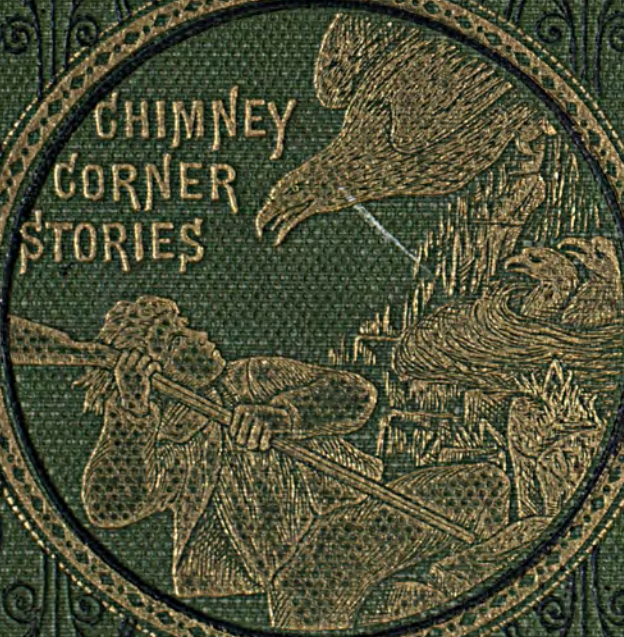


CHIMNEY
CORNER
STORIES



56

Albert Greer

B.

Prize for 1st in Grammar
2nd in Arithmetic.

2nd .. Fifth Book

2nd .. Spelling

Awarded to A. Greer

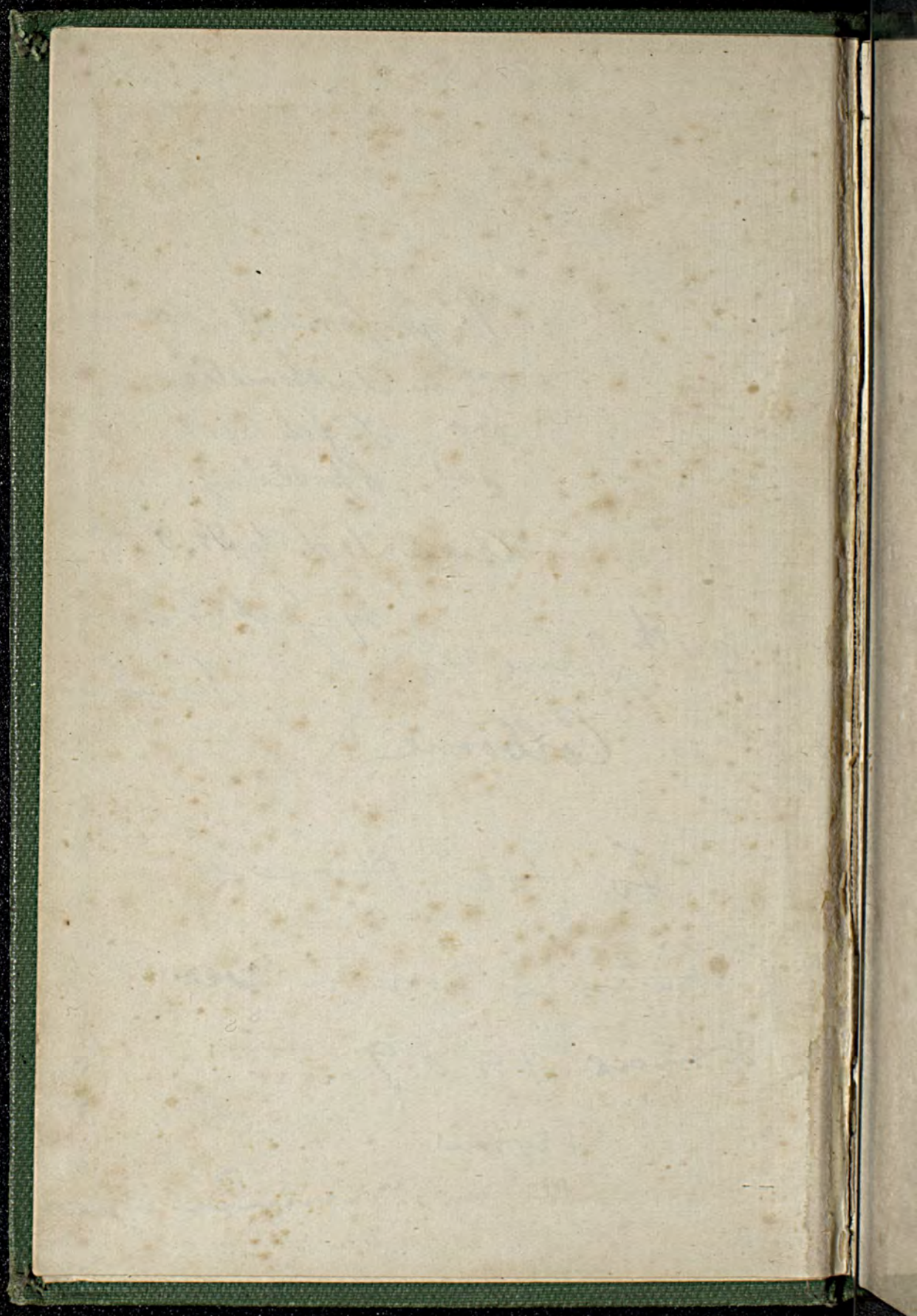
24th June 42 } by Jas. A. Sinclair
Colborne } Teacher

To Joe Hinds

Wishing you a Merry
Xmas 1909

From

Minnie Greer



Prize for a copy of
of a Constitution
and a copy of
the following

document to be given

to the first person who
brings it to the
June 1st 1861
Collins



"He still defended himself as well as he was able, dealing the bird many a stout blow."—Page 118.

CHIMNEY-CORNER STORIES.

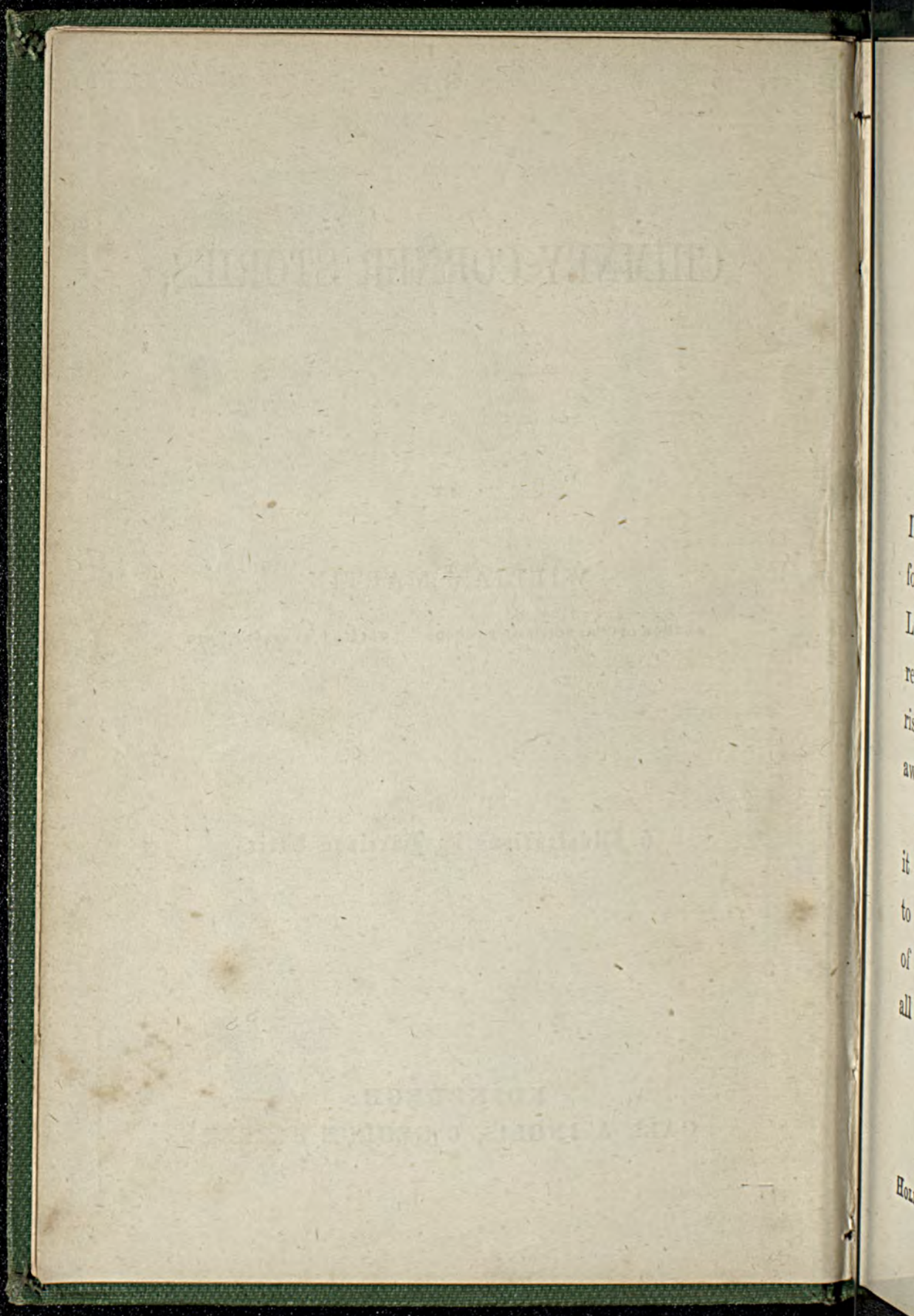
BY

WILLIAM MARTIN,

AUTHOR OF "HEROISM OF BOYHOOD," "HOLIDAY KEEPSAKE," ETC.

6 Illustrations by Harrison Weir.

EDINBURGH:
GALL & INGLIS, 6 GEORGE STREET.



PREFACE.

IN the present volume of this series will be found the very wonderful and extraordinary Life and Adventures of "Neddy Bray." By reading it, my young friends will have their risible faculties excited, and their humanities awakened.

The remaining "Chimney-Corner Stories," it is hoped, will "point a moral," and tend to develop in the rising generation the seeds of love, truth, and righteousness, and bring all these virtues into goodly blossom.

WILLIAM MARTIN.

HOLLY LODGE, 1861.

PREFACE

For the present volume of this series will be found the very wonderful and extraordinary tale and adventures of "Noddy Bird". By reading it my young friends will have their little imaginations excited and their imaginations nourished.

The remaining "Whimsy-Corner Stories" it is hoped will "point a moral" and tend to develop in the rising generation the seeds of truth and righteousness and bring all these virtues into goodly blossom.

WILLIAM MATTIN

Henry Jones, 1881.

CONTENTS.

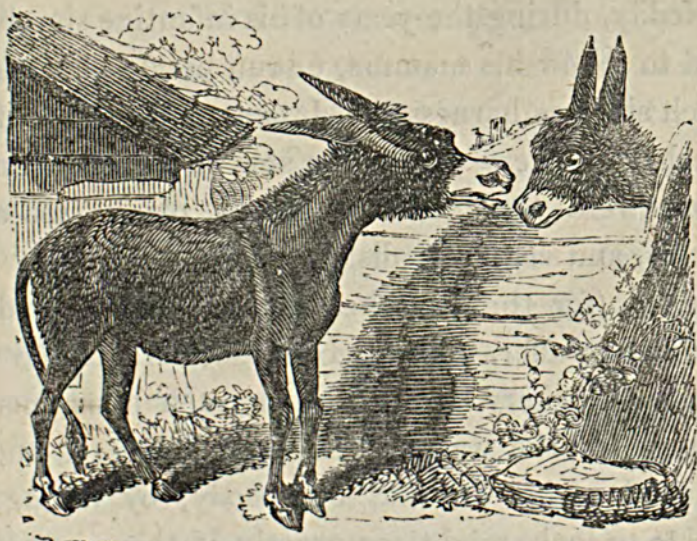
PAGE

I. History of Neddy Bray.

Neddy's birth, parentage, education, and washing .	1
Moral Suasion of the Copperstick, and of Neddy's Love of Buttons and Artificials	5
Neddy's Gipsey Life; and how he suffered from the "Volunteer Movement"	17
Neddy's Seductive Decoy; and how he made "ducks and drakes" therein	24
How Neddy became impounded; and of his transit from Limbo to Beans	25
Neddy's Adventures at a Country Fair; and how taken for a Tiger	33
How Neddy gloried in Asparagus, and took a Lesson in Horticulture	44
How Neddy got up a Concert, and tried to rival Bray-ham	48
How Neddy was "Smugged" for a "Just Ass," and looked Big in his Wig	62
How Neddy became a Joint-stock Proprietor in the Royal Asses' Emigration Company . .	80

	PAGE.
How Neddy became a Mahommedan, and what he got by it	90
How Neddy became a Christian again, and died in peace with all mankind	99
II. A Boy's Adventures with an Eagle	103
III. The Young Inca ; a Tale of the Ancient Peruvians	129
IV. A Turkish Story	137
V. The Old Witch	149
VI. "Venice"—her ancient deeds and doings	157
The Story of Marino Faliero, and the Council of Ten	167
The Story of Marco Lascaris, the Assassin	174
VII. The Alpine Pastor ; or, Felix Neff	195
VIII. The Story of a Rainbow, and a German Forest	203
IX. The True History of Bold Robin Hood	212
X. The Two Friends ; or, Love begets Love	224
XI. The Two Playmates ; or, Sympathy and Gratitude	231
XII. The Story of a Bear	239
XIII. Lobenski the Polish Exile	245
XIV. The Beautiful Antelope	253

THE
WONDERFUL LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
NEDDY BRAY.



CHAPTER I.

WHOO-HO, Neddy!—woo-oo-up! Here he is,
and his cousin Samuel taking leave of him
over the palings. Whoa, my pretty fellow!

Neddy Bray was the only son of his mamma, who

used to carry crockery-ware, pitchers, jugs, and all sorts of jugs; hand-basins, and all sorts of basins; feet-warmers, tea-cups, egg-cups, and all sorts of cups. In short, her worthy governor, lord, and master, was a hawking crockery-man.

The mamma of Neddy was called Gipsy, and a little gipsy she was; for she was sometimes as full of tricks as a monkey. And Neddy, long before he had reached years of discretion, was as waggish as his mamma.

Neddy, during the years of his infantine simplicity, used to follow his mamma, or run beside the cart to which she was harnessed. It was a little low four-wheeled crockery phaeton, a sort of little wagon, in which were arranged the dishes, plates, tea-cups, saucers, and vegetable dishes aforesaid.

Jaffer (for that was her master's name) and his wife, Mrs. Jaffer, used to go to the markets and fairs with the crockery all piled up in such a manner on the sides of the wagon, behind and before, and so arranged within it, that everybody, by taking the trouble to look, might see exactly if there was anything in the whole machine they were likely to want. To enable them to do this, or rather to give them a hint that they might do it, Jaffer used to bawl out as loud as his lungs would allow him, "Here's the royal Victoria china, cheap as at the potteries! China cheap, china cheap, cheap china!" Sometimes at the end of this, Mrs. Jaffer would say in addition, "Some

of the right sort here!"—while Mrs. Gipsy would occasionally conclude the argument by shouting, "Eh-awgh—eh-awgh—eh-awgh!"

One fine spring morning, it was on the first of May, when even the chimney-sweepers are merry, on a beautiful sunny morning, Jaffer and his wife, having set their machine in due order, entered a village where they hoped to dispose of some of their crockery. Gipsy was tolerably quiet; and Neddy would have been so, but for an untoward circumstance.

On the first of May a stag was turned out in the vicinity of the village of Cowbridge, for the benefit of the cruel feelings of various persons in red coats, and the apprentices, butcher-boys, ostlers out of place, and such persons who had nothing better to do.

The stag, after making a circuitous movement, leaped over some gardens, and took his course directly through the village, with horses, dogs, and ponies—aye and even donkeys after him. When Mrs. Jaffer saw them coming, she ran to Gipsy's head, and vainly endeavoured to pull her out of the road. Before she could do this, onwards bounded the stag, and, making a spring, passed clearly over the crockery cart. Gipsy began her "Eh-awgh;" the huntsmen came dashing on; the dogs followed the scent; while poor Neddy, not knowing what to make of all this shouting, confusion, yelping, and bustle, and wishing to take care of himself, and feeling, perhaps, that there was no place like home, made a spring after the fashion of

that of the stag, and leaped—clean into the crockery cart.

My goodness, what a smash!—he alighted just among the vegetable dishes; and, not finding them very comfortable to his feet, began floundering and kicking to such a degree, that jugs, tea-pots, cream-pots, and all sorts of pots, flew up into the air like so much chaff; while poor Mrs. Jaffer stood horror-struck, as if an earthquake had taken place, and shouted murder.



After recovering herself, she seized a large stake, and ran at Neddy, who, taking her will for the deed, leaped out of the cart with as little ceremony as he had leaped into it, and scampered off just as you see him in the picture.

The next day, to repair the damage, Neddy was sold, and being large enough to work, he was purchased

by a laundress, to carry her clothes home when they came to be washed, and to take them back when they had undergone that necessary operation.

For several days, Neddy behaved tolerably well; a little frisky sometimes, but this was cured; by a common medicine applied to his shoulders in the shape of a crab stick; and so things went on smoothly for some time.

But the weather at last grew very hot, and Neddy, who was turned out at the back of the laundress's cottage, would find out a dry, and sometimes a dirty, spot to lie down and roll in, which seemed to give him great pleasure.

The good laundress was just getting up a very heavy wash; it was summer season, and she was overburdened with bed-furniture, counterpanes, and such things, which were all hung out in the sun to dry among other articles of wearing apparel.

Neddy had very often amused himself in the manner I have related, and oftentimes he had been forewarned by the logic of the copper-stick that he was to keep at his own end of the garden, and not to come into the drying-ground; and it is probable he might never have transgressed in this particular, had it not been for the following circumstance:—

There was a man who used to amuse himself with playing upon bells, which were fastened on various parts of his person; some on his head, some on his hands, elbows, knees, and feet. He used to stand

before doors and windows, and amuse people wonderfully.

He came into the neighbourhood of the laundress, and immediately the laundress and all her washerwomen ran out to witness the extraordinary performance. The music was delightful; and Neddy, although he could not see the performer, pricked up his ears at the sound of the music.

He had just been at his usual play; and having made a towel of an ash-heap in the immediate vicinity, began to caper at the dulcet sounds. There were several other Neddies in the neighbourhood, who, hearing the music, became delighted; and one set up an accompaniment in the well-known sounds for which donkeys are celebrated. This was caught up by another, and then another, till every donkey, within half a mile, took up the strain, and produced a chorus not very musical, but still pleasing.

Our Neddy, hearing this, began to frisk about in an unusual manner. First he pranced, then he capered, then he kicked; then he leaped over the slight fence into the drying-ground. Then he capered, then he kicked, and then he pranced again, leaving the impression of his dirty feet upon the various articles of wearing apparel, hung out to dry and sweeten, which, as he became more violent, flew about much in the same manner that the crockery had done aforetime.

What with rolling, what with kicking and rubbing,



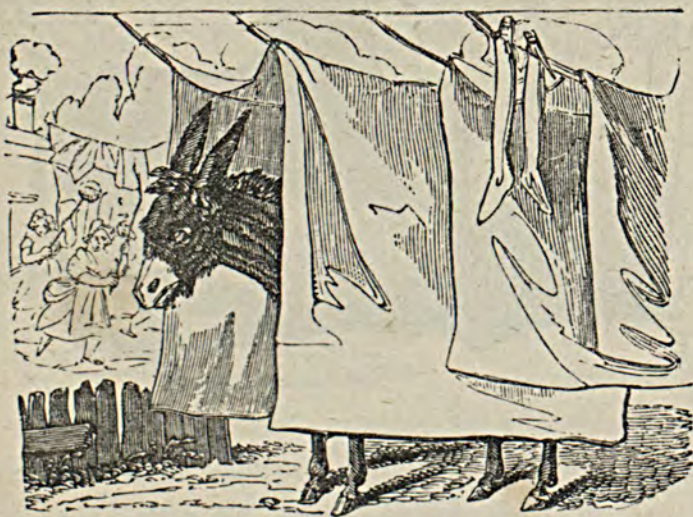
"Neddy among the clothes."—Page 6

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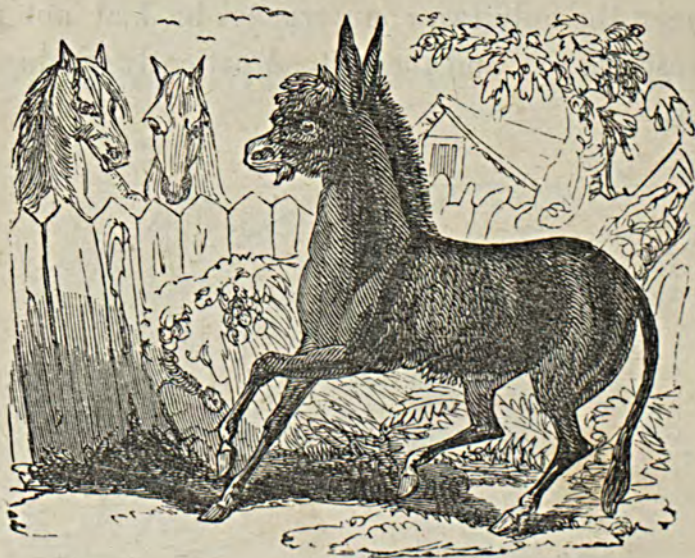
and leaping over lines, knocking down props, creeping under lines, and overturning peg baskets, Neddy made no little confusion. The poor laundress little thought, while she was enjoying the music in front of the house, what a hornpipe was being performed to it in the rear. She, however, did find it out; for, as soon as she came in, "the thing spoke for itself." She immediately dropped down in a swoon. Neddy, hearing her scream, by instinct ran and hid himself between the only two counterpanes he had not paid his respects to; and there stood patiently waiting the event.



Away came the washerwomen, with mops, brooms, sticks, pokers, fire-shovels, and all kinds of offensive weapons in their hands, and, to make bad worse, drove Neddy over his former work; which, to do him

justice, I must say he had not neglected; but he nevertheless gave it a few finishing touches, and bounded back again to his retreat in the duck pond.

Here I shall leave him; but in my next chapter will give an account of his other adventures.



CHAPTER II.

POOR Neddy! He had sinned beyond all forgiveness! The laundress was a long time before she recovered. They burnt brown paper under her nose, slapped her hands, tickled the soles of her feet, threw cold water on her head, and lastly poured spirits down her throat: this seemed to revive her.

She raised her head slowly from the ground, and when she beheld all her maids of honour about her, she cried out, "I hope the copper has not boiled over." But it had; and shirts, and sheets, and such things, were flustering and fuming on the outside.

When the poor laundress saw this, she immediately fell back into her former hysterics, and faintly ejaculated, "Run to the copper!"

It was a very pathetic scene, I can assure you; and while Neddy stood quietly in the duck pond, rubbing his nose contentedly against the palings, he had no idea that his mistress, to whom he was indebted both for food and fun, should be in hysterics about his doings.

The laundress, after a few more recoveries and relapses, at last stood upon her feet; and in a few minutes got courage to walk over the field. It was,

indeed, a cruel sight to see so many lines broken, so many props smashed, so much fine linen soiled. The poor woman seized a prop, and ran towards the duck pond.

Neddy quite understood what was the meaning of the prop, and floundered about the water in fine style. He received several hearty thumps, and not having his hide quite so callous as that of old donkeys, he grew quite impatient under this treatment; and, making a bold spring, leaped by the laundress, and flounced and scampered again over the drying-ground.

Another chase took place round and round, Neddy still being pursued by the laundress, quite red with fury; she ran and he ran. At last, Neddy seeing no end to the sport except by making his exit, summoned up all his strength, and making an extraordinary leap, passed over the palings into the adjoining garden.

Smash went something—it was a cucumber frame; clatter went something else—it was a stand of flower-pots. Away ran Neddy into the centre of the garden, and was obscured from the view of his persecutors.

If the laundress felt herself in jeopardy before, what do you suppose she felt now? Clothes were easily washed, lines could be tied together, props could be spliced; but cucumber frames and flower-pots were not so easily mended.

The garden into which Neddy had extended his

hornpipe, belonged to a market-gardener; and asparagus was just coming in. Neddy had not yet tasted this luxury; and withal, being extremely hungry after his unusual exercise, and led by the nose, as most asses are, came in contact with the asparagus, which he began to devour like an alderman, never asking for mutton chops, or any other viand, as an accompaniment.

The laundress, having in vain attempted to get over the palings, immediately ran round to the gardener's door: she knocked—no one answered—again, all was still. Neddy went on browsing.

"Mr. Bean—Mr. Bean," said she; "let me come into the garden—my donkey is in your garden." But Mr. Bean was not at home. Poor man! he had gone to market.

The laundress, accompanied by all her washerwomen, again tried to get over the palings; at last they succeeded, and ran after Neddy.

The poor donkey, expecting of course another edition of the prop stick, scampered away as fast as he was able.

He ran among the young beans, potatoes, carrots, and onions; at every step doing a shilling's worth of damage. There was no catching him any how, so the ladies, old and young, gave up the pursuit.

Neddy was quite contented, for he had taken a fancy to some young cauliflowers, and began to feel himself in paradise. When he had tasted these, he

took a few mouthfuls of young peas, and then turned to the peach-trees, the young buds of which are very finely flavoured.

Well, thistles are good, thought Neddy; but there is nothing like cauliflowers and peaches. If a few thumps with a cudgel bring one into a place like this, I think I should not mind a few every day in my life.

Just as he thought this, however, he heard a click, and in a moment found himself fast by the leg; he had been caught in a man-trap. It was, however, not one of those cruel traps that would cut the leg through: it did not hurt him, but it held him fast.

Great was the joy of the washerwomen when they beheld this. Soon after Mr. Bean came from market; soon after he went to Mrs. Starch; soon after they quarrelled; soon after Neddy was in the pound; soon after a lawsuit was commenced; and soon after Neddy was sold to help to pay the expenses of his repast and hornpipe.

Neddy was sold to a widow lady, who wished to learn to ride. She *had* kept a greengrocer's shop, in which she made a fortune, and had a great fancy for donkeys: her name was Button, and she was very stout.

She advertised for a quiet creature, and Mrs. Starch recommended Neddy as the sweetest-tempered, best, gentlest, most amiable, most beautiful, and most valuable donkey in the whole universe; as being swift

of pace, sure of foot, a lovely one to look at, and a sweet one to go. If you had heard Mrs. Starch recommend her donkey, you would have thought she had served seven years' apprenticeship to the trade of recommending donkeys.

Neddy was bought. Mrs. Button fed him morning, noon, and night:—

Sometimes with grass, sometimes with greens,
Sometimes with hay, and sometimes with beans.

Beside this, she had a saddle made, and bought a bridle; and, this done, prepared herself to take lessons in riding, by buying a riding whip.

Certainly, Neddy was a very pretty donkey to look at; and much prettier did he look when he had his bridle on, with his little rosettes of blue on his forehead, and primrose-coloured saddlecloth.

Mrs. Button had a small grass plot, and Neddy was exercised in it every day; and Mrs. Button exercised herself upon Neddy's back. A little at a time Neddy did not mind, and so behaved himself remarkably well. Mrs. Button was delighted; and, having gained courage every day, at last thought of trying her Jerusalem pony in the streets. Ah! that was a fatal determination, and led to a series of mishaps, which, probably, have not yet had an end in Mrs. Button's connections.

Mrs. Button had dressed herself in leg-of-mutton sleeves, a lace pelerine, a straw hat and feathers, and

a green veil to keep the sun off her face. She mounted Neddy in her garden, and had him led out of the side gate, and then trotted him towards the village.

At first Neddy went on very well; but the day was very hot, and Mrs. Button was very heavy, and Neddy was rather overcome—at least he thought so. “Is there no way to get this load off my back?” said he to himself. “It is a strange thing to me if there be not.” At all events he was determined to try.

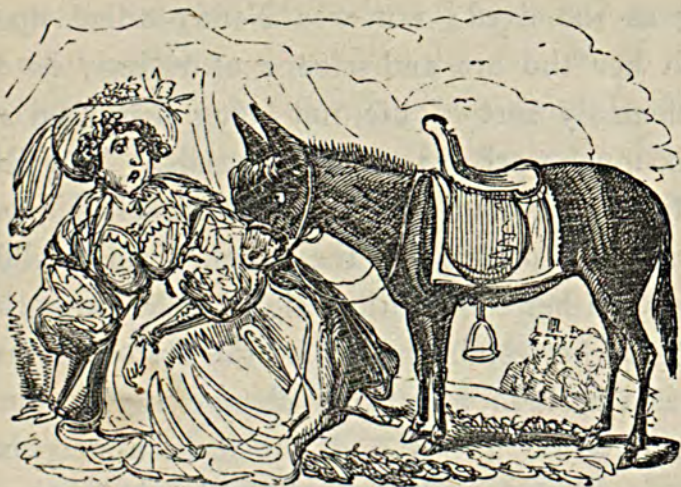
They came to a part of the road in which there was a long wall on one side. Neddy thought grazing might suit his mistress, so he grazed her knee against the wall, in return for which he got a sound thump, which made him stand stock still, waiting, I suppose, to see if any more were coming.

“Go along, Neddy,” said Mrs. Button. “Tutch—tutch! come up, come up!” and then she gave him another touch with the whip. Neddy turned his head round in the direction of home, as much as to say, If you can’t behave better than this, you had better go home, Mrs. Button.

Mrs. Button pulled the bridle, and Neddy turned back again; and, for the sake of variety, turned himself round, and round, and round again, hoping to make matters square, I suppose: but going forward was a thing quite out of the question.

Mrs. Button began to grow timid; and just in proportion as she was timid, Neddy was courageous

and determined, and resolved to have his own way. So he first threw up his head, and gave Mrs. Button a blow on the nose; then he ran into the hedge on the other side of the road, and then against the aforesaid brick wall: then giving a lounge, and a twist, and a shy, and a kick, and a summerset all together, off went Mrs. Button, who, either from the concussion of the fall, or overpowered with the fright, lay quite insensible.



Neddy seemed quite unconcerned, as if nothing had happened. At last, however, he went to his mistress, and, being attracted by the colour of the green gauze veil, and by the glitter of a large bunch of artificial flowers the lady had in her bonnet, began to make a meal of them.

Just, however, as he was about to ascertain that

gauze was not grass, and that paper, and calico, and wire, were not so eatable as asparagus, sweet peas, and young cauliflowers, a lady and gentleman came laughing up the hill, and Mrs. Button came to herself.

Her bonnet was rumped, her dress was crumpled, her leg-of-mutton sleeves were flattened, and her feathers and all the rest of her finery ruined in the eyes of men, if not of donkeys.

Mrs. Button never mounted a donkey again as long as she lived; nor was Neddy called upon to teach her the art and science of riding; he led a gentlemanly sort of life, not being disturbed either by too much work or too much victuals. Mrs. Button carefully concealed her disaster from all her neighbours; and, pretending that donkey riding did not agree with her constitution, signified her intention of giving up her establishment on the first opportunity: and as a prelude to such a change in her circumstances, wrote a bill and put it in a neighbour's window—the straw-bonnet maker's close by: "A genteel donkey and harness complete, to be sold—a bargain. N.B. Warranted to drive or carry."

This notification was in the straw-bonnet maker's window many a long day; there did not appear to be a person in the world in want of a donkey—not one. Donkeys were going out, and railroads were coming in; Mrs. Button could not find a purchaser.

It now became a matter of serious reflection to

Mrs. Button, as to whether she should keep a donkey at half-a-crown a week expense, without any returns ; or whether she had not better have him slaughtered for his hide, and thus put a stop to his eating, drinking, playing, frisking, and mischievous tricks.

Humanity prevailed ; and Mrs. Button said to herself, "I will give the tiresome creature away ; it is of no use to keep him. I will give him to anybody who chooses to have him, except a chimney-sweep." So the bill in the straw-bonnet maker's window was altered, and ran as follows :—"A donkey to be given away."

However, this had not the desired effect. There was really nobody in the village who wanted a donkey, and Neddy remained on hand longer and longer. At last the bill was taken down, and Neddy had to take his chance.

His mistress sent him out for rural excursions round the fields and lanes, to save provender at home ; and Neddy was, perhaps, for many weeks the freest donkey in the freest country in the world. But one Monday morning he was missing ; the donkey that could not be sold, nor given away, had found out the way to be stolen. It was just like Neddy.

The gentleman who had taken a fancy to Neddy was a gipsy, and Neddy was not the only thing he had taken a fancy to in the village. Sundry articles of wearing apparel, a sheep or two, and many odd matters, had decamped with Neddy, who lent his aid to carry them off.

The gipsey was called Giles, and travelled all over the country in search of things in want of an owner. When he purloined Neddy he was determined to make him go—and he did.

He was quite at home, as you see him, when on Neddy's back; and he used to smoke his pipe, and look as innocent on his stolen ass, as if he had paid a pound for him.



The gipsey carried Neddy about with him, or rather Neddy carried the gipsey about with him, for some months; and was witness to many roguish tricks, I can assure you, if he could have told of them. Giles made Neddy a very humble, patient donkey, and broke him of his wild mad tricks.

The gipsey and his companions had formed a design to rob a house in the neighbourhood in which they

were travelling; the reason for their doing this was, because it was inhabited by a very great coward.

Simon Stickery, was his name: he was one of the volunteer riflemen, and was corporal. He lived at a place called Little Puddle.

The good people of Little Puddle were a very spirited set of folks. They did such things as bar up the turnpike gates to keep the snow out, and lock up the cellars for fear the thunder should turn the beer sour. Every person who had a house in Little Puddle had a lightning conductor to his chimney. "There is nothing like being on the safe side," said they.

Once it so happened, that a drove of Irish pigs came through the town, and ran up all manner of streets; and not only up the streets, but into all manner of houses: and thus invaded the domestic privacy of the Little Puddlearians, who forthwith called a council of war, and agreed to establish a volunteer corps to repel all intruders.

Thus it was that Simon Stickery was a corporal; there were no privates; all were officers of some kind or other, and every one thought himself a hero.

Simon lived a little way out of the town, and was always afraid of being robbed; particularly as he had no one to defend him but his sister, an ancient maiden of fifty, or thereabouts.

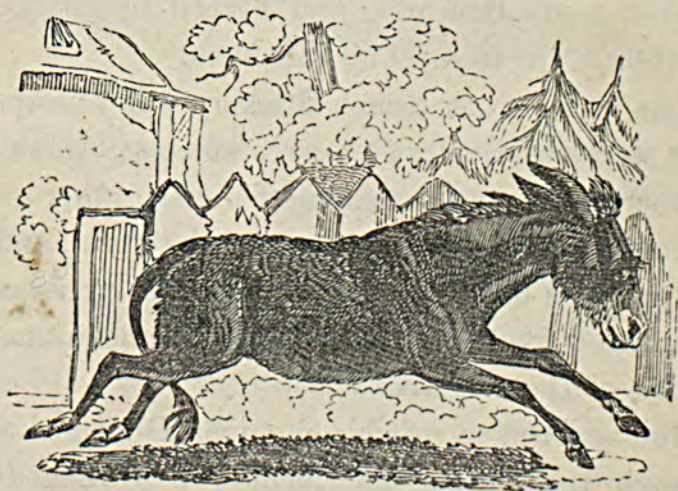
He happened to cast his eye upon Giles as he rode through the streets on Neddy, and immediately

hastened home in woful alarm, called his servants together, went to bed soon, barred the doors, locked the gates, set the man-traps and spring-guns all round the garden, loaded his blunderbuss, and prepared for the worst.

About twelve o'clock at night, as he sat up in his bed—for he could get no sleep—he heard a noise; then he thought he heard footsteps. He leaped out of bed, and looked out of the window, but could see nothing.

He still heard the noise, however. "Who goes there?" he cried. No one answered; still the noise approached. "Speak, or I'll shoot you!" said Stickery. Nobody spoke. "Once, twice, three times," said Stickery.—Bang!

He discharged his blunderbuss, and Neddy scampered off with the speed of lightning. The results I must leave for the present. Here he goes, faster than he ever ran in his life.



CHAPTER III.

WE left Neddy Bray scampering along as fast as he could, after being shot at by the brave Mr. Stickery. Indeed, so nimble was Neddy on his legs, that the shot from Stickery's blunderbuss never came up with him—at least it never struck him. The sound, however, being quite of an unusual character, and Neddy not being the bravest donkey in the world, and his mamma having taught him to run away before he was hurt—as there is little use of running away afterwards—Neddy went off like a shot.

He ran and ran. Never did he think of looking behind him. He was too frightened for that. But along the road he ran, not wishing to do any mischief. He was, however, born to it, and therefore it is no wonder if disaster followed in his footsteps.

You know it was night when Neddy was fired at. The reason of his being in the situation of so much danger arose from his having strayed away from his master, the gipsey. He was now nobody's donkey, and had a right to run as far as he liked.

And he did run—on and on—gallop, gallop, gallop down one road, and up another—and all in the dark, too.

Neddy made light of the distance, and cared not for the darkness. It was so much the better: he could see no danger; and therefore scampered along as if he had left it all behind him.

Not far from the spot in which Neddy was trying his speed, perhaps four or five miles from the house of the valiant Stickery, was what is called a decoy pond, if you know what that is: perhaps you do not, and so I must tell you.

In some parts of the kingdom the wild fowl are caught in a peculiar manner. A place is constructed near some rivulet leading to the moors or marshes, for the purpose of securing ducks and geese, and such wild fowl.

First, the rivulet is stocked with a few decoy ducks, which are always fed at a certain place, which I shall describe to you. These are allowed to swim about at the lower part of the rivulet. The wild birds seeing them, flock together at the same spot, and the old decoy ducks, as they are called, decoy them up into the meshes prepared for them.

These meshes are at the upper part of the stream, and are first made by gradually twining the boughs of the trees that overhang the rivulet. As the stream becomes narrower, the inclosure is made more secure; and at the last portion, which opens into a little pool, nets are intermingled with the branches, so that any fowl proceeding so far find it impossible to get away.

Now, to construct these decoys is the work of a

great deal of time, and requires a considerable degree of ingenuity; but when finished, they are as intricate as a spider's web. At the proper season men are at watch all round, to seize the fowl as soon as they get within the meshes of the decoy pool.

It sometimes happens that the decoy pools are robbed during the night of any fowl that may have taken refuge there after dark, and even of the decoy ducks themselves, which are said to turn on a spit as well as any other ducks, and to eat a great deal better.

So at least Giles, Neddy's master, thought; and while he had turned out Neddy to saunter where he pleased, and while the poor creature was very proud of this, and was running away at the risk of breaking his neck, Giles was on an expedition to these decoy ponds, with a large stick to knock down the fowl, and a bag to put them in.

Giles proceeded on foot to this spot, as donkeys are sometimes apt to be talkative; otherwise he would, without doubt, have made use of Neddy's back. He reached the decoy pond about twelve o'clock.

Giles listened and listened: all was silent—the fowl, if anywhere, asleep. He ascended the stream, keeping close by the side of it, and worked his way through the willows and various branches of hazel, which had been planted to over-arch the way.

At last he came to the spot in which the fowl might be expected, and, taking a dark lantern from his pocket, Giles surveyed the place. There, indeed,

reposed on the bosom of the pool fourteen or fifteen ducks, so fat and plump that they delighted Giles.

