he therefore willingly agreed to assist her, but neither of them were tall enough to accomplish the matter properly, and when they got one sack on old Dobbin's back, it was done with such a jerk that it fell over on the other side, to the great mortification of Herbert, and the dismay of poor Dolly, who

would have been sadly distressed, had not a countryman chanced to ride down the lane, and by an equally agreeable chance he happened to be the girl's master whose anger she appeared so much to dread, but Herbert pleaded her cause with so much eloquence, that the farmer, though he at first appeared disposed to be very angry, saw that she was not to blame, therefore helped on the sacks, and telling the girl to make haste down to the mill,

rode away, muttering threats however against *young fly-about*, and promising to dust his blue jacket if ever he met with him. —Herbert gave Dolly a shilling to comfort her, and as she had never been in possession of so much wealth in all her life, and foresaw in an instant what a quantity of sweetmeats her shilling would purchase at the next fair, her tears were immediately dried up, and taking Dobbin by the bridle, after making half a dozen of her

best curtsies to the giver, she pursued her road to the mill.

Herbert also continued his way, but meeting with several things which amused him he forgot his friend Walter, the letter he had taken charge of, and the hour in which the market boat usually passed the White Rock.—Sometimes an old bird hovering about a hedge made him wish to discover her nest, and when he had done that, he stopped to watch the progress of an insect

crawling on the ground; but his attention was at length roused by the voice of a countryman, who in no very soft accents, nor in doubtful terms was vowing vengeance against some person who had let above a score of sheep into a field of young corn.

"I only wish I could catch him," said the man, "I would strip him of his blue jacket and his smart nankeen trowsers, and keep them till his father would pay me for the damages

he has occasioned; and moreover, I would send him home with as good a flogging as ever he had at school (which I do not doubt have been many) to make him remember not to run over people's grounds and leave the gates open."

So! thought Herbert, Walter's jacket and trowsers again! but as he was somewhat intimidated by the thundering tone of the man's voice, he did not like to appear to know any thing of the culprit, but simply

asked him how he knew who had occasioned the mischief.

"How do I *know*," answered he, stamping with his foot and opening his mouth wide enough to swallow any one,—"did not Margery Marrowfat, the gardener's wife, see him flying across the field into the lane, and then into my field of corn —and did not I find both gates open, and all the sheep gone from one field into the other? —I suppose by your dress you are one of his associates—if so,

you had better keep out of my way, for I am in no very mild humour, I can tell you; I shall not feed you with either milk or honey if you stay here, so go along about your business."

No, thought Herbert, there will be no honied accents flow from your tongue to-day I fancy, I had indeed better get out of your sight, and away he trotted down the hill at such a rate as he never had done before in his whole life, for though he was no coward, very far

"I had indeed better get out of your sight." page 36.

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from it, he had no inclination to feel the weight of the farmer's arm,—he had also some fears on Walter's account; for unless they could find another road to return by in the evening, it was more than probable that they should meet with the threatener, and that he would have no pity on either of them.

Mr. Maynard, he was sure, would, as he was in justice bound to do, make good whatever loss the man had sustained by his son's carelessness, more-

over he was not surprised at his being vexed and angry, but there was something so brutal in his manner, that he determined to advise Walter to avoid him till he had candidly told his father what had happened.

Having settled the matter in his own mind that the man, notwithstanding his violence, ought not to be a loser, and that in the mean time the sooner he was out of his reach the better, he continued to advance with

rapid strides, more like those of the impetuous Walter than the loitering Herbert; and in a few minutes found himself in sight of a cottage, in the front of which an old woman with a stick in her hand was hobbling about, backward and forward, in such a bustle, that he immediately perceived something had discomposed her, and the hope of assisting her, getting entirely the better of his fears on the farmer's account, he

went up to her directly and asked why she was so busy.

"Don't ask me any questions, young man,"—said she, "I am all over trembling with vexation.—Only to think what trouble I had to get the pigs into the plat, and that good for nothing boy in the blue jacket and nankeen trowsers has let them all out, and how to drive them in again by myself I am sure I cannot tell, for I am as tired as a dog already!"

Shall I never hear the last of

Walter's feats of activity? said Herbert to himself.—I will not stay a moment longer, but go after him as fast as I can; it cannot be above a quarter of a mile, from hence to the White Rock, and if I can catch him there, I will not lose sight of him any more,—he is always in mischief—and I am tired of hearing along the road of nothing but the boy in the blue jacket and nankeen trowsers.

"What are you plodding about," asked the old woman,

"if you had any good nature in you, you would help me to drive in my pigs."

Herbert was possessed of a *great deal* of good nature, of so much that in his willingness to oblige, he forgot his determination of endeavouring to avoid hearing any more of his friend's exploits, and though he did not feel himself much honoured by the employment, accepted the office of assistant pig driver, rather than see the good dame fatigue herself any longer, he

therefore desired her to direct him what to do, and she, pointing to a sow with eleven young pigs, and to the gate of a little plat of ground which she had posted open, desired him to stand on the lower side, whilst she took the higher, and not to be such a fool as to let the sow run between his legs as blue jacket had done.

