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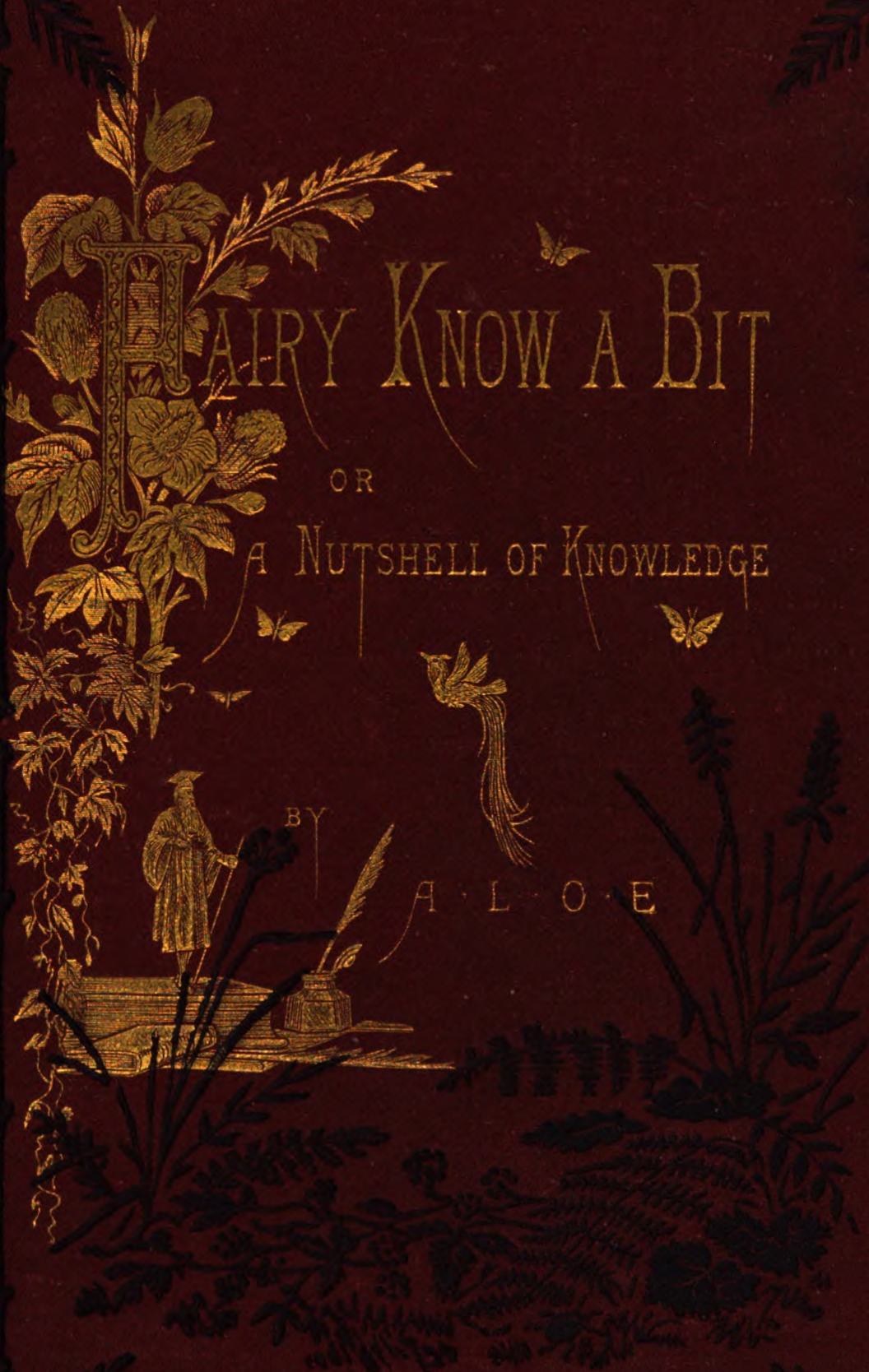
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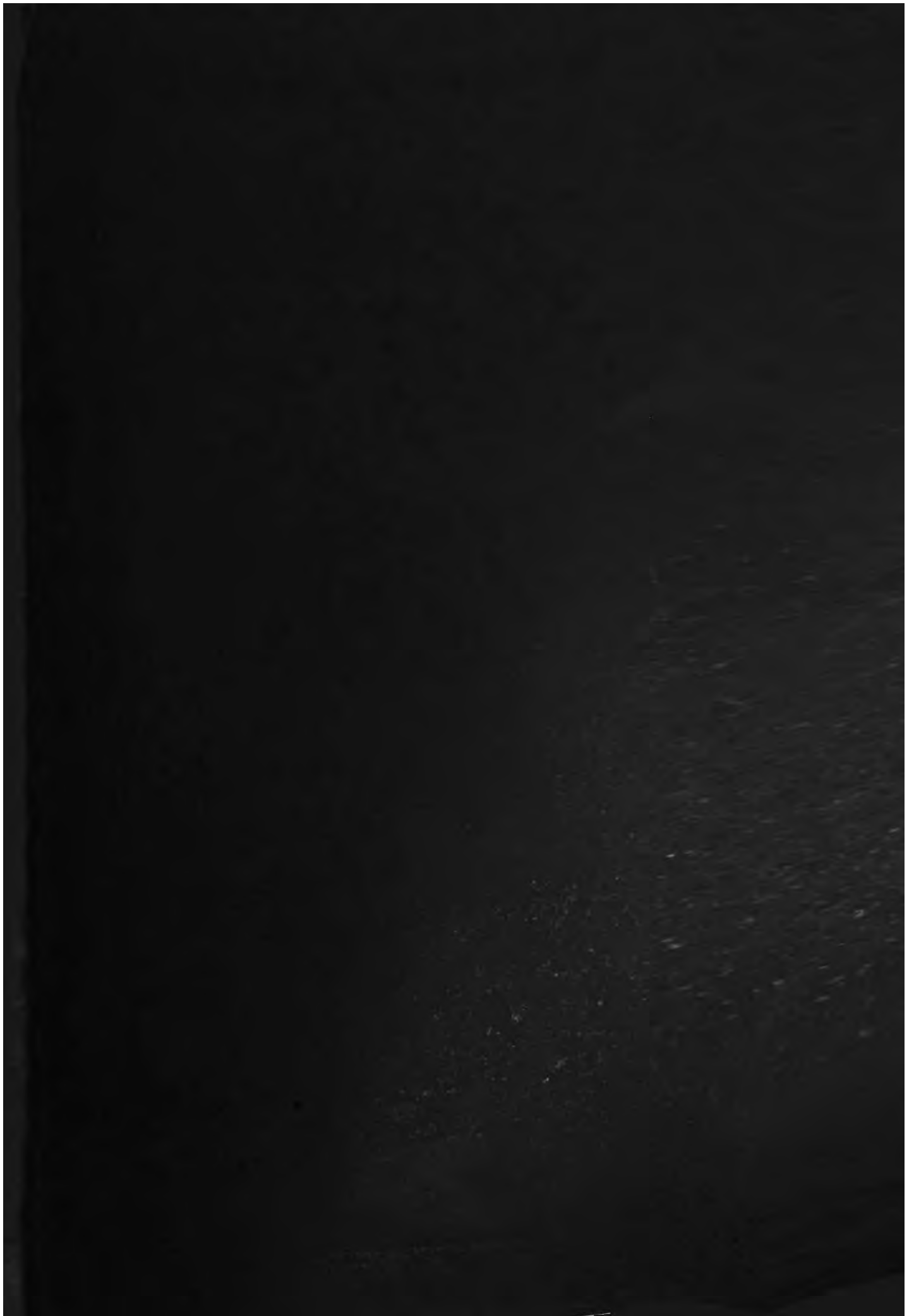
FAIRY KNOW A BIT
OR
A NUTSHELL OF KNOWLEDGE

BY
A L O E



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SIDNEY'S INTRODUCTION TO THE FAIRY

1

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records. It emphasizes that every detail matters, from the date of entry to the specific observations made. This section also touches upon the need for consistency in reporting and the role of these records in future analysis and decision-making.

In the second section, the focus shifts to the methodology used for data collection. It describes the various techniques employed, including direct observation, interviews, and the use of specialized equipment. The document highlights the challenges faced during the process and the steps taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the data gathered.

The third section provides a detailed overview of the results obtained from the study. It presents a series of findings that are supported by the collected data. These results are analyzed in the context of existing knowledge and theoretical frameworks, leading to several key conclusions. The document also identifies areas where further research is needed to address the remaining questions.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the main points and a reflection on the overall significance of the work. It reiterates the value of the research and the contributions it has made to the field. The author expresses gratitude to the individuals and organizations that supported the project throughout its duration.

2



AIRY

KNOW-A-BIT

OR
A NUTSHELL OF KNOWLEDGE

T. NELSON & SONS, LONDON, EDINBURGH AND NEW YORK.





FAIRY KNOW-A-BIT;

OR,

A NUTSHELL OF KNOWLEDGE.

By

A. L. O. E.,

Author of "The Shepherd of Bethlehem," "The Young Pilgrim," "The Giant Killer," "The Roby Family," &c., &c.



LONDON:

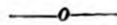
T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;
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1875.





PREFACE



WHEN I see what a little handful of the grains of knowledge I have gathered, I am almost ashamed to own from how many fields I have gleaned it. It is perhaps right, however, to mention authorities when giving facts ; and I will therefore name as mine, amongst others, the "English Encyclopædia," Miss Twining's "Lectures on Plants," "The Child's Guide to Knowledge," and the Rev. H. Waddell's "Twenty-nine Years in the West Indies and South Africa." My little bunch of corn-ears, tied together by a string of fancy, is only intended to feed the young birds of our nurseries ; and I shall rejoice if it lure them, when their wings are more fledged and their pinions stronger, to search for themselves those rich fields where knowledge in abundance is to be found by those who industriously seek it.

A. L. O. E.



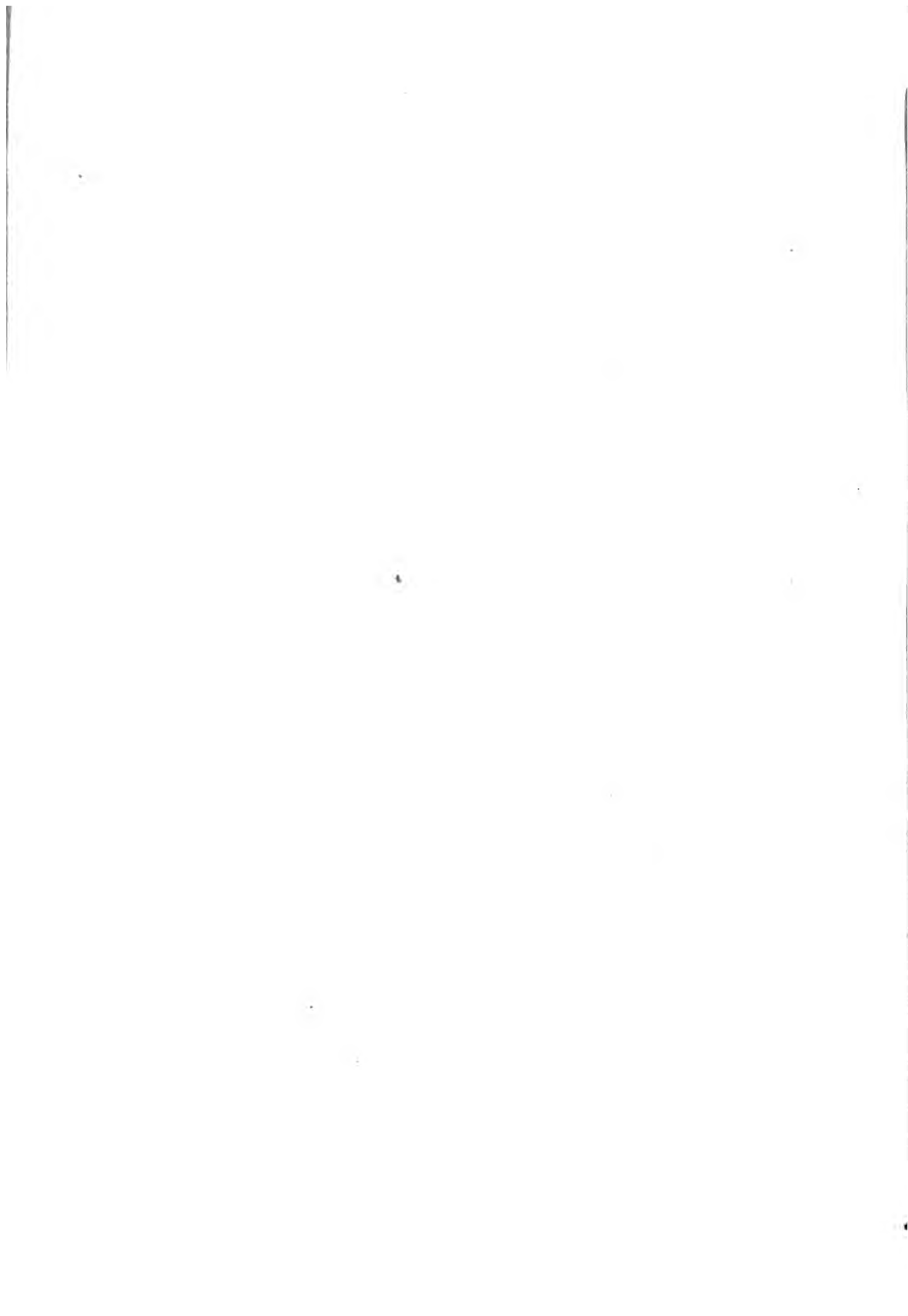


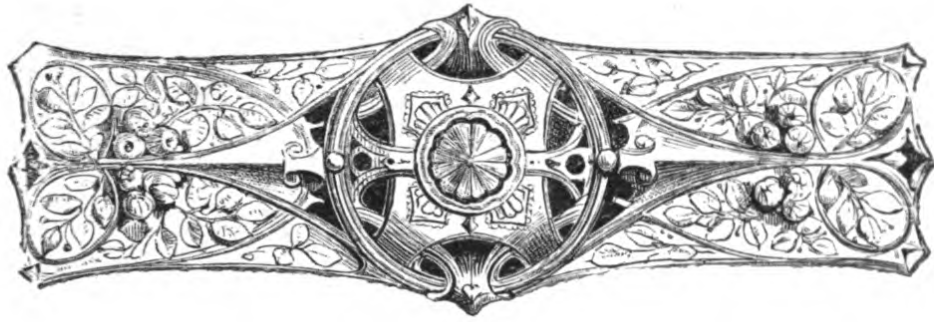
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FAIRY KNOW-A-BIT.

CHAPTER I.

YOUNG MASTER AT DINNER.

 M not going to dine in this little bit of a room ! why is the table laid here ? ” cried Master Philibert Philimore, as he strutted into the study, and looked in scorn on what would have been a pleasant sight to many a hungry child.

On the table was seen a nicely roasted pheasant on its pretty china dish, backed by a silver cruet-stand holding bottles of pepper, salt, vinegar, and oil ; a dish of potatoes was on one side, and a plateful of bread on the other, all resting on a white damask table-cloth with a pattern of lilies and roses. Here was a dinner fit for a king ; and yet the little boy in the blue velvet dress for whom it was intended looked as impatient and cross as

if he had found nothing to eat but some crumbs of dry bread. "Why is the table laid here?" he repeated to Mary, his nurse.

"Because, as you know, Master Philibert, the workmen are in the dining-room, putting up the new bell."



THE DINNER-TABLE.

"Why could they not wait?" cried the child, as he sulkily seated himself at the table. "It is too bad that I am to be so put out for a set of dirty workmen!"

Mary did not like the scornful tone of the little boy. "You should not speak so of honest men, Master Philibert," she said; "if we had their work to do, we could not keep our hands clean while we were about it. We

should never forget that none of us could do without the help of workmen."

"I could do well enough!" cried Philibert, with a saucy look on his fat little face, as he rested his two round fists on the table. "I could be like Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, and manage well enough without any one to help me. I'll just show you that I can!" he added, seeing a smile on the lips of his nurse; "I'll do without you to-day; I'll carve the pheasant my own self! So go away, Mary, go away! I don't want you, or any one else!"

"Mind that you don't cut off your own fingers, Master Philibert, or you won't do without the help of the doctor!" laughed Mary, as she left the room, and her spoilt little charge.

Master Philibert Philimore took the big knife in his right hand, and the big fork in his left; but as he was raising them to cut the pheasant, he stopped—started—and dropped them both in his sudden amazement. His eyes opened wider and wider as he fixed them upon a book lying on the ledge of a bookcase which filled up one whole side of the little study. A big book it was, and a learned one, with red edges and gilt-lettered back; but it was neither on the red edges nor the gilt letters that little Philibert Philimore was staring in breathless amazement. Seated on the volume, quite at his ease, appeared a tiny figure, not six inches high, dressed like

a student, in cap and gown, with wee dots of spectacles on his nose, and a grand beard, nearly an inch in length, which reached his little girdle! The figure had as a pen behind his ear a quill from a humming-bird's wing, and at his girdle hung an ink-bottle about the size of an elder-berry. His eyes, not quite so large as those of a robin, but a great deal brighter and merrier, twinkled through the tiny spectacles, which looked like diamond dew-drops set in a single thread of gold! An elegant little creature was this to behold, as he sat there with a tiny white wand in his hand, hung with wee silver bells, which tinkled when he moved it. Philibert was astonished and delighted, but yet a little frightened, for he had never before in his life seen anything so pretty or so strange!

"I see that you do not know me," said the little stranger, politely rising and lifting his cap, which was about the size of a coat-button, with a neat square top, from one of the corners of which hung a golden tassel as big as the bud of a daisy. Philibert was surprised at a voice so clear and distinct coming from a creature so small. It was something as if a canary-bird had taken to talking; but the opening between the lips, which looked like scarlet threads, was not larger than that in the eye of a darning-needle.

"My name is Know-a-bit," continued the stranger; "I was once a fairy, living under the greenwood tree,

dancing my rounds on the soft green turf, to the light of the glow-worm's lamp and the sound of the nightingale's song. Then I drank honey-dew from the blossoms, and decked myself out in the petals of flowers, or spoils from the butterfly's wing. But times have changed—and so have I. A railway now runs right through the valley which was our favourite haunt—there are engine-lights instead of the glow-worm's, and the scream of the whistle drowns the song of the bird! Education is now all the fashion, and fairies, like bigger people, are sent to learn lessons at school. As for me, I was the first of my race to give up a rural life. For more than four hundred years, ever since printing was invented,* I have taken to books; and I now make my home within the leaves of this volume," he added, tapping the one upon which he had been seated with his tiny white wand.

"Four hundred years!" thought Philibert in amazement; "he is wonderfully little for his age! Surely Fairy Know-a-bit should be 'Grow-a-bit' by this time!"

"I might not have troubled you with my company," continued the pretty little fairy, "but for some words which I happened to hear you utter just now. You said, if I mistake not, that you could do well enough without the help of your fellow-men. Now, if you had

* The Bible was printed from large metal types in 1450, in the city of Mentz, in Germany.

lived but half as long as I have done," Know-a-bit stroked his long downy beard, "you would have been aware how many of the comforts—the very necessaries of life—the rich owe to the labours of the *pocr*. As what we see with our eyes is apt to make more impression on the mind than what we hear with our ears, I will show you by a touch of my fairy wand what some of the objects around you were before man employed his labour, art, and skill, in fitting them for a little boy's use."

With a smart bound, like that of a grasshopper, Know-a-bit sprang clear over the space which divided the ledge of the bookcase from the table spread for dinner, and alighted on the white cloth. Philibert jumped down from his chair in a little alarm, for he thought that the active fairy's next spring might be into his mouth! Know-a-bit touched the warm pheasant with his wand, and in an instant the dish was empty! The fairy turned and pointed with his wand towards the window; Philibert, looking through it, saw a large handsome bird with a long tail running across the lawn.

"I say—I say—I don't like that sort of fun!" exclaimed the boy, who was hungry enough to object to seeing his dinner thus running away before his eyes. "I want my pheasant back!"

"Nay," laughed the fairy, and his laugh was like the tinkling sound of bells; "you would need the aid of the gamekeeper to shoot it, and of the cook to dress it, and

you are the Robinson Crusoe who can do without help from others."

"I could shoot it myself!" cried Philibert, boldly ;
"I could pull the trigger of a gun !"

Know-a-bit laughed yet louder, till his tiny sides shook with his mirth. "Can you make the axe to cut down the tree, the wood of which is used for the gun-stock? Can you dig in the mine to find the iron, or work it into the steel of which the gun-barrel is formed? Can you get the lead for the bullets, or can you tell how to mould them aright?"

Poor Philibert looked grave and confused. He was beginning to have an idea that even Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, with his gun on his shoulder, had owed much to the patient labours of some of his fellow-men.

"Then for the gunpowder," continued the fairy ;
"can you fly off to India, Africa, or Spain, to find the saltpetre, or nitre, which lies on the ground in some places ; or to snowy Siberia, or burning Vesuvius, to search for the yellow sulphur of which, united with charcoal, the powder is carefully made?"

Philibert was now feeling himself very helpless, and learning to have a greater respect for workmen than he ever had had before. Ere he had time, however, to make any remark, Know-a-bit struck the plateful of bread with his wand, and the contents of the plate all

disappeared—not a crumb was left behind. Philibert looked with a wistful eye on the empty plate, and felt more hungry than ever.

“I can’t make bread like a baker,” said the child, “but I know very well what I’ll do. The fields are covered with ripe corn; I can gather it, and rub away the husks, and eat it without any one’s help!” Philibert did not look very cheerful, however, at the thought of a dinner on uncooked grain.

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed Know-a-bit; “do you think that wheat will grow like blackberries, and that skill and toil have not been required to raise a single sheaf? The ground must be harrowed with the harrow; the land must be ploughed with the plough; the sower must pass along the furrows, scattering the golden seed. And then, when the crop has grown up and ripened, the reaper must cut the corn, and bind it up into sheaves; the thresher must thresh the chaff away; the miller must grind the grain into flour, all before the baker can so much as begin to make that flour into bread!”

Poor little Philibert Philimore heaved a very deep sigh. The spoilt child was learning a lesson, very needful, but not very pleasant. All the comforts and pleasures of his life he had owed to the toils of others, and he had never himself earned a single penny with which to pay for those toils. Every kind of luxury had come so easily to the rich man’s child, that he had quite


forgotten his own weakness and ignorance, and dependence on those who were stronger and wiser than himself. Philibert sat down again on his chair, dolefully looking at the empty plate from which the pheasant had vanished, while Know-a-bit, in the centre of the table, gracefully leant on the silver cruet-stand, which was of about his own height.





CHAPTER II.

THE CRUET-STAND.

“ I AM afraid, my young friend,” said the fairy, “that I have spoilt your dinner for the present. It is but fair that I should do something to make up to you for this, by giving you a feast for the eyes, a delicious banquet for the mind.”

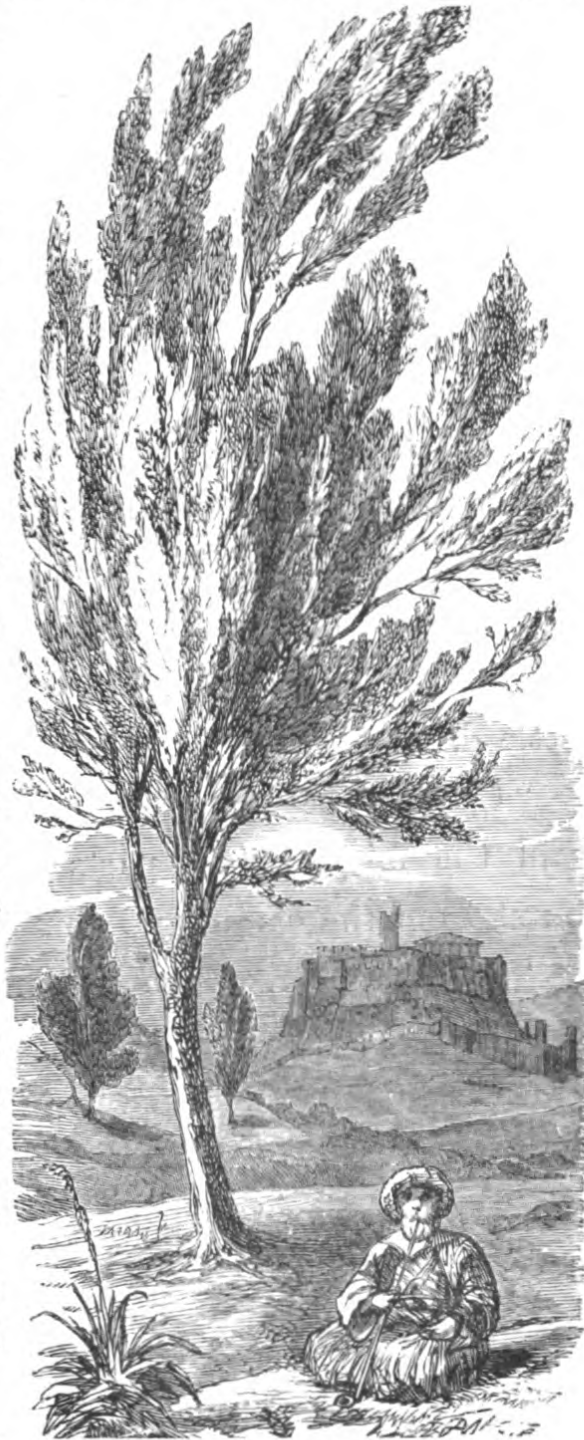
“I would rather have a beef-steak,” thought Philibert, but he did not like to say so aloud.

Fairy Know-a-bit turned, and waved his white wand. A mist seemed to cover the whole bookcase, such as creeps over the low valleys in autumn. When the mist gradually cleared off, nothing more of the bookcase was seen, but a huge mirror appeared in its stead, which, however, reflected nothing that was in the room, but spread its wide surface of shining glass without a single object in it.