He now threw down his sack, and prepared to seize the fowl, and waded silently into the water: a little gabble was set up, but in a moment Giles had a duck by the neck in each hand. Just as he was about to give the necks a twist, he heard footsteps.

Footsteps! hasty footsteps! He paused—he was discovered! He dropped the ducks, which began to flutter and scream. Before the gipsy could recover his presence of mind, something dashed into the decoy ground; away it came. What it was, he did not know; but, with a tremendous bound, it darted through boughs, nets, and hazel twigs, and came floundering into the pool.

Giles was struck down—the lantern was jerked from his pocket—the candle flew out and set fire to the dry grass and some of the tarred net-work. Neddy, more frightened than ever, began kicking without any regard for his liege lord and master. The ducks and fowls set up violent screams, fearing, I suppose, that they should be consumed. The flames from the tarred net-work rose above the trees; and by its light, which made everything as clear as day, Giles discovered his own *Neddy*.

It was no time for a cordial welcome. However, Giles could not refrain from giving him a few hearty thumps with his cudgel, as a matter of duty, and then darted off with the swiftness of lightning. Neddy

at the same time scampered away in an opposite direction.

The light from the burning spot, and the cries of the feathered creation, soon brought some persons to the place. The lantern was found, and a search commenced after the incendiary in all directions.

Giles was soon taken and brought before the magistrates, and denied all knowledge of the transaction. Neddy was also taken, and brought up as a witness against his master.

The result was, that the dark lantern, Neddy, and the gipsey, were proved to be old acquaintances, and alike adjudged to be guilty of arson. The dark lantern was given to the constable, Giles was taken to the tread-mill, and Neddy was put in the pound, as the best place, "under all the circumstances of the case," as the judge said.

It is a very hard thing for a poor donkey to be in a pound. Neddy did not relish it, I can assure you. When he got in, he in vain looked for a blade of grass or a wisp of hay, and long before night began to feel so hungry that he could have eaten his own head off, if he could have got conveniently at it.

He paced round and round the pound, poked his head through the high rails and the low rails, rubbed the great padlock with his nose, and took a taste of the oak post, but found that to be very indigestible.

"Well," thought Neddy, "it is a very easy thing

to get into a pound, but a plaguy difficult one to get out. What shall I do?" and so he placed his two fore-feet on the middle rail, and put his nose over the top, and looked wistfully towards the village green.

It was now about ten o'clock at night, and a beautiful moonlight night it was. Neddy kept his attitude for some minutes, but most of the villagers were a-bed. He began to despair of supper, and would have given his tail for a thistle.

Poor Neddy! He did not stand so a great while. The chimes of the village clock played melodiously; and when they were ended, some other music saluted his pricked-up ears.

You must know that Little Puddle, the place to which Neddy was again brought, was not a very great distance from a seaport; and as it lay in a direct road to the principal town in the county, numbers of seafaring people passed and repassed through the place continually.

The sounds that broke upon Neddy's ears were the strains of two sailors, who had just been paid off from the "Arethusa." They were singing—

"Rule, Britannia! Britannia rule the waves!
For Britons never, never, never shall be slaves."

"No," said one, "never—as long as we have a shot in the locker. There shall be no slaves anywhere, and no foreigners, if I could help it. I say,

Harry, that precious French prison, four years and a half of it, was no joke—was it?”

“Well, then, the old boy that got us out!” said the other; “and I’ll drink his health as long as I live, though he has been dead these six months:” and here the half-tipsy sailor put the rum bottle to his mouth, and from the time it was there, one would have thought he never intended to take it away again.

“Hurrah!” said he, when he had finished. “Good luck to every unfortunate! Hulloo, messmate! what is here? A ship in distress. What, in limbo! Why, bless your old heart, what do you stare at me so for?”

“Ehewh! Ehewh! Ehewh!” said Neddy.

“Then I’m blessed if I don’t. ‘Britons never shall be slaves’—lend a hand, Harry—no, as I am a sinner. Why, look here; the place is as dry as a biscuit box, and never a biscuit in it. I know what this sort of thing is, don’t I, Harry?”

“I should think the pair of us are not much in the dark that way; and therefore, young scraper, we will have you out of it, if Jack tars can do it. Bear a hand—we’ll have him out in a twinkling.”

And so into the pound leaped both the sailors: they could not bear to see a fellow-creature in confinement. One got under Neddy’s belly, and lifted him up, while the other, making a bight in his pocket handkerchief, hauled and hauled, till by some means

or other, in spite of the violent struggles of Neddy, who did not understand this kindness, the poor ass was dragged over the gate of the pound.

“And now for a supper for ye, my hearty ! for I dare say you haven’t forgotten the way to eat. What do you say, Harry, to turning him into old Farmer Skinflint’s bean-field?”

This was no sooner thought of than the sailors put it in practice. Neddy was led along the road till he came to the field ; but as the gate which led to it was locked, there was no other alternative than to lift Neddy over it, as he had been lifted out of the pound.

This good action performed, the sailors had another drop of rum, and Neddy was left alone in his glory ; and I can tell you that he considered himself translated to a perfect Elysium.

Beans, beans, beans ! nothing but beans—ripe, real, beautiful beans—before him, behind him, right side and left side !—was it a dream ? It could not be real ! Yes, it was—they were *real* beans !

If ever a donkey did eat, Neddy did that night : he eat, and eat, and eat to such an excess, that soon after sunrise he absolutely was forced to lie down in his provender ; but even then he fed on all that surrounded him, although he had eaten too much to stand.

By lying down, it so happened that during the day he was not discovered, for the beans were high, and

totally concealed him from passers by ; besides which, Neddy had made his way to the middle of the field.

The whole of the next night he browsed, and part of the day after ; and a pretty hole he made in the beans. There had not been such a hole in any bean-field in the whole county ever known before.

At last, however, that day of gladness passed away, and Neddy was surprised by the presence of the farmer, honest old Skinflint, who, when he saw the devastation made, was in such a rage that he threw down his hat and stamped with vexation.

Neddy, not knowing what to make of the violence of the farmer, began to make off at his usual rate, the farmer following all the way, till they came to the edge or hedge of the field, where he made a pause.

The farmer, when he found himself near the hedge, immediately thought of a hedge-stake to apply to Neddy's shoulders ; and to make sure of giving him a good basting, after having obtained his cudgel, laid hold of the tail of the beast, that he might keep him from running away.

Neddy finding his tail held, and the weight of the cudgel upon his hams, began to run, the farmer close behind, applying the stick with all the strength he was in possession of. Neddy tore along beside the hedge, and once or twice gave a kick, but the cudgel prevented him from doing much damage. At last, finding no alternative, he suddenly made a desperate

spring, and Neddy and the farmer went over the bank, and through the hedge, at the same time.

It is very well to be on one side of a ditch, but it is sometimes very ill to be on the other. Such was the case in this instance; for the other side of the ditch was a mixture of nettles and mud, and Neddy and his tormentor went *clean* into it.

"And dirty out of it," you will say: and this is true. Neddy, however, came out first, and ran with all his speed over the next meadow. I know not how many other hedges he went through, or how many fields he cleared, but at last he found himself in a gentleman's shrubbery.

Where he was, he knew not; all he knew was, that young fir, ash, and elm trees, were not so eatable as beans: and so, for want of anything better to do, Neddy laid himself down.

It so happened, that the gentleman to whom the shrubbery belonged had a son about nine years old, named Arthur, and another about seventeen, who went by the name of Trollop, in honour of his grandmother. The former was a nice little boy enough, but the elder was quite the reverse.

Arthur, walking in the shrubbery, found Neddy lying under one of the beech trees. "What do you do here, Mr. Donkey?" said the little fellow.

Neddy, who knew manners, rose up, and made a bow to his young master; for a fly bit him in the hock, and he bobbed his head to catch it.

"What a very pretty bow for a donkey!" said the little boy; "but you have no business here:" and so he got a stick, and essayed to make Neddy move onwards.

Neddy would not stir, however. The beating he had received had begun to make his flesh callous to the stick. The little boy had not the heart to beat him much; and so he took hold of the hair on the top of his head, and began to pull him forwards.

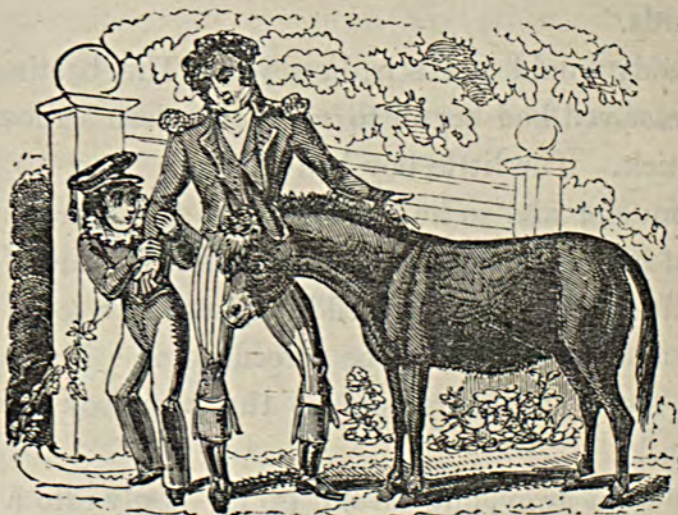
This would not do: Neddy did not like to go that way, and he would not be forced to it. He pulled back more and more, and so the poor boy gave up the task.

He went away, but did not go far—only into a field close by—and soon returned with three or four carrots under his arm. One of these he gave to Neddy, which put him into a mighty good temper.

Persuasion is better than force—and so, with the remaining carrots, he enticed Neddy step by step, till he got him into the stable-yard. In a few minutes he brought out John the footman to look at him, and begged of him to ask his father to let him buy him.

John was very much surprised, for he thought he knew the donkey. At last the old gentleman came out. He also was quite astonished: "Why," said he, "it is the donkey of that rogue, Giles the gipsey, whom I committed the other day for setting fire to the decoy pond."

Whether the old gentleman took a fancy to the donkey because he was the gipsey's donkey, or



because he was a good-looking animal, or because he was entreated by his eldest son, Master Trollop, I do not know ; but, after having spoken to the constable, the donkey was purchased of Giles, though in prison, for thirty shillings—a fair price.

When Trollop had fairly got the animal into the stable, he began to devise means of how he should amuse himself with him. Now the annual fair of Little Puddle was near at hand, and there was to be a donkey race for a pair of leather gaiters. So Trollop thought it would be a good opportunity to try the speed of his donkey ; but, knowing his father would not approve of such a proceeding, he determined to conceal it from him by engaging Tom Wright as his

jockey. This lad lived in the village, and Trollop found him a very convenient assistant in his various schemes.

Neddy was accordingly entered for the race, and Tom's seat on his back joyfully accepted. Trollop procured him a blue jacket, boots, and small-clothes, a jockey-cap and spurs, and everything else to make him look fine; and, on the morning of the fair, he rode through the village fully equipped.



Just as he entered the village green, Neddy descried the pound from which he had been so kindly liberated. He made a dead stop at it, and refused to go any farther. At the same time a wag blew his horn, which gave Neddy a very good excuse for turning back.

And back he turned with the greatest expedition, and ran to and fro, till at last he plunged among all the varieties of the fair, of which I shall tell you another time.

CHAPTER IV.

THE fair was held on the twenty-third of October ; and a very fine fair it was, at least so the rustics thought it.

There were a great many sights to be seen. Among the rest, was an extraordinary fat boy ; a marvellously lean lady, called the "living skeletoness ;" a learned pig ; a shaved bear, which was called "the *pig*-faced lady : " then there was a calf with two heads, and a cat with three ; and, among other things, Billy Button, wild beasts, gingerbread nuts, fried sausages, boiled eggs, and oysters.

The village green was thronged in every part, as the day advanced ; even the pound, for which Neddy had such an aversion, was transformed into a shop or stall for the sale of *pound*-cake by the slice ; and a line was stretched across the upper end of the green, upon which a Mr. Hengler danced in wooden shoes, with a long pole to balance himself.

Then there was a conjuror who ate fire, and pulled ribbons out of his mouth by hundreds of yards ; and then he ate tow, and set fire to it in his mouth, plunged his head into burning oil, and suffered melted lead to be dropped on his tongue : and all this was to be seen for the charge of one penny.

Hundreds of children, old and young, paraded the fair; lots of grandmothers were there also; fathers and mothers were behind: and what with the ginger-pop flying on one side, and the roaring of voices through the speaking trumpets, "Walk up, walk up!—just going to begin!" together with the screeching of scratch-backs, the blowing of penny trumpets, and the roaring of wild beasts, poor Neddy was indeed bewildered.

Tom had determined to gallop him through the fair; and when the people saw the donkey, with a tall jockey, dressed in a riding-cap, jockey-boots, jacket and hat, they set up a loud shout, and clustered round him—even the shows were left for this new fun, which seemed to charm all hearts.

Such a crowd gathered round him that Tom was obliged to cry "Make way!" and as he was the magistrate's servant, each did as he was desired: some, however, determined to have a little fun of another sort. It so happened that a mischievous lad had provided himself with a pocketful of crackers for his evening's amusement, and thought, I suppose, that it would increase the speed and mettle of Neddy, to fasten a bunch of them to his tail.

While Tom was preparing for a start, with a great many persons around him, praising his fine dress, boots, cap, and donkey, the bunch of crackers was tied on behind; and "Make way, make way!—he is sure to go!" resounded from all sides.

A piece of touch-paper ignited one of the crackers, and he had not got many yards in his course before it exploded. Bang—snap—bang—bang—snap—snap—bang—bang—bang! Indeed, when they once began, there seemed no end to the snapping and banging.

If Neddy had never run fast before, he did so now; the firing from Stickery's gun was nothing to this; for not only were his ears assailed, but his hind quarters smarted with every explosion, as if he had been shot.

Away he ran through thick and thin; and instead of following the course that had been opened for him, he dashed off at an angle, and, capsizing oyster-stalls, gingerbread-nuts, apples, and old apple-women, made a terrible confusion. The mob hooted, the boys halloed: in a few minutes the cry was raised, "A tiger has broken loose from the caravan!"

It would be impossible to describe the scampering, panic, and confusion which there were at this moment—shrieks from the women and children, shouts from the men. Hundreds made a rush all together; the show-men left their shows, the stall-people their stalls, and ran they minded not whither, tumbling over each other in the mud, and knocking down stalls, stools, and shows, of every description.

"A tiger is loose!" re-echoed again and again, from all sides; those who followed Neddy thought such a disaster had happened, and left him to take care of themselves; and the fields and hedges around the green were now full of people, making the best

of their way off, till at last nothing was left on it but poor Neddy, who, as soon as the last cracker had exploded, left off kicking and stood patiently and quietly in one corner of the green.

Tom, on the first alarm, had scampered away as fast as his legs would carry him, and really believed that a tiger had broken loose—never for a moment supposing that Neddy could have raised such a panic; he reached home breathless. Soon after, terrible accounts came in of the woful damage done by the ferocious beast.

The cook-maid, who had been suffered to go out that day, to see her grandmother, who was dying, as she said—although it was herself who was dying to go to the fair—returned, supported by the washer-woman, whom she met on the way; and, when she reached the kitchen, fell down in a swoon.

As soon as she came to herself, she gave her version of the disaster. "Oh, Sir," said she, to the worthy magistrate, who stood over her with a poker in his hand, "oh, Sir, a real Bengal tiger, six feet long from the tip of his nose to the beginning of his tail—such a monster—flew about the fair like a mad cat—over the booths, Sir—under the stalls—fourteen women wounded, seven small children eaten up alive, for what I know, and several men dead on the field of battle. Oh, what a mercy I have been preserved!"

"But what has become of the animal?" said the magistrate.

"Oh, Sir, he is roaring about, and may jump in at the window directly, for what I know."

"Here, Mat," said the magistrate, "bar the gates—shut the windows—barricade the doors—bring down the fire-arms—spring the rattle—anything to keep him off."

The poor cook was left to take care of herself, and all the rest flew about the premises with as much alacrity as so many squirrels. They listened for the roar of the tiger—but no, there was no roar. The house was now turned into a complete fortification at all points: at last, however, Matthew, the footman, thought he heard a snuffing or sniffing at the outer gate.

He listened: it was—"The tiger!—the tiger!" resounded through the house. "Here, Mat," said the magistrate, "run to the copper, and treat him with a pailful of boiling beer."

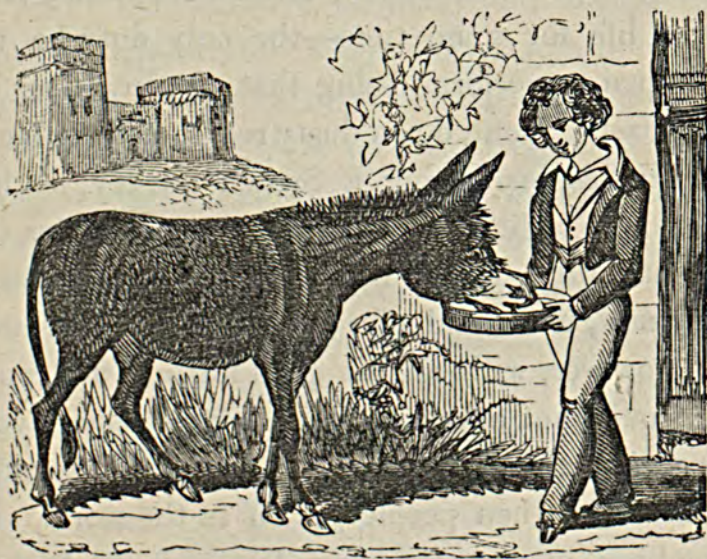
I forgot to tell you it was brewing-day, and the wort was just in the copper, boiling up with the hops. Matthew ran and filled his pail with the boiling liquor, with the intention of throwing it over the gate, on the supposed tiger, but was intercepted by the master. "Give it to me—give it to me," said he; and, taking the pail in his hand, essayed to throw its contents over the gate; however, he somehow missed his aim, and thus scalded himself all over.

"He will clamber over the gate. Run, Sir, run!—"

I hear him getting up!" and away they all ran. After waiting a considerable time—some barred up in the stable, some in the cow-house, some in the pantry—the footman at last ventured to look out.

Not hearing any noise, he ventured to the gate; and, after much hesitation, unbarred it: he opened it very gently, and at last squeezed his head out between the latch and the post—and there stood Neddy.

Poor fellow! as he had found no one to take notice of him in the fair, he had taken to his heels, and made the best of his way home, as good asses ought always to do.



CHAPTER V.

AFTER this affair of the squibs and crackers, and Neddy being mistaken for a tiger, you may suppose that ever afterwards he was looked upon as a tiger; and, in truth, if ever a donkey was a tiger, he was. Everybody came to look at him—and no one could look at him without laughing—and fewer could look upon his young master dressed in top boots, without laughing a good deal more. After this, Neddy lived a quiet life for some time—the only duty he was called upon to perform, being that of conveying his young master about, down dusty roads, or dirty lanes. As to thistles—not being a Scotch donkey, he had no national feeling towards them: as to grass, he cared but little about it—he was a gentleman's donkey now, and could afford to eat oats and beans.

He, however, with all his good fortune and good living, could not afford to keep a conscience; very few people can in this world; and it very often happens, that, when people get on in the world, and are making money, they are less able to keep a conscience than before, and vote it the most expensive of all animals.

They find it to be vastly troublesome also—always asking so many questions; as, Why do you do so? and why not act thus? and this is a bill upon your future peace, payable at forty years after date; so that a man wishing to go swimmingly through the world, finds these conscience jerks at every turn, besetting him to such a degree, as to make his life quite disagreeable.

The fact is, a donkey can be kept on thistles and greens, without barley or beans, and will not care much if he starves for a day or two; but a conscience requires you to sacrifice this, and to sacrifice that; to give up one pleasure and to forego another; to put yourself in the place of this man or in the situation of that; and always to be upon the look-out, and keep such a watch upon yourself, that few persons will keep a conscience; and those who do, are said to be great fidgets.

I have heard, keeping a conscience is like keeping a pig; that, although he is very troublesome at times, requires a great deal of food, and is for ever squeaking; yet that, at last, he makes up for all trouble, care, and attention, at his death. Well, I believe there is some truth in this comparison; for certainly there is a reward at last for those who do what is right.

Neddy, as I said, when he obtained plenty of good fare and kind treatment, began to show his independence more strongly than ever. He was a Radical

sort of a donkey, and made a great splutter about liberty. He wanted to be free, and tried to gnaw the rope that bound him; so when he was caught at his tricks he pretended to be very hungry; he was not, however. The young gentleman thought he could not feed a donkey too much; and especially as he could take as much of his father's corn as he liked, without asking leave; so Neddy was fed with corn four times a-day. He eat, and eat, and eat. You know it has been said, that a donkey has been known to eat after he is dead.

There was no end to Neddy's eating. He grew sleek and fat; he was no longer the rough hardy animal he used to be; his coat was combed, his fetlocks clipped, his hoofs polished; and the young gentleman, copying the dirty groom, polished Neddy on the feet with Day and Martin's blacking till the chickens would come and peck at them, thinking strange fowls werè in the yard by seeing the reflection of themselves.

So Neddy grew fat, and impudent, and lazy, and independent; he cared for nobody—not he. He turned up his nose at every pony, and endeavoured to mimic the paces of the hunters and steeds of high degree. But, above all things, did he sigh for freedom; then, thought he, I should be a donkey.

But the summer passed and Neddy was still tied up—a very stable donkey. He sighed for the air and the green fields, and at last would have given up all

his corn and kindred for a good browse on a bank of thistles. So one night he contrived to release himself from his stall by gnawing the halter; and the door of the stable not being securely fastened, he found himself once more a free donkey.

It was a bright moonlight night, and the cats were squalling upon the tiles; as soon as he got loose he kicked and he pranced, he jumped and he frisked, he capered and he trotted, and at last, in the very delight of his heart, laid himself down and rolled. Then he stood up, and, with a wistful look at the moon, and a deep-drawn sigh, began to he-haugh, he-haugh, to the great discomfiture of the equally unmelodious strains of Grimalkin above.

After frisking about a little longer, Neddy felt a strange sensation of green meat stealing over him. He sniffed up the wind, but there was no getting fat upon that.

He look'd to the east, he looked to the west,
But could not discover which was the best.

At last he followed his nose, and went quite round the palings in the stable-yard; then he put his two fore paws upon the pig-stye. The pig gave a grunt, as much as to say, Who's there?—then he tried to lift himself up behind; at last, by a little manœuvring, he found himself on the roof of the stye, and, making a leap, was presently on the lawn before the house.

It was, however, a hard frost, and the ground was

nearly covered with snow. The green meat was too cold for his nostrils, and made Neddy sneeze, so he looked at the moon again, and trotted and gambolled to keep himself warm, I suppose; but as fat soon chills, and as Neddy was a fat donkey, he soon found himself getting very chilly indeed.

He would have been glad to get into the stable again, but that was impossible; so he went round and round to look for a warm corner, and at last came to the greenhouse, which stood in the warmest place in the garden, as greenhouses usually do. It was built of glass from top to bottom; and by the rays of the moon Neddy could see green things innumerable, growing up—things not to be despised even by daylight.

So he pushed his nose against the glass—it gave way, and the leaves of a vine made Neddy's mouth water: he forced his head in, and eat a circle around it as far as he could reach. Wishing to extend the sphere of his operations, he now put one foot forward, and pawed away till he had made a door-way large enough to admit his body.

Neddy, no doubt, thought that he had been suddenly transported to the islands of the Southern Ocean; so sweet, so mild, so warm, so kind was the atmosphere. I can imagine he would have said to himself, This is the land for me—and in he walked.

What a delightful spot! Asparagus pricking through the heated mould; pine apples just spring-

ing forth; grapes coming in out of season; peas in full blossom; and even cherries in the bud. Time was too precious to think—Neddy began to eat; and eat he did—particularly of the pine apples.

When he had eaten of everything, and pretty well filled himself, he began to think and reflect, and, maybe, moralize, for what I know; at all events, he thought he would try a few experiments in practical botany. So he nipped the balsams, pruned the geraniums, made cuttings of the myrtles, and transplanted a few of the American heaths.

Pot after pot came to the ground—smash after smash echoed through the place—dash, dash went saucers, and at last Neddy, being more foolish than wise, happened to take a mouthful or two of the prickly cactus, which made him caper again; so that he brought down on all sides everything to the common level.

Had Neddy been an auctioneer, he might have said, going, going, gone, with effect, for his was now quite a knocking-down freak—bad enough to all thinking; but what was worse, the greenhouse was heated with hot water, and Neddy, by continually pawing with his fore feet, managed to knock off a portion of the pipe which conveyed it, so that the scalding water spouted out upon him; this made him very frisky indeed, and he kicked and pranced furiously. The glass from the broken windows stuck in his feet and legs; so he scampered and kicked the

more, till at last, he sprang out at one bound through the side windows, making a fresh hole, and scampered along as if he had been, what donkeys seldom are, intoxicated. How he got on after that, you shall hear in my next.



CHAPTER VI.

AFTER the woful adventure of Neddy in the greenhouse, it was not to be expected that he would be a favourite donkey any longer : accordingly, it was determined, at the very next meeting of the family, that Neddy should pay the penalty of his sad doings, and be banished to some penal settlement, where he might have time to correct his evil propensities under the heavy cudgel of some chimney-sweep or costermonger. There was nothing, in the eyes of his lords and masters, too bad or too wretched for him. In the first instance, the poor creature received a good sound thumping from every member of the family ; next, he was heartily abused for several days ; lastly, he was tied up, and nothing given him to eat but straw ; so that the transition from asparagus, pineapples, and hot-house grapes to such rude fare, was of itself enough to break the heart of any sentimental donkey. But Neddy, luckily, was not sentimental ; and, therefore, he did not feel the transition with such intensity as he might have done. Confined in a rude shed, the poor creature had time for reflection ; and, no doubt, did reflect, in his rude fashion, on the sublunary nature of all sublunary enjoyments. Be-

fore, however, his cogitations had done him any good, as is usually the case with criminals, he had begun to scheme new methods of doing evil.

There was living within a few yards of the mansion in which so large a portion of Neddy's history had been enacted, a lady who was what is called very sentimental. She had returned from London to enjoy the country and all its charms; such as the lowing of oxen, the bleating of lambs, the cackling of hens, and the sweet songs of the feathered creation—but she had not bargained for the brayings of a donkey. Neddy, after he had been tied up for a day or two, began to think that his life was truly monotonous; and so he gnawed and gnawed—and shook his head, and stamped his fore-feet—and mangled his straw without eating it—and turned his wistful eyes doorward—and looked at the straw, and gnawed, and stamped, and sighed, as before.

At last, either by way of amusement, or for the purpose of annoyance, or for both, he began to serenade the other cattle with a succession of those dulcet sounds which are so exceedingly expressive of long ears and stubborn natures, and of which the whole of nature does not find another example; those short and sweet notes which usually go by the name of a *donkey's bray*, and from which Neddy received his respectable cognomen.

Heigh-haugh—heigh-haugh—heigh-haugh! said Neddy, once and even again. At morning, and

through the morning—at night, and through the night, still was Neddy's voice heard in its treble and its bass, to the annoyance of every one in the neighbourhood; for, as is always the case in such matters, every donkey within one mile from the leader of such a harmony, joins in long-drawn and beautiful chorus and while Neddy stood forth as an assinine *Brayham*, the other donkeys in the neighbourhood, both male and female, stood in the relative situations of Sinclair, Malibran, Catalini, and other celebrated prima donnas. The whole village was therefore, from morning till night, a rare musical festival; equalling in celebrity, if not quite so musical, those of Hanover Square or Exeter Hall, and resembled a Hicksonian chorus.

Against this disturbance the inhabitants of the place at last loudly protested. A round robin was signed by a variety of persons, and addressed to the magistrate, praying that he would be pleased either to emancipate the donkey, or to send him to Botany Bay, as the fittest place for such a destroyer of botanical specimens. As to the sentimental lady, she went in person to the magistrate; and would, in the very style of Volumnia of old, have thrown herself at the magistrate's feet to obtain his favour in order to get rid of the plague, pest, and nuisance, which brought such discord into the neighbourhood.

The magistrate, after hearing the poor lady's long speech, in which she recounted her number of sleep-

less nights—her troublesome days—the ways in which she had been annoyed, disturbed, perplexed, and worried, said, very sharply, “What is your price for the donkey?—then, madam, you can do what you please with him.”

This was a poser for Miss Whizzlegig, for that was her name; she had never bought a donkey, she knew nothing of the animals, and therefore it was necessary for her to decline so serious a bargain. She, therefore, left the magistrate’s office in high dudgeon; and, drawing out her white lace-bordered pocket-handkerchief, walked away, half in anger, and half in sorrow.

She went immediately to Mr. Popinjoy, a great man in a little way; he was the grocer of the village, and had a small dash of poetry in his composition; he had, too, been in the habit of making speeches at public meetings, occasionally acted as chairman, and figured, on several occasions, as a great orator. Miss Whizzlegig bought her gunpowder of Mr. Popinjoy; and, therefore, she thought no man could be better calculated to make war upon the obdurate man who was deaf to the voice of pity.

“Madam,” said Mr. Popinjoy, assuming an air of great importance, and stretching out one of the *pats* with which he had just been serving a quarter of a pound of butter, “Madam,” said he, “the cause is one that calls for the serious interference of every man endowed with human susceptibility, and who values

the peace of society, and the good of the universe in which we live. I have heard of the nuisance of which you complain: a public meeting, madam—a public meeting; there is no other cure for this ill than the expression of public opinion, the great safeguard of our liberties.”

So Miss Whizzlegig remained to take tea with Mr. Popinjoy; and, in the evening, the latter stepped out and called in Mr. Serge, the tailor, Mr. Last, the boot and shoemaker, Mr. Spruce, the haberdasher, and Mr. Twig, the patten-maker.

After the bohea had been duly circulated, the subject was accordingly broached, and it was determined that a general meeting of the inhabitants should take place, to take into consideration the propriety and expediency of addressing a memorial to the constituted authorities, expressive of the high indignation of the town and neighbourhood at a nuisance calculated to disturb the public peace, and detrimental to the best interests of society.

Bills were therefore printed and circulated. The chair was to be taken by John Bubblesqueak, Esq., a refined tripeman; the attendance of ladies was particularly requested, and certain celebrated speakers were said to have promised their attendance. From the time that these notifications were issued, the whole of the people of the district did nothing but talk of the matter; the fire of contention was lighted, and no one could guess the issue.

On the other side, the worthy magistrate and his sons determined to resist this attempt to interfere with their vested rights and interests. It was a maxim at law, which the judges on the bench would certify, that every man had a right to do what he liked with his own. A meeting was accordingly held in the vestry; and the churchwardens, overseers, parish clerk, sexton, grave-digger, grave-digger's supernumerary, and grave-digger's supernumerary's assistant, attended. A vote was passed condemnatory of the parties at the east end of the town, and the following bill was printed and published:—

**ENGLISHMEN, PROTECT YOUR VESTED
RIGHTS!!**

To the Inhabitants of the Village of Spicklehurst.

GENTLEMEN,

A base attempt having been made to deprive you of your ancient Privileges, and a reckless and lawless faction having made an attack upon your Rights and Liberties as Englishmen,

A MEETING,

For the purpose of resisting, by all Legal and Constitutional means, the usurpation of a dominant faction, will be held on

Tuesday next, at the Town Hall.

**HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DOLITTLE,
IN THE CHAIR.**

Vivat Rex.

To this another flaring handbill was issued by the Popinjoy party ; it ran as follows :—

“ Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow ! ”

MEN OF SPICKLEHURST,

The eyes of both hemispheres are upon you ! Defend your liberties as Englishmen ; do not bow down to the manners of wickedness in high places ; let your tyrants know that the liberty of an Englishman is his birthright ; and let your tyrants feel the sharp edges of your moral steel. War to the knife is our watchword.

LIBERTY OR DEATH !

COME TO THE MEETING !

Who would have supposed there would have been such a bother about a donkey ? But the question seemed to be one of vital importance to the community.

CHAPTER VII.

WE left Neddy and his friends and enemies in great danger of mutual animosity. The dispute continued; on the one hand, those who held the nuisance in their own possession, wished to have the power of doing as they pleased; on the other, those who felt annoyed by it, felt also a desire to do what they pleased in the matter. Each party wanted to do as it liked; the contest was to ascertain which was the strongest.

The important day at last arrived, and a meeting, such as was never seen before, was appointed to be held at one and the same place. Two chairmen, and rather more speakers than hearers.

After a great deal of discussion of an angry kind, among hootings not to be described, hissings, clapping of hands, and other uproarious demonstrations, it was finally settled by the majority, that John Popinjoy, Esq., was to be called to the chair; the other party being, as it were, put upon their defence; and, at last, the business of the meeting commenced.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Popinjoy, amid groans and hisses; "Gentlemen—hem—hem—gentlemen—hem—eh, em. We have met here to-day—to discuss

a point of the most vital importance, not only to ourselves, but to the whole human race. A great nuisance exists—a nuisance intolerable, bigoted, unprincipled, atrocious, infamous, and unmanly. We are, gentlemen, under the dominion of—of—of—a host of tyrants, who trample upon our liberties, who would take away our rights, who would——”

Here Mr. Popinjoy looked in his hat for the remainder of his speech, which some one had abstracted ; so he fell to coughing, and, after a word or two expressive of his wish not to detain the meeting, sat down among cheers and hisses.

Lord Dolittle now occupied the speaker's place, and commenced with the following speech :—

“Worthy Friends,—The times in which we live teem with great events. Who but must deplore the great desire of ruthless change which animates a great portion of the population? If we go on at this rate, in a few short years we shall have all our vested rights, privileges, immunities, level with the dust. I presume, gentlemen, every man has not only a right to do what he likes with his own donkey, but also to suffer his own donkey to do as it likes. This, gentlemen, in my opinion, is perfect liberty, and is in the spirit of the British Constitution, and in unison with all our ancient and venerable institutions, wherever they are to be found. I would have as my maxim, gentlemen—not every man his own washer-woman, nor every man his own wine-merchant, nor

every man his own groom, nor every man his own horse-doctor—but every man his *own donkey*. (*Hear, hear!*) This principle carried out would, I am sure, tend to the conservation of society, promote public morals, lay a foundation for legislation, and secure to every man this most inestimable blessing, namely, that of his being at perfect liberty to make an ass of himself whenever he feels so disposed; and therefore I shall beg to move the first resolution.”

Resolved—“That donkeys have a right to do as they please.”

The motion was met by an amendment, introduced by Mr. Spruce, the haberdasher, who said—

“Gentlemen,—The *thread* of that gentleman’s argument I do not care a *button* for; I shall not *pin* my faith on his *sleeve*. I contend that the more a donkey is an ass, the less an ass is a donkey. This is the question we are met to discuss.” After continuing a long elucidation of this point, Mr. Spruce moved the following amendment:—

Resolved — “That donkeys are not privileged members.”

Mr. Twig begged to second the amendment. He said that parties seemed to have lost sight of the facts of the case, and what the meeting was called for. It was, whether the magistrate’s noisy donkey should disturb the peace of the town, or whether it was lawful for other parties, possessing donkeys, to suffer their animals to join in chorus musical, to the

detriment of all other sweet sounds, and against the peace of our lord the king. Now he was prepared to contend, that donkeys had no right to be fed on straw, nor to be tied up in a shed, nor to be beat in an inhuman manner, and that the onus must lie somewhere, and that, therefore, somebody must be accountable; and he appealed to the worthy magistrate as to whether he had not fed his donkey on pine-apples one day, and straw the next.

"I shall do as I like with my own," said the magistrate; and so the amendment was put, and *negatived*.

"And now," said Lord Dolittle, "since our friends must acknowledge themselves beaten, I have to propose that a public subscription be entered into for restoring the peace of the town, by purchasing the cause of so much annoyance. Gentlemen, we are all desirous of harmony, and though I was prepared to substantiate that the braying of an ass is, above all other things, the most musical to a refined and practised ear; yet, as the case has gone against you, I do not wish to offer any further remarks, except to put down my name for half-a-crown for the purchase and annihilation of the nuisance complained of."

So a subscription was entered into; seven times the value of the donkey was raised, and paid over to Master Trollop, who buttoned up his right-side pocket, and clapping it smartly with his hand, said

to his good father, "Father, I think Lord *Dolittle* does it well."

"Yes, my boy," said his father, "this is what we call tact."

Seven pounds, fifteen shillings, and twopence half penny were raised by the united subscriptions of the Dolittle and Popinjoy parties, that Neddy might be expatriated. But how was he to be sold, was the next question; and the Dolittle and Popinjoy party, united as they were by the tact of their leaders, were now again disunited, and could not agree as to how the donkey should be sold.

Mr. Popinjoy, who had *a brother an auctioneer*, declared with the most vehement emphasis, that nothing in the world should make him forget his duty to the public. He was a public man, and therefore he thought sales by public auction were the most consonant with British liberty, and freedom, and independence, and principle; and that the base attempt of the Dolittles in voting for a private sale could not be too severely reprobated. "Indeed," said he, "hole-and-corner meetings of buyer and seller have been productive of all the evils of our social system. No! public auction for me!" said Mr. Popinjoy; and so another large placard was sent round the town, calling upon the inhabitants not to sanction a private sale.

The Dolittles were exceedingly annoyed at this piece of patriotism; particularly the worthy magis-

trate, who was in possession of the animal: "For," said he, "if the beast should be put up to public auction, individual purchasers will not bid quite so much as a collective body would pay me." But as he had been appointed treasurer of the subscription fund, he did not value the circumstance greatly.

In the midst of all this dislocation of sentiment, there was a dry, droll kind of a fellow, who went by the name of Smug, who determined to have a game with both parties, and he waited for an opportunity of putting it into execution.

It had been finally settled and agreed upon, that Neddy was to be put up to the hammer at the Town Hall, the common place of sale. Mr. Popinjoy, who was the only auctioneer in the town, and also a parish officer of high degree, had managed to place his auctioneer's box as a permanent fixture in the Hall of Justice; for he had really appropriated to himself the judge's seat; and from this seat of justice did he weekly sell pots, pans, tables, chairs, beds, and various other articles which the law gave him power and authority over in his auctioneerial capacity.

The town was, as may be supposed, in a state of high excitement as regarded these proceedings; and the Popinjoy party having gained the day, flags, banners, and bands of music ushered in the ominous morning. All business was suspended, the shops were shut, flags were hoisted on every beer-shop, and nothing was wanted to give *éclat* to the triumph of

principle over prejudice, as it was called, except the peals of the church-bells; but they were Lord Dolittle's—he having, some years before, made them a present to the steeple, *on condition that they were to be rung only when he thought proper.*

The night before the sale of poor Neddy was to have taken place, Master Smug, with his usual adroitness, went to bed at an early hour, and slept till midnight. Smug was the grave-digger's supernumerary's assistant's deputy, and had a great deal to do with the churchyard, the steeple and the steeple-house, the bone-house, the fire-engine-house, and also the Town Hall, which he used to sweep and dust after the various meetings. He contrived, therefore, the night previous to the sale, to leave the side door of the Hall only fastened by a small piece of wood, so that a very small degree of force would enable him to break through when necessary.

