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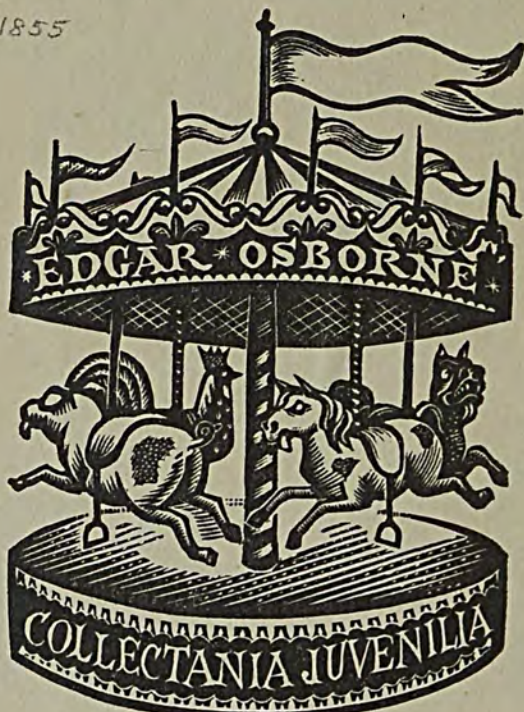
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PHILIPPE ARMANDES NARRATIVE.