“Now,” said the fairy, bowing politely, “I will have the pleasure to show you all the contents of this cruet-stand as they were before the skill of man had manufactured them for your use.”

Know-a-bit gently touched with his wand the bottle of oil: the bottle was instantly empty. To the no small surprise of Philibert, a tree, not very large in size, appeared to be reflected in the mirror, though nothing like it was in the room. Its narrow leaves, about two inches and a half long, were of a bright green on the upper side, a duller whitish green on the lower. Small white flowers were on the olive — such was the name of the tree. These flowers, while Philibert looked on in wonder, changed into fruit of a yellowish-green, which darkened as they ripened before his eyes, being about the size and shape of damsons.

“It is from these olives,” observed the fairy, “that oil is obtained by pressing.”



THE OLIVE.

“There I think that you’re wrong, in spite of all your learning,” cried Philibert. “Papa told me that oil came from the blubber—the fat of a whale. I’d much rather have seen in that looking-glass of yours a jolly big fish, tumbling about in the waves, and spouting up water like a fountain.”

“But you would be sorry to partake of the oil that comes from the whale,” replied the fairy, with a little displeasure in his tone. “Whale-oil is called train-oil, and is used for lamps and common purposes, but neither its taste nor its smell render it fit for the table.”

“But I was right in saying that one could get oil from the fat of a fish, and not only from squeezing those little dark olives.”

“Oil can be procured in a great variety of ways,” said the fairy. “In parts of America springs of oil burst from the earth, and this oil is called petroleum.”

“What—oil that can be burnt, and give out a flame?” cried the boy.

“Certainly,” answered the fairy.

“I should like to put a match to such a spring,” cried Philibert; “what a glorious bonfire it would make!”

While Philibert was laughing at the thought, Know-a-bit turned to the bottle of pepper, and touched it, as he had touched the oil-bottle. The olive-tree vanished from the mirror, and instead of it appeared a creeping

kind of shrub, covered with berries growing in clusters, something after the fashion of currants. They were green when Philibert first saw them, but ripened into bright red.

“Hallos! where does that come from?” cried Philibert.

“From India, and the islands near it; there the pepper-plant grows.”

“You don’t mean to say,” cried the boy, “that a dull-looking powder like pepper comes from those pretty red berries?”

“The berry becomes black when dried. If ground with the outer skin on, it is called black pepper; if the skin be peeled off first, then we name it white pepper. Its property is”—

“Oh, don’t I know?” exclaimed Philibert Phili-

more. “How it set me sneezing when I pulled off the top of the muffineer, and spilt half the pepper on my plate! Pepper is nice enough in its way, but enough is as good as a feast. And mustard is as fiery as pepper. Where does that come from, I wonder?”

The mustard-bottle was instantly touched, and instead



THE PEPPER-PLANT.

of the creeping pepper-plant, the mirror showed one about two feet high, with hairy stalk and deeply jagged



THE MUSTARD-PLANT.

leaves. Yellow blossoms on it changed into hairy pods, containing the seeds that are ground into mustard-powder.

“This,” said Know-a-bit, “you should look upon as an old friend, for it is a native of England, and grows in plenty in the county of Durham. But there are other kinds of mustard.

In the Holy Land there is a species of mustard which rises into a tree with woody stem, and bark, and branches.”

“Since you have emptied three of the bottles,” said Philibert Philimore, “you had better finish the set. I can’t think what that sour vinegar is made of.”

“Vinegar can be made from a variety of things,” said the fairy. “It is usually made from malt, which is barley steeped in water until it begins to sprout; but beer, sugar and water, nay, the little ants that run about in the woods have been made to yield vinegar.”

“Ants!” exclaimed Philibert in surprise, and looking

with some disgust at the contents of the fourth bottle in the cruet-stand ; "I hope the vinegar there is not made of boiled ants !"

Again rose Know-a-bit's tinkling laugh. "That," he said, as he touched the bottle, "is made of white wine, and wine is made of the juice of grapes." As he spoke, a lovely vine with its beautiful clusters of fruit appeared in the mirror, and they looked so tempting and nice, that poor hungry Philibert Philimore longed to taste as well as to see them.

"I have often eaten grapes," said the boy, "but the juice does not seem at all like the wine which I sometimes sip from papa's glass."

"The juice is not wine until it has fermented."

"Fermented, what is that?" cried Philibert.

"Fermentation is a strange process which takes place in many liquids and substances," replied the fairy ; "a kind of working of themselves up into a fussy and a fidget. I should say," laughed Know-a-bit, "that *you* were fermenting when you came into this room."

"But grape-juice and that kind of thing can't get into a passion like a boy!" exclaimed Philibert Philimore.

"Not exactly," answered the fairy, "but they've a kind of bubbling and working while they are fermenting that looks very much like it. It is not until after they have fermented that they have any spirit in them."

"Spirit!" repeated Philibert. "Is not that the

horrible thing that makes people tipsy, and, papa says, causes more misery in the world than all the sickness and all the fighting."

"Yes," replied Know-a-bit, sadly shaking his tiny head; "no one can reckon up the evils that have come from too much drinking. There are a great variety of kinds of spirit, made from different things—*rum*, from the coarse part of sugar; *brandy*, from wine or from malt; *whisky*, distilled from grain; *gin*, from juniper berries and malt."

"Distilled, what is that?" cried the boy, putting up his hand to his head, which, with so much new knowledge in it, felt like a carpet-bag crammed till it is ready to burst.

"If you heat a liquid till its steam or vapour rises, when that steam is cooled enough to fall again in drops, it is called *distilled*. If you hold a saucer over the steam of boiling water, does not the saucer in time grow wet?"

"I know that it does," said the boy.

"It is wet with distilled water, that is, water that has been steam. If, instead of water, wine had been distilled, the produce would have been brandy."

Poor Philibert who found fermentation and distillation rather hard to be understood, though the tiny fairy seemed to know all about them, turned rather impatiently to the last thing in the cruet-stand, a muffineer

filled with salt, and, hoping that he had lighted on something simple, said, "Pray, how do men get salt?"

"Much is produced by distilling salt water."

"Distilling again!" cried Philibert.



THE SALT-MINE.

"The salt contained in sea-water will not rise into steam; the water is distilled, the salt left behind."

"Ah, I understand," said Philibert. "The fish I sometimes have for dinner, and the salt which I eat with it, both come from the sea."

“Not the salt which you eat at table, not that which your cruet-stand holds ; *that* is won not from water, but earth.”

In a moment a strange change came upon the mirror, and Philibert found himself staring into what appeared to be a deep cavern, where torches threw their glaring light upon walls of shining whiteness. The forms of little men, with pick-axe and hammer, were busily engaged in this cavern ; and so strangely natural was the scene as it appeared in the fairy mirror, that Philibert wondered that he could not hear as well as see the blows given by the tiny workmen. The boy was delighted as well as surprised at this curious glimpse of a salt-mine, and exclaimed, “Well done, Mr. Fairy ! You are as good as a conjuror ! I like to see those little chaps hacking away at the salt. Show me something else pretty like this.”

“You have seen enough for one day,” said Know-a-bit ; “your mind has had as much food as it can swallow, and the body must not be forgotten—for boys need more substantial food than fairies. I shall now leave you to eat your dinner in peace, assured that you will no longer have the folly or ignorance to look down on those to whose labours you owe it ;” and Know-a-bit took off his tiny cap, and bowed as if taking his leave.

“Stop a bit, stop a bit !” cried Philibert ; “tell me,

you wonderful fairy, am I never to see you again, or the curious things that you show?"

"If you wish us to meet again," said the fairy with a gracious smile, "your wish can be gratified by your coming alone any morning to this study soon after day-break, and thrice tapping on yon book with your hand. But mark me," he added more gravely, "you must mention my existence to no one; my retreat must not be invaded by the prying eyes of mankind. If you reveal to any mortal living that you have talked with a fairy, or beheld the wonders raised by his wand, the fairy, his wand, and his mirror are hidden for ever from you!"

"I will never, never tell any one of your visits," cried Philibert, eagerly.


"Remember, your word is plighted," said Know-a-bit; "and he who breaks his faith with me, never more must fairy see."

As he uttered the words, the fairy vanished, and with him all the strange marvels which he had wrought. The mirror was once more a bookcase, the empty bottles in the cruet-stand became filled with salt, vinegar, pepper, and mustard, and to the amazement of Philibert the pheasant was again on the dish! The boy stood awhile with his mouth and eyes wide open, staring at the spot from which Know-a-bit had vanished, and feeling like one in a dream. He was suddenly roused by the voice of Mary, his nurse.



CHAPTER III.

PHILIBERT'S SECRET.

“EARIE me, Master Philibert, have you not even begun to eat? Why, your dinner is quite cold!” cried the maid, as she put down a bottle of spring water by the side of her charge.

“I wonder if that is *distilled* water,” said Philibert thoughtfully, while he poured some into his tumbler.

“Distilled!” repeated the astonished Mary; “what can a young gentleman like you know about distilling? My father, the chemist—”

“If it is rain-water it must be distilled,” said Philibert, with an air of authority which made him look very absurd; “because papa told me that the clouds are water drawn up from the earth in steam, and then tumbling down in rain.”

“My father the chemist distils rose-water and other scents,” observed Mary, “but I never heard him say—”

“I don’t care what he says,” interrupted Philibert;

"he is not likely to know as much as—" the boy stopped short suddenly, remembering his promise to the fairy.

"Do, Master Philibert, leave off all this talking, and set to your dinner," cried Mary, rapidly cutting off a wing of the pheasant, and putting it on the child's plate. "Shall I sprinkle the salt and the pepper over it?"

"Ah, Mary," said Philibert, shaking his curly little pate, "you little know where the salt and the pepper come from!"

"From Ragg the grocer, to be sure," replied Mary.

"But where did *he* get them from?—tell me that," asked the boy, with a knowing smile.

"You'd better ask himself," laughed the nurse. "Really, Master Philibert, you're so funny, I can't think what makes you talk so."

"Ah, I know something that would puzzle even your father the chemist," said Philibert, scarcely able to keep in his secret. "If you could but guess what is in that big book! But knowledge is a wonderful thing! What a deal of knowledge one would get if one lived for four hundred years!"

"Four hundred years!" exclaimed Mary, much amused; "nobody lives half so many as that!"

"Not *men*, I daresay," observed Philibert, who was now busily engaged with his dinner.

"Nor women either, Master Philibert," said Mary.

"But *fairies*," whispered Philibert, glancing towards

the big book, half afraid to see one of its heavy boards suddenly lifted, and the reproachful face of Know-a-bit peeping out from the leaves.

“Fairies are all nonsense,” said Mary, who being, as the daughter of a chemist, better educated than many of her class, looked with contempt on the tales with which nurses often amuse their young charges.

“Please don’t say anything rude about them,” cried Philibert uneasily, stopping as he was about to put a morsel into his mouth, and glancing again at the book.

“Only silly children ever talk about these little hop-o’-my-thumbs,” continued Mary.

Philibert grew alarmed lest she should give serious offence to his new acquaintance.

“Leave the fairies alone, will you, Mary!” he cried. “They are very polite, clever, pretty—at least—I mean—if you were to see—but you can’t—and, of course, I’ll say nothing about it—but I’ll get up so early to-morrow!”

Mary stared at her little charge, as if she thought him half out of his wits. Philibert felt uncomfortable under her look, so tried to turn the conversation.

“Do you know, Mary, that in some places—I think in America—there are springs of oil that burst from the ground,—and it is called Pet—Pet—something like Peter?”

“You’ll be telling me next,” laughed Mary, “that in

some places plum-pudding grows on a bush, and is called something like Tom—Tommy!”

“Mary, I’m not joking,” cried Philibert, who was rather offended at the laugh. “If you don’t believe there is any such oil, I’ll ask papa all about it; he knows a great deal—almost as much as—” Philibert stopped and corrected himself—“no, papa has not lived for nearly four hundred years.”

Mary, on hearing this, burst into such a merry fit of laughing that she was obliged to sit down and press her hand to her side. Philibert did not join in the mirth; he was afraid of letting out his secret, and besides was by no means pleased at the thought that his nurse was laughing at him. The offended look on the face of the fat little boy made Mary laugh all the more.

“I can’t imagine what you’ve been dreaming about, Master Philibert!” cried Mary, as soon as her fit of merriment was over.

Philibert put his hands to his eyes and rubbed them. He looked at the bones of the pheasant on his plate, the silver cruet-stand before him, the bookcase, which showed no trace of having ever played the part of a mirror; the red-edged gilt-lettered book, on which even lay a light coating of dust. What if all had been but a dream! What if Know-a-bit, gold spectacles and all, had never existed but in a boy’s fancy! Philibert began to suspect that such was really the case. No evidence of the pre-

sence of the learned fairy remained, except a few scraps of knowledge which that fairy had left behind him in the memory of the child. Philibert, puzzled and doubting, sat dreamily staring at the bookcase, while Mary replaced the pheasant by a pudding which she brought in. At this moment Philibert heard the step of his father in the passage, and then the handle of the door was turned, and a stout rosy-cheeked gentleman entered, whose jovial face bore a strong resemblance to that of his son.

“Hey, my boy! turned my study into your dining-room?” cried the Squire, in a tone of easy good-humour, on finding his library invaded.

Philibert jumped up from his seat, eager to test the reality of fairy Know-a-bit's visit. “Papa,” he cried, “is there any place in the world where springs of oil burst out from the ground?”

“You must mean petroleum; yes, there are immense quantities found in America.”

“That's right!” exclaimed the delighted boy, thumping the table with his fist, and darting a glance of triumph at Mary. “And, papa, isn't rain-water distilled from the clouds?”

“I should say that it was,” answered the Squire, mightily amused at the question; “the sun draws moisture up in invisible steam, and it falls in the form of rain.”

"*Invisible!* what's that?" asked the boy.

"What is, but what cannot be seen."

"Then *he's* invisible now!" exclaimed Philibert, looking again at the red-edged book.



PHILIBERT AND THE SQUIRE.

"He? what are you talking about?" asked the Squire, his eyes following the direction of those of his son.

Philibert would have had some difficulty in answering the question, had not the butler, Sands, come in and

announced that a visitor was in the drawing-room. The Squire left his little son to finish his pudding and his reflections, and to make many a plan for gaining a vast amount of amusing knowledge from his new friend, the learned fairy.





CHAPTER IV.

MORE HASTE, WORSE SPEED.

PHILIBERT was so impatient for the coming of the morrow, that he hardly could get to sleep on that night. The little boy tossed from side to side, and appeared so restless in his bed that Mary, a kind-hearted woman, came to ask if anything were the matter.

The child lifted his flushed cheek from the pillow.

“Can I do anything for you, dear?”

“Yes,” replied Philibert, eagerly; “you can give me a little tea.”

“I am going to make some—”

“I don’t want it to be made,” cried the boy; “I want a little dry tea in a paper, and another paper with a spoonful of coffee, and another with cocoa, the powder you mix up for your breakfast. Just give me all that, and a lump of sugar—just one—and I’ll go to sleep directly.”

“You cannot possibly want to have such things in your bed?” said Mary.

“I do want them,” cried the impatient boy; “I want to keep them all under my pillow.”

“You must be dreaming,” said the nurse. “I can answer for it, that whatever becomes of the tea and the cocoa, the sugar will soon find its way into a young gentleman’s mouth.”

Philibert could not help laughing a little; he saw that the sugar was in some danger of never meeting the eye of the fairy. “The best plan, then, will be to give me *two* lumps,” said the child; “one for my pillow and one for my mouth, and I’ll go to sleep quite happy.”

Though Mary could not imagine what her little charge could make of dry coffee, cocoa, or tea, she gave way to his whim; and four tiny twists of whity-brown paper, looking something like curl-papers, were soon laid under the pillow. Philibert dropped asleep almost before he had finished his lump of sugar.

Eagerness, however, made him awake at break of day.

The nursery was very quiet; Mary was still asleep. Philibert jumped out of his cot with a noise that awoke her.

“What are you after, Master Philibert?” asked the nurse in a drowsy tone.

“I’m after knowledge,” answered the boy, who was hurriedly pulling on his clothes.

“Wait a bit and I’ll help you,” said Mary.

"I don't want your help!" cried Philibert, proud to show the nurse that he could manage without her.

"He has some funny fancy in his head," thought Mary; "I'll leave him alone, and let him find out how little he can do."

Some way or other Philibert did manage to dress himself, after a desperate hunt after a missing shoe, which had hidden itself under the bed. It must be owned that his socks were wrong side outwards; that half his buttons were left undone, and those that were fastened were in the wrong holes; that not a morsel of collar could be seen above his blue velvet; and that his yellow hair hung in a rough untidy mass over his eyes. Unwashed and uncombed, Philibert was not fit to be seen by a man, much less by a fairy. It is not well, even in the pursuit of useful knowledge, to forget everything besides it.

Dressed, as he now considered himself to be, Philibert dashed past Mary, who had risen and was lighting the fire, and hurried down to his father's study. The housemaid had not yet opened the shutters of the large window that lighted the staircase; and when Philibert reached the study he found the place almost in darkness.

"Idle, tiresome Sarah!" cried the impatient boy, groping his way to the window, and then getting on a chair to tug at the iron bar which fastened the shutters.

Philibert was not accustomed to this kind of work, and his strength did not equal his impatience; he

managed at last to pull out the bar, but in doing so lost his balance, and came tumbling down on the ground.

Poor Philibert received a bang on the back of his head that set him howling with pain. He jumped up, however, and pulled open the shutters in angry fashion, as if they were somehow or other in fault, and so let in light on the study, and on the figure of little Know-a-bit, who, startled no doubt by the crash of the fall, was standing on tiptoe on his book, with his tiny hands raised in surprise at a noise so unusual in that quiet place. The sight of the fairy stopped Philibert's crying in a moment, especially as Know-a-bit's tiny face wore a grave, displeased expression.

"Why come you here thus?" asked the fairy.

"I come because you told me to come," said Philibert, rubbing the back of his head; "what else did you expect?"

"I expected a young *gentleman* to accept my invitation," replied Know-a-bit, his bird-like voice sounding shrill from displeasure. He looked at Philibert from head to foot through his dots of spectacles, till the boy became uncomfortably conscious that he was not fit to be seen. Every one acquainted with fairies knows that they are the neatest of creatures, and always look as pure and bright as a flower washed in dew; and as for rude noise, and banging of doors or shutters, no one ever so much as heard the footfall of a fairy.

“Return to your room,” continued Know-a-bit, “nor come into my presence until you can show yourself as a gentleman ought to appear. Care of the mind must not produce neglect of the person; while we try to furnish the head, we must not forget to comb the hair.”

A good deal vexed and mortified, Philibert returned upstairs to the nursery. He found that, after all, he must beg for the help of Mary.



PHILIBERT'S TOILET.

“Well, Master Philibert, I’m glad that you’ve come back,” cried the nurse. “I should have been sorry if your papa had seen you such a figure. Only look at your socks; and as for your hair, ’tis just like a yellow mop! Come here, and let me wash and put you to rights; a little boy, such as you are, is not fit to take care of himself.”

Philibert had to submit with as good a grace as he could to the handling of Mary, though very impatient indeed to return down-stairs to his fairy.

“Mary,” said the boy, as his nurse was dividing and brushing his hair, “I want to rise quite early every morning, ’tis the only way for me to get the learning I wish for.”

“I wish that you’d learn to be obedient, and quiet, and good-tempered, Master Philibert,” said Mary; “that is the best kind of learning. Just stand still for a minute, will you; how am I to make a division, if you keep twisting about like an eel?”

“You are always complaining of my getting up too late,” observed Philibert, who was usually lazy about rising in the morning.

“There’s a mighty difference between lying in bed till past eight, and getting up before six, and going idling about the house, in every one’s way,” said Mary.

“Indeed—indeed—I’m not going to idle, I’m going to learn,” cried the boy.

“Time indeed that you should learn something better than knocking about toys, and riding on the back of chairs, and pulling your clothes to pieces,” said the nurse, who was not fond of the work of mending. “Why, you were seven years old last month, and you scarcely know more than your letters. I daresay that Master Pierce could read before he was five. I shall be ashamed,

when he comes to-morrow, for him to see how little you know."

"I mean Sidney Pierce to be surprised to find how much I know," muttered Philibert.

"You'll have to be quick about your learning," laughed Mary; "but I'll teach you all that I can."

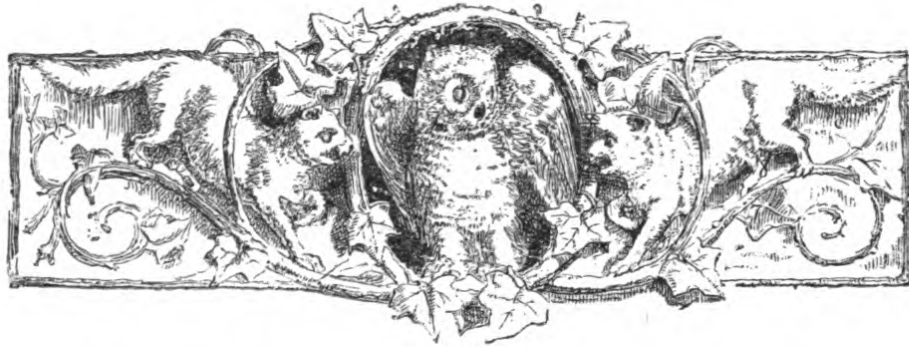
"And you will help me to get up early, and let me go quietly down to the study?"

"I can't think what has given you this new fancy for learning," said Mary; "but I'm willing enough to help you, if you'll be a good boy, and not fly into tempers, or imagine yourself too clever to be taught. I can't let you have such freaks again, however, as that of sleeping with tea and coffee under your pillow."

"Ah! I had forgotten them—how stupid!" exclaimed Philibert; and darting from the hands of Mary, who had just finished making him neat, the child ran up to his cot, and drew out the little treasures which he wished to show to the fairy.

With these in his fat little hands, Philibert Philimore again descended the broad staircase, and hastened to the quiet study to keep his appointment with his friend.





CHAPTER V.

BREAKFAST FARE.



WHEN Philibert entered the study with his four little packets in paper, he found the clear, bright mirror already shining in the place of the bookcase, and Know-a-bit seated on his red-edged volume, gazing with thoughtful attention on a small pink, which he held in both his hands, the flower being as large compared to his size as a big cabbage would have been to that of Philibert.

“What are you doing with the flower?” asked the child.

“I am studying it,” answered the fairy.

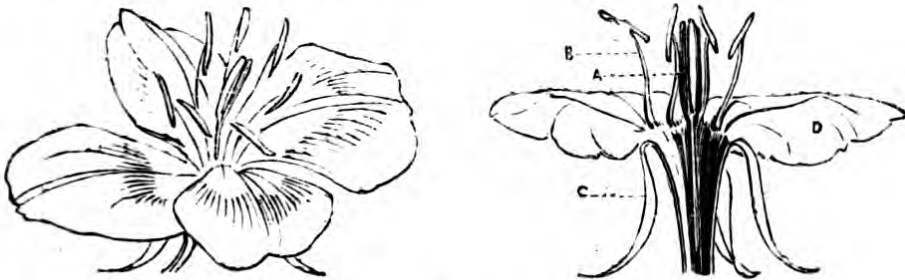
“What!” cried Philibert, in surprise, “you, who have lived four hundred years, and must have seen no end of flowers in that time, do you care to study one now?”

“The longer I study flowers,” answered the fairy, “the more beauties and wonders I find even in the smallest. Come here, little boy, and look. I doubt whether you so much as know a stamen from a pistil.”

“A pistol!” exclaimed Philibert; “I have heard people talk of flowers shooting, but I never knew that they shot with pistols.” He laughed at his own little joke, but Know-a-bit did not deign to notice it. The fairy turned the flower downwards, so as to show the green kind of sheath which seemed to keep it together.

“This is the green cup or *calyx*,” said Know-a-bit. “When I dwelt with my gay companions in the woods, we used to have such as goblets at our feasts, and quaff the sweet honey-dew out of our green fairy-cups.”

“And what did you make of the pretty coloured leaves?” asked Philibert.



FLOWER DISSECTED.

a, Pistils. b, Stamens. c, Calyx. d, Petals.

“What you call coloured leaves are *petals*,” said Know-a-bit, pulling off one by one the delicate pink, velvety pieces which formed the flower. “Our neat-fingered fays would make of such dainty velvet slippers, sewn with cob-web; and in such slippers we tripped it over the lawn, dancing rounds in the moonlight. Some fairies wore robes made entirely of the soft fragrant petals of the rose.”

“What is that little narrow green bag in the very middle of the flower?” asked Philibert.

“The very treasure-chest of the blossom,” replied the fairy; “the *seed-vessel* or *pistil* that holds the seed from which future flowers are to grow. It is kept in the centre as the place of safety.”

“And these thin threads round it, what are they?” asked the boy.

“These threads are called *stamens*,” said the fairy; “they have tiny powder-cases at the top, termed *anthers*, which hold the *pollen*.”

“*Pollen!*” repeated Philibert; “I once heard that bees gather pollen to make wax for their cells.”

“And the merry fairies gather it to sprinkle over each other in sport,” said Know-a-bit; “it is called *gold-dust* in the land of the fays.” And in a soft musical tone Know-a-bit murmured a snatch of rhyme which he had learned hundreds of years before, under the greenwood tree:—

“The rosy *petals*—silken stuff,
All ready for our wear is;
The *anther* is our powder puff,
The *calyx*—cup for fairies;
With *stamen* needles knit we too
Gossamer webs to hold the dew!”

“Not all flowers are alike,” observed Philibert; “some have blue petals, some red, some yellow—”

“Some few, some many,” said the fairy; “and there is

as great variety in the number of the stamens—the iris has but three, the myrtle-blossom more than two hundred!”