Having thus arranged matters for the success of his dark and deep design, as soon as the iron tongue of the parish clock struck twelve, Smug rose from his bed, which overlooked the churchyard, and taking one of the ropes used to lower coffins into the grave, he tucked it under his arm, and passed silently over the fields towards the habitation of Neddy and his master.

The night was very dark, and therefore very favourable for the expedition of Smug. After passing through several fields, and over many hedges, he at

last came to the mansion in which Neddy was located. After a little search he found him in a small shed on one side of the cow-house, fastly tethered and fast asleep, as all respectable donkeys might be expected to be at that hour.

Putting a bunch of hay under his arm, Smug untied his victim, and, leading him out very gently, secured him with his own rope; then giving him a mouthful of hay, Neddy was soon in a good temper, and followed on without any farther trouble, except seeking from him a bit of hay now and then.



It was two o'clock in the morning, and nothing was to be heard save the squalling of the cats upon the tiles of the house belonging to the maiden lady. At last Smug reached the side door of the Town Hall; he gave it a push, it yielded to his force, and he and Neddy entered.

When he had got within the building he considered himself safe, and took a few minutes for breathing time: he then obtained a light from a lucifer box he had in his pocket, and putting it into one of the watchman's dark lanterns, several of which were hung up round the passage of the Hall, he commenced his operations.

The room of the Town Hall contained, in addition to various public documents and parish matters, the state sword, with the robes of the mayor, recorder, and other official dignitaries of the mayrochial bench. Smug could only come at some of the worn-out habits, however, which were hung up in a small closet; but



these were enough for his purpose. He selected the recorder's worn-out gown, a large cauliflower wig,

a pair of lappets, and the first volume of "Burn's Just-ass."

Neddy was now, by means of the remainder of the hay, quietly decoyed up a flight of stairs to the magistrate's room; through this a door led immediately to the platform upon which the seat of justice was placed: Neddy passed through it, and at last stood over the seat of justice itself.

Smug now obliged the poor ass to place his two fore-paws over the judge's desk or cushion in front of the seat; and having secured them by cords so that he could not get them down again, and having placed plenty of hay under Neddy's nose, he then endeavoured to invest him for the imposing ceremony he was to perform.

First and foremost Smug placed on his friend the lawn lappets of the recorder; he then threw over him his official gown, which he secured behind and before, and cut a hole in it behind for the benefit of Neddy's tail, that it might wag itself, if it thought proper; lastly, he placed over, or on the creature's head, the wig of wisdom and gravity; and cutting holes in it for Neddy's ears, he tied it well under his jaws with some of the red tape which lawyers use, a bundle of which was found in the magistrate's room.

Neddy was now so tied, and fastened, and secured, that it was impossible for him to change his position. To speak the truth, he was exceedingly patient during the investiture; and the smell of the hair-powder in

the wig put him so much in mind of oats, or other farinaceous diet, that he no doubt expected every moment a dish of Emden groats, or arrow-root, or something else quite as strengthening.

Smug, having made everything secure, went to the large outer door of the building, and put a few peas in the key-hole, that it might not be opened before the people had assembled for the sale. He then took an affectionate leave of his favourite; and, placing the remainder of the hay before him, descended the stairs, and made his exit by the side door, slamming it to, so that it was closed by the spring-bolt. He then went home and slipped into bed again.

The morning soon dawned; and, before the sun rose, the whole of the partisans of the town were awake. Lord Dolittle's party were exceedingly busy; they had determined that no one should bid for the donkey; and my lord, and the magistrate, and the lawyer, and their friends, had convened the town the preceding night, giving it to be understood that every person, whether he was tradesman, salesman, doctor, or farmer, should lose his trade, practice, or farms, if they bid for Neddy; that is, all those who happened to live on the Dolittle interest.

On the other hand, the Popinjoy party mustered in large numbers, and with banners, bands of music, and favours, paraded the town at an early hour. "Bid for the donkey!" was heard in every mouth; little children in arms waved yellow ribbons and

cried, "Bid for the dontey!" while their mothers declared that their fathers should have no peace unless they went and bid for the donkey in opposition to the Dolittles.

The Dolittles had hired a large party of the country fellows, to whom they had given stout staves, and directions to keep the peace. They had also given them several barrels of ale, on which were chalked, in large letters, *order, sobriety, union, peace*. These barrels were multiplied infinitely, and the ale was emptied by quarts down the throats of all who chose to take up the Dolittle interest, and had a remarkable effect in *predisposing them to keep the peace*.

At last the two parties met in the street; the beerites, and the nobeerites: the former, with their thick staves, began to try their valour upon their adversaries' heads; but they were so intoxicated, that the Popinjoys turned round upon them, and a furious conflict ensued. Numbers ran to the scene of conflict; a riot of the most awful kind had taken place; the blood flowed in all directions; hats, caps, clothes, were fluttering about in pieces and in tatters; broken heads, broken noses, and broken limbs, were on every side.

What was to be done! There was no rural police—there was no constabulary force—for these were all engaged in the conflict; there was no military but the yeomanry cavalry, and these were also of the parties engaged. The town was threatened with

destruction, and everybody was in a state of the greatest consternation; and the screams of women, and the cries of children, were dreadful.



At this inauspicious moment, far off in the extreme distance, was seen a gathering of people; the dust arose—a noise as of thunder saluted the ear—a car came whirling on with tremendous rapidity—the mob opened a way for it—it was the parish engine with Smug on the top of it, grasping the pipe with both his hands. The engine stopped in the centre of the conflict.

“Pump, boys, pump!” said Smug; and then, turning his engine-pipe full against the combatants, he gave both parties such a sousing with temperance liquor, in which a considerable portion of soot had been mingled, as to make every man a living representative of Day and Martin’s liouid blacking.

"Pump, boys, pump!" said Smug; and they did pump; and so vigorously did the general of the engine direct his fire, that in less than a quarter of an hour the riot was at an end.

While this was going on in one locality, the auctioneer, Mr. Poinjoy, and his party, were proceeding towards the Town Hall. Lord Dolittle, and his more gentlemanly supporters, also gathered together, and both proceeded up the steps that led to the front door of the Sessions House; the beadle and bellman, town-crier and sexton. Smug's master was fumbling at the key-hole; he could not get the key to turn—no, the peas prevented that.

"There be peas in the key-hole," said the beadle.

"Then send for a justice of the peas," said a dry-looking cobbler, with his face painted by the soot and water of Smug's machine; "try again."

No better luck—the key would not turn. By this time the greater part of the inhabitants had congregated round the door, and a tremendous rush was anticipated. At last a crowbar was sent for, the door was burst open, and the whole multitude rushed simultaneously into the Hall.

In the confusion Neddy was not at first seen: in fact, he looked so like a judge, that nobody thought it could be a donkey; some supposed it was the recorder come to read the Riot Act. Neddy, however, soon undeceived them by a loud he-haugh—he-haugh; and a laugh, and cheer, and shout, which

might have been, and was heard for miles, made the Town Hall ring again.

Mr. P. Popinjoy, with that quickness for which auctioneers are so remarkable, upon seeing the cause of the laughter, and finding the joke told more against his opponents than himself, very adroitly cried out, "There he is, gentleman, with 'Burn's Just-ass' in his hand, looking the picture of corporate wisdom; who will bid?"

A low yell now broke from the Dolittles, and a rush was made at Neddy; his lordship cried out, "The dignity of justice is violated; down with the Popinjoys!"



Neddy was nearly murdered in the struggle; he was dragged down-stairs by the Dolittle party, his recorder's gown was torn to pieces, and he himself

narrowly escaped annihilation. At last, however, he found himself in the street ; and, maddened with the din, took to his heels with all the speed for which he was remarkable : he dashed along the High Street without his lawn lappets or his wig, knocking down all who came in his way. He determined never more to be made a recorder or a just-ass, and scampered along as fast as his legs could carry him, and never stopped till he found himself far, and wide, and alone, on a wild desolate heath, six or seven miles from the scene of his inauguration.

Poor Neddy, his time is now short, but you shall soon hear of him again.



CHAPTER VIII.

UPON a wide and desolate heath, as you remember, was Neddy driven, after having just personated a *just ass*. Upon a wild heath was Neddy driven, and only stopped from want of wind. Certainly he chose an airy spot to regain that useful commodity, at least so windmills might have thought. Neddy looked round him, and sniffed up the precious air. There were no Popinjoys near. There was no Smug pumping his dirty water from the parish engine. There was no hot water scalding him from a greenhouse. There

were no bursting crackers ; no copper-sticks ; no more of those instruments of torture by which Neddy had so often suffered. Indeed, there was nothing to be seen, heard, felt, or smelt, save the prickly furze with which the heath abounded.

It has been said that a furze-bush is to a donkey what a dish of curry is to an alderman—a sharp provocative ; an internal tingler ; a peristaltic persuader. Neddy was content ; he pricked his nose at first, but afterwards, taught to manage the prickles by experience, he made a meal of them, and in the course of a very few hours was as happy as any fugitive donkey could be.

As the night drew on Neddy became contemplative. The moon rose from the far east in a flood of glory, and as she slowly advanced among the distant hills, gave forth her silvery sheen, and illuminated the heath for many a mile. Neddy had browsed his fill upon the furze, and observing the moonlight to *sleep* upon the bank, as the poet said it did, he thought he might as well take a nap there likewise.

On the verge of this heath, which Neddy had chosen for his future quarters, stood a little cottage. It contained but two rooms, one on each side of the door, which had a porch covered with honeysuckle in front, and a garden of posies and roses both before and behind. In this pretty little retreat lived old Gaffer Gray, a homely old hedger and ditcher, who, being now past work, was obliged to depend upon his

daughter for a scanty subsistence; but she was a good daughter, and a great comfort to her father, although she was very poor and a widow.

But God blesseth the widow's exertions as he did the widow's mite: and Rachel Green (for that was her name) had a lively little son, who was now not quite seven years old, and a great blessing he was to her; his name was Robin.

They used to call him little Robin Redbreast, because he wore a little red waistcoat his mother had made him out of a pair of red plush breeches which his grandfather wore in the service of Sir Gregory Stumps, many years ago. Robin had never been to school, and "could not tell an A from a bull's foot," as the saying is; but yet he was a very clever child, and knew a great deal.

And a rare boy was he for the moles, and the weasels, and the rabbits. He could track a mole as well as the oldest mole-catcher in the district; and he could tell, only by putting his finger in the mole-track, whether the mole had been recently at work. He knew, too, the haunts of the fern owl, and the places where the cunning chaffinch would build; and could find a fox when any of the neighbouring gentry wanted one.

Robin had been put to work from the time he could walk; his mother had always something for him to do. He went to couch-picking at four years of age; and long before that he used to go into the

woods and hollows, all alone by himself, to gather beech-nuts and acorns for the pigs. As he grew older he attended, now and then, a flock of sheep for the owner of the cottage in which he dwelt. He would also take a dozen beasts forty miles away to the town of Southampton, and not pay a turnpike. He knew all the green lanes and free feeding for forty miles, and would take a score of cattle by the bye ways, and, by the time they got to market, have them in good condition.

In these expeditions Robin made a good deal of money; for he had a shilling a-day clear, besides fourpence for his lodging. The fourpence a-night he used to save whenever he could obtain leave to lie down in a straw-yard or a hay-loft, and rarely lived up to his shilling: a great hunch of bread and a slice of cheese, twice a-day, were enough for Robin; for his joy was to bring as much money as he could to his mother, and throw it into her lap, saying, "You shall never want, dear mother." And then the old grandfather, who used to sit by, would weep tears of joy.

This little boy is a strange contrast to some little boys whom you may know, who are "born" (as the saying is) "with a silver spoon in their mouths"—that is, born to money—and have nothing to do but to spend it; and who think they are doing their parents a great favour when they go to school without crying, or when they learn their tasks readily, or

when they do as they are bid. Poor children, they are far more to be pitied than little Robin Green. He was a little man, compared with those children who have everything done for them, and who want servants to tie their shoes, to put on their stockings, to tie on their handkerchiefs, and such matters, which they ought to try to do themselves. Yes, my little readers, Robin Green, although he did not know a letter in his alphabet, was a king to such children; for his ambition was to do everything for himself, and, if possible, to assist those who could not work for themselves—such as his mother and grandfather.

So Robin Green, who was at that time at home waiting for a job of cattle-driving, and not knowing but that he might be idle, thought he could not employ his time better than by getting up very early in the morning to gather mushrooms, of which his mother might make catsup, which she used to sell to various tradesmen, at the nearest town, for two shillings a bottle.

The broad full moon was sinking westward when Robin awoke: he listened, and he heard a cock crowing some way off. By this he knew it was past midnight; and so he leaped out of his straw bed, and, putting on his clothes, slipped out gently, for fear of waking his grandfather, who had been coughing all the earlier part of the night. Out he went by the light of the moon, for the dawn had scarcely begun to break.

As the dawn came on Robin went forth, and, by the time it was broad daylight, came to the very spot upon which Neddy had so sentimentally reclined himself. "Well," thought Robin, "here is a donkey, sure enough; I wonder to whom he belongs; but that is not my business." So he went away, and began the search for his mushrooms, and Neddy laid his head down and took another nap.

After the lapse of a couple of hours, young Robin had filled his basket with the fungi for which he came in search, and was returning, whistling as he went. After leaving the heath he passed down a narrow lane, and hearing something pit-pat behind him, he looked back, and there was the stranger donkey within a few yards of him. He stopped—the donkey stopped.

The fact was, that Neddy, after having browsed the greater part of the former evening on furze, longed for something a little more savoury; and being awakened from his second sleep by the effluvia of the mushrooms which Robin had in his basket, he naturally turned his nose to the point from which the scent arose, as a weather-cock does its sharp end to the quarter the wind comes from.

Robin stopped—Neddy stopped. "What do you smell the mushrooms for?" said Robin. "E-eugh," said Neddy. "Perhaps you would like to taste one," said Robin—for he was a good-tempered boy—and held one out. Neddy, who knew good breeding, came and took

it. Asparagus, and beans, and pine-apples, of which Neddy had formerly partaken, had a celestial flavour, but a mushroom—ay, that was the *bonne bouchée* after all. Neddy had a taste, and felt at that moment as glorious as the newly-elected citizen does the first moment that he tastes turtle soup. Robin went on; Neddy needed no farther inducements to follow him, and never left him till he reached the cottage door.

“Here is a strange donkey,” said Robin, “who is fond of mushrooms; he has followed me all the way from Dingle Crag.” Robin’s mother was at that moment setting her teacups and saucers on the table for breakfast, and was delighted to see her son return, and particularly when she found he had his basket full of mushrooms.

“What shall we do with this donkey?” said Robin. “I think he has no owner.” “He must have strayed from some of the villages hereabouts,” said the grandfather, who was lacing up his high shoes, “and so we may as well turn him away, or we shall get into some trouble about him; so you had better take him away,” said he. “When I have had my breakfast I will,” said Robin.

So they all sat down to breakfast, while Neddy, who was not altogether unused to the smell of tea, and bread and butter (for he had been rarely pampered by Master Popinjoy), stood at the cottage door, looking wistfully into the room. At last a lad came by, named Ben Snell, who cried out, “What, is that

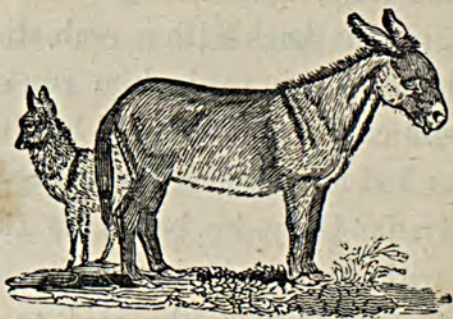
your new donkey, Master Gray?" "It is not mine," said he; "it is a strange one. I wish you would just drive it away to the other side of the bank." "O yes," said Ben; and so he gave Master Neddy a good whack on his back with a crab-stick, which he had in his hand, which made him run off as fast as his legs would carry him, followed by Snell.

After Ben had followed Neddy a long way from the cottage of Gaffer Gray, he began to think what he should do with him, and whether he might not be sold; for it was a pity, as he said to himself, that such a donkey should belong to nobody. So he mused within himself again and again, and before he had got to the end of his musing he had got to the end of the lane which led to the heath; and just as he turned the corner he met a man crossing the heath in an opposite direction, with no less than seven donkeys and donkeyesses tied in a string. The man who drove them was, by name, Sawney Bean.

"Hoot, mon!" said Sawney, "what are ye about with the beeste there? Here, tie him to the others, and take the siller. There, there are five silver shillings for ye, and a good borgain ye have made out."

So Ben took the five shillings, and fastened Neddy to the Scotchman's rope, or rather to the other donkeys, and away he went as if nothing had happened. He never reflected upon selling what was not his, nor what might be the consequences of such

an action. But there is no action without its consequences, and those are very serious sometimes, depend upon it.



At the time the war between the Dolittles and the Popinjoy party was taking place at the village of Spicklehurst, other wars were going on in distant parts of the world, particularly one in South America, between General Bolivar and another general, who wanted to deprive him of his power. The war had been long and bloody; many thousand persons had been killed on both sides, a number of villages burnt, and a great many families ruined. Now in South America a very large portion of labour is done by asses, who carry great burdens over the mountains, and are employed in the plains in a variety of ways. But the war of Bolivar had been very fatal to the donkeys of Bolivia; hundreds, nay thousands, had been massacred; for, as they were so useful to either army, when any number were taken they were sure to be put to death if they could not be carried off,

for fear of their being used again : and when an army was obliged to decamp, rather than leave their asinine cavalry behind, they used to spike the guns and slay the donkeys.

From these circumstances, asses in Bolivia and the northern districts of South America were what is called at a premium ; they were " looking up," as is said of the funds—that is, rising in price ; for a good donkey which, before the war, would have stood for days in the market-place, at half-a-dozen dollars, and never found a bidder, would now be snatched up for thirty, whoever might be his seller.

Now this state of things had, somehow or other, found its way into England by some of the sailors who traded between South America and our own country ; and, coming to the ears of Mr. Swaggerbags, counting-house merchant, of Dowgate Hill, he immediately began to conceive that the purchase of donkeys for the demand from the south-west would be an excellent speculation. But Mr. Swaggerbags had no money ; he had not a pound wherewith to buy a donkey. What could he do ? The matter was easy. He would start a joint-stock donkey company, and had no doubt but it would answer as well as the joint-stock pickled-gooseberry company ; or the joint-stock treacle-and-roll company ; or the joint-stock tin-machine and hot-potato company.

So he went about it with an alacrity and perseverance known only to joint-stock companies' secretaries.

First, he procured three sheets of the best foolscap paper. On one of these he wrote first—

“The British and South American Joint-Stock Asinine Company.—Capital £25,000, in 1000 shares, of £25 each.”

“Now then for the names,” said he. “We must have Patrons, Vice-Patrons, President, Secretary, Committee, Treasurer, &c. Great names are great things, and so here goes. It is only necessary to print the word *proposed* in a type so small that no one can see it, at the head of the list, where the names are our own, without the trouble of asking.” And so, without more ado, Mr. Swaggerbags wrote—“President, his Grace the Duke of Wellington. Vice-Presidents, Lord Lyndhurst, Marquis of Londonderry ;” with the Lord Mayor for Treasurer, and himself as Secretary.

Under this patronage it was no wonder that the Company flourished. Shares were taken to an extraordinary amount. They rose above par ; a premium was demanded. Mr. Swaggerbags sold all his shares at £40 a-piece, which was £15 above their real value ; and everything went on prosperously.

It was advertised that above 100,000 donkeys would be required for exportation ; that the profits on asses’ milk would realize sufficient to pay all outgoing expenses : and that the donkeys which should depart this life, in the order of nature, during the transit, or in the process of collection would, from their hides

alone, supply all the pocket-book makers in London with *asses' skin*.

His purveyors were now appointed at £150 a-year; and Mr. Swaggerbags took care to receive from every person so appointed the sum of £20 as a deposit. *Ass inspectors* also were appointed at high salaries: one of them was Mr. Swaggerbags' first cousin; the other two were his sons, the eldest not quite sixteen years of age.

The purveyors were directed to proceed through every village, town, and hamlet, in the three kingdoms, and to buy up donkeys wherever they saw them— young, old, halt, maimed, lame, or blind; and it was one of these very purveyors who had bargained for Neddy, and to whose tether he had been lashed, as already related.

Mr. Swaggerbags had directed that all the donkeys, as they approached the metropolis, previous to their shipment for exportation, should rendezvous at a place called Newington Green, a mile or two north of London—a very quiet spot, both rural and romantic, and inhabited chiefly by retired tradesmen, and persons of the most serious, steady habits and disposition.

Sawney proceeded with Neddy; and as he passed through various towns homewards, or rather Londonwards, picked up a number of other beasts of the same order and genus; and at last, after the lapse of a week, found himself within sight of the smoke of

modern Babylon. According to his instructions, he bent his way towards Newington Green; and when he branched into the main road, was delighted to find several other companies of donkeys, with their purveyors mounted in good style, progressing towards the appointed rendezvous.

It was towards the evening that the various purveyors met in Newington Green, and as a great number met on the same day, the number of asses was far more considerable. Upwards of 500 clustered in that ill-fated spot, and found provender for the night in the grassy space between the white railings which surrounded it. But quiet as Neddy and his companions were during the night, they were not so in the morning. Neddy may be assumed to have had a dream: the asparagus and pine-apples were before him in all their beauty and relish; and when he awoke in the morning, and found it to be but a dream, he lost no time in manifesting his regret by one of the longest, loudest brays that ever issued from the throat of an unfortunate donkey.

Neddy was the leader of as beautiful a chorus as ever issued from the opera house, even when it was led by *Brayham* himself; for every donkey opened his mouth, and saluted the neighbourhood with such sounds, that the welkin rung again and again. Policemen came in from all quarters; they thought, poor simple-minded folks! that some fair had commenced, against the statute, and came forth, banded

and truncheoned, and looking as valiant as the great general whom the donkeys had for their president in prospective. To quell their disturbance was a delight; so in they rushed, pell mell, and belaboured Neddy and his fellows to such a degree as to silence, for a time, the noisy uproar.

After a few days, Neddy and some of his companions were ordered down to the water-side, and, notwithstanding some difficulty, shipped on board the "Aurora," for Lima; but, before the shipment was completed, Mr. Swaggerbags received no less than twenty-four notices of action, from various persons of the Newington Green locality, for a nuisance, in which damages were laid at several thousand pounds. This proceeding was fatal to the British and South American Asinine Joint-Stock Company, which forthwith resolved itself into thin air, leaving behind it nothing but a shadow and a name, and some score or two of bankrupts and insolvents, who had put more faith in the prospectus and prospective patrons and vice-patrons than they ought to have done.

How Neddy crossed the Atlantic, and what befell him on the other side of the water, will be related presently; but concerning poor little Robin Green, of whom, perhaps, you would like to hear something more, I must tell you now.

First, then, you must know that Neddy's flight was the very next day traced by Master Popinjoy, and he was tracked to the very bank on which he had

so comfortably reposed himself. Inquiries being farther made, it was ascertained that Robin had been seen to decoy the animal home; since which time he had never been heard of. Ben Snell came to say, that he would swear that he saw the beast at old Gray's cottage; and, in a very few hours after Neddy had been sold to the Scotchman, was Robin seized by a constable, and taken before a magistrate for the theft.

The magistrate was a man of great penetration; and when he saw Robin, he took a dislike to him, because he fancied him to resemble a servant of his who had once docked his horses. "I see you are a great scoundrel," said he, before Robin could speak; "and the less you say the better. You have burked the donkey, and sold him to the knackers. I have no doubt he went up to London with the first load of straw that passed your door." Robin was going to say what he knew of the beast, but was stopped short by, "Hold your insolent tongue! Constable, remove your prisoner." And so Robin was committed for trial to the county jail.

And a cold, dark, hideous place it was—having been an old baronial castle in former times, surrounded by a deep moat and a high wall, and defended by a drawbridge and a fierce-looking portcullis. It made Robin's blood run cold as he entered it. The gate was unbarred, unbolted, and unchained with a loud noise; and, when he had passed the portal, slammed

to behind him with a force that made the old walls echo, and the bats, rooks, and daws, whiz, caw, or chatter from the ivied battlements. But Robin knew he was innocent, and walked into his cell with a firm step and a calm brow.

He was thrust in, and locked up, on suspicion of being suspected—thrust into a cold, low, dark, damp cell, which only received light through a little loop-hole, not wide enough for Robin to put his hand through. There was nothing within it but a truss of straw, and on this the poor boy flung himself, almost in despair; and, notwithstanding his heart told him he had done no wrong, not without tears.

But a soft and kindly influence came over him. He rose from his tear-bedewed straw, and knelt down on the cold flinty stones (not half so hard as the heart of the unfeeling old magistrate), and there he prayed to God to help him out of the thick-ribbed prison, and to restore him once more to his kind, dear, and affectionate mother.

But it was not to be. Robin lay in prison for several weeks. His mother made many fruitless attempts to see him. At last, the county assizes commenced, and Robin was brought out of prison, and placed in the bale-dock to be tried for horse-stealing, although Neddy was but a donkey.

It was at the fag-end of the day when Robin's trial came on; the jury were wearied, and the judge, who was a very old man, was half asleep. The

indictment was read by the proper officer, in a mumbling tone; witnesses were not called, as the thing spoke for itself. The verdict "Guilty" was pronounced, and sentence passed. "Transportation for seven years! For," said the judge, "donkey-stealing has now reached a fearful height; and, unless an example be made, we shall not have an ass left in the country." So said, he bowed to the jury, and the court rose.

Poor Mrs. Green, who was in the body of the court, anxiously awaiting the sentence, when she heard that her good, darling, only child was to be transported, fell into a swoon, and was carried out in a lifeless condition: when she came to herself, she was more like a thing dead than alive, and went home half-frantic. She came the next day to take a farewell leave of her boy, but he was gone.

Yes; gone, as it were, for ever! She knew he was innocent; his grandfather knew he was innocent: but all availed nothing. Robin was the same night taken to the nearest seaport, and, in company with twenty hardened offenders, sent off to Botany Bay.

On board the "Aurora," bound for the Spanish Main, was Neddy shipped among two hundred other unfortunate donkeys, leaving for ever their native land; and they did so with tearful eyes and heavy hearts; for they no sooner felt the motion of the vessel, as they sailed down the British Channel, than every donkey wished himself on *terra firma*, and began to

be utterly sick of the sea. Neddy, in particular, was most heartbroken; for he remembered his many scrapes, and his many feastings, and the good things he had occasionally fallen in with; and knew not whether the country to which he was going might not be a great deal worse than that from which he was parting. In short, he knew nothing but that, every time the ship lurched, his head came with a lunge against an iron bolt, which was by no means a thing to be considered comfortable. It is true that, by way of a change, when the ship luffed the other way, his stern-quarters reposed upon the jagged end of an iron stauncheon, which kept him in a continual fret. Then, as to provender. Alas! for green fields—particularly bean-fields! Nothing but chopped straw, with a few oats, one day; and for the next, by way of a change, less oats, and more chopped straw. Poor Neddy! Had not the sea-sickness come to his relief, he would have died of starvation.

After the "Aurora" had been at sea three days, a tempest arose, and everything went topsy-turvy. The waves rolled mountains high, several of the donkeys broke from their moorings, and floundered about among the others, which began to kick and plunge in a dreadful manner. Neddy was one of those whose rope had broken; and when the good "Aurora" mounted a high wave, he was thrown off his balance, and forced with such violence against the partition which separated the cabin from the hold, that

it cracked again. The wind now increased, and the ship laboured greatly. All hands were called on deck—at an unfortunate time, too, just when they were about to sit down to dinner. Again the “Aurora” made a heave, and Neddy was forced with violence through the panelling, and found his head and shoulders half-way in the cabin.

Pork and pease-pudding had been placed upon the table for the dinners of the crew. Neddy knew what beans were; he had also a dim recollection, or thought he had, of the smell of peas. At least, a large pudding, of a couple of stones, put him in mind of eating. The smell was delicious. Was it not a remedy for sea-sickness? Without asking himself any farther questions, Neddy was determined to try it, and took a mouthful—a tremendous one it was; but, the pudding being hot, Neddy burnt his asinine jaws. He tried again and again; and, before a double reef could be taken in, the fore and main-topsail had so spliced the pudding to the coats of his stomach, as to be all but comfortable.

The storm increased more and more. All hands were called to the pump. The poor cargo, horribly alarmed, began to bray, and kick, and plunge more than ever. The ship was sinking, water gained in the hold, and Captain Weathergauge gave orders to throw the donkeys overboard.

This was, however, easier said than done. Many ways were tried to get them on deck; but, what with

the heaving of the ship, and the rocking of the waves, and the squalling of the wind, and the roaring of the sea, not a donkey could be hoisted above board. The cruel order then came to stick the donkeys, and throw their bodies overboard; so several of the sailors came down, and stuck, with their knives, above fifty of Neddy's companions; and most likely Neddy would have shared the same fate, had he not found his way into the biscuit room, and quietly laid himself down to take a comfortable nap after his dinner, as a gentleman should do.

"Breakers a head!" was soon the cry upon deck; and cries and groans were heard on all sides. In a few minutes the "Aurora" struck. The crew lashed themselves to spars, hencoops, and water-butts; and, after a few thumps upon a flinty rock, the good ship "Aurora" broke up into four or five pieces. Neddy was thrown out, and floundered about in the water for some time; at last, he found his head above the waves, and, being carried by them and the wind towards the shore, was at last washed by an unusually large wave, half dead, upon the beach.

How long Neddy lay in this state, he knew not. All he knew was, that when he awoke, he found himself—you shall hear where, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

HEIGH-OUGH! heigh-ough! were the first sounds that broke from the jaws of Neddy, after he came to himself on the beach where we left him lying, half drowned, half dead.

Heigh-ough! heigh-ough! heigh-ough! was responded from some thirty or forty of Neddy's companions, who, like himself, had not met with a watery grave. Upon hearing these friendly sounds of sympathy, Neddy wagged his unfortunate tail, and felt less gloomy. He looked around him, and there lay the great and wide sea, like an exhausted giant slumbering at his ease: he looked up to the heavens, and a clear bright blue sky hung over him, as placid and pure as if it had never borne the shadow of a storm. Around him expanded in the far distance a broad, sandy, golden shore—spangled with thousands of fancy shells and precious stones. "A very nice place this," said Neddy, as he lifted himself upon his four legs: "but," continued he, as he sniffed up the land breeze, "a very bad place for grass."

He was right, poor fellow, for he had been thrown upon the sandy shores of the African coast; not a tree, nor a shrub, nor a blade of anything but the

salt sea-weed was to be seen. And then, the sun came scorching down, and the air quivered with the heat, and the sands grew hot to his feet, and the skin of Neddy's back shrivelled and smoked; his eyes ached with the heat, a burning thirst came upon him—in short, Neddy began to fry.

The other asses were in the same predicament; they came to the spot where Neddy stood, and tried to lie down in each other's shadows, it was so hot. It was droll enough to see the poor creatures taking the lee side of each other to keep out of the sun. Then there was no amusement in the eating and drinking way. The sea-weed was salt, the stunted herbs were salt, the water was salt, and the sun was pepper.

Oh dear! what a state for a poor unfortunate, forlorn, shipwrecked donkey! But what cannot be cured must be endured, and things might have been worse, Neddy thought. Besides, he had hope, for hope exists in a donkey as well as in a human breast. So Neddy wagged his tail, and, with an effort such as hope often makes, he trotted up the beach till he came to a little creek opening. The other asses, seeing Neddy moving, began to move likewise, and the whole troop were trotting after him like a flock of sheep.

Provender was depicted in each countenance; provender seemed to be the motto of every wagging tail. Had they formed an array of battle, provender

would have appeared emblazoned on each banner; had they been a portion of a Radical mob, they would have had "No corn monopolies" as their watchword; and "Cheap oats, cheap hay, cheap beans," bound about their necks.

Neddy trotted on through the creek, and over a large area of wet sea-weed; he then ascended a small eminence, and his companions after him. At a great distance something appeared like little black spots in the burning air, which twinkled and hovered in his gaze. The wind, as I said, blew from the shore; the asses, one and all, sniffed it, and a balm was borne upon its wing quite welcome and joyous. It was not the odour of the Persian rose, nor the fragrant sandal-wood, nor the delightful scent of spicy isles—no, but a scent more delightful to Neddy and his companions—it was the scent of other donkeys.

And other donkeys they were; for far over the burning plain were a hoard of Arabs, with their horses, asses, and camels; and towards these, with as much speed as the sea had left in them, did Neddy and his fellows scamper, up to their knees occasionally in sand. After half-an-hour's run, the Arab troops perceived them; a large amount of snorting and braying took place on both sides, and in a few minutes, Neddy and his party were surrounded by a body of Arabian horse.

The leader of this mounted company was a little, thin-featured, wiry, shrivelled, but vigorous old man.

He wore a green vest and a white and green turban. Over his vest hung a broad scimitar, a pair of pistols of very good workmanship, and behind his back a short rifle. His feet were in broad leather stands or stirrups, and his steed was badged with rude gold ornaments and cowrie shells. At his word of command all the Arabs stopped, and surveyed, with great mirth and astonishment, Neddy and his companions. They strained their eyes to the east and to the west, to the north and to the south, and then they pondered again. "Did these donkeys fall from the clouds?—Have they masters?—What country do they belong to?"—for English donkeys are very different to those of Africa.

"Allah be praised!" said the chieftain. And his troops bowed their heads in reverence. "Allah be praised!" said he; "but these are ours, and so keep them together, and bring that Christian dog to tend them, and let his life be on his lash. Enough."

In a few moments a poor ragged youth was seen coming towards the troop, forcibly driven by one of the Arabs; his clothes were nearly torn from his back, and his skin was burnt brown by the sun; a piece of broken chain was round his leg, and his back seemed to have been lacerated by blows.

Before a word could be spoken, the poor lad flew into the midst of the group and clasped Neddy round the neck. It was little Robin Green, who had been transported for stealing Neddy. He had been ship-

wrecked in the same storm, cast on the same coast, and now Neddy and Robin were slaves together among the Arabs.

At the period alluded to, in which Neddy had marched himself into such unusual quarters, the French had taken possession of Algiers. The French nation, as you must know, is what is called the "Grand Nation." Thinking it somewhat strange, some time ago, that England should be in possession of so many rich colonies, the French picked a quarrel with the Algerines, and sent a fleet against the city of Algiers, which they bombarded, and eventually took by force of arms. Having made themselves masters of the city, they thought it no hard matter to subdue the people; but this proved to be a very different task. Cities are but, at best, made of stone walls, but the hearts of bold men are firmer than the rocks upon which cities are built. The sons of the desert are a bold and hardy race, and, although they may be repelled, they can never be subdued. This, the French have found out to their cost; for Abd El Kader, the chieftain, who looked with such astonishment on Neddy and his companions, has foiled the various detachments of French soldiers which have been sent against him; sometimes he has rushed upon them from some ambush and destroyed the whole opposing force, cutting off the heads of those either slain or taken prisoners, with cruel ferocity; at other times he has stolen upon the camp

of the French, unperceived, and run off with all the wealth, provisions, and moveables. Thus he has continued to annoy the enemy at every step, and will, in all probability, so tire out the invaders of African soil, that in the end the French will be glad to decamp and give up the city, which has taken them so much to gain, and so much more to retain.

Abd El Kader was collecting his forces for a surprise upon a French detachment encamped at a small village about ten leagues distant. Nothing could be more *àpropos* than the supply of so many asses. They were able to carry both ammunition and provender, and the wives and children of some of the Arabs. As to poor Robin, he was of use also, and was compelled to become ass driver to the community. But this service he cheerfully performed when he thought upon Neddy; "for," said he to himself, "as very strange mishaps have brought us together, far away from our native land, perhaps some events, quite as singular, may bring us both back again."

Neddy slept soundly on the burning sands through the night, and made a pillow for Robin, who lay down beside him. In the morning, at sunrise, the Arabs rose up, and Robin was much surprised at observing them all move a few paces in advance towards the east, and then bow down their heads and utter prayers. "Why, these people," thought he, "are better Christians than the English; for they never seem to say their prayers at all without they

go to church, and very few, even then. I should think," said he, "that these people must be better sort of people than I took them for." He, however, soon found out that they were no better than they should be.

After these devotions were ended the whole party prepared to move onward; a cloud of dust was seen to the north, and another to the east. The Arabs shouted, and waved their long banners in the air. The chieftain fired his pistols several times, and pranced about on his small Arab barb in great joy.



In a short time the allies approached, and exhibited from 800 to 1000 warlike-looking fellows, of a deep tan colour; some of them rode nearly naked, some had fire-arms, others nothing besides a short spear and a Turkish scimitar; but all were well mounted,

and exhibited extraordinary dexterity in riding. Sometimes they would set their horses at full gallop, and while at the top of their speed jump off, run after them, and mount them again. At other times they would throw their bodies close to the back of the horse, and, placing their heads beside his neck, dart along scarcely visible. They would also lie on their backs, with their legs clasped round the horses' necks, and in this way proceed quite at ease. Thus, it was difficult to shoot them or to come up with them, or to know in what way to attack them in common warfare.

The other group having now come up, the whole body moved on in good order, Abd El Kader in the middle, surrounded by a strong body of his attendants; Neddy and his companions were forced on at the top of their speed, and the whole of the warriors burst out simultaneously with a song or hymn, which made the desert alive with music.

They proceeded at a moderate pace till evening, when the order was given to halt. The asses, the baggage, and the women and children, belonging to Abd El Kader's troops, together with Robin and Neddy, were left behind, with orders to wait. Robin saw the Arabs depart, and, as he strained his eyes after them, fancied he saw a white shining range of buildings at an immense distance. It was, indeed, some of the French forts at Algiers, towards which the Arabs were journeying. Robin did not know

where he was—not he; as for Neddy, he seemed to make himself comfortable anywhere, and laid himself down quietly to sleep. Robin also, as the night drew on, was permitted to follow his example.

What passed after this, neither Neddy nor Robin knew, but they were awakened about midnight by the report of cannon, and heard a confused noise, with the clashing of swords and stamping of hoofs. Robin leaped up, and Neddy also; a shot struck the latter about two inches below the crupper, and made him kick and prance at a desperate rate.

The blowing of the bugle, and the loud sound of the guns were increased; so that, what with the din and the noise, and the smoke and the dust, and the dread and the danger, Robin made no more to do but leaped upon Neddy, and, giving him a sound thwack or two, turned his head in the direction in which he had observed the bright buildings in the daytime, and set off at full speed. Glad to get off at any rate, Neddy kept up his pace, and never slackened it till he found himself at the bottom of a deep trench or dyke, which belonged to a French fortification.

The deep dyke or trench into which Neddy and Robin had thrown themselves in their panic, proved to be the ditch of the French fortifications at Algiers. In the morning, the young lad and his ass were discovered by the French, and taken prisoners, amidst shouts of laughter. They were brought before the

commandant, who jocosely entered them both on his roll as British-born subjects, and forthwith sent them to the British consul; but not till both had been well fed, the one with bread and the other with stubble.

The British consul was astonished at the history of Robin's adventures, and would have been no less astonished at Neddy's, could he have given a "full, true, and particular account;" but his language, being confined to a few German phrases, was utterly unintelligible to an Englishman.

