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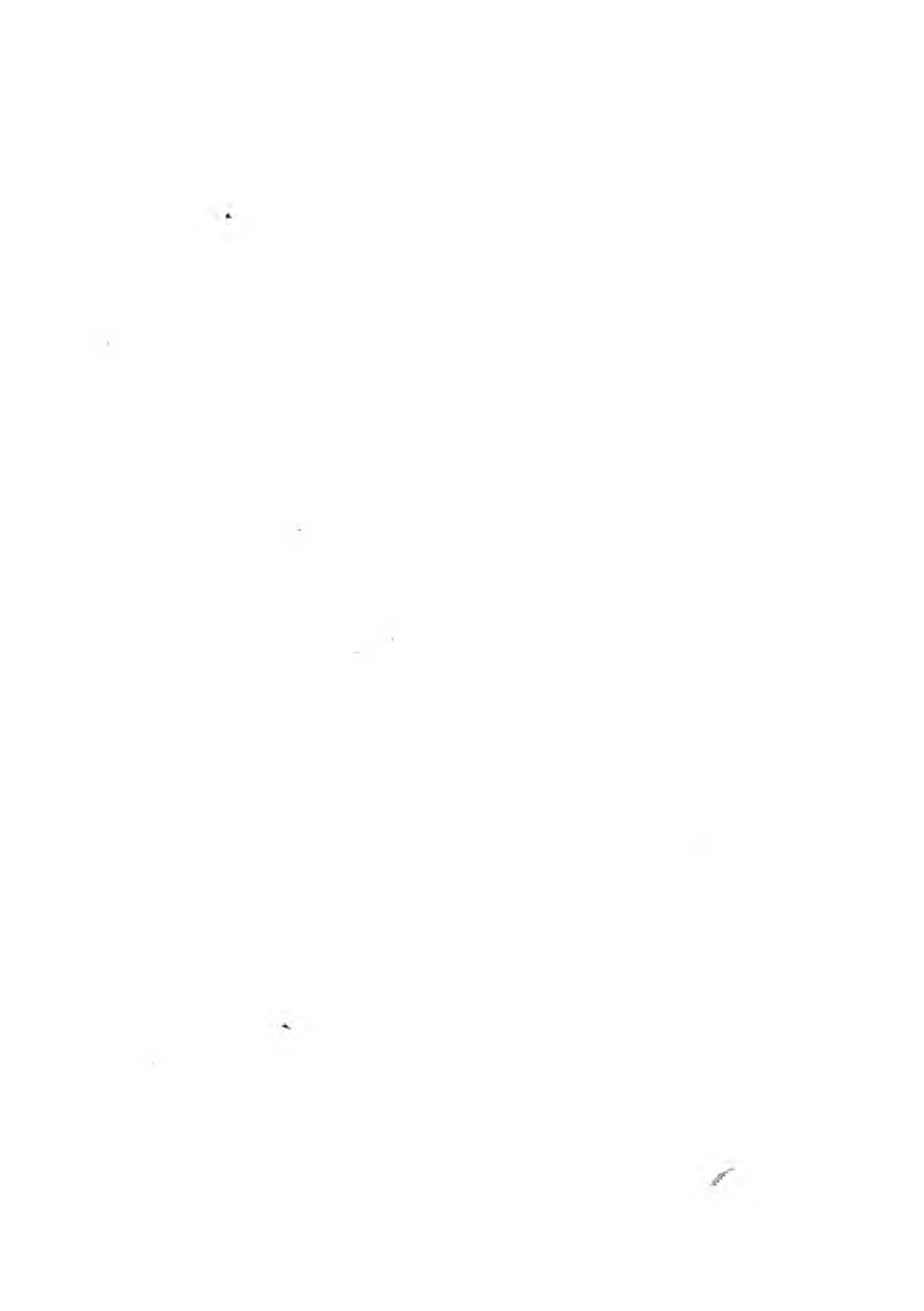
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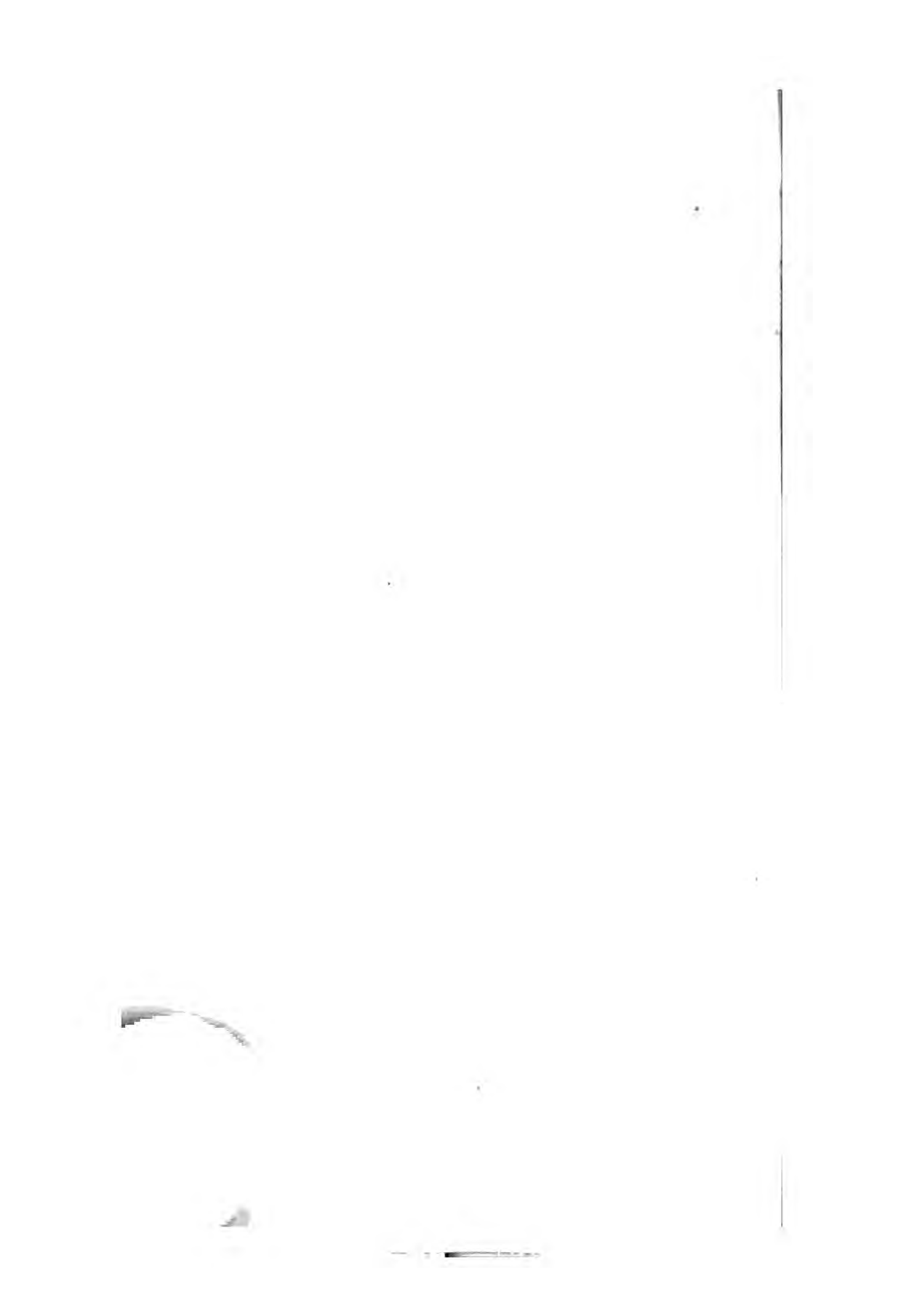