Know-a-bit would probably have gone on with his account of the flowers, but the eyes of Philibert Philimore were impatiently glancing at the mirror, and at the first pause made by the fairy the boy eagerly put down his four little packets on the edge of the book-case, by which he was standing.

“Can you guess what are in these?” he inquired.

“I were no fairy,” replied Know-a-bit smiling, “if I could not tell the nature of the contents of these packets afar off by the scent.

To satisfy you of this” —he took up his little white wand, which he had laid down beside him while examining the flower—“go back a few steps, and I will show you the tea-plant as it grows in China, or in your Queen’s dominions in Assam.”

Know-a-bit touched with his wand the piece of paper containing the tea; and Philibert,



THE TEA-PLANT.

stepping back to have a better view of the mirror, beheld in it a plant bearing firm, glossy green leaves, something like those of the camelia, with a blossom of five white petals ranged round numerous pollen-tipped stamens crowded together like so many tiny guards keep-



THE COFFEE-TREE.

ing watch over the central seed-vessel, the treasure-chest, as Know-a-bit had called the pistil.

“Why, what part of that plant makes tea?” said Philibert to the fairy.

“The leaves, gathered, dried, rolled, and packed, form such tea as is wrapped in your little paper.”

Know-a-bit then touched the packet of coffee, and in the mirror a small tree suddenly

took the place of the tea-plant. With slender stem, pointed glossy leaves, and clusters of pretty white blossoms, the coffee-tree was pleasant to behold. As Philibert gazed, the flowers fell off, and green berries were left behind; these changed to yellow, then red, then purple.

“And now,” said Know-a-bit, “the berries are ripe; could you open one you would find two seeds, and from these seeds, when roasted and ground, you have the pleasant drink called coffee.”

“And what does cocoa come from?” asked Philibert.

One touch to the third little packet, and the coffee-tree had vanished from the mirror. In its place was another small tree, with smooth gray bark, and large pointed leaves, and small clusters of blossoms, pale, pink, and buff. These fell off as the coffee-flowers had done, but the fruit which followed was a great deal larger than the coffee-berries had been. Each, of an oval shape, was six or seven inches long; first green, then purple or reddish brown. Philibert watched the changes with amusement; it was so curious to see these, which in nature might take months to be accomplished, rapidly take place in a minute!

“But these are not cocoa-nuts,” cried Philibert.

“I’ve seen cocoa-nuts at papa’s table, and I’ve drunk the sweet milk that came from them, and eaten the nice white lining; and I’ve such a pretty carved cup made from a cocoa-nut shell!”

“The cocoa-nut palm,” said Know-a-bit, “that grows in Ceylon, America, and India, is a perfectly different plant from the cacao-tree before you, which yields cocoa and chocolate to man. Yonder tree bears fruits, not



THE CACAO-TREE.

nuts. Each of those fruits which you see holds from twenty to thirty seeds, arranged in five divisions. In Mexico, where the cacao-tree flourishes, the seeds are used as money."

"Ah, how funny it would be to have eatable money!" laughed Philibert Philimore, who fancied, not unnaturally, that these seeds must be chocolate-drops.

"I think that if we had such in England, I'd soon have an empty purse."

"The cacao-seeds, unprepared, would scarcely be very tempting, even to a hungry boy," said the fairy. "They need to be roasted, ground to powder, and mixed with a little sugar and spice, before you would care to see them on a breakfast-table in England."

"Ah, most things are the better for sugar," cried Philibert, who, like many other children, was exceedingly fond of sweets. "I want to know where that comes from; if it lies in the flowers, like honey, or is dug from caves, like the salt. I used to think," he continued,

“that fairy-land must be a place where the snow is white sugar, and the sand brown sugar ; where the puddles are all made of treacle, and the pebbles of bulls’ eyes and comfits, and the hills are pretty pink rock, with rivers of honey running down them.”



SUGAR PLANTATION.

Know-a-bit laughed and shook his head at the little boy’s notion of fairy-land, suited only for gluttons. He touched the paper of sugar, however, in reply, and the mirror became instantly crowded with images of canes

as they grow in a West Indian plantation. These canes appeared to be from twelve to fifteen feet high, comparing their height with that of black negroes, a party of whom, greatly to Philibert's amusement, seemed to be busily employed in cutting them down. Jointed were the stems of the canes, with long flat leaves springing from the joints, and from the tops drooped a graceful tuft of arrowy blossoms.

"How fat those black fellows look!" cried Philibert, as he watched the negroes at work in the mirror.

"They grow fat upon sugar," said the fairy; "for I've read that during the cutting time they live entirely on the raw cane."

"Oh! I know that sugar makes people fat," cried Philibert, "for Mary says that her father, the chemist, dare not take so much as one little lump in his tea for fear of getting too heavy to walk. I take plenty of sugar," continued the child, "and she tells me that I shall soon grow as fat as a little porpoise! But how do the people manage to get sugar out of those canes?"

"They are carried to a mill," said Know-a-bit, "where the sweet juice is crushed out, and then heated, to carry off the watery part. What remains dries into brown sugar."

"And white sugar?" inquired the boy.

"It is sugar prepared and refined."

"And what is treacle, nice thick brown treacle,

that I have on my bread at breakfast?" asked Philibert.

"Treacle is the brown juice which drains off in the process of refining," answered the fairy. "Sugar is cultivated, not only in the West Indies, but in India, and in many other parts of the world. Nor is it only procured from canes; beet-root, amongst other plants, yields a great deal of sugary juice."

"But now tell me"—began Philibert Philimore; when suddenly sugar-canes, negroes and all, vanished from before his eyes, and the lettered backs of books were seen in rows where the bright mirror had been. Know-a-bit had disappeared in a moment, and Philibert stood wondering at the cause of so sudden a flight, when, turning round, he saw Sarah, the housemaid, coming in, with dust-pan and broom in her hand.

"Oh, dear! what have you come for?" cried the boy, vexed at what he felt an intrusion.

"Come for? Why, to clean the room, to be sure," said the woman, inclined to repeat his question, and ask him what *he* had come for, at an hour so unusually early.

Rooms must be cleaned, books must be dusted; so Philibert had to retreat before the broom and the dust-pan. He carried with him, however, a nice little stock of pleasant knowledge; and he enjoyed his breakfast all the more from having learned of what it was made.

“Just let me look at one of the tea-leaves, Mary,” said Philibert. “No, not that little dry curled up thing, but one of the tea-leaves out of the pot.”

The nurse, who was very obliging, fished one out with a spoon; and Philibert could hardly eat his bread and treacle, so eager was he in spreading out the leaf, and fancying how it must have looked when green and growing on a bush.

“I wonder if one could make tea of any other sort of leaves,” said the boy.

“I’ve heard my father say,” observed Mary, “that a lot of common tea is made from leaves that grow on our own currant bushes. But Master always buys fine Souchong, and gets it direct from China.”

“China! Is not that the place where the people have such funny little eyes, and no hair but a pig-tail at the back of their heads? I want you to read to me all about them from that book with the funny pictures.”

“Would it not be better, Master Philibert, if you learned to read the book for yourself?”

“That kind of learning is so stupid!” cried the boy. “What fun is there in knowing that M, A, N, spell *man*?”

“But if you want to know all that man can do, Master Philibert, you must have books to teach you; and what is the use of having books if you are not able to read them? There’s not much fun in the key of the

cupboard ; but if one has not the key, how is one to get at the bread and butter, and treacle and jam, that are kept locked up in the cupboard ? Reading, you see, is the key to knowledge, and all its pleasant things."

Philibert's round rosy face looked very serious as he turned the matter over in his mind. The nurse's homely simile was one which he could understand. The little boy had begun to have a relish for knowledge, and he was not satisfied with his short glimpse of the mirror in the morning ; he knew that he could not have the learned fairy always beside him. Philibert set to his little lesson with great steadiness on that day, and mastered all about the cat that ate the rat without once yawning, or jumping up to look out of the window.

After the lesson came the walk. Philibert had often grumbled at being kept to the garden, and had longed to get out on the road to watch the carriages and horses. But now the garden had a new interest for the little boy. He scampered from flower to flower, stooping down, with his little fat hands resting on his knees, to examine the petals of this blossom, or to count the stamens of that ; then got on tiptoe to raise his face as high as he could towards some tall holly-hock or sunflower.

"I say, Mary," he exclaimed, "what big anthers the white lily has!"—and Philibert pulled down the tall flower towards him, to smell its powerful perfume.

“Master Philibert,” laughed the nurse, “you’ve made your little nose as yellow as a guinea with the powder!”

“I’ve been using the fairies’ powder-puff,” cried the child, “and robbing the bees of the pollen! Now, do you gather that rose for me; I want to see if it carries a pistil.”

Mary plucked the rose; which was, however, so fully blown, that it fell to pieces in her hand.

“Dearie me, all the leaves are falling!” cried the nurse.

“Do you call these leaves?” said Philibert, with the fairy’s lesson fresh on his mind. “These pretty pink things are petals, not leaves. They are what are worn by the fairies.”





CHAPTER VI.

SOMETHING OF DRESS.

PHILIBERT was not only up early on the following morning, but he submitted with very good grace to being made, as he said, “as neat as a fairy.” He looked with some pleasure on his blue velvet dress, wondering in his childish mind whether it were somehow made of the petals of flowers, it seemed so much like those of the big hearts’-ease of which the gardener was so proud.

“I could not bear to be dressed in ugly brown stuff, like Sidney Pierce,” said the boy; “it looks so horribly shabby!”

“Master Sidney’s mamma is poor, and your papa is rich,” said the nurse, as she fastened Philibert’s collar with a small pearl breast-pin, which had been given to him on his birth-day.

“I don’t believe that Sidney ever wore a bit of velvet in his life,” cried Philibert.

“He is just as much a gentleman in his stuff frock as

if he were decked out in velvet and lace," said the nurse. "He has such good manners, has Master Sidney. He never forgets to say, 'Thank you,' or 'Please ;' he never speaks with his mouth full, nor spills half his pudding over his dress, nor flies into passions, nor calls one bad names. 'Tis a pleasure, it is, to do anything for young Master Sidney, and I am very glad that he is coming to pay a visit at Fairydell Hall."

Philibert could say nothing in reply, though perhaps he was not able yet fully to understand that gentle manners and kindly politeness are much more becoming, and valuable too, than the grandest dress that a little prince ever wore. Philibert was foolishly inclined to be proud of his father's wealth, as if to have been born a rich man's son were any merit of his own.

"Do you want to go down to the study?" asked Mary, as she gave a finishing touch of the comb to the little boy's curly hair. "Had you not better stay up here, and play with your pretty coach and horses?"

"Such play is only fit for babies!" cried Philibert; who, silly, ignorant child that he was, was beginning to be proud even of the little scraps of knowledge which he had gathered from the fairy. "I've something better to do than to amuse myself with such toys!" and, hurrying away to the door, he soon found his way down to the study.

Perhaps Know-a-bit was taking rather a longer nap

than usual, or perhaps he was so deep in his studies that he had forgotten his appointment with the boy; for Philibert saw nothing of the fairy when he entered the room, though this time Sarah had been beforehand with him in opening the shutters and letting in the light. Three taps on the big red-edged book, however, made Know-a-bit start from his place of hiding, and again the large shining mirror appeared where shelves of volumes had been.

“Now, I want you to show me,” began Philibert, as soon as he caught a glimpse of the pretty little fairy, with his tasselled cap and silvery wand. But Know-a-bit, in a voice shrill with displeasure, cut him short,—

“Yesterday,” cried the fairy, “you came before me clad as no gentleman should be; to-day you appear without that which every gentleman should wear!”

“I don’t know what you can mean,” replied Philibert, feeling that his breast-pin was in its right place, and looking down with a perplexed air at his blue velvet dress. “I don’t think that I’ve forgotten anything to-day.”

“You’ve forgotten your manners,” said the fairy; “you have forgotten to say so much as ‘Good morning;’ you are in such haste to be amused, that you do not take the trouble to be commonly polite.”

Philibert blushed at the reproof of the fairy, and amended his fault as well as he could by a very low bow,

and a murmured "I'm sorry." He had been so much accustomed to give himself airs, and, when his own pleasure was concerned, to remember nothing beside, that he had never thought before how vulgar and rude his manners appeared to others.

"And now," said the fairy, in a more gracious tone, "what was it that you wished me to show you?"

"I wish, please, to know what velvet is made of?" Philibert stroked his soft glossy sleeve as he asked the question.

"Such as you wear is a preparation of silk," answered Know-a-bit, "though much of a common kind of velvet is manufactured from cotton. I will show you silk in its earliest stage." With his slender white wand he touched the hem of Philibert's dress.

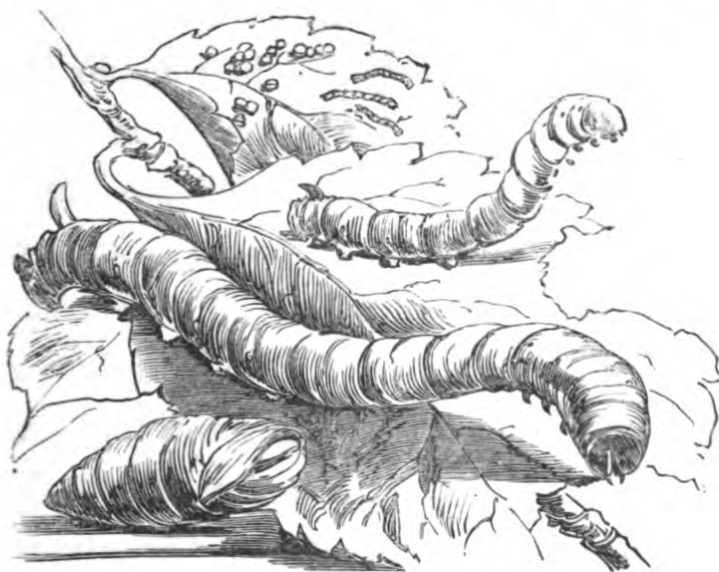
"Halloa! I don't like that," cried the child in some alarm, as he found himself suddenly stripped of his finery, and standing in his under-garments only. His velvet dress had disappeared, and a mulberry tree was seen in the mirror. On and amidst its leaves crawled hundreds of caterpillars, of large size and pale yellowish hue, some of which were busily spinning little round balls, in which they buried themselves entirely.

"What have those ugly, creeping, crawling creatures to do with my velvet frock?" exclaimed Philibert, who had a foolish dislike to every creeping thing.

"They are making the silk of which the velvet

is woven," answered the fairy. "To the labour of caterpillars you owe the finery of which you are proud."

Little Philibert stood looking at the silk-worms for some moments with mingled surprise and disgust, and then said, "How can silk be got from those little yellow balls which the caterpillars are making?"



THE SILK-WORM.

"Those balls, called cocoons, are collected, put into warm water, and then the silk is wound off ready for the weaver, many threads being joined together, as each by itself is far too fine to be used by any but fairies."

"What millions and millions of caterpillars must be spinning away to make all the silk used in England!" cried Philibert; "and what a slow, tiresome work it must be to wind it all off those cocoons!"

"Silk was once so scarce," said the fairy, "that it was sold for its weight in gold; and the great Emperor Aurelian, who reigned in Rome, is said to have refused his wife a silk-robe, because of its great expense."

“I must tell Mary that,” laughed Philibert; “even she has a silk-dress for Sundays now.”

“The silk-worm is a native of China, and silk was worn there long before it was known in Europe,” said the fairy. “Even when introduced there, it was not guessed at first that a caterpillar had made it. Some supposed that it was a fine down found on the leaves of certain trees, others that it was a delicate kind of wool or cotton. Two Persian monks are said to have made their way to China, and brought thence, about the year 530, some silk-worms’ eggs hidden in a hollow cane. These they managed to take to Constantinople, then the capital of the great Christian Empire of the East. From these eggs worms were raised, and the silk manufacture spread through Greece, and then extended to Italy. Now myriads of spinning caterpillars are amongst the most valuable products of France, Italy, Greece, and Spain.”

“Ah,” cried Philibert, “what riches were hidden in that hollow cane which the monks carried from China! These wee dots of caterpillars’ eggs were to turn out more precious than jewels.”

“It was long,” continued the fairy, “before silk became common in Britain. There is a story of James VI. of Scotland, afterwards also king of England, having once borrowed a pair of silk-stockings from the Earl of Mar, with the touching appeal, ‘Ye wadna hae your king appear as a scrub!’”

Philibert burst out laughing at the idea of a monarch having to borrow a pair of silk-stockings. "Was he the first to wear them in our land?" asked the boy.

"No; more than four hundred years before, Henry II. is recorded to have possessed a pair of silk-stockings. Queen Bess, who reigned in England just before King James, had also the luxury of silk-stockings, which she called 'marvellous delicate wear.'"

"I know what I'd do," cried Philibert, in the exulting tone of one who has made a great discovery; "I would not go to caterpillars for silk, I'd wind up the webs of spiders—I daresay that they would do just as well."

"You are not the first to think so," observed the fairy. "An attempt to use spider-silk has been made, but it failed, partly on account of the quarrelsome temper of spiders. It was needful to collect a great number of these little spinners, that their silk might be in sufficient quantity to be used for weaving. The spiders would not live in peace together, like the quiet, industrious silk-worms; they took to fighting instead of spinning; so there was an end to the attempt to make them of service to man."

Philibert liked to hear about the quarrelsome spiders, but he was also rather in a hurry to get back his dress. He therefore drew out his fine linen handkerchief, and asked, "What sort of creatures spin linen?"

The velvet frock was again on the child—and not a single crawling silk-worm was left on the mirror. A delicate grass-like plant had taken the place of the mulberry-tree. It had small leaves, and slender stalk, and blossoms formed of five pale blue petals.

“What is that pretty plant?” asked Philibert.

“This,” answered the fairy, “is flax, which grows in England, and Ireland, and many other parts of the world, especially Russia. Linen, which is made from flax, was known thousands of years ago, and was worn by the priests of Israel even before they entered the Holy Land. We read of flax as being grown in Egypt in the ancient times of the Pharaohs.



THE FLAX-PLANT.

“I cannot see,” observed Philibert, “how that pretty green plant can be turned into linen.”

“The stalks are collected, and then soaked in water,” replied the fairy, “till the soft green pulp melts away, leaving the fibres behind. These fibres are spun into thread, and the thread is woven into linen. Nor is this

valuable material the only thing which man owes to flax. The seed, when pressed, yields an excellent oil, which is known as *linseed-oil*, used in medicine, varnishing and painting, and sometimes in making soap. What remains of the seed, when the oil is squeezed out, is called *oil-cake*, and is useful for fattening cattle."

"What a famous little plant!" cried Philibert; "it gives clothing to us, and food to cows, and oil for all sorts of purposes! Who would have guessed that such a simple little flower would have been of so much use! And I suppose that my *cotton* socks, too, come from the stringy stalk of a plant?"

"Nay," replied Know-a-bit; "in the case of cotton, the snowy treasure is held in the ripening seed-vessel of a flower!" Scarcely were the words uttered by the fairy when Philibert found himself with only one sock on, and instead of a slender plant with pretty blue blossoms, another of about the same height appeared, with leaves deeply notched. The



THE COTTON-PLANT.

blossom had five bright yellow petals, with a dark red spot upon each.

“I do not like these flaring flowers,” said Philibert, “as well as the blue flax-blossom.”

“The yellow colour of these petals,” said the fairy, “reminds one of the gold for which so many millions of unhappy Africans have been sold as slaves, that they might labour in the cotton-fields of America and the West Indies. See, there is a red spot, like a stain of blood, upon each!”

“England never bought or sold slaves!” cried Philibert.

“Nay,” said the fairy, shaking his tiny head, “there was a time when England was by no means guiltless of this crime. As early as the reign of Henry VIII., from English vessels rose the groans of poor Africans kidnapped from their homes, and stowed away in such cruel manner that numbers died on the passage; more happy, perhaps, than those who lived to toil in exile, never again to return to their country, children, and wives! Honour to such great and good men as Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Granville Sharpe, who spoke for the poor black slaves labouring in the West Indies; good men who gave their time and their strength to plead the cause of sufferers whom they never had seen! After twenty years of hard struggle, Great Britain abolished the slave-trade in the latter end of the reign of King George III.”

“And set all her poor slaves free?”

“No,” said the fairy, gravely. “England’s slave-trade was stopped, no more poor Africans were to be kid-napped from their homes; but for many long years Britons *who had slaves already* were allowed to keep them, because, as they had bought and paid for them, they thought them as much their property as their horses, cows, or sheep.”

“Oh, but that was hard on the blackies!” cried Philibert. “If any one bought me, and paid ever so much money for me, I should think it a dreadful shame to be kept as a slave, that my master should not be a loser!”

“And the masters thought it very, very hard that they should be ruined by their slaves being taken away; just as a farmer would feel if a law were made to sweep off all his sheep!”

“But if some one *paid* him for his sheep,” said Philibert, “then he would have no right to grumble.”

“This is just what Old England did to set free the slaves,” said Know-a-bit. “In the reign of King William IV., the uncle of Queen Victoria, England agreed to pay the enormous sum of *twenty millions* of pounds, to make up to the West Indian planters for the loss which they would otherwise have suffered from liberty being given to their slaves.”

“Twenty millions!” repeated Philibert Philimore;

“that sounds like a very big sum, but I don’t know how much it can be. Papa has taught me to count up to a hundred; once he gave me a shilling for counting so fast that I got through the whole hundred in a minute. How I rattled along, to be sure, while he watched the tiny second-hand of his watch—I was out of breath before I had done!” Philibert looked not a little proud of this feat, the greatest that he had ever performed.

“If you were to count off a hundred pounds in *one minute*,” said Know-a-bit with a smile, “and went on counting every day in the week at the same rattling pace, from six in the morning till six at night, without stopping one moment to eat, it would take you *two hundred and fifty-five days, one hour, and two minutes* to count twenty millions of money, or from before sunrise on New-year’s day till the twelfth of September.”

Philibert was so much astounded at the idea of such an enormous number of sovereigns, that he could not for seconds utter a word. At last he exclaimed, “What could the planters do with such a mountain of money!”

“Pay the wages of their freed negroes, so that cotton might still be sown and reaped, but not by the hands of *slaves*. This great measure of justice and mercy—justice to the planters, mercy to the slaves—was carried out chiefly through the efforts of good Sir Fowell Buxton.”

“But all the cotton that ever was grown in the world could not be worth half of *twenty millions* of money,”

cried Philibert; "why, I heard Mary say that she bought cotton for sixpence a yard, and got forty yards for one pound!"

"But how many yards, think you," said the fairy, "are required to clothe the millions who wear woven cotton? The cotton brought into the British Islands in the *one year* 1860, would, if woven into cloth, stretch to such a length that it could be wrapped *two hundred times* round this huge world!"

Philibert felt his poor little brain quite puzzled with such tremendous calculations; he relieved himself with a sigh, and turning to the yellow-blossomed plant in the mirror, "I should like," he said, "to see how those flowers can give out cotton."

As he spoke, down fell the five yellow petals from each, leaving a seed-vessel behind. This swelled and swelled till it burst, and there lay a number of seeds embedded in a mass of white cotton.

"How pretty it must look," cried Philibert, "when thousands and thousands of bushes are all covered with that white down. It must look like a fall of snow. It must be a pleasant work to pick cotton; I should like to have a cotton-bush in our garden."

"Remember," said Fairy Know-a-bit, "that the cotton-plant will only flourish in places where the heat is great, and this is the reason why negroes are required to cultivate it."

"I suppose that string is made of cotton," remarked Philibert, putting his hand on a piece of twine that happened to be lying on the study table.

"Not so," answered the fairy. "String, cordage, rope, and canvas are made of *hemp*, a plant related to our common stinging nettles; a plant which was once cultivated in England, which still is grown in France, and is imported in large quantities from Russia. Hemp is also found in India, where the natives use its leaves as tobacco, and procure an intoxicating drink from



THE HEMP-PLANT.

them when pounded and boiled."

Philibert raised his eyes to the mirror, and beheld in it a plant with a firm, slender stem, notched leaves, and a spike of small green flowers.

“Hemp,” continued Fairy Know-a-bit, “is prepared much in the same way as flax. It is the tough stem that yields the fibres that are spun and woven by man.”

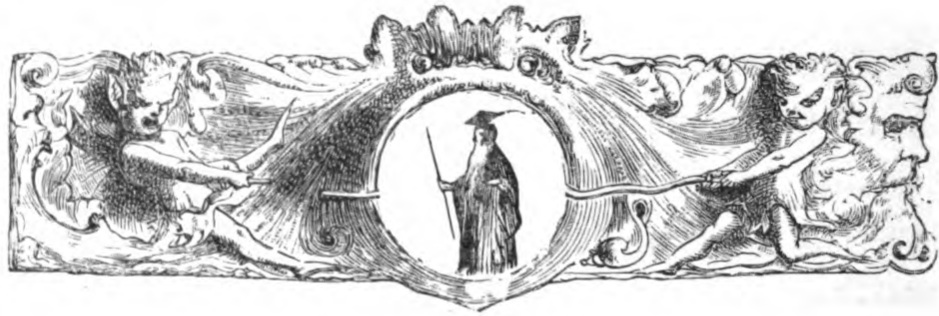
“And is the hemp-seed that I give my Dicky the seed of this plant?” asked the boy.

“It is,” said his learned little friend; “and as from linseed oil is pressed out, so is it also from seeds of hemp.”

“What odd things one learns of plants,” cried Philibert Philimore. “Who would ever have thought that the tough ropes of ships could ever have grown out of these little seeds that Dicky picks up for his dinner!”

“Nature is full of wonders,” said the fairy. “What a marvel it is that the mighty oak should be packed up, as it were, in the acorn? And what an endless variety of properties useful to man is contained in the vegetable world! Some plants give clothing, some food, some drink, some medicine to cure diseases. The South Sea Islands have their *bread-fruit tree*, Africa its *butter-tree*, while the *tallow-tree* grows in China. Man is constantly discovering new marvels, new sources of pleasure or profit, in the beautiful plants that clothe the earth with verdure, and adorn it with their exquisite hues.”