Robin Green was taken into the service of the British consul as groom, who advised him to dispose of Neddy and purchase an outfit. With tears in his eyes Robin implored the consul to take Neddy into his service too; for, after the extraordinary circumstance which had brought them together, he could not part with the companion of his fortune and misfortune. Robin's master, who was a kind-hearted man, gave way, and Neddy was taken into service likewise, and a good servant he proved.

It was Neddy's office to go down every morning to the market-place with a pair of hampers, one on each side of him, to bring vegetables and other provisions for his master's table. On such occasions Robin was his invariable companion; and many a sly carrot Neddy managed to chew while he was loading; and, on one occasion, he indulged his almost extinct

taste for pine-apples, which are not quite so rare in Africa as in England.

The way to the market was down a steep hill, and by a narrow path close to the sea shore, into which jutted a small creek. The banks were steep in one place, but gently declined to the water in another. Neddy, with Robin Green on his back, was trotting along this road early one morning, when they were suddenly brought to a stand-still by a loud outcry, and the rush of a number of people, mostly French, towards the water; at the same time shrieks arose from the glassy sea below.

When Robin looked over the bank, he beheld a little girl struggling with the waters; she had fallen from the bank by accident, and was vainly endeavouring to keep herself from sinking. The cowardly French kept calling out for succour, and gesticulating violently; and they made such a hubbub as to be quite deafening. The young lady floated towards that part of the shore where the bank was less precipitate, but still none of the French attempted to plunge into the water to save her life. Robin, however, having some notion of Neddy's capacities as a swimmer, and thinking that the empty hampers, which were covered with skin, might act as floats, gave Neddy a whack, and rode fearlessly into the sea, and floundered about till he had the good fortune to seize by the hair the drowning child, whom he brought safely to land amid the cheers of the French, who seemed to



"Robin having some notion of Neddy's capacities as a swimmer, rode fearlessly into the sea, and seized the drowning child."—Page 100.

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The young lady, thus rescued from a watery grave, was the daughter of a British merchant; and when her father knew the peril in which she had been, and the heroic manner in which she had been delivered from it, he was overjoyed, and nothing would content him but offering a handsome reward to her deliverer. Robin, however, would take nothing; "For," said he, "why should I be paid for what it was my duty to do? But, as my donkey has had a good wetting, I have no objection to a peck of beans."

Neddy was regaled with the peck of beans; and while he stood on the shore munching, he thought to himself, "If this is the fare after taking a salt-water bath, I do not care if I take another to-morrow."

The gentleman, the father of the little girl, however, was determined not to let the matter drop in this way, and found out where Robin lived; and it was lucky for Robin that he did, for on the very next day the British consul was superseded by another, and Robin was on the point of becoming placeless. As it was, he was received into the family of the British merchant.

Here he remained for some years, and Neddy with him; for nothing could induce him to part with the animal. At last he rose in confidence, and became clerk, and then chief clerk, in the merchant's house. By a course of industry, faithfulness, and talent,

Robin was at length offered a share in the business of his master; and, what was not, perhaps, so very extraordinary, the hand of the young lady whom he had saved so miraculously from the sea.

Neddy was now growing old; but he had a stable and a paddock, and his declining years were spent in rambling about the grass with Robin's little family, as they grew up one after another. At last Robin grew rich, and revisited his native country, where he settled in the very house of the magistrate who had sent him to trial. Neddy once more saw the scenes of his former youthful pranks, and died a peaceful death from sheer old age. Robin filled the magistrate's chair, but never could be prevailed upon to send a man to trial for stealing a donkey.

A BOY'S ADVENTURE

WITH

AN EAGLE.

CHAPTER I.

AN eagle is said to be the king of birds, as a lion is called the king of beasts. The eagle, too, has, in the old mythology, been termed the companion of the gods, the bird of Jove : and upon some old coins and sculptures you may find him riding on a thunderbolt.

Well, I do not wonder at it, for he is, after all, the bird of the storm and of the thunder ; and there is a great deal of wild grandeur and rude sublimity about him. Even in captivity eagles are noble, and seem to contemn the men and the cages that restrain them.

There have, in consequence, been many ridiculous stories about the eagle. He, like the lion, has been endowed with a great many virtues, which perhaps do not belong to him, being set down as the most noble-minded and most generous of birds ; as one, in

short, who could do nothing to lessen the dignity of a monarch. Whereas an eagle, though fierce and sanguinary in the fight, soon relapses, when his vengeance or appetite is satiated, into his accustomed inaction and retirement.

Thus you see, my young friends, that persons are led, by exterior accomplishments, to form false conclusions. The ass and the goose are, by universal consent, made the very emblems of stupidity; so much so, that their very names have become so closely linked with stupidity, that we call a dullard an ass, and a simpleton a goose. But the ass, so far from being a stupid animal, is wonderfully sagacious; though, in this country, he is abandoned to the least reputable part of society, and badly fed, and worse treated. Yet, although slow, and a little sullen in temper, it is the most enduring, the most patient, the most hard-working, the most temperate, and the most inoffensive of all animals. The goose is a vegetable feeder, and attacks no animal except in defence of its young; and, like the ass, is anything but a stupid animal, but as intelligent, and as susceptible of attachment, as any in the poultry-yard.

Eagles are very dangerous and formidable birds, and are found in a great variety of situations. Some species are found high in the clefts of mountains and rocks; such as the more lofty mountains in Scotland and Ireland, and the elevated wild and bleak districts of the Alps and Pyrenees. Other

kinds are to be met with on the margins of tropical forests. The mountain eagle has to contend with all the violence of the mountain storm while he sits upon the pinnacle of the rock, beaten by the wind, and pelted by the snow. The other eagles, from their more rich and sheltered habitation, and having to beat about amongst trees to catch the larger birds on the wing, and to seize monkeys and other tree-animals while they are on the branches, are not endowed with a frame so hardy, and adapted for a single effort, as that of the mountain eagle, which has to pounce down from its Alpine height on its prey, but with one which is better adapted to flutter and to fly, and to tack and to veer, as suits its purpose.

The characteristics of the eagle are, a strong curved bill and stout feet, toes strong, and claws very much arched: the wings are very long. Eagles live in pairs, and the mates are never at any great distance from each other. The pairs inhabit parts more or less wide of each other; and it is said that when one of a pair meets with any casualty, the other one wanders off, never to return to the same locality, though a second pair may take possession of the deserted eyry.

The eyry of the eagle, which is a dwelling as well as a cradle for their broods, is placed on some ledge of the rock, and rarely on a tree, and is generally slippery with the refuse of the prey. When the young are there, it is generally well stored with pro-

visions, which consist both of quadrupeds and birds. The eggs are seldom more than two. The eagle is said to live to a great age, sixty, eighty, or a hundred, or, as some assert, to two hundred years.

Among the hills in Cumberland, eagles used in former years to be much more numerous than they are now; they were fine objects to the sportsman, and the ascent of a mountain 3000 or 4000 feet in perpendicular height, was in itself a good day's work for a man; but what will not boys attempt? and such a *bird's nesting* as the one I am about to describe perhaps has rarely taken place in this or any other country.

On the west of Windermere, in Cumberland, is the tremendous pass of Borrowdale; and amid the mountains leading to this pass is a small village. Near it the river Derwent pursues its rapid course, leaping from rock to rock. Close to the entrance of the gorge is a detached mountain, called Castle Craig, which obtained its name from a fortress that once stood on its summit; and at its foot is the romantic village of Grange, situated among the woods and meadows which skirt the borders of Derwent lake.

Among the most gigantic of the falls that form the great outline of the scenery of this place are Eagle Craig, Glamora, Bull Craig, and Serjeant Craig. The first is a tremendous rock, at the head of Borrowdale, to the east, where the eagles have made their habitations for ages. Glamora is a perpendicular

rock of immense height. Bull Craig and Serjeant Craig are less considerable eminences, but have their rugged sides covered with hanging wood.

In the village of Grange, about sixty years ago, there lived a worthy yeoman, or small farmer of the district, named Penruddock. He had two sons (twin brothers), Robert and Richard, both daring boys, who, from living among the mountains, were as healthy and vigorous as the wildest of the mountain races. To the shame of Penruddock, he had allowed both his sons to grow up without any education: neither of them, at the time the exploit took place which I am about to relate, knew their letters. They were both just turned fourteen; and, although they could not read, they could run like wild deer over the mountains; and, although they could not write, Richard could bring down the buzzard when only like a speck in the sky, and Robert could at any time lay a Scotch heifer by her heels. They both loved each other with an extraordinary affection, and were not only twins in body, but in heart and soul, as brothers ought to be.

Now, it so happened that Robert was sent with his sheep on the mountains, taking for his companion, as was usual, his dog Jock. Jock was one of the true Highland breed, somewhat large for his species, and knew everything that was said to him; and was ready, if necessary, to risk his life for his master. Robert, next to his father and brother—for mother

and sisters he had none—loved Jock better than any person in the world beside; and, as to Jock, he appeared to have no love left for anybody except the members of the family with which he had been bred and brought up. With this faithful companion, therefore, early on a Monday morning, Robert started, with three score sheep and a dozen head of



black cattle, to lead to pasture among the grassy knolls of the mountain sides. Richard had to make a journey to Keswick on his little roan pony; and Penruddock had enough to do indoors to attend to a broken leg which had only been set about a fortnight.

Robert set off, and proceeded through a wood which entangled a rocky promontory, stretching out into a narrow part of the lake; but, leaving the grassy margins and scattered copse which bordered the

water, he threaded Dragon Pass, as it was called, and soon all around him became one scene of mountains, which hemmed him in, rising with awful and precipitous fronts. Here the white cliffs raised their pointed heads; there the shaken and rifted rocks were split and broken into vast shelves, chasms, and dreary cells, which yawned upon the shadowed lake; while other slips, less rugged, were decked with shrubs which grew on every plain and chink, their summits being embrowned with sun-parched moss and scanty herbage.

The sheep went bleating, and the heifers lowing, through the intricate path which led to the spot where a sufficient pasturage was to be found. But at every winding of the passage new hills and new rocks were seen to overlook those which but a minute before were new upon the prospect. Much of this Robert was used to, and therefore did not experience those sensations of awe generally felt by those unaccustomed to mountain scenery. But the clouds hung gloomily upon the mountains, rolling in heavy volumes overhead; in some places dragging their ragged skirts along the sides of steeps, giving them a deep and melancholy shade; in others, admitting the sunbeams, which illuminated the winding dells with a greyish light.

At last, however, after two hours' toil, the young shepherd reached the spot to which he had been directed, a long and narrow valley, encompassed on

all sides by mountains, whose shattered masses of grey rock seemed to threaten destruction to all who ventured within their confines. As the kine lowed upon the first scent of the inviting herbage, their voices echoed from rock to rock, dying away in soft murmurs; and Robert's task was done, for here was the resting, or rather grazing place of his herds and flock, and nothing remained but for him to spend the remainder of the day as idly as he chose.

But Robert was not like shepherds in general: he could not lay himself down and bask sleepily in the sun; his mind was formed for enterprise and exploit; and he cast his eyes round from hill to hill, and made an anxious survey of the scene. "There is nothing alive," said he, "on the mountains, but I cannot be idle; I will go a little higher, and take a look out on the back hills." So he began to mount the rugged steeps that surrounded him, and, by the side of a roaring cataract pushing its way over rocky ledges, mounted towards the summit of the rock which frowned on him.

From this elevation he obtained a more extensive view, and new gigantic shapes appeared in the distance. The mountains unfolded themselves more fully, and exhibited a higher degree of grandeur. He looked on every side: before him grazed his sheep and oxen; and as far as his eye could reach to the east rose a tumultuous sea of mountains, with the dark clouds rolling among them; while, to the west, arose, upon

a high and barren peak, the lofty castle which went by the name of Craig Castle, or Castle Craig.

While Robert was surveying this scenery, with rather a sportman's than a traveller's eye, he sighed with regret at not being able to see the spring of even a grouse or a rabbit, or to hear the shrill cry of the buzzard. But at last he thought he beheld, as a far speck veering in the wind, the tremulous wing of an eagle, and rejoiced within himself that something approached that might, at least, relieve the monotony of the hours he had to spend till the evening.

"Ay," said the boy, "if I could only get a shot at you, my *friend*, I think it would go hard with me if I did not bring you down." The eagle now came nearer, and, with a circuitous flight, but still keeping at a great height, spread her strong wing round and round the peak upon which our hero stood. "You are afraid to come lower," said the boy, elevating his gun, which he never travelled without. To this the eagle seemed to reply, by uttering a loud and wild scream; at which the dog Jock raised his ears and eyes, and gave a sharp and peevish bark.

"You are a coward, master eagle," said the boy; "why don't you come on and let me shoot you?"

Again the eagle screamed, and made a swoop downwards, Robert, with his gun to his shoulder, pointing at her at every turn, yet fearing to shoot owing to her distance.

"Now, I'll give you a hundred yards, and if

I do not hit you then, you shall peck my nose off."

"Done!" seemed to say the eagle, with a shrill scream or cluck; at the same moment it came within the prescribed distance, and made a pounce. Robert fired; but by the time the smoke had cleared away, he observed the bird soaring high in the air, with something in its claws. The boy looked again. "It is too true," said he; "the bird has stolen my dinner."

And so it had; for on the spot below where Robert had first rested, he had left the bag, containing bread and meat enough for a couple of meals; and the loss was in such a place a very serious evil: to replenish it was impossible.

"But you shall not have my dinner, though," said the boy, "if that is where you are going." The eagle had passed over to Castle Craig, and settled herself among the ruins of the keep.

Robert descended the mountain as quickly as possible; and Jock, encouraged by his animation, ran before him vigorously. They soon reached the valley in which the heifers and sheep were enjoying their dinners, and, after crossing several cascades and deep clefts of the mountains, Robert and his dog were wending their way up Castle Craig. But the way was exceedingly difficult of ascent; high masses of rock, which seemed to have been recently dislocated from their stately bases, obstructed the various

pathways. Over these the adventurer was obliged to climb, to creep through crannies, and to cling to the roots of old oak-trees, long since blasted by the lightning ; but, nothing daunted at the dangers that beset him, he surmounted difficulty after difficulty, till at last he came exactly under the spot where the eagle had taken refuge.

But now a greater difficulty presented itself. The rock was so steep that it was apparently impossible



to scale it. Robert searched in vain for some track or avenue by which he might enter the ruins which the eagle had made her eyry ; but he searched in vain. The snow still lay in the clefts and crannies of the rock, and it was, at the height at which the boy now was (being nearly 3000 feet), exceedingly cold. But his hunger increased, and with it his determination to regain, if possible, some portion of his

food ; and, if not able to do so, to have some satisfaction on the thief. He little thought, poor boy, that the eagle was as hungry as he could be, and yet had not eaten one morsel of the food she had seized : she was then feeding her young ones with it.

While Robert was reflecting upon what to do, Jock had, in the meantime, scratched a hole in one of the snow heaps that filled a cleft in the rock, and discovered a cave or cavern. Robert put as much of the snow on one side as he could, and crawling on his hands and knees, soon found himself in a low arched passage or vault. Jock proceeded, and the boy followed. The passage now took one turn, then another, till at last it terminated in a rude flight of stairs cut out of the solid rock. These he ascended (and they were numerous) till he reached the inside of the keep of Craig Castle. He looked up, and the walls seemed as if they would fall in upon him ; and the wind, roaring without, gave a deep and hollow sound above. While he was looking upward, he heard a rustle and flutter ; at the same time a heavy stone fell down below, which, had it fallen upon him, would inevitably have killed him.

"Ay, there you are," said the undaunted boy.

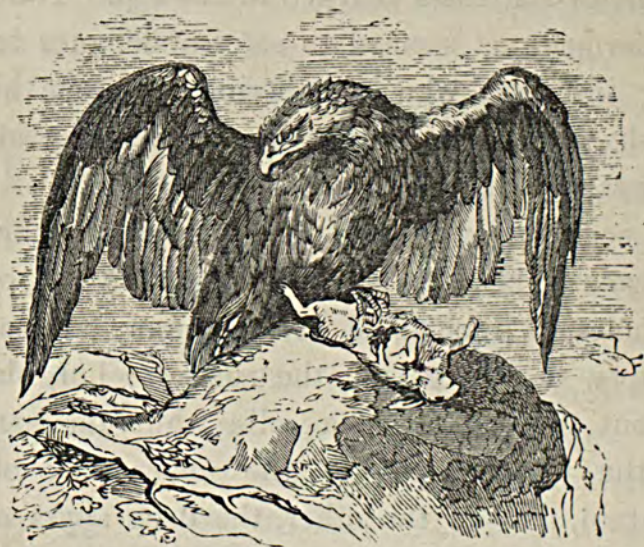
He was right ; it was the flutter of the eagle on its nest.

"I will come at you by and by."

But this was easier said than accomplished, for it was still a difficult task to reach the summit of the

keep. Time, and the rocking of the winds, had long ago overthrown the battlements, and, in the ruin thus occasioned, lumbered up with stones and rubbish the narrow staircases that led to the top. The eagle was alarmed, yet seemed to scream defiance to the young intruder, who, clambering over one hill of rubbish, and then another, found his way at last finally stopped by a high wall.

To scale this wall was now the great difficulty; by means of his gun, which he placed in one of the loop-holes, as a foot-hold, he, after many unsuccessful attempts, at last gained the summit; but, alas! it was but the summit of a wall; while, on one side was the whole depth of the upper part of the mountain, and on the other, the deep abyss of the keep. Robert, however, saw that it led to the very spot where he believed the old eagle to be feasting on his mutton; and, creeping on his hands and knees, he at last gained the farther extremity of it, and entered a narrow window in a corner tower.



CHAPTER II.

ROBERT felt assured that he was at last in the immediate vicinity of the eagle's nest, and was overjoyed at the success of his enterprise. All that he feared was the sudden flight of the bird, and the frustration of his hopes. He proceeded therefore silently ; and, having entered the lower window already mentioned, he found himself on a narrow staircase, or rather flight of stone steps, which led to the top of the turret. By the aid of his gun, which he still held in his hand, he succeeded in advancing several steps ;

but at some twenty feet elevation he found his farther progress obstructed by a mass of rubbish, which had fallen from the ruins above, and which was overgrown with thick moss and a kind of wild heath and stunted shrubs.

With great effort he obtained a footing among these, and found himself within a few yards of the top. But still he neither saw nor heard of his old enemy the eagle; and he began to think that all his labour was in vain, and that the bird had taken her flight while he had been combating with the difficulties of his ascent. Determined, however, to ascertain for a fact whether such was or was not the case, he still continued to clamber over the broken stones till he could reach the verge of the top of the turret with his hand. But, just as he laid hold of the stones, and was about to raise himself higher, a loud scream startled him, the stones came tumbling about his head and ears, and he felt the fierce pounce of the eagle's talons upon his fingers.

"Now or never," thought the boy, not so much alarmed by the unfriendly grasp of the eagle, as overjoyed by the certainty of finding game. He made a desperate effort, and drew himself up to the top of the tower, placing one leg over a jutting stone, so as to secure himself from falling. He had scarcely time to do this before the eagle made a bolder flutter, and, with a slight wheel in the air, attacked the unfortunate boy with extraordinary fury. Robert

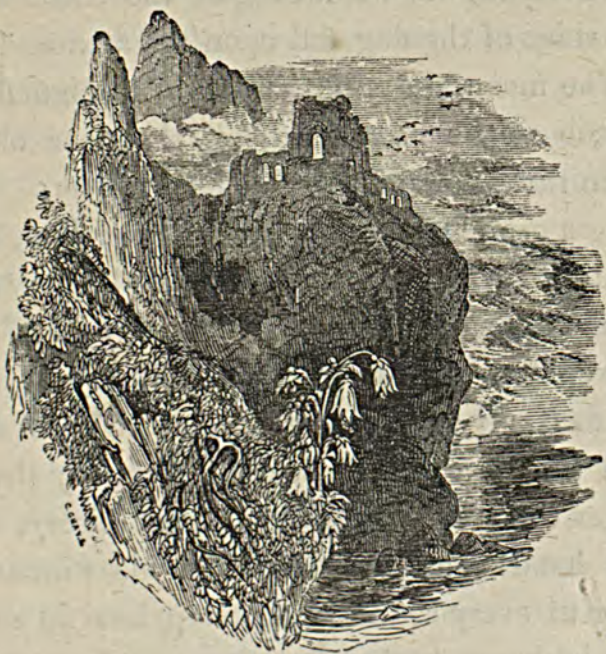
was now, however, firmly seated, and, taking his gun in his hand, began to buffet the gigantic bird as bravely as his little remaining strength would permit.

The eagle now flew off, and then dashed down upon Robert with a tremendous plunge; but he evaded the shock by stooping his head; at the same time he dealt the bird a terrible back stroke, which sent it reeling down the interior of the keep.

In consequence of this rencontre, many of the stones of the turret became dislodged; and as the eagle was partly disabled by the blow she had received, Robert looked about him, and there, in the corner of the turret, was the eagle's nest, with two young ones, in their callow down, screaming for food. There, too, was Robert's dinner-bag, safely tied and bound, which the eagle had been endeavouring to pick to pieces, but the tough canvass, of which it was composed, had made the task a tedious one.

The courageous boy now thought he should be sure of his dinner, and was preparing to cock his gun, when the eagle, having recovered herself, again came to the attack. Spreading her wide wing, she made a short circle in the air, and pounced down upon the boy's head, tearing his bonnet from his brow, and inflicting a desperate wound on his forehead. But Robert now levelled his gun and fired. His shot took partial effect; the eagle reeled and fluttered downwards. Robert now drew nigh to the

nest, and, having seized his bag, was about to carry off the young ones as his trophy; but the parent bird had recovered herself, and again attacked him with redoubled fury. He still defended himself as well as he was able, dealing the bird many a stout blow; and, in all probability, would have succeeded in driving her off, but, to his consternation, he beheld, like a speck in the air, another eagle approaching in the direction of the place. "It is the male eagle," thought he, "and I shall now be killed and eaten."



But he still stood on the defensive, and, as often as the eagle attacked him, succeeded in striking a blow, and keeping her in some degree at bay. The male eagle was, however, now at hand, and made a furious

swoop towards the scene of combat, and, with the force of his body progressing at the rate of twenty, perhaps forty, miles an hour, made his tremendous pounce upon poor Robert, who, stunned with the blow, tumbled head over heels down the ruins which he had previously climbed.

All that night Robert's father sat anxiously watching for the return of his son. The evening hour came on at which he usually returned, but no Robert; the sun went down behind the mountains, and the stars began to blink, but no lowing of the cattle or well-known voice of the dog fell upon the anxious father's ear. The moon arose, but silence still reigned; and, like Jacob on the loss of Joseph, the poor old man began to think some ill had befallen his son.

Being a cripple, he could not go after him, and he feared to send Richard; "For," said he, "should anything happen to him, what will become of me?" There were no neighbours near, and it was almost useless to travel over the mountains to them at that hour of night, as it was nearly midnight; the poor old father therefore sat in the deepest misery, wringing his hands, and watching from his window, and listening to every sound or footstep, but no son, no son! so he began to despair.

Ay, my young friends, you little think what an anxiety your parents feel when you are away from them. It is a very poignant sorrow for parents to watch for their children's coming home, when engaged

in doing their duty ; but what must it be when they suspect that they are away and keeping late hours, not from necessity, but from pleasure in midnight revelry and dissipation ?

I knew a poor mother once, who had a son that she dearly loved ; but this son was a wild and thoughtless young man, who, instead of feeling for his mother's anxiety, used to laugh at it. He would spend night after night in drunkenness and wickedness ; and his poor mother would sit and watch hour after hour at her bedroom window for him. She would listen to the clock as it struck one, two, three, four, but no son ; and at last, when everybody else was getting up, this bad young man would return with his face bruised, his clothes torn, and his brain reeling from the effects of liquor ; and, when his poor mother would expostulate with him, he would call her an old fool. But his wickedness was short-lived, for disappointment at last drove him mad, and he became, for many years, the inmate of a mad-house, and at last put a period to his life by poison. May my young readers never forget the admonitions of their parents, and be sure, if they slight or contemn them, the evil will, sooner or later, fall terribly upon their heads. They may bring down their parents' heads with sorrow to the grave, but God is the avenger of grey hairs.

But to continue our story. Richard, when he saw his father in such distress of mind, determined to go

up the mountains and seek his brother. He apprehended that he must have fallen from some of the mountain heights; and, after wringing from his father an unwilling leave, he took a tall staff in his hand and rapidly ascended towards the place at which his brother ought to have been found.

The way was difficult by day, but more so by night, and the moon had become clouded; but still our new hero travelled on, and in less than an hour came to the cattle. There they were, quietly grazing, but no Robert. He hallooed again and again, and the mountains echoed with his voice, but he received no answer from his brother. He listened, but all was still, except now and then the shrill scream of the night hawk, and the hootings of the owl, or the occasional scamper of the mountain hare.

From mountain to mountain Richard roamed and called, and the moon was going slowly down, and dark clouds were rising in the west. What to do he knew not, for he felt assured that, in a very short space of time, he should be in darkness; but to return without some tidings of his brother would be impossible, and he resolved to spend the whole night, wandering and shouting, whether in darkness or in light. He again mounted another of those wild peaks which look defiance in their aspect, and shouted again and again, but no answer, except from the wind, which was beginning to murmur on the mountain tops. The moon now became obscured, and he could

scarcely see before him; yet he still kept his way onwards till he had reached the top of another elevation.

The wind now blew fitfully in gusts, and he thought he heard distant thunder. He listened and shouted, however, between the pauses of the blast. At last, as in answer to his shout, he thought he heard the faint bark of the dog. Overjoyed at this, he immediately called the poor animal by name, and again he heard his bark or yelp, for the poor creature barked as if he were in distress. Richard sprang forward full of joy, but at the moment he did so a sudden flash of lightning showed him that he was within three paces of the extreme verge of a perpendicular rock 500 feet deep; and before he recovered himself from his terror, the thunder burst with a fearful crash overhead, and echoed from rock to rock as from a multitude of tongues.

This uproar, which would have appalled many a stout heart, was scarcely noticed by Richard, who was all intent upon rescuing his brother from the danger in which he supposed him to be placed. He avoided the precipice which the friendly lightning had revealed to him, and, descending by its side, endeavoured to direct his course in the direction of the dog, which at intervals still continued his barking.

The storm continued, and to the thunder and lightnings were added hail and rain, which came down

with awful violence. The rocks now became slippery, and afforded but a sorry foothold; still, however, Richard kept on his path, nothing daunted by the terrors that surrounded him, or overpowered by the difficulties with which he had to contend. But, as he found himself drawing nigh the spot in which he thought his brother would be found, he trembled. Strange stories of Castle Craig, and of the castle which crowned its summit, had been taught him in his infancy.

It was reported that in former times a stupendous giant, named Hurlstone, had been the owner and inhabitant of this castle; that he used to devour both men and women, and particularly children; and that he had kept a large den or cage, in which he used to place his victims for the purpose of fattening them, till such time as he needed them for his supper or other meals. This said giant was reported to have been nearly twelve feet high, with arms and legs so long that it was useless for any one to run away from him. That he could hurl stones of enormous size to an incredible distance; and some of the stones so hurled were often shown to Robert and Richard by their grandmother, lying in heaps in various hollows and crevices of the rocks.

Giant Hurlstone was covered all over with hair, like a beast, and had a long grisly beard, nails like eagle's talons, a nose like the hook of a bill, and eyes that positively shot forth fire.

It is true that Giant Hurlstone had long been dead, but the spirits of the victims which he had so savagely slaughtered and eaten, were heard to wail and howl at certain seasons; and it was said the giant himself could not rest in his grave in consequence of his many crimes. Not being able to rest, at certain times of the night he wandered among the mountains; and, when he arose, a violent tempest was sure to take place, and those unfortunates who stood in the way of it were sure to fall victims, either to it or the unappeased fury of Giant Hurlstone.

Poor Richard, firmly believing all this, could not help trembling as he approached the giant's mountain, Castle Craig; but then he thought of his poor brother, and felt brave again. "But," muttered he to himself, "perhaps my brother has been taken up by the ghost of the giant and placed in one of the old dungeons, and I shall never see him more. What shall I do?—what shall I do?" said the poor boy; and, wringing his hands, he burst into tears.

The storm was still roaring around him: he listened, and the voice of the dog was no longer heard amid its pauses. He heard, however, the loud crash of falling rocks, and expected every moment to be smitten by one of them, as they rolled about him on every side.

"Ay," said he, "Giant Hurlstone is at his pranks; I shall be killed by one of his stones, and then carried away to the old dungeon; but I care not now so that I am laid by the side of my brother. And

as to going forward, I may as well do that as run backwards, the danger is alike." So forward he went with new vigour in the supposed direction of the dog, without any guide but his own sagacity. A flash of lightning at last, however, revealed Castle Craig and its castle immediately above him, towering amid the clouds, which had partly surrounded its base; and he would have felt some confidence had he not, at this moment, received an unknown blow from behind which nearly stunned him. Before he had recovered himself from this stroke, he felt his cap forcibly torn from his head, not by a gust of wind, but by some invisible hand. "Ay," thought Richard, "the giant has me now!"

He, however, plucked his broad clasp knife from his pocket, determined, if again molested, to use it manfully. In a few seconds he received another severe blow, and at the same moment made a quick front-handed plunge in the direction from which the attack came. It pierced some soft body, and he heard a tremulous sound and a rattling among the rocks. The boy now kept his course onwards, expecting every moment to be again assailed. Nor was his expectation without cause; for he had not ascended more than 100 feet, groping his way in the darkness, when, suddenly, he felt his bare crown clutched by sharp and piercing claws, which went to the very bone. He tried to disengage himself, and to shake off the unearthly gripe, but to no purpose. He made a plunge upwards with all his remaining

strength, then, overcome by fatigue and the most intense terror, he fell backwards insensible.

The storm of that night had passed away ; the birds had begun their songs on the mountains ; the sun was rising in his accustomed splendour ; the air was calm, the clouds had all disappeared, and everything was soft, and bright, and still, when Richard opened his eyes, and beheld his brother Robert kneeling by his side, endeavouring to staunch the blood, which was streaming afresh from his temples. There, too, was the faithful dog ; and as soon as he could rise and look around him, he saw the two fallen enemies, who had so furiously beset him in the darkness—the two eagles, both dead and stiff. The convulsive plunge of his good clasp knife had indeed done the poor boy valiant service.

And now the two brothers kissed each other, and the delighted dog wagged his tail for joy, and barked, and frisked, and capered, at the delight of returning home. “But,” said Robert to his brother, “I will not go now without my dinner.”

And so, without farther words, he again mounted towards the eagle’s nest on the top of the keep ; and, from knowing the way, was soon at the fated place. There lay his dinner-bag, and there sat, cold and shivering, the two eaglets, now without a parent to provide for them, or a parent’s wing to shelter and defend them.

“I will be your father,” said Robert ; “I will bring you up ; come along with me.” So saying,

he placed the half-fledged birds within his frock, and, slinging his bag round his neck, quickly descended to his brother.

Richard had not been idle. Delighted with the success of his valour and prowess, he had already walked to the spot where the two eagles lay, and appropriated the spoil of their bodies to his own, by tying them neck and heels together, and swinging them over his shoulders, and received his brother with a loud hurrah.

The two now sat down and devoured their scanty provision from the dinner-bag, and did not forget their faithful companion. They soon began to descend the mountains, and in less than an hour reached their father's door.

The two young eagles were taken care of, properly fed, and brought up. They became, in some degree, attached to their feeders, and, for many years, lived with them, and around their dwellings. At last a bird of their own species was seen hovering about the spot, and they joined him, and spread their wide wings far away to the regions of liberty.

But for many years the birds had not forgotten their former habitations. In the cold winter months they would pay Richard and Robert a visit, who always fed and treated them kindly; for they put the brothers in mind of what they had suffered for each other. To have killed them would have been wicked; for probably these two brother eagles were as attached to each other as Robert and Richard?

THE YOUNG INCA.

A TALE OF THE ANCIENT PERUVIANS.



YOU know, perhaps, my young friends, that Peru is a Republic of South America, and that it comprises a part of the western coast of that division of the globe. It may be divided into the low country on the coast, with a hot climate, and the highlands, beginning about sixty-five miles from the coast, and rising gradually towards the Andes, of which those are in fact the lower steps. This latter region con-

tains lofty plains, from 8000 to 10,000 feet above the level of the sea, and numerous deep valleys. A large tract in the north-eastern part of this country is inhabited by independent Indians.

The circumstances which I am now going to relate to you happened in the year 1532, when Pizarro and Almagro, at the head of a small Spanish force, entered the country, with a view to its conquest for the kingdom of Spain. At this time, and for a great number of years previous to it, the Peruvians had led a peaceable and quiet life under their Incas, or king-priests, and had become partly civilised. They had fortresses, temples, and palaces; and were acquainted with the art of mining, of working in gold and silver, of polishing precious stones, and of sculpture. They had, besides, great wealth in gold and silver.

Instead of the fierce and bloody spirit, murderous wars, and uncouth deities, and ferocious rites of many of the American nations, the Peruvians were united in a mild subjection; the land was cultivated. They believed their Inca to be a child of the Sun, who exercised, in his father's name, a benevolent government.

Pizarro embarked on the 13th of February, 1531, after having been fully equipped, and authorised to take possession of what countries he might conquer, by the court of Spain; his whole force consisted only of three small vessels, and 180 soldiers, thirty-six of

whom were horsemen. With this small body he meditated the conquest of a populous country.

At the time of Pizarro's arrival, unfortunately, the forces of the Peruvians were divided by an obstinate civil war between Huascar, the legitimate monarch, and Atahualpha, his half-brother. By degrees, understanding the state of the country, Pizarro engaged to be the ally of Atahualpha; and, under this pretence, was permitted to penetrate unmolested to the city of Caxamalca, twelve days' journey inland, where he was received as a friend. With no other object than to plunder the country, and enrich himself, this wicked man now began to try a scheme for getting both the Peruvian chieftains into his power; of the one, whose cause he pretended to espouse, he imagined he could make an easy prey, and therefore determined to sacrifice him at the first opportunity.

There was a grand festival in honour of the Sun, whom the Peruvians worshipped, and Atahualpha, who wished to propitiate the priests of the temple of the Sun in favour of his enterprise against Huascar, obliged the whole of the people within his sway to bring immense gifts of gold, silver, and precious stones to the temple. He went himself, clad in a royal robe, with a sun of gold about his neck, and the rays of a star upon his head. The Spaniards also bedizened themselves, and attended the warrior to the temple.

While various ceremonies were being performed, Pizarro suddenly called out to his soldiers to avenge

the insults offered to Heaven—"to purge idolatry," as he called it. And suddenly the Spaniards drew their swords, rushed on the priest and his attendants, slew all that made the slightest resistance, took possession of the immense wealth, and seizing Atahualpha, led him immediately away, and confined him in a dungeon.

Pizarro now made himself master of all the country around him, and, what with killing the inhabitants and burning the towns, became a terror everywhere. His thirst for wealth knew no bounds; and although he had by his conquest amassed an immense quantity of gold, silver, and precious stones, yet he cried out for more—refusing to accept a less ransom for Atahualpha than his own weight in pure gold.

Being thus successful, he now turned his attention to the rightful monarch of Peru, the young Inca. He sent messengers to him, informing him that he had subdued his enemy for him, and that he would give him up on the payment of a large sum. His object was to obtain a price for his prisoner, both from his friends and his enemies.

The prince himself was averse to anything in the shape of treachery; but an old priest, named Torqueta, whose hatred to Atahualpha was very great, determined to accept the offer, and, having obtained by this means possession of his enemy, to kill him. So, in the name of the Prince, he opened a negotiation with Pizarro, appointing a time and place for the payment

of the price demanded, and for the delivery of his victim.

The young Inca in vain endeavoured to persuade Torqueta of the injustice of this proceeding. He submitted to him, that although his kinsman was an open enemy, yet he did not think it right to destroy him in so base a manner; that in all probability the Spaniards were more deadly hostile to the Peruvians than they could, by any possibility, be to each other; and that, to destroy even their native foes would be dangerous, while a foreign foe was in the country.

To this, Torqueta appeared to listen. Indeed, he pretended to assent to the arguments of the young Prince; at the same time, he intended to act as if under his authority, for the destruction of the man whom he hated. He, therefore, carried on secretly the negotiations into which he had formerly entered, trusting that, when the enemy of the prince was destroyed, it would be an easy matter for him to defend himself.

In the meantime, the captive Atahualpha pined without hope in his loathsome dungeon; and, being left to his own reflections, began to feel the pangs of conscience for taking up arms against his lawful sovereign. He called to mind many of the good qualities of his enemy, and wished, over and over again, that he had not undertaken the enterprise, and at last he made a solemn vow, that, should he ever be free, he would repair at once to his sovereign, and,

throwing himself at his feet, offer himself as a faithful subject, ready to defend him till death.

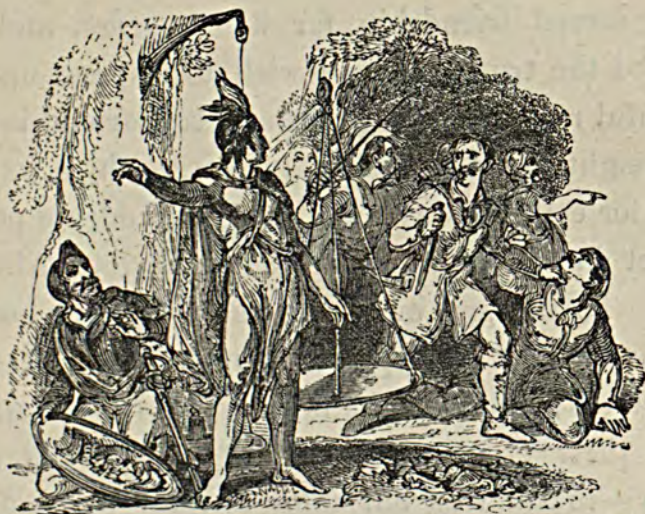
The wicked Pizarro, whose thirst for gold was immoderate, several times visited the wretched man, and endeavoured to ascertain from him what more gold could be obtained, but without effect. He then put him to the torture, and tried to persuade him to embrace Christianity—a very bad method of teaching religion.

The time, however, at length arrived when, according to the understanding between Pizarro and Torqueta, the unhappy captive was to be delivered up a prisoner. The price determined upon was the weight of Atahualpha in gold.

Torqueta and Pizarro met with a number of their followers at a romantic spot in the craggy cleft of a mountain. The latter had prepared a pair of scales for weighing the prisoner, whom he had forced to swallow a prodigious quantity of water, to make him heavier. Torqueta had the gold ready on the backs of two mules.

But, just as Pizarro was about to place the victim in the scales, Huascar suddenly appeared, and, springing forward, denounced the wicked bargain: his followers, who were numerous, surrounded him. Pizarro immediately gave orders for his soldiers to advance. Torqueta was in a moment struck to the ground. Pizarro himself advanced on the young Prince, but was driven back by his undaunted bravery.

Atahualpha now rushed to the fight; and, seizing a spear from the dying hand of the old priest, rushed to the assistance of his Prince; and, just as Pizarro was about to strike him down, he received the wound in his own breast.



The conflict now became general among the contending parties. The Peruvians raised the war shout. The Spaniards were driven back, and, with their leader, were forced to make a precipitate flight. Huascar, supporting the bleeding body of his former enemy, bore him to a secure spot, and administered to him every kindness.

