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ENCOURAGE...

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THE
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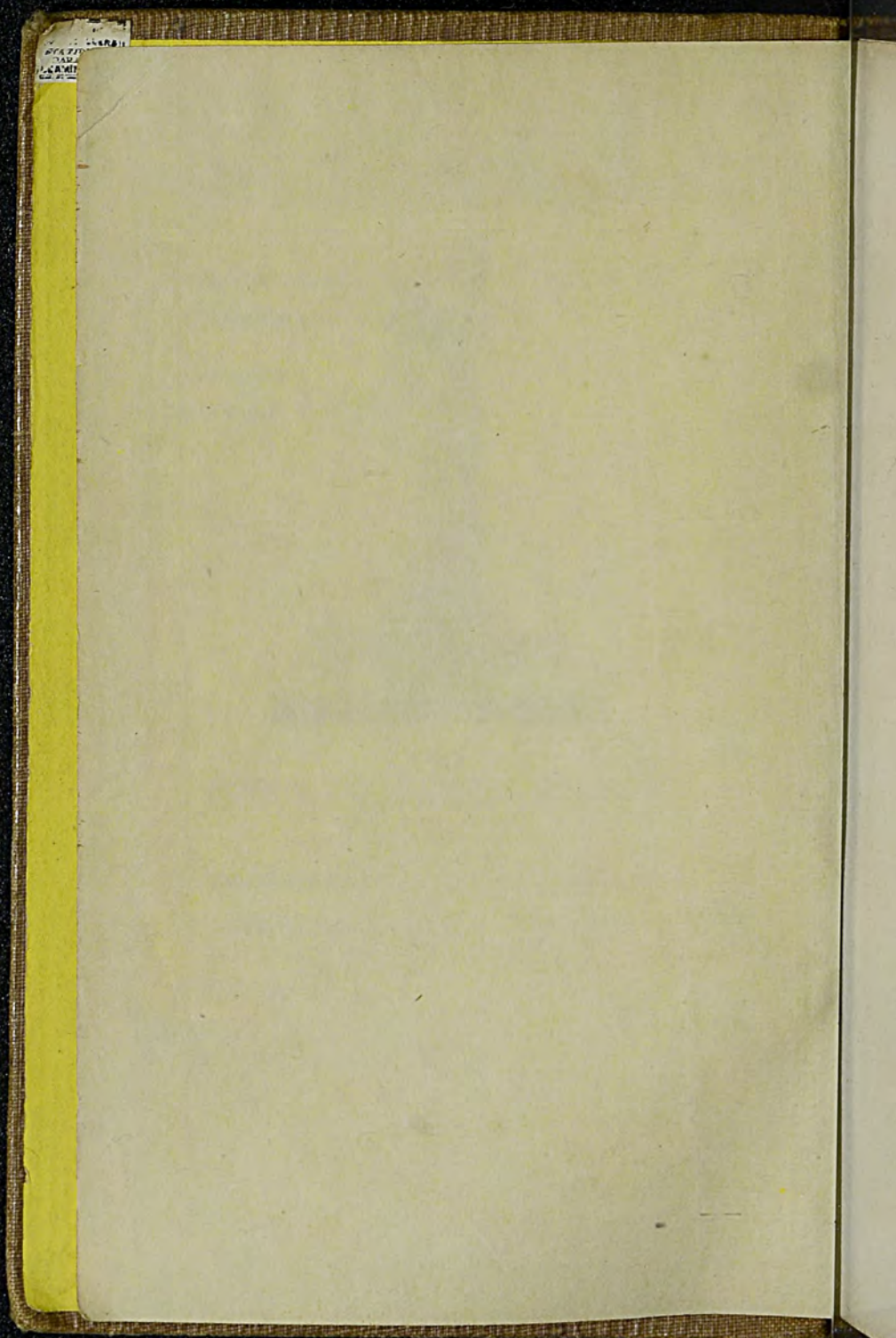
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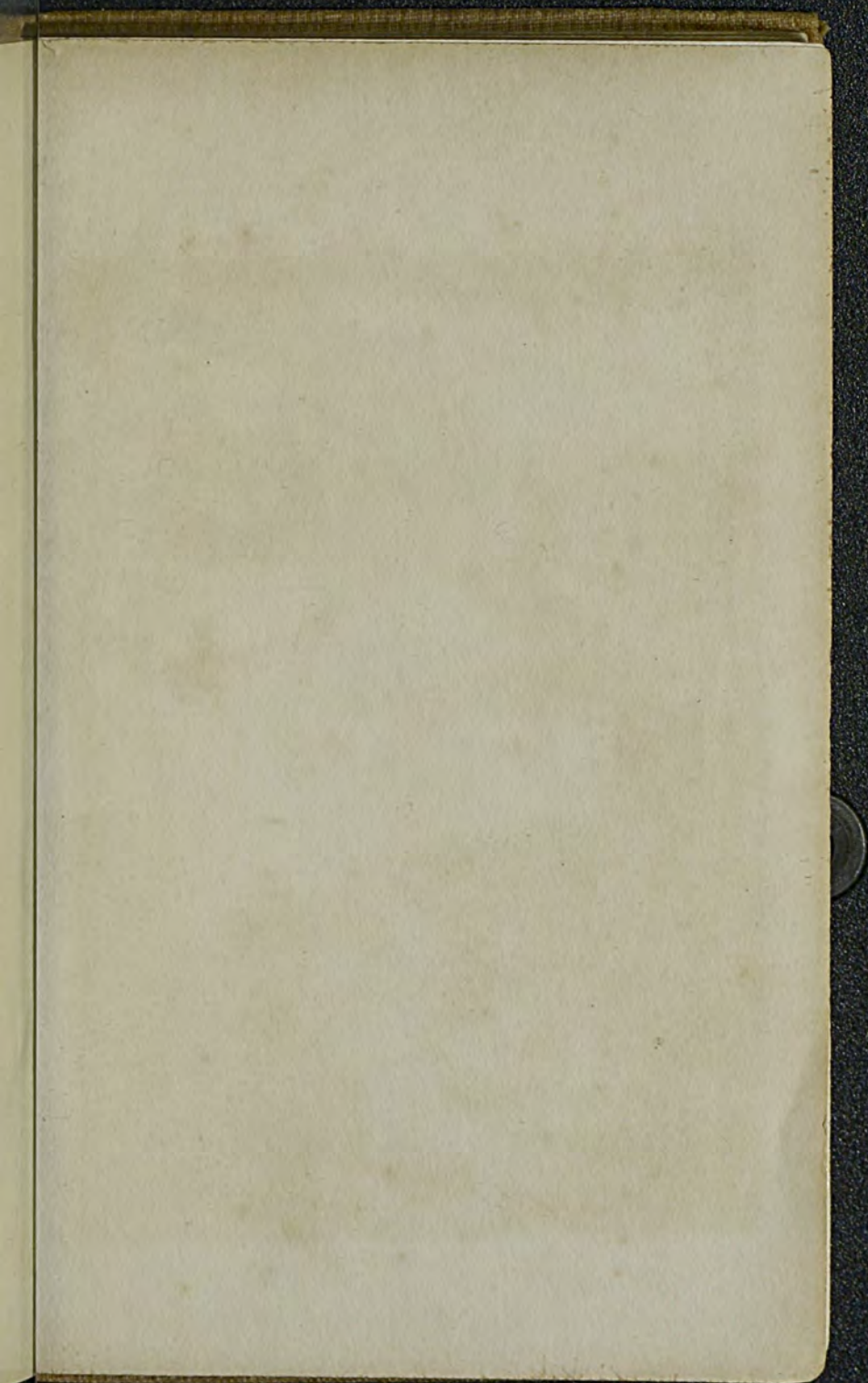
JOHN SULLIVAN HAYES & JO ANN ELLIOTT HAYES
from their children

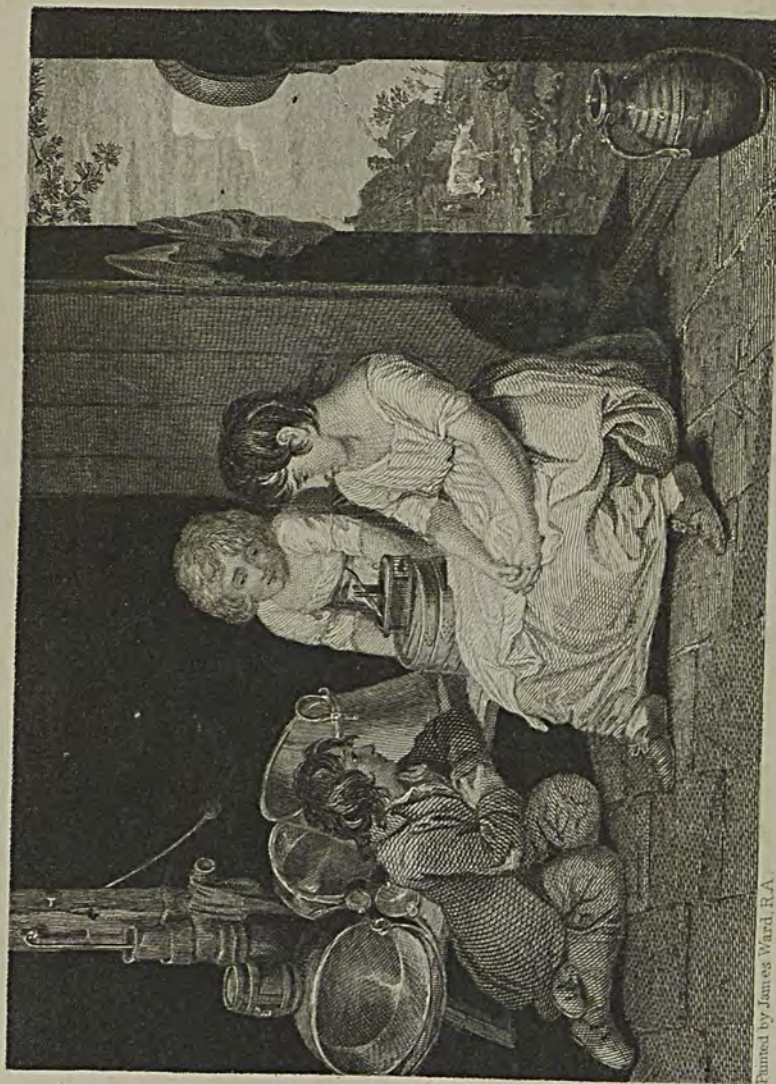
ANN ALCIN AND ELLIOTT HAYES

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G. 1855







Engraved by J. Romney.

THE MOUSE TRAP.

Painted by James Ward, R.A.

ENCOURAGE
KINDLY FEELINGS:
BEING THE ADVENTURES OF



LITTLE DOWNEY,
AND
HARRY PERCY.

BY MISS J. STRICKLAND.

JOHN AN & SON, THREADNEEDLE STREET.

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THE
HISTORY OF LITTLE DOWNY.

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H! what is Alfred crying for?" asked Mrs. Clifford, as she entered the room. "Come here, dear, and tell me what is the matter."

Alfred slowly advanced towards his mother, and wiped away his tears with her apron. Alfred was but a little boy, or he would not have cried.

"Well, Alfred, and what is it?" asked his kind mamma.