Herbert followed her directions exactly, and in a few minutes the little family was once more safely lodged in the plat,

and the gate shut and properly secured.

"You are a fine boy," said the old lady,—"and almost as pretty as our white-faced calf, but not so plump,—come with me and I will give you a cake of my own making, and a bowl of milk, as sweet as sugar candy."

Herbert was not much flattered at being compared to a white-faced calf, but he felt a strong inclination to the cake and the milk, and therefore

"There I was a full hour getting the sow into the plat after I had let her out of the Stye". p. 4

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seated himself on a broad stone, at the door of the cottage, where he had soon the pleasure of seeing the good woman bring what she had promised him, and seating herself by his side, she renewed the subject of the trouble Mr. blue jacket had occasioned her.

"I wish he were here," said she, "I would pull his ears for him as handsomely as he ever had them pulled in his life. There I was a full hour getting the sow into the plat, after I

had let her out of the sty, but I was determined not to be mastered by her; no, no, I know better than that.—Young folks must not think to get the better of old ones; and I bred her up from a sucking pig.—I know very well that she wanted to run about with her young ones, and would have walked them off their legs,—so I got them all in snug at last, and fastened the gate."

"And how came the boy to let them out," enquired Herbert,

wondering what Walter could have to do with the pigs. "How?" answered the old woman, "why, because he could not keep the straight road like other people; I believe the constables are after him, for my part, for some misdemeanour or other, for he did not come down the hill as you did, but jumped out from that hedge as I sat here, spinning at my wheel, and frightened me so that I broke my yarn snap off. —And so, sir, he was going

along the road full gallop as fast as his legs could carry him, till he unluckily spied out the gate of my little plat, and then he darted at it, pulled it open, and out bounced madam sow, who desired no better sport, and running between his legs, laid him flat in that dirty puddle you see there, and before he could get up, the whole eleven pigs had scampered over his nice nankeens, and left him in such a plight, that if I had not been so provoked, I must have

laughed outright; but nothing gave me more vexation than the boy's mistaking the cause of my anger, for whilst I was exclaiming, 'oh dear! oh dear! how grieved I am,' he was up in an instant, and running off as fast as he could, called to me not to vex about it, for it would all wash out, just as if I were troubling myself about him."

"That was very provoking indeed," observed Herbert—"however, he had the worst of it, for he must be in a sad dirty

condition, and your pigs being all safely lodged you have nothing to do but go on with your spinning, and I will wish you a good morning, for I am rather hurried, having a letter to carry for a friend, which must be delivered before dinner time. "Bless me," interrupted the old woman—who would have thought it?—sure you be a rare one to send on an errand."

"I am gone, I am gone," said Herbert, but at that moment a woman coming up to

the door, and enquiring if they had seen her old hen turkey, who had got out of the hive, and wandered away with her poults, she knew not where, he stopped just to say he had not seen them; but when she smilingly added that she had met with a comical adventure, and that her neighbour desired to hear it, he re-seated himself upon the stone, anxious to partake of what appeared to have given her so much amusement.

"Why you must know,

Sarah," said the woman—"that I went out as usual to milk my cow, and when I had milked my cow I brought in my pail, and put it down upon the table just by the door, and when I had put down my pail, I took up my pitcher to fetch some water from the well, and when I had fetched the well—that is I mean the pitcher, the first thing I saw when I returned, was the table thrown down, the pail on the ground

and all my milk running about the kitchen."

"Poor Mary!" exclaimed old Sarah, "I am sorry for you —but sure this is not what makes you look so simpering like,—what a loss, a whole pail full of milk!"

"The loss was not so great as you think," replied Mary, "for in the first place the pail was but half full, and in the next place, close by the side of it, I found a nice, new, shining, beautiful three shilling piece,

and how it came there, or how the pail came down, you know as well as I do, though I must say it required no great strength to over-set the table, for the leg next to the door was only a prop, which John had put there till he could find time to mend it, and if the cat had gone purring against it, and rubbing her back as she sometimes does, it must have fallen; it could not have helped it."

"The more fool you," said the free spoken dame Sarah,

" for putting down your pail upon such a tottering piece of furniture, but what signifies talking about cats!—when my miss Pinkey broke my best tea cup and saucer, she left no three shilling piece, *no*, nor threepence, neither, to pay for the mischief, 'tis well for you to have such luck, but it was a two legged cat, you may depend upon it, and very generous and very kind it was."

You would not say so, thought Herbert, if, as I suspect,

this is another of Walter's frolics,—yet how or why, he should have gone into this woman's house I cannot imagine, as it could not be the means of shortening his road, and that seems to be the only object he has had in view, since he first set out this morning; afraid, however, to hear any thing more, he rose hastily and pursued his way; old Sarah calling after him in a tone of mockery, "that she hoped he would not arrive with the letter before the gen-

tleman was up, as she did not like to be disturbed, or disturb others." Herbert had nothing to answer, for he felt that he had been unpardonably loitering; and willing to make up for lost time was walking on very briskly, when turning short round an old tree which grew pretty far out in the road, he bounced against Walter, who was once more coming in search of him, and was now so much out of humour that the two friends, for the first

time, had very nearly quarrelled seriously. Herbert, however, desired to be heard, assuring Walter that when he knew how he had been detained by witnessing and endeavouring to remedy the mischief he had done by his activity, he would be less inclined to find fault with his want of diligence.