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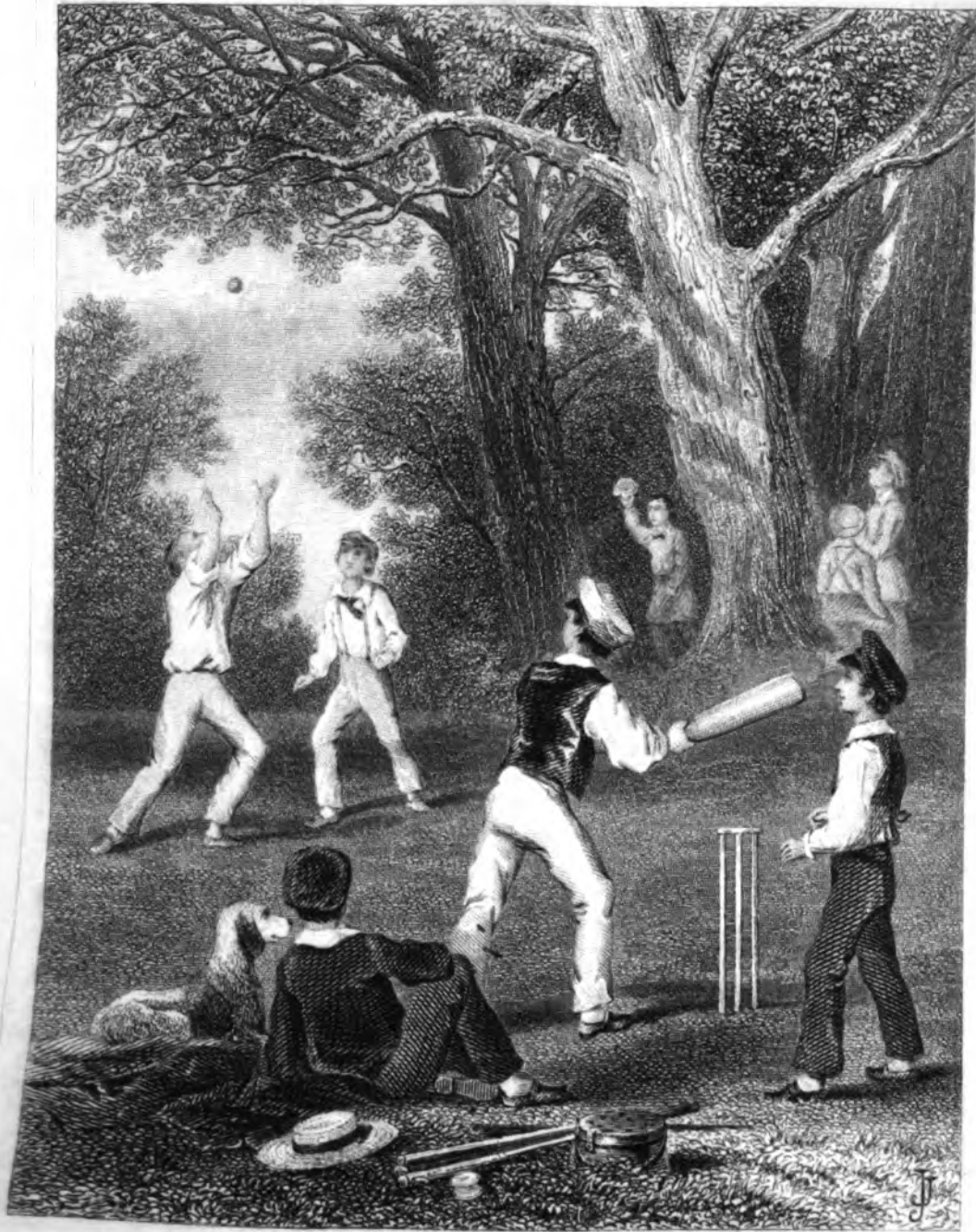