"Why, mamma, you know that nice plum cake you gave me; I put it in

the cupboard, as I did not want to eat it then, and I came just now to take a little nibble at it; when, as I opened the closet-door to look for it, there was an ugly brown mouse in the closet, and hardly a scrap of my cake left; that greedy thing had eaten it all but a few crumbs." And here Alfred's tears flowed afresh.

"I am very sorry, my dear child, that the mouse has eaten your cake; but still I do not think it was worth shedding so many tears about: I dare say the mouse has eaten a great deal of my sugar and cakes, but yet I shall not cry if he has."

"I am sure it is enough to make any one cry," said Alfred. "I only wish," added he, his eyes sparkling with anger, "that I could have killed the little beast for stealing my cake."

"Now, Alfred, I am ashamed of you," said his mother gravely.

Alfred could, however, think of nothing but the loss of his cake, and begged his mother to let the mouse-trap be set to catch the mischievous intruder.

Mrs. Clifford was much grieved that her little Alfred showed an inclination to be cruel and revengeful.—She was aware of the inconvenience of having mice in her cupboard; so, as she was forced to kill the mouse, she hoped to turn its death to a good use.

Therefore, when Alfred again entered the room, she asked him if he was still resolved to have the mouse killed.

"Yes, mamma; it had no right to eat my cake."

"Very well; I will have the mouse-

trap set; but observe, Alfred, whether before the day is past, you do not tell me you are sorry for its death."

"Oh! no; that I am sure I shan't," replied Alfred; and Mrs. Clifford ordered the trap to be set.

Early the next morning, when Mrs. Clifford came down stairs and went to the closet, she beheld her poor little prisoner dead in his wire cage.

"See, Alfred," said she, "here is the poor mouse dead!"

Alfred at first was glad; but when he saw what a pretty one it was, he was sorry; but contented himself by saying to the dead mouse, "If you had not done so much mischief, you would not have been killed?"

When he had said his lessons, his mother said to him, "Now, Alfred, shall I tell you a story?"

Alfred was very fond of hearing a story. So he fetched his little stool, and having placed it at her side, fixed his eyes on his mother's face, while she related

THE

HISTORY OF A FIELD MOUSE.

“IN a wheat-stack, in Farmer Ball's yard, lived an old mouse with her family, consisting of five little ones; the most worthy of which was a pretty brown mouse, called Downy, because her fur was longer and softer than either of her brothers' and sisters'; and besides being the prettiest, she was likewise the wittiest and best among them.

“It was one fine clear morning, in the middle of March, that, as Downy

was peeping her little nose out of the stack, to breathe a little, she saw the farmer with his men, enter the yard, and heard him tell the people that he would have the stack taken into the barn and thrashed, and desire them to bid Fen, the rat-catcher, come, and bring all his dogs with him.

“Poor Downy was in a terrible fright at hearing this; she ran to acquaint her mother with it, and asked her what they had best do; but her mother, who was but a foolish mouse, bade her not to be under the least alarm, for she was persuaded the farmer did not mean to take it just then; and added, it was time enough to think of it when the men began. She told Downy to go to bed, and not be afraid.

“But poor Downy could not sleep for thinking of the sad fate that threat-

ened them; she awakened her companions to consult with them; but they only laughed at her fear, and said, they would never leave a place where they were so well off, and where they could get plenty of good corn, only for the trouble of eating.

“Poor foolish little things! they were awakened the next morning by the farmer’s men unroofing the stack, and they now wished they had hearkened to the prudent advice of little Downy.

“Poor little Downy’s heart almost died within her, when she heard the barking of the dogs, and the hallooing of the men; how much rather would she have been in the field, than in the warm stack! for she heard the men drawing near to the place where they lay; and they were all terribly afraid:

and their mother, the old mouse, would go to see how far the danger was from them. Imprudent creature! she ventured too near; for a great black dog on the top of the stack, the moment the men raised the sheaf where she was, snapped her up in an instant.

“Nothing was now to be heard but shrieks and cries from every side of the stack; and the men drew nearer and nearer: Downy heard the last cries of her brethren; the sheaf where she had taken refuge, was already on the point of being raised, when she sprang through an opening in the side, and was just going to run down, when she beheld a great dog directly under her!

“Poor Downy gave herself up as lost, and awaited in trembling anxiety her fate: for some moments she clung

to the outside of the stack, not daring to descend, yet fearing still more to stay; when, luckily for our poor little mouse, some one called the dog, who instantly ran off; and Downy, darting from the stack, had just time to gain a place of security beneath a clod of earth, where she lay shaking with fear, not daring to look up for some minutes.

“Several times poor Downy had like to have been discovered by the dogs, or crushed beneath the horses’ feet; but she crouched very close to the ground, and lay so still, she hardly breathed, so great was her fear; at length she watched an opportunity, when no one was near, to quit her retreat, and ran with all the speed she could, not once daring to pause or look behind, till she gained the farmer’s orchard; where she lay among

the long grass, panting, and half dead with terror and fatigue; she hid herself toward night under the roots of an old apple tree; for she was very much afraid of a great white owl which she had seen flying near.

“It was in vain for her to lament the sad fate of her mother and brethren, she could not recal them to life; and Downy was thankful that she had escaped so well: but the cold weather was not yet gone, and poor little Downy knew she had nothing to eat and no warm house to live in, but must make herself one; or she should be starved to death with hunger, or perish with cold.

“These thoughts occupied her mind, till she fell asleep; nor did she awake next morning till quite late, and found herself very hungry.

“She first peeped out of her hole, and seeing nothing near to hurt her, she ventured forth in search of some food; she rummaged among the dead leaves for some time, till chance led her to a row of nut-trees; here, after a diligent search, she had the good fortune to discover three nuts, one of which she eat, being very hungry, and the rest she carried home to her tree, where she deposited them safely away, and set off to look out more provisions. She spent nearly the whole day among the nut-trees, but returned home with only one nut; and a shower of snow falling, she was forced to return to her dwelling; and did not go out any more that day, but lay quite still, and thought how she should make herself a warm nest; for she was very cold here, having been used to the close

warm stack, where scarcely any air entered.

“She ate very sparingly of her nuts, saving as much as possible for the morrow, fearing lest the snow should hinder her looking for more; but there had not fallen much; and in the morning, the sun coming out quite bright, melted it all; and Downy left her tree to look for more nuts, and something to line her nest with.

“She was more fortunate than before, as she discovered several ears of corn, which had been blown by the wind off the stack; she could scarcely credit her good fortune, when she beheld her store, and saw it all safe.

“Her next care was to line her nest; for this purpose, she collected all the bits of dried moss and grass she could find, and carried them in her mouth

to her new habitation; she nibbled off the fibres which hung to the roots of the tree, and with dried weeds, soon made her house quite comfortable.

“The spring began with some beautiful warm days, and every thing looked warm and gay; the crocuses were all in flower, and the primroses, with some early violets.

“One fine evening, as she was returning to her house, she saw a creature much like a weasel, only somewhat smaller; he was prowling along close by her tree, in hopes of catching her; he smelt about for some time, and at last went in.

“Poor little Downy was in a sad fright; she knew not what to do, for she saw his head peeping out of her hole, and his cunning black eyes prying in every direction.

“When Downy saw the weasel take possession of her house, she knew she must not venture near it again.

“Poor Downy was in great distress, as to where she should pass the night securely; at last she found a hole in the bank, and into this she crept, though much alarmed for fear of her enemy’s discovering her. She dared not go to sleep at all that night; nor did she stir out next day till forced by hunger to seek her food. She did not see any thing of the weasel; but she resolved to leave the orchard, and seek a safer spot for a new habitation.

“Accordingly, next day, she set off to look for a proper situation. She passed through the orchard-hedge into a beautiful green meadow, all covered with daisies, red clover, cowslips, and golden buttercups.

“Here Downy resolved to find a place to live in, and she whisked about under the tall heads of the cowslips and buttercups; at last she fixed on a little green mound, such a one as you, Alfred, call a fairy’s throne; and here she began to scratch with her feet, till she had made a little opening in the turf; and she used such diligence, that before night she had made a hole large enough to sleep in; and though it was not lined, or so warm as her house under the old apple tree, yet she slept so sound that she never woke till the sun had risen quite high in the heavens.

“Downy jumped up in a hurry when she saw how late it was: the birds had been up hours before her, and were all busily employed building their nests; every bush resounded with

the songs of these innocent little creatures while at work, and Downy knew she must not be idle, for she had much to do. Being very hungry, she first went to an oak which grew at some little distance, and here she found plenty of acorns among the leaves,—of these she made a hearty meal, and carried some to where she was at work.

“With a great deal of care and labour she dug her house, and made it quite round and smooth as she went on, carrying it in a slanting direction along the hollow side of the hill.

“It cost poor Downy many a long day’s hard work before her house was completed, and many a weary nibble before she had finished lining the inside of it.

“Her next care was to make a se-

cure room for stowing away her winter stores; for this purpose, she made an opening on one side of her first room, and carried a passage along some little distance; and then formed her store chamber, which she was a long time making, but it was at length completed perfectly to her own satisfaction, having rendered it a most convenient granary.

“She had now nothing to do but find food for herself, and play; but Downy never came home without bringing something useful for her house, either a bit of straw or hay, a little tuft of moss, or the dried stalk of a flower; these she cut with her teeth into small pieces, and laid in her nest to make it soft and warm.

“Downy was now quite happy; her mound was all covered with flowers,

fine cowslips and buttercups, and a tuft of daisies grew close to the entrance of her house, and served to hide it from the eyes of owls, weasels, or any of the enemies to poor mice; and Downy thought herself secure from danger.

“On a beautiful moonlight night she used to peep out from under the daisies, and look at the dew drops all shining like diamonds in the moon beams; and once she whisked on the top of her green mound, and began to play among the flowers; but she was alarmed by the sight of a small dog running through the high grass, and she quickly retreated into her house; nor was she so imprudent again as to venture out after it was dark.

“And now the grass grew long and high, the flowers began to loose their

beauty, and turn brown; every thing proclaimed the approach of summer.

“The month of June began, and the mowers came to cut the grass; Downy was fearful they would molest her, and spoil her house, when they came near the little mound, but she trusted that they might not discover it, and she laid quite close all day.

“But poor little Downy was very sorry to see all the nice high grass and pretty flowers cut down to the ground; those flowers which had sheltered her from the sun and rain so long.

“‘And now,’ thought she, ‘I shall certainly be caught by the great white owl; for he will be able to see me now; and I can’t hide myself under the long grass and dandelions, as I used to do, for they are all cut down and spoiled.’”

"Pray, mamma," said Alfred, "do owls really eat mice? I should hardly think they could catch them; for they are not like cats or weasels, you know."

"And yet, Alfred, though they are not like cats or weasels in form, they live on mice, and indeed are of quite as much use in destroying this sort of vermin, as cats are."

"Will you tell me, dear mamma, all you know about the owls?" asked Alfred.

"With a deal of pleasure, my dear boy," replied his mother:—"There exist a great many different species of owls; but the white, the tawny, and the brown, are the most common sorts."

"Now Downy's enemy was (as I before said) a great white owl, the most common of any. They live during the

greatest part of the year in barns, granaries, hay-lofts, and other out-houses; and are of great use to the farmers in clearing those places of mice.

“They never quit their retreats till dusk, as they cannot bear the light, but sit in the darkest holes they can find, till evening, when they sally forth in quest of prey.