Harry Perry

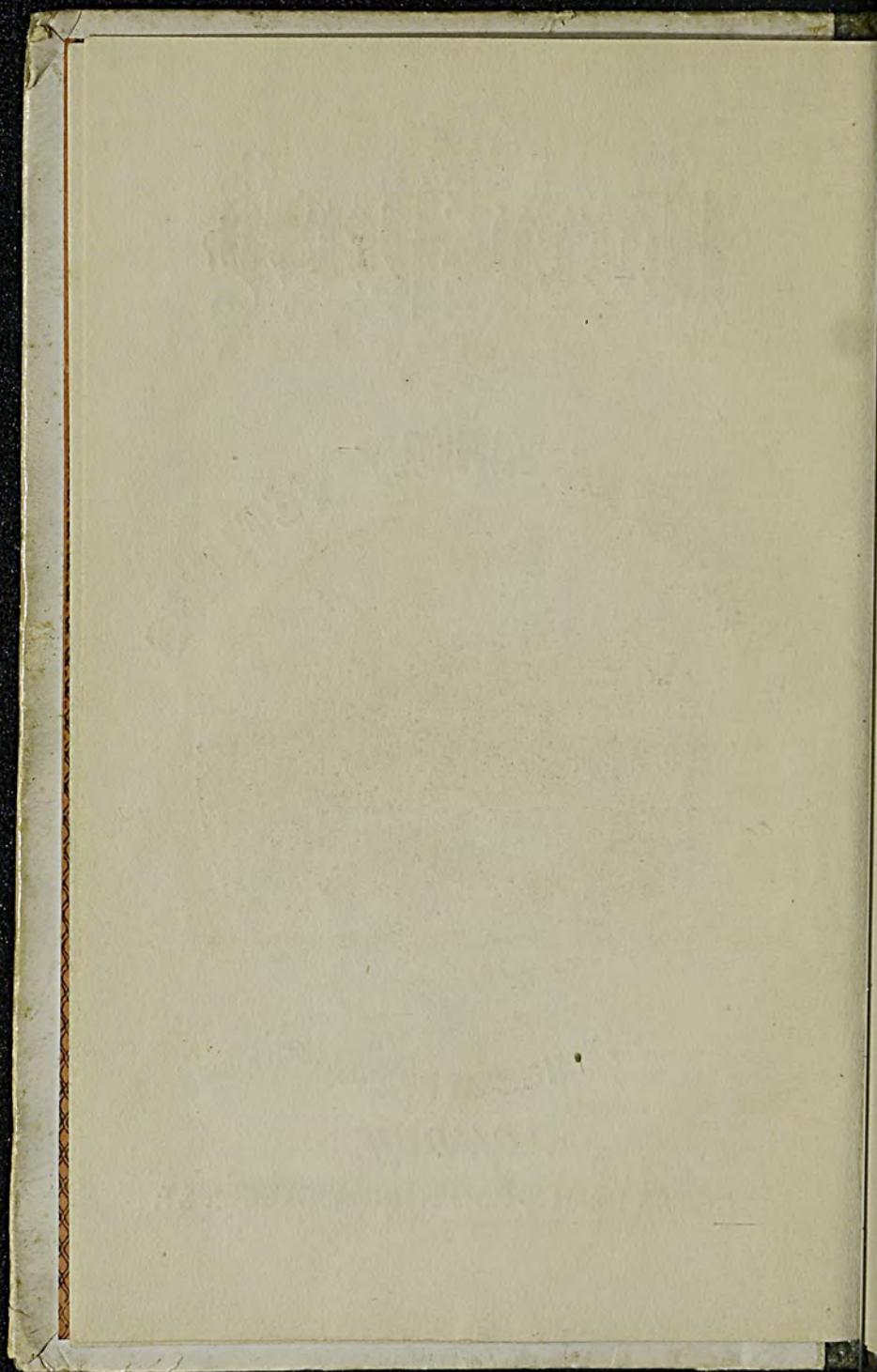
ENCOURAGE KINDLY FEELINGS



BY MISS STRICKLAND.

LONDON

THOMAS DEAN & SON THREADNEEDLE ST.



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ATTOR

THO

HARRY PERCY;

OR,

ENCOURAGE KINDLY FEELINGS.



BY MISS J. STRICKLAND.

AUTHOR OF STORIES ON THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON, &c. &c.

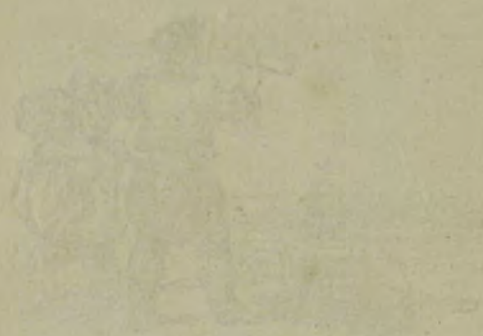
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HARRY JERRY;

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INTRODUCTION.

PREJUDICES are generally imbibed in early youth, before reason obtains its proper influence on the mind. Their quality is that of a moral poison,—blunting the understanding, and corroding the heart. The following tale is intended to point out to young people, what mischievous effects may spring from the indulgence of such

improper feelings, and what are the advantages of overcoming their prejudices ; showing that to think rightly is beneficial both to ourselves and our fellow-creatures.



HARRY PERCY;

OR,

ENCOURAGE KINDLY FEELINGS.

CHAP. I.



HE 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 those 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, learning 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 fervant 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 or 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, he 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 regarded 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 commisson 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 me, 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 contereited 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, 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 succesful 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 the 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 *Marsellaise* 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 apartment, with its huge grated windows.

"I have, madam," replied Louis; "but I was formerly a soldier, and hardships are incidental to 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 Vendeean 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 jour
Tous les objets de mon amour ;”

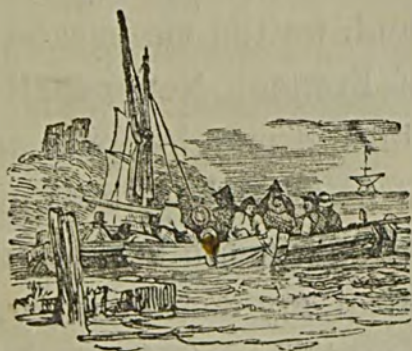
but then suddenly checking himself, he exclaimed with a sigh, “ Alas! I have little cause to rejoice, for I leave in England the ashes of the best and dearest of brothers.”

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 though 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 Philippe 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 enquires 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 a remarkably early age he was raised to the rank of post-captain, and appointed on 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 and 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 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.



CHAP. VII.