Overcome by his goodness, the once fierce foe was now converted into a sincere friend. He craved forgiveness of his Prince, and vowed to defend him in all dangers. The Prince was delighted with the result

of his timely interference; and, at the next rising of the sun, fell down before that luminary in praise and thanksgiving. He was an idolater, but not without a sense of the Divine presence on his mind, or he would not have known how to act rightly.

Atahualpha and Huascar lived together in the most sacred friendship for many years, and daily learned the truth, which I wish to impress upon my youthful readers—namely, that a true friend is worth his weight in gold; and that when we, by a return of good for evil, convert a foe into a friend, we perform an act in the highest degree pleasing to Almighty God. Farther, we may learn that righteous heathens are far better than hypocritical men who profess to be Christians; and that the best way of converting men from their errors, is by doing justice and loving mercy—in showing our faith, not in our words, but in our conduct.

A TURKISH STORY.



THE city of Constantinople is a very beautiful city, surrounded with gardens, and abounding in mosques, which are the places of worship of the Turks. The city is built along the shores of the Bosphorus, on seven hills, and a part of it is embosomed in groves, from amid which gilded domes ascend to a great height.

In this city dwelt an old Greek, a fisherman, whose name was Boetes ; and a fine old fellow he was. He was somewhat rude and fierce in exterior, but had as warm and kind a heart as ever beat in an honest breast. The truly brave are generally kind-hearted.

It is not, however, every kind-hearted person who meets with the encouragement he ought, nor every good person ; because, if that were to be the case, we should always have an interested motive for doing right ; whereas, we ought to do what is right, because it is right.

Boetes was one day sailing in his little boat round the point of land in the bay, which goes by the name of the Golden Horn, singing and humming to himself one of the old Greek songs, when the principal officer of the Sultan was proceeding in a contrary direction in his state barge, accompanied by his family. Boetes, who was very busy mending a part of his tackle, which had suddenly broken, did not see the Caliph, who was approaching ; and, in a moment, his boat ran directly against the beautiful gilded prow.

The Turkish sailors in the suite of the Caliph roared out lustily ; the guards who attended upon him levelled their guns and fired. Luckily, however, the balls only passed through the boat of Boetes. As it happened, the only misfortune was the sinking of his boat, which soon began to fill with water, and Boetes leaped out into the sea, and swam for his life to the shore, which he reached, much exhausted.

Before, however, the poor man could congratulate himself upon his safety, or lament the loss of his boat, he found himself surrounded by Turkish soldiery, who hurried him towards the market-place, where the attendants of the Caliph were fixing up some public order. In a short space of time he was thrown down on the ground, and the black slaves were about to apply the bastinado to the soles of his feet, for the offence of which he had unintentionally been guilty.

At this moment, however, a little girl, not more than eight years old, screamed violently. She could not bear to see an old man so used, and begged and implored her father to spare him. The Caliph, who was very fond of his little girl, took her up in his arms and kissed her. The little girl, whose name was Selina, then said, "The poor man has lost his boat, father."

"Let him have a boat," said the Caliph; "and mark'ee, thou dog of a Greek, if ever thou rowest against the prow of one of the faithful again, thou shalt hang by the neck—Christian dog!"

This last word he said with a sneer, and turned away; for you must know that the Turks hate the Christians, and think them infidels and wicked people. When the Caliph turned away, Selina smiled on the poor old man, and seemed quite rejoiced that she had performed a good action.

Boetes made for home as fast as possible, and was

astonished soon after to find that the slight direction of the Caliph had been performed most scrupulously. A boat, far better than the one sunk so unceremoniously in the Bosphorus, was on the shore opposite to the fisherman's hut; and Boetes went to work again most cheerfully.

There is a proverb, which I would wish my young readers never to forget, namely, that no person is so poor or helpless, but he may, at some time or other, be in a condition to perform a service, to do an injury, or to return a kindness. I do not say this because I would have people do their duty to others in hope of reward, but because I wish no one to think meanly of the poor, or the apparently indigent.

Boetes did not see the Caliph or his daughter for some time after this, but he often thought of the latter; and, being a good Christian, never failed to remember the little girl in his prayers. Time passed on, and, as is common in Constantinople, and everywhere else, it brought many changes with it. It so happened, that the Grand Sultan was one day taking his accustomed ride in the grounds of the palace. The Caliph, who had been for some time out of favour with the court, was also riding in the same vicinity, mounted upon a spirited charger, which required great management to govern. He unwittingly rode against the Sultan's horse, which immediately began to plunge, rear, and to kick violently. The Caliph turned his steed away, and tried to get out of sight as fast as

possible ; but the Sultan's horse, in the very pride of his mettle, would not suffer himself to be outdone in speed, and galloped after that of the Caliph, to the no small discomfiture of both.

The Sultan was, however, at last rescued from his danger, and immediately began to blame the Caliph. There is nothing so easy as to find fault with those we do not like. The Sultan, therefore, declared the Caliph's act of riding near him to be a treasonable design, and gave orders for his immediate arrest. So the unfortunate Caliph was hurried off to the prison of the Seven Towers, a strong castle on the banks of the Bosphorus.

When the news reached the home of the unfortunate Turk, his family, as might be supposed, were in the utmost consternation. And, as it very often happens in those despotic countries, that the wife and family of an accused person share the fate of the accused, poor Selina and her mother, with a little brother, not more than six years old, made the best of their way into the desert mountains, at no great distance from the city.

They knew not where to look for a friend, and feared their hiding-place might be discovered. They saw, in a few days after their flight, a party of soldiers traversing the hills on which they had concealed themselves, and felt certain that on the morrow they must be discovered.

The place to which the fugitives had fled was the

remains of an old Turkish castle, situated among the wildest and most desolate rocks. The ruin stood on a conical crag; and a small lake skirted its feet, whose black waters looked the very picture of gloom and despondency.

It was moonlight, and at the dead hour of midnight. Selina, who, with her mother and little bro-



ther, was sleeping in a cold damp hole underneath the ruins, awoke. She had been dreaming. The whole of the scene of the poor Greek, whom she had saved from being bastinadoed, was recalled to her mind. She thought she saw him again cast on the ground, and fancied she felt the rough beard of her father when he kissed her. Waking in this feeling, she immediately said to herself, "Oh, the poor old man! I am sure, if I could find him out, he would give us food, and not let us die of hunger."

She arose, and went towards the light. The moon was shining wanly upon the scene around ; there was nothing but dry, hard, barren rock and stones, and a solitary bird flying over the lifeless lake.

Selina came forth from her hiding-place, and looked about her. She felt very hungry, poor child. She again went back to her mother and brother ; they were both asleep. She paused ; she gave her mother a kiss ; and then, quick as lightning, leaped back into the moonlight, and bent her steps rapidly over the barren rocks.

She first skirted the lake for nearly a quarter of a mile, and then turned up into a deep gorge, or defile, among the hills, which stood on each side of her an immense height. Here, all was dark ; for the rays of the moon could not penetrate the gloom. Poor little girl ! she trembled as she went, and feared that some of the loose rocks might fall upon her head as she passed along.

After this, she came to a deep hollow glen, much more hideous than any part of the mountains she had before seen. She had mistaken her path, and wandered to a place, above all others, the most fearful. As she went on with hesitating step, she heard a hiss, and an enormous snake darted from one of the overgrown crannies in the side of the mountain. She saw its glistening back in the moonlight, and almost fainted with terror.

Still, however, she passed on, descending at every

step into a dark and gloomy hollow. Once or twice she thought of retracing her steps ; but felt too tired to ascend the sides of the rock again. She thought she heard footsteps ; then voices ; and, lastly, she clearly beheld the glittering of arms.

She stopped ; and, as the footsteps appeared to get nearer, withdrew herself behind a projecting rock. Presently, she saw two armed men rise up from the dell below, who came and stood close to the spot where she was. Both were well armed, but she could not distinguish the face of either.

At last, one, addressing the other, said, "Depend upon it we are betrayed, or they would have been here."

"Nay, nay ; give time, give time," said the other. "I know my men too well ; they will be here."

The voice of the last person who spoke seemed familiar to Selina. She listened again. It was the voice of the chief Janizary, whom she had frequently seen in her father's mansion.

"Look, here they come !" said the same voice ; and immediately a considerable body of armed men ascended the craggy sides of the mountain, and halted where their commander stood. They were completely armed ; and one of them, who seemed to be of higher authority than the rest, came to the chief.

"Everything is done," said he ; "Ramadan is the challenge. We have placed our confederates in nearly every avenue of the palace. The western portal is

the only place of entrance not within our power ; but, this being so near the town, will be most likely unprotected when the city is fired."

From farther conversation which passed between the conspirators, Selina learnt that it was in contemplation for the Janizaries to set fire to the city of Constantinople, and, during the confusion, to make themselves masters of the seraglio, or palace ; to kill the Sultan, and for the Agra, or chief Janizary, to place himself on the throne.

Selina, poor child, although only twelve years old, knew well enough the importance of this secret, and resolved to make the best use of it she was able. She therefore took the first opportunity of leaving her concealment, as the conspirators moved away, and, hastening her footsteps, followed the path into which she had so fortunately diverged, and, in less than an hour, found herself within view of the white walls of the seraglio, and the glittering waves of the Bosphorus.

Avoiding the numerous guards posted on all sides of the palace, she skirted its lofty walls, and just before daybreak found herself at the door of the old fisherman, who was the object of her journey. The old man had not risen, and was by no means pleased at the pebbles being thrown up at his window. Presently, however, he thrust his head out, and, in a somewhat surly mood, inquired, who is there?"

"It is I," said Selina ; "the poor little girl, daughter of the Caliph Hussan, who saved you from

the bastinado four years ago. I am dying with hunger."

"Blessed be God!" said the old man; "what do I hear? I am dreaming, sure." When he rubbed his eyes, and stretched his head farther out of the window—"Starving!—daughter!—right, right; I recollect now;" and down he came.

Selina, wearied with her toilsome night's walk, had sunk exhausted against the door: so that when the old sailor opened it, the poor child fell immediately into his arms.

"God be praised!" said he; "what is this, poor dear child? Come, come—wake. What, ho! Wife! wife!" In a minute, the good woman was at the side of the exhausted girl. A little wine and some cooked rice soon restored her; and she was then enabled to relate her night's adventures.

"Conspiracy against the Sultan—hush! Secure that bolt; barricade the door. Speak not, even in a whisper. We shall all be slaughtered, only to know of such a thing. Ha! the city to be fired—hush! hush! do not say a word."

"Why, you are surely not in this wicked plot?" said Selina.

"I! No. Heaven forbid! But do you not know that, in Constantinople, only to know such a thing is death, if we had as many lives as a cat? And everything is laid to us poor Greeks."

"But what is to be done?" said Selina.

"I know not," said the fisherman.

"Oh, have nothing to do with it," said the wife; "they will lay it all upon our shoulders."

"But my poor father," said Selina, "is confined in yonder tower, and he will be burnt, and you will be burnt, and the whole city be burnt also."

"I burnt!" said the wife. "Burnt—burnt—city burnt! Is it possible that we shall be burnt alive!"

"Yes," said Selina; "and cut to pieces by the cruel Janizaries. The whole palace and city are to be burned. Do save my dear father; he is in one of the seven towers yonder."

Just at this moment a boat was seen slowly gliding along the Bosphorus, from the outer fort. Boetes looked at it with great anxiety. It drew near, and a tall personage leaped out, who, addressing himself to the fisherman, said, "Fisherman, lend me your aid to go into the mountains yonder. Have ye not garb and gear to fit me?"

"Not now; I cannot, and will not. You are a traitor!" So saying, Boetes took down a pistol, and levelled it at the stranger's head. "Yes, he is one of them," said his wife. "Kill him directly, or we shall all be massacred."

"He is not one," said Selina; "they were quite different men to him—quite; more grim and ugly."

"What sayest thou, pretty maiden?" said the stranger; "tell me, tell me. I am no traitor; here, fisherman, look on this ring."

"Heaven defend me," said Boetes; "it is the Vizier!"

Yes, it was the Grand Vizier; and in a few minutes all was explained. Selina detailed what she had heard and seen, and, in the end, pleaded for her unfortunate father.

"He shall be free," said the Vizier. "I will myself bring his cause before the Sultan."

Selina gave the Vizier the information he was in search of. A guard was immediately summoned, the mountains were entered, and the chief Janizary taken.

Before the evening sun had set, Selina and her father and family met together and embraced each other. Poor old Boetes was advanced to the post of fisherman to the coast, and was also made captain of the Sultan's fishing boat.

THE OLD WITCH;

OR, THE LITTLE GLEANERS.



MANY years ago, when the greater number of people in this country were uneducated, they were also, as is generally the case, very superstitious. Ignorance and Superstition always go hand in hand. They are twin blind sisters, who think they can see better than any one else, and, in consequence, do a great deal of mischief.

About fifty years ago, there lived at the corner of a rugged wood, or forest, in one of the villages of Suffolk, an old woman. Her hut was more than a

mile distant from any other habitation, and she seldom had any one to see her, and seldom went to see any one, for all her relations and friends were dead, and she had no one in the world to whom she could look up with confidence as her friend.

The poor old woman's name was Betty Blowers, and she was as quiet and inoffensive a creature as ever lived. Although very old and very poor, and with only a shilling a-week to live on (which was allowed her from the parish), she was, what very few people are in this world, contented.

One of the reasons for her contentment was owing to her being always employed. In the spring she would be found weeding the young corn, in the summer gleaning, and in the autumn seeking for fallen acorns in the woods, or picking up sticks for her winter fire. The little corn that she hoarded, the little fuel that she saved, and the few bushels of beech-nuts and acorns she sold to the farmers, with the produce of her spinning-wheel in the dark December days, enabled her to live without murmuring.

Notwithstanding all this, the poor old creature was greatly persecuted by men, women, and children. Because her face was old and wrinkled, and her hands tanned and rough; because she wore a man's coat to keep herself warm, her petticoat was full of patches, and her once black bonnet had become rusty with age; because she was unseemly to look upon,

every wicked man, lad, and boy thought they had a right to worry and torment her whenever they saw her. However, the poor old woman bore all this with patience. In short, she had become so accustomed to ill-treatment, that she no longer felt it with the same intensity; and, instead of stopping to resent ill-usage, she hobbled away as fast as her poor old legs would carry her.

The reason urged for thus persecuting this poor old woman was, because she was a witch. They said that she could charm people, and make them ill; that she sometimes bewitched the cream in the churn, so that all the churning in the world would not make it into butter. One woman, who, for several weeks, could not get her bread to rise owing to the badness of the yeast, accused the old woman of bewitching it. And a groom, who would not take the trouble with his horses to make their coats shine, asserted that the old woman had bewitched the stable in the form of a black cat, which had been seen there on several occasions.

It was not every one, however, that thought these evil things of the poor old woman. There was a sweet family of children, who, having been brought up by a good mother, used very often to meet Betty. Their father was the working wheeler and blacksmith of the village. They would sometimes give her a few halfpence to buy a pinch of snuff; for they knew this was a great comfort to the poor old lady.

One day, as these children were passing through a field in which the corn had just been carried, a mob of the villagers swept over it, and began gleaning away as fast as they could pick up the fallen ears of corn. While the scramble was going on, poor old Betty was observed at the farther corner of the field creeping along by the hedge, and picking up a few straggling ears with a trembling hand and terrified look. At last, some of the rude boys called out, "Here is old Betty, the witch;" and immediately three or four of them began pulling up the stubble, with thick clods of earth at the end of every root, and threw them at the poor woman. The women then joined the boys, and poor Betty was first pelted with stubble and then with stones, till she was obliged to hobble away into a field at some distance, amidst the yellings and hootings of her persecutors.

When Eliza, the eldest of the little family of the Gordons. (for that was their name,) saw this, she was much affected, and tears came into her eyes. "Poor old Betty!" said she; "what a shame to serve her so! I only wish my father was here, he would give you boys a sound drubbing with his great horsewhip, which would serve you right."

"Go along with you," said one of the boys, "she is a witch, and will bewitch you if you do not mind."

"I am not afraid of her bewitching me," she replied; and then she whispered to her three sisters, "I will tell you what we will do. Instead of going to

play, we will stop here this afternoon and glean all the corn we can, and take it to old Betty in the evening."

"Oh, that we will," said little Anne; "I am sure mother will be pleased."

"May I glean too?" said little Sarah, who was about six years old. "And I too?" said Mary, who was not quite four.

"Oh, yes; we will get as many handfuls as we can for the poor old woman. Yes, we will all glean; so go along in the next furrow—the corn always lies more in the furrow; and you in that one, and I in this, and you in that, Sally."

So to work the little girls went, and picked up the ears as fast as little chickens would pick up grain—the hot sun scorching them all the time. "See what a deal I have got," said Sarah, when she had picked up half-a-dozen ears. "And look at mine," said Mary, who had only two ears to boast of.

"Now, do not stop looking at your ears," said Eliza, "there's dears. If you do, we shall never get a handful; come, make haste and pick them up. There, put one hand behind your back, and pick up the corn with the other, till you get a good many ears in your hand. Come, let us see which will get a handful first."

After picking up the corn for a little while longer, Anne cried out, "Oh! my back does ache so; I must stand up a few minutes to rest." "And so does

mine," said Sarah. "And so does mine," said little Mary.

"Well, mine does not," said Eliza; "and if it did, I would not mind it."

"Yes, but you are bigger than we," said little Sarah.

"Well, mine will ache by-and-by; and when it does, I will not call out about it. I shall not mind a little pain, if I can do anybody good by it."

"No more shall I," said Sarah. "No more shall I," said Mary; "only the sun scorches my neck so." And sure enough it did, for the poor child's neck was very much inflamed.

But the little girls laboured on, and handful after handful of corn was picked up. Eliza obtained three large handfuls, Sarah two, and the other little girls more than one each.

But they were all very tired. As to Sarah, she declared her back was nearly broken; little Mary and her sister had their skin blistered, and the sharp stubble had pricked their legs in several places, so as to draw blood.

But, in spite of all these pains and mishaps; in spite of aching backs, and bleeding ankles, and sun-burnt necks and arms, these little children felt a great pleasure in their task; and, gathering up their corn at sunset, directed their steps towards the old woman's cottage.

It was about eight o'clock when they reached the

place. They looked in. Betty had just reached home, and was putting some sticks in the fireplace to boil her tea-kettle. "Goody, Goody," said Eliza, "we have brought you our gleanings, because they drove



you off the field." Poor old Betty cried like a child, and would have kissed the children.

"I have got a halfpenny, which mother gave us to spend this afternoon," said Eliza; "shall I give it

her?" "Yes," said the little girls. "And here is a halfpenny, to buy a halfpennyworth of snuff." The muscles of the old woman's face moved, and her eyes filled with tears, but she could not speak.

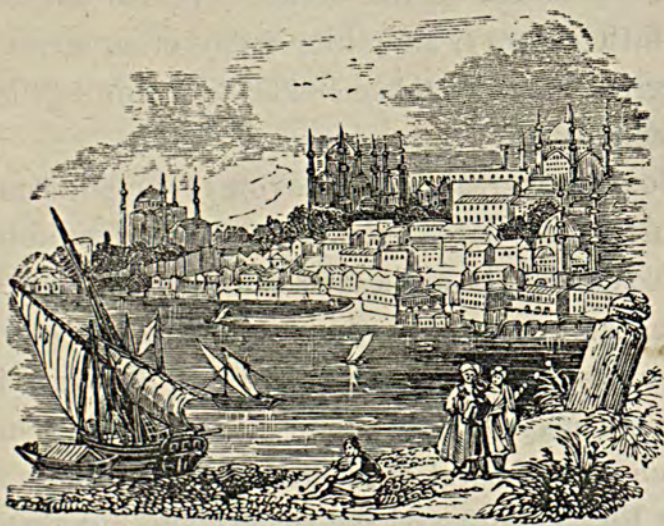
"And, if you like, next Saturday afternoon we will go and glean for you again, Goody," said Eliza. "Yes, all of us," said Sarah. "And me too," said little Mary.

And so they did, and the poor old woman felt thankful. And when Mr. and Mrs. Gordon heard of what their children had done, they were also delighted, and kissed them over and over again. Ah! my little ones, think what pleasure there is in doing a good action. Look for no other reward. Who, do you think, bestows the pleasure we feel when doing good? It is God, who both sees and knows it.

By cultivating such feelings as these, we lay the foundation of a virtuous and happy life, and thus have it in our power to make many happy. These little girls became very kind and affectionate to their fellow-creatures, and, when they grew up, were beloved by all who knew them.

I hope my young friends will take the lesson I mean to convey by this little story. It is, that children, however young, have often the opportunity of serving others; and that, in serving others, they at the same time do the greatest service to themselves.

VENICE.



CHAPTER I.

VENICE was once a proud city, and ruler of the Mediterranean; into her bosom flowed the commerce and wealth of the East. Once the mistress of Rome, she humbled those who humbled all the world, and sacked the imperial city. What England now is, Venice once was. But her glory is departed, and all her palmy days of commerce and of victory are remembered but as a dream.

This once celebrated city is situated upon seventy

isles of the Adriatic, partly on a rock, and partly on piles sunk in the sea. A marine channel or canal is the highway of every street. Thus Venice rises from the water like "a sea Cybele," with its tiara of domes, towers, and pinnacles, and appears to ride upon the bosom of the ocean. Venice was built in the fifth century, and, like many other great cities and great men, from the smallest beginnings became exceedingly powerful.

Along the great canal a row of magnificent, but now decayed palaces extends. Their splendid marble porticos and light arabesque balconies and casements exhibit an affecting combination of former glory and present debasement. The square of St. Mark is still the most magnificent public place in Italy; and the church or cathedral of the same name, situate in the great Piazza, is one of the richest and most magnificent in the world. It has a gloomy and barbaric pomp. Its five domes, and the crowded decorations of its porticos, give it somewhat of an Eastern appearance. Its mixed orders, Greek, Saracenic, and Gothic, are beautifully, but barbarously blended, and glitter with incrustations of gold, gems, and marbles. The interior is enriched with the spoils of Constantinople and the East—monuments of long ages of glory. But why has the glory of Venice departed, like "the baseless fabric of a vision?" Why are all her triumphs but an empty name? Because the nobles, who once swayed the councils of Venice, and com-

manded her fleets, had no longer any objects but those of pleasure, and wasted their time in public processions and the gay objects of the carnival, and in luxury and inglorious ease, instead of attending to their proper duties.

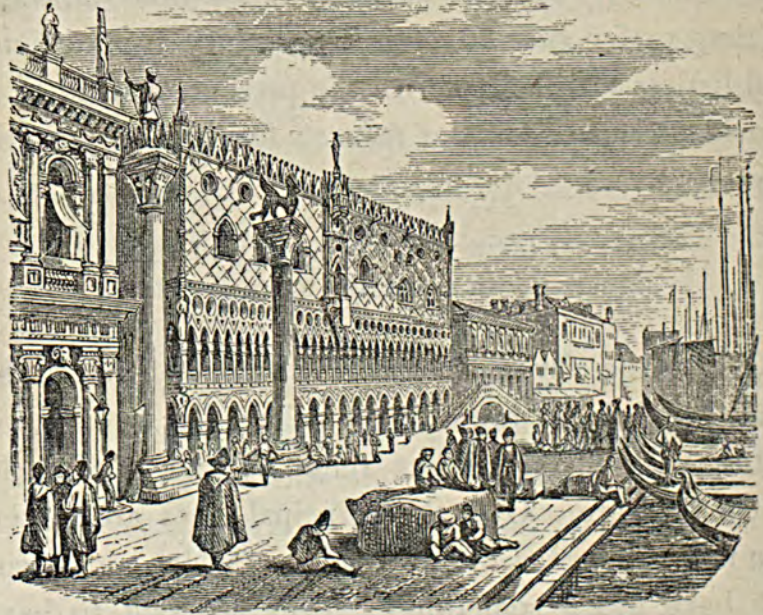
Nothing, my young friends, can stand against ease and idleness. The sword will sooner *rust* out than it will *wear* out. Individuals, like nations, will also most assuredly come to nothing, or less than nothing, if they prefer *ease* to *assiduity*, luxury to exertion, and listless satisfaction with the present, instead of a provident regard for the *future*; for, as the proverb says—

“Always taking out, and never putting in,
Makes a lean miller and an empty bin.”

But to the city of Venice. The front of the cathedral, which looks towards the palace, has five brazen gates, with historical bas relievos; and very noble gates they are. Over the principal gates are placed the four celebrated bronze horses, of which most people have heard something. They are said to have been executed by the famous Lysippus. They were given to Nero, the Roman Emperor, by the King of Armenia, to be put to the chariot of the sun, for adorning his triumphal arch, after he had conquered the warlike Parthians. They were removed by Constantine the Great to the Hippodrome of Constantinople, and remained there till the capture of that

city by the French and Venetians, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, when they were conveyed to Venice. Buonaparte took them from the Venetians, and they were carried to Paris; but, upon the overthrow of Napoleon, they were again restored to Venice.

Besides the cathedral, the Ducal Palace is well worthy of notice, not only from its imposing archi-



tecture, but from the historical associations to which it gives birth. Near the principal entrance is a statue of the Doge Foscari, in white marble; and opposite to the entrance are the magnificent steps called the Giant's Staircase, from the colossal statues of Mars and Neptune, by which they are commanded. Here it was that the Doges of Venice recovered the

symbols of the sovereignty; and upon the landing-place of those stairs the Doge, Marino Faliero, was beheaded. Here the senate, which resembled a congress of kings rather than an assemblage of free merchants, sat and deliberated; and here those terrible inquisitors of state, the dreaded *Council of Ten*, weaved those webs which entangled in their meshes all they chose, and in secret silence chained and awed this extraordinary Republic.

From the palace is a path over a covered bridge or gallery to the dungeons of the state. The bridge bears the name of the *Bridge of Sighs*. And well it may. It is divided by a stone wall into a passage and a cell, into which latter portion the prisoners were taken, and there strangled. You descend from the Bridge of Sighs by a steep and narrow stone staircase, just wide enough to admit one person at a time to walk, till you come to a narrow passage, at the extremity of which are some holes or dungeons, ranged in rows along the horribly confined place. They are so low that no one can stand upright in them—cold, and damp, and dark, as the grave. Below these is another range of still more horrible dungeons; more close, and more loathsome, and situate below the level of the canals. Well might the poor wretches, who became inmates of these cells, give up every hope, and pray for death at the hands of their gaolers, when they passed the Bridge of Sighs.

The Venetians are of the Roman Catholic Church,

and their patron saint is St. Mark. Opposite the Ducal Palace and the Piazzetta of St. Mark, two magnificent granite columns are erected. They were among the trophies brought by Dominico Michieli in his victorious return from Palestine, in 1125, and were landed on the place where they now stand. Here they remained for more than fifty years, as no engineer could be found sufficiently enterprising to rear them. But in 1180, one, Nicolo Barattiero, a Lombard, undertook the task, and succeeded. The government promised to reward the architect by granting whatever boon he might ask, and he demanded that the games of chance, hitherto forbidden throughout the capital, might be played between the columns, reserving to himself a tax upon the players. His request was granted, and the disgraceful monopoly was established. But afterwards, in order to render the spot infamous, and to deter the populace from frequenting it, it was made the scene of public executions, and the bodies of countless malefactors were thus gibbeted under the very windows of the palace of the chief magistrate.

Upon one of the columns is a winged lion in bronze, which is considered the emblem of St. Mark. This lion has a more profound meaning than he may appear to bear at first sight. As a herald would describe him, he is *azure siegeant*, with wings *or*, and he holds a book *argent* open under his paws. He sits, as we are told, in order to show that the Vene-

tians are wise and pacific; for sages and councillors mostly use that attitude. He is winged, to show that they are prompt in execution. On one occasion these wings furnished a pungent reply to an imperial ambassador, who inquired in what country such a species of lion was to be found? "In the same country," answered the reigning doge, "which produces *spread eagles*." Truly the crests and emblazonments of heraldry are empty folly. Paley, the great Christian writer, used to laugh much at the arms which some of his family found for him on an old family tankard, for it was proved, after the quarterings had been paid for at the Herald's College, that the tankard had *been bought at a sale by his great-grandfather*. Still, had every armorial crest as much meaning as the lion of St. Mark, we might bear with it.

The legend of St. Mark is not less interesting than the meaning attached to the lion. The body of this saint was at Alexandria, and the church in which it was deposited was about to be destroyed by the Turks. To preserve so precious a relic from profanation, the priest took the body of the saint out of its tomb, and, effectually to prevent discovery, they placed it in a large basket, and covered it with ribs and joints of pork. The porters who carried it were instructed to cry loudly, "Khanzir, khanzir," (the Arabic for a hog), and every true Mussulman ran from the burden as from the leprosy. But even when on board, the body was not yet quite safe, for it was thought some

unlucky accident, for which no one can account or calculate upon, might reveal it. So the saint was hoisted to the yard-arm of the mainmast till the moment of departure.

When the ship got out to sea a violent storm arose, and the sailors were under the greatest apprehensions for their safety. Some declared it was a judgment upon them for removing the saint from his resting-place, and were for throwing the captain overboard to appease the anger of Heaven. But in the extremity of danger the saint appeared, and took the command of the ship. He ordered the sailors to put the vessel on another tack, to reef the sails, and to stand away towards another point of the compass. By this miraculous interference all were saved, and the ashes of St. Mark were safely deposited in their new resting-place, amid the acclamations of the people, A.D. 827. The exact spot, however, where the sacred deposit lies is acknowledged to be an *undivulged secret*.

Having given you some account of the city of Venice and its history, before I commence my story, I must give you some information concerning the government, by which order was preserved among the people; for in Venice it was different from that of most other nations.

The state and people of Venice were for many years governed by an aristocracy, under a chief magistrate, called the DOGE. This person was selected from one

of the chief Venetian families, under certain restrictions. At first his power was very extensive, but the other branches of the aristocracy gradually abridged it, till at last it became an office almost as powerless as it had before been powerful. The manner in which the doge was elected was very curious, for the electors were chosen by no less than five ballots and five scrutinies. This complicated operation was performed as is described in the following rhymes, which I have translated from the Italian for you:—

From the council's nomination
Thirty meet; nine keep their station.
Forty next by those are chosen;
Who, by lot, become a dozen.
Four-and-twenty then combine
To produce another nine.
Hence are five-and-forty given,
Who diminished to eleven,
Are by forty-one succeeded;
Of whose final votes are needed
Five-and-twenty, to create
The presiding magistrate,
The serene by whom elected,
State and statutes are protected.

You may see by this complicated mode of electing a doge, that the nobility were not only jealous of him but of each other, and lost no opportunity of keeping a strict watch upon his actions, so that he might not league with or show favour to any noble families. From time to time, also, they controlled his power, as I have hinted; and although, on one occasion, the

reigning doge had been nearly murdered in his palace the elective council did not grant him, or any of the succeeding doges, any more power. On the contrary, they appointed, with extraordinary powers, a *council of ten persons*, called distinctively the COUNCIL OF TEN, who were invested with an entire sovereignty over every person in the state; and they tried, sentenced, and punished, according to what they *called the reason* of state. The public eye never penetrated into the mystery of their proceedings. Sometimes the accused was not heard, and never confronted with witnesses. The condemnation was as secret as the inquiry; the punishment undivulged, like both. This fearful council went even farther; and as it grew stronger by its secret iniquity, it annulled, at pleasure, the decrees of the grand council, degraded its members, and deposed and even put to death the chief magistrate or doge himself.

CHAPTER II.

STORY OF MARINO FALIERO.

ONE of the most daring and determined of the doges was Marino Faliero, whose family was one of the noblest and wealthiest that the Republic could boast. Two of his ancestors had worn the ducal crown, and he himself bore the honourable title of Count di Valemorino. After a long and laborious life, chiefly spent in the field, when nearly in his eightieth year he still continued to serve his country as a diplomatist. In temper he was angry and choleric, in disposition vindictive; but he was bold and enterprising, even to the close of his life.

Now, at almost every new election of a doge, the aristocratic power had curtailed afresh some remaining portion of his authority, till at last the chief magistrate, who bore all the odium of tyranny, was at the same time, in his own person, the victim whom that tyranny the most grievously oppressed. During a short interregnum, which had occurred before the nomination of Faliero, new inroads had been made upon the few privileges which yet remained to him. Among other things, he was forbidden to open the

despatches from foreign courts but in the presence of some members of the council, and three presidents were annexed to their prince as so many spies. Besides this, he was subjected to great control in the delivery of his votes, in the disposal of his property, and in the collection of his revenue. He was also a prisoner in his own palace, vigilantly watched, and studiously degraded.

There was living at Venice a gentleman of poor estate, named Michael Steno, who misbehaved himself at a banquet which the doge gave, as usual, on the Carnival Thursday. For this, the doge ordered his exclusion. To revenge this affront, Steno wrote on the back of a chair in the council chamber a sentence reflecting upon the character of the doge's wife. This Marino determined to punish with death or exile, if possible; but found himself utterly thwarted by the Council of Ten, who only condemned the offender to imprisonment for two months, and banishment for a year.

On the day after the sentence, while the doge was still indignant, an event occurred which led to the famous conspiracy which I am about to relate. It happened that Bertuccio Israello, Admiral of the Arsenal, a person apparently of no less impetuous passions than the doge himself, and who was possessed of great cunning, approached him to seek redress for an outrage. A noble had dishonoured him by a blow, and it was in vain to ask redress for this affront from any

but the highest personage in the state. Faliero, brooding over his own imagined wrongs, disclaimed that title, and gladly seized occasion to descant upon his personal insignificance.

"What wouldst thou have me to do for thee?" said he. "Think upon the shameful gibe that has been written concerning me, and think on the manner in which they have punished that ribald, Michael Steno, who wrote it, and see how the Council of Ten respect our person."

"My Lord Doge," replied the admiral, "if you wish to make yourself a prince, and cut all these villanous council to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all the state, and then you may punish them all."

The suggestion pleased Marino marvellously, who immediately, while the notion was still fresh in his mind, sent for Bertuccio Calandario, a seaman of great repute, to confer with him. These three then agreed to communicate the design to six other associates; and, during many nights successively, these plebeian assassins arranged with the doge, under the roof of his own palace, the *massacre of the entire aristocracy*, and the demolition of the existing government.

It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the city, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination.

On the appointed day they were to make affrays here and there, in order that the doge might have a pretence for tolling the bells of St. Mark, which were never rung but by order of the doge. At the sound of the bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the streets which open upon the Piazza, to know the cause of the riot; then the conspirators were to cut the nobles to pieces: and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero, the doge, was to be proclaimed Lord of Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their attempt on Wednesday, the 15th day of April, in the year 1355; and so covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamed of their machinations.

As a previous step, in order to arouse popular feeling against the great council, it was determined to practise a singular stratagem. Parties of the conspirators paraded different quarters of the capital at dead of night, and, having stopped at the windows of some citizens of the middle and lower classes, and there insulted the women of the family, retired, with rude bursts of laughter, calling each other loudly by the names of the principal noblemen.

This design was framed with such rapidity that no one but those who were privy to the plot had the least expectation that, on the following day, the constitution of Venice was to be destroyed, and her streets deluged with blood. The Council of Ten, not-

withstanding their almost supernatural ubiquity, were quite uninformed of what was about to take place; and, in all probability, would have remained so, had it not been for the love and affection of one Bellramo, of Bregamo. This young man had been brought up by a noble family, to which he was closely attached, that of Nicolo Lioni; and, anxious to preserve his patron's life, he went to him on the evening before the rising, and entreated him to remain at home on the morrow. The singular nature of the request roused suspicion, and Bellramo, being pressed, at length revealed the whole particulars of the plot to Lioni. Not a moment was lost. He secured Bellramo, and, having conferred with a few friends, they resolved upon assembling the heads of the different magistracies, and immediately seizing such ringleaders as had been discovered. These were taken at their own houses without resistance. Precautions were adopted against any tumultuous gathering of the mechanics of the Arsenal, and strict orders were issued to the keepers of the cathedral not on any account to toll the bells.

In a very short space of time the whole of the conspirators were taken, and immediately consigned to the rack and the gibbet. The ringleaders were immediately hanged between the red columns of the Fiazetta; some singly, some in couples; and the two chiefs of them, Bertuccio Israello and Calandario, with a cruel precaution not uncommon to Venice,

were previously gagged. Nor was the process of the higher delinquent long protracted. With a haughty bearing, he would neither affirm nor deny his guilt, conducting himself with a moody silence to all interrogatories; and thus, on Friday, the 16th day of April, judgment was given in the Council of Ten that my Lord Marino Faliero should have his head cut off, and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase—namely, the Giant's Stairs, where the doges take their oath when they first enter the palace.

The following day the sentence was carried into execution with closed doors, in the presence of the council who had condemned him, and those who were to have fallen a sacrifice to the conspiracy. The cap of estate was pulled from off the head of the culprit, all the ensigns of office were wrested from him, and with one blow of the executioner's sword his head was severed from his body. Immediately the trumpets sounded; one of the chiefs went to the columns of the Piazza, and, displaying the bloody sword exclaimed, "Justice has fallen on the traitors!" The gates being opened the populace rushed in to view the bloody spectacle.

The body of Faliero was conveyed by torchlight, in a gondola, and unattended by the customary ceremonies, to the church of San Giovanni and San Paolo, in the outer wall of which is a stone coffin still imbedded, with an inscription almost illegible, and which once bore the words "Hic jacet Marinus Faliero,

Dux." His lands and goods were confiscated to the state, with the exception of 2000 ducats, of which he was permitted to dispose; and yet farther to transmit to posterity the memory of this enormous crime, his portrait was not permitted to range with those of his brother doges in the hall of the great council. In the frame which it ought to have occupied was suspended a black veil, and over it the following words were inscribed:—"Hic est locus Marini Falieri, decapitati pro criminibus."

CHAPTER III.

STORY OF MARCO LASCARIS, THE ASSASSIN.

IN the dark days of Venetian, as in the dark days of every other national history, events occurred which can scarcely be believed in our days. The employment of the assassin was so common and uniform, that the sudden sacrifice of a man was not looked upon with horror, but as an every-day occurrence. And what is more terrible to think of, there were several known assassins, who were not only suffered to go at large, but invited even to the tables of the great; so that the assassin himself was honoured, and his employment thought by no means detestable. It was convenient to remove out of the way such persons as opposed themselves to the state measures, and it was also convenient to destroy private enemies. And, as absolution in these dark days of superstition was easily obtained, the wickedness of murder had but little weight in repressing those whose interest it was to kill, from the commission of it.

One of the most celebrated of the Venetian gentlemen who thus laboured in this profession, was Marco Lascaris, a wretched tool of the wicked and the great, and an acknowledged assassin, who kept the most pow-

erful nobles in awe. No one could ever prove a direct murder against him ; and if it could have been proved, no punishment would have followed, as the wretch had the highest ecclesiastical authorities on his side, for whom he had performed the most essential services. Thus fenced in, no one dared to impeach Lascaris, although he might have murdered half the state of Venice.

It was not many years after the detection of the conspiracy of Marino Faliero, that Francis de Carora meditated designs of an equally black character against Andrea Contarina, elected doge in 1367. Through the artifices of Bartolomeo, a monk of St. Jerome, he won over to his views some of the highest officers of the government, and two presidents of the Council of Ten. An *avvoadore* and a privy councillor of the doge basely sold themselves to betray the secrets of their country ; and these made the terrible Lascaris their chief instrument. The great object of the conspiracy was to cut off the principal Venetian nobles.