“They fly round the fields till they discover it, and then drop instantly down, and bear it away in their talons.

“They also build their nests in the eaves of churches, in old ruinous buildings, and in hollow trees.

“Whilst the young are in the nest, the father and mother go out alternately in quest of food for them, beating the fields like spaniels.

“They continue the care of their

young till after they can fly and shift for themselves; and it is quite surprising the immense number of mice they catch to supply them with food. They lay, in general, four or five eggs.

“The barn owls do not hoot, but hiss and make a disagreeable noise like snoring, and will scream most dismally while flying along; they have a beautiful circle of soft white feathers round their eyes and beak, which is strong and hooked; the legs are clothed with feathers down to the feet, and the toes are covered with short hair; the claws are very sharp.

“This sort of owls are not entirely white, as the shafts of the lower feathers of the wings are grey, and sometimes of a pale buff; the tail is likewise barred with a sort of dusky grey colour.

“The tawny, or screech owl, differs in colour; it is handsomer, and considerably larger than the common white owl, its neck is of a fine buff, powdered over with blackish spots; it is much hardier than the other sorts: the young owlets will eat any kind of dead meat which may be brought to them; the little barn owlets, on the contrary, must have a constant supply of fresh food.

“And are the little owls pretty, mamma?” asked Alfred; “I should like to see one.”

“I am sure, Alfred, you would, for they look just like balls of swans’-down, when they are fledged, and they have such fine black eyes, which look so cunning, peeping from under the soft white ruff of feathers round their heads.

“When I was a little girl, and was staying on a visit in Kent, at my uncle Reed’s, one of his men brought in a large tawny owl, which they had disturbed in the barn; and not being able to bear the glare of the day-light, it was easily caught; and my cousin Mark kept it in a large hamper in the root house in the garden; where he used to feed it on raw flesh, rats, and mice, and if he could get nothing else, on bats and other birds: but the owl never would eat before us, and if we opened the lid of the hamper in the day-time, or held a candle to him of a night, he instantly threw himself on his back shrieking and hissing at us till his house was again shut up in darkness: he was very savage and fierce at first. Mark soon tamed him, and at the end of two months’ time,

he would fly out of a night and get his own living.

“He was so used to his shed, that he never failed to return to his old habitation, sitting perched up on a beam in the darkest corner, all day, and going out as soon as it was dusk; and, indeed, he made a sad noise of a night, and used to screech most dismally.

“One day, we were a little surprised, on going to pay our owl a visit, to discover a companion sitting by his side; and a few days after, we missed our favourite entirely from his home; nor could we think what had become of him.

“But one day, about a fortnight after, Mark came running in to us quite out of breath, and told us he had found the owl, and that he had

got a nest full of nice soft white owlets in a great hollow tree at the bottom of the garden.

“You may be sure, Alfred, we ran as fast as we could to the tree, and soon discovered the little ones by the hissing noise we heard; and at last saw some round white heads nestling among the ivy; for Mark lifted us up one by one to peep into the nest, which was in a hole in the tree, not very far from the ground. We went to see them every day, but unfortunately I left my uncle’s house before the little owlets were able to shift for themselves so I do not know what became of them.

“There is one thing more, my little Alfred, that I have to tell you about them:—It sometimes happens that an owl is disturbed from its haunts during

the day-time, and forced to fly in the light, which they can hardly do, their eyes being so formed that they can only see in the dark and shade, and are completely dazzled in the daylight. When this is the case, all the small birds of every sort flock round him, uttering their cries of dislike, and mimicking him, chattering as if in contempt; whilst the poor owl, half blinded by the unusual glare of light, flies with the greatest difficulty, surrounded by those little creatures, who toward the close of the day tremble at his presence, and dare not approach him.

“The owl will often stand still on the bough of a tree, and sinking his head among the feathers of his breast, appear weary and stupified by their noise; while the birds, conscious that

their enemy can do them no harm, gather round and continue to teaze and persecute him till he is forced to seek some safe retreat in the dark, where they dare not approach to molest him."

Little Alfred was well entertained by his mother's account of the owls; and he promised to remember all she told him: and Mrs. Clifford again went on with the history of Downy.

"Poor little Downy was in a great fright all the time that the hay-makers were at work, and when she found them coming near the house, with their great hay-forks in their hands, she remembered the fate of her mother, and all her brothers and sisters in the stack, and she thought that she would be safer in the bank of the garden-hedge, which was not far off.

“She watched an opportunity when no one was looking, and hastened away to the edge as far as she could; and creeping in, lay quite snug; she remained in the bank the whole day, and enjoyed herself more than could be expected, for the weather was extremely pleasant, and there was a bed of ripe wild strawberries close by, which smelt quite refreshing.

“Though Downy dared not venture back into the field, for fear of being killed, (for mice are but timid little things) yet she was very happy all that day, and when she saw the men leave the field with the hay-forks, which had caused her so much terror, she returned to her nest and slept that night on some new hay which she had nibbled, and brought into her house to lay on.

“As soon as it was day, away ran careful Downy to the bank; she peeped through the hedge, and saw every thing in the garden looking very pleasant.

“So Miss Downy thought she should like to spend the day in the beautiful shady garden; in she went, and soon found it as charming as it looked; for the garden abounded in plenty of good things; there were peas, and beans, and potatoes, and young carrots, and beds of ripe red strawberries.

“Downy did nothing but eat and enjoy herself the whole day, and did not think of returning home that day, nor for many days afterwards, for she said to herself—‘What occasion is there for me to go back to the meadow, where I have so much trouble to get food, while here is more than I could ever eat, and I have no trouble in

getting it at all,—and I am sure no mischief will happen to me here!

“So she gave no thought of her nice house in the field, but amused herself by eating all day long; till she grew quite fat, and Downy thought she was happier than ever she had been in the field: and she grew very indolent, for she now began to think that there was no occasion for her to work; but she said to herself, she would play all day; and here she showed herself to be a very simple little mouse, as it proved in what befel her.

“She had been living in the garden for nearly a month, when, one fine sunshiny day, she had ventured nearer to the house than usual, and was lying reposing herself in the sun, by a clod of dirt, near a rain-water-butt, when she was disturbed by a noise near her,

and to her horror she beheld the black cat with a fine kitten by her side, proceeding down the walk where she lay: to escape was almost impossible, even the attempt was vain, and hapless Downy gave herself up for lost.

“A month back, and she might have trusted to her own speed for escaping—but, alas! Downy had so long been used to do nothing but eat and enjoy herself, that she was no longer able to run as swiftly as she used to do, she dared not even move a step, but sat in an agony of hopeless despair.

“Downy now lamented her folly in having left her safe retreat in the meadow: what would she now have given to have been in her own little house under the mole-hill? and she bitterly regretted ever having been

tempted to quit it; for there no cats ever came, and there she had ever lived in innocence and happiness; whilst now she was doomed to fall a victim to the merciless claws of a hungry cat, who would devour her alive! She lay breathless; not a limb did she move; for the cat approached within a yard of the spot where she lay, and——”

“Oh! poor Downy!” cried Alfred, “how sorry I am,—but mamma, did that wicked cat kill her? dear mamma, do make haste and tell me!”

“Why, Alfred,” said his mother; “you would not wait for me to tell you whether she was killed or not: I am sure you could not feel sorry for the death of *a nasty brown mouse*. You hate mice, they are such little thieves.”

Little Alfred blushed at what his mother said; for he remembered they were his own words—and said to his mother: “Dear mamma, I think I will never wish for the death of any thing again, and I am very sorry I had the mouse killed: I will never kill another, if it were to eat all the cakes you mean to give me when I am good.”

Mrs. Clifford could not help smiling at her little boy, and she kissed his forehead, and then went on.

“The cat, as I said before, was close to the clod of earth on which luckless Downy stood; and when she believed her death certain, she had the inexpressible joy of finding that her motionless posture had been the means of saving her from the eyes of the cat, who passed on, quite unconcerned, without taking any notice of her prey.

“For an instant, Downy could scarce credit her eyes, when she saw her enemies pass on; but fearing that, if puss should return, she should not again escape so miraculously, she darted away, as she hoped, unseen; but, silly little thing! she had better have stayed where she was, for the kitten saw her as she ran, and sprang upon her! Poor Downy felt her claws; but exerting all her speed, she flew to the hedge, that friendly hedge, which had so often been her refuge; and darting among the tangled roots of the hawthorn and ivy, left her pursuer far behind; and, exhausted with terror and fatigue, remained trembling and panting, till she was half dead. Still she heard the mews of the disappointed kitten, and the angry purrs of the old cat—who sat

watching above the bank for more than an hour, waiting to seize her if she ventured forth

“Downy now began to consider whether it would not be much better and wiser for her to return back to her own house in the meadow, instead of living in idleness and luxury; thus Downy found that indolence brings its own punishment sooner or later; for had she been at home, she would not have been so frightened by the cat, or nearly killed by the kitten; or even if a cat had come near her nice nest, she would have run away much faster than she did now, for being then smaller and thinner, she was also much nimbler.

“With a sad and penitent heart, Downy once more returned to her old habitation: but alas! what was her

grief on beholding it a complete ruin! her nice warm nest all destroyed, and the pretty green mound quite spoiled!

“Downy was sadly vexed, for the cruel hay-makers had with their pitchforks torn open the turf, and scattered her soft bed all around on the grass. She stood gazing with anguish on the desolate scene before her; here was all her spring work entirely ruined, and now she was ill, and had no where to lay her head. ‘Ah!’ thought she, ‘if I had not spent so much time in doing nothing but eat and play, I should have escaped the danger of being caught by the cat, and should not have been hurt by the kitten; besides which, I should by this time have made up my nest, and have been quite comfortable again.’

“She was now hardly able to work, and what was far worse, she felt very great reluctance to begin her laborious task; so much harm had her living so long in indolence done her, as it does to every one who indulges in it.

“Remember, my little Alfred, that idleness is the root of all evil, as you may see in the case of Downy. Now which do you think was the happiest and best: careful, industrious Downy, making her house, and busily procuring food for the winter; or, careless, idle Downy, doing nothing but play, and enjoying herself in the garden, eating the fruit and sleeping among the flowers? Now tell me, which do you like the best of the two?”

Alfred considered for a minute or two, and then said, “Why, dear mamma, though I should have liked

to have eat the nice things in the garden, and lived among the flowers; yet I see that it would have been better for Downy if she had remained in the field and worked hard; but I am afraid, I should have been as silly as Downy, and not have liked to work."

"That is what I was afraid of; therefore, my dear, I thought it best to show you how wrong she was in indulging herself in that manner. And be assured, my dear Alfred, that whoever does, will be sure to fall into misfortune.

"Did you not find, Alfred," said his mother, "that when you left your garden for more than a week without doing any thing in it, till it got all overrun with weeds, that every day you felt less inclined to work at it; till it got so bad, that you had not the heart to begin it at all? E 3

“Yes, mamma,” replied Alfred: “that is true, for when I had my new humming-top, I did nothing but spin it for a whole week, and I forgot my garden, and I saw the weeds grow longer every day, and I said to myself ‘I can pull them to-morrow;’ but then I hated to work whilst I could play, and so it got on worse and worse; and I felt so idle, I could not begin it; and so, you know, I drove it off from day to day, till I went one day to gather some flowers, and found them all choked with weeds and spoiled, and I felt so vexed; but I did not think it was of any use doing any thing to my garden, as all my flowers were spoiled; so I let it go, mamma, till you were angry with me, said I should never have another, and threatened to take it away from me if I did not put it in

order and keep it neat. Now, mamma, was not I like Downy then?"