As Know-a-bit uttered the last words, he disappeared from Philibert’s view.



CHAPTER VII.

THE TWO COMPANIONS.



THINK that my reader must be pretty well aware by this time that Philibert Philimore was inclined to be peevish, impatient, and proud; in short, that he was a spoilt little boy, who, instead of being thankful that he had more comforts than fall to the lot of others, was most absurdly puffed up because his father happened to be rich. One excuse for his faults was that poor Philibert had lost his mother when he was a baby; for though Mary was a kind good creature, and took care of the health of her young charge, she did little in the way of curbing his temper and correcting his pride, and rooting up the weeds that so readily spring up in the heart of a child. Mr. Philimore was out-of-doors during the greater part of each day, hunting, shooting, fishing, or going over his farms; he saw little of his only son, of whom he was very fond; yet the squire was beginning to suspect that Philibert was sadly self-willed, and some-

times turned over in his mind what he could do to make his boy more gentle and good. It struck Mr. Philimore at last that what his child needed was a companion, and he invited Sidney Pierce, who was about a year older than Philibert, to spend a short time at Fairy dell Hall.

Sidney was the only son of a widowed lady of very narrow income, who devoted her life to visiting the poor, and bringing up her beloved child in the way of piety and virtue. Sidney's mother loved him too dearly not to correct his faults. She was not able to give him riches—it was with difficulty that she afforded him common comforts; but Mrs. Pierce used every effort to educate her boy well, by which I mean that she tried to train not only his mind but his heart. Often, when little Sidney lay asleep, his mother would sit by his bedside busily engaged in working for him, till her weary eyes ached with sewing; then she would lay her needle aside, and kneeling down, pray earnestly to God for a blessing upon her dear child. Mrs. Pierce denied herself many comforts that she might lay by sufficient money to send Sidney to school when he should have grown too old for her teaching; but in the meantime it was her delight to impart knowledge to her dear boy, who learned readily and quickly. Sidney led a busy and happy life. He possessed few toys and playthings, indeed, but such as he had gave him more pleasure than anything that money could have bought. Had not his mother helped

him to make them?—was not everything connected with pleasant remembrances of hours passed at her side? Sidney had not, like Philibert, a great many books, but then he knew how to read them. He had not a large garden, as the squire's son had, but his tiny plot of ground, no bigger than a table, afforded him much delight, for he weeded and hoed it himself, and every flower that grew there sprang from seed which he had sown.

Sidney had but one real trial, and that was delicate health. He could not run, leap, and jump, like many other little boys, and he was obliged to take cod-liver oil, which he disliked very much. But Sidney never murmured, he never added to his mother's troubles by complaining of his own. He took his medicine cheerfully, sure that his mother would never give what was not for his good, and feeling that it would be wrong to grieve her by not obeying her wishes at once. Sidney watched his parent's face, and a look was enough to guide him.

Mrs. Pierce was grieved to see her son thin and pale; she knew that he needed a change, but to move from place to place is expensive, and she could not afford the expense. Sometimes the poor lady could hardly help longing for a little more money, that she might give to her darling the comforts which he required. But as she had taught her boy to love and trust his earthly parent,

so she herself looked up with love and trust to a heavenly Father above. She tried to take poverty cheerfully, as Sidney took his medicine, sure that what God ordered must be best both for her and her son. Mrs. Pierce brought all her cares and troubles to God by prayer, and she felt it an answer to her prayer when an invitation came to Sidney to spend a few weeks at Fairy dell Hall, Philibert's beautiful home.

"There," thought the lady, "my boy will have all the comforts which it is not in my power to afford him: he will have change of air, and change of scene, a little playmate to share his amusements, and nice large grounds to run about in. But oh! how I shall miss him; how long the days will appear when my darling is not beside me; how dull the house will seem without his whistle on the stairs!"

Mrs. Pierce was not accustomed, however, to think much of herself: she was quite content to be lonely for awhile if Sidney were happy. She would cheer herself by looking forward to seeing him return with a little colour on his now pallid cheeks. She never dropt a word to damp her boy's natural pleasure at the thought of his visit, and when Sidney, looking fondly up into her face, said, "But won't you be dull all alone?" she answered with a cheerful smile, "I shall be thinking of you, and working for you, and how I shall enjoy hearing all that you will have to tell me when you come back!"

Philibert Philimore was much pleased at the prospect of Sidney's visit, just as he might have been pleased with the promise of a new toy. He expected great enjoyment in displaying all his fine things to Sidney Pierce, and now, silly boy that he was, he thought that he would be able to make a show of knowledge also! The vainest people are often those who have least to be vain of.

At about eleven o'clock, the one-horse chaise which Mrs. Pierce had hired to take her son to Fairy dell Hall was driven slowly up to the large entrance. There was no luggage to be seen upon it but one small deal box beside the coachman.

"What," thought Philibert, who was looking out of the nursery window, "does Sidney carry all his clothes in that!"

"If I were you, Master Philibert, I would run down and welcome my friend," said Mary. "He will feel a bit strange at first, perhaps, coming to stay at this big house; we must make the little master happy while he is here."

"I don't want your teaching," said Philibert pertly, going, however, to meet Sidney Pierce. The squire's son did not consider that he required any lesson in good manners; but his very first words to Sidney, when he shook hands with him in the hall, showed that, however rich he might be, Philibert was a vulgar little boy, and knew not how to behave like a gentleman.

"I say, Sidney, had you only one horse to drag you all this way? We always travel with two, except when we drive four-in-hand."

"My mother can't afford that," said Sidney. If Philibert expected his little guest to feel uncomfortable and ashamed at having to own his parent's poverty, the silly boy was quite mistaken. No flush rose to Sidney's pale cheek; his mother had taught him that there is sin in being discontented, but no disgrace in being poor.

"Come along, and I will show you all my tops and pretty things," said Philibert, hurrying his guest towards the broad oak staircase which led up to his rooms. Sidney followed with light step and light heart, and looked about him with keen enjoyment.

"Oh, stop a moment, just let me have a good look at that old armour hanging there, with stags' horns above it," cried Sidney. "I never saw horns so large; do you know whether they are elks'?"

"I don't know—and I don't care," answered Philibert, who had never thought on the subject before.

"That helmet is just like what one sees in pictures of the Crusaders, and so is that pointed shield. Do you know if they were used by *real* Crusaders?" asked Sidney, stopping to examine with interest these relics of olden times.

"What does it matter if they were?" replied Philibert,

who knew as little about Crusaders as if they had been men in the moon.

“Perhaps that very helmet and shield were in the fight at Acre or Ascalon,” thought Sidney, lingering as he walked up the staircase to recall stories of Cœur de Lion and his Saracen foes. “What a heavy blow must have been dealt on that shield, to have left such a dint behind!” That old armour had as little interest for Philibert as if it had been made of painted wood; but to Sidney, who was already fond of history, it had a very great charm. He fancied how it must have looked when worn by some knight of old, bound for the Holy Land, to rescue the Sepulchre at Jerusalem from the hands of Saracen foes.

When the two boys had reached the broad landing-place at the top of the staircase, various old portraits on the wall attracted the eye of Sidney.

“Oh, how amusing it will be to hear all about these pictures!” he exclaimed. “That solemn-looking man in the funny stiff ruff, he must have lived in the days of Queen Bess, or perhaps in James the First’s. Is he Lord Burleigh or Lord Bacon?”

Philibert knew nothing of any bacon but what he had sometimes at breakfast; and Sidney, seeing that he looked a little puzzled and annoyed, with intuitive politeness resolved not to ask him any more questions of the kind.



THE TWO COMPANIONS.

“I wonder,” said Philibert peevishly, “that you care for stupid old pictures. Come on quickly,” he continued, “and I will show you my rocking-horse.”

“What a famous rocking-horse!” cried Sidney, as he entered Philibert’s play-room; “it is almost as big as a pony. May I jump on the saddle, and ride?”

“Jump on, and I’ll rock you,” cried Philibert. Sidney put his foot in the stirrup and was up in a moment.

and Philibert made the horse rock as violently backwards and forwards as he could, perhaps thinking to frighten the sickly-looking rider; but Sidney was only delighted.

“’Tis a capital horse,” he exclaimed; “I could almost fancy that I was riding a real one.”

“Don’t you wish that you had one like it at home?” asked Philibert, pausing to rest himself, for he was soon tired of rocking his little companion.

“Mamma says that it is a bad thing to wish for what we can’t get,” said Sidney, gaily; “perhaps I should grow tired of a rocking-horse if I could ride on it every day.”

“I don’t care a bit for mine now,” said Philibert; “I have not been on it for a month. Just get down now, and come here and see the new model of a castle which my uncle sent me from London.”

Sidney jumped off the saddle, and ran up to the model, which he admired as much as Philibert wished and expected.

“You’ve nothing like that at your home?” said the rich man’s son, perhaps with an ungenerous wish to rouse a feeling of envy.

“No, not so large and fine as that,” answered Sidney Pierce; “but we’ve a little cottage that I made by myself,—not quite by myself, you know; mamma did the measuring and marking, and helped me to cut out the

windows, and fasten in the little bits of talc which were put behind for glass."

"What is *talc*?" asked Philibert Philimore.

"Mamma told me that it is a kind of mineral dug from beds of clay or slate," said the boy; "but it looks like glass, only a little browner, and you can split it thin—oh, so thin—much thinner than writing paper! And you can scratch on it, or cut it with scissors, or paint pretty flowers on it; and when you burn a bit in the candle, the edges seem turned into silver."

"I suppose that the windows in my castle are talc," said Philibert; "I always took them for glass. I've a good mind to poke one of them out, and see if it will burn into silver."

"Oh, that would be a pity!" cried Sidney. "Your model is a great deal finer than ours; but then we had such fun in the making of it. There was the cutting of the card-board, and the painting of the roof to make it look just like slate; and the strewing the gummed walls over with sand, and the hunting for pretty bits of moss to seem like creepers growing up them. It took me three days to make my cottage, when I was getting well after the influenza,—but the time seemed to go so fast! And now the cottage ornaments our chimney-piece: it is the only ornament there, but mamma says that she prizes it more than the prettiest thing that money could buy. I think it looks pretty enough,"

laughed the boy, "but then one always takes most pleasure in what has given one trouble."

Philibert turned away from his beautiful castle with an air of discontent. The pleasure of possessing was not to be compared to the "fun" of making, and the joy of presenting what had been a labour of love to a parent. Sidney's little cottage of card-board had given him fifty times more enjoyment than the fine model sent from London had afforded the rich man's son.

"Ah! you've books—plenty of nice books!" cried Sidney, running up to the well-filled shelves of a tempting little bookcase. "Have you read these all through?"

Poor Philibert flushed to the roots of his curly hair. He did not like to own that he had not yet mastered words of one syllable.

"Nurse reads to me a little," he observed; "does not your mother read to you?"

"Mamma has too much work to do, to have time to read much," replied Sidney; "but she likes me to read while she sews, and we have such nice evenings together. Mamma explains all that I don't understand; and we chat over the stories that we find in the history books."

Philibert found it more difficult than he had expected to look down on his little companion. He disliked this talk about books, so he gave the conversation a sudden turn, such as said little for his politeness.

“Have you no dress but that brown one?”

“Oh, yes,” replied Sidney Pierce, looking surprised at the question; “I have a common dress to romp about in, you know; one need not take such care of a worst dress.”

“I should not think that you need take much care of your *best*, if you have it on now,” said Philibert, with a little unmannerly laugh, which made his young guest feel annoyed. “Don’t you wish,” added the silly child, glancing down at his own blue velvet, “don’t you wish that you could have a beautiful one like mine?”

“I would not give my dress for fifty velvet ones,” exclaimed Sidney; “every stitch in this brown one was worked by my mother’s own dear fingers!”

Philibert walked slowly across the room towards his gilt coach with a feeling of mortification. The little conversation which had just passed was beginning to open the child’s eyes to some truths of which he had had no knowledge before,—that there are some things, and these the best things, which cannot be purchased by money! Philibert had been accustomed to speak with a kind of pitying contempt of Sidney as living “in a poky little home,” and “never wearing anything pretty and nice,” but he began now to suspect that Sidney’s lot was at least as happy as his own. What were Philibert’s idle evenings, spent amongst toys of which he was tired, or in lounging lazily on a sofa, forming

useless plans for what he would do when he should be a man, compared to Sidney's busy, pleasant hours, spent at a mother's side! If Sidney had to make his own toys, and Mrs. Pierce to stitch her son's clothes, what an interest and what a value the very labour imparted to both! And then, as regarded the books, how much better to have but a few, with the power to read and enjoy them, than to have shelves loaded with volumes from the full benefit of which ignorance shuts out their possessor! Certainly, as regarded happiness, the balance of good lay on the side of the poor widowed lady's young son.





CHAPTER VIII.

TALK ABOUT SLAVES.

LET'S come into the garden," cried Philibert, "the sun is shining so brightly, and I can show you such lots of fine flowers."

"I do love flowers—and so does mamma," said Sidney, following his companion with right good will, and only stopping a little in the hall to look again at the armour, the helmet with its barred visor, the gauntlet with its joints of steel.

Sidney was quite as much delighted with the garden as Philibert could desire; his was pure and keen enjoyment of all that was lovely in nature; but Philibert was disappointed of a pleasure which his vanity had made him expect—that of astonishing his young companion by showing off his knowledge of plants.

"I daresay that you do not know that flowers have pistils," he observed, "though you are such a chap for reading."

"I did not read about them," said Sidney, "but

mamma has told me about them; she has taken flowers gently to pieces, and put the pretty petals and the tiny stamens into her microscope, and shown me such wonderful things! Mamma says that flowers have little veins, as we have, only there is sap in them instead of blood; and that they breathe and take in air through tiny holes in their leaves."

Philibert was silly enough to be vexed at the greater knowledge of his companion, but determined to try Sidney on another subject on which he was not likely to be well-informed. As Sidney was stooping to watch a bee sucking up honey from a flower through her little trunk or proboscis, Philibert suddenly asked him the question, "Have you ever heard of 'bolition?"

"'Bolition, what's that?" inquired Sidney; "is it a kind of game?"

Philibert burst into a rude laugh. "It was a fine game for the black men," he said, "for then they were not to be caught, and forced to work for planters any more."

"Oh, I know what you mean!" cried Sidney; "you mean abolition, that is, stopping of the wicked slave-trade. Mamma has a book which she reads when she has time, and sometimes she gives me bits of it to read to her, and it tells a great deal about that.* There is

* Rev. H. Waddell's, "Twenty-nine Years in the West Indies and Central Africa."

one part that is so funny, a poor little black boy's story!"

"I like to hear what's funny," said Philibert; "what is the story about?"

"It is about a good English ship coming and catching the naughty slave-ship that was carrying off the boy and his poor companions," said Sidney; and having a very good memory, he repeated, almost word for word, the account which had taken his youthful fancy.

"The poor little boy had been taken for a slave, and when waiting at Popo—that's somewhere in Guinea; (what funny names those African places have!)—he heard that if an English ship should catch the slave-ship, all the poor negroes would be set free! So after they sailed from Popo, did not the poor fellows look out and long for an English ship to come! 'But we never tell 'Panish capin,' said the boy; he meant the Spanish slave-captain, you know. After a long, long time, the man on the look-out called to the captain, who took his glass, and went up to spy what he could see over the waters. Soon he shouted out to his sailors, and didn't they run about, and pull at the ropes and sails!—I suppose to get on the quicker. The little black boy, he peeped out, and he saw a little ship far far away, but it soon grew bigger and bigger, and it soon came nearer and nearer; for though the slave-ship went as fast as it could, the English ship came on faster. Oh, how the slaves' hearts

must have beat with hope! Presently the black boy saw fire, and a puff of smoke from the vessel coming on behind, and he heard *boom-m-m* over the waves!" Sidney imitated the sound of a cannon with such animation that Philibert burst out laughing. "This frightened the Spaniards," continued young Pierce; "they ran about—up and down—here and there—but they saw that they could not get off. Then the little slave boys were glad! These Englishmen fired another big gun very loud, *boom-m-m-m-m*, and something went whiz over the Spaniards' heads, and through the sails, tearing and breaking everything. Then the Spaniards made haste to get into boats, and the 'capin' called to the slave boys to follow; but no, no, no!" laughed Sidney, shaking his head, "the black boys were too wise for that; they hid themselves, and stayed in the ship till the English sailors went on board. Then they jumped, and shouted, and clapped their hands, and the ones below shouted too." Sidney, who had fully entered into the spirit of his story, ended it by a caper that set Philibert laughing again.

"I wonder what became of the boy," said the squire's son, after a little pause.

"He was servant to the missionary," replied Sidney. "But what do you think has happened to another little slave boy—I mean one who was a slave when young, but who was set free, and christened, and

taught to love the Bible, and to teach others to love it too !”

“ I don’t know,” replied Philibert Philimore ; “ I shouldn’t think one could make much of a woolly-haired negro !”

“ He has been made a *bishop* !” cried Sidney ; “ a bishop of the Church of England, and he is labouring now in Africa amongst his poor black brethren. His name is Samuel Crowther ; he is a very good man, mamma says.”

“ I should not take much notice of a black, however good he might be,” said Philibert, giving another proof of his folly.

“ Then you are not like our dear Queen, for *she* took notice of Mr. Crowther, and had him at her palace, and showed honour to one who had once been a poor little slave. I daresay the Queen knows that a soul may be white, however black the face may be.”

Philibert could say nothing in answer to this ; so he asked Sidney if there had been anything else amusing in the book which he had been reading.

“ Oh, I liked the part about the eman—*emancipation*, that’s the long word—of the slaves. Not,” added the boy more gravely, “ that all the poor fellows were set free ; in America the slaves have only lately received their freedom, but it does not belong to our Queen.”

“ And if the trade began hundreds of years ago,” said

Philibert, "numbers of slaves must have worked and died before any one thought of 'abolition.'"

"Could you guess how many?" asked Sidney.

"Not I," replied his companion.

"It has been counted that *forty millions* of poor blacks have been carried off from Africa since the slave trade began!"

"Forty millions!" repeated Philibert thoughtfully, trying to recall the fairy's calculation as to how long it would take him to count up half that number. "I should be much more than a year counting them up, if I did nothing else from morning till night. But tell me what the slaves did who were set free."

"I can only tell you about the slaves in Jamaica—a big island belonging to England—because the missionary who wrote the book was living there at the time. The people went everywhere to their churches on the night before their eman-ci-pation, to thank God that they were not to be slaves any more. Then next morning there was such a singing, just as birds might sing when let loose from a cage; and the black folk walked with flags, singing as they went to church. Over the church was a big flag, with a cross upon it, and the words, *By this we conquer*. Oh, there was such a shouting when the different bands joined, and waved their banners on high. One flag had on it, *No bond but the law*; another, *Wages are better than whips*; another, *We will work for our*

wives and children ; but mamma thought that *This is the Lord's doing*, was the very best motto of all."

"It must have been a pretty sight," said Philibert, "only I can't bear blackies. I never feel as if I could care a bit for those ugly negroes, with their black skin and thick lips!"

"I used to feel so too," said Sidney ; "only mamma said that was wrong, and then she read to me stories out of books to show me what fine noble fellows some of the negroes are. Before the eman-ci-pation" (Sidney could never get out the word without stopping a moment to think), "there was a white man who had a slave called Brutus, and the master owned that that poor slave had helped to make him a Christian."

"How could that be?" said Philibert.

"It was once thought," Sidney continued, "that the slaves were going to rise—I don't mean to get up in the morning, but to fight against their masters, and kill them, and set their houses on fire. Slaves did that sort of thing now and then."

"Did they!" exclaimed Philibert Philimore ; "I should not have liked to have kept any slaves if there was any chance of their rising like that. We are never afraid of our servants fighting us, or burning our houses."

"No, of course, for they are not like slaves. If they displease us, we dare not beat them ; and if we vex them, they can give leave and go. They are just as free

as we are, and they are paid for all that they do. Well, I was telling you that the whites were afraid that the blacks would rise, so they kept a strict watch over the slaves. Some one told the master of Brutus that voices had been heard in the dead of night in the hut of a watchman. 'Ah! ha!' thought the master; 'these slaves of mine are plotting together; I'll go and see what they're after.' "

"I should not have liked to have gone in the dark, for the slaves might have popped out of the hut and killed me," cried Philibert Philimore.

"The master took care to be well armed," said Sidney. "He crept softly up to the door of the hut, and listened; he could hear a voice within, and it was the voice of Brutus. But the slave was not urging the other negroes to rise against their master. Oh, no; Brutus was praying aloud to God. The white man heard him praying for 'massa, and missis, an' dem lillie chillen.' He heard Brutus thanking God for his supper, and begging Him to 'send plenty rain to make the yams grow.' The master turned away from the place with his heart quite full. He was not afraid of that slave any more; he felt that Brutus, black as he was, must be more of a Christian than he."

"That is a pretty story," said Philibert; "can you tell me more stories about the black people?"

"There are some funny stories," said Sidney. "I

read one to mamma last night out of a different book ; it was too hard a book for a little fellow like me, only mamma picked out a bit that would suit me. There was a good-natured planter in the West Indies who wanted to ease the labour of his negroes ; he thought that it must be hard work for them to carry away heavy clods of earth in baskets upon their heads."

"I should say that it was," cried Philibert. "I wonder what our gardeners would say, if they had to carry about earth in that fashion!"

"So this good-natured planter got wheelbarrows, to make the work easy for his slaves."

"How glad they must have been !" said Philibert.

"No ; that was the funny part of the story," laughed Sidney ; "the slaves were not glad at all. They did not like to have their old customs altered ; they begged and prayed to have their baskets again. But when they found that they could not get them, and that the wheelbarrows *must* be used, they refused to wheel them about, and actually *carried them on their heads!*"

Both the boys laughed merrily at the notion of the negroes toiling along with big wheelbarrows on their heads, because they would not use them as wheelbarrows ought to be used.

"What fun you seem to get out of those books, Sidney," observed his companion ; "and you are always

finding something new. I am quite determined now to



THE SLAVE AND HIS WHEELBARROW.

learn to read as fast as I can."

Sidney was not a little surprised to find that Philibert could not read already, but he was too polite to express his surprise. "Poor Philibert," thought he, "has had no mamma to teach him. How much better off I am than he."

"I mean," continued little Philimore, "to get very clever—wonderfully clever!"

"I mean to work hard too," observed Sidney.

"It would be so famous," continued Philibert, "to have every one saying when you passed by, 'There goes that clever man—that monstrously clever man—who knows more than anybody else in the world!'" And the little boy strutted along the gravel path with his chin up, and his head thrown back, and a self-satisfied look on his fat round face, as if he already felt himself to be a wonder to all beholders.

"I wish to be clever," said Sidney, "but not because

I want people to think me so. It is so nice to have knowledge ; there is such real pleasure in learning."

"You might well like it," said Philibert, smiling, "if you had a fairy to teach you."

"Oh, I've a mother to teach me, and that is quite as good as a fairy. But I have another reason for wishing to be clever," Sidney added more gravely ; "mamma often tells me that I shall have to earn my own bread, and that gentlemen who do not work with their hands are obliged to work with their heads. I want to study very hard, that instead of mamma's having to pay for my living, I may pay for my own, and help her too. That would make me so happy."

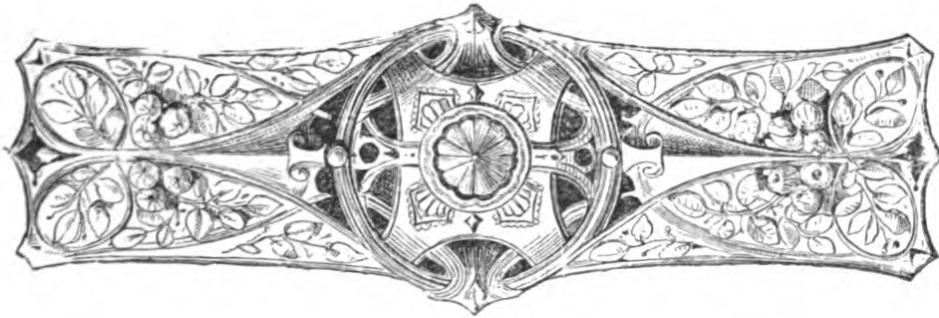
"Then you want to be rich, after all," said Philibert, "though you like to make out that you are so wonderfully contented."

"No," replied Sidney gaily ; "I do not want to be what you call rich ; but I should like mamma to have new stockings instead of having to darn the old ones over and over, and I should like for us to have an egg every day, instead of only on Sundays."

The pampered son of the squire laughed at Sidney's notion of comfort. But an idea (quite new to the boy) crossed his mind when he looked at the sparkling eyes of his young companion, that eggs must be nicer when bought with one's own earnings than when had without any trouble. Philibert felt more and more that though

he was so much richer than Sidney, and though he had a fairy to give him knowledge in the most amusing manner, he had much more cause to envy than to pity his sickly young guest, who had a lowly home, few comforts, and all the battle of life before him.





CHAPTER IX.

THE SECRET LET OUT.



WE have seen that Philibert Philimore had found it rather difficult to keep the fairy's secret both from his father and his nurse, and that he was more than once nearly letting it escape. With his little play-fellow, Philibert found it harder still to keep silence: he longed to excite Sidney's wonder, to see his look of amazement on hearing of Know-a-bit's sudden appearance. Philibert was very proud of having a fairy for a friend; but half of the pleasure would be lost if no one else knew of his strange acquaintance.

"But then," thought Philibert, "will it not make Know-a-bit very angry if I let out his secret? I know that he can frown with those wee, wee eyebrows of his; and his voice grows dreadfully sharp. It is no joke to offend one who, with a whisk of his wand, can turn cotton socks into yellow flowers, and velvet dresses into a lot of ugly crawling caterpillars. He might take it

into his funny little head to turn *me* into something that I should not fancy at all. And then, even if he should not do that, did he not threaten me that, if I let out his secret, I should never see him again, never look at his curious mirror? That would be a dreadful vexation! But how can the fairy know what I've done, if I only whisper the secret to Sidney here, when we are all alone together in the garden? It would be such fun to tell Sidney! What is the use of having a secret if no one knows anything about it?"