Now, at a town situated among the hills, a short distance to the north of Venice, was a family seat of the reigning doge, Contarina, to which he frequently retired from the cares and fatigues of state affairs, and where he felt greater security than in the ducal palace. Carora had long plotted to destroy him, if possible, without suspicion ; and, after much consultation, it was determined to track him to his country palace, and assassinate him there. To this

deed Lascaris willingly lent himself, partly from the promise of a large reward, and partly from his private hatred of a man who had endeavoured by his influence to expel him from Venice.

To obtain admittance to the palace, Lascaris disguised himself as a cook-serving man, and got himself engaged by the head cook. He entered the residence without suspicion, and gave his colleagues information extremely important for them to possess. The first design of making the doge the sole victim was therefore soon abandoned, and in its stead, a determination was entered upon to sacrifice such of his friends as might, on some fitting opportunity, attend his usual banquets, which, in this place, were all private and confidential friends; while those who attended at the state dinners of the ducal palace, were composed of a variety of persons whose offices principally entitled them to be there.

Invitations for a banquet were soon issued, and the design of the conspirators was to obtain ingress at an appointed hour, and in the dead of night to murder the guests in their beds—a deed worthy of the most cruel and remorseless slaughterers.

Lascaris had not made known his intention to any one of the ducal household, being fearful to trust himself in the hands of an associate. There was, however, a scullion boy, named Lancelot Gibbo, who appeared to be a fit instrument for his purpose. Gibbo was half an idiot, as it was supposed, and was beaten, and

kicked, and cuffed, by every one, as scullion boys generally are. To gain him over, Lascaris treated him with great kindness, allowed him to take home provisions, from time to time, to his mother, as perquisites—for so thefts are called in the houses of the great—and by such means won upon his victim, for such he intended he should be. The object of the crafty Lascaris being to slay him in one of the apartments where the murders were to take place, and place him in such a position that suspicion might *fall upon him* as the assassin.

But the task was a difficult one, and Gibbo was a difficult lad to deal with. Owing to his mother's care, he had a great dislike to anything wrong. "For," said she to him in his early years, "a good conscience is the only inheritance of a poor boy, and if you lose that, you have little else in the world to comfort you; for when I am gone you will have no one but God to be your friend."

Lascaris, day after day, meditated his plans with the profoundest dissimulation. He busily employed himself in the duties he had undertaken, and no one had the slightest suspicion but that he was indeed the person which he represented himself to be. The household affairs went on as usual, and everything spoke of confidence and security. Gibbo, poor fellow, thought himself lucky in having found a friend and protector, and the head cook was pleased in having an excellent assistant.

One night, after Gibbo had retired to rest in a little damp room in one of the corners of the quadrangle which formed the culinary apartments, he was startled by the fall of something over head. He listened, but all was silent. The apartment above him was occupied by Lascaris. The noise appeared to be that of a falling poignard or sword, for he heard the rattling of the hilt. He listened again, and thought he heard a groan. Anxious for his new friend, he put on his apparel and mounted the staircase which led to the apartment. The door was fortunately not fastened, and he entered. There lay the assumed cook, sound asleep, apparently in a hideous dream; his mouth was covered with half-dried foam, his lips quivered, his right hand was firmly clenched, and through his grinning teeth he uttered fearful sentences; as, "Down with the doge! down with him!—Death to them all! Spare *him*! No, no, not one—dead men tell no tales. This to thy heart—there—there! What, not dead yet? Curse thee! take that, and that!" And here his hand struck several times on the bed-clothes, as in the act of stabbing, while his eyes turned glaringly from their half-closed lids, although they saw not.

Gibbo at first thought his good friend the cook was in a fit, and he would no doubt have awakened him; but, as he gazed upon the wretched assassin, he was astonished to find him in his bed quite a different person as regarded his dress. His cook's

guise was hanging on a peg in a small wardrobe; but he had on his body, between the sheets, not a night garment, but a coat of wadded mail—that is, a coat composed of knitted iron, encased in a leathern doublet or waistcoat; it fitted close in every part, and was proof against the most violent thrust of sword, lance, or poignard.

“Well,” thought Gibbo, “this is a strange dress for a cook; there must be something more in this than I can understand. And as to this skewer,” he continued, taking up the poignard which had fallen from the assassin’s hand on the floor during his dream, and the noise of which had awakened the scullion, “this, by its workmanship, must have belonged to one of the noblest in Venice. This cook seems to me to be more of a walking spit than anything else. But he has been very kind to me,” thought the poor boy, “and why should I suspect him? Besides,” he again thought, “were he to awake, in all probability I might be found guilty of knowing too much, and I should have little favour.” So Gibbo went lightly down stairs, got into bed, and, after a few turns, first on one side and then on the other, he fell into a sound sleep, till startled by the words, “Gibbo, Gibbo, do you mean to lie in bed till to-morrow, and to let the sun breed maggots in you?”

Sure enough the sun was high in the sky, and the rays came down fiercely and hotly; and Gibbo

arose ; and so busily was he engaged that he had no time to think of what he had seen and heard the night before. But when he again retired to his bed he ruminated more and more ; and the more he pondered, the more was he convinced in his mind that Lascaris was some spy, or some bad man, who had, for improper purposes, obtained admittance into the mansion of the doge.

He still reflected on the matter, day after day, for a whole week. And when the Sabbath holiday came, he obtained permission for a few hours, and flew, as on the wings of anxiety, to his mother. A fellow-servant maid, who did many little kindnesses for Gibbo, went with him, and helped him to carry a few



scraps and wastements from the kitchen. He found his mother sitting at the door of the cottage, with

her summer head-dress on to keep the sun off, as you see her in the picture.

After the first affectionate congratulations were over, Gibbo lost no time in detailing to his mother the circumstances of the night already described; and the poor creature was greatly astonished, and as greatly alarmed. Women are generally quicker sighted than men, and, with a penetration such as a female mind often shows, she, by one question, put the matter completely at rest.

"Has this cook, as you call him, lost an ear?"

"I do not know," said Gibbo, "for he always keeps his cook's cap so closely over his face that I never saw one of his ears. He has an eye—such an eye that I scarcely can bear to look upon; it pierces you through and through, like a sword."

"Ay, that is the man," said his mother.

"What man?" inquired Gibbo.

"A man to be dreaded more than the great fiend himself. There is some horrid plot at work, be sure of it, my son, and do exactly as I direct you, or you will be lost—perhaps Venice itself be lost."

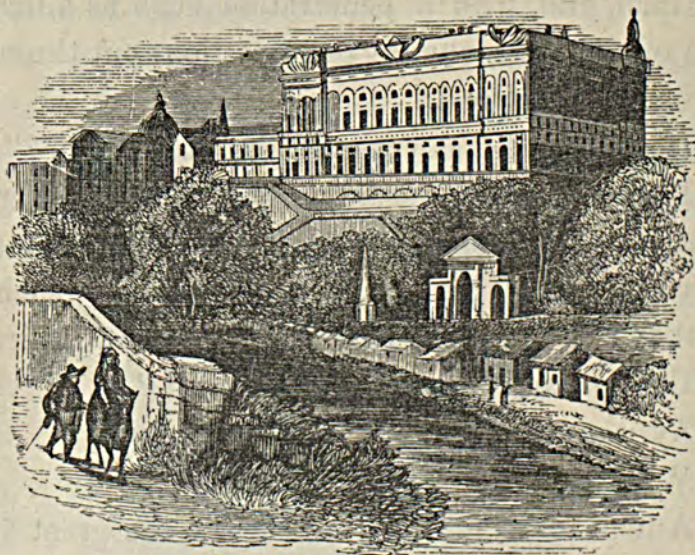
"But what am I to do?" replied Gibbo; "I am only a boy, and it is very likely that a bad man's wits will be too much for me. I think I had better not go back."

"Not go back! you will ruin me and yourself too, and lose, perhaps, an opportunity of doing great service to the doge himself. Never mind the wits of a

bad man, be he ever so cunning. Innocence and a just cause will carry you through, if you *strive*."

"How strive, good mother?"

"You must watch every look, every motion, and every word of this man. Keep all your thoughts close; tell no one anything but me; and then do exactly as I bid you."



All this Gibbo promised to do, and, after some farther conversation with his mother, went back again to the ducal château.

The first thing Gibbo did was to look after the ears of Lascaris; both, however, were closely covered by the cook's cap. It was, nevertheless, by accurate observation plainly seen that only one ear graced the head of this bad man, from the care with which the folds of the cap were laid over it. This convinced

Gibbo that his mother's suspicions were well founded ; he therefore watched every word, every look, and every motion of the suspected man. Among other things, he noticed his anxiety to make an acquaintance with one of the grooms of the chambers. He found him on one occasion in close consultation with this person beneath a tree in the garden. A few days after, the principal equerry was taken suddenly ill and died. Shortly after, another person, holding a confidential situation near the doge's person, fell sick, and in a few hours expired. These persons were succeeded in their places by two others, Bellramo and Pisano, and things went on for a few days as usual.

One night, as Gibbo lay pondering and thinking, and perplexing his poor brains with these matters, till the dead time of night, he thought he heard a noise over head. He listened, and felt assured. Lascaris was rising. Shortly after, he heard the old oaken stairs creak with his weight ; and in a few minutes he heard his tiptoe pace before the small window of the apartment. Gibbo rose, and, without waiting to put anything on him but his cloak, followed in the direction of the footsteps. At first the sound was indistinct, and in a few seconds lost altogether. He followed on in the direction he thought his precursor would take, and wended his way under the piazza which led to the state apartments, till he came to the foot of the private staircase, leading to the doge's attendants. Here he paused, but not for long ; a door was closed gently,

immediately above him. He mounted the stairs, and listened at the door at the top, but all was still. He raised the latch, and it opened easily. This door led to a narrow gallery, which Gibbo traced, with a heart knocking loudly against the sides of his ribs. He came to another staircase; this he ascended, and, having mounted to the top, found himself in a small quadrangle, having a square well or opening in the centre, with chambers on either side, and an arched doorway leading to a passage, from which branched other apartments.

Down this passage Gibbo turned on tiptoe, till at last he came to a small vestibule, at the end of which was a door, leading to an interior apartment. Gibbo listened at this door and heard some persons conversing at a distance. He opened it; it led to an ante-chamber, beyond which was another apartment, the door of which he also opened. It was neither fastened nor closely shut. He looked through a small crevice, and there, at the farther end of the room, which was only illuminated by a single candle, held in the hand of Lascaris, stood three men in close consultation. Gibbo knew the cook, for he had his cook's gown and cap on; he also knew the other persons, for he had helped to remove their luggage when they came to the château to fill up the places of the equerry and groom of the chambers; they were Bellramo and Pisano.

In vain Gibbo tried to catch the conversation of these persons, as they spoke in a very low tone, and,

the chamber being of considerable dimensions, it was lost in the empty space. At last, summoning courage, he hastily glided through the half-opened door into the chamber, at the end of which hung some drapery; and in the folds of this Gibbo concealed himself. He was then sufficiently near to hear, in part, the conversation of the parties assembled.

"But it must be to-morrow night," said Lascaris. "I know I am suspected by a dolt of a scullion, whom I mean to skewer, and throw down the kitchen well, unless I can make better use of him."

"Suspected by a scullion! where are thy wits, Lascaris?" said Bellramo.

"The rogue knows I have an ear too little," he replied.

"But reflect," said Pisano; "unless we are well prepared and secured by our friends without, should we fail, we are lost."

"Leave that to me," answered Lascaris; "there shall be no trouble, nor sound, nor shout, nay, not so much as a squeak or a groan."

"The doge first—we must make sure of him."

"Yes, lop off the head, and the limbs are easily managed."

"How have you arranged about the chambers?"

"We sleep close to the doge. It will only be necessary to cut through a panel or two to enter his apartment."

"And make no noise?"

"None, if it be done beforehand. All this I can do to-morrow, or at nightfall."

"Well, then, be it so ; but what is that ?"

Poor Gibbo had, somehow or other, contrived to make a dust in the folds of the drapery, and sneezed.

"It is the wind," said Bellramo ; "it is the wind in the curtain. If it were a man it would be thus !"

So saying the conspirator drew his rapier, and, half in earnest, half in jest, made a lounge which pierced through the damask only an inch or two above Gibbo's head.

"That is a narrow escape," thought he. "Oh, I wish I was out of this place, and quietly asleep in my own little room among the spiders."

The conversation shortly after ended, and what was farther said left no doubt upon the mind of the lad that a plot was nearly ripe for the murder of the doge and his principal guests ; and now he reflected deeply of what he should do.

The conspirators withdrew, Lascaris by the way he came, and the others into separate apartments, leaving Gibbo in the dark ; and in the dark he remained for several hours, cogitating, and scheming, and planning. "Oh," said he, "if I could only get to the doge I would tell him the whole. Where there is a will there is a way," thought he, "and therefore I will, as soon as I can see the dawn, try my fortune up the chimney here."

After another hour's suspense, Gibbo, who was an

excellent climber, mounted the sooty walls of the chimney of the apartment, and by this means reached the roof. His object was, if possible, to descend the chimney which led to the apartment of the doge. But how to distinguish that from others was the difficulty. "There is no way," said the boy, "but by trying them all." So as he went up No. 1, he resolved to go down No. 2, and down the next chimney he descended.

After considerable difficulty in making another ascent, owing to the capaciousness of the chimney, poor Gibbo at last reached the top, but in such a condition from soot, as to resemble an imp rather than a poor scullion lad. Being somewhat greasy, from the fumes and occupations of the kitchen, together with the labour of his ascent, the soot had stuck to the poor lad in such quantities as almost to obliterate his features, and rendered him one mass of black. In short, he looked like the figure of a boy carved in ebony, although he was not half so polished.

The chimney ended, as all chimneys do, with the sky for a tailpiece, and when Gibbo put his head out at the top, he found himself surrounded by a fine starlight night. He looked around him, and drew in a few breathings of pure air. He then felt very hungry, and wished himself in the larder. All was very silent on the top of the palace, but a busy hum was heard from below. He was at a fearful elevation, and was once or twice in danger of falling. But, nothing daunted, he determined to put his project into prac-

tice, and, without farther delay, prepared for the descent of the adjacent chimney.

After commending himself to Providence, and making the sign of the cross, Gibbo, began his descent, and proceeded half-way down without obstruction. But at length his progress was arrested by a stout iron bar, which would not allow him to proceed downwards. Here he stood and pondered for awhile, not knowing how to advance. Upon examination with his fingers, (for of course he was in complete darkness during this period), he at last ascertained that the stones were loose, and, taking out his dagger, (for even boys carry daggers in these countries), he soon succeeded in removing one end of the bar. The other end was also quickly detached; but at the moment of its detachment it fell down to the hearth beneath, with a loud crash, and Gibbo had great difficulty to avoid falling with it. He, however, supported himself by the sides of the chimney, and descended leisurely till he found himself on the hearth of the private bedchamber of the doge, where lay also the unfortunate bar.

The room was of rather small dimensions; a splendid bed, with a rich canopy of state, stood in the centre of the apartment; around the wainscoted panels hung a variety of rare paintings. In a niche, at one end forming a bow window, were an altar and a crucifix, before which candles were burning. A small casket, containing a rare relic of one of the bones of St. Peter,

gave a sacred sanctity to the apartment. At a bay or bow window at the opposite end stood a beautiful alabaster vase, in which a lighted lamp was placed, which shed a soft light over that portion of the apartment. The curtains of the bed were drawn all round, and Gibbo trembled to undraw them. He expected instant death for his intrusion, and yet he knew how necessary it was to awake the doge. Perhaps," said he to himself, "his highness is not there." He listened; at last a loud snore convinced him that the bed was not without a tenant. "Ave Maria," said the boy, "does the doge snore like another man? Well, I think I need not be afraid." So he drew aside the curtain.

The light from the altar fell upon the bed, and revealed the doge of Venice, in a white nightcap, sleeping. But his sleep was not sound—it was fitful—full of starts. Sometimes the hands were clenched, and suddenly stretched out; then a tremor shook the frame; then the teeth were clenched, and at last the doge turned himself in the bed, and gave another snore, and, having lain on his back for a few moments, snored again louder than at first.

"Well," thought Gibbo, "Michael Angelo, the caster, could not snore better than that. But I wonder what the doge is dreaming about? I dare say he never dreams that I am here, much less that his throat is likely to be cut, so I may as well tell him."

Gibbo, however, used some of his natural good

sense, and thought his sooty appearance might so alarm his highness, if he showed himself, that he would call for his guards, and that he might be sacrificed before he had time to reveal the important intelligence. He therefore crept partly under the bed, and, raising himself on one hand, gave the doge a sharp push, and withdrew his hand and arm from observation.

The doge seemed to rouse himself for a moment, then all was still. His snoring ceased. He, however, was not wide awake; and so he gave another turn in the bed, and in a few seconds snored as loud again as ever. When Gibbo heard this, he gave him another push, and the chief magistrate of Venice said, "More capon and vermicelli," in a mumbling tone; and he moved his lips as if he enjoyed the relish. Gibbo pushed again.

"Hey, what!—done! A little more curry."

Gibbo gave another push.

"Time to rise—Oh!—Well." And then the doge rubbed his eyes, and sat up in bed. First he looked towards the altar, then round the apartment; then he pulled off his nightcap and rubbed his bald head; then he rubbed his eyes again: at last he pulled a box from underneath the pillow and took a pinch of snuff. This seemed to make him "wide awake."

Gibbo was now more than ever afraid to show himself, for he was still stricken with awe at the presence of the doge, who took another pinch; at the same

time he looked towards the altar, and made the sign of the cross. Gibbo now summoned up courage, and uttered, from under the bed, in a solemn voice, "Doge of Venice, beware of treason!"

"Hey, hey, what's that?—Who speaks?—Treason—treason! Who are you? Where are you?"

"Your life is threatened," said Gibbo.

"Who are you? What are you? Where are you? If thou art a friend, show thyself."

"Oh, mighty doge!" said Gibbo, "forgive me for thus venturing into your room, but I have discovered a foul plot to murder you: do not be frightened at me, for I have come down the chimney to tell you what I know."

"Come from under the bed," said the doge, who now clearly ascertained from whence came the warning voice. "I will forgive thee, whoever thou art, and reward thee too."

Thus encouraged, Gibbo revealed himself to the astonished doge, in all his sooty habiliments.

"Why, thou lookest like a devil," said the doge. "How is it that thou performest the part of my guardian angel? Come—reveal thy mind as thou hast thy person."

Thus encouraged, Gibbo, in a few words, told the doge all that threatened him, and revealed the whole plot which he had overheard. As may be supposed, the doge was overwhelmed with wonder. "If it be true, as thou sayest," said he, "I will make thee a

great man in Venice ; but tell me." And so he asked Gibbo a variety of questions, till he fully satisfied himself that treason was intended, and that, too, within the hour.

The doge therefore rose from his bed, and, having put on his dressing-gown, let himself out into another chamber, which communicated with the guard-chamber. He then communed with the officer of the guard, and both came back to Gibbo.

After a few more questions, particularly relating to the manner in which the conspirators had proposed to enter the apartment, by cutting through the panel it was determined to place a figure in the bed, to resemble the doge, and to conceal the guards in the apartment, who might, on a given signal, fall upon the conspirators.

One of the armed figures from the guard-chamber was now quickly laid in the bed, and the doge's nightcap placed over his head. Everything was put in the strictest order. Two guards were placed under the bed, two behind the foldings of the drapery, and several behind the altar ; while, in the adjoining room, through which the doge had passed, the remainder of the fifty were assembled, ready, at the first warning ; the doge, Gibbo, and the officer, being with them.

They waited, however, for more than two hours ; but at last a low grinding sound was heard at the wainscot, opposite to the door leading to the guard-

chamber. It was like the gnawing of a rat, but so exceedingly low as not to be distinguished without the greatest silence, and all was very still. At last a portion of the panel was heard to rattle, but nothing could be seen, as the piece removed was behind a picture. The lower part of the picture, however, now moved, and in a minute or two Lascaris descended. He was quickly followed by two others, both with their daggers drawn, and with masks on their faces.

"We are right," said Lascaris; "he sleeps; now strike home."

"But stay; where are we to meet when we have done our work?"

"We must immediately to the Rialto, where the guard will join us."

The two companions of Lascaris drew back the curtains on one side of the bed, while Lascaris himself glided nimbly to the other. They all struck the same instant at the breast of the Doge; but the moment their hands fell on the figure, the guards rushed on them.

"We are betrayed," said Lascaris; "flee!"

The doge with the remainder of the guards now rushed in, and the conspirators were surrounded.

"Do not slay them," said the doge; "this must be answered before a proper tribunal. Let them be bound."

So the prisoners were bound. And as soon as Lascaris had his hands tied, Gibbo walked up to him and

said, "Ah! never you despise a scullion boy again: pitchers have ears."

And so they have, although Lascaris had lost his. And boys hear and think when no one imagines it. Gibbo heard and thought to a good purpose; for, from that hour, the doge took him into his service as page of his bedchamber, and he rose from one place to another, till he filled the office of councillor. His poor mother lived to see her son rise in wealth and power; and Gibbo died one of the Council of Ten.

The design of this tale is to teach my young friends always to have their wits about them; never to be corrupted by the wicked and designing, and implicitly to follow the advice of their parents, particularly that of their mothers.



THE ALPINE PASTOR;

OR,

FELIX NEFF.



I AM now about to tell you a story, my young friends, which is strictly true. Some of my stories are partly imaginary—that is to say, the names and places mentioned in them are fictitious, though the circumstances are such as have really occurred in the sphere of my own observation. I think I never wrote a story entirely fictitious in my life, and every one, in this work at least, has been founded on facts; but, in the story I am now about to relate, you will have

real names, real incidents, and the facts just as they occurred.

Felix Neff, of whose history I wish to say a few words, was born in the year 1799, near Geneva; and, like many others who have in after life become great, was indebted to a kind mother for his first lessons of right and wrong. When a very little child he was fond of rambling about among the mountains, and of singing hymns of praise to that Being whose wondrous power is so fully displayed in mountain scenery. When fourteen years of age Neff engaged himself to the proprietor of a nursery ground; and at sixteen he published a little treatise on the culture of trees. But still, the quiet life of a gardener did not suit his enterprising genius; and at seventeen he became a private in the military service, and two years after a sergeant of artillery. In this office he soon showed that he was not only a soldier of his country, but a soldier of the cross. His Christian efforts with his comrades were so earnest that he was advised, as the serious turn of his mind was so strongly marked, to prepare himself for holy orders, which he did, by the study of the Holy Scriptures and by earnest prayer.

Thus appointed, it was Neff's province to be situated in some of the wildest, most rugged, and most inhospitable regions of Europe; not like a minister of England, with a snug ministerial residence within a stone's-cast of the place of worship, or in a neat parsonage-house contiguous to the church,

with a lawn and a paddock, and all the comforts of civilisation. Neff was located amid Alpine mountains, avalanches of snow, which hourly threatened destruction, or the mazes of perilous valleys, among sombre and frowning rocks, tremendous abysses, thick mists, and clouds and cold.

Such was the scene Divine Providence marked out for the labours of this young Christian minister. And here, unappalled by the dangers of the places that surrounded him, or by the ignorance and benighted state of the various folds of which he was the common pastor, did Neff enter upon his charge. He established himself at La Chalp on the 16th of January, 1824, and on the Monday following we find him, a second time within four days, encountering the fearful pass of the Guil, and on the evening of the same day looking after his little flock at Vars, twenty miles from Arrieux-la-Chalp and Branichord; all this distance he must have travelled over high and dangerous mountains, through snows, and ice, and cold. On Saturday, in spite of a fall of snow and a storm of wind, he proceeded. The snow was from seven to eight inches deep, and the wind, which blew a hurricane, raised and tossed it about in clouds. Not a trace could be seen of the paths, and he was six hours performing twelve miles. Yet he arrived perfectly well at San Veran, which is the highest village in Europe. He preached and conducted public service in every village between Dormilleuse and the frontier

Alps. In his daily and almost hourly journeys from village to village and from family to family, many were his hair-breadth escapes among the mountains; and many desolate hours he spent on foot, now on the pinnacle of some mountain, now in the dark shadows of the deep ravine. Yet nothing was thought too laborious, and no suffering too great by Neff, in his endeavours to spread the religion of Jesus Christ, to feed hungry souls with the bread of life, to extend the pastoral crook of the Good Shepherd, and to venture his life for the sheep.

Nor did Neff wholly confine himself to the spiritual wants of his parishioners, but he attempted to improve their temporal circumstances by every means in his power. Their agricultural system was bad in the extreme. Neff condescended to be a teacher; his former life had qualified him for the task, and his knowledge of gardening was of great service. The villagers were of course addicted to old customs, and were slow in adopting his plans, and perhaps would never have done so, but Neff not only directed but laboured, going into the gardens and fields where the planting was going on, and, taking the hoe or the spade out of the labourer's hand, he used to work himself. Thus, having observed their pastor's heart in the work, the villagers followed his example, and in the end obtained large crops of vegetables, where before they had only obtained scanty ones. On one occasion he persuaded the peasants, although with much difficul-

to repair an ancient aqueduct, for the preservation of the water of the winter months for the drought of summer, and he assisted as a common labourer, working with them, directing and animating them; at one time plying his pickaxe, and at another moving from place to place, superintending the progress of others. He was the good shepherd, not taking the fleece, but exhausting his own strength, and wearing himself out for the sheep. Thus a work, stupendous considering the means available for the undertaking, was accomplished with complete success, and the gratitude of his flock was unbounded.

In the same way did Neff work in the building of his school; and the same hand that had been employed in regulating the interior arrangements of the church, was now turned to what was scarcely less important, the building of a schoolroom. He persuaded each family in Dormilleuse to furnish a man who would consent to work under his directions. And having first measured out, with line and plummet, and levelled the ground, he marched at the head of his company to the torrent and selected stones fit for the building. The pastor placed one of the heaviest on his own shoulders, the others did the same, and away they went with their burdens, toiling up the steep acclivity till they reached the site of the proposed building. The labour was continued until all the materials were ready at hand. The walls then began to rise, and in one week from the commence-

ment the exterior masonry work was completed, and the roof was put upon the walls. The windows, doors, tables, and seats were not long before they were finished, and Dormilleuse, probably for the first time in history, saw a public schoolroom erected, and the process of instruction conducted with all possible regularity and comfort. It was here, however, that this apostle of the Alps may be said to have sacrificed his life. The severe winters of 1826-7, and the unremitting attention he paid to his ministerial duties and to the school, were his death-blow.

Neff added to this school a sort of normal school for teachers; and here he was from sun-rise till breakfast, at eleven o'clock, employed in teaching adults. He had, indeed, a most difficult task in advancing the education of his pupils, but no efforts were spared. Sacred history and all the common elements of knowledge were taught with great success; and Neff himself gave lessons in geography, the elements of science, and on music. Thus shut up among the most comfortless scenes of nature, enveloped in ice and snow from November till April, with fourteen hours' hard study a-day, Neff found his strength failing, and became at last painfully convinced that his career must soon end. The long-continued excitement and activity, the oft-repeated journeys on foot in all weathers, the sharpness of the external air, and the suffocating heat of a small room, in which so many persons, not remarkable for

their cleanliness, were crowded together day after day—these, in addition to the exertion of daily sermons and lectures, and scanty fare, added to hard work, soon brought his health into a state which nothing on earth could remedy.

And thus this Alpine teacher was called upon to die. And, knowing his end was drawing near, he called together his friends, and, after preaching a farewell sermon at Vars, descended towards a more healthy district. He made presents to his friends, and set apart some religious books for many persons to whom he still hoped to be useful, and, having underlined several passages, he thus wrote the address, "Felix Neff, dying, to —."

On the last night of his life it was necessary to support him constantly, and to hold him in his convulsive struggles, to raise his fainting head, to wipe the cold drops from his forehead, and to bend or straighten his stiffened limbs. The centre of his body alone retained any warmth. For four hours his eyes were observed to be raised to heaven; each breath that escaped his panting bosom seemed accompanied with prayer; and at that awful period when the heaviness of death was on him, he appeared more animated than ever. The power of faith was so visible in his countenance, that it imparted fresh life to those that stood by. His soul seemed hovering on his lips, and panting for eternity. At last, all well understood what his vehement desire was, and,

with an impulse, they ejaculated—"Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" In a few seconds Neff was in heaven.

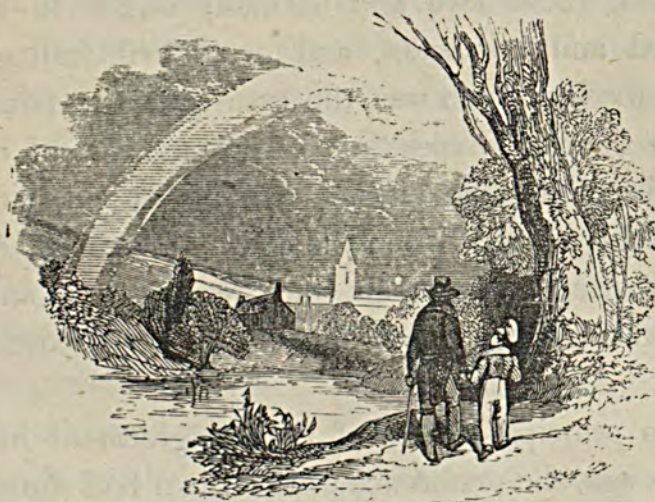
Such, my young readers, is the story of a pious young man, who thought that it was better to wear out, than to rust out. Take a lesson from his history, and learn from it—that "where there is a *will* there is a *way*," and that those who wish to serve God, and pray to him for strength, will always find a sphere of usefulness.



STORY OF A RAINBOW

AND

A FOREST.



“A rainbow in the morning,
Is the shepherd's warning.”

DID you ever see a rainbow, half-weeping, half-smiling through the air of a cold March morning? On such a morning, and with a long journey before them, did Adam Hoffer, and his grandson Eugene, leave Frankfort-on-the-Maine, for the town of Ursal, about sixteen leagues distant.

The object of their journey was a melancholy one. Adam had but just lost the partner of a long life, and

Eugene, who had before been bereft of his parents, his grandmother. The poor old grandfather was without a relation residing near him, and was now travelling to find sympathy in those who ought before to have afforded it to him—his son and daughter, uncle and aunt to Eugene.

It very often happens, my young friends, that in families where love and harmony ought to reign, discord and confusion, and every evil feeling too often dwell. Such was the case with the family of which I am now speaking. The members of it had long been estranged from each other, and had not visited for years. Upon the death of his wife, Adam had written to his son, but received no answer, and was hastening on his journey to discover the cause.

One principal reason of the disagreement in this family was, the preference which Adam had shown for his poor little grandson and his deceased mother. She became a widow in early life, and Eugene appeared to be so much the delight of his grandfather and his grandmother, it was feared by Joceline, the elder son of the old man, that he would, in some way or other, deprive him of that which he considered as his right.

When, therefore, the poor old grandmother died—own mother to Joceline—so little was he affected by it, that, instead of starting off immediately, he pleaded various excuses within himself, and forbore even

writing, as he ought to have done, contenting himself by intending to be in time for the funeral.

Ah! it is not merely at the funeral that a heart-broken old man should regain the sympathy of his children, but also in the long dreary time between the day of death and that of interment, when the house is darkened, and the footsteps go lightly about it, and nurses and strangers are taking advantage of every little matter, to the detriment of the survivor. Then is the time friends and relations are most welcome, and not when the body is laid in the earth.

With such reflections as these, Adam and his grandson journeyed on. The rainbow rose before him, but the old man could not look upon it as a type of hope. The day of his hopes was past, and he looked rather to the grave and its peace, than for anything which the world could afford.

They travelled on silently for some distance, and entered the graveyard, where the grandmother was at rest. The old man and his grandson went up to the grave—it was a sorrowful sight. They looked at the grave, and turned away with their eyes full of tears.

“Is that grandmother’s grave, grandpapa?” said Eugene.

“It is, my child,” said the old man; “would it were mine also.”

“Stop till I grow a man, grandpapa,” said Eugene.

“Ay, boy, that is well said. I should like to stay

till thou art a man, for what wouldst thou be in the wide world alone !”

“ But you told me the other day that I was never alone, grandpapa ; that God was ever near to me, and knew what I said, and what I thought, and what I did ; and I was so glad to hear you say so, because I often thought good things about you, dear grand papa.”

“ God would be with thee,” said the old man, “ and would guard and keep thee if I were gone : but come, let us hasten, or we shall be far from our journey’s end before nightfall.”

So away they trudged as steadily as they could. Adam was helped along by his staff, and the little fellow sometimes ran and sometimes walked by his side.

They went on for several leagues, and at last Adam, taking a bottle from his pocket, opened a handkerchief and produced some food, and both sat down under the shelter of a fine large beech-tree which grew on the confines of a wood, and there they regaled themselves.

“ We had better begin and end our meal here,” said the old man ; “ for we shall be some hours in striking through the forest, and have little time to idle ; the sun is high up, too : we should think of twelve o’clock.” So they took their dinner as hastily as possible, and then rising, followed an unfrequented path directly through the forest.

A cold east wind whistled through the trees, and the birds seemed afraid to venture out in the cutting blast : scarcely a note was heard. The half-dried green and last autumnal leaves were pale upon the ground, here and there a violet and cowslip sprang up, but little was to be seen either to delight or to cheer.

By some means or other, during a heavy storm of hail and sleet, which fell about four o'clock, the old man, whose eyes were dim with age, mistook his path, and, just as the day was about to close, found that he had done so. "Alas!" said he, "we have mistaken our path, and we shall be benighted in the forest."

"Let us make haste," said Eugene, who was already crying with the cold, and very tired; so they exerted themselves as much as they were able. Their legs at last failed them; the one very weak through youth, and the other through age. "We must stop here for the night," said the old man.

So they began to collect the dried leaves and grass from under the trees where the hail had not fallen, and placed them in a craig or cave, which afforded them both room to lie down. The darkness fell round them while at this task, and before they could well finish it night set in.

The old man pulled off his outer garment and threw it over himself and his grandson, and after having again partaken of some bread and ham, with the contents of their flask, they laid themselves down to rest, and in a short time both fell fast asleep.

During their slumbers a storm arose, and the snow and hail fell in large quantities. It was pitch dark. Eugene was awakened by something warm at his face, loudly breathing, and, before he could call out to his grandfather, felt himself lifted up by the grubbing snout of a wild boar.

He screamed dreadfully; the animal rushed upon him and held him down with his fore feet. The old man rose, and belaboured the animal with his staff, but to little purpose; it still kept its huge tusks at the throat of the child.

At last the old man thought of an expedient to drive the animal off; and, taking out his snuff-box, he threw a handful of the pungent dust full in the eyes of the savage creature, which gave a dreadful howl, and turned upon the old man.

It rubbed its nose and eyes with its fore paws, and tumbled about in great agony, during which time both the unfortunate victims of its rage withdrew to a short distance. As soon as the pain had subsided, the boar again made a turn towards the old man and his grandson, who ran and dodged him among the trees. At last, however, they got separated. The old man, in his eagerness to get away from the wild animal, fell over a precipice, and was soon buried in the accumulated snows of a deep dell, and, in his fall, lost all sensation.

Eugene called and called, but to no purpose. He had climbed a tree for safety. After calling for

some time, and, hearing no answer, he was afraid to descend, and remained in the tree all night.

As soon as it was dawn, he discovered his poor grandfather almost lifeless. He could neither make him hear nor speak: he appeared to be dead—but that his heart still beat. Eugene knew not what to do.

He, however, instead of staying and crying, as some children would, formed the determination of immediately finding the way out of the forest to solicit assistance; and that he might know his path back again, took the precaution to scatter along the way as he went branches of the fern or other shrubs. He also hallooed with all his strength.

He went on for several miles whooping and hallooing; but no sound answered him. At last, as the day grew bright, he thought he heard the sound of a distant horn. He hallooed again. It was answered.

In a short time a number of horsemen appeared. One, who seemed the principal, was dressed in a suit of green, and had a golden bugle by his side. "They are hunters," said Eugene; "I will tell them of the track of the boar."

Eugene had imbibed a prejudice against hunters. He thought that those who hunted for sport could not be very kind-hearted, and so he resolved to say nothing about his grandsire's condition, but to tell them of the boar.

He immediately offered to show the hunters the boar's track, and retraced his way backwards. He

was placed on one of the horses, and in a very short time found himself at the spot where his grandsire lay.

"The boar! The boar!" said the young man in green.

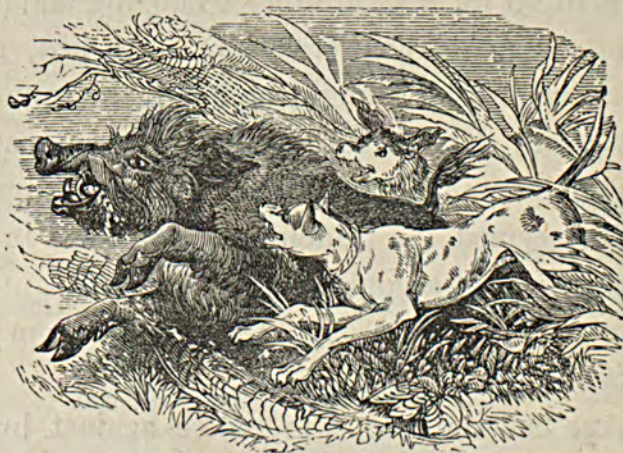
"Save my grandfather!" said the little boy.

"Tell us of the boar!" said the young man.

"Here are his foot-marks," replied Eugene.

"And there he is!" said the hunter, trying to raise up the stranger. "Halloo!"

The dogs immediately dashed down the declivity; the boar was roused from his bloody meal; the chase commenced, and a furious battle ensued between him and the dogs.



The animal ran this way and that way—overthrew several horses—lamed more than one of the hunters. At last he came near Eugene, who had already desired one of the spearers to defend himself. "Strike, boy, strike!" said several.

Eugene did as he was desired, and, with great dexterity plunged his spear into the animal's side, who ran away with it, but in a few seconds fell down dead.

The hunters were loud in their praises of Eugene. They placed him on one of their horses. The old grandfather was conveyed back to Frankfort; and the principal hunter, who was one of the German princes, was so pleased with Eugene, that he adopted him, and made him his page.

"Now you will have a protector," said the old grandfather; "and I may die."

"No, not yet," said Eugene.

The old man did not die, but lived to see his grandson grow up a handsome, brave, and useful man—as all will who exercise *discretion and fortitude*.

THE TRUE HISTORY
OF
ROBIN HOOD.



A famous man was Robin Hood.—WORDSWORTH.

I DARE say my young friends have very often heard of Robin Hood, and of Little John, and of his “merrie” men, and of Maid Marian. Perhaps you would like to know who this Robin Hood was.

The accounts of his life are so various, and so much mixed up with fable, that to render a true history of him would be almost impossible.

His real name, however, appears to have been Fitzooth. His grandfather, Ralph Fitzooth, Lord of Kyme, was a Norman; and his maternal ancestor, Gilbert de Gaunt, Lord of Kyme and Lyndsay, whose name appears on the roll of Battle Abbey, came over to England with William the Conqueror.