"Why, Alfred, it was something in the same way, I must own; but remember, it is never too late to be good again; and the sooner one begins, the better.—Do you understand me, Alfred, and know what I mean?"

"Yes, mamma, I think I do; you mean, if I am as idle in making myself a good boy, as I was in pulling the weeds out of my garden, I shall never grow good,—don't you?"

"Yes, Alfred, dear; and if you do not begin in time, your faults will grow into such a habit, that you will have as much trouble in correcting them, as Downy had in overcoming her indolent disposition."

Mrs. Clifford would have talked longer to Alfred, but he was so impa-

tient to hear how Downy got on in making her new house, that, he begged her to go on, and his mother once more resumed her story.

“Necessity obliged Downy, at last, to overcome her extreme reluctance to work; and she once more began to look out for a proper place for her new habitation; she visited all the green mounds in the meadow; but, alas! they were occupied by the ants; and poor Downy was quite out of patience; and at last she was, though with great reluctance, forced to take up her lodgings in the side of the garden bank, quite at the farther end, where no cats ever came: here, finding it really was her own interest to work, she resolved not to be idle any more, but to labour as hard as ever she had done, and she soon completed her

new dwelling, making a most commodious habitation, in which she lived happily all the summer.

“When the harvest time arrived, then was Downy very busy; she went into a neighbouring wheat-field, and laid in a handsome store of grain, for her winter supply.

“Nothing of any consequence happened to Miss Downy till the latter end of the Autumn; for some days she had missed her provisions, but could not account for it in any way; and was at a loss to know who it could be who devoured the fruits of her daily labours; but one morning, when she returned from gleaning in the stubble fields, she was greatly surprised, on entering her house, to behold a young stranger busily employed breakfasting in her granary; she

stopped at the entrance of her house to examine her visitor, and was struck by the beauty of his form; he was of a reddish colour, his hair very long and thick, his breast and fore feet of a pale buff, and his belly white; he had a nice round face and fine oval ears, with quick lively brown eyes, and long handsome black whiskers; in short, he was the prettiest mouse Downy had ever seen, though he was a sad little thief, and had eaten a great deal of her wheat.

“He appeared, at first, much disconcerted at being disturbed and discovered at his depredations, and looked round on every side for an opening to escape at; but none appearing, he stood still, and scratched his ear with one of his hind feet, assuming as unconcerned an air as he could possibly put on.

“Downy was not sorry she had discovered who was the thief; but she soon forgave him, though she could not help thinking he was a very dishonest mouse to come every day and rob her as he had done; but he was so pretty, and made so humble an apology for his intruding into her house, that she could not find it in her heart to be angry with him long, and they soon became very good friends; and at last he proposed her taking him as a partner, which the simple Downy agreed to without hesitation, and shared her house and provisions with the handsome young stranger, who behaved with great decorum for some time, and was very careful to mind what little Downy said to him; but at last he began to throw off his restraint, and was often

getting into mischief, in spite of the sage advice of Downy, who took great pains to warn him from such evil practices. But Silket would frisk in the garden, robbing the newly-planted bean and pea crops, with the greatest audacity; not minding what careful Downy said, who represented to him the danger he ran of being killed by cats, or by the weasels, or caught in traps;—but Silket, like a naughty mouse that he was, only laughed and made light of her fears; and when at last she appeared vexed at his disobedience, he promised never to go into the garden again; but, like many more, broke his promise directly he was out of her sight; and besides this, he was sadly idle, and was, I am sorry to say, much fonder of play than work; and Downy was obliged to re-

monstrate with him on such bad behaviour, and said—‘Silket, how can you expect me to work for both you and myself? you are a sad partner.’

“Silket was very humble, and promised to be more industrious for the future; and that very afternoon he ransacked a new crop of peas, which the gardener had sown that day, and came home laden with spoils; next day, he brought home a hoard of nuts from the garden, and Downy thought if he would but continue so good, she should be very happy, for her Silket was a pretty creature, and she was very fond of him.

“But pretty creatures are not always the best, as she found to her cost, for when the weather set in cold, Mr. Silket refused to work, or stir out of the house, but lay rolled round like a

ball in the soft hay, and slept, only just getting up to eat, and Downy was much grived, for she feared their stock of food would never last out the winter, if he did not help her to make some addition to it; but Silket begged her not to be under any concern, for there was plenty for them both; and on her again expressing her fears on the subject, he gave her two or three bites on the ear, and squeaked most vehemently; showing his anger at being found fault with, and then laid down again with a sulky air of displeasure; while poor Downy, almost broken-hearted, slowly and full of sorrow, left her house and wandered along the side of the bank, quite disconsolate, and she resolved never to go back again to her ungrateful husband, who had treated her so unkindly,

but leave him in a quiet possession of her dwelling.

“Simple little Downy! she might have known before-hand how he would have treated her, as she was so well acquainted with his propensity to stealing; and she was a very foolish mouse to take for a partner one who showed, from the first, that he liked better to play about and steal, than labour to get an honest living. Downy ought to have considered all this; but Downy, who did not think that such a soft pretty creature could tell so many stories, believed all he said; and this was the consequence of her folly.

“Poor little Downy laid bewailing her sad misfortune on the cold damp grass, determining never to go home to her little tyrant again, so angry was she at his cruel conduct.—‘Ah!

foolish mouse that I was,' (said she,) 'why did I not continue to live by myself when I was so happy! I might have known how he would have behaved to me; but I will never return to him; he may enjoy by himself that food which he loves so much more than he does me, ungrateful that he is!'

"In this manner, she was uttering her complaints, when she heard a soft padding step behind her, and a mournful noise made her turn round; and she beheld her penitent Silket, (for it was him), who advancing with a sorrowful air, humbly besought her forgiveness, and rubbed his velvet cheek in an imploring manner against hers; his lively brown eyes were now troubled, and very sorrowful. Downy could not resist his beseeching looks, but forgave him for all past offences,

and took him once more into favour, on his promising to be good in future, and never bite her ears or tail again.

“Silket was really very sorry for his late bad behaviour, and he resolved to be very good, and do so no more, for he did love Downy very much, though he loved himself better.

“He accompanied her home with great affection, and they were happier for some weeks than they had ever been before; he was so kind, and seemed to study only to please her; he spent day after day in searching among the dry leaves in the garden for filberts; and when he could not procure any thing else, he brought her crocus-roots, and carrots.

“One evening, he had been out later than usual, he did not see Downy’s bright eyes looking out from among

the ivy leaves and moss for his return, and he was fearful some ill had befallen her. As he approached his home, he thought he heard several little squeaking sounds, and on entering his nest, found that Downy, in his absence, had become the mother of four little helpless blind mice, which she was suckling. Silket was overjoyed; he licked the little ones with much affection, and behaved with the greatest tenderness to Downy; he presented her with the filberts he had brought home, and praised the beauty of his family; though none but himself could see that they possessed any, for little mice are very ugly till they can open their eyes, and have got fur on them; for, like puppies, and kittens, and rabbits, they are all born blind, and do not open their eyes for many days after.

“No mouse could behave better than Silket did; he was out almost all day searching for nice food for Downy, and getting soft moss to keep his little ones warm.

“But, one day, he much grieved Downy, and did a deal of mischief—Wanting something to cover his little ones with, what did he do, but go into the garden to the hedge where Mrs. Ball hung out her linen to dry, and wickedly gnawed and bit one of the old lady’s aprons almost to pieces, carrying home as many of the rags as his mouth would hold, to his house.

“Downy was sadly vexed when she heard what he had been doing, and she was forced to give him a long lecture on being so mischievous, while Mr. Silket amused himself by laying the rags out to the greatest advan-

tage, admiring the white quilt he had brought home for his little ones' bed, and secretly resolving to go and fetch the remaining fragments; and though he saw how grave Downy looked, he did not think he had done much harm in biting the old lady's apron; so he cast a cunning eye at Downy, to see if she was observing him, for he wanted sadly to get the rest of the apron. But she saw what he was after, and begged him not to go; for she said that such mischievous ways would come to no good end; and that he would be caught in a trap, or killed by a cat, or fall into some danger; 'and,' added she, 'what should I do, Silket, left with these four helpless little mice to provide for?' So he never spoiled any more of good Mrs. Ball's linen, though he often came in the way of it.

“The old lady was much annoyed by the misfortune which had befallen her best muslin apron, and threatened to have the rat-catcher and ferrets, to hunt the garden, if any thing more were destroyed; so it was well that Silket took Downy’s advice, or he would certainly have lost his life.

“At the end of three weeks, the little mice began to be quite lively, and to grow very pretty little creatures; they much resembled their father in their mischievous inclinations, and it needed all Downy’s prudent management to keep them in order, for they would frisk out of their nest, and scud about in the meadow; going so far out of sight, that Downy was frightened lest any mishap should befall them; as to Silket, he seemed to take great delight in their pranks.

“ When it was fine weather, one, bolder than the rest, would run up a little tree, and clinging to a branch, look down with triumph on his companions; then, if the dead leaves but shook, the timid little thing whisked down, and away all four scudded, to hide themselves till they thought the danger past.

“ Downy now began to feel the cares of a family, and she was often much grieved at the disobedient behaviour of her little mice. Velvet was the only good-behaved one, and she was bad enough in all reason.

“ They were sad little thieves; and though Downy and Silket were all day busied in getting food for them, and fed them with the best of every thing, the wicked little things stole the corn from the granary, and wasted even

more than they ate; and they became so mischievous, that all the field-mice in the meadow declared they were spoiled, and that Downy ought to keep them under restraint, and to punish them when they behaved ill.

“As they grew older, they grew worse; Downy had warned them of all the dangers into which they ran, by roaming so far from home; and told them of the cat that haunted the garden, and the great white owl; but these bad mice paid no attention to what their good mother said to them.

“Among other things, she begged them not to go near the brick-traps which the gardener had set among the beans and peas, to entice simple mice to eat the bait, and then they were sure to be killed, by the trap falling on them: but they did not regard

those prudent counsels in the least; and a day or two after, they all sallied out into the garden, with Whitefoot their leader, in search of plunder.

“They rummaged the ground under the nut-trees for some time, without finding a single nut, when they came to a row of late-sown peas; these they made a terrible havock amongst, regardless of their mother’s advice.

“They were going home, delighted with their regale, when Whitefoot espied some wheat, carefully laid out under a sort of brick house. Whitefoot run round it, and thought it stood too firm to be knocked down; and as he was rather greedy, he determined to venture under, and eat up the wheat; he was in such a hurry, for fear his companions should want to share his prize, that, in his haste, he pushed

down a bit of stick, that held the brick up—down it fell,—and Whitefoot was crushed to death in an instant.

“The shriek of the dying Whitefoot alarmed the timid little mice; away they ran as fast as they could, nor did they once stop to look behind them. Whitefoot was found next morning by the gardener, under the brick trap, and was given to the black cat. Now, had he minded what his mother had told him the day before, he would have been alive, and frisking about with the rest. See, Alfred, what comes of disobedience and greediness.”