I am afraid that Philibert thought little of breaking a promise, and forgot that it is neither honourable nor right to do so. He drew Sidney to the end of the garden which was the furthest from the house, towards a beautiful arbour quite overgrown with ivy.

"I'll tell him here," thought Philibert, entering the arbour with a stealthy step, as though afraid that some one might see him. Sidney thought his companion's manner very odd, and wondered what could be the cause of the silence which had come over Philibert.

"Why, this is a regular bower for fairies," exclaimed Sidney, throwing himself down on the seat, for the delicate child was tired with his ramble.

"You don't think so?" cried Philibert, anxiously; "you don't see one hiding under the leaves?"

Sidney gave a merry little laugh. "I wish that I

could," he said; "I should like of all things to see a fairy."

Philibert glanced to the right hand, and glanced to the left, and took a peep under the seat. He then went softly up to Sidney, sat down beside him, and putting his mouth very close to the little boy's ear, faintly whispered, "I have seen one!"

"You are joking!" cried Sidney Pierce.

"Hush! hush! don't talk so loud! I have seen one," repeated Philibert; "I meet him every morning in the study. He has little round black eyes like my canary, and he moves—oh, so wonderfully fast!"

Sidney leaned back on his seat, and laughed till his sides ached, quite as much at Philibert's serious manner, as at the nonsense which he thought that his playmate was talking. As soon as he was able to speak, he cried, "Why, you have taken a mouse for a fairy!"

"As if a mouse wore spectacles, or a beard, or a cap with a golden tassel! as if a mouse knew all about 'bolition, and 'mancipation, and fermenting, and distilling!" exclaimed the indignant Philibert.

Sidney stopped laughing at once, and opened his eyes very wide, for he saw that his little playmate was not joking at all.

"I can't think what you can mean, Philibert," said the boy.

"Mean! I mean what I say, to be sure. I have seen

a fairy in the study ; I meet him there every morning. He teaches me all sorts of things, and shows them to me in a mirror."

Philibert, having once begun to speak on the subject, had no inclination to stop, and gave his astonished listener a full and particular account of each of his meetings with Know-a-bit, from the beginning to the end ; not even leaving out the fairy's displeasure at his own rough hair and want of a collar. Sidney listened as if to the account of some wonderful dream ; the story seemed a great deal too strange to be true. When Philibert had ended, Sidney exclaimed, "I should like to see this fairy myself."

"You shall come with me to-morrow," began Philibert ; but he checked himself directly. "No, that would never do ; for Know-a-bit would then guess that I had let out his secret to you."

"I can hardly help thinking," laughed Sidney, "that this Know-a-bit, gold spectacles, mirror, and all, come out of your own little head. You've had a dream, and you fancy it true."

"'Tis no dream," cried Philibert, angrily. "You must come—you shall come—and see for yourself ; only mind and don't let out to Know-a-bit that I told you a word about him."

"I can't promise that," said Sidney ; "for if I make a promise I must keep it, and this Know-a-bit might

ask me the question. But I can't believe," exclaimed the boy, "that there really can be such a funny little chap, four hundred years old, and yet so small that he could ride upon a young kitten!"

"You shall see, you shall see," cried Philibert. "But we must not talk about fairies any more; there is Mary coming to call us to dinner."

The boys returned to Fairy dell Hall, and with good appetites both sat down to their meal. While they were yet busy with their mutton, the door opened, and in came the jovial Squire, booted and spurred for riding. He clapped Sidney on the shoulder, asked after his mother, and bade him heartily welcome.

"Papa, may I take Sidney a drive in the carriage?" asked Philibert.

"You cannot have the carriage to-day, for Lightfoot has cast a shoe, and Foster is taking him to the blacksmith's; but to-morrow you can have it early, and drive to the town, if you like it."

"And go to the bazaar—oh, papa, mayn't we go to the new bazaar?" cried Philibert.

"Ah! and spend your money, that always slips like an eel through boys' fingers, hey, Sidney?" cried the Squire. His tone seemed to imply a question; but Sidney knew not what to reply, and only smiled, conscious that he, at least, had little money to spend.

"I suppose that I must pay for the frolic," said the

Squire, gaily; and after fumbling in his waistcoat pocket, he pulled out two bright half-sovereigns, and gave one to each of the boys.

Philibert took his eagerly, forgetting even to thank his father. Sidney coloured a little and hesitated, for he was not accustomed to receive money from strangers; and the first thought of the boy was, "Would mamma like me to take it?" The Squire read the doubt on the face of his little guest, and said, with frank good-humour, "Come, my boy, I'll answer for your mother having no objection;" and the small thin fingers closed over the bright piece of gold, while Sidney modestly thanked the Squire for his kindness.

"How stupid Sidney is," thought Philibert, "to make any difficulty about being tipped!"

"That boy is a little gentleman," was the Squire's reflection; "he does not clutch at money as though it were the first good in life, though I'll be bound that is the first half-sovereign that he has ever possessed."

The Squire was right; Sidney had never before had a piece of gold of his own, and it seemed a mine of wealth to the widow's young son. What might not that half-sovereign buy? Ideas of a tool-chest, a piping bullfinch, bow and arrows, followed one another in the mind of the boy. These were all things which he had scarcely allowed himself to wish for before, they had seemed to be so utterly beyond his attainment.





THE SQUIRE'S WELCOME TO SIDNEY.

“But, oh! how selfish I am!” thought Sidney. “How could I dream of spending all that money on myself, when dear mamma has so little! I wonder what a velvet bonnet would cost, or a nice warm shawl for the winter.”

The thoughts of the two young companions during the remainder of that day were chiefly divided between the expedition to the town and bazaar which was to

take place on the following forenoon, and the introduction of Sidney to the wonderful learned fairy. The latter subject was much talked over by the boys; but Sidney did not say much about the former. He felt that Philibert would scarcely enter into his pleasure at the idea of "giving mamma a surprise." Once, when he chanced to ask Philibert if he could guess the price of an apron, the boy burst into such a roaring laugh, with the question, "Do you mean to turn into a butcher?" that his playmate resolved henceforth to keep his shopping plans to himself.





CHAPTER X.

TASKED FOR TALKING.



“**K**NOW, mind,” whispered Philibert to Sidney, as the boys stood on the staircase on the following morning, “we must not come in together, or Know-a-bit will easily guess that I have told you his secret. But just as I am talking about something with my good friend the fairy, do you walk in quite boldly, as if you knew nothing at all. Perhaps he will not mind you, as you are a boy like myself; perhaps, as you are my friend, he will show you some of his curious sights.”

“Yes, I want him to show me what paper and ink are made of,” said Sidney, who carried in his hand a small leathern travelling desk.

“But hush!” cried Philibert Philimore, “or the fairy may hear our voices on the stairs. Remember, whatever is said, don’t let him know that I told you about him.”

Sidney made no reply. He thought, “I do not like

Philibert's fashion of dealing with the fairy at all; he first makes a promise, then breaks it, then wants to be cunning and sly to keep himself out of a scrape. If Know-a-bit is as clever as Philibert says that he is, he'll find everything out in a minute."

Philibert opened the door of the study. The room appeared just as usual. There was the window which looked out on the lawn; no wind stirred the shadow of the great cedar-tree which lay upon it; a blue-bottle fly was buzzing on the panes. The light of the morning sun shone on the bookcase, and the gilt letters of the big volume which lay on the ledge. Philibert could perceive no trace either of Know-a-bit or of his mirror.

"The fairy is late this morning," thought the boy, "for I heard the clock strike on the stairs. But I'll soon wake him up, and get him out of his hiding-place." Philibert went straight up to the red-edged book, and tapped three times on the cover; but all remained just as before, Philibert heard nothing but the buzzing of the fly.

"Oh, I hope that I have not lost my fairy," thought the child, growing a little alarmed. With no small anxiety he tapped again three times on the book, but still without any effect.

"Oh! what shall I do?" cried the boy in distress. "Know-a-bit—Know-a-bit—come to me!"

A third time he tapped, more loudly than before, then

started to hear the well-known shrill, canary-like voice, which seemed almost close to his ear:—

“ He who breaks his faith with me,
Never more must fairy see!”

Philibert looked here and there, above, around: no sign of a fairy appeared. He stared up at the bookcase before him; such works as “Macaulay’s England,” “Gibbon’s Decline and Fall,” and “Shakspeare’s Plays,” in all the dignity of their gilded bindings, seemed to look down from their shelves, defying all notion of change. Philibert was distressed and perplexed, and could not make up his mind what to do. As he stood silent, staring and wondering, the handle of the door was turned, and Sidney came into the study, but gave such a start of surprise as he did so, that he almost dropped the little desk which he was carrying in his hand.

Philibert hastily turned, and saw the face of his young companion bright with an expression of curiosity and wonder, while his blue eyes were first bent upon the big book, then admiringly raised towards the bookcase.

“ Oh, Philibert, then it is all true!” he exclaimed.

“ What is all true?” cried Philibert, with impatience. Instead of answering, Sidney made a low respectful bow, smiling and colouring as he did so.

“ You stupid, why are you bowing so?” exclaimed Philibert, who was growing quite angry.

“Because he is bowing to me. Don't you see him—the beautiful fairy in the gold-tasselled cap?” and Sidney approached a few steps towards the red-edged volume, still with a smile of pleased surprise on his lips.



SIDNEY AND THE FAIRY.

Philibert rubbed his eyes very hard, and stared in the same direction, but no fairy appeared to his gaze.

“And the splendid mirror!” cried Sidney.

“There's no mirror!” cried Philibert, passionately; “there's nothing but those stupid old books!” He was provoked beyond expression to find that Sidney could evidently see what he could no longer behold.

Again rose the clear, piercing voice; but its words were addressed to Sidney, not to Philibert:—

“ Oh, child of earth, to you will I show
The wonders which now you seek to know,
If never to mortal you breathe a word
Of what you have seen, or what you have heard!”

Little Sidney paused a few moments in thought, and then made his simple reply, “ I never keep anything secret from my mother.”

“ Well spoken, my boy,” cried Know-a-bit; “ you will make no promise which you cannot keep, nor hide anything from one who has a right to know all that concerns you. Speak to your mother, but to her alone. You are to be trusted; you are not like him beside you, whose vanity and folly have made him forfeit the friendship of Fairy Know-a-bit.”

These words, which he could hear distinctly, though he could see nothing of the speaker, almost drove poor Philibert into despair. He burst out into a roar of crying, flung himself down on the carpet, and kicked in a passion of grief. Sidney went up to him to try to comfort him, but Philibert pushed him away.

“ You will have all the pleasure, you will look at all the wonderful, beautiful things in the mirror, while I shall see nothing but the backs of those horrid books,” sobbed the little boy, who bitterly felt the punishment which had followed breaking his promise.

“But I will tell you what I see,” said Sidney; “you shall know all that I know.”

“I don’t care for that; I don’t care one fig for that,” cried Philibert, kicking more violently than before. Sidney was grieved to see such distress, of which he had been the innocent cause; but when he glanced at Know-a-bit, he saw that the fairy’s little black eyes were sparkling with glee. Though rather puzzled as to the best way of addressing the curious little being before him, Sidney determined to speak a kind word for his play-mate.

“Oh, sir!—Mr. Know-a-bit—won’t you forgive him this once? I am so sorry to have brought him into this trouble.”

“You did not bring him,” said the fairy.

“It was to please me—”

“It was to please himself,” interrupted Know-a-bit.

“But will you never, never let him look on you and on that wonderful mirror again? Will you punish one fault so severely?” Thus Sidney continued to plead, forgetting, in his wish to help his companion, his own eager curiosity to see some of the wondrous changes in the mirror.

“Would you give up for his sake,” asked Know-a-bit, “your own power to behold fairy-wonders—would you change places with Philibert Philimore, and bear the punishment which he has deserved?”

Philibert stopped crying in a moment, to listen eagerly for his companion's reply to such a proposal. Poor Sidney stood for several seconds looking at the tiny figure before him with a perplexed and disconsolate air. It would be such a grievous disappointment to give up seeing all that he so much wished to see; and yet, would it not be right to think first of his friend—would it not be honourable to prevent Philibert from suffering for having put confidence in him—would it not be acting as his own mother would act, if she could be put in his place?

“I will bear Philibert's punishment for him,” said the unselfish boy.

“Oh, no, you must not!” cried Philibert Philimore, jumping up from the floor, and dashing the drops from his tearful eyes. Spoilt, selfish, and passionate as he was, there was some generosity in the little boy's heart, and it was drawn out into action by the example of his companion. Sidney Pierce had, without intending it, given to Philibert Philimore his first lesson in real self-denial.

The tiny face of the fairy wore a more kindly expression than had appeared upon it before, and the tone of his bird-like voice was more musical and sweet, as he again addressed Sidney Pierce. “You shall keep your power of sight,” he said, “until, like Philibert, you forfeit it by some act of your own. But you have not pleaded in vain for your friend. I will hold out to him a hope of winning back the pleasure which he has lost.”

Then, shaking his little white wand, till all its silver bells tinkled, Know-a-bit said to Philibert, who stood with his cheeks still wet, and his eye-lashes moistened with tears,—

“ When you some knowledge can obtain
More precious than all you can learn from me,
The wondrous gift shall be yours again,
And you once more shall the fairy see.”

Philibert gave an anxious sigh. “ I’m afraid that I shall have to wait a long, long time before I get such knowledge,” he said; “ I don’t believe that I shall ever find it in the book about the cat and the rat! I am going to set hard to work, though. But how am I ever to tell when I have got the right kind of knowledge? What *I* think very curious and clever may be nothing at all to a fairy who has studied for four hundred years.”

“ I’ll give you a token,” cried Know-a-bit.

“ Oh, what a jump!” exclaimed Sidney; and Philibert saw his companion’s head turned towards him with a quick movement of surprise.

“ What do you mean? where has he jumped?” cried Philibert in a little alarm.

“ The fairy has jumped right on to your shoulder.”

“ Oh, but I don’t like that,” exclaimed the boy, afraid of what might come next.

“ He is touching your front lock with his wand.”

Philibert clapped his hand up to his hair, not a little

fearful lest he should find his head as bald as his cheek. Matters were not quite so bad as that; there was still a thick crop of curly hair—only the fore-lock hung as straight and stiff as if it had been made of bristles.

Then again was heard Know-a-bit's voice, in its peculiar bird-like shrillness, quite close to Philibert's ear :—

“ When your fore-lock shall curl again,
Be sure that your search has not been in vain,
And that some knowledge has entered your brain,
More precious than all you from fairy can gain.”

Poor Philibert was obliged to be satisfied with this hope; it was more than he had deserved, though certainly less than he wished for. He did not like having the invisible fairy perched on his shoulder, for he knew not what his next prank might be. It was quite a relief to the boy, when Know-a-bit spoke again, to hear his voice sound from the study table :—


“ What would Sidney Pierce desire to see in the mirror?” asked the fairy.

“ You had better lose no more time, Sidney,” said Philibert, speaking in a melancholy tone, as he went and seated himself in the great arm-chair which his father used in his study. “ You had better show Mr. Know-a-bit the things which you have brought in your desk. Tell me what you see in the mirror—that will be a little amusement for me; and I hope by to-morrow to win back the power of seeing it all for myself.”



CHAPTER XI.

PAPER AND INK.

SIDNEY opened his little desk with a fluttering feeling of expectation, and laid a sheet of note paper on the table before the fairy. Know-a-bit touched it with his wand. A heap of linen rags appeared in the mirror.

“O Sidney! what do you see?” cried Philibert.

“I see a heap of rags,” began Sidney; but interrupting himself, he exclaimed in a tone of wonder,—“Oh no, all is changed! there is a machine with sharp iron teeth turning round and round, it is tearing the rags, it is munching them up, it is turning them into a pulp, and now—”

“What is it doing now?” asked Philibert.

“I can see nothing more,” replied Sidney.

“The pulp is liquid paper,” said the fairy. “It is given shape by another machine, drawn out, dried, and made into the size of large sheets.”

“Ready to be written upon?” asked Sidney.

“Not so,” answered the fairy. “As the rags would have soaked up ink, so would the paper made from those rags ; it is blotting paper until *sized*.”

“What is *size*?” asked Philibert, who could hear, though he could not see.

“Size is a kind of glue made from *parchment* (parchment being dried sheep-skin), or from the cuttings and parings of skins. It fills up the pores in the paper, and prevents the ink from sinking and spreading through it.”

“Is all paper made of linen rags?” asked Sidney.

“No; paper is made of various substances. A quantity is manufactured from cotton rags. The Chinese use silk for the purpose. They have also a beautiful soft kind of material called *rice paper*, on which they paint pretty pictures ; this is the delicate pith of a tree, carefully cut into slices.”

“Oh, I know rice paper!” cried Philibert. “I got into a scrape with my aunt about some which she brought from China, with birds and flowers painted upon it. I thought that I would cut them out with my scissors—they looked so pretty and bright ; and the soft paper broke all to bits in my hands. No wonder, if it was made of nothing but pith.”

“Is not some paper made of straw?” asked Sidney. “Mamma often writes on straw paper ; it does not look very pretty, but I think that it costs very little.”

“You are right,” said Fairy Know-a-bit. “The best and finest paper is manufactured from linen rags.”

“Who would have thought,” cried Philibert, “that rags and tatters could be of such use—that a beggar’s cap might be turned into writing paper for the Queen! But what becomes of woollen rags—what will be done with Sidney’s brown-stuff dress when his mother buys him a new one?”

“What becomes of old clothes! that,” said the little fairy, “is one of the most curious questions respecting manufactures that can be asked. Your young friend’s woollen frock, when past all mending, will probably be taken to a mill, torn into shreds, mixed with fresh wool, and then woven again into cloth less strong and good than the first, and commonly known as *shoddy*, though not asked for under that name. Much of the cheap cloth bought in shops has been worn before in a different shape.”

“How very strange!” cried Sidney. “Perhaps then this very coat that I have on was made from the coat of the Duke of Wellington. I know that mamma was surprised at the shopman asking so little for the stuff.”

A smile passed the tiny lips of the fairy, while Philibert laughed and said, “I daresay, Sidney, that your dress is made of shoddy, and had been worn by lots of people before ever it came to you.”

“Not all old clothes are torn up and made into pulp,” said the fairy. “Quantities are sent to different countries, especially Ireland and Holland.* The scarlet coats of English soldiers are turned into flannel vests for jolly Dutchmen, to keep out the fog and cold; the fine cloth of officers’ uniforms is said to be cut up into the red cuffs worn by officials in Russia; while Englishmen’s old velvet waistcoats figure as caps on the heads of Polish Jews. The grand gold-laced liveries of Lord Mayors’ footmen are carried off to Africa—perhaps it would gratify my young friend to have a sight of one of them in the mirror.”

Sidney Pierce burst out laughing as he raised his eyes to the looking-glass before him.

“Oh, what do you see?” cried Philibert.

“Such a comical black fellow, grinning at me, and looking as proud as a peacock in his gold-laced hat and his flaring livery!”

“He is an African king,” said the fairy.

“He looks like a negro footman,” cried Sidney. “How can a king dress in such an odd way?”

“He is as vain of his gay clothes,” replied the fairy, glancing archly at Philibert Philimore, “as a certain young gentleman is of a blue velvet dress.”

Philibert was rather offended at being thus compared

* These curious particulars about rags were taken from an amusing article which appeared in the *Times*.

to a woolly-haired negro strutting about in footman's livery, and thinking himself remarkably fine. The child had been inclined to laugh at Sidney for that plainness of dress which his mother's narrowness of means made both suitable and right. Philibert was scarcely yet wise enough to see that the economy of those who have little to spend only deserves respect, while pride of dress is ridiculous, whether seen in a little white boy or a black-faced negro king.

"Ah, that funny fellow has disappeared," cried Sidney, who had had his eyes fixed on the mirror. "I should like to know," he continued, "what is the very end of the woollen rags after they have grown so bad that they can't be turned any more into shoddy, when they are only fit to be thrown away. I think that somewhere or other there must be a mountain of old rags—rags that are quite good for nothing."

"Woollen rags are *never* good for nothing," said the fairy. "When they can no longer be made into cloth, they are used as manure for *hops*, the plant from which men make *beer*; and in a part of Italy they are used as manure for vines."

"Oh, that is funny!" cried Sidney. "So then, when my brown dress is quite in tatters, so that not even a beggar boy could wear it, it may come back to me again in a new way, and I may drink it up without knowing it in

a tumbler of beer!" The idea amused both of the boys, so that even the mournful Philibert joined in the mirth of his playmate.

"We must not linger too long over paper and rags," said Know-a-bit, "or we shall have time for nothing besides. Is there any other thing which you are curious to see in its original state?"

"Oh, the ink!" cried Sidney Pierce. "When all the ink in my bottle had once dried up, I tried to make more with water and soot, for that was the blackest thing I could think of; but it would not do, it only served to make my fingers dreadfully dirty!"



THE FAIRY AND THE INK-BOTTLE.

Know - a - bit's fairy wand lightly touched the small bottle of ink which Sidney had brought in his desk.

“Sidney, can you see anything?” asked Philibert, who himself could only behold a bookcase.

“I see a tree,” said Sidney; “but I can’t think what that can have to do with ink.”

“Do you see nothing on the leaves?” asked the fairy.

“Nothing at all but those funny little lumps called *galls*, which mamma told me were made by insects.”

“These galls,” observed the fairy, “are the principal ingredient in ink. They must be mixed with green vitriol (sometimes called copperas), which is a preparation of iron, and also with a little *gum-arabic*, which oozes out from the bark of a tree which grows in Egypt and Turkey.”

“How very odd that *green vitriol*, *reddish galls*, and *yellow gum*, should turn into *black ink*!” cried Sidney. “I cannot imagine how any one should think of trying to mix such things together.”

“There are many strange facts in regard to colouring matter which you may one day learn,” said Know-a-bit. “You would hardly guess, for instance, that the beautiful tints called *mauve*, and *magenta*, and *rosaniline*, are dyes procured from *coal-tar*.”

“If any one but a fairy told me that, I would not believe it,” cried Philibert.

“But how is it done?” asked Sidney.

“The process is much too long for me to describe, or

you to remember," said the fairy. "It is like a chain with a number of links—I will but give you some of the first ones. From *coal*, heated in a retort, *coal-tar* is produced. Coal-tar distilled gives *coal-naphtha*. Coal-naphtha distilled gives *benzol*. Benzol warmed with *nitric acid* gives *nitrobenzon*, a heavy, oily substance with almond scent, used for scenting soap. From this, mixed with acid and iron filings, *aniline* is distilled, and this—"

"Stop, stop!" exclaimed Philibert Philimore, clapping his hands to his ears; "this is a chain that will go on for ever. To think what trouble it must have given to have coloured the little bit of mauve ribbon that Mary wears in her bonnet!"

"And what clever heads these must have been that found out how to do it," said Sidney.

"Please go back to the ink," cried Philibert; "that's not quite so hard to understand. Though, I daresay, he was a very sharp fellow who first discovered the way to make it."

"Would you wish to know who was the very first to use any fluid of the nature of ink?" asked the fairy.

"I should like to know," replied Sidney; "I daresay that it was some one very, very long ago—perhaps an Egyptian or Assyrian."

"I'll show you his likeness," said the fairy.

"Holloa!" shouted Sidney in amazement.

“What is it? what is it?” cried Philibert.

“One of the ugliest creatures that ever I saw in my life. I don’t know what to make of it!” exclaimed Sidney.



THE CUTTLE-FISH.

“That is one species of *cuttlefish*,” said the fairy, “which is doubtless the most ancient possessor of ink to be found in the world.”

“A fish!” exclaimed Philibert Philimore; “what could a fish have to do with writing with ink?”

“I never said that the fish used its ink for *writing*,” answered the fairy. “The ink, which it carries in a kind of bag, is the only protection which the

poor fish possesses against its numerous enemies—plaice, lobsters, eels, and sea-wolves. When pursued, the cuttlefish throws out its ink, which so blackens the water around it that the helpless creature has some chance of escaping in the darkness.”

“Do people write with this ink?” asked Sidney.

“It is said,” replied the fairy, “that the old Romans used the cuttlefish’s liquid for the purpose of writing, and some suppose that it is an ingredient in Indian ink,

much used by artists. This strange looking creature is in other ways of service to man. Its bones are used for cleaning silver, and sometimes for making tooth-powder; and in some parts of Europe the fish itself is eaten as food."

"I'd rather not taste that dish," cried Philibert. "I don't fancy feasting on a bagful of ink."

"The fish are not black," said the fairy. "When well washed they are bright, and almost transparent."

"What is *transparent*?" asked Sidney.

"What can be seen through, like glass," replied Know-a-bit.

"And if you were to put one of these clean, glassy fish back into the sea," inquired Sidney, "would it get filled with black ink again?"

"If the fish were alive," answered Know-a-bit; "when put into the salt water,* in *ten minutes* it would have its ink-bag full again, all ready for service."

"What funny little creatures these cuttle-fish must be!" cried Philibert Philimore.

"There are five species of cuttle-fish, and one is by no means small," observed the fairy. "I will give Sidney Pierce a glimpse of one kind which the ancients called a *polypus*, which is immensely large and strong."