WHEN Percy 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 how 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 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 sister 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 be, 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 hastend 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 hastend 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 emhraced 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 Armand 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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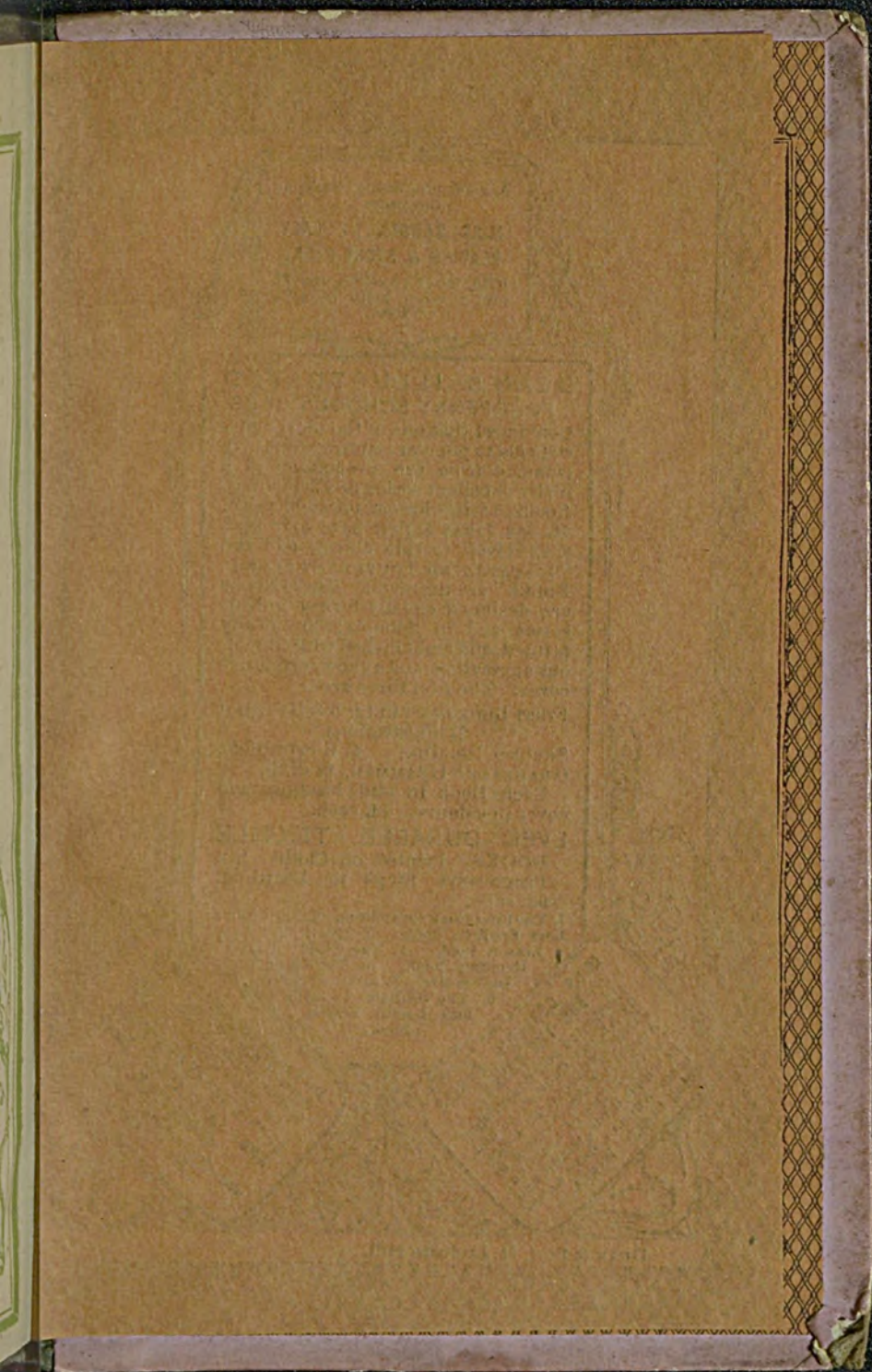
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