“Yes, mamma,” said Alfred, “I will remember poor Whitefoot’s fate, and not disobey you.”

“Downy was much shocked at the death of her poor Whitefoot, and she told the other little mice to take warn-

ing by their brother's sad fate, and not go near any more brick-traps, but be contented with the food which she and their father provided for them.

“For a few days they were more orderly, but their bad habits returned again, and they forgot all their promises, and were as naughty as ever they had been; even Silket was shocked at them, and was forced to chastise the two most unruly, Wilful and Sprightly, by biting their ears.

“Wilful ran away, but he very soon came to a most untimely death.—His last thoughts were of deep regret for having left his home as he did.

“There were now only two young mice left, Sprightly and Velvet. Velvet was so shocked at the bad end to which her two brothers had come, that she resolved not to be naughty again; but

when she told Sprightly of her intentions, she wickedly ridiculed her, and said, for her part, she should go and seek her fortune in the meadow and garden, where no one could scold her, and where she might do as she pleased: with this resolution she set off, and they never saw her again; for having no house to go to, the white owl saw her as he was flying out one evening, and soon made an end of Sprightly, who had better have staid at home with her father and mother.

“Velvet was, now, the comfort and pride of her parents; she helped them in all their labours, and assisted them in enlarging their house, and lying in food against the winter.

“As she increased in goodness, she grew prettier; and every one admired her, she was so clean, and her skin was

as soft as satin, and looked quite bright and glossy. Velvet was generally up and abroad before sunrise, and enjoyed being out in the dew: she always returned home loaded with grain; and they were all quite happy and comfortable; for Silket was very good, and Downy had nothing to make her uncomfortable, being blessed with a good husband, and a good daughter.

“But a sad accident happened, which deprived poor Downy of all means of providing for her wants, and gave Silket and Velvet the greatest pain and uneasiness on her account.

“One day, Downy had been by herself in the garden, and in passing under a gooseberry-bush, she did not see a trap which had been set to catch little birds, and it caught one of her poor little feet, and she lay struggling and

shrieking in the greatest pain; at last, by a violent effort, she got loose, but with the loss of one of her fore-feet, and, sadly wounded, and crying piteously, she gained her home.

“Silket and Velvet found her exhausted with pain, and almost dying; they were greatly grieved at the misfortune, and lamented bitterly the sad fate of poor Downy, and they feared greatly lest they should lose her; but good nursing and great care at last restored her, in some measure; after which, Velvet and Silket would never permit her to go out to get food, but always brought the best for her; and she lived quite at her ease, only she never was so strong as before.

“The summer passed happily away, but the sudden death of poor Silket once more filled them with grief.

“The innocent little creature was sleeping under the nut-trees in the garden, one warm morning in September; he had been collecting nuts to carry home, but being tired, he had laid down to repose himself in the sun, and unfortunately, fell asleep; nor did he wake till he found himself in the grasp of the merciless black cat, who springing upon her defenceless prey, killed him. There was no fond Downy nor affectionate Velvet near, to give him aid, or receive his last sighs,

“The evening came, but no Silket returned to the disconsolate Downy; another day passed, but they saw him not; and they were at last certain that he must have been killed.

“This heavy blow almost overcame Downy, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Velvet could persuade

her to eat and be comforted; but every thing around them served to recal the image, and remind them of the loss of their beloved Silket, and this gave them both great pain.

“At last, Velvet, without saying any thing to her mother, stole away while she was asleep, and having found a pretty spot some way from farmer Ball’s land, she made a new house, much more convenient than the one they then lived in.

“It was a long time before it was completed, but when it was quite finished, and well stocked with grain, she brought Downy to see it. It was situated in a pretty garden, on a beautiful sloping green bank, under the shade of a fir-tree, not many yards from a nice white brick house, the front of which was covered with vines

and wall-fruit; and there were pots of balsams and geraniums, on the beds opposite the windows and glass door."

"Why, mamma," exclaimed Alfred, suddenly looking up in his mother's face, "that was just like our garden, and our house;" and he ran to the window, and looked out into the garden, saying with great vivacity, "Yes, mamma, it is exactly the same?" And he looked enquiringly at his mother.

Mrs. Clifford smiled, but made no reply, and went on as if she had not heard him.

"In this pretty spot they settled, and Downy hoped to spend the rest of her days in quiet; she wanted for nothing, for Velvet was her provider.

"Downy thought, if she should ever be deprived of her, it would break her heart, and she must soon be starved to

death; as she could not work now, as she had done formerly.

“These thoughts made her often very sorrowful, and Velvet thought she seemed to droop, and lose her spirits and appetite; so Velvet thought she would try to get something nice, to please her; she stole into the house, one day, when no one saw her, and, after some little time, she found her way into the cupboard, where she smelt something very nice, and beheld a new plum-cake. ‘Ah!’ said she, ‘how my poor sick mother will like a bit of this nice cake!’ so having made a hearty meal herself from it, she carried away the rest for her mother, not thinking that she had done any very great harm.”

“Ah, mamma,” cried Alfred with tears in his eyes, “how I wish I had

not set the trap to catch that good Velvet; she might have had my cake, and welcome, if I had but known what she took it for; how sorry I am! Poor Velvet! I wish she was alive again, that I do with all my heart."

"I told you, Alfred," said his mother, seriously, "you would be sorry for killing the *nasty brown mouse*, before the day was over.—But let me finish my story.—When Downy found that Velvet did not return, she was so heart-broken that she very soon died of grief."

"Ah, mamma!" cried Alfred, bursting into tears, "what a cruel boy I have been! I have killed both Downy and the good little Velvet—I hope I shall never be so cruel again."

Mrs. Clifford, pleased at having awakened a proper feeling in the mind

of her little boy, kissed him tenderly, saying, "Dry your tears, my dear Alfred, and never again be so anxious for the death of any animal."

"We are taught to be merciful, but it is not expected that we should permit mice and other similar animals to overrun our houses, and prey on our food and clothes.—It is, therefore, sometimes very necessary to destroy them.—Still, when we are forced from necessity to kill any thing, we should do it with as little suffering to them as we can;—it becomes cruelty when we inflict unnecessary pain.

"I should myself have been forced to set the trap,—for I could not permit the things in my cupboard to be eaten by mice,—but I did not like to see my little Alfred, merely from a feeling of revenge, wishing so eagerly

for the death of a poor mouse, that did not and could not know that it was doing any harm in eating a cake that it chanced to fall in the way of. And now, my dear boy, you may go and amuse yourself in the garden."

Alfred kissed his mother, and having wiped his tears away, and thanked her for her kindness in telling him the pretty story, he went into the garden to play till tea was ready. But on this, as well on several other occasions, he could not help casting a glance at the bank under the fir-tree, and thinking of

LITTLE DOWNY,

THE FIELD MOUSE.

HARRY PERCY;

OR,

ENCOURAGE KINDLY FEELINGS.

CHAP. I.



THE bells of Portsmouth rang merrily, the colours were flying in every direction, and the town had poured forth its thousands, to welcome home the Invincible and her victorious crew; and to behold the fine French frigate she had lately captured.

It was one of the showy and merry-making incidents of warfare, and gratifying to naval pride;—yet some among these happy groups sighed, and thought

that victory had been bought too dearly; for the intelligence had just arrived, that Captain Percy, the gallant commander of the Invincible, had fallen in the moment of victory.

The sad news had not reached Mrs. Percy, who, unknowing that the brilliant event had made her a widow, appeared on the beach. The people, now silent, made way for her; and she, leaning on the arm of a companion, stood anxiously watching the progress of a boat, which was rapidly approaching the shore. It neared, and the late wife and still mother cast a searching look among the crew. With maternal joy she recognized her gallant son, and waved her handkerchief, to greet his safe return.

In another moment the stripling midshipman was at her side; but de-

jected, and in tears. Summoning all her fortitude, the benevolent lady exclaimed, "Harry, tell me all—suspense is torture!"

Harry turned away, and wept; and then sobbed out the heart-rending words,—“my brave father fell in the very moment of victory.”

Mrs. Percy feebly uttered, “O Lord, thy will be done!” and sunk into a state of insensibility.

When Mrs. Percy recovered her senses, she found herself at home, and her dutiful son watching by her side, with the fondest solicitude; then she perceived, for the first time, that his right arm hung powerless by his side, and that his uniform was stained in many places with blood. Yet even in that bitter moment her grateful heart was lifted up, in pious thankfulness to

heaven, that her son was still spared to her; and becoming more composed, could ask, and Harry Percy could tell, the particulars of the fight; and the fall of the heroic Captain Percy. The afflicted lady heard that her husband had nobly perished in the performance of his duty; and knowing that he had lived like a Christian, she confidently looked forward to a blessed re-union with him in a better world, where nothing would ever again divide them from each other.

Far different feelings agitated the heart of her son: he did not seek for consolation from above. While his mother's tearful eye was raised to heaven—while her fervent prayer was ascending to the throne of mercy, in pious resignation to the will of God—he stood looking down on his sword,

secretly vowing eternal hatred to the French nation. Reason might have told him that it was the chance of war; and that the conflict in which his father died, had also made many a Frenchwoman a widowed mourner—many a child fatherless. No: the prejudice he bore to the very name of Frenchman, stifled the voice of reason, and forbade its pleadings to be heard.

Harry Percy, it must be told, was enthusiastic in the cause of the Royal Family of France, and from the moment they became the victims of popular fury, he detested the very name of a Republican, and such he erroneously considered every Frenchman to be.

This prejudice might, possibly, have yielded to time and his natural benevolence, if the untimely fate of a

young relative, for whom he cherished a brother's love, and who died in consequence of the hardships he endured in a French prison, had not revived it in all its former force. Young Percy thirsted to dip his yet unstained sword in French blood, and much wished the Invincible might soon come into action.

This wish was now amply granted; he witnessed all the terrors of a sea fight—felt all its dreadful excitement; he saw the decks strewn with the dead and dying, and beheld his father fall, as he was heading the boarding party, in the very moment of victory. Deeply did he now lament the fulfilment of his desires, since such had been their sad consummation.

The wounds young Percy had received, during the action, promised

to detain him on shore during the greater part of the winter.

It was a clear morning in the beginning of December, when a slight frost made every thing glitter in the cheering rays of the sun, that the invalid first took his walk abroad, but with a step enfeebled by pain and confinement to his chamber. The sea-breeze invitingly drew him to the beach, and then the sight of the Invincible, which lay at anchor off the town, insensibly recalled the memory of his father's death; and, with the recollection of that sad event, all his bitter animosity against the French revived. "Oh!" thought he, "that I could revenge his fall, and that of my dear Edward, on these odious Republicans!"

At this moment his reverie was interrupted by a youth, apparently of

his own age, who accosted him in very broken English, and implored him, "*Pour l'amour de Dieu*, (for the love of God,) to take pity on a poor prisoner of war, and to bestow a trifle on him for his sick brother."

Percy, in a rough voice, replied, in French, "Begone, you French dog! I hate your country too much to afford you any relief."

The French prisoner raised his fine dark eyes to heaven, with a look of appeal that softened Percy's anger; who took a half-a-crown from his purse, and offering it to the suppliant, said, in a milder tone, "Here is a trifle for you; for though I detest your country, yet you appear to be in great distress."