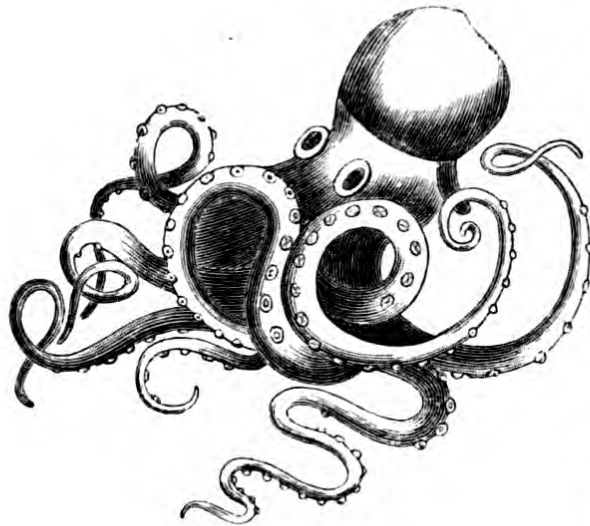
Sidney suddenly gave a start and an exclamation, and retreated several steps back from the mirror.

* "Life in Normandy."

“Oh, what do you see there?” cried Philibert.

“A monster, if ever there was one!” exclaimed Sidney; “with long arms twisting round a big horny mouth, and huge eyes in the middle of its body.”

“With the arms, which are tremendously long,” said Know-a-bit, “the creature seizes its prey. These arms have been known to be nine feet, nay, it is said even *eighteen* feet long, three times the length of a tall man.”



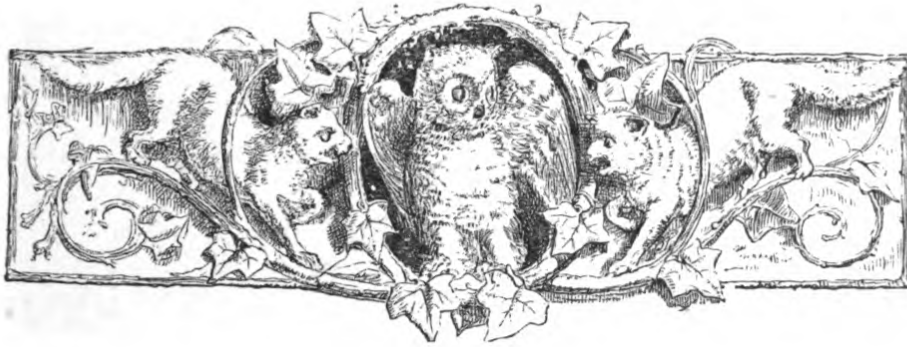
THE POLYPUS.

“I should not like to meet one of these monsters if I were swimming in the sea,” cried Sidney.

“A Sardinian captain,” said the fairy, “when bathing in the Mediterranean, was caught and drawn under water, and so

drowned, by one of these terrible creatures.”

As Sidney’s eyes were fixed on the polypus in the mirror he gradually saw it fade, and when he turned to look for Know-a-bit, the fairy had vanished into air.



CHAPTER XII.

SUN AND STARS.



ALTHOUGH Sidney had been prepared for the sudden change, he was astonished to see how instantaneously the mirror was replaced by the bookcase; and he stood staring at it with raised eye-brows and lips apart, doubting, as Philibert had doubted at first, whether all had not been a dream. He was roused by Philibert pulling him by the sleeve.

“I suppose, Sidney, that the show is all over?”

“It is all over!” replied the boy, rubbing his eyes.

“I say, then, let us come into the hall,” said Philibert, drawing his companion to the door. Sarah entered the study as they went out, and stared at young Philimore’s hair as she did so.

“Sidney, does my hair look dreadfully bad?” asked poor Philibert, reminded by her glance of what the fairy had done.

“All your hair is right enough—but one lock.”

answered Sidney, smiling, "and that hangs straight down over your forehead."

"Like a rat's tail—I can feel it!" cried Philibert, giving an impatient tug to the luckless lock.

"It won't make matters better for you to pull it like a bell-rope," said Sidney, who found it difficult to help laughing. "Would it not be a better plan to try and do what the fairy said,—get some knowledge into your head more precious than all that he can teach you?"

"I suppose that it would," replied Philibert, his face brightening a little at the hope held out; "but, considering that the tiny chap has been at his books for four hundred years, I'm afraid that my poor hair will turn white before it takes to curling! But can't you give me some knowledge, Sidney,—you who are always learning from your mother? I should think that you must have heard some curious things in your life!"

The outer door was open, and the boys sauntered out on the lawn; perhaps they had an idea that the fresh air might be favourable to thinking.

"Mamma has told me a good many things, if I could only remember them," answered Sidney.

"But what is the most wonderful thing of all?" asked Philibert.

"Let me see. Well—perhaps—I should say that what mamma called the *solar system* was the most wonderful thing of any that ever I heard of."



STUDYING THE STARS.

“Solar system!” repeated Philibert; “that sounds hard enough to puzzle even a fairy. Please tell me all about it.”

“I should find that much too hard,” answered Sidney; “but I’ll tell you what little I know. You see the sun there—the great shining sun? Do you think that it moves?”

“Of course it moves,” said Philibert; “for I always see it in the morning, when I am in the shrubbery, rising first over the bushes, then the trees; but by evening it has travelled across the sky, and sinks down behind our stables.”

“Now, that is quite a mistake,” said Sidney. “You fancy that the sun is travelling all that way along the sky, while it is really we—we on our big ball of earth—that are moving right round the sun, and rushing on at the rate—let me think”—Sidney raised his hand to his forehead—“at the rate of *sixty-eight thousand miles* an hour, or much more than a *thousand miles in a minute!*”

“Holloa!—stop!—what do you mean?” cried Philibert.

“I mean that the earth is going more than *two thousand* times faster than the quickest racer could dash along, or *one hundred and forty* times faster than a ball from the mouth of a cannon!”

Philibert opened his eyes and mouth wide with amazement. “You don’t expect me to believe that?” he exclaimed. “I can hardly fancy that this big solid earth moves at all”—he stamped with his foot on the ground as he spoke—“but to think of it, with all the towns, and cities, and mountains upon it, whirling round and round, faster far than a ball from a cannon, while we never feel that it stirs one inch—this is harder, much harder, to believe than all that the fairy has told us.”

“It is quite true for all that,” said Sidney; “for mamma told me about the earth and the sun—and she never will say a thing that she does not know to be

true. Mamma taught me a good deal more about the solar system, as she showed me the stars one night through a telescope that had belonged to my dear papa. She said that this earth is called a *planet*, and that there are other planets which also whirl round the sun, some much bigger than our world, and some going a great deal faster. There is the sun in the middle, like the father of a family, and the planets, like his children, running round and round him. The very nearest to the sun is *Mercury*—”

“It must be hot there!” cried Philibert.

“I daresay that, if we were in Mercury, we should be scorched to ashes; but mamma thinks that if God has put creatures into that planet, He must have given them a different nature from ours, so that they may be able to bear and enjoy what would be dreadful to us.”

“This is all very, very wonderful!” murmured Philibert, while Sidney went on with his account of the solar system.

“The next planet to Mercury is Venus,—that beautiful one which we sometimes see shining so brightly after sunset, when she is called the evening star. Our earth is the third of the planets; and after her come several others: Mars, and Ceres, and Pallas, Jupiter, and Saturn, and the Georgium Sidus—a tremendous long distance away—and some other planets, little ones, whose names I cannot remember.”

“ You have missed the biggest of all—the moon,” laughed Philibert. “ If the sun is like the father, the moon must be the mother of the planets.”

“ Oh, no, no !” cried Sidney, quickly; “ the moon is quite a little ball ; she is not so much as *seven thousand miles* round.”

“ Do you call that little ?” cried Philibert.

“ Little compared to the sun and the planets. The moon is only what mamma calls a *satellite*—a kind of attendant on our earth ; she keeps twirling round and round it, while we go twirling round and round the sun.”

“ What a pace *she* must go at !” cried Philibert, who, though slow in learning to read, was a very intelligent boy. “ If I were to go rushing round a field, and a bird were to keep flying round and round my head all the time, the movements of the bird would be ever so much quicker than mine.”

“ It is strange that I never thought of that !” observed Sidney, putting his hand across his eyes. “ One can't imagine the earth going a hundred and forty times faster than a cannon-ball ; as for the speed of the moon, it dizzies one's brain to think of it.”

“ I can't understand it at all,” cried Philibert. “ I have often seen the moon, and she looks as quiet and still in the sky as anything can look. If she is darting about like the lightning, how is it that she scarcely

seems to move an inch in ten minutes? There she is—as quiet as can be!”

Sidney looked upwards in the direction to which his companion pointed. There was the moon, pale and white as a piece of paper, high up in the morning sky, nearly opposite to the sun.

“I suppose,” said Sidney, after a pause, with a thoughtful shake of his head, “that what we call an *inch* of the sky is really many thousands of miles. You know,” he added more briskly, “how tremendously fast a steamer seems to go when one is quite near it; while I have seen a steamer far off at sea, and it seemed to go so slowly, that I could fancy that it was only painted on the sky.”

“That must be the reason,” said Philibert; “but how people can find out all these curious things about the sun and the stars—tell how big they are, and how fast they go—I can’t understand in the least. Have any of the other planets moons, as well as our earth?”

“Yes; Jupiter has four, Saturn has seven, satellites or moons,” replied Sidney.

“What wee dots they must seem!” cried Philibert.

“We cannot see them at all unless we look through a telescope,” said Sidney; “and then there are such strange things to be seen! Saturn has two great rings, which he carries about with him wherever he goes. I saw them both through the telescope, and one of the

little moons. They looked small even through the glass, because they are so far, far away; but mamma told me that if we were but one thousand miles from Saturn, he and his rings would look so enormously large, that they would seem to fill up the sky."

"Oh, how wonderful and grand!" cried Philibert; "and then one could see something of the tremendous speed with which that immense ball is rushing on in its way round the sun." The boy looked awed by the grandeur of the thought; and some seconds of silence followed. Philibert broke it with the question, "Are all the twinkling stars that one sees on a fine night, planets?"

"None are planets that twinkle," said Sidney. "Mamma says that we can tell a planet from a *fixed star* by its not twinkling, because it has no light of its own. A planet shines, just as the moon shines, because the sun is gleaming upon it."

"We—I mean, our earth does not shine!" said Philibert.

"Indeed it does," replied Sidney; "if we could look at it from Venus or Mars, we should see it shine as they do."

"There must be thousands more of fixed stars than of planets," observed Philibert; "for almost ever star that I look at twinkles and sparkles like a diamond. Are these fixed stars all going round the sun?"

“Oh no; don't you notice that they are called *fixed*, to show that they do not go round him like planets? These fixed stars are suns themselves, and they may have planets and satellites of their own, only they are so far—so very far away, that we can't know so much about them. Mamma told me that if a cannon-ball could be shot from the *nearest* of the stars to our earth, it would take *four millions and a half of years* on the journey before it could reach us!”

“It gives one a headache to think of it,” exclaimed Philibert, pressing his forehead.

“If mamma herself had not told me all this,” said Sidney, “I could hardly have thought such things possible to be.”

“One would like to know,” observed Philibert thoughtfully, “if every one of these fixed stars has a set of planets of its own rolling round it, and moons rolling round the planets, and people living upon them.”

“I have often thought that,” said Sidney. “It seems so wonderful—so awful. It makes one feel”—the boy raised his eyes towards the blue sky as he spoke,—“how very, *very* great God must be, who made them all—the fixed stars, suns, planets, and moons—and who keeps them all, and sends them on their wonderful courses, and never lets them go wrong or fall; and who yet can stoop to notice such poor, little, helpless creatures as we are!”

Again there was a solemn silence. Philibert had long known that God had made the sun and stars, but he had never before had the faintest idea of the wondrous size and marvellous motions of the heavenly bodies. To conceive such grandeur oppressed his young mind, and he gave a little sigh as if to relieve himself, as he said, "I wonder who first found out that the earth moved round the sun, instead of the sun round the earth. He must have been very clever to have ever guessed such a thing."

"It was guessed long—very long ago," observed Sidney; "but then people seemed to forget all about it; they thought it so clear to see that the sun moved round the world. At last a great Prussian philosopher, called Copernicus, who lived when our Edward IV. was king, he rubbed up the old notion, and from him it is called the Copernican system."

"What a head that man must have had!" exclaimed Philibert.

"Yes," observed Sidney Pierce; "he deserved to have a statue made to him a hundred feet high! but poor Copernicus had a very different kind of reward. It seemed a misfortune to him to be so clever, so much more clever than the rest of the world. His discoveries about the sun were thought quite wicked; the Pope threw him into a prison, and would not let him come out until he had confessed that what he had said was not true."

“But if he knew that it was true?”

“Ah! he had not courage to speak out; he was obliged by that cruel Pope to keep his knowledge to himself.”

“I never heard anything so strange!” cried Philibert; “fancy putting a man into prison because he found out wonderful things about the sun!”

“You’ve not heard the end of the story,” said Sidney. “Just one and twenty years after Copernicus died, there was born in Italy another clever philosopher called Galileo. Some think that he invented telescopes, and some that he only improved them.”

“And when he had looked a great deal at the sun and stars through his telescope,” asked Philibert, “did he say that the other man with the long name was right, and make everybody ashamed of having treated him so badly for telling the truth?”

Sidney smiled at the question. “Galileo did say that Copernicus was right,” he replied; “but he did not make people ashamed, or they would not have treated *him* just as badly as the Pope had treated the wise man before him.”

“Why, what did they do?” asked Philibert.

“They clapped Galileo into prison, burned his clever writings, and forced him to own, like poor Copernicus, that his discoveries had been quite false.”

“Well,” exclaimed the astonished Philibert, “I’m glad

that I did not live in those days. Not," he added with a smile, "that I should have been in much danger, unless my learned fairy had taught me some very curious things."

"Poor Galileo was brought before some terrible inquisitors," said Sidney, "to confess aloud before all that it had been nonsense to say that the earth ever moved round the sun. But the poor prisoner was so sure, so very sure that it did, that he could not help bursting out with the words, '*But it does move!*' in face of them all."

"I hope that he did not die in prison," said Philibert.

"No; Galileo lived ten years after he was let out," answered Sidney. "He died when our Charles I. was king in this land."

"And I hope that he was able to look through his telescope, and find out all that he liked in peace," said Philibert.

"Poor Galileo turned blind when he was getting old," replied Sidney; "so he could not look any more at the sun, and moon, and stars. But mamma says that he was very patient, and bore his trial meekly; and we hope that he now is happy where no ignorant, cruel men can ever torment him more."



CHAPTER XIII.

THE MEDICINE-CHEST.



“ONE thing I’m sure of, Sidney,” cried Philibert, “you have a wonderful lot of knowledge crammed into your little head.”

“I should know nothing at all,” said Sidney, “if mamma did not tell me, and if she had not taught me to read.”

“Well,” observed Philibert, stretching himself and yawning, “I should never get in so much if I had a mother to stuff me with learning on one side, and Fairy Know-a-bit on the other. I believe that it is learning so much that makes you so sickly and thin; you are poking over your books when you ought to be romping about; and staring up at the stars, when you ought to be snug in your bed.”

“I daresay that my not being strong enough for active amusements, has made me more fond of quiet ones,” replied Sidney; “but—”

“Master Philibert! Master Philibert!” the shrill voice

of Mary was heard calling from the direction of the house. The poor nurse was hunting for her little charges like a hen that has lost her brood.

“Here! what do you want?” shouted Philibert in reply.

“Have you quite forgotten your breakfast, Master Philibert, that you are taking your young friend to wander about the garden at this hour?” cried Mary, with some vexation, as she met the boys on the lawn. “There I’ve been hunting for you, when I ought to have been getting out the medicine for poor little Simon, who was told to call here at nine.”

“Never mind, Mary, we’ll make up for lost time,” cried Philibert, who was in better humour than usual. “I think that learning makes one hungry.”

“Why, Master Philibert, what ever have you been adoining with your hair?” exclaimed Mary, looking aghast at the yellow rat’s-tail lock hanging over the little boy’s forehead.

Philibert, thus disagreeably reminded of his misfortune, gave the unlucky lock a pull, and cried out, “Why, I should have thought that Copernicot and Gallipot would have made it curl round and round like a corkscrew!”

“Copernicus and Galileo,” laughed Sidney.

“Are they hairdressers, pray?” asked Mary.

The question threw both the boys into fits of laughter. Mary, who could not understand the cause of their

mirth, looked a little impatient as she hurried the young gentlemen up to their breakfast.

"There, now, sit down; the tea and eggs are half cold," said the nurse, as she pushed a plateful of bread and butter towards Philibert and his guest, who had just seated themselves at the table. The boys, who were hungry, set to their meal with right good-will, while Mary hurried off for her little medicine-chest, to get out something for a poor boy whom she expected to call for physic for his sick father.

"Sidney," said Philibert, lowering his tone, and not speaking very distinctly, for his mouth was full of bread and butter; "is it not a bore that my hair won't curl? I'm sure that you told me stranger things to-day than anything that Know-a-bit has taught me; and don't you remember his words,—

'When your fore-lock shall curl again,
Be sure that your search has not been in vain.'

"I suppose," said Sidney, thoughtfully, as he slowly dipped a piece of toast into his egg, "I suppose that Know-a-bit *could* have told you all about the solar system, and would have done so if you had asked him. If you recollect, he said that some knowledge must enter your brain

'More *precious* than all you from fairy could gain.'

Fairies might know all about the stars."

“To be sure they might!” exclaimed Philibert. “I daresay that when Know-a-bit lived four hundred years ago under the trees, and danced about in the moonlight, he made a little telescope for himself out of a straw, and was always peeping through it at the planets and the fixed stars. But what can it be that a fairy—a learned fairy like him—does *not* know?”

“Dearie me!” exclaimed Mary, from a side-table, on which she had placed her little medicine-chest; “I could have been quite sure and certain that some opium had been left in this bottle!”

“Mary’s a great doctor,” whispered Philibert to Sidney. “Her father is a chemist in London; and I do believe that Mary knows a great deal more about medicines than the old doctor who sometimes comes here. She gives physic to half the poor folk in the village. She is mighty clever about that sort of thing, and cures lots of coughs, and headaches, and toothaches.”

“Do you suppose that fairies know much about coughs, and headaches, and toothaches, and what can take them away?” asked Sidney.

Philibert laughed at the question. “Know-a-bit’s tiny teeth could go through the eye of a darning-needle,” he said; “it seems so funny even to think of their ever taking to aching!”

“But though fairies mayn’t have toothache, men, women, and children often have, and all sorts of other

aches besides," observed Sidney, who, young as he was, spoke from experience. "Would not the knowledge of cures be really more precious than all one could learn about paper or ink, or even the solar system?"

"Sidney, you are a capital fellow!" exclaimed Philibert, in high glee at the hope of regaining his power of seeing the fairy and the mirror. "I'll ask Mary to bring her medicine-chest here, and tell us where the things in it came from, and——"

"Just wait till we've done breakfast, please," said Sidney, who did not fancy the scent of the drugs before the meal was concluded.

"Mary is so proud of her medicine-chest," whispered Philibert, "that it always puts her into good-humour when I ask her anything about it. She is never tired of telling me of her father the chemist, and the splendid big bottles—blue, purple, and green—which he has in his window, and the red glass lamp that hangs over his door."

"It would be curious to know where the different medicines come from," observed Sidney Pierce. "I know that *cod-liver oil* is taken from the cod-fish, immense quantities of which are caught off the island of Newfoundland; but I have never heard from whence we get any other sort of medicine."

"There, I've done," exclaimed Philibert, pushing away his empty plate, and jumping down from his

chair; "and, Mary, you seem to have got what you wanted for Simon."

"It is for his father," said Mary, "poor Will Garland, who was a good, honest, hard-working labourer, bringing up his six little children as well as he could, and never asking a penny from anybody while he had the health to earn one."

"I know the look of him," cried Philibert; "Will Garland, the tall, rosy-cheeked fellow, who always went whistling to his work."

"I'm afraid," said Mary, sadly, "that he'll never go whistling again. Poor Will caught a bad cold some months since, which fell on his chest. He struggled on long—much too long—against illness, being the breadwinner of the family. None of his children are old enough to work, the youngest, twins, being babies in arms."

"Did Will not catch that cold in saving a neighbour's son from being drowned?" said Philibert.

"Yes; a poor idiot boy, who, but for Will's noble conduct, would have been drowned in the mill-stream," answered Mary.

Sidney's eyes glistened at the thought of the brave man risking his life and losing his health in the effort to rescue a helpless idiot.

"How do the poor people manage to get on," he inquired, "when the father is ill, and can't earn any food, and there are so many little children?"

“They get on very badly, indeed,” replied Mary. “If some kind folk did not show them kindness, I believe that the family would be starved.”

“I don’t like to hear these sad stories,” cried Philibert; “I wish that everybody were comfortable and jolly. But now, while you’re waiting for Simon, just show us that medicine-chest, please, and tell us what the physic is made of.”

“You have grown very fond of knowledge, Master Philibert,” said Mary, with a good-humoured smile. “You see, Master Sidney, my father is a chemist, and—”

“Oh, he knows all about that,” cried Philibert, rudely interrupting his nurse; “I’ve told him of the green and purple glasses, the red lamp and all. Just tell me, now, what is the good of that *opium* which you were hunting for just now, and whether people get it from fish, flesh, or fowl.”

“From neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, Master Philibert. Opium is a medicine to allay pain and give sleep; but to get into a habit of taking it constantly is just as bad as to get into a habit of drinking spirits. It injures both the body and the mind, till opium-eaters at last cannot tell what is true from what is quite false.”

“But where does it come from?” asked Sidney.

“From the green heads of poppies,” replied the nurse, “which are grown—so my father told me—in immense

quantities in different parts of Asia. The poppy-heads are wounded, and the juice which oozes out is scraped off, dried, made into flat cakes, and sent over to England."

"Who would ever have dreamed of getting such a medicine from poppies!" cried Philibert.

"Remember it is a poison as well as a medicine," said Mary.

"Is not *laudanum* something like opium?" asked Sidney. "It was given me to make me sleep when I was very ill indeed; and mamma said that it came from poppies."

"Laudanum is made from opium and spirits of wine. Poppy-heads are also used outwardly," continued the chemist's daughter; "they often afford relief by fomentation to painful swellings."

"I never thought that poppies were of any use at all," cried Philibert. "I never guessed that a medicine could be got from them to make sick people sleep."

"When you talk of sleeping," observed Sidney, "it makes me think of *chloroform*. I've heard that when people have to suffer some dreadful operation, they are often made to smell chloroform first, and then they feel no pain. A man fast asleep from chloroform may have his leg cut off, and know nothing about it till he wakes."

"I'll smell chloroform with all my might," exclaimed

Philibert, "when next I go to the dentist. I'll sleep like a top all the time, and never feel the wrench and the tug."

"Not every one can take chloroform without hurting health," observed Mary. "Like laudanum, it must be carefully used, and only by a doctor's advice."

"What is it made of?" asked Sidney.

"I've heard my father say that chloroform is made by distilling *chloride of lime*, spirits, and water. Chloride of lime is valuable in places where there is infectious illness, to prevent the disease from spreading."

"Is not that *camphor*," asked Sidney; "that pretty white lump, with a curious scent, that I see in the little drawer?" The two boys were now standing by the side-table on which the medicine-chest had been placed.

"Yes, that is camphor," answered Mary. "You can take it into your hand and examine it, if you like. It is a curious kind of gum, that camphor; it oozes out of a tree that grows in China and other eastern lands."

"I don't dislike the smell," observed Philibert, to whom Sidney had handed the camphor.

"Insects dislike it so much," said Mary, "that it is often put into drawers and boxes in India, to keep such creatures away. Camphor seems to waste itself in giving out its scent; for unless kept from the air, a lump of it will grow smaller and smaller, until it all disappears. A

very little piece, put into water, is apt to move round of its own accord, sometimes whirling about fast, almost as if it were alive. Camphor burns with a bright flame. A preparation of it, called *camphor julap*, is used as a medicine to quiet the nerves, when a person has been under great excitement. A piece of camphor held in the mouth will frequently soothe a cough. *Camphorated chloroform* is a powerful remedy for the toothache."

"Oh, there's *rhubarb*, that horrid stuff!" exclaimed Philibert, looking with disgust at the red contents of one of Mary's small bottles.

"That is a very valuable medicine, Master Philibert," said Mary; "it comes from the root of a plant that grows wild in Turkey."

"Is it the same rhubarb from which we have such nice puddings and tarts?" asked Sidney.

"I asked my father that question," replied Mary. "He told me that it was not just the same species of rhubarb that is used; and you know that we eat in tarts, not the root, but the stalk of the plant."

"There is *calomel* marked on that bottle," said Sidney; "does that also come from a root?"

"No, my dear," answered the nurse; "it is a preparation of that curious metal, *mercury* or *quicksilver*, which is dug out of mines."

"I should not like to have anything to do with calomel," said Philibert. "Did not papa say that it was

taking calomel that had turned Mr. Bullen's teeth so black?"

"It is a very powerful medicine," observed Mary; "and, like many others, if taken in too large quantities, it becomes a poison."

"It seems odd to make medicines of metals," observed Sidney.

"Gold was used in physic in former days, as I've heard," remarked Mary; "and *steel* is much given now to strengthen those who are weak."

"Ah, I know; *steel-wine*," said Sidney Pierce. "I have had to take that myself; it was not in the least like wine. I was given *bark*, too, to make me stronger; it had such a bitter taste!"

"It comes from the bark of a tree which grows in Peru," said Mary. "The Spaniards call it *fever-wood*, because it is a valuable cure for low fever. The Indians, I've heard, call it *fuddling-wood*, because it turns fish tipsy if they drink of the water in which the tree has been steeped."

"That is funny," cried Philibert.

"Is bark the same as *quinine*?" asked Sidney; "for mamma sometimes called what I took by the one name, and sometimes by the other."

"Quinine is a preparation of bark," answered the chemist's daughter.

"And now, what is *castor-oil*?" inquired Philibert,

making a face as he asked the question. "I suppose that, like cod-liver oil, or train-oil, people get it from some fat fish that swims about in the sea."