Engraved by W. J. Edwards.

"Like sportive deer they coursed about,  
 And shouted as they ran,  
 Turning to mischief all things of earth,  
 As only boyhood can."

LONDON: WILLIAM TEGG & CO

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 And shouted as they ran  
 Turning to mischief all things of earth  
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 can

SUNNY SEASONS  
OF  
BOYHOOD.

BY GEORGE MOGRIDGE,

AUTHOR OF THE "VILLAGE AND THE VICARAGE," "EPHRAIM  
HOLDING'S DOMESTIC ADDRESSES," ETC. ETC.

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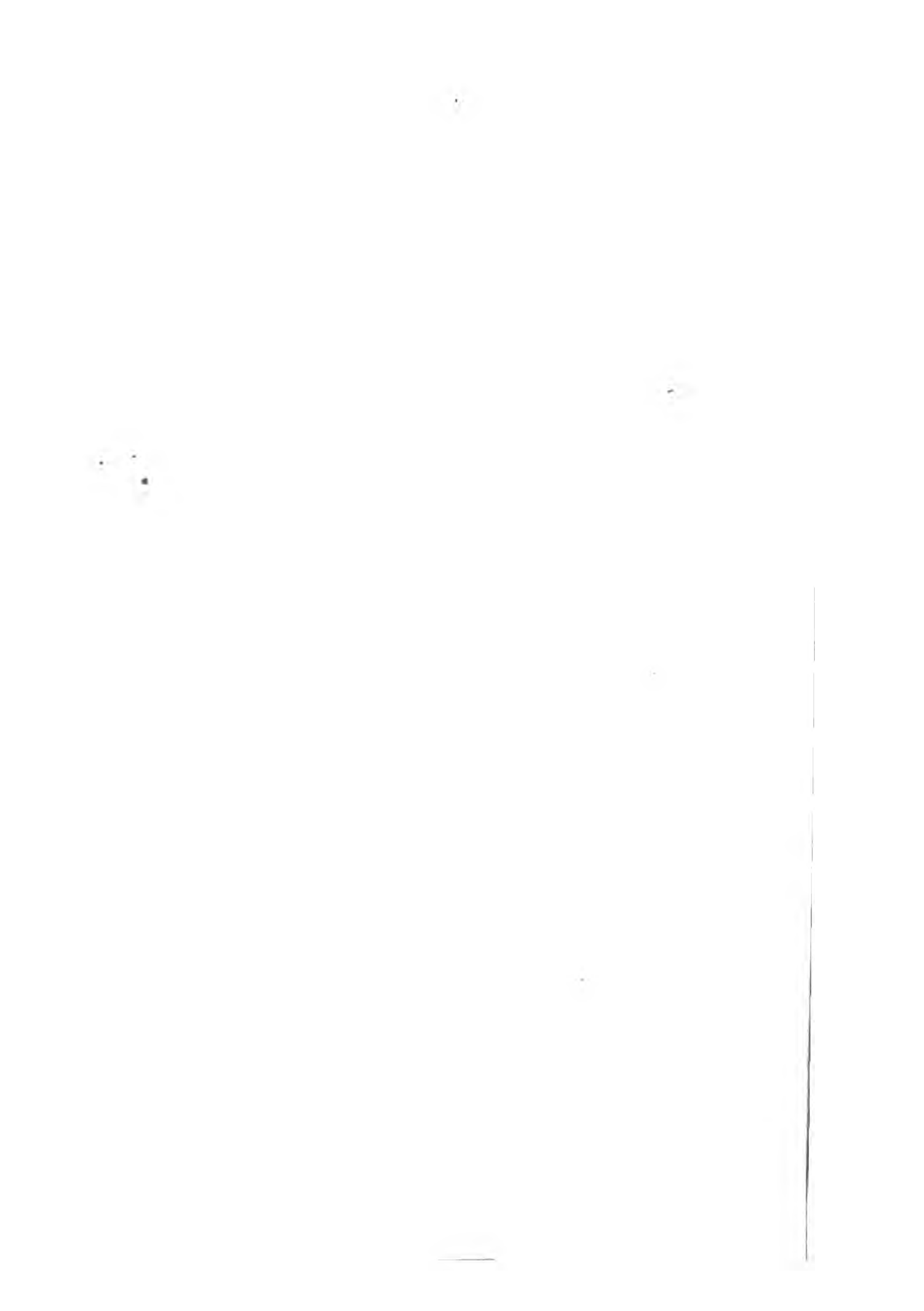