The poor youth looked earnestly at the piece of silver, but the ungenerous words that accompanied the proffer

crimsoned his pale cheek; and he replied, with some indignation, "Yes, I am distressed; but I cannot accept relief from one who reviles my country. No: I could perish first!" And, without speaking another word, left young Percy, who remained for some moments on the same spot, covered with shame and confusion.

The pleasure of the walk was now gone; for, at sixteen, the heart is seldom hard; and Percy returned home, discontented and out of humour with himself, angry with the French prisoner, and in a frame of mind ready to be displeased with every body.

"You are ill, my Harry," said his fond mother, anxiously regarding the invalid, as he threw himself into a chair; "the walk has been too much for you. I feared it would be so; but

you were obstinately bent on having your own way."

"No: I am well enough," he replied, in a pettish tone; "but I wish I was on board ship again."

"Do you wish then to leave me, Harry?" asked his mother, regarding him with an anxious look.

"No, my dear mother, I do not wish to leave you, but something has happened to vex me;" and then, with some little hesitation, he related his adventure with the French prisoner.

Mrs. Percy was grieved to find that prejudice should have induced her son to treat with unkindness a distressed fellow-creature.—"Alas!" sighed she, "you may be taken prisoner yourself, my son, and be reduced to beg your bread in a foreign land."

"Never! while the Invincible has a

mast standing, or a man left to work her guns," replied Percy, "and I think that you, dear mother, ought to enter into my feelings;" and, as he spoke, he looked on his wounded arm, and then glanced at the black crape he wore, as mourning for his father.

Mrs. Percy understood his meaning perfectly well, and, as tears filled her eyes, said, "Your brave father died in the performance of his duty; and those who slew him, followed the dictates of theirs likewise. I wish them no ill. Are we not, my son, commanded to love our enemies, and return good for evil?"

Percy, made no reply to his mother's meek rebuke; but he turned the conversation to another topic; and the entrance of his new commander obliterated the incident of the morning walk from his mind.

CHAP. II.

PERCY's health improved daily, so that he was able to walk abroad without any fear of a relapse; and in the course of his morning promenades, he frequently saw the French prisoner, who, he fancied, regarding him with an air of defiance; and on those occasions, the young midshipman frequently muttered some unkind reflection on the French nation, in the hearing of the poor lad: yet sometimes the natural generosity of Percy's heart reproached him, and he let the French prisoner pass without molestation. But it is very difficult to overcome a bad habit when once acquired; and we are sorry to say, that his forbearance was of rare occurrence.

Philippe Armande, which was the name of the French youth, generally carried a basket of elegant toys; for he was an adept in manufacturing those delicate pieces of fancy work, in the forming of which his countrymen surpass the natives of all other nations. For these he had a brisk sale, and seldom returned to the prison with many of his morning's freight. An unfortunate event, however, nearly ruined his little trade; for one day, happening to be caught in a shower of rain, and anxious to preserve his toys from the ill effects of a wetting, he hurried towards a pastrycook's shop, when in his haste, he ran against Harry Percy, and struck his wounded arm with the corner of his basket. Natural politeness and benevolence prompted him to make an apology for the accident; but the

young officer, not waiting to hear what Philippe would say, darted forward, and struck him so violently with his left hand, that his basket and all its contents were rolled into the kennel.

The pale cheek of Philippe Armande grew crimson; his soft, dark eyes glittered with rage; his whole frame trembled with indignation; and he was about to raise his arm in the act to strike Percy, but suddenly checking himself, he caught up his basket, and hastily collected his little property.

“So you dare to threaten and insult me, you cowardly king-killing Republican,” exclaimed Percy; “because you think that the wounds I have received in my country’s service will prevent my punishing your insolence as it deserves.”

“Such motives might influence my conduct, if I were ungenerous and unjust, like you,” replied Philippe Armande, in a tone of bitter reproach; “but I scorn to take advantage of your present disabled state.” He then crossed the street without casting another look at his reviler.

Percy was too much excited by sudden pain, to consider at the moment how unjustly and ungenerously he had acted; but felt, notwithstanding, humbled and mortified by the forbearance of Philippe Armande. Yet, if the young officer could have followed Philippe Armande to his home,—that home a prison,—if he could have seen him weeping on his pale sick brother’s neck, lamenting over the destruction of the toys whose sale would have procured medicine and nourishing food

for the suffering invalid,—his heart would have felt keen remorse for the pain he had occasioned to the ‘Poor French prisoner of War.’

From that day, Percy rarely met Philippe Armande; but when he did, was much struck by the melancholy of his fine dark eyes. He was evidently ill, and unhappy, and Percy felt a slight pang of remorse, when he made this observation. After a time he ceased to see him at all, and began to wonder what had become of him; as did those also who had been accustomed to buy poor Philippe’s toys.

The month of February set in unusually cold; and one afternoon, Harry Percy, who had been enjoying a comfortable nap on the sofa, near the fire, was awakened by hearing some one conversing with his mother in French,

and in a tone of voice he thought he knew. Half unclosing his eyes, he beheld, to his utter astonishment, the French prisoner sitting directly opposite to him, and talking earnestly to his mother, who appeared to listen to him with the greatest interest and attention. Unable to comprehend the meaning of this unexpected visit, he hastily closed his eyes, and assumed again the appearance of sleep.

“And is your brother so very ill?” asked Mrs. Percy in a compassionate tone of voice and manner.

Philippe Armande replied in a hesitating and broken voice, “Alas! yes, madam; I fear, if his health does not improve soon, he will not see another winter. Indeed, he requires both warm clothing and nourishing food; for the prison allowance is unfit for an invalid,

and for some time he has had nothing better. However," continued he, in a more cheerful tone, "I hope now to earn a trifle for that purpose."

"But you look ill, yourself," said Mrs. Percy, "and seem quite unequal to any kind of exertion."

"I am still weak from the effects of an illness I had this winter; but I am getting better. My poor brother Louis has injured his health by nursing me, for he was gaining a little strength when I fell ill; and now he looks worse, and is so thin, so very thin. Oh! he will die, I am sure, he will die! and my poor mother will break her heart when she learns his sad fate. But no—she will not know it, for we shall both perish in this strange land, and never see her, our sisters, or dear France again." Poor Philippe now

turned aside, and wept; but for very shame, Percy would have shed tears also. With anxious interest, he now awaited his mother's reply; which was, like her own character, mild and compassionate.

"Yours is a sad case, but God is all merciful; put your trust in him, and he will comfort you; for he never forsakes those who place their confidence in him. So, now, I will buy the contents of your basket."

"May God bless you, madam," replied the grateful youth, "and repay you a thousand fold; for, indeed, I have not been able to sell a single toy to-day."

"Are you always so unfortunate?" asked Mrs. Percy; "or have you only now commenced this trade?"

"No, madam, formerly I was very

successful, and sold my toys; but, one day, I had the misfortune to run against a young officer, who, without deigning to listen to my apology, struck me so violently, that I dropt my basket and all its contents into the mud. I returned home, in a miserable state of mind. I had been insulted, beaten, and, to complete my misfortunes, not only my own toys were spoiled, but those I was employed to sell for my fellow-prisoners, who were consequently angry with me. I had no money to purchase materials to replenish my basket, and though I still earned a trifle, by selling on commission for my comrades, I could not gain enough to procure those comforts my poor brother needed. Soon afterwards, I fell ill, and my brother lost all his little remaining strength, working for me

and nursing me during my illness. Three days ago, a stranger visited the prison, and bestowed a trifle on me. I purchased some materials with this money, and, aided by Louis, made some toys; and was trying to sell them, when you saw, and were touched with my sickly appearance and sad looks; and, unsolicited, relieved the poor prisoner of war; for which goodness, I hope, God will one day reward you."

"I think," said Mrs. Percy in a thoughtful tone, "that if the youth who struck you were to know all the distress he has occasioned, he would be very sorry."

"Alas! no, madam," replied Philippe Armande, utterly unconscious that his former enemy was present, "I fear the young officer is too cruel and insolent by nature, to feel for the

sufferings of two unfortunate French prisoners. That was not the only time he insulted me. Once I solicited his charity, and he reviled my country. Think, Madam, how bitterly I felt those epithets of republican and king-killer; for my father commanded one of those gallant Swiss regiments, which defended the Tuileries on the memorable 10th of August, and perished on the staircase of that palace, in the service of his king. And yet," continued Philippe with bitter emphasis, "his son has been reviled in England, as a regicide."

Till that moment, the penitent midshipman had not changed his position, but had conterefted sleep. When, however, he found that the innocent object of his aversion, was an unfortunate son of a brave officer, who had

perished in the cause of suffering royalty, he could contain his remorseful feelings no longer, but springing from the sofa, earnestly besought Philippe Armande's forgiveness.

Surprised and delighted by this candid acknowledgement of error, the poor youth embraced his repentant enemy with the characteristic warmth of his country; exclaiming, as he did so, "I forgive you with all my heart; and I am truly sorry that I said so much: but, indeed, I did not know that this lady was your mother."

"Indeed, if I had known that you were a royalist, I should not have called you such names," said Percy wishing to extenuate his conduct; "for I hated your countrymen because they killed their king."

"All Frenchmen were not guilty of

that crime," replied Philippe, "it was the act of party fury."

Percy was silent for a moment, and then said, "Tell me truly, Armande, do you not hate the English as much as I do the French?"

"I hate no one," replied Philippe, "and my parents taught me not to dislike any one because he happens to be born in a foreign country."

Mrs. Percy pitied her son's confusion: and to relieve him from it, asked Philippe how he became a prisoner.

"My story has, I fear, little in it to interest you, madam," replied Philippe, bowing to Mrs. Percy.

"The death of my father reduced us to poverty; but my mother's grief for his loss, prevented her even from feeling her destitute circumstances. She did not weep, but her reason was

partially affected. She would sit, for hours, gazing on her helpless orphans, without uttering a single word. I was a little child then, and well remember being terrified by her passionate caresses and wild looks.

“My elder brother Louis took her into Normandy, which was her native country; and the sight of her birth-place, and her absence from the capital, restored her to health and self-possession; and she was thus enabled to make some exertions for the maintenance of her family.

“Louis, who had quitted the army, rather than serve against his king, obtained employment in a merchant’s counting-house, and so assisted my mother; besides which, he spent all his leisure time in educating and instructing us in our moral and religious

duties; and in spite of poverty, we were happy; but our comforts were destroyed in an unexpected manner."

"How was that?" asked Mrs. Percy; "were you attacked with illness, or did the rage of party follow you to the humble asylum you had chosen?"

"No, madam," replied Philippe, "I wished to become a sailor, and Louis accepted a birth in a ship, then bound for the Isle of France, making it a condition that room was made for me."

"It cost us both many tears, before we could resolve to part with those we loved so dearly; but the hope of earning a competency for our mother and sisters, comforted us a little.

"We had a successful voyage; and, while at the Isle of France, Louis received a letter from Adele, his betrothed, informing him that her

father, who opposed their union, was no more, and that she was eagerly expecting his return.

“You may imagine, madam, how tedious the homeward passage appeared to us both; but, alas! when nearly in sight of Dieppe, we were chased and captured by an English frigate, and brought hither.

“Since then, grief and disappointment have prayed on my poor brother’s mind; his health has fallen a sacrifice to his blighted hopes; and I fear he will never see France again.”