"No, Master Philibert," said Mary. "Castor-oil is procured by pressing the seeds of a plant that grows in the Indies. The seeds are bruised and boiled in water, and the oil rises to the top, when it is skimmed off and put into bottles, and sent over the sea to be sold as medicine in chemists' shops. But talking of oil," cried the nurse, suddenly interrupting the current of conversation, "I'm sure that your hair wants something of the sort; it is not fit to be seen;" and darting a glance of annoyance at the offending lock, Mary bustled off for comb, brush, and pomatum, to see what her hair-dressing skill could do in restoring neatness to Philibert's appearance.

"Sidney, it's no use trying," said Philibert, sadly; "I shall never see the fairy again. Here have I been patiently hearing about rhubarb, and calomel, and castor-oil, and all these dreadful things, and my hair is as straight as ever. Of course, after four hundred years' study, Know-a-bit has learned as much about physic as if he had lived all the time in one of the chemist's fine coloured bottles!"

"Perhaps," suggested Sidney, playfully, "Know-a-bit keeps a little medicine-chest of his own in a walnut-shell, and doctors the beetles and spiders."

Mary now came bustling back with brush and comb, and set hard to work upon Philibert's unruly lock. But in vain she twisted and twirled the hair; she might as well have attempted to curl the bristles of the brush.

"I never saw anything like this," exclaimed the nurse with some impatience. "I must get the curling-irons and give that lock a good squeeze."

"It's no use, Mary; you can't make it come right," cried Philibert, as the nurse pulled open a drawer full of all sorts of odds and ends, and hunted through it, throwing the contents to this side and that, till at last, from its inmost recess, she drew out an old pair of curling-irons, rusty from never being used, and poked them between the bars of the grate in order to heat them.

"You shan't touch me with those," cried Philibert, looking in some alarm on what appeared to him formidable-looking instruments.

"I must put the lock in paper, Master Philibert," said Mary. "Just you stand quiet, will you!" and in a minute the unruly hair was imprisoned in a piece of whity-brown paper.

"It will come out just as straight as ever; I know that it will," cried the little boy in despair.

"Not when it has been well pinched between hot irons," said the nurse, stirring the fire to make the curling-irons heat faster.

"I won't let these horrid things come near me!"

exclaimed Philibert; "they look as bad as the dentist's pincers! You shan't go burning off my hair!"

Mary made no reply to the silly boy; she drew out the irons from the bars, tried their warmth upon a piece of paper, and went with them towards her young charge. Philibert, who was something of a coward, began retreating as his nurse advanced armed with the irons, dodging her round the table; while Sidney could not help bursting out laughing at the scene.

"Stand still!" cried the nurse.

"Keep off!" cried the boy.

"You don't suppose that I could let your papa see you such a figure as that!" exclaimed Mary, making such a vigorous charge with the curling-irons that she drove the boy fairly into a corner. "You silly child, I'm not going to hurt you," she added, as she attempted to get firm hold of the curl-paper between the irons. The spoilt child, however, was not accustomed to submit; he plunged, roared, and kicked, while Sidney looked on in amused surprise, till a sharper yell announced that in the struggle the iron had done something that it was not intended to do,—not only squeezed the curl-paper, but knocked the young rebel across the nose.

"You've hit me—you've burnt me—wa-a-a!" roared Philibert, stamping more from passion than pain; while Mary, much vexed at the little accident, vainly tried to find out how much mischief had been done. Philibert



PHILIBERT AND THE CURLING-IRONS.

kept his fat hands over his nose, roaring and stamping still.

“Master Philibert,” expostulated Mary.

“I’ll tell papa—I will—I’ll tell him that you burnt me with hot irons!” yelled the boy.

How long this scene might have gone on before the astonished Sidney I know not, had not a hunter’s horn suddenly sounded not a hundred yards from the hall, and a loud trampling of horses’ feet been at the same moment heard. In a minute Philibert was up at the window, hair, curling-irons, and nose all forgotten; and

while the tears still glistened on his chubby, fat cheeks, he shouted out in a loud, merry voice, "There they go! —one, two, three—look at them jumping over the hedge! There—there—that's papa! isn't his horse a jolly big one? That man on the bay doesn't know how to ride;—he'll not go over the hedge; he'll go round by the gate—ha, ha, ha! I'll ask papa to buy me a pony; and won't I be up with the fox!"

"You're not fit for riding, nor anything else that is manly," said the nurse, who was relieved to find how slight was the hurt received by her wilful charge. "I'm ashamed, I am, that Master Sidney should see you behave like a baby."

Philibert could not help feeling ashamed also; so, after the hunting-party had gone out of sight, he allowed Mary to examine the little lump on his nose, and then release his lock from the curl-paper, warm from the pressure of the irons. The moment that she did so, down fell the hair as stiff and as straight as ever.

"I knew that it would be so!" exclaimed the petulant boy; "not all your laudanum, camphor, and rhubarb, your combing, brushing, squeezing, and pinching, can ever make my hair curl."



CHAPTER XIV.

THE PIECE OF GOLD.

THE strange little scene which he had witnessed had at first set Sidney laughing, but now it set him thinking. Philibert's fright and fury had at first only seemed absurd to his young companion ; but after the first feeling of mirth was over, the boy began to reflect. If he had ever been in the least degree inclined to envy Philibert for having so many more of this world's goods than himself, Sidney was certainly not disposed to do so now.

“ What a dreadful thing it must be to be left to have one's own way till one grows so spoilt and wilful that the least trifle can make one miserable, the least offence put one into such a passion as that ! Philibert's temper seems to run away with him ; he has no command over it at all. If he lived in a house made of gold, with fairies to serve him, and every pleasure that could be imagined, I don't believe that he would be really happy. I wonder, if I had been brought up like him, with no sweet mother to teach me to do what is right, and

punish me when I did wrong, if I should have been as wilful and cross, and as easily vexed as Philibert! Mamma has often told me that I have naturally an impatient temper, and used sometimes to fly into passions when I was a little child. But what care she has taken to train me!—how faithful she has been in correcting my faults!—how she has been on the watch to pull up every weed of naughtiness as soon as she saw it springing! If ever I grow up to be a useful or happy man, it will be all owing to my mother. Her love and her care are worth ten million times more than all Mr. Philimore's money."

Sidney's reflections were brought to a close by the sound of the bell rung for Mary.

"Ah, there must be Simon at last," cried the nurse, taking up the medicine which she had so kindly prepared; and she hastened with it down-stairs, followed by Philibert and Sidney.

A pale, thin little boy was waiting at the outer door of Fairy dell Hall; a stamp of care was on his young face, which told a tale of woe.

"How is your father to-day?" asked Mary.

"He was better yesterday," answered Simon; "he was getting a bit hungry, and mother said that bees a good sign, only—" the boy hesitated and sighed.

"Only she had not much to give him to eat," suggested the nurse.

Tears came into the eyes of the child. "Folk have

been very kind," he replied; "but then father has been so long ill, and there's such a lot of us to feed."

"I understand," said Mary; "kitchen physic is what your father most wants. How did he sleep last night?"

"He slept very badly," answered the boy; "but that was because Mr. Cowley called in the evening; whenever he comes father always is worse."

"He's your landlord, I suppose," observed Mary; "I daresay there is rent owing to him."

"How can father pay when he can't work?" said the child. The tears now trickled down his thin cheek, but he brushed them away with the back of his little rough hand. "Father always worked hard when he was well, and he always paid reg'lar, he did. It's hard that Mr. Cowley should come and talk about the Workhouse till he put father into such a worrit that he could not sleep a wink all the night."

"Ah, well," said Mary, with a compassionate sigh, as she placed the medicine in the child's hand, "we must hope that times will grow better, and your good, honest father get back his health."

Philibert and Sidney both heard the little conversation between the nurse and the boy. It interested Philibert but little. What was it to the Squire's pampered son that a poor man was in want of bread?—why should he care if little children in some low cottage were hungry and cold? Not that Philibert was a particularly hard-

hearted boy, but he had not been taught to feel for others ; he knew nothing of the sweet delight of relieving distress. He regarded the poor as if they possessed a different nature from his own. It was not so with Sidney Pierce. Little as his widowed mother possessed, she loved to give of that little ; and she had taught her son to pity the woes of those who, though born in a humbler station of life, were his brethren still. Thus it was that Sidney's hand had somehow or other found its way into the pocket of his brown dress, and that he was fumbling with his purse, which contained one half-sovereign and one sixpenny piece. If any one could have read the boy's thoughts, they would have been found to be something like this :—

“I'll give my sixpence to that poor fellow ; I shall never miss it at all, the Squire has made me so rich ; I shall have twenty times as much remaining to spend. But is there any real generosity in giving what one does not miss ? Sixpence will go but a very little way in buying food for a family, and no way at all in paying rent, and setting the poor man's mind at ease. How much more Simon's father needs this piece of gold than I do ! What is given to the poor is given to God, and we should give God our very best—not grudgingly, but joyfully ;—that is how my mother gives.”

Simon was walking along the gravel drive, on his way back to his home, when he heard a light, quick

step behind him ; he turned and met the glance of a kind young face, and at the same moment a small piece of money was squeezed into his hand.



SIDNEY'S BENEVOLENCE.

“Take that home to your father,” said Sidney ; and without waiting for thanks the boy was off in a moment. Sidney rejoined Philibert before his companion had even missed him—his attention being occupied by seeing the carriage coming round from the stables.

“Here is the carriage to take us off to the bazaar,” cried Philibert; “won’t it be jolly fun, as you and I have plenty of money to spend!” and he rattled his purse, which contained a good deal of silver, as well as the half-sovereign given to him by his father.

Sidney did not feel the expedition to the town quite as delightful as he would have done half an hour before; but if a thought of regret rose in the young boy’s mind, it was instantly chased away by the remembrance of the joy which his gift would cause in the home of that poor brave man who had risked his life to save that of an idiot boy. Sidney would not—could not be sorry that he had chosen to help a fellow-creature in distress rather than care for nothing but his own amusement and pleasure.

Mary, who had gone to get ready for the drive, soon appeared in bonnet and cloak; and, accompanied by her, Philibert and Sidney soon set out for the town. Philibert was very impatient to reach the bazaar, and wanted the coachman to flog the horses to make them trot the faster; to Sidney the drive itself was delightful, partly because he had seldom been in a carriage, and partly because an approving conscience had made his heart feel as light as a feather. Everything that he looked on seemed to have sunshine upon it.

At last the town was reached, and the boys, followed by Mary, hastened into the bazaar. It was a large and

tempting one, with many stalls heaped with all sorts of things that are attractive to the young. Philibert, ever self-indulgent, soon found his way to a stall loaded with all kinds of sweetmeats, and began buying lolly-pop, brandy balls, chocolate drops, pink rock, barley-sugar, and cakes, at such a rate that Mary became afraid as to what the consequences might be.

“Now, Master Philibert, you know that you made yourself sick when last you came here.”

Pop went another chocolate drop into the mouth of the greedy boy.

“Master Philibert,” persisted poor Mary, “had you not better come and look at the toys; there are such nice little guns, and swords, and—”

“I’ll come presently,” answered Philibert, speaking with his mouth full of plum-cake.

While the Squire’s son was thus throwing away on gluttonous indulgence enough of money to have given a meal to the whole family of the Garlands, Sidney was carefully laying out his sixpence to what he thought the best advantage. A beautiful shawl-pin for his mother, which, though only made of glass, looked just as well as jet; a pin-cushion for his aunt Lucy; and a ball of twine for himself, were the purchases made by Sidney. His sixpenny-piece was spent, but he felt satisfied and pleased with the choice which he had made.

“Mother will value my pin,” thought the boy, “just

as much as if it had been made of gold ; and it certainly is remarkably pretty. The twine is just what I am always wanting ; it will make famous ropes for the nice little ship which I mean to rig out in the winter. And then that heart-shaped pin-cushion, won't it take Aunt Lucy's fancy ! I should hardly have thought that one little sixpence would have gone so far !”





CHAPTER XV.

TALK ABOUT BIRDS.



S Sidney did not care to loiter long at the stalls when he had no more money to spend, he turned aside to look at a very large glass-case, filled with a great variety of stuffed birds for sale, which occupied a principal place in the bazaar.

“Are you fond of *ornithology*, my boy?” inquired a mild-looking gentleman with a bald head, who chanced to be standing near.

“I do not know what that is, sir,” replied Sidney, with a modest frankness which pleased the gentleman.

“Ornithology is the science which relates to birds,” said he.

“I like to hear about birds,” cried Sidney. “I wish that I knew something about these beauties kept in the case.”

“Some of these are rare,” said the gentleman, whose name was Mr. Gray; “many of them natives of tropical

climates. There is an immense variety of birds in different parts of the world."

"Yes," observed Sidney Pierce; "I don't suppose that any one can arrange birds in classes, as mamma tells me that flowers are arranged."

"There you are wrong, my young friend. There is a certain order observed in all the works of nature, and ornithologists have been able to class all kinds of birds in six divisions. By observing a few simple rules, they find out to which of the six any bird belongs."

"Would you mind telling me the names of the six orders, sir," asked Sidney, "and how one is to know what birds belong to each?"

"I will tell you with pleasure," answered Mr. Gray, "and give you both the Latin and English names."

As the gentleman repeated the titles, Sidney counted them on his fingers.

"*Accipitres*, or falcon; *picae*, or pye; *anserēs*, or duck; *grallæ*, or crane; *gallinæ*, or poultry; *passeres*, or sparrow."

"I am afraid that I shall not remember these names," observed Sidney; "the Latin is sure to go out of my head."

"You will have a better chance of recollecting them," said Mr. Gray, "if I mention to you a few leading characteristics of the orders, and point out to you specimens of the birds belonging to each. You see that one with strong hooked beak and sharp claws?"

“ I know that is an eagle,” replied Sidney ; “ a fierce bird of prey, that can carry off a lamb to its nest.”



THE EAGLE.

“ All such rapacious birds—not only eagles, but hawks, kites, and buzzards—belong to the order of falcon. Those that we may call the soldier class of birds have first place. Pyes follow behind them, including ravens, rooks, jackdaws, and magpies. Some birds of most beautiful plumage belong to this second order, such as the whole tribe of parrots ; the Baltimore oriole or fire-bird ; the golden oriole, that yellow bird

with black wings, of which you see a stuffed specimen yonder."

"Do you mean, sir, the one perched close beside that strange hanging nest?"

"Yes; the nest is curious as well as the bird. The golden oriole, which is found as far north as France, is remarkable for her tender love for her young. It is said that, when defending her little brood, she fears no enemy; and that even if the nest be seized, the faithful mother will not fly, but chooses rather to be made a prisoner than to desert her helpless charge."

"One could not bear to hurt such a tender mother!" cried Sidney. The boy was thinking of his own.

"Look at yon splendid bird, with a tail of light-yellow feathers, so exquisitely graceful and delicate that its beauty can scarcely be excelled!"

"Is not that a bird of paradise?" asked Sidney.

"Yes. This beautiful native of Guinea is also of the order of pye."

"It seems very strange!" exclaimed Sidney; "that lovely bird with its fairy feathers is so unlike the dull raven or crow!"

"Though they are but distant relations," said the gentleman, smiling, "the elegant lady amongst birds must not flaunt her fine feathers in scorn of the sober black undertaker."

"I think that these little beauties of humming-birds,"

said Sidney, "are even more lovely than the bird of paradise. But of course they have nothing to do with pyes."

"Nay," replied Mr. Gray; "these little jewels of the feathered race, the smallest, perhaps the most beautiful of all, with plumage of ruby, emerald, or sapphire, belong to the order of pye."

"How can the order be distinguished?" asked Sidney; "it holds such a variety of birds."

"By a sharp-edged bill, strong short legs, and feet formed for walking, perching, or climbing."

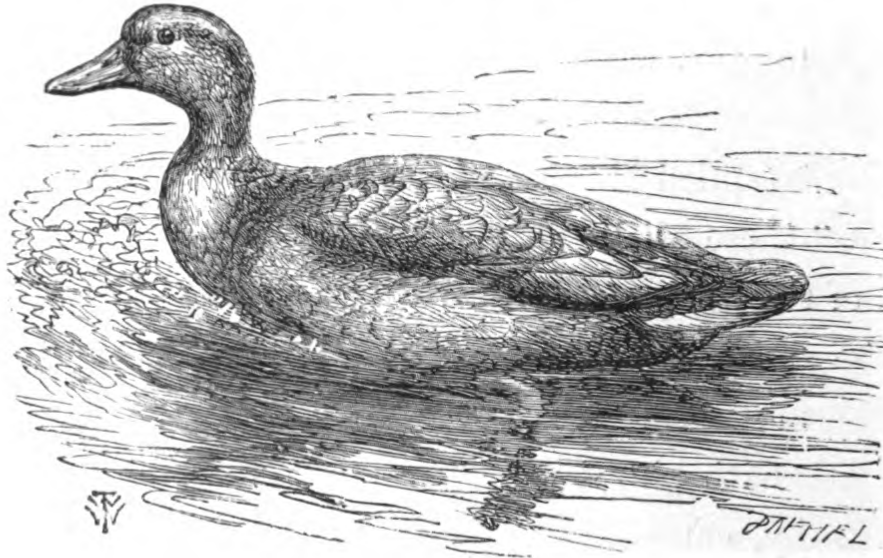
"And pray, sir, what is the third



THE BIRD OF PARADISE.

order?" said Sidney; "I won't forget the falcon and pye."

"The third order, *anseræ*, is easily remembered. It



THE DUCK.

comprehends all the broad-billed, web-footed race, that feed upon frogs, fish, and worms."

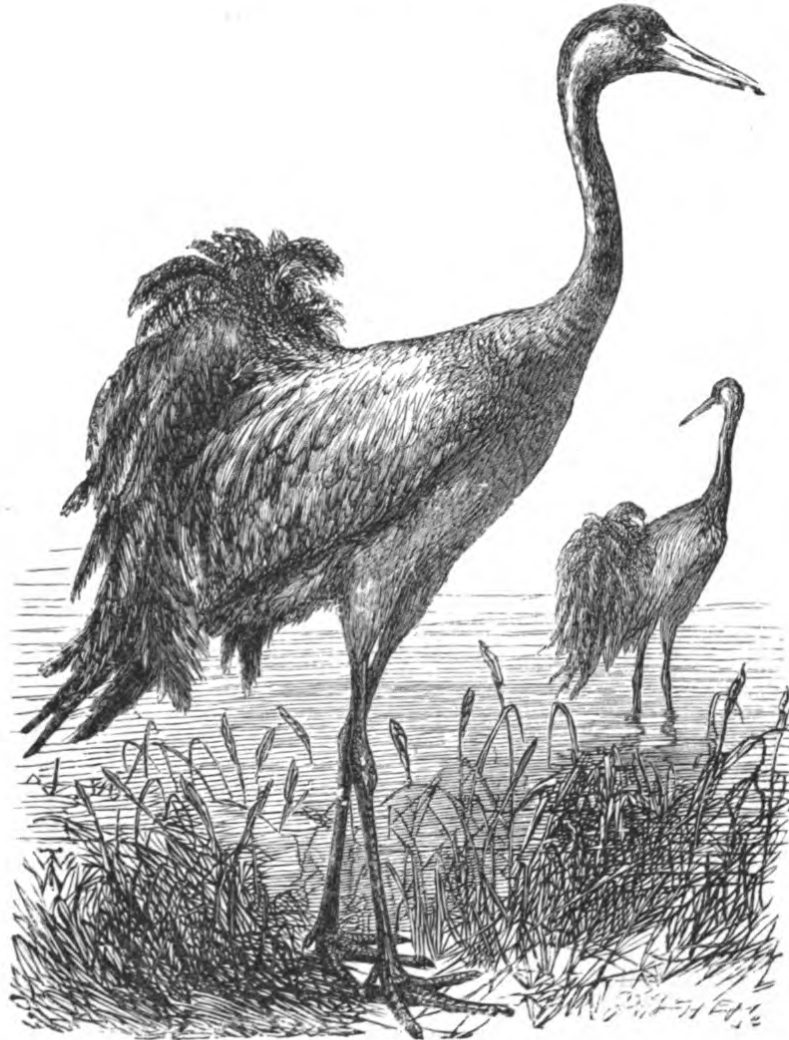
"Ah! ducks, and such like," observed Sidney.

"For the fourth order, we change from web-feet to long legs, and find ourselves amongst cranes. Amongst birds of this kind we count herons, spoonbills, trumpeters, and the brilliant scarlet flamingo."

Sidney had touched successively each finger of his right hand, as Mr. Gray had recounted the four first orders. He said, with a smile,—

"I wonder what will come for my thumb!"

"A most useful order," observed Mr. Gray; "that of *gallinæ*, or poultry: the turkey and cock that strut in



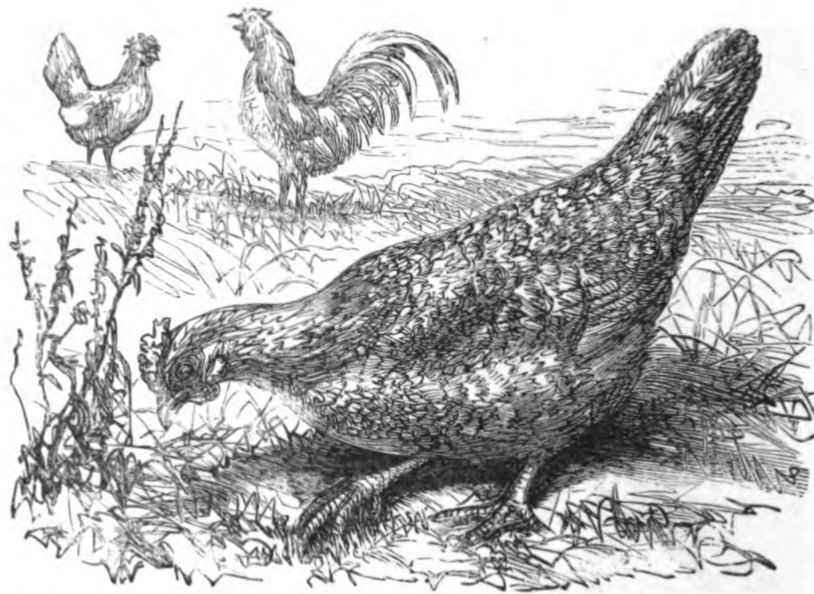
THE CRANE.

our barn-yards, the pheasant and partridge that feed in our moors, all are included in this.”

“I am wondering what order the peacock can belong to,” said Sidney. “It is dashing enough, with its feathers of green and gold, to keep company with the pyes; but still it seems to have more of the nature of cocks and pheasants.”

“It certainly belongs to your order of the thumb,”

observed Mr. Gray with a smile. "Were you to see a peacock stripped of his feathers and served up for your



THE FOWL.

dinner, you would hardly know him from a barn-door fowl."

"It would seem a shame to eat such a splendid bird!" cried Sidney.

"The Romans used to eat it," remarked the gentleman; "and not unfrequently, in olden times, the peacock appeared as a dainty dish on the tables of the wealthy in England."

"We have had none of the singing-birds yet," said Sidney; "if they all belong to the sixth order, thrushes, blackbirds, nightingales, and larks, I shall think it the nicest of all. It should be called the musical order."

"It is named after the sparrow."

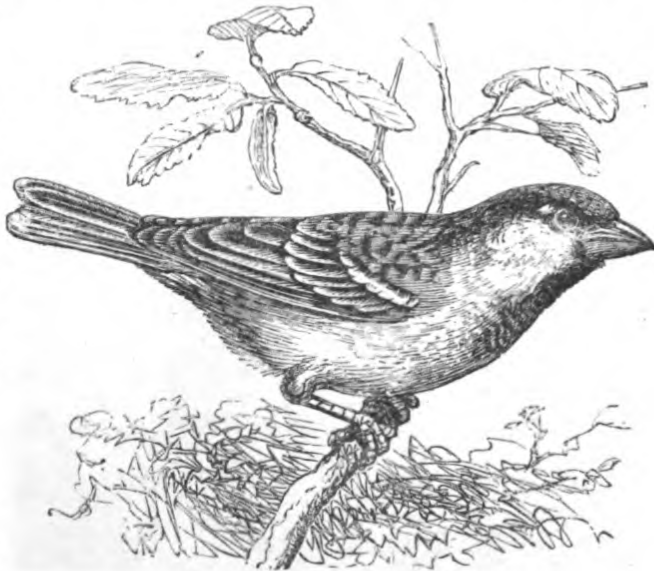
“How funny that is!” cried Sidney. “It seems as if the commonest birds were chosen to lead their set. If I had had the arranging, I would have had eagle order instead of falcon; parrot order instead of pye; peacock instead of poultry; and as for the little brown sparrow, it should never have been heard of at all. Nightingale order would have sounded so well!”

“In the same way, I suppose,” said Mr. Gray, “you would have had *lion* order amongst beasts, instead of classing lions, tigers, panthers, and leopards under the division of cats.”

“Cats!” cried Sidney, in surprise.

“To return to our birds,” said the gentleman; “though we have but the sparrow kind to consider, it comprehends such a vast variety as to be arranged in four divisions.”

“Then it will take up the four fingers of my other hand,” said Sidney. “Pray what comes first, for the little one?”



THE SPARROW.

“Thick-billed birds, such as the grosbeak, bunting, and finches, of which there are more than a hundred species.”

“Such as goldfinches, greenfinches, and bullfinches, I suppose, sir,” observed the boy.

“The second division have the upper beak somewhat hooked at the end, as is the case with swallows; while the third division of the sparrow order have a notch near the end of the upper beak. This is the case with thrushes, fieldfares, and blackbirds.”



BILLS.

“But where do my favourite nightingales come?”

“In the fourth division,” replied Mr. Gray, “marked by bills straight, simple and tapering. The large class of larks, and also of pigeons, rank with your musical friend.”

“What puzzling divisions!” cried the boy; “larks and pigeons are not in the least alike, and nightingales are so different from either. You have been very kind, sir, to tell me so much about birds; I wonder if I can manage to remember the six great orders. I am afraid that the four divisions of the army of sparrows will march out of my brain.”

“And all the Latin names,” observed Mr. Gray.