His father, William Fitzooth, in the times of feudal dependency, was a ward of Robert, Earl of Oxford, and who by the king's order gave him his niece, the third daughter of Lady Roisia de Vere, Countess of Essex, in marriage, by whom he had one son, the hero of our story.

Robin Both or Hood, as he was called, having dissipated his fortune, joined a band of depredators, and, as their chief, laid heavy contributions, for their support, on all such as he deemed rich enough to bear the loss. He was not only famed for his skill in archery and his courage, but for his kindness to the poor, with whom he often shared the plunder he had taken. The principal scene of his exploits is said to have been in Sherwood Forest, during the reign of Richard the First.

"In this time," says Stowe, "were many robbers and outlaws; among the which Robin Hood and Little John, renowned thieves, continued in woods, despoiling and plundering the goods of the rich. They killed none but such as would invade them, or by resistance for their own defence."

The said Robin kept a band of one hundred tall

and good archers with such spoils and thefts as he could obtain; upon whom four hundred men, were they ever so strong, were afraid to make an attack. He suffered no woman to be oppressed, or in any way molested; and poor men's goods he spared, abundantly relieving them with that which by extortion he got from rich abbeys and the houses of rich earls.

Robin Hood is reported to have lived till the year 1247, in the reign of Henry III. But Baker makes his death (which is said to have been caused by treachery) to have taken place some time before, in the reign of Richard I. The king had issued a proclamation to have him apprehended; but according to this account he fell sick at a certain nunnery in Yorkshire, called Berckley's, and, being desirous to let blood, he was betrayed by a monk, and left to bleed to death.

One of the best parts of the story of Robin Hood is that which relates to the Knight of Barnslie, who was first observed by Little John approaching on horseback through one of the long green glades of Barnsdale Wood.

"All dreary then was his semblaunt,
And little was his pride;
His one foot in the stirrup stood,
The other wored beside.

"His hood hung over his two eys,
He rode in simple array;
A sorrier man than he was onc
Rode never in summer day."

"I greet you well," said Little John, "and welcome you to the greenwood. My master has refused to touch his dinner these three hours, expecting you.

"And who is your master," inquired the stranger, "that shows me so much courtesy?"

"E'en Robin Hood," said the other.

"Ah, Robin Hood!" said the knight; "he is a good yeoman and true, and I accept his invitation."

Little John soon brought him to the trystell tree, where Robin received him with a kindly air and a merry countenance.

"They wash'd together, and wiped both,
And sat till their denere;
Of bread and wine, they had enough,
And nombles of the deere.

"Swans and pheasants they had full good,
And fowls of the rivere
There failed never so little a bird
That ever was bred on treere"

"I thank thee for thy dinner, Robin," said the knight; "and if ever thou comest my way I will repay it."

"I make no such exchanges," said the outlaw, "nor do I ask any one for a dinner. I vow, as it is against good manners for a yeoman to treat a knight, that you must pay for your entertainment."

"I have no money in my coffer," said the other, "save ten shillings;" and he sighed as he said it.

Robin now signed to Little John, who quickly

dived to the bottom of the traveller's bag. He found but ten shillings, and said, "The knight has spoken truly."

"I fear you have been but a sorry steward of your inheritance," said Robin. "Ten shillings is but a poor sum for a travelling knight."

"It was my misfortune, not my fault," said the knight. "My only son fell into a quarrel,

"And slew a knight in Lancashire,
And a squire full bold;
And all to save him in his right
My goods are let and sold.

"My lands are set to pledge, Robin,
Until a certain day,
To a rich abbot here beside,
Of Saint Mary's Abbey.'

"My lands," he continued, "are mortgaged for four hundred pounds. The abbot holds them; nor know I of any friend who will help me—not one."

Little John wept; Will Scarlet's eyes were moist; and Robin Hood, much affected, cried, "Fill us more wine; this makes me sad too."

The wine was poured out and drank; and Robin continued: "Hast thou no friend, Sir Knight, who would give security for four hundred pounds?"

"None," said the other; "not one friend have I save the saints."

Robin Hood shook his head. The saints are but

doubtful security in matters of money ; you must find better before I can help you."

"Then up bespake he, Little John,
To much he thus gan say,
'By Mary I'll lay my life to wad,
These monks have brought our pay.'"

Some monks were approaching with fifty armed men as their escort : and, moreover, eight hundred pounds for their treasury. To stop and seize them was a hard task for three outlaws.

"'My brethren twain,' said Little John,
'We are no more than three ;
But an we bring them not to dinner,
Full wroth will our master be.

"'Now bend your bows,' said Little John,
'Make all you press to stand ;
The foremost monk his life and his death
Is closed in my hand.'"

"Stand, churl monks !" said the outlaws ; "how dared you be so long in coming, when our master is not only angry but fasting ?"

"Who is your master ?" inquired the astonished ecclesiastics.

"Robin Hood," said Little John.

"I have heard of him," exclaimed the monk ; "he is a strong thief." As he uttered these words a blow from Mich laid him on the turf ; while a few arrows, drawn to their very heads, set the armed men flying ;

who, no doubt, imagined Robin Hood and his bold followers were near at hand. The three outlaws seized the remaining monk and the horses that carried the luggage and treasure, and brought them all to their master, below the trystell tree.

Robin, on beholding his dismayed guest, welcomed him, caused him to wash, and invited him to sit down to dinner, and, passing the wine, inquired of him who he was, and whence he came.

"I am a monk, sir, as you see," was the reply, "and the cellarer of St. Mary's Abbey."

"'I have a great market, then,' Robin Hood said,
'And all this live-long day
I dread our Lady is loth with me.
She hath not sent me my pay.'

"'Have no doubt, masters,' said Little John,
'Ye have no need, I say;
'This monk hath got it, I dare well swear
For he is of her abbaye.'"

"That is well said, John," answered Robin Hood. "Monk, you must know that our Lady stands security for four hundred pounds, and the hour of payment is come; hast thou the money?"

The monk declared that he only had heard of this for the first time, and that he had but twenty marks for travelling expenses.

"We shall see that," said Robin. "Go and examine," said he to Little John.

“Little John spread his mantle down,
(He had done the same before),
And he told out of the good monk's mails
Eight hundred pounds, and more.

“Little John let it lie full still,
And went to his master in haste;
'Sir,' he said, 'this monk is true enough,
Our Lady hath doubled your cost.'

“'I have then none other,' said the knight,
'The very sooth to say,
Except it be our dear Ladye,
Who never fail'd me a day.

“'By dear worthy God, then, Robin,' he said,
'Ye may search all England throwe,
Yet find me never onto to my pay
A truer better borrowe.'”

Having thus accepted the Virgin's security, Robin bade Little John tell out four hundred pounds for the knight; and, as he was ill apparelled, to give him three yards, *and no more*, of each colour of cloth for his use.

Little John generously counted out the cash; and, as his *honest* heart was touched with the knight's misfortunes, he measured out the cloth, even more than liberally. He called his bow an ell wand, whereas it was nearly six feet; and every time he applied it, he skipped, as the ballad avers, “footes three.”

“Scatchlock he stood still and laughed,
And swore by Mary's might
John may give him the better measure,
For by Peter it cost him light.

“ ‘Give him a grey steed, too,’ Robin, he said,
‘Beside a saddle new;
For he is our Lady’s messenger,
God send that he prove true.’ ”

“Now,” said the knight, “when shall pay-day be?”

“This day twelvemonth,” said Robin; “and the place, this good oak.”

“So be it, and amen,” said the knight; and away he rode, with a light heart.

After the expiration of the year, the day of payment came, and Robin Hood sat again below his trystell oak. He then thought of the unfortunate knight, and on his spiritual security.

“ ‘Go we to dinner?’ said Little John;
Robin Hood he said nay;
‘For I dread our Lady be loth with me,
She hath sent me not my pay.’ ”

“ ‘Have no doubt, master,’ quoth Little John,
‘Yet is not the sun at rest;
For I dare say, and safely swear,
The knight is true and trest.’ ”

Little John was right, for the knight was on his way to the trysting tree, with the four hundred pounds in his pocket, and a noble present for Robin Hood. But as he rode along, he came to a place where a horse, saddled and bridled, and a pipe of wine, were set up as the prizes at a public wrestling match; and, as they were won by a strange yeoman, the losers raised a tumult, and, but for the interference of the knight,

and the men who accompanied him, they would have deprived the yeoman of his prize, and done him some bodily harm.

Little John, with his two companions, stood sentinels in the wood. The former, who loved his dinner almost as well as he loved a prize, began not only to grow impatient, but to entertain doubts about the hour of payment being kept. However, he was soon relieved from his anxiety.

“For as they looked in Barnsdale wood,
And by the wide highway,
Then they were aware of the two black monks,
Each on a good palfraye.”

“‘I make mine avow to God,’ said Robin,
‘Monk, what say I to thee,
Our Lady is the truthfullest dame
That ever yet found I me.

“‘I vow by St. Paul,’ said Robin Hood, then,
‘I have sought all England thorowe,
Yet found I never, for punctual pay,
Half so secure a borrowe.’”

Little John chuckled over this scene of profit and humour, and stood ready to fill the monk’s cup as soon as Robin ordered wine.

“Monk, you are the best of monks,” said the outlaw. “When you return to the Abbey greet our Lady well, and say she shall ever find me a friend; and for thyself, a dinner worthy of an abbot shall always be thine when thou ridest this way.”

“To invite a man to dinner, that you may beat

him, and bind him, and rob him," replied the monk, "looks like courtesy."

"It is our usual way, monk," replied Robin, drily; "we leave little behind."

The monk, mounting his horse, said,

"'Nay, before God, then,' said the monk,
'Me reweth I come so near,
For cheaper far I might have dined
In Blythe or Doncastere.'

"'Greet well your abbott, then,' said Robin,
'And your prior, I you pray;
And bid them send me a monk like thee
To dinner every day.'"

As the monk departed, the knight made his appearance; but Robin refused the four hundred pounds. "You were late in coming," said he, "and our Lady, who was your security, has sent and paid it double."

The knight looked astonished, and said, in reply, "Had I not stayed to help a poor yeoman who was suffering wrong, I had kept my time."

"For that good deed, Sir Knight," said Robin Hood, "I hold you fully excused; and more, you will ever find me a true friend."

But Robin Hood, like all other brave men, passed to the dust. A monk is said to have caused his death, and monks to have buried him; and they gave him a funeral worthy his descent. At Kirplees, in Yorkshire, formerly a Benedictine nunnery, is a gravestone, near the park, under which, it is said, Robin Hood is buried. The inscription is now illegible; but Mr.

Ralph Thoresbery, in his "Ducatus Leodiensis," gives the following as the epitaph:—

"Hear undernead dis laith stean,
Laiz Robert, Earl of Huntington.

Nea arcir ver az hie sa geude,
An peple kaud im Robin Heud;
Sic outlawz as he, in iz men,
Wil England never sigh agen.

Obiit 24 kal. Dekembris, 1247."



THE TWO FRIENDS;

OR,

LOVE BEGETS LOVE.

HAVE you not often seen, my young friends, poor foreign boys about the streets of London or the country with monkeys, or white mice, or music of some kind? I have no doubt you have. They are worthy your commiseration, for they are boys like yourselves, and are in a foreign country.

The poor little boy of whom I am going to tell you was the son of a very honest but very poor woman, who sold maccaroni in one of the streets of Rome. She had eight children, and had been a widow for some years. Giacomo (for that was his name) was induced, at the representations of an uncle, to leave his native city, and go with him to England. When his uncle arrived in London, he inquired his way to an obscure street, near a place called the Seven Dials, and there either sold or lent Giacomo for a small sum, to one of the men who make a living by sending out these boys into the streets to pick up pence from passers by.

Poor little Giacomo! often did he think of his dear

mother selling macaroni in the streets of Rome, and of his brothers and sisters, and of the warm mild air of the south, and of the blooming myrtles, and ripe oranges and grapes, and other rich fruit. In this cold country the poor lad used to say he never saw any fruit except roasted apples and baked chesnuts.

He was sent forth with a monkey and a hurdigurdy, and told by his task-master that he must bring home a certain sum of money or starve the next day. Giacomo went forth, and with a light heart too—for children are not, thanks to divine mercy, disposed to be sad for any length of time; and the gay shops, and the crowds of people, and the coaches, carts, wagons, and bustle of this mighty city, made him forget for awhile his griefs; and he turned the handle of his instrument with lively emotion, while his full Italian eyes sparkled at the tricks of Jacopo his monkey.

There soon grew up a feeling of love between the poor child and his only companion, Jacopo. They were both far from their native land; both were friendless and homeless, for there is no home where the heart is not; and they were both foreigners. Misfortunes bind things together, however opposite, and thus Giacomo and Jacopo became as brothers.

Giacomo knew no language but his own, and, therefore, could not make himself understood; so the world was almost as a desert to him. There was, however, something in the arch look and playful gestures of

Jacopo and his odd tricks, that made him merry when he would be sad; and thus it was he loved the monkey. On the other hand, as love begets love, poor Jacopo soon found out that his little master was kind-hearted, and loved him in return. Be assured of this, my young friends, that no creature, however vile, is insensible to love.

And as, on the one hand, Giacomo would have rather received an injury himself than it should have been inflicted upon Jacopo; so the poor animal had, with his strong attachment, shown the fidelity of a dog, and he would have bitten anybody to the bone who dared to ill use his master.

For many months did this pair of fugitives thread the streets of London, and many a rude auditory did Jacopo amaze with his grotesque tricks. But still poor Giacomo was but ill requited, and often would he return to his miserable sleeping apartment with but a few pence. When his earnings were small, he was quite sure of receiving a scolding, and, perhaps, blows; and on the following day he would have nothing more than a piece of bread and a cup of cold water to support him during his next twelve hours' peregrinations.

One night, when Giacomo returned to his task-master, he found him partly intoxicated; and, upon being informed of the small sum the poor boy had brought with him, he fell upon him with the most cruel rage, and gave him several severe blows upon

his head, which completely stunned him. Jacopo, who had clambered up to a corner of the room during the affray, seeing his friend and protector thus ill used, rushed down upon the assailant, and inflicted a severe bite upon his cheek, which caused the blood to flow, and made him roar with anguish.

Upon this, Decastro (for that was the task-master's name) went into another room, and returned with a pair of loaded pistols—one in each hand. The first he fired at Jacopo, who had mounted again to the beam, from which he had descended to make his attack. The poor animal dropped with a loud cry, but was in a moment caught up by Giacomo, who, with tears in his eyes, fell on his knees before Decastro.

"Let him go, or I will shoot you both," said the enraged monster. "Let him go!" And he pointed his pistol at the monkey, who had rushed under Giacomo's jacket.

"Me no let go; I die vid Jaco," stammered the resolute lad.

The fellow now turned the pistol in his hand, and aimed a blow at the poor boy with the butt end of it, but fortunately missed him. In the scuffle and confusion which followed, Giacomo ran out at the street door, while Jacopo was missing, and gone no one could tell whither.

For several days this poor Italian lad wandered about the streets of London without any food, his cruel master searching for him in every direction. At last

he found him sleeping under one of the stalls in Clare Market; and, taking him by the collar, he dragged him home in triumph.

This wicked man's mind was now seized with the thoughts of a horrid deed, almost too horrid to mention; and was it not that this crime had been often committed, no one could believe that such wickedness was possible.

There was at that time, and it is only a very few years ago, a set of wretches who waylaid unfortunate wanderers, and, having deprived them of life, sold their bodies for dissection to the hospitals.

With some of these villains the man, Decastro, was leagued. He had more than once thus disposed of some of the unfortunates over whom he had control, and now made up his mind that Giacomo should be his next victim.

To lull the suspicions of the poor lad he pretended to be fully reconciled to him, treated him with apparent kindness, and gave him a good supper, with an extra blanket to cover him. He had previously bargained to sell the body for three pounds to a man named Williams; and poor Giacomo was to be *smothered*, and then packed up in a hamper and sent to the doctor's.

Giacomo threw himself upon his sorry pallet about ten o'clock, and he had not lain there long before Decastro went out to consult with the wretch who was to have the body. As soon as all was still,

and dark, and safe, Jacopo, who had been three days up the chimney, where he had fled for refuge, came gently down, and, rushing towards his old friend, gave a squeak of joy, and was soon placed close to his heart beneath the blankets. After many a caress between the two friends, the Italian boy fell asleep.

Not so, however, with Jacopo; he had been too much frightened to feel secure, and he lay with his heart beating and his little ears all on the watch. At last he heard a footstep, then a whisper, and presently the words "all right" saluted his ear; although, as a monkey, he did not understand them.

Decastro and Williams had now entered the apartment, the one with a dark lantern, and the other with a roll of brimstone, which he held in one hand.

"He seems sound enough," whispered Williams; for Giacomo was snoring loudly.

"Sound as a top," said Decastro. "But come, let us be quick and have it over."

Williams now took the poker and gave the brimstone a gentle tap, and it fell to pieces. He then placed it in a small tub, and having thrown upon it some shavings, brought it close to the head of the victim. The shavings were lit, which immediately set fire to the brimstone; and, as the fumes began to rise, both the assassins raised Giacomo gently by the shoulders, and they were in the act of holding him down over the burning brimstone, when Jacopo disengaged himself from the bed-clothes, and, leaping on De-

castro, gave him a severe bite; in fact, he bit the end of his nose clean off. Then, as nimbly as a monkey can jump, he sprang at the face of the other assassin, and inflicted a severe bite upon him, near the ear. Jacopo was black with soot, and by the glare of the burning brimstone looked hideous. Williams took him to be some infernal inhabitant, and ran out of the house in the greatest consternation. At the same moment Giacomo awoke, and, hearing the confusion, and seeing the light, and thinking that the house was on fire, he quickly followed Williams, with the monkey clinging to his shoulder. Decastro, in his alarm, staggered and fell over the brimstone-tub. He was unable to rise, the fumes having deprived him of his senses; and before help could be rendered to him he was suffocated.

Yes; he, who prepared a pit for others, fell into it himself. So will it often happen to those who try to injure the weak and helpless. He was found dead by the persons who came to extinguish the fire. As to Giacomo and his monkey, a gentleman of wealth, having heard of the case, afforded him his protection, and took him into his house, where he became a faithful and industrious servant. He remained with this gentleman several years, during which time Jacopo still continued his friend; and at last they both returned to Italy.

THE TWO PLAYMATES;

OR,

SYMPATHY AND GRATITUDE.

TWO little boys lived some years ago in a very pleasant village, near the New Forest in Hampshire. The name of one was John, and that of the other Paul.

Paul's father lived in a large house, and kept horses, and servants, and a coach. He had a nice lawn and garden, and was what is called a gentleman. Paul had a pony to ride on; he had also a great many playthings—tops, hoops, balls, kites, a ship, and everything he could wish for; he had also fine clothes to wear, and nothing to do but to go to school.

John's father was a poor man; for he had only a little farm to keep him; and John was forced to get up in the morning to look after the cows, feed the pigs, and do a great deal of work before he went to school.

Although John's father was a poor man, he was determined to send his son to the best school in the

parish. "For," said he, "if my boy turns out a good lad, he will be a comfort to me in my old age."

When John first attended the school to which Paul went, the boys, who were better dressed than he was, shunned him. They did not like his rough cord jacket, nor his thick hands and coarse shirt. One said "He shall not sit by me!" and another said, "He shall not sit by me!" So, when he went to sit down on a form, the boy who was on it walked to the other end.

Poor John did not know what this meant; but, when he looked at his coarse clothes, and rough hands, and thick shoes, and compared them with those of his school-fellows, he said to himself, "It is because I am a poor boy!" and the tears came into his eyes.

Paul saw what was going on, and truly felt for him, and he could have cried too. So he went to the form on which the new scholar sat, and said, "Do not cry, little boy, I will come and sit by you. Here, take this nice rosy apple; do take it. I do not want it; do, there is a dear little boy!"

This made John cry the more; but these were tears of joy at having found some one to feel for him. He looked at Paul, and sobbed out, "No, no, I thank you." Then Paul put his arm round his neck, and said, "I cannot bear to see you cry!" and he kissed him on the cheek.

One of the boys called out, "Paul Jones is playing

with apples!" The usher came up, and, without making any inquiry, took the apple away, and gave Paul a cut with his cane. The apple he gave to the boy who told, for that was the rule of the school. Paul did not mind the cut, because he knew he was doing right. The other boys laughed, and seemed quite pleased. Some peeped from behind their slates, which they held before their faces, as if they were doing their sums. And one called out in a whisper, "Who likes *stick-liquorice*?"

John felt as if he could have torn the usher to pieces. "Oh!" said he to himself, "if I were a man I think I would strike you!" For he felt it cruel that Paul should be struck for being kind to him. It was, however, wrong for him to wish to take revenge.

From that time John felt as if he would have died to serve Paul, and he never seemed so happy as when he could play with him or sit by him at school.

Some time after this, Paul, who had about half-a-mile to walk to his home through the green lanes, met some gipsies. There were two of them; and one said to the other, "Bob, do you see that youngster; he has some good things about him!"

So they whispered a little together. At last one came close to the little boy, and, in a moment, seized him round the waist, and put his hand over his mouth and nose, to prevent his calling out. They had made up their minds to steal him for his clothes;

so they tied a handkerchief over his mouth, put him in a sack, and told him that if he made the least noise they would kill him.

After going for some miles, they went aside into a thick wood, and when they reached the middle of it, they stripped poor little Paul quite naked, left him under a tree, and went off with all his clothes.

It was now nearly dark, and Paul was very much frightened. As soon as the gipsies were gone, he cried out for help till he was hoarse, and could cry no longer. Being naked, and very cold, he crept under a bush to screen himself from the wind.

When Paul's father discovered that he had not come home, he was very unhappy, and went to look for him. He sent servants first one way and then another, but no one could find him. His poor mother, too, was in great grief.

They dragged all the ponds in the neighbourhood, went up and down the river, inquired of every one they met, but no one had seen him. John was called up. He said, the last time that he saw him was when he bade him good-bye at the corner of the lane.

The night began to close in. Paul was not found, and poor John was as unhappy as any little boy could be. He went crying to bed, and when he knelt down to say his prayers, he prayed that Paul might come safe home again. He then got into bed, but he could not sleep for thinking of his kind school-fellow.

At last, he leaped out, and said, "I must go

and see if he is found! I must go and seek him, too!" so he slipped on his clothes, let himself out, and fastened the door after him.

At first, he did not know what road to take, and he wandered up one lane and down another. It was very dark at first, so that he could scarcely see where he went; at length the moon rose up, and she seemed to cheer him in his search.

So on he walked, looking into every ditch and every pond, and going through every little clump of bushes, but to no purpose; he could neither see nor hear anything of poor Paul.

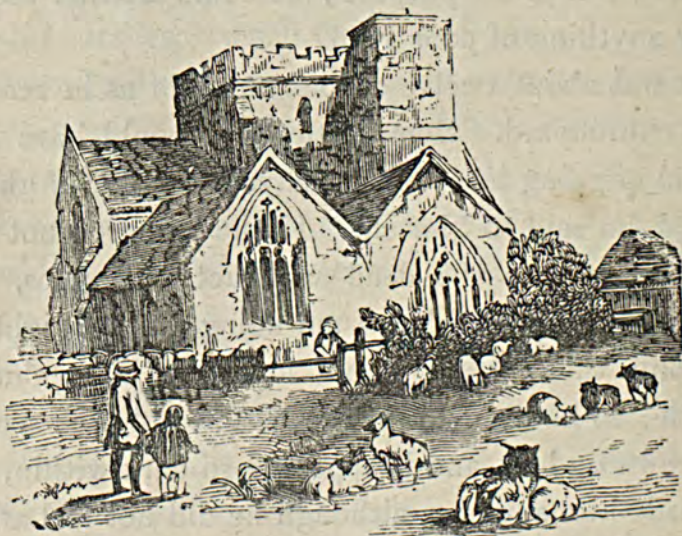
It was about twelve o'clock at night as he reached the churchyard. Some little boys would have been afraid of going into the churchyard for fear of ghosts. But John said to himself, "If the living do not hurt me, I am sure the dead will not. Besides, why should I be afraid when I am doing what is right?"

John thought he would look into the church-porch; so he drew towards it. The old arch seemed to frown on him, and it appeared so dark within, that it made him shudder, although he did not feel afraid. He stepped boldly in, and cried, "Paul, are you there!" Something started up with a loud noise, and bounded by him, calling out, "hilloo! hilloo!" and leaped on to one of the tomb-stones. When John looked, he found it was a poor silly boy, whom they used to call "Silly Mike," and whose part John had often taken when other boys used to tease him.

“Ah Mike!” said John; “don’t you know me?” The poor idiot knew him directly, and said, “He is in the sack! he is in the sack—buried in the wood! dong, dong, ho! bell go dong, dong!”

After some trouble, John made Mike understand that he was in search of Paul; who kept saying, he was in a sack in the wood;—“gipsey men!—sack in wood!—Mike frightened!”

At last John prevailed upon the poor fellow to take him to the wood; for the boy thought it might be



that Paul had been carried away by somebody. So they walked on till they came to the wood, Mike leading the way. At last, John thought that he heard a moan; he listened, and heard it again. He then pushed through the brambles, tearing his face and hands at every step.

He called out, "Paul! Paul!" "Here! here!" was faintly said in reply. John rushed to the spot, and there lay the poor little boy, half dead.

John ran and helped him up; he then pulled off some of his own clothes and put them upon him. Mike gently lifted him on his back, and they soon got out of the wood.

Paul's father had been out all night looking after him. His poor mother had also been out, searching every place she could think of, and had given him up for lost. She thought he had fallen into the river and was drowned.

You can therefore imagine the poor lady's joy when she saw her child borne towards her; she could scarcely speak; and when he leaped into her arms, she fainted away.

Paul's father was greatly rejoiced to see his son. He thanked John in the warmest terms, for saving him.

"I offered a hundred pounds reward to any one who would find him, dead or alive," said his father; "you shall have the hundred pounds, my little fellow. Nay, more; I will give you the best pony in my stable."

"What for, sir?" said John.

"Why, for being such a brave little fellow."

"No," said John, looking at Paul; "one good turn deserves another. Do you remember the nice rosy apple you gave me the first day I went to school."

Nothing could prevail upon John or his father to take the reward. "To pay my son for doing his duty," said the poor man, "would spoil all."

From this time Paul and John were firm friends, and grew up together like brothers. Paul became a very rich man, and John was appointed his steward.



STORY OF A BEAR.

THERE was once, in the outskirts of the town of Otranto, not far from the North American lakes, a very worthy man, who united the various trades of blacksmith, carpenter, bricklayer, storekeeper, and herdsman, in great perfection. He had a numerous family of children, and a large progeny of pigs. The children were made to work as soon as they could walk, but the little pigs were better treated, and had only to work their way through Indian corn and butter milk from day to day, as little pigs ought to do. I should have told you that the name of this general tradesman and artificer was Humphrey Clinker. And he was a clinker; for from morning till night there was nothing but clink, clink, clink, to be heard throughout his dwelling.

His house had as many apartments in it as a royal palace. Some of these were closed till they were wanted for the exercise of some particular branch of his business; others were open at all times. Beside one wing of the building was a range of piggeries; and here did Mrs. Clinker, who was wofully, as she termed it, fond of pigs, luxuriate in the prospect of

her farrow of thirteen to the dozen. Night and morn did Mrs. Clinker count her thirteen pigs; but on one fatal morning the number was reduced to twelve. The sty was searched; every crack and cranny investigated; all the outbuildings were examined; and even the very woods round the dwelling were threaded in the hopes of finding the lost pig, but in vain—the pig was gone.

The next morning the twelve pigs were reduced to eleven, and Mrs. Clinker's consternation was indescribable. The idea of "gone astray" was scouted; and, rather than suspect the honesty of her neighbours, the good woman was charitable enough to think that the little porkling might have squeezed his way through the palings of his dormitory. So Mr. Clinker placed an extra stake between each of them.

The following morning the number was reduced to ten. Mrs. Clinker counted the pigs again and again. Yes, there were but ten; how could it be? Everything now gave way to horrid suspicion, and it was determined to keep watch, and catch the thief.

So Humphrey, much against his will, consented to sit up the following night to guard the piggery. It was a very cold, dark, squally night, and he sat himself down snugly behind the water-butt, where he had thrown some straw, to keep his midnight watch.

Midnight came, and with it a sharp north-wester, which made Humphrey keep close to the brandy

bottle. The straw, too, began to grow, to his thinking, mighty comfortable. The solitary grunt of the old sow had ceased, and the wind lulled, and the stars shone out placidly; so that, what with the silence, and the starlight, and the calmness of the hour, and the brandy, Humphrey Clinker fell fast asleep.

The sun awoke this patient watchman; and so Humphrey got up from his straw. The old pig began to grunt, and the young ones to squeak. Mrs. Clinker's voice was heard coming down stairs: "Well, my love, what is the news? Have you caught the thief?"

"Not at all," said the good worthy man. "The quietest night I have spent for a long time. Depend upon it no mortal hand has had to do with the pigs."

"Eight, nine!—Eight, nine!" exclaimed Mrs. Clinker; "why, what have you done with the other pig? I can make but nine now; yesterday there were ten."

"Count them again," said her spouse.

"I have counted them; do you think I cannot count? I tell you there are but nine; and I declare it is my dear little dolly that is gone." And here the poor woman wept as if she had lost her youngest child instead of the doll pig, which is the name usually given to the pet of the farrow.

The next night another pig was missing. There were but eight on the morrow. Every method was

taken to discover the thief. The pigs were at last removed, when they had been reduced to six, to a lock-up house. For awhile they were safe. But one morning the six were by some unaccountable means reduced to five.

Again the whole house were in consternation. Watch was kept by Mrs. Clinker and all the family, but nothing was seen or heard. A couple of weeks passed, and at last the remainder of the pigs were removed to their old quarters. On that very night a pig disappeared.

Mrs. Clinker now thought that the whole was a supernatural visitation, and determined no longer to lament. She considered it as a just judgment upon her for her overweening partiality to them. "It is true," said she to herself, "I deserve it all; I loved them better than my own children; and often have I put in the pig-tub what I might have given to the poor."

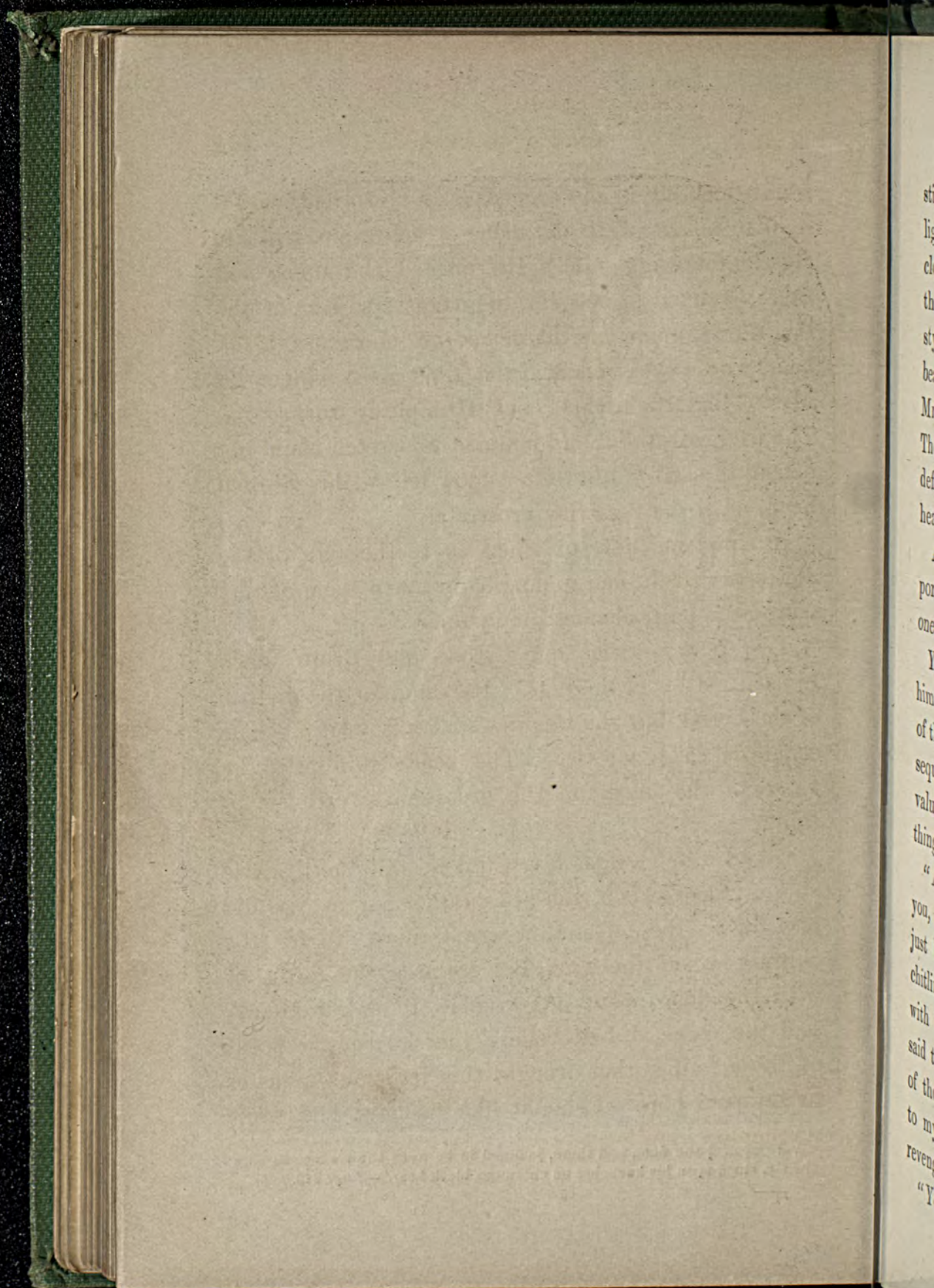
The fatal day at last arrived when this patient lady, thus humiliated, ventured to look into the sty; and there stood one as disconsolate as herself, but not half so patient—the reft mother of her progeny, all alone!

Mrs. Clinker went to bed sorrowful. She lay for some hours pondering over her terrible losses, when she was aroused by a loud, unearthly roar; then a noise, as if the house was shaken from its foundation.

Humphrey jumped out of bed, and seizing a thick



"He opened the door, and there, jammed in between the transverse bars of the sty, stood upon his haunches an enormous black bear."—Page 243.



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stick which lay in the corner, away he rushed, with a light in his hand, to the scene of confusion, his wife closely following him. He opened the door, and there, jammed in between the transverse bars of the sty, stood upon his haunches an enormous black bear, whose eyes reflected the light most hideously. Mrs. Clinker shrieked, but Humphrey rushed on. The overgrown, fat, and jammed-up wretch could not defend himself. Blow after blow fell on his devoted head, until the beast lay prostrate.

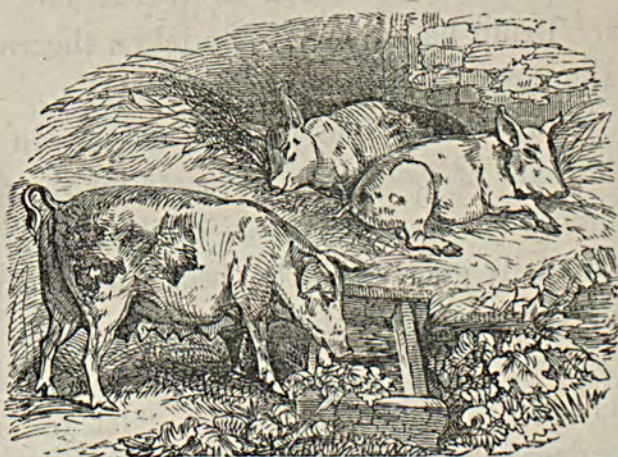
A clew was now obtained as to the fate of the porkers. Bruin had undoubtedly taken them one by one in the most clandestine manner.

Yes, it was true; one by one had Bruin made himself master of the pigs. He came for the mother of the brood, but she was not so easily misled. The sequel is easily guessed. The bear's skin paid the value of the pigs, and the grease was worth something.

"And now," said Mr. Clinker, "let me advise you, my dear, when you kill another pig, as you did just before these losses occurred, never to fry the chitlings when the wind lies towards the forest, or with the door open. As true as I am a woman," said the dame, "I do believe that it *was* the scent of those fryings that brought this ferocious monster to my poor pigs. I should like to have had some revenge on him."

"You shall have as fine a ham out of his carcase

as was ever made from a real Berkshire. If you do not know what bear hams are, I do." And so saying, Mr. Clinker dragged Bruin out of his cramped position, and in a few minutes was performing the butcher upon him. In less than an hour he was hung up by the heels, and turned out in as neat a style as any sheep or calf in Leadenhall Market.



LOBENSKI, THE POLISH EXILE.



POLAND is now a province of Russia, but it was once an independent nation, and governed by a king of its own. Many years ago Catharine, the Empress of Russia, knowing that her power was greater than that of the King of Poland, sent an army into his dominions, and took possession of them.

In the year 1830 the Poles made a brave effort to recover their rights, but the Russians overcame them, and put many to a cruel death. A great number of them also were banished to Siberia, which is a very cold and miserable country, in the north of Asia.

Those of them who survived are now working as slaves in the mines belonging to the Emperor, or employed in hunting ermines and other creatures for their fur, which is valuable.

The following brief story is given upon the authority of a relation of the persons to whom the events happened—

In a village, about seven miles from Warsaw, there lived an old man named John Lobenski. As his family had been well off, he had in his youth travelled at his leisure nearly all over Europe, and had become acquainted with several languages. But through some misfortunes he had become poor; and when he lived in this village he was supporting himself as a teacher of French and Italian at one of the public schools in the neighbourhood. His wife had been dead for many years, and his family consisted of a son, about twenty-four years of age, and a daughter, about twenty, who were a great comfort to their aged parent, for they were very affectionate and dutiful.

When the Poles had formed their plans for rising to assert their freedom, some of young Lobenski's friends were foremost in the movement, and they tried to persuade him to join them. For a long time he was restrained from taking any active part by the entreaties of his father, whose mature judgment saw that the Russian power was too mighty for the Poles. "My son," he would say, "we must for the present

bow to the hard dispensation of Providence; for, without we obtain more foreign help than we can reasonably expect, our rising will only make our bondage the more severe."

At length, however, the sanguine feelings of patriotism swayed the mind of the young man, and he took leave of his weeping father and sister to join the Polish army, which was secretly assembling in a thickly-wooded forest, about twenty miles to the south of Warsaw.

His good sense and brave bearing immediately placed him in an influential position amongst the patriots, and he was made a captain, and posted with a body of men in a thicket on the outskirts of the forest, which was nearest to the road that the Russians were expected to pass as soon as they were informed of the movements of the Poles.

The evening after he had taken up this position, a body of Russians, three times as numerous as the whole of the Polish army, bivouacked in a small wood close by the one where Lobenski was concealed, because they could travel no farther that night, being much fatigued with a long day's march. Small as was the band of Poles, they determined on attacking them, with brave hopes of success. In the dead of the night they made a furious charge on the encampment, and, before the Russians had time to arm, they slew hundreds of them.