Mrs. Percy and her son spoke soothingly to Philippe, promising to see Louis in a short time; and the French prisoner took his leave, with renovated spirits.

CHAP. III.

LET us accompany Mrs. Percy and her son to Porchester Castle, the place of confinement of prisoners of war, at that time. Many of these unfortunates were assembled at work, in a large room; and there was an air of cheerfulness and content in them that greatly surprised the visitors. Some of the more robust and noisy were singing the *Marsellais* hymn, in concert, while they wove their elegant straw baskets; while others, less boisterous, were solacing themselves with a loyal song, which, in other times, had been sweet to the ears of Frenchmen: it was still so to Philippe Armande, who was sitting in one of the deep embrasures of a gothic window, unconscious for

some time of the presence of Mrs. Percy and her son. His thoughts were, evidently, far away from the scene before him: perhaps they sought the land of his nativity, and the companions of his childhood. Suddenly he turned his eyes on a young man, who sat near him, employed in carving an ivory fan; and whose consumptive appearance, and melancholy expression of countenance convinced Mrs. Percy, that in him she beheld his brother Louis.

In another moment Philippe saw, and recognised his friends; and coming forward, with a smile of welcome, introduced them to the invalid, as his kind and generous benefactors.

Louis's noble propriety, in the manner in which he expressed his thanks, proved, that though hardships and im-

prisonment had ruined his health, they had not degraded his mind. His dress was that of poverty; but his air, military and genteel, was that of a soldier and a gentleman.

Mrs. Percy enquired after his health, with much considerate kindness in her manner; and told him, that her own medical attendant should see him; and that she would feel the greatest pleasure in supplying them with those necessaries his present weakly state required.

The invalid bowed gracefully, as he said, "Kind lady, how shall I find words to thank you for the generous interest you are pleased to take in the sufferings and sorrows of an unfortunate stranger? though I rather wish, than hope to live, for those dear ties I have left in France, yet, if I should

recover from the fatal disease that threatens me with an early grave, I shall, probably, next to God, owe my restoration to your compassion."

"I fear you have endured many hardships in this place," remarked Mrs. Percy, glancing her eyes round the large department, with its huge grated windows.

"I have, madam," replied Louis; "but I was formerly a soldier, and hardships are incidental to a military life; yet I confess it had many charms for me."

"How came you to quit the army then?" asked Mrs. Percy, "since you approved of a military life."

"I had the misfortune, madam, to hold a command in one of those battalions which forsook the sovereign they had sworn to defend, and I left

my regiment, because I would not share in its treason; whilst the sad condition of my widowed mother, and her orphan family, obliged me to abandon my intention of serving as a volunteer under the gallant and loyal Conde, in Germany, in order to provide for their support. Philippe has already acquainted you with the story of my misfortunes and blighted hopes.

“No, madam, I should blush to feel for deprivations that my king, and the virtuous daughter of the exiled and murdered Louis, and the nobility of France, must all share; but my mother, my sisters, and my promised wife, are all sorrowing for me and my poor Philippe, and are, like me, the prey of disappointment and despair. Peace is yet, perhaps, far distant, and we may both perish in an English prison.”

“God is merciful,” rejoined Mrs. Percy, “and he may yet restore you to health and liberty, and give you back to your family and France. You have still a comfort that many of your fellow-prisoners do not possess, for you have, in Philippe, the fondest and most attached of friends and brothers.”

Louis, taking his brother's hand, pressed it between his own with ardent affection. “He is, indeed, more than a brother; he is at once my nurse and my comforter, and my example of patience and heavenly resignation. —How often has his sweet voice cheered my sad heart, and borne it back to absent France!”

They both now asked Philippe to shew them the little manufactures that were constructed for sale by himself and his fellow-prisoners.

Philippe, readily, conducted them through the apartment, directing their attention to the ingenious works of his fellow-prisoners, saying something kind and complaisant to each individual; and notwithstanding the accident to their toys, Mrs. Percy saw that he was a favourite with them all.

Mrs. Percy and her son, on retiring, made the prisoners a present of a handful of silver, promising that, ere long, they would visit them again.

They then left the prison, with that calm, holy peace of mind, which is the reward of the compassionate and charitable; which, even in this world, gives them, as it were, a foretaste of heaven.

CHAP. IV.

MRS. PERCY was in affluent circumstances, and her wealth was a source of comfort to the sick and afflicted among her fellow-creatures. Her talents and virtues had obtained for her that general respect and influence, which riches alone can never procure, even when associated with the highest rank.

She not only desired her physician to visit the Armandes, but she also purchased clothes and linen for their use, and permitted her son to assist in this work of mercy, by devoting a portion of his own money to the purchase of nourishing food for these interesting brothers.

Nor was this the limit of her kind-

ness; she employed her influence for the amelioration of their condition as prisoners; and to her solicitations the Armandes owed an increase of liberty; for though Philippe, on account of his youth, had been permitted to sell the little manufactures made in the castle, yet a late daring attempt of some of the prisoners to procure their freedom, had caused them all to be kept in much stricter confinement than formerly.

Percy now became a constant visitor at the Castle; and under his tuition the younger Armande acquired the English language, and progressed in the knowledge of navigation, and all those interesting sciences which it embraces.

The pupil was very soon able to express the warm feelings of his grateful

heart in Percy's own language; and often did the once prejudiced midshipman listen, with delight, to tales with which the revolutionary era abounded; whilst the sufferings, even of republicans, melted his heart with compassion. Over the sad relation of the Vendean struggle he wept, with feelings of mingled admiration and pity.

Time stole on, but brought with it no vigour to the exhausted frame of Louis Armande; whose breath became more oppressed, and whose cheek glowed with a deeper bloom, while his eyes sparkled with a light that was not of this world.

Sometimes, he would listen to the sweet voice of his brother, while he sang hymns, or chaunted those beautiful passages of Scripture, which have been adapted to music. At other

times, leaning on the arm of that brother "who was gilding daily his passage to the grave with smiles," he would watch the waves, as they broke on the distant shore, while their incessant motion reminded him of the sea of time, whose waters were now fast ebbing from him.

The negotiations for peace between France and England inspired the poor sufferer with the hope that he might perhaps die in the bosom of his own family, and that his ashes might be mingled with his parent soil; even Philippe and Henry began to think it possible that he might yet live to return to France.

One morning, however, Louis's cough suddenly left him, his strength appeared to be renewed, and the pain in his left side, which had long tor-

mented him, ceased, and he felt himself so much better, that he told Philippe he was "quite equal to the exertion of taking a walk."

The affectionate brother placed him near the gothic window, that he might feel the warm sunshine, and was assisting him with his over-coat, when Percy entered, with the newspaper in his hand, and exclaimed, "Peace! peace has been signed, and to-day it is to be proclaimed in London!"

Neither of the brothers spoke, but silently embraced each other, and raised their eyes to heaven, in unutterable thankfulness. Louis stretched out his hands towards Harry Percy, while feelings of intense joy brightened his wasted cheek; his lips moved, as if in devout prayer; and then turning a look of fond affection on Philippe, laid

his head on that faithful bosom, and expired without a sigh.

It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to describe the feelings that agonized the fond breast of the survivor; but the ever gentle voice of sympathy fell upon his ear, and a kind and affectionate friend whispered peace to his agonized mind; and the suffering Philippe felt, even in that painful moment, that in Percy he yet possessed a brother.

The remains of Louis Armande were followed to the grave by all his own countrymen, and by many of the respectable inhabitants of Portsmouth; to whom his touching story had become well known through the medium of the benevolent Percy.

The order at length came down from government for the embarkation

of the prisoners; when something like joy brightened the cheeks of Philippe, and he began to sing the first verse of a celebrated Swiss song, adapted to the music of the *Ranz des vaches*, which begins with these words,

“Ah quand reverrai-je en un jour
Tous les objets de mon amour;”

but then suddenly checking himself, he exclaimed with a sigh, “Alas! I have little cause to rejoice, for I leave in England the ashes of the best and dearest of brothers.”

Philippe removed to the house of his English friends, who made his short stay with them so agreeable, that when the parting hour arrived, his affectionate heart was full of grief. “Adieu, my second mother!” said he, as he kissed Mrs. Percy’s hand; “I shall never forget your kindness, nor

cease to pray for you. May God bless you and recompense you for all the goodness you have shown to a poor, desolate foreigner."

Mrs. Percy smiled through her tears, and wished him much future happiness. Percy took his arm and led him to the beach, where his countrymen were already assembled, when Phillipe said, in an agitated voice, "Percy, dear Percy, from this time, I shall consider every Englishman as my brother; and if I should ever meet a native of this country in distress, I will repay to him a part of the debt of gratitude I owe to my generous benefactors." He then bade Percy a hasty but fond farewell, and leaped into the boat which was rowed swiftly towards the transport, waiting to convey the French prisoners to France.

Percy stood watching the progress of the bark till his friend was no longer discernible; and then slowly returned to his own home.



CHAP. V.

A FEW days after the embarkation of the French prisoners, Percy received the following letter from Philippe Armande.

“ My dear Percy,

The same fresh breezes that bore me so swiftly from my dear friends in England, wafted me in safety to the shores of France. Never shall I forget the feelings of mingled pain and pleasure that filled and agitated my heart, when I beheld again my native land. I thought of my dear country, and all she still contained for me; I thought of home and its fond familiar ties; but then the remembrance of Louis was inseparably blended with the recollec-

tions of that home and its dear inmates. Yes, dear brother! the remembrance of thy untimely fate came over my mind, and I recollected that thou wert sleeping in a foreign grave, far from those who were then so eagerly expecting thy return! My new born joy quickly faded away from my sad breast. And when I reached Rouen, I scarcely dared to make enquiries at the Auberge, where the diligence put up, respecting the welfare of my beloved family; fearing to learn, that death had rent away from me some dear one: however, I found that my mother and my sisters were all spared, and in health; but Adele, was no more! She had already been dead four months, and had bequeathed all her fortune to her absent lover. Ah! little did Louis think that Adele, for

whose sake he so ardently wished to behold France was then quietly sleeping in the church-yard.

“I cannot describe my first interview with my dear relatives. I remember how each loved one hung round my neck, and wept; that I heard them ask for Louis.—Alas! my tears and mourning-dress soon told the sad truth, and changed their joy to bitter sorrow.

“As soon as the sad group became a little composed, I related to them all that had happened to Louis and myself, during our imprisonment in England; and how your friendship had shed a ray of gladness round the last hours of the dying prisoner. I wish you could have heard the blessings these sad ones pronounced on the name of Percy. Never will they forget to pray for

you and your noble-minded mother, whose benevolence softened even bondage itself, and lightened the chains of the poor prisoners of war.

“Farewell, dear Percy; assure my English mother, that I shall always feel for her the affection of a son, and believe me to be, ever,

“Your affectionate

“and grateful

“PHILIPPE ARMANDE.”

This assurance of his friend's safety, gave Percy much pleasure; and during the short peace, he kept up a constant correspondence with Philippe Armande, for whom he now felt the affection of a brother. The recommencement of the war, however, put an end to this friendly intercourse, to the mutual sorrow of both parties.

Percy did not forget the lesson he had learned from the French prisoner; and the fine qualities of his mind, no longer obscured by prejudice, promised to ripen into heroic virtues.