Walter, quite unconscious of all he had done, expressed the greatest regret for having occasioned so much trouble, and said he should have no peace

till he had made Dolly a present to console her for the tears she had shed, and declared that he would offer his whole year's school allowance to the farmer, to make good the damage the sheep had done in his corn. —"As to dame Sarah," said he, "I will give her a handsome new walking stick, to drive her pigs with, and the pail of milk which I pulled down from that old ricketty table, I believe I fully paid for."

"Oh, oh!" cried Herbert,

" it was really you then, Mr. blue jacket, who did that fine feat, as a finisher;—I suspected it,—but pray tell me how you came to give yourself so much time as to enter any house in your way,—I should much sooner have suspected you of endeavouring to jump over it, had such a thing been practicable."

" You are much mistaken, my friend," answered Walter, " if you imagine I lost time by visiting the woman's kitchen;

"Where is the Letter Walter?"

p. 61.

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I will tell you how it happened, and convince you that when I am sent on an errand I am no *loiterer*,"—" Nor am I a *scamperer*," answered the other smiling, " and I have one very necessary quality towards being a good errand boy, which is that I never leave the thing I am to take charge of, behind me—where is the letter, Walter ?"—

Walter did not search his pockets, for he knew he had it not, though he had never recollected it, and perceiving

that his friend had it in his hand, was so delighted, that he would once more have flown off, if Herbert had not held him by the arm, and insisted on his walking in a more sober pace, for he dreaded his leaving him, lest he should get himself into some hobble which might not only retard their progress, but turn out of worse consequence than any of his late atchievements, and in order to induce him to be quiet, that they might finish together the

short distance they now had to walk, he reminded him of the milk pail, and Mary's cottage, desiring him to recollect that he was still in the dark about that visit.

"Oh! very true," said Walter, "I had forgotten to tell you how that happened; but you will remember my unfortunate adventure with the pigs, for my dirty trowsers cannot fail to remind you of it, whenever you cast your eyes upon me; pray observe the marks

of the dear little pettitoes all over my nankeens, I hardly know how I shall appear before Mr. R— in such a dirty condition,—but it cannot be helped —go I must—come along Herbert,—how you saunter."

"Go on with your story," said Herbert, stopping him short.

Walter now took him under the arm, and as he dragged him along, informed him that he had left the road, which lay before the door of old Sarah's

habitation, the moment he saw the gate opening into the little enclosure, which she had made a park for her pigs, for he was very sure that by crossing it, he should save a considerable angle in the road, " and so," said he, " I bounced through it as you have heard, and was only sorry my haste did not allow me to stay to thank the kind old woman for the sorrow she expressed for my accident. —I therefore darted across the plat, and jumping through a

hedge at the end of it, without stopping to examine where it would bring me, I found myself in a little kind of court, belonging to a poor person's cottage, and seeing the back door open, without any hesitation, determined to dart through the house into the high road, and it was in performing this feat, that I happened to pull down the three legged table. I hope, however, you will give me some credit for having so much command of

myself, as not to proceed on my way, till I had placed a three shilling piece by the side of the milk pail."

"I am not surprised at the proof you gave of your good heart, and your proper way of thinking," replied Herbert, "the loss of so much milk would have been a serious concern to a poor woman, and I am sure you would never allow any one to suffer by your fault if you knew it, but my wonder

is, that you perceived what you had done."

"I should never have known it," replied Walter, "but it was blue jacket for ever, who did the mischief; if he had not chose to shake hands with the table as he passed by, all would have remained safe as I found it.—Oh! Herbert, here is the White Rock, and now look sharp for the market boat; how beautiful the river is this morning!—we will go down a little further that we

"What was their astonishment when on looking down the River they saw the Boat." *page 69.*

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may be able to call Joe Williams to take us in."

The two boys walked forward to the Rock, admiring the effect of the sun on the turrets of an old castle on the opposite side, but what was their astonishment, when on looking down the river, they saw the market boat sailing gaily along and just turning the point, having passed the White Rock, whilst Walter had gone back the last time in search of Herbert.

I must here, in justice to the two friends observe, that they did not, as many would have done, break out in reproaching each other as the cause of this disappointment, they had too much understanding, when they allowed themselves to reflect, not to feel that they were both in fault, and too much honour to utter the slightest word in the way of accusation, when they did not feel it as a truth. Instead, therefore, of losing any more time, they de-

termined to return home with all possible dispatch, hoping they might still be in time for Mrs. Maynard to send off a servant on horseback with the letter; and that there might be no more delay on the road, Walter and Herbert agreed, and mutually promised each other not to separate, that the vivacity of the former might prevent the latter from loitering, and the steadiness of the latter keep the other out of mischief.

THE END.

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