The inequality of numbers was too great. The

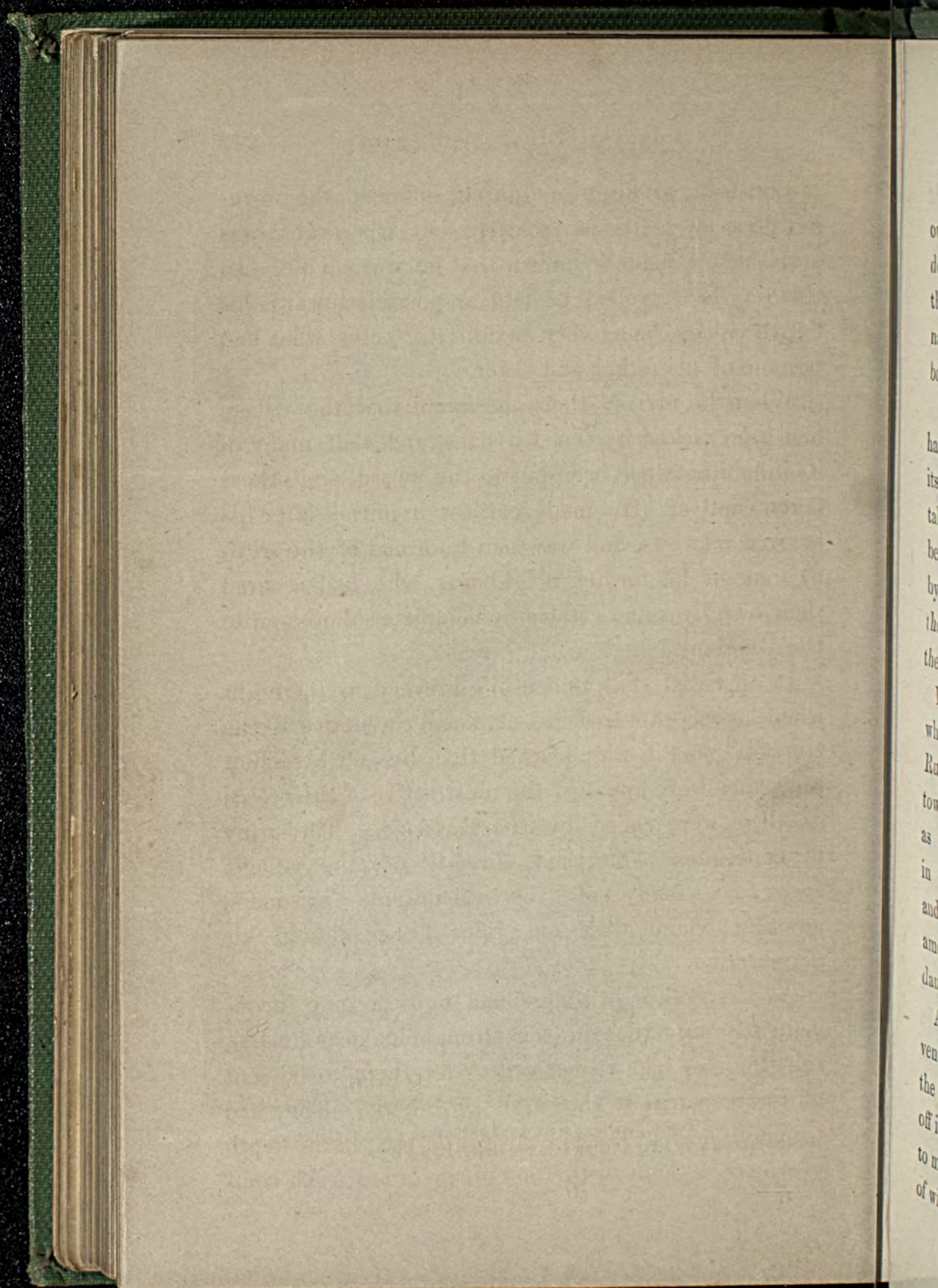
Poles, however, fought till morning, losing but very few of their number, and performing prodigies of valour. But as soon as day-light appeared, the Russians surrounded the little troop, and took them prisoners.

Young Lobenski and his companions were carried off, and lodged in a castle on the banks of the river Dnieper. They were here subjected to very rigorous treatment, though the place was not adapted for the close confinement of prisoners, having originally been the palace of a Russian noble. After remaining there about three weeks, Lobenski and two others, who were good swimmers, effected their escape by jumping from a very lofty window into the river, the height of which was so great that the Russians did not conceive it possible that any one would be so bold as to attempt to leap from it, and had not therefore secured it.

The three brave fellows had watched their opportunity when it was tremendously stormy and quite dark; and by this precaution the guards heard nothing of their movements. They swam in the direction in which they knew there were some boats, and, seizing one of them, and taking advantage of the wind, which was blowing a hurricane in their favour, they speedily passed the Russian frontiers, and landed on that part of Poland which was not strictly guarded, because its inhabitants had not joined the insurgents.



"Lobenski and two others, who were good swimmers, effected their escape by jumping from a very lofty window into the river."—Page 248.



Lobenski, to disguise himself, obtained the worn-out dress of a Russian soldier ; but wherever it was desirable he made it known that he was a Pole. In this way he travelled as fast as possible towards his native village, being very anxious to know what had become of his father and sister.

When he arrived there, he found that the village had been sacked by the Russians, and that many of its inhabitants had been put to the sword, and others taken captive. He made earnest inquiries after his beloved relatives, and was soon informed of the truth by some of his former neighbours, who had secured their own lives and estates by complete submission to the Russians.

It appeared that Lobenski's bravery on the night when he was captured had attracted the notice of the Russian general, who learned that he and his fellow townsmen were amongst the most active of the *rebels*, as they were called by the Russians. The army in consequence marched directly on the village, and took many of the inhabitants prisoners, amongst whom were old John Lobenski and his daughter.

As the Polish prisoners had now become inconveniently numerous in the strongholds near Poland, the Emperor had issued orders for them to be sent off in companies to the wilds of Siberia. They had to march on foot day after day in fetters, in the depth of winter, without distinction of age or sex, each com-

pany guarded by a troop of horse soldiers. At night they sheltered themselves by digging holes in the snow, unless they were lucky enough to reach a village at nightfall, when they used to be miserably lodged in the stables and outhouses belonging to the inhabitants.

In one of these companies Lobenski and his daughter had to travel. Many times in the course of the journey the old man sank down, overpowered with fatigue; and, had it not been for the affectionate attentions of his daughter Irvana, he would have certainly perished.

Young Lobenski obtained a considerable sum of money from a rich relation, who, although he appeared favourable to the Russians, and was therefore left unmolested by them, did not forget his duty to his family. Lobenski, thus provided, took every possible means of disguising himself. He assumed a different name, and called himself a Russian. He had learned the particulars of his father's sufferings, and knew exactly the route which would be taken by the company in which he was a prisoner.

He accordingly made a hasty journey to the town of Okhansk, through which they were to pass, hired a house and some Russian servants, and bought several horses, as if he intended to take up his abode there.

After he had remained about a fortnight, and had begun to acquire the confidence of the people about him by a display of wealth and great liberality, the

prisoners arrived, and amongst them his father and sister. By a little contrivance, and the assistance of some of his servants, whom he had secured by the promise of a rich reward, and without saying who it was he was going to deliver, he managed that old Lobenski and Irvana should be lodged in an out-building attached to his own residence. The place seemed so secure that the guards did not think it needful to watch the prisoners very closely. Young Lobenski gave them plenty to eat and drink, and by midnight they were all sound asleep or helplessly intoxicated. With those servants on whom he could rely, he then carried off his father and sister, giving them a signal to remain perfectly quiet. Without a word being uttered, they were conveyed some distance from the house, put into a carriage, such as the rich Russians use during winter, and the horses were instantly put to the top of their speed; and, before the guards were aroused, the party had travelled more than thirty miles. The soldiers, only missing from their company an old man and a young girl, and not thinking that they were at all connected with the sudden absence of the master of the house, with whom in fact they had nothing to do, gave up the pursuit, and went on their journey.

I shall not attempt to tell you the joy experienced by all the Lobenskis in once more meeting each other, when their first surprise was over, and all the circumstances were explained.

Young Lobenski immediately provided Russian dresses for his father and sister; and, as soon as possible, he sold his carriage, lest it should lead to his detection; and, by different modes of travelling, he reached the coast of the Black Sea, about a fortnight's



journey, took shipping for one of the Ionian islands, and from thence came to England, where he found a safe home. And although the whole of the money that his kind relation had given him was expended, he and his beloved relatives thanked God that they had escaped from a tyranny much worse than poverty of any kind.

THE BEAUTIFUL ANTELOPE.



LITTLE children in England, accustomed only to the motions of the horse, cow, sheep, and hog, cannot form a notion of the leap and bound of the antelope. From some unseen hollow among the cliffs one of these animals will vault up perpendicularly and alight on all fours upon a pinnacle only a few inches in breadth, and upon which almost any other creature would impale itself in its attempt to descend. There it will stand in perfect security, its four feet touching each other, and its back bent upwards like a bow. And no sooner has it espied a new footing, than it bounds off again like an arrow, though the distance be many fathoms.

The antelopes of Asia and Africa are far more numerous than those of America and Europe; and,

no doubt, in many parts of both these continents still unexplored, they exist in prodigious numbers. The common antelope, or sasin, is found on the vast continent of India in all places that are adapted to its habits. It shuns equally the desert, the forest, and the mountain, and takes up its abode in the rocky plains, where it bounds along with the greatest grace and agility. It is said to leap occasionally upwards of twelve feet in altitude, and horizontally nearly twenty.

The gazelle, which has been so lauded by poets for the brightness and beauty of its eyes, is one of the smaller species of antelopes. The specific name, *dercus*, literally means bright eyes.

Gazelles keep the open plains, and browse upon the saline and other pungent plants which they meet with. They live in considerable herds, placing sentinels wherever they graze. And when an alarm is given, they bound off in different directions, and collecting again on a more commanding ground, they form a square, with the females and the young in the centre, and the bucks outside on the defensive.

The other species of antelopes have peculiarities quite as remarkable, and accounts of them would be full of interest, but I have only room for the following story :—

In one of the towns of northern Asia, inhabited by Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, there lived a worthy Spaniard, named Don Almiera Don Francisco.

He had two children, Alphonso and Isabella, who were very fond of each other.

It so chanced one day, that Isabella went upon a visit to a young friend in the vicinity of the city, who showed her all her curiosities, pets, and playthings. Among others was a beautiful gazelle, which knew her voice, came at her call, and fed from her hand. Isabella was delighted beyond measure with the bright-eyed creature, and she became very desirous to possess such an animal.

When she reached home in the evening the beautiful gazelle haunted her, and she was very sad.

Alphonso was anxious to ascertain the cause of her sorrow, but Isabella was ashamed to expose her weakness. However, she at last confessed that her desire for the possession of her friend's gazelle was the cause of her sadness.

"You cannot have Theodora's gazelle," said Alphonso; "but my dear sister shall have one ten times as beautiful, if our plains and mountains will afford such an animal. I will go among the rocks and bring you a gazelle."

Isabella was delighted with her brother's kindness, and never thought of the propriety of sacrificing her own desires, when they were not easily attainable.

So the next morning, before the break of day, Alphonso, having slung his gun over his shoulder, took his course across the plains into the gigantic mountains that rose up into the clouds a few miles

from the city. It was a bleak howling day; and although that was not the country of winter's cold, yet the season of boisterous weather was at hand, and, before the enthusiastic boy got many miles on his way, a storm overtook him, and rendered his travelling somewhat dangerous.

He, however, reached the clefts and passes of the rocks where the gazelles were wont to be seen skipping and bounding, but found, as he approached, that the animals had become shy, and would not allow him to advance within gunshot. Observing a flock on a little cape-like peak at some distance, Alphonso threaded the secret footpaths, and crouching under projecting rocks, or crawling through crannies, at last obtained a situation within a few feet of them.

He levelled his gun and fired, but without success. The whole herd, startled by the report, bounded from rock to rock with the agility for which they are so remarkable, and the ardent boy was left alone in the mighty solitude.

He pursued his flying prey, and endeavoured to obtain another position for firing upon them, but to no purpose. Young Alphonso at length grew faint and weary with his toil, and he sat down on the jutting part of a rock, still looking about him for the antelopes, but not one was to be seen. He now felt both hungry and thirsty, and descended the mountain with a view of obtaining some refreshment from a shepherd boy whom he descried at some distance eating.

He took a silver coin from his purse, and, presenting it to the shepherd boy, said, "Give me of your food, and I will give you of my silver." The boy, who was placing the remainder of his food in a coarse bag, looked at him and shook his head.

"Can you not spare me one morsel?" said Alphonso; "I will pay you for it. I am faint and tired with my sport to-day."

"So am I," said the boy; "for had it not been for your noisy gun I should have spent a very quiet morning; instead of which, you have made my sheep scamper from hill to hill like mad things. Go home, boy, and get your dinner, and leave me and my sheep alone. What do you want with a gazelle?" inquired the boy.

"I have a great mind not to tell you," said Alphonso, "since you are so cross; but, perhaps, it will do you good to know that I have a sister whom I love very dearly, and she has set her heart upon a beautiful gazelle, and I now come here in the mountains to procure one."

"Then you are a great fool for your pains," said the shepherd boy, doggedly. "You fine ladies and gentlemen never wish for a thing but you will have it; you do not care who suffers. What is the good of a gazelle to her? If I were a gazelle, I would much rather bound about on my free native hills than live in one of your scented houses, though they may be hung with silks and satins. No," continued the

boy, "I shall not give you any food ; and as you seem to boast of your kindness, I shall of mine. I have a poor old mother who has no food except that which I procure. I have this allowance once a-day ; and although I could eat the whole of it, I only eat half, and take the other half to my mother."

"That cannot be true," said Alphonso ; "for if it were, you would be glad to take my money, which would buy you ten times as much."

"And is my mother to starve while I go to the city to spend your money ? No ; my mother has had no food since last evening, and I shall now send this to her round the neck of my dog ; I would not disappoint her for the world." So saying, the young shepherd called his dog, and, fastening the bag to his neck, by a few words sent him off through the valleys as fast as his four legs could carry him.

"There," said he, as he let him go, "that dog is a better man than you are ; for he can bring down a gazelle, and you cannot."

"Then I will not leave these hills till I have," said Alphonso.

"Ha, ha, ha !" said the young shepherd, "you will find yourself mistaken before nightfall."

"Were it only to spoil your evil prophecy," said Alphonso, "I will sooner die than leave these hills without the object of which I am in search ; and you shall see me, food or no food, with a gazelle round my shoulders, or there is no truth in my gun."

"Ha, ha, ha!" said the shepherd; "go your own way, you will repent it before you see me again."

Alphonso departed hungry and thirsty, and wended his way again over the mountains. When he had descended a short distance on the other side, he saw two men with guns; and at the same moment the young shepherd's dog came bounding along with the bag tied to his neck. One of the men immediately levelled his piece and fired.

The dog yelled, but still ran on, evidently wounded, while the man who had shot at him raised a loud laugh. Alphonso, who had been delighted with the fidelity of the dog, determined to follow him, and, in case the poor animal was much hurt, to render him every assistance in his power.

He, therefore, urged his steps forward as rapidly as he could; and, as the dog's speed was somewhat diminished through the wound he had received, he soon came within sight of him. The poor creature limped along with great difficulty, and threaded the ravines with evident pain. Alphonso followed on, until he came to a deep hollow, at the bottom of which, overhung by rugged rocks, stood a little hut, rudely made of fragments of stone.

The dog scratched and barked when he reached the door, which was presently opened, and, upon his entering, was again shut. Alphonso went round to the back of the hut, and, looking through a chink between the loose stones, beheld a poor sick woman

lying on some straw, and a little girl sitting beside her, who was in the act of taking the provisions from the bag which the dog had brought. She then presented it to her mother, and the poor woman seemed very grateful. She called down a blessing upon her son, and offered up her thanks to Heaven for having so good a one.

"Ah!" said Alphonso, "I thought myself a very good boy for being so kind to my sister, but how much better is this little boy than I am, to give up his food to keep his poor mother from starving. I will certainly speak to this poor woman;" and he knocked at the door.

"Who is there?" said little Annette, for that was the little girl's name.

"A famished lad," said Alphonso, "who would beg a little water. Open the door, I pray you."

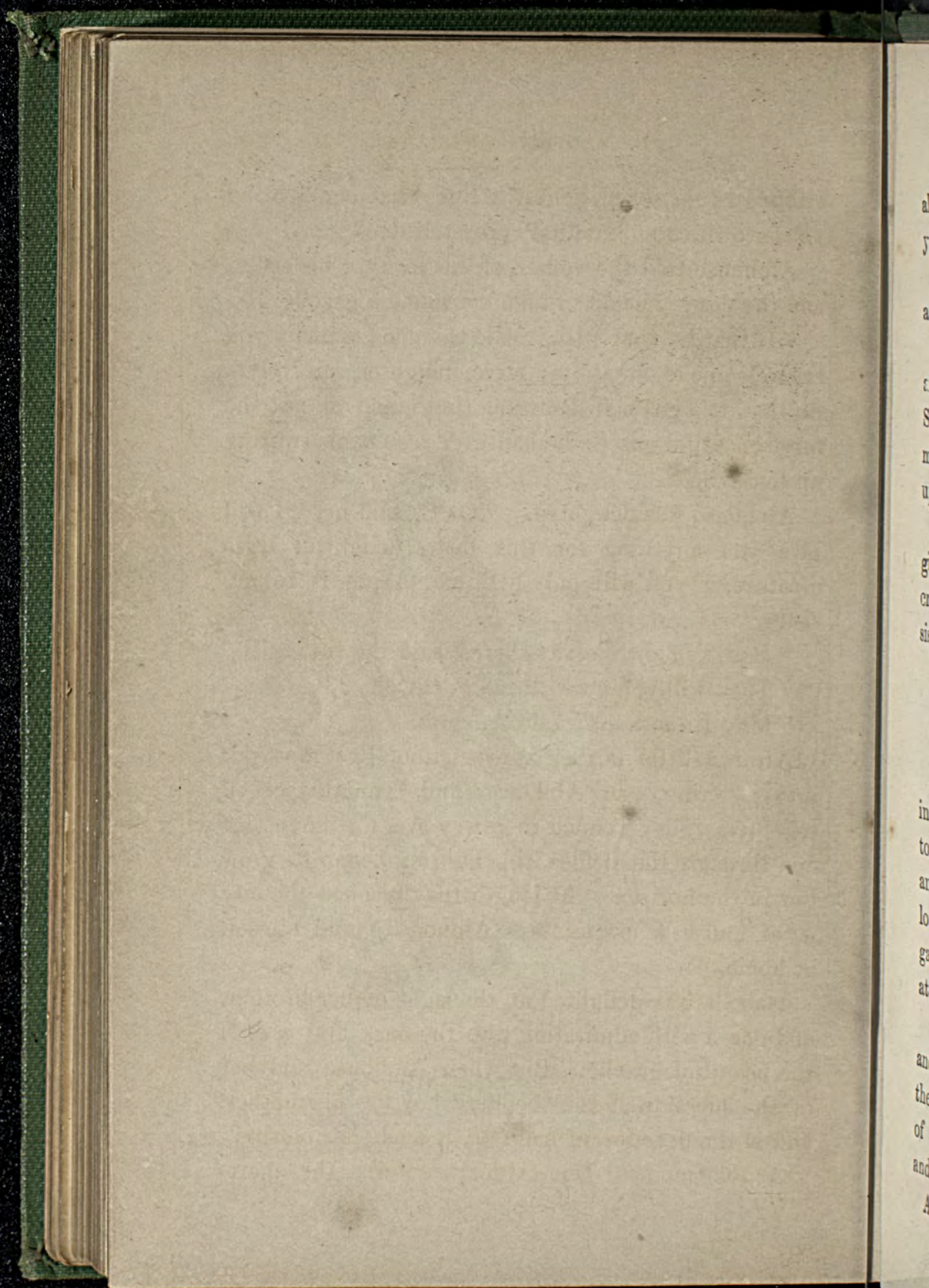
So the little girl opened the door, and Alphonso went in. The poor woman cried out, "Poor lad, give him water, and some of our scanty fare."

"Thank you, dame," said Alphonso; "a very small portion will satisfy me; and if you will take this, I shall be better satisfied." So saying, he put into the good dame's hand about eight or nine pieces of silver.

The poor woman, who seldom saw silver coin, was overjoyed; but, seeing that the lad was very young, refused to receive it, saying, "It would be wrong of me to take so much from you. I cannot do it; for



"Roly was put into a string, and Alphonso and Annette set off together."—Page 261.



although poor, I am honest. But what could bring you into these mountains? pray tell me."

Alphonso told the woman of his love for his sister, and the desire he had to take her home a gazelle.

"If that be your wish," said the good woman, you are welcome to our Roly. Here, daughter, call Roly." So the little girl called several times, and at last the most beautiful gazelle he had ever seen came trotting up to the door.

Alphonso was delighted. "Oh!" said he, "I will give you anything for this dear, delightful little creature, if you will only help me to get it to my sister."

"It will follow me anywhere," said the little girl.

"Then will you go with me to the city?"

"May I, mother?" said Annette.

After a little farther conversation, Roly was put into a string, and Alphonso and Annette set off together. They wended their way over the mountains and through the defiles, till the sun began to grow low in the horizon. At length they reached the city gates, and in a few minutes Alphonso found himself at home.

Isabella was delighted at the sight of her brother, and gazed with admiration into the dark full eyes of the beautiful gazelle. But when Alphonso told her of the affection of the shepherd boy for his mother, and of the devotion of Annette, it made her blush.

At this moment Don Almiera entered the apart-

ment, and having learned the whole of the matter, was much pleased to find his son and daughter showing so much affection for each other; but when he heard of the dutiful conduct of the poor shepherd boy, he was still farther pleased.

"I must be going back now," said Annette.

"Oh, no!" said Alphonso and Isabella, "you must stop here to-night; we could not think of your going now, for the sun has already set, and you will be benighted."

"I am not afraid of the night," said Annette; "I can find my way through the mountains in the dark as well as in the light, and I would not leave my dear mother for the world."

"Then I will go with you," said Alphonso. "And I will make one of the party," said their father; and he immediately gave orders that his carriage should be horsed, and in a few minutes all were seated within it, and it was jolting over the rough roads in the vicinity of the mountains.

When they came to the widow's cottage they found it quite dark; lights were, however, soon procured. How great was the poor woman's astonishment to find herself surrounded by such company. Almiera, addressing her, said, "My good woman, you have the greatest blessing upon earth—good children."

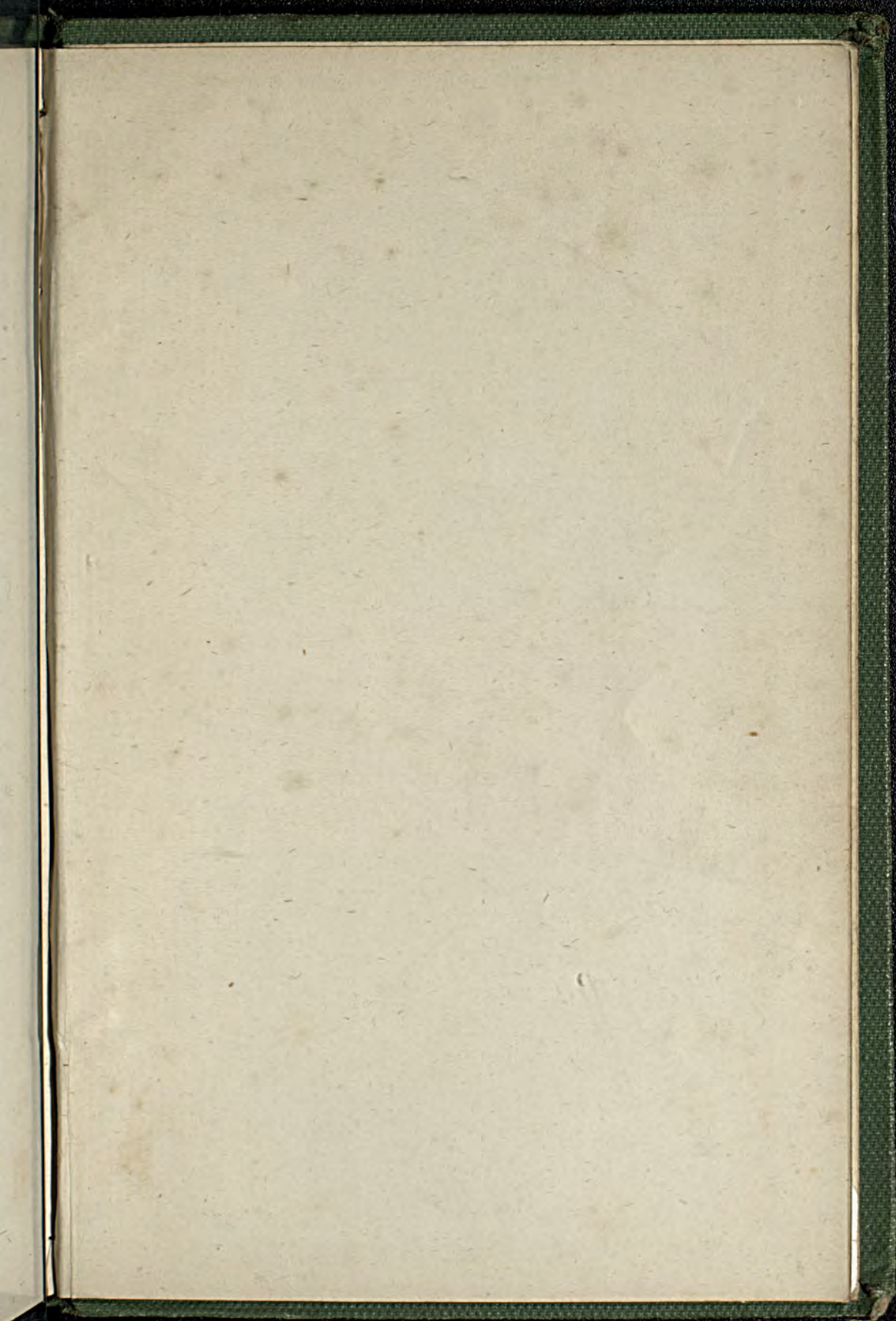
"Heaven be praised!" said she; "they are my greatest blessing."

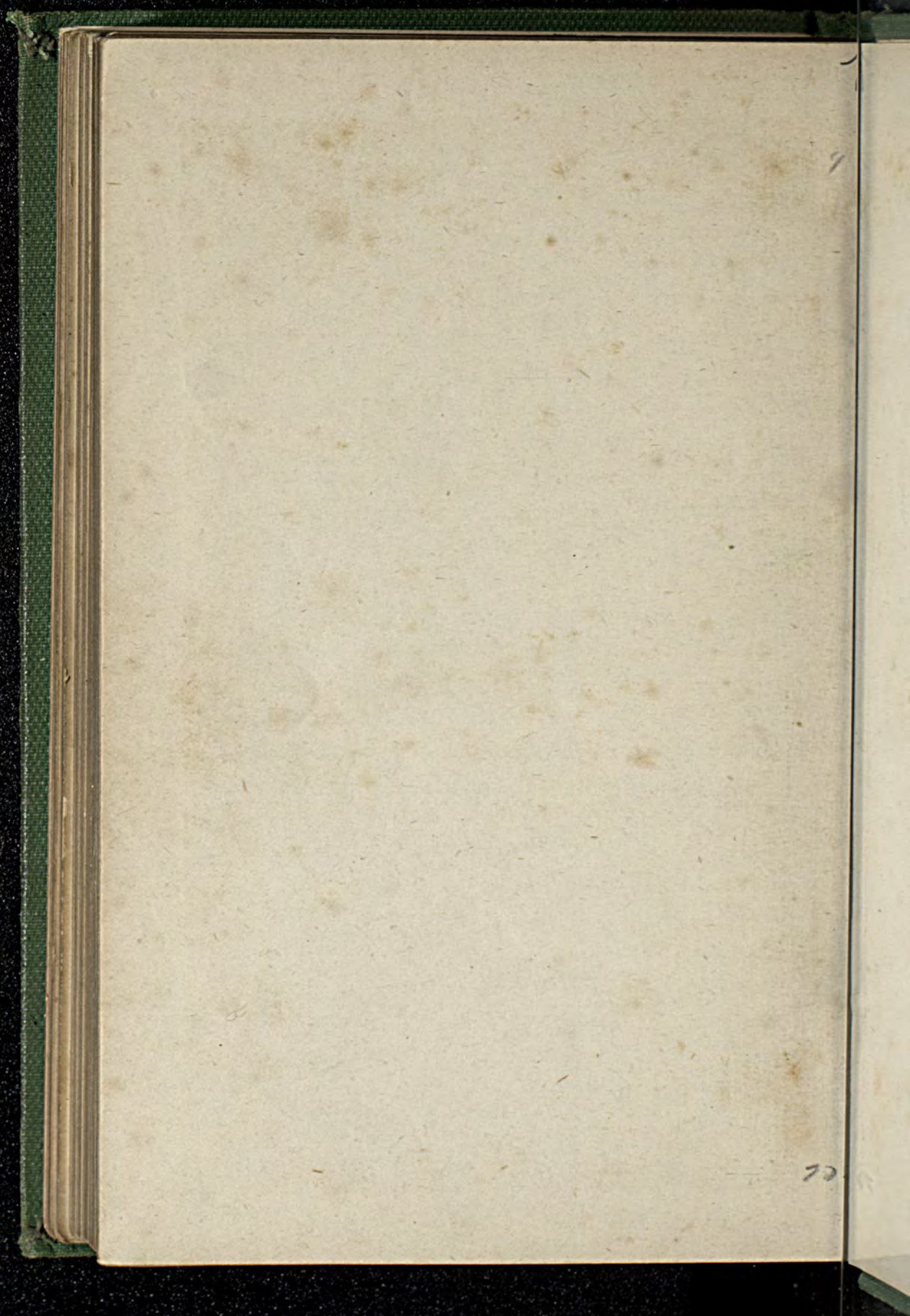
"You shall have other blessings," said Almiera,

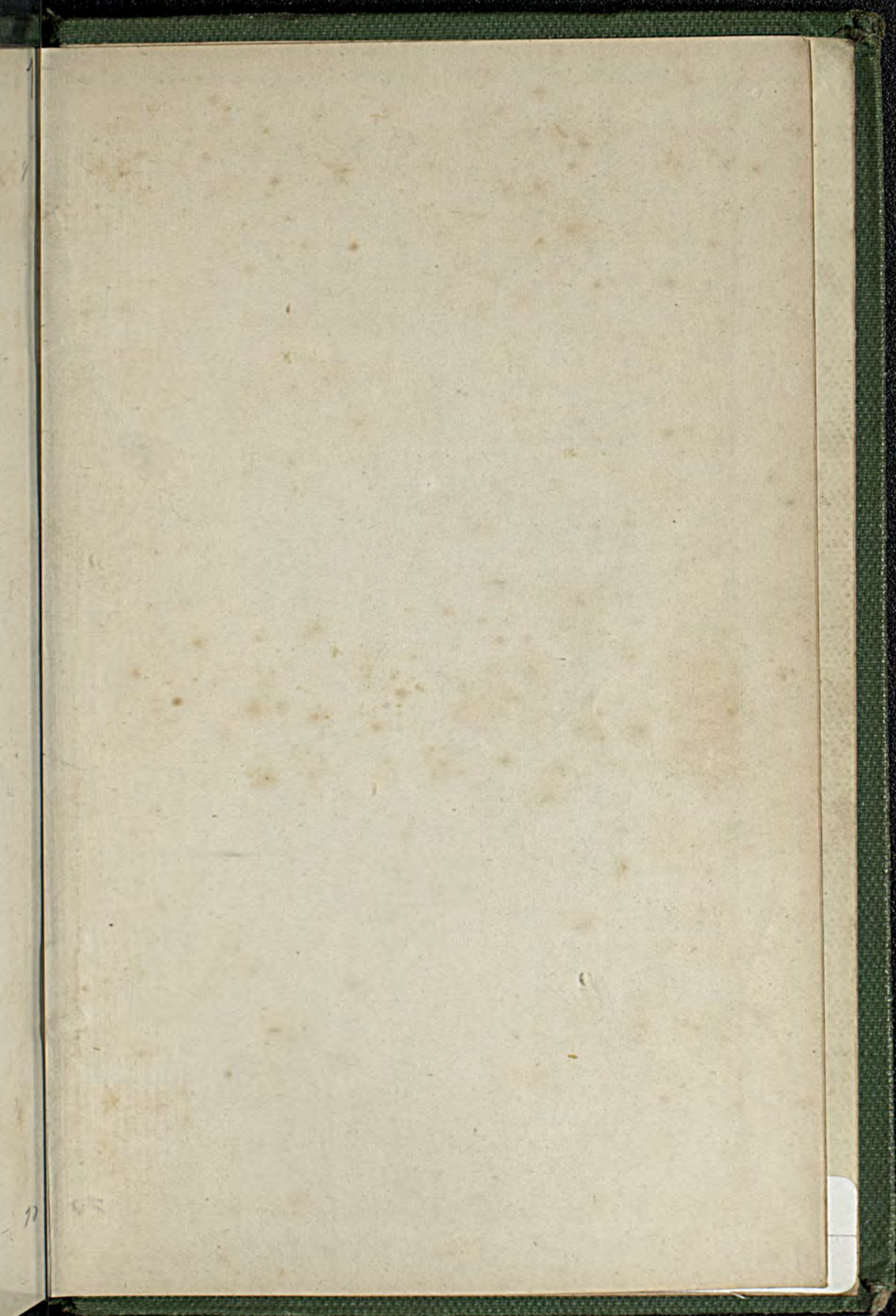
"I will myself be your son; I will provide for you and yours. As to your lad, he shall be my herdsman, and your daughter shall be my children's helpmate, if you will have it so."

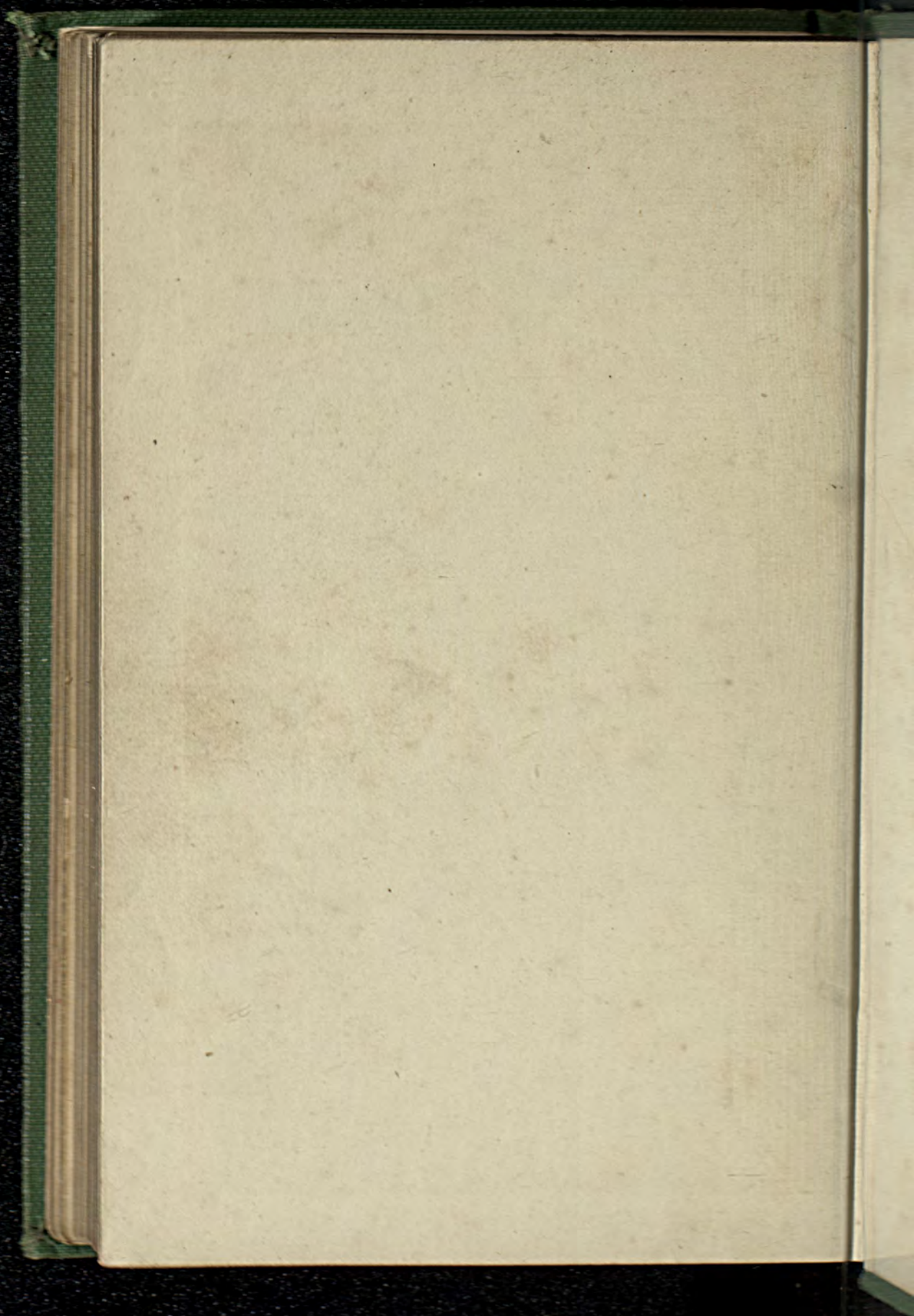
So, after a little time, the filial duty of Arnette and her brother were rewarded. The poor widow had no longer to depend upon the precarious supply of her son; and Alphonso and Isabella, when they grew up, often remembered the story of the gazelle.

The lesson I mean to convey to my young readers in this story is, that everybody, whether rich or poor, has the means and opportunity of being good, of showing love, and of doing his duty. It matters not in what situation God has been pleased to place us; for in all there are trials to be borne, sacrifices to be made, duties to be performed, kind acts to be done. We should take advantage of them whenever they present themselves, and never lose an opportunity of doing a good action.







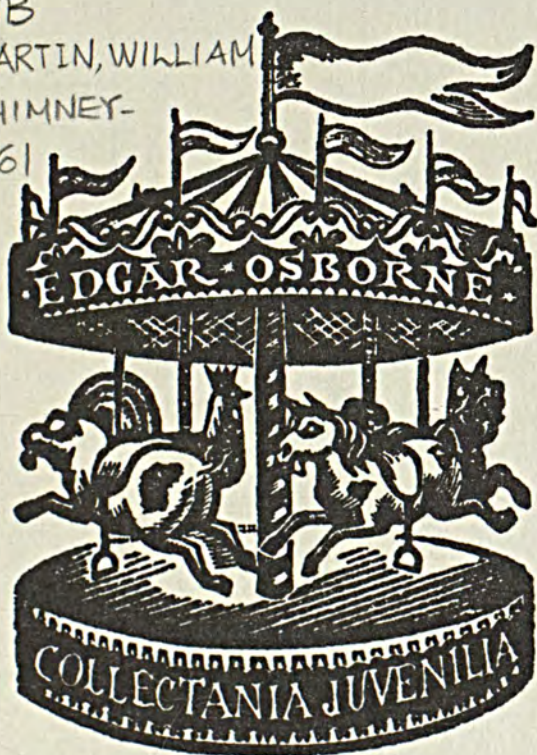


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