“If you would please, sir, just to add the Latin as I go over the English. First, there are the fighters—the greedy birds of prey—the order of falcons,” continued Sidney, touching the little finger of his right hand.

“ Accipitres,” added his friend.

“ Second order, the parrot—I mean the pye.”

“ In Latin the name is picæ.”

“ Then the web-feet—the ducks.”

“ Anseres.”

“ The fourth order is—let me think—ah! the long-legged fellows—the cranes.”

“ Grallæ,” added Mr. Gray.

“ The fifth, the useful—the poultry.”

“ Gallinæ.”

“ Oh, how much amused mamma would be, if I told her that yesterday I dined on one of the order of gallinæ,” laughed Sidney.

“ You will hardly forget the sixth order, the sparrow,” observed Mr. Gray, “ which is passeris in Latin.”

At this moment Master Philibert came up, with both of his hands full of toys; Mary was following behind, carrying a helmet, breastplate, and flag.

“ I say, Sidney, have you done your buying?” inquired the boy.

“ It was done long ago,” answered Sidney. “ I have been amusing myself here by looking at these beautiful birds. I am much obliged to you, sir,” he added, turning politely to the gentleman, “ for what you have told me about them.”

“ It is a pleasure to tell anything to one so attentive and willing to learn,” said his friend. Then, glancing at

Philibert, he added, "Surely that is Mr. Philimore's son," and he kindly held out his hand to the boy.

It was not convenient to Philibert to put down the sword, gun, and top which he held, so he only gave a little awkward nod, and abruptly turning to his companion, said, "Where have you put the things which you have bought?"

"In my pocket," answered Sidney.

"They must be very little things," said Philibert. "It is time for us now to go home. I'll show you what I have bought when we get into the carriage."

Philibert moved off without so much as looking again at Mr. Gray, perhaps from ignorance of manners, perhaps from mere forgetfulness; but Sidney turned modestly towards the gentleman and bade him "Good-bye," before following his companion.

"How different are these boys," said Mr. Gray to himself; "the one has the manners of a gentleman, the other those of a boor. I should like to know more of that Sidney."

"Now just look at the jolly lot of things that I have bought with my money," cried Philibert Philimore, as he threw himself down on the cushions of his father's luxurious carriage. "Here's a sword, isn't it handsome? and a gun that looks almost like a real one, and a helmet and breastplate bright and strong; did you ever see anything like them?"

"You know that I have seen those fine old ones hanging up in your hall," said Sidney.

"Rusty fusty things!" cried Philibert. "You don't mean to say that you like them as much as these?"

Sidney Pierce had been taught to be polite, but he had also been taught to be truthful. He would rather have been silent, and so not have disappointed his young companion, but as Philibert waited for an answer, he gave one straightforward and honest. "I can't help liking the old ones best," he replied; "partly because they are so old, and partly because they were made for real use instead of for show."

Philibert looked discontented and almost angry; his fancy had been caught by the glittering armour, but, as was often the case with the rich man's spoilt child, the least thing put him out of conceit with his toys. Philibert pulled his sword out of its scabbard and tried its edge on his finger; then was half ready to fling it out of the window, because he found that it was not sharp like a real one.

"That bazaar woman—she's a cheat," he exclaimed angrily; "it will cut no better than a spoon!"

"It is lucky for your fingers that it will not, Master Philibert," observed Mary.

Philibert pouted, looked out of temper, complained that the carriage was stuffy, fidgeted, got up to put down the window, then sat down on his gun, and snapped it in

two. This put him into worse humour than before, added to which he had a most uncomfortable feeling of sickness, though he did not like to own it; for the boy knew well enough that any indisposition of his would be at once accounted for by his visit to the sweetmeat stall.

“Perhaps,” suggested Mary, “Master Sidney will show us the pretty things which he has bought.”

Sidney wished that he had not been asked about his purchases, but as Philibert was curious to see them, he drew out from his pocket the twine, the pin-cushion, and the shawl-pin.

“Is that all that you’ve bought? they’re not worth twopence!” cried Philibert in disdain. “I daresay that you have had a lot of sweeties, and have gobbled up your money at the sugar-plum stall!”

“No; indeed, I have not,” laughed Sidney. “I am not quite so gree—” he stopped short, for it suddenly struck him that it was very possible that this was exactly what Philibert himself had been doing.

“Then you’re a stingy fellow!” cried little Philimore, who easily guessed what the word was which Sidney had left uncompleted. “Of all things, I hate a stingy fellow. You’ve never had so much money before in all your life, and you’re hoarding it up like a miser;” and Master Philibert Philimore gave an insolent look of contempt that was more provoking even than his words.

Sidney had never been much with other boys, and

was quite unaccustomed to such rudeness. It made his young spirit boil with anger ; and if he had not thought of his mother at that moment, there is some chance that Philibert would have had a box on the ear as his only reply. Never before had Sidney Pierce had such difficulty in keeping his temper. His cheek was burning hot, and his lip quivered as he replied, "I am not a miser, and I care as little to hoard as you do."

"Then where's your half-sovereign?" cried Philibert. "If you've not eaten it, nor hoarded it, nor lost it, you must have something to show for your money."

Sidney was on the point of saying, "I gave it to Simon this morning ;" but he recollected that in bestowing charity we must not let the left hand know what the right hand doeth, nor make a display before men of what we give for the sake of God.

"I have spent it," Sidney said, more calmly ; "but I do not see that I need tell you how."

"Oh, keep your secret ! keep your secret !" cried Philibert, bitterly, for the word recalled to him how ill he had kept his own ; and intuitively he put up his hand, and gave his unmanageable fore-lock an angry tug.

"That unlucky hair !" exclaimed Mary ; "what to do with it I can't think ; and I hear there's a gentleman coming to dinner : you won't be fit to be seen."

"I don't care a fig !" cried Philibert, with a burst of fretful impatience, flinging himself back on the cushions,

and kicking aside the sword and breastplate, which he felt in his way. The spoiled boy was thoroughly out of temper and out of spirits, partly, as I have hinted already, from the effect of his late self-indulgence at the confectioner's stall. Philibert had not taken enough to make him ill, but he had taken enough to make him feel uncomfortable and cross.

There was silence in the carriage for about ten minutes, only broken by the roll of the wheels. Mary was thinking what measures could be taken to bring Philibert and his unruly hair into order—whether a good birch rod would have any effect on the one, and oil on the other. Sidney was watching every bird that he saw on the wing, trying to decide whether it belonged to the order of pye or of sparrow. Then his thoughts flew off, light as the birds, to little Simon in his humble home; and he feasted on the idea of the delightful surprise which the sight of the half-sovereign would cause to the poor sick man. “He will sleep better to-night,” thought Sidney.

Philibert first broke the silence with something between a sigh and a yawn; then wearily exclaimed, “I wonder why one never can really be happy!”

“When I was a little girl,” observed Mary, “my mother used to say,—

‘To live for self is to live for sorrow;
The well-spent day brings the happy morrow.’”

“ I don't want your stupid rhymes,” cried Philibert. “ I should be happy enough if I could get everything my own way. Why are you shaking your head, Sidney ?” he angrily added, catching sight of his companion's unconscious movement.

“ I was thinking about what mamma told me about happiness,” replied Sidney. “ She said that what a wise man of old had thought about fame was true of happiness—it is like our own *shadow*. If we run after it, it is always *running away from us* ; while, if we walk straight on in the way of duty, it *follows us* like our shadow. That is such a pretty thought ! and it has come into my mind so often since I have been at Fairy-dell Hall !”


Philibert pouted, but made no reply. One thing was clear, even to him—that though he had always been running after happiness, careless of what he knocked over in his way, he had never come up with it yet.





CHAPTER XVI.

TALK ON STEAM.

 might be expected, Sidney had a far better appetite for his dinner than Philibert had, the Squire's son having spoiled his already by eating sweets. Sidney sat down with all the more relish to his comfortable meal, from the thought that his gift had spread a table in the cottage of Will Garland; that the poor hungry invalid was perhaps at that moment partaking of strengthening food which a young boy's help had supplied. Sidney's heart was exceedingly happy, and its cheerfulness showed itself on his face. Mary remarked that Master Pierce was getting much stronger already, and that Fairy dell air would do more for him than barrels of cod-liver oil. Sidney, from his gentle, courteous manner, was a great favourite with Mary, and she often held him up as an example to her spoiled little charge, which did not make Philibert Philimore feel more kindly towards his young guest. Somehow or other, that rhyme of Mary's dis-

agreeably haunted Philibert's mind. He found himself almost unconsciously repeating, though not aloud,—

“To live for self is to live for sorrow;
The well-spent day brings the happy morrow;”

but he would angrily break off with, “That's all nonsense. Of course, those must be happiest who don't go worrying themselves about other people; and as for spending a day well, boys like me have nothing to do but to be as jolly as they can.”

After dinner the two companions again sauntered into the garden.

“Sidney,” said Philibert to his guest, “I have some hope of getting this horrid hair of mine to curl again this evening.”

“I am glad of that,” answered Sidney. “But where do you expect to get the knowledge ‘more precious than aught you from fairy could gain?’”

“Our butler told me that a gentleman is coming to dine with papa—a tremendously clever chap, who has written some books himself, while the fairy has only read them. Now, I may get something out of him that will make little Know-a-bit stare.” And Philibert stroked down the lock on his forehead with a more complacent air.

“But I should be afraid,” observed Sidney, “that a learned man might talk so as that neither you nor I could understand him.”

“You seemed to get on well enough with that bald old gentleman at the bazaar, who said that he knew my papa.”

“He made things simple,” replied Sidney Pierce; “but if he had only given me the hard Latin names of the six divisions of birds, I should have stuck at my little finger, and have never got so far as my thumb.”

Philibert did not exactly see what Sidney’s finger and thumb had to do with the matter, but he did not choose to ask for an explanation.

“So, perhaps,” continued Sidney, “this learned gentleman who is coming this evening will make things simple for us little boys.”

“I don’t want things so simple,” said Philibert, proudly. “If I can understand a fairy, I am not likely to be much puzzled by a man. I must and will get knowledge, by some means. I can’t bear that you should see the fairy, and the mirror, and all the curious sights, and that I should have nothing to amuse me but that shrill squeak of a voice.” Philibert glanced round anxiously, afraid lest Know-a-bit should have heard him; then went on,—“I would rather, much rather, that neither of us had anything to do with a fairy, than that you should have the fun, and I be shut out in this way. It worries me more than anything.”

Ah, Philibert Philimore! were not selfishness and sorrow connected here? Sidney could have taken

pleasure in the pleasure of a friend, though not allowed himself to share it. There would have been enjoyment to him in that which to you gives only an envious pang. They who can be happy in the happiness of others need never be in want of something to make them rejoice.

I will not describe the various amusements in which most of the rest of the day was spent by the boys in Fairydell Hall. Sidney had so much pleasure in examining the old pictures and curiosities that he needed nothing else to make the time pass agreeably; but he did not forget to write to his mother. He was amusing himself with a book, when Philibert called him to accompany him down to the dining-room, where the two gentlemen—the Squire and his guest—were at their dessert.



SIDNEY'S DILIGENCE.

“Let’s be off, and get some knowledge and nuts,” cried the boy.

On entering the lighted dining-room, where the

gentlemen sat at the table, with wine and fruit before them, Philibert was rather surprised to see in his father's guest the same bald-headed gentleman whom he had met that morning at the bazaar.

"I say, Sidney," he whispered, "that's your friend of the birds."

Mr. Gray held out his hand to Philibert; and this time the boy took good care not to decline it. The gentleman then shook hands kindly with Sidney, and asked playfully whether the six orders of birds had flown out of his head since the morning, or whether he had been able to keep them in any order at all.

"There's something that requires order," said the Squire, looking hard at Philibert's unlucky forelock. "What on earth has Mary been doing with your hair?"

"Pinching it with a hot iron, and burning my nose," cried Philibert, in the tone of one who feels himself shamefully treated.

The Squire laughed, clapped his boy on the shoulder, and said something not very complimentary to Mary's hair-dressing talent. Plates were then heaped with nuts, and one put before each of the boys; but Philibert paused, nut-cracker in hand. Know-a-bit, in bidding him attain precious knowledge, had given him a harder nut to crack than any of those on the table.

"What are you waiting for, Philibert?" asked the Squire, as he filled his own glass with port wine.

“I want Mr. Gray to tell me something.”

“Something about birds, eh?” inquired the guest; “my little friend yonder seems curious about them.”

“Not about birds nor beasts,” replied Philibert; “I have heard plenty about them. But I want you to tell me what is the most wonderful, the very most wonderful thing that men have ever found out?”

“The boy means to set up for a philosopher one of those fine days,” observed the Squire, smiling as he sipped his old wine.

“Yours is a question to give an answer to which must require a little time and consideration,” said Mr. Gray; “man has made so many wonderful discoveries, that it is difficult to choose between them. There is the invention of the Alphabet, for instance—”

“Oh, I won’t go to the A, B, C!” cried Philibert impatiently; “every baby knows that!” The ignorant boy did not understand that what a baby might *learn*, it must have required the most wonderful genius to *invent*: that it is a disputed point whether the honour of the first discovery of the use of an Alphabet belongs to the Egyptians, Chaldeans, or Phœnicians, while some think that this knowledge, like the gift of speech, must have come direct from Heaven.

Mr. Gray smiled at the folly of the boy, and went on. “Then there is the art of printing—”

“Oh, don’t stop at that!” cried Philibert, remember-

ing that Know-a-bit had mentioned it at their first meeting.

“Another very wonderful discovery is that of the power of *steam*,” said Mr. Gray; “a power by which vessels can now go against wind and tide, and heavy trains proceed at a pace such as our forefathers never dreamed of.”

“Do you mean such steam as comes from a kettle of boiling water?” asked Philibert.

“The very same,” replied Mr. Gray.

“I don’t see what that can do,—except scald one’s fingers,” said the boy. “I don’t understand one bit what you mean by the power of steam. Is not steam only hot water?”

“Water when heated to a certain point becomes steam,” remarked Mr. Gray, “and in doing so it expands, that is, it takes up a great deal more room than it does in the form of water, and a prodigious force lies in this power of *expansion*.”

Philibert bit his lip with vexation, for he did not understand Mr. Gray in the least, but he was ashamed to say so after his silly boasting to Sidney. Mr. Gray, however, saw that his words were not understood, and kindly tried to explain his meaning to the boy.

“You see this,” he said, taking a walnut into his hand; “you doubtless know that it came from a tree.”

“Yes; from our big walnut-tree,” replied Philibert.

“And that big tree sprang from *one walnut*; you may say that it was packed, leaves, branches, trunk, and all, in the narrow space of one shell.”

“I know that it was,” said the boy.

“Year after year it expanded by growth; here was great power of slow expansion. The full-grown tree takes a great deal more room than the little kernel of a nut. I place this walnut in a wine-glass; if it could *suddenly* expand to the size of a tree, what would become of the glass?”

“It would be smashed into bits!” cried the boy.

“So would something much bigger and stronger than a wine-glass,” thought Sidney.

“Now let us turn our thoughts to the steam. When you boil water in a kettle you turn it into steam—it expands—it requires a great deal more room. Some of it escapes by the spout, but that does not let it out quickly enough; you must know that if left on the fire it boils over—the steam forces the lid off the kettle.”

“But one might have a kettle with no spout,” said Philibert; “and a lid fastened down so tightly that nothing could force it away. What would happen then? Would not the steam be kept in its prison?”

“Nay,” said Mr. Gray; “the steam, strong in its power of expansion, would smash the kettle to pieces; iron itself would give way under the pressure.”

“I never could have fancied that steam, a thing that

one can blow aside, or put one's finger through, as if it were nothing but air, could have the least power over strong, firm iron," said Philibert Philimore.

"Have you never heard of boiler explosions?" asked Mr. Gray.

"Why," observed the Squire, "there was one the other day on board a steamer, which cost the lives of five or six poor fellows."

"These accidents," continued Mr. Gray, "are occasioned by hot water in the boiler expanding into steam, for which not sufficient means of escape are provided. The huge boiler bursts under the pressure, the confined steam thus forces its way to freedom. But," added Mr. Gray, turning kindly towards Sidney Pierce, "my little friend there looks as if he had some question to ask."

"I should like to know, sir," said Sidney, "how this power of steam can set vessels or railway-carriages going?"

"You would not understand a description of complicated machinery, my boy; you can have but a general idea that the expanding steam forces up a piston, and that that piston is so connected with a paddle or a wheel, as to set it, and keep it in motion. There is an immense variety of steam-engines; they are used for many different purposes, and do their work much faster than it could be done by hands. It is only steam, for instance, which makes it possible for the great *Times* newspaper

to be printed off at the rate of one hundred and sixty copies *in one minute!*"

Philibert clapped his hand up to his fore-lock. Alas! it hung stiff and straight as ever.

"Pray, who first found out that steam had such wonderful power?" asked Sidney.

"The idea of the possibility of its being used in machinery is at least as old as the time of Charles II.," replied Mr. Gray; "for a Marquis of Worcester in the year 1663 published a book on the subject, in which he mentioned a kind of steam-engine of his own contrivance. In France, an inventor, whose name was Solomon de Caus, was struck by the idea that steam might be used to propel carriages. This unfortunate man, instead of being praised and rewarded for his discovery, was thrown into a French prison, where he remained till his death, looked upon as a *madman* by those who took their own ignorance for wisdom!"

"That was something like what happened to Copernicus and Galileo," thought Sidney; "only they were thought wicked, while this poor Frenchman was only thought mad. What a dreadful thing it must have been to have lived in times when people were punished and persecuted only because they were a great deal more clever than those around them."

"Various other thoughtful men," continued Mr. Gray, "followed in the same track of discovery; but to the

famous Watt, who flourished in the reign of George III. is perhaps due the praise of being the actual inventor of the steam-engine."

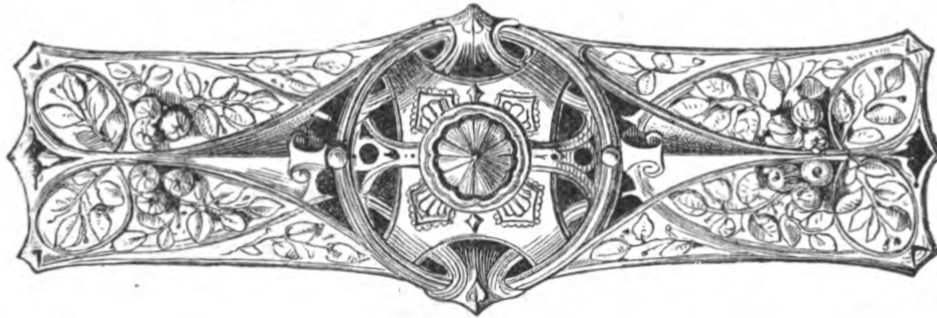
"Inventions often grow slowly, like the walnut-tree," observed Squire Philimore, as he cracked another nut-shell.

"I thought," said Sidney modestly, "that mamma had told me that the name of the man who set steam-trains going was George Stephenson."

"George Stephenson may be called the grand inventor of the railway-system," replied Mr. Gray. "Steam-engines had been known before his time; *tram-ways*, or iron lines on the road, had been used for common carts; but Stephenson set the steam locomotive, as it is called, on the lines; and from 1814, when his engine 'Blucher' first puffed along the tram-way, we may date the beginning of that wonderful system which has covered our island with an iron net-work of railways, and enables us to rush from one end to the other at a pace which our fathers never even dreamed of."

"How astonished every one must have been," cried Philibert, "the first time that they saw that 'Blucher' go rushing along the railway."

"There was not much of *rushing* at the beginning; 'Blucher' at first did not move faster than a lady could walk. Great inventions are seldom complete all at once; they require much thought, much patience, and much practice, before they are brought to perfection."



CHAPTER XVII.

A SURPRISE.

PHILIBERT was now beginning to despair of ever seeing the fairy again; he had cause to feel disappointed and disheartened, for whenever he raised his hand to his lock, he felt inclined to tear it in his impatience, it seemed such a hopeless thing to attempt to make it curl. While he was turning over in his mind whether it would be worthwhile to make another effort to draw from Mr. Gray knowledge "more precious than aught he from fairy could gain," the door of the dining-room opened, and the butler made his appearance.

"Please, sir," said the servant, "there's a woman called 'Garland' here who wants to speak to Master Philibert."

"Garland—Garland!" repeated the Squire, as if trying to recall the name; "don't we know something about her?"

"Yes, papa," said Philibert; "she's the wife of the man who saved the poor idiot boy."

“ Ah! I remember—a very gallant thing he did,” said the Squire; “ deep stream—strong current—the man had great difficulty in getting to land.”

“ And has never been well since,” observed Philibert; “ Mary sent medicine to him to-day.”

“ But Mary says,” joined in Sidney, making an effort to speak, for he thought that he might help a poor man by so doing, “ Mary thinks that plenty of food is the medicine which he needs the most.”

“ I can't fancy what the woman can want with me,” cried Philibert. “ Tell her we're all at dinner, and can't be troubled now.”

“ Yes; tell her to call at some other hour,” said the Squire.

Sidney felt rather relieved at this message being sent. He was afraid that, had Mrs. Garland been admitted, she would have embarrassed him by thanking him before the Squire and Mr. Gray for the present given in the morning. Sidney was sorry, however, that the conversation immediately turned from the gallant deed of poor Garland to curious cases of recovery from drowning; he had hoped that from the Squire's full purse something might have been given to the sick labourer and his family.

In less than five minutes the butler came back, with a little piece of gold on a silver salver, which he handed to Philibert Philimore.

“ What's this for?” asked the boy, in surprise.



SIDNEY'S GENEROSITY MADE KNOWN.

“The woman says that she thinks that you gave this to-day to her little boy by mistake, taking it for a sixpence; and she can't feel easy in keeping it.”

“Oh, the honest creature! and when she is so poor!”

involuntarily burst from the lips of Sidney, but in a tone so low that no one could overhear him.

“I think the woman is out of her wits!” cried Philibert; “I neither gave little Simon a sixpence nor anything else.”

“She says that the young gentleman gave it,” persisted the butler.

“There are two young gentlemen here,” observed Mr. Gray, who had quietly been watching the expression on the face of young Pierce.

“Do you know anything about the matter?” asked the Squire, addressing himself to Sidney.

The boy felt uncomfortable at the silence which followed the question. “Yes,” he answered shyly; and turning to the butler, he added, “Tell the honest woman that there’s no mistake, and that she’s very welcome to the money.” Sidney then began to crack nuts vigorously, wishing to hear no more of the matter.

“Wait a moment,” said the Squire to his butler; and Mr. Philimore fumbled in his waistcoat-pocket. “There are not many poor women who would have brought back a bit of gold given in mistake for a sixpence; I like to encourage honesty, so here’s another bit to keep it company,”—he threw down a sovereign on the salver; “and you may tell Mrs. Garland that I will see what can be done for her husband.”

“Hurrah!” exclaimed Sidney, delighted to find that his half-sovereign was so quickly trebled.

“Ah, Sidney!” cried Philibert, “I know now why you could buy your mother only a shawl-pin at the bazaar.”

“Eh?” said the Squire, bending forward with a good-humoured smile on his jovial face. Again were his fingers in his pocket, again was a sovereign drawn thence; but when he held it out towards Sidney, the boy drew back, his pale face suffused with a sudden flush.

“Oh no, sir—thank you—I’d rather not,” he stammered forth, putting his right hand behind him. Mr. Gray came to his assistance.

“Don’t urge him, Philimore, don’t urge him. Don’t take from him the pleasure of knowing that his self-denial has been the means of saving an honest family from want.”

Mr. Philimore rather reluctantly replaced the money in his pocket. “I’ll only let him off,” said the Squire, “on condition that he go with me to the town to-morrow, and help me to choose a Cashmere shawl which I hope that my friend, Mrs. Pierce, will favour me by wearing with the shawl-pin.”

“Depend upon it,” said Mr. Gray with a smile, “the *pin* given under such circumstances as these will be more precious to the mother of that boy than the richest shawl ever worn by an Indian queen.”

Philibert was spoilt and selfish, but better feelings lay at the bottom of his heart, and they were drawn out by

the force of example. Generosity, kindness, unselfishness, he had cared little for all these so long as he had only heard them *spoken* of, but when he saw them carried into practice by a boy not much older than himself, when he saw them a source of blessing to others, and of joy to their possessor, he felt, perhaps for the first time in his life, that happiness and duty are indeed closely united. Drawing nearer to Sidney, Philibert whispered in his ear, "Well, I believe now that Mary's rhyme is true after all,—

'To live for self is to live for sorrow,
'Tis the well-spent day brings the happy morrow.'

"Your hair!" exclaimed Sidney, in a tone of amazement, which drew the attention of both the gentlemen.

"Why, Philibert, my boy," cried the Squire, "your lock has taken to curling without the help of the pincers!"

Philibert's hand was up in a moment, and he felt the forelock twisted into a close, tight curl, lying like a ring of gold on his forehead. He was so much delighted that he could hardly refrain from jumping for joy. He had acquired at last the "knowledge more precious than all he from fairy could gain;" the mirror would display its wonders for him as well as for Sidney; and he would once more enjoy the pleasures which he for a time had forfeited by breaking his promise to Know-a-bit.

Perhaps my little readers would like to hear what the

two boys saw on the following morning : how Philibert beheld the pearls of his little brooch bedded in oyster-shells, and Sidney with astonishment viewed the head of his glass pin suddenly changed into sand and ashes, and then as suddenly restored to transparent beauty. But I will rather leave my young readers to find out for themselves all that the fairy might show them. Knowledge, like Know-a-bit, lives in books ; and Fancy has ever her fairy mirror to delight us with curious sights and scenes from distant lands.

I would only add one word at parting. The knowledge of the way to true happiness is worth more than all contained in the great encyclopædia, and that one Book alone can teach us ; while the sight of a face which we have gladdened by an effort of Christian self-denial and kindness, is the sight of all others on earth which gives true and abiding joy !







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