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# Sunny Seasons of Boyhood.

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Not ours to lead the young astray  
With idle mirth and folly,  
Though willingly we drive away  
Gloom, care and melancholy.  
Our volume acts a wiser part  
Through every line and letter,  
For, while it cheers the reader's heart,  
It strains to make it better.

---

## Chapter First.

---

### SCHOOL AND SCHOOLBOYS.

THOUGH the very name of schools is somewhat shadowy to the young, yet cannot we think of the sunny seasons of boyhood without going back to our schoolboy days. As the clouds in the sky add to the beauty of a summer's day, so in the sunny season of youth do the grave pursuits of learning increase the holiday pleasures of the schoolboy. Gaieties will never do long together without gravities. Continual holiday would become wearisome to the scholar, while the sobriety of his school duties adds in his hours of recreation to the buoyancy of his spirit and the hilarity of his heart. While I make this remark,

old Holyrood Academy rises to my remembrance, with my severe schoolmaster, my talented tutors, and my light-hearted playmates. Not yet have I forgotten the inhabitants of the village; some of the most remarkable among them will be described.

There's a time to be merry, a time to be wise,  
Their sunshine and shadow presenting;  
And if in our mirth we should wisdom despise,  
We shall all find a time for repenting.

There were, also, places as well as persons round about the neighbourhood of Holyrood Academy full of interest. Whetstone Ridge and Blackwater Pond had much to recommend them to notice, and Arrow Bridge, Grouselly Moor, and Horberry Bog were not a whit behind them. If half the tales that were told about Beachy Wood, Holloway Rift, and Stormy Fell, were to be related to you, they would rank in your estimation as very remarkable places. Much might be said about Mossy Tump, Peter's Point, and the old Gravel Pits, in addition to some singular relations concerning Litherton Tops, Yew Tree Coppice, Brookhouse Farm, and the Dwarf Holes, that would set you thinking, and if you were not surprised it would surprise me. Hailstone Crag, Bilberry Hill, Sandstone Rock, and the Ragged Windows, are talked of far and wide, and odd things have taken place, by all accounts, at Caryfort Camp and the Tibberton Lime Kilns. Some of these

I may, perhaps, refer to in the course of my sketches and comments on days gone by.

Thirty or forty years ago, though school-boys were the same ardent, light-hearted adventure-loving beings as they are now, and ever will be, schools were differently conducted to what they are now, and I doubt not that many of the manners and customs—the plans and practices of old Holyrood Academy would be altogether new to scholars of the present day. But a country boarding-school at all times, and under all circumstances, presents such a motley train of foolish feuds and romantic friendships—youthful aspirations and boyish enterprises—such a strange mixture of sport and spelling—tasks, tales, and tipcats—pranks and punishments—laughter, long faces, and latin grammar—copy-books, caning, and kite-flying—arithmetic, blackberrying, and breaking up—in short, such a variety of sudden transitions, in-door occupations, and out-door pastimes and adventures, that it cannot fail to rank among the things that are interesting and entertaining. If, in the sunny seasons about to be described, I give you no pleasure—if I put neither fire in your eye nor cheerfulness in your heart—then tell me that I have forgotten my youthful days, and that I know nothing of what is going on under a boy's waistcoat. It is my intention to amuse and to instruct you, and if I can do neither, I will try to find some satisfaction in having attempted both.

It was always a puzzle to me in my younger days to account for the odd names of some of my schoolfellows. That a schoolboy should find among his playmates Mountains and Hills, Rocks, Cliffs, Lakes, and Rivers,—Butchers, Bakers, Turners, Coopers, Tanners, and Painters, is not very wonderful. In these we seem at once to see their origin. Blacks and Whites, too, with Browns, Greys, and Greens, as well as Woods, Forests, and Flowers, are of the same character—and so are Eagles, Crows, Rooks, Finches, Sparrows, and Wrens, with Bishops, Deans, Monks, Parsons and Clarks: that boys and men should bear these names is nothing remarkable, seeing that there is nothing objectionable in them. It is easy to imagine that the son of John might be called Johnson, and the son of Thomas, Thomason; nor is it difficult to conceive that a man might be called Mason, Slater, Weaver, from the trade or calling he followed; but how any one came to bear the name of Snookes, Hogsflesh, Wild, Savage, Gore, Death, or Coffin, I cannot tell. To say that these names were given them by way of nickname will not clear up the difficulty, for that will not account for the parties having adopted them themselves. In feudal times, names may have been now and then imposed on persons by their superiors, but still there is no small mystery in the matter.

I might say something about the Micklejohns, Muggins, and Merryweathers; the Goodenoughs,

Prettypmans and Pennefeathers ; the Lundyfoots, Twycross, Cruikshanks, and Strangeways, for they are quite odd enough to call forth half a dozen observations, but instead of this, I will make a few remarks on the common names of my schoolfellows.

For a private school, Holyrood Academy was a large one. Many years had I the advantage of belonging to that celebrated establishment, and during this period, reckoning those who remained at school and those who went away, my schoolfellows amounted to a great number. In very few cases did their names agree with their characters. *Sharp*, it is true, was a *quick, clever* lad, and *Little* was of *small* stature, but of all the boys in the school, *Short* was the *tallest*.

Neither *Lock* nor *Bolt* could *keep* anything committed to their care. *White* too often had hands like those of a *blackamoor*. *Ezra* was a sad *scribe*, *Moreland* could never *sketch*, and *Luke* was anything but an *Evangelist*.

*Alexander* had nothing *great* about him. Whether *Homer* knew *Greek* or not, he certainly did not know English. No one suspected *Addison* of having had a hand in the "*Spectator*," and *Becket* was by no means calculated to be *Archbishop of Canterbury*.

If there was a *polite* boy in the school, it was *Hogg*,—if an *honest* one, it was *Turpin*,—*Moon* had a face almost as red as the *Sun*,—*Howard* was as hard-hearted as a *Turk*,—*Cook* had never



been at sea in his life,—I question if *Nelson* knew the *figure-head* of a ship from the *rudder*,—and *Thoroughgood* was certainly the *worst* lad in the school.

It was rather odd that *Jenner* was pitted with the *small-pox*, and that *Byron* could not bear *poetry*. *Bell* spoke so *low* that he could hardly be heard. *Webb*, whatever else he might catch, never *caught much learning*, and *Gurney* was altogether ignorant of *shorthand*.

It was a rare thing for *Gold* to have either *silver* or *copper* about him. *Dolt* was by no means a *fool*. Of all the boys I ever knew, *Hardy* had the least *pluck* in him, while *Lamb* was as bold as a *lion*.

*Groom* was the son of a country *squire*. *Merry* was as *mopish* as an owl. *Swan* was considered by everyone to be a great *goose*. I never met with one who had less *cunning* and more open-heartedness than *Fox*. *Lark* was a lazy *lie-a-bed*, and *Raven* whistled like a *Nightingale*.

Some regarded *Page* as the *prince* of good fellows, but I always thought *Carter* a *king* to him. We knew but little of *Spring*, for he was at school with us only one *winter*. *Grant*, I must acknowledge, was ready enough to *give* anything to anybody, but *Savage* was a poor *tame* creature. *Pierce*, with all his boasting, had no *point* in him, and *Clarke* had made up his mind to be a *parson*.

There was no getting *Bond* to act up to his word. *Warwick* came from *Worcester*. *Best* was a *bad* one. We used to like *Paine*, he was such an incessant laugher. *Wild* was a *steady* lad. *Crouch* would *bow down* to no one. *Whitehead* had a dark complexion with *raven black hair*. *Manners* was an *ill-behaved* cur. *Small* was indeed a *great* eater, but *Martin* was the boy to *swallow*.

I was always of opinion that names might be turned to a good account by young people emulous of wisdom and virtue. My advice to them is this: pick out from the names of your school-fellows such as have been famous among mankind for good and bad qualities, and then do your best to emulate the good example of the one, and avoid the vicious courses of the other. Try, according to your parts and the opportunities you possess, to equal *Walkinghame* in arithmetic, *Jones* in languages, *Murray* in grammar, *Euclid* in mathematics, *Bacon* in philosophy, and *Newton* in Astronomy. Who can tell, while shunning the parsimony of an *Elwys*, the infidelity of a *Paine*, and the immorality of a *Rochester*, but you may in time equal a *Crichton* in talent, an *Arkwright* in industry, a *Johnson* in learning, and a *Howard* in philanthropy.

---

## Chapter Second.

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### EARLY CHILDHOOD.

THOUGH the sunny seasons of youth, about to be described, will not embrace the earlier years of childhood, yet are there bright spots that must ever remain visible in the fading prospects of our earliest boyhood. We have not forgotten, we hardly can forget, the proud moment when we were first put in trousers. This event is chronicled in our memory, recorded in our history in letters of gold. Our blue jacket and buttons, and the jingling coin in our trouser-pockets, are a part of our by-gone existence.

Nor have we forgotten, nor are we likely to forget, some of the shadowy days of our childhood. That was one of them, when full of the dismal foreboding of long lessons, and the cane of the school-master, we first quitted our home for the boarding-school. Strong as our faith was in our father and mother, we more than half doubted their honied accents, when they told us we should be "cheerful as the day," with our "pleasant playmates," and "happy as

little kings!" Now and then, but not often, we look back at these seasons, and we call to mind the past, contrasting them with present scenes. Who among us, even though years may be graven on his brow, has forgotten his grandmother, however long she may have been called away from the world?

And who is there who has no remembrance of his grandfather, though summer and winter, seed-time and harvest may have succeeded each other through a goodly term of years, since he saw his cheerful smile, or heard the music of his pleasant voice? Many a wise lesson have we received from those over whose mouldering dust the daisy has often bloomed.

And there are others, besides those who were related to us, who live in our memory on account of their kindness to us when we were children. Many such do I remember, and Old Anthony is among them. He was fond of me and my play-mates.

Aged Anthony was a very good man, but at times very comical. I do believe that he was never half so pleased as when he had made us happy; but though he liked to make us happy, he never failed to correct our errors. One day having heard us boasting a great deal of our courage, he determined to put it to the proof.

He got us all into his study, where on the table in the middle was something covered over

with a clean napkin. Aged Anthony looked very grave, and he made us look grave too, by telling us that he wanted our advice.

It was so odd for an old man, so wise and good as aged Anthony was, to ask the advice of little children, so we looked at him, and then at one another without speaking a single word, for we knew not what to make of the matter.

“There they are,” said he, “under that napkin, lying upon one another, with their heads and their tails all higglety pigglety. What shall we do with them! What shall we do with them!”

Here aged Anthony walked up and down the study, as though he was in a great difficulty. We were standing up close to the table, but when we heard that the things under the napkin had heads and tails, and that they were lying all higglety pigglety together, we were sadly puzzled, and some of us shuffled a little further off the table, thinking they might get from under the cloth, and leap upon us.

“Now,” said aged Anthony, taking a large knife out of a drawer, and holding the handle towards us, “if any one of you will take this knife and boldly cut off one of their heads, I will give you a silver sixpence.”

Every one of us shrunk back, not a bit disposed to have any thing to do with him. There stood aged Anthony, still holding out the knife, but if he had offered us a crown-piece, instead

of a silver sixpence, not one of us would have taken up the knife, or have touched the napkin.

“Well,” said he, opening a closet, and taking out a large sword which had belonged to his great grandfather. “Well,” said he, drawing the sword out of the black scabbard, “if you are afraid, I will stand beside you, with my drawn sword, and if one of them should happen to leap upon you, I will chop him in two at a single blow.”

Now this, instead of giving us fresh courage, only added to our fears, the knife and the sword made us think that whatever they were, under the napkin, they must be fearful creatures. Some of us looked pale, some got behind the chairs, and poor Luke Lilly, who was of a timid disposition, went and stood by the door, holding it half open, that he might, if necessary, take to his heels. You may be sure that we kept a sharp look out at the napkin, and every now and then we thought that we saw it stir.

“Nay,” said aged Anthony, “if you think for a moment that we shall not be safe armed with the knife and this sword, I can call John and tell him to come with his loaded blunderbuss, for I should not like any accident to take place in my house.”

The very thought of John and the loaded blunderbuss, made the affair truly terrible, so that when Anthony offered any one a crown-

piece to take away the napkin, we would not have done it for any money.

“What are you afraid of?” said he, “if I had thought they would hurt you, I would not have allowed them to be brought into my study. To be sure they did look red, and the bristles on their backs stood up all on end when I covered them over, but for all that I should not think them dangerous. We shall certainly be able to manage them,” said he, going up to the table, “and if you will not venture to uncover them, I will, but mind that you stand by each other, however fierce they may be.”

Aged Anthony when he told us to stand by each other, might as well have talked to the winds, for no sooner did he brandish his sword with one hand, and lay hold of the napkin with the other, than off we started for the door, as nimbly as a party of lamplighters, screaming and squalling. Some got out safe, some fell on the floor, and Luke Lilly could scarcely have run up the garden-walk faster had a tiger been about to be let loose after him.

I was among those who fell, and what was my surprise on getting up again and stealing a fearful glance at the table, to see nothing in the world there but a large bowl of rough red gooseberries. There they were, sure enough, lying higglety, pigglety, with their heads and tails one upon another; but though they looked red, with their soft prickles standing up in all

directions, there was nothing very terrible about them.

It was some time before we all got together again in the study. Luke Lilly was the last, and he held the door fast, before he would venture in, peeping between us at the table, for though he had heard of the gooseberries, he could hardly bring himself to believe what he had told him.

Aged Anthony soon put up the knife into a drawer, and the sword into its scabbard, saying, that finding himself surrounded by so many brave fellows as we were, he thought neither the sword nor the knife would be wanted.

“But now,” said he, “I am in as great a difficulty as I was before. What shall we do with them? What shall we do with them?” We began to smirk, and smile, and titter among ourselves, thinking the difficulty might very soon be overcome.

Aged Anthony called Pompey, and gave him a gooseberry, but though he snapped it up when it was pitched to him, he soon dropped it again on the floor. After rolling it about with his nose for a little time, he went away and left it. Anthony then gave one to the tabby cat, but she only set up her back, looking at it for a moment, and then took herself off.

“What shall we do with them? What shall we do with them?” again cried out Anthony; “for neither the dog nor the cat will help us out of the difficulty.”



In a little time every one of us had a heap of rough red gooseberries before him on the table, when we enjoyed them to our hearts' content.

"I see," said aged Anthony, "that though you were a little afraid of your enemies when you did not know what they were, no sooner are they placed before you, than you can nip off their heads and tails as bravely as a regiment of dragoons with sharp long swords."

Aged Anthony did not forget to reprove us for our vain and silly boasting; but if he had not said one word about the matter, the remembrance that, notwithstanding our vaunting, we had run away half frightened out of our wits at a bowl of rough red gooseberries, would have been sufficient. We were convinced of our folly, and never again were heard to boast of our bravery.

The Sandstone cliff that rose up from the narrow part of Holloway-lane, at Holyrood, was the reddest rock that I ever saw, and the spring at the bottom of it was of the clearest water. I do not wonder at the cliff being called the Red Rock; and am not at all surprised that the spring at the bottom should have had the name of the Red Rock Fountain.

I loved to stand by the side of the spring, for the creepers hanging from the cliff made it look very beautiful. The green moss, too, and the little flowers that adorned the edge of it, were sweetly pretty, and then a clean, yellow frog

sometimes leaped plump into the water, stretching out his legs gracefully, and swimming, or rather diving to the bottom. In summer time, when the weather was hot, and the ground parched with heat, the day scholars from the school-house, carrying their bags and satchels, were fond of gathering round the spring. I have seen a dozen of them there together, some laughing, some talking, and others taking up the water with their hands to drink. The errand woman, too, as she came by with her load on market day, and the old mole catcher, when he happened to pass that way with his traps, often stopped at the place. There was hardly a person in the village who had not, at one time or another, slaked his thirst there. Every one knew the Red Rock Fountain. When Jennet Gill was alive, she was never known to pass it without making a halt; but who was Jennet Gill?

Jennet Gill was a poor crazy woman, that wandered around the country, eating the berries of the bush, drinking the water of the brook, and sleeping in barns and outhouses, or under hedges and hay-ricks. I never knew what crazed her, though strange tales were abroad about her having been brought up by a lady of fortune; however that might be, she must have been a Bible reader in her earlier days, or she could never have talked of holy things as she did, nor repeated so many texts of holy Scripture.

Peaceable and inoffensive, she wandered from place to place, muttering to herself, and stopping for hours to gaze at the rippling brook, or the flowers of the field and hedgerows. She loved children, and would stop in her rambles to talk with them, telling them to fear God, and to love and be kind to one another. Sometimes her language was a little above what is spoken by common people; but this is not an unusual thing with those who are crazed. She had always a dozen texts of Scripture at the tip of her tongue.

You must not think that Jennet Gill was ill-provided with food. No! she fared sumptuously; for He who feeds the ravens and caters for the sparrows, spread a table for her in the fields, and inclined her neighbours to befriend her. Hers was the brownest cluster of the copses, the goodliest berry on the brier, the whitest mushroom on the dewy grass, and the freshest water-cresses of the running brook. No farmer begrudged her a turnip, or would have hindered her from plucking the finest fruit of his orchard. Jennet Gill fared sumptuously every day.

Though Jennet was fond of the Red Rock Fountain, it so happened that I had not seen her there for months, and I wondered what could have become of her. One day when I happened to have a Bible under my arm, two or three of my schoolfellows were talking with me at the fountain, when one of them cried out "Jennet Gill, Jennet Gill!" In a moment we were mute as

so many mice, and not long after, Jennet Gill came up.

She was tall, and dressed in a loose blue cloak, tattered and torn, holding in her hand a long, thin crooked stick, with moss upon it, and so dry and brittle that a child might have snapped it into two. Her face, though sunburnt, for she never wore a bonnet, was animated and striking, her lips were thin, and her long hair dark as the plumes of the blackest raven. Those who had once seen Jennet Gill were not likely to forget her.

She stood on a little mossy stump, by the side of the spring, her long hair streaming in the breeze, and as she stretched out one hand towards us while she spoke, with the other she leaned lightly on her slender staff; her quick eye saw, in a moment, the Bible in my hand.

“Boys,” said she, “hold fast your Bibles! Do you fear God? Jennet Gill fears him, in the daylight and dark night; and the wind and the rain, and the heat and the cold cannot hurt her. Nothing can hurt them that fear God. Do you see Him? Jennet Gill sees Him, in the sun, and the silvery clouds; in the green trees and the waving grass. Do you hear Him? Jennet Gilt hears Him, in the thunder of the storm; and in the breeze when the tempest is asleep. What! have you been sipping at the fountain? It is God’s fountain, for He made it with His own hands. ‘He clave the rock and

the waters gushed out.' 'He sendeth the springs into the valleys.' 'The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life.' If you fear Him, and love Him, and read His word, and do His holy will, He will watch over you when the sky is dark and the wind blows. He will make the tree bud, the bird sing, and the berries grow for you; and when you have no bed, He will heap up the dry, warm, rustling leaves at the corner of the wood for you, as He does for Jennet Gill. But if you despise Him and break His commandments, He will break you as a dried stick, and cast you from His presence for ever." Saying this, she snapped her long, dry stick in twain, and throwing it from her, hurried onwards along the Hollowway. This was the last time that I saw Jennet Gill at the Red Rock Fountain.

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## Chapter Three.

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### VILLAGE CHARACTERS.

IT is said, with some truth, that without much forbearance on the one side, and much docility on the other

“ Old age and youth cannot dwell together”

Age loves quietude and repose, while youth delights in noise and activity. But though this is undoubtedly the case, many of the sunny seasons of boyhood are passed in the company of old people, especially in the country. There is something in the time-worn countenance, the cut of the clothes, the tone of voice, the quiet manner and general appearance of an old countryman, that is very taking with boyhood. Not to know half a dozen old people, would be a trouble to most country boys. Old Roger, thrashing in the barn, Old William, the Woodman, at work in the coppice, Old Etherd the mole catcher, busy with his traps, Old Frank the hedger and ditcher, Old Nanny who works in the fields, Old Alice who keeps the village Post office, and Old Esther the errand woman, are characters that every country boy loves to talk with.

Round about Holyrood Academy we had no lack of old people, nor indeed of curious characters. Among them might be reckoned, Old Robin Roe, Dame Ashley, Captain Collard, Terrible Tooke, Madam Norton, Crazy Cawthorn, Alan Day, Old Frank Gilbert, Drunken Andrews, the punning Waiter, Major Montrose, and Ben the Boatswain. Where should I look for any of these characters now? Like the sunny season of my boyhood, in which I knew them, they are gone. Truly life is a dream!

“Life and friends, like seasons, pass away—  
We step’d lighthearted forth to meet the Spring  
But scarcely had begun our childish play;  
Ere full-leaved Summer leap’d into the ring  
And looked around, but deigned no longer stop,  
For seldom Autumn came with faded wing,  
And scarce had time to gaze upon our game  
When he too fled—then wrinkled Winter came.”

The difference between City and Country manners is very great. We may look a long while before we find politeness in the country, or simplicity in the city.

A party were once assembled at the farm house of Robin Roe and his dame, a worthy aged couple, more famed for their honesty and homely manners than for their politeness. The fire blazed brightly, the kettle sang cheerily, and the happy guests gathered around the tea-table. But though the good dame did her duty, Robin altogether forget his, when the old lady cried out in a shrill tone, “Why, Robin, Nobody’s got no toast.”

Thus appealed to, Old Robin did what he was by no means in the habit of doing, for he actually handed the toast round. Not exactly, perhaps, in the way that Lord Chesterfield would have done it under the same circumstances, but yet very creditably. A Miss C——, however, who was seated by the fire, and near the trivet on which the plate of toast stood, was left unsupplied. This brought down another reproof on Old Robin from his watchful spouse. "Why, Robin," said she, "you has forgotten Miss C——, why douzent you help her?" "Oh," replied Robin, "her be sitting by the yeup (heap), her can help herself."

We may laugh as much as we will at the homely manner of Old Robin and his dame, but most likely we should find ourselves as much out of our places at the plough tails, or in the dairy, as they were at the tea party. If Roger and his spouse were out of their element, now and then, they were honest, and hospitable, and kind-hearted all the year round. Country people have something else to do than to practise politeness. Theirs is a life of usefulness; let us then, instead of laughing at the homeliness of their manners, value their honesty and hospitality, and try to make our lives as useful as theirs.

Terrible Tooke was a sad fellow in our apprehension. He had been Quarter Master in a regiment of Hussars, after serving in the Infantry. Report said that he had led two Forlorn hopes,



killed three officers in duels, and invented a bomb-shell that did fearful execution. In addition to all this he had broken down at least half a dozen horses in hunting. He always carried fire arms about with him, and once when his horse refused to take the leap over a double fence hard by Crazy-foot Camps, the Quarter Master sprang from his saddle in a fury, pulled out a pistol, and shot the poor brute through the head. The Quarter Master wore mustachios, looked so fierce, and spoke so sharply, that we always avoided him when we could.

It was always a sunny season to spend half-an-hour with Alan Day, for three score years and ten sat smilingly on his brow, and his heart was as simple as the heart of a child. To help us in making our kites, to carve for us a knobbed stick, to give us flowers out of his garden, and to tell us where mushrooms, nuts, and blackberries grew the thickest, was a real delight to him. In this world of care and unkindness Alan