I will not stop to trace the steps of this young officer through the different gradations of his profession; it is sufficient to say, that he rose rapidly in the service;—so that at an extraordinary early age he was raised to the rank of post-captain, and appointed to the command of the *Invincible*, to whose quarter-deck he had served as a midshipman, under his gallant father. And a better commander England never had; but the glory, however bright, never seduced him from the sacred duty of humanity; for when the fight was over, the vanquished foe was sure to find a friend in the victorious cap-

tain, whose pride and boast it now was,
to prove himself a brother to a con-
quered Frenchman; and he was wont
to say,

“To snatch a brave fellow from a watery grave,
Is worthy a Briton, who conquers to save.”



CHAP. VI.

HITHERTO Captain Percy had sailed on a calm sea of prosperity, and had known no reverse of fortune;—the *Invincible* had never lowered her flag in battle, nor encountered shipwreck. But seas are not always calm; and the winds and waves, whose rough music had often lulled the intrepid commander of the *Invincible* to sleep, from his very boyhood, were now about to exert their might, to the endangerment of his life or liberty.

The *Invincible* was entering the British Channel, on her return from a successful cruise, when she encountered a most furious gale; and was driven out of her course, and stranded

on a reef of sunken rocks, opposite the coast of Normandy.

Captain Percy and his gallant crew, exerted their utmost skill to extricate the ship from her perilous situation; but all their efforts were unavailing. The waves continually beat with incessant fury against her broadside, and it was evident to all on board, that the fine frigate, which had weathered so many gales, would speedily be scattered, in broken pieces, on the surface of the deep.

Captain Percy ordered signals of distress to be fired, and lights to be hung out, since even the horrors of a French prison were preferable to a watery grave.

No assistance, however, appeared likely to be given them from the shore. The situation of the ship and her

company seemed desperate, when the captain ordered the boats to be lowered, although he saw little chance of their living in such a sea. Then many a brave tar, who had often faced death in battle, without fear, shook with apprehension, and gave way to lamentations.

One feeling only was shown by the ill-fated crew of the Invincible, in which all degrees of subordination were forgotten, and that feeling was self-preservation. Even the Commander was not insensible to its dictates. He thought of his mother, and was going to enter the heavily laden long-boat, when he reflected that many must inevitably perish; and among these some who were husbands and fathers, whose families were dependent on them for support.

Percy drew back, resisting the wishes of his friends, and crushing every selfish inclination, resigned himself to the will of God, whatever that will might be. Then undressing himself, and putting his trust in Him, who, with a word, had once calmed the tempestuous waves of the sea, he then cast himself into the raging deep, in the hope that he might yet reach the shore in safety.

Captain Percy was a very expert swimmer, possessed of great muscular strength, and presence of mind; but a wild cry—a drowning shriek, now mingled its shrill and heart-rending voice with the fearful sounds of the gale:—the boats were upset, and their unhappy crews, struggling on the stormy water. For a moment the bold swimmer was unnerved;—for a moment he echoed

that dismal cry, and felt inclined to yield the contest and his life together. Then the thoughts of home, and his widowed mother, came over his mind, and he redoubled his efforts, although he felt his strength rapidly giving way.

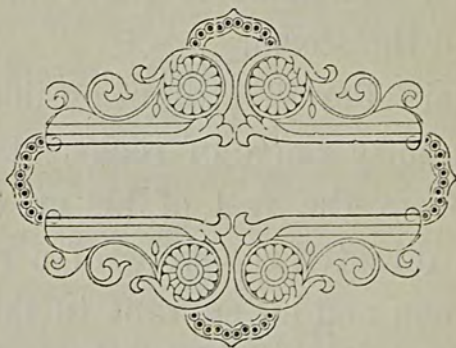
The bitter dread of death had, in some measure, passed away with the mental struggles he had endured when his officers urged him to leave the ship.—A deadly faintness now stole over the swimmer's senses, and he was on the point of sinking, when he instinctively caught hold of a plank that floated near him, with the strong grasp of a drowning person. Then sight and sense forsook him, and he was carried, at the mercy of the waves, by the tide, which was setting in towards the shore.

The gale had now subsided, the thunder had ceased to mutter, and the day rose without a cloud; and the first beams of the autumnal sun glittered on the half immersed form of Captain Percy, and shone on the head of many a drowned and dying seaman.

Humanity brought to the beach a group of French peasants, who speedily rendered assistance to those who had survived the storm.

Captain Percy, still insensible, lay under a lofty range of rocks, at a distance from the rest of his crew, and chance directed the steps of a French gentleman and his servant to the spot where he was lying. They immediately rendered him the help his desolate situation required; and when the gentleman caught a view of Percy's face, he gazed for a moment, and then uttered

a cry of astonishment. At that cry, the tempest-beaten mariner opening his eyes, just recognized the features of Philippe Armande, and again relapsed into a state of insensibility.



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CHAP. VII.

WHEN Percy again recovered his senses, he found himself lying in a bed, whose delicately white hangings gave him an idea of comfort and home. A confused remembrance of the events of the past night crowded on his mind. He looked round the chamber, and was satisfied that he was not in his own cabin; still he was unwilling to believe that the timbers of the Invincible were scattered before the winds and waves, and that her gallant crew had perished, amidst the rude war of elements. He felt like a man awakened from a dream, who is conscious that the images he beholds are the creation of his own fancy, and entirely unreal, although they yet perplex and terrify him.

A well-known voice soon dispelled his doubts, and convinced him that he was labouring under no delusion of the senses; for Philippe Armande, who had been watching, unseen, by the bed-side, put back the curtain, and tenderly enquired after his health.

Captain Percy answered, by embracing his early and beloved friend, and, for a moment, alive only to joy, forgot the disastrous circumstances, under which they met.

The truly brave are never selfish, and Harry Percy now thought of his officers and crew, "Have none of my brave fellows survived this dismal storm?" he enquired with an anxious look.

"Two officers, the boatswain, and ten seamen, are all the survivors," replied Philippe. "Three officers, and several

mariners, died of exhaustion and fatigue, after they came on shore."

Captain Percy hid his face in the pillow, and was silent; feeling that he had been especially protected by Providence; and in secret, he now lifted up his heart in pious thankfulness to the Almighty hand, which had preserved him from the great peril of the storm. He could not hear of the sad fate of his unfortunate ship's company without severe pain; but it was the will of God that they should thus perish, and he acknowledged and meekly submitted to that will.

The friends had much to learn from each other: fortune appeared signally to have smiled on Philippe Armande's family, for they were now in possession of wealth and happiness.—"Yes, my friend," said the young Frenchman,

“we are all happy and contented; our grief for our dear Louis, softened by time, is now a tender remembrance, rather than sorrow; the hope of meeting him again is an incitement to religion and virtue, and makes us feel that this world is only a brief sojourn, not a final home.

“My mother is resigned, my sisters are happily married, and I am about to form an union with an amiable and intelligent female, with whom I hope to spend the remainder of my days in peace. God has, indeed, recompensed me for the years in which I suffered adversity.”

“How surprising is this meeting,” exclaimed Captain Percy; and while a shadow of gloom spread over his face, he added, “I have now the prospect of spending my best years in a French

prison, but,"—and he smiled,—"I shall have a friend near me.

"I hope to avert that evil from you, my dear friend," said Armande, pressing the hand he held with great warmth, since no one, besides my own family and household, know that the commander of the Invincible survived the storm that rendered the ship a wreck. I can depend upon the fidelity of my servants, and you can remain here in perfect safety, till we can devise some plan for your escape from this coast."

Captain Percy returned the friendly pressure with equal warmth, and expressed great satisfaction, in the hope that he might yet regain his native land, without a personal experience of the evils of captivity. He now expressed a wish to rise; and Philippe Armande retired, to provide the

necessary articles to form his friend's toilette.

The British Commander could not refrain from smiling, when he beheld the very fashionable appearance he made in his new habiliments; tapping his friend playfully on the shoulder, he said, "Really, my dear Armande, if I see England shortly, I shall be complimented on the cut of my cloth, by every one; and shall have the honour of importing the newest Parisian mode that is likely to be seen for years, on my side of the water."

Philippe laughed at his friend's sally, and conducted him to the breakfast-room, where his mother and sisters were assembled to meet him.

As soon as the introduction was over, which was as unceremonious as gratitude could make it. Philippe Armande

said, in a playful tone, "Percy, I have half a mind to send these saucy girls home to their husbands; for, because I sent my mother to inform them that my benefactor was in the house, they have intruded themselves upon me, determined to claim a share in his regards and remembrance."

Captain Percy soon found himself as much at home with the family of his friend, as he could possibly do, under the painful circumstances that caused his visit.

A week glided away at St. Vallerie, almost imperceptibly to Captain Percy, when Philippe obtained information that a vessel, whose owner carried on a contraband trade with England, was about to sail that very night.

As soon as Philippe Armande learned this circumstance, he hastened to Mon-

sieur le Fevre, the commander, and procured a passage in the Ville de Rouen, for his shipwrecked friend, and then communicated the good tidings to the object of his solicitude.

"Believe me, my dear Armande," replied Percy, "that I have been so happy in my sojourn with Madame Armande and her family, that I half regret the necessity of my immediate departure. Must I really separate from you so soon?"

"To-night the wind is fair, and I fear we shall not again meet with such an opportunity, if we let this pass."

"It must be so, dear, considerate Armande," exclaimed Captain Percy, embracing his friend; of whose amiable family he hastened to take leave.

It was night, when Philippe Armande conducted Percy to the beach of St.

Vallerie. Not a star shone in the heaven above them. A single light, which was held up by some one in the vessel, to direct their course towards her, served rather to make the darkness more intense. To Captain Percy's eye, however, it appeared like a beacon of hope and liberty; although to Philippe it was a melancholy sign of their approaching separation.

The friends soon gained the spot where the little bark was moored, and then embraced each other, like brothers who were about to part for ever. "Farewell, dear Percy," exclaimed Armande: "farewell, my beloved friend!—may years of prosperity efface your late misfortunes, and banish the remembrance of your shipwreck on the coast of Normandy! Yet, if your thoughts should ever dwell on

your short sojourn at St. Vallerie, let Philippe Armande share in your recollections of that period."

Captain Percy assured him, that his friendship would always be the pride of his life, and that the memory of the days he had passed in France could never be forgotten by him, while gratitude and affection were the inmates of his breast. He then shook hands with Philippe; in a few minutes after he stood on the deck of the *Ville de Rouen*, which was immediately got under weigh for England.

The wind was fair; and the master, an old and experienced navigator, and the crew, a set of bold, active fellows, well acquainted with the coast, were remarkably civil to their passenger during their short voyage.

The vessel arrived on the coast of

Sussex, with its freight of silks, cambrics, and Normandy lace. A boat was lowered, and Captain Percy was, to his great joy, put on shore near Brighton. With the liberal reward paid to the owner of the vessel, Captain Percy also put into his hand a few lines to Armande, announcing his safe arrival. He then engaged a post-chaise, and was instantly on the road to Portsmouth.

On his arrival, he heard that his mother was in deep affliction at his supposed loss; but his caution in undeceiving her, successfully prepared her for his appearance; and the friend who undertook to inform her of the joyful news, in reverting to the pleasureable mission, always repeats the words of the young sailor:—"I am truly happy that in my early days my

prejudices were subdued, and that I learned to lighten the captivity, and to soothe the sorrows of a French Prisoner of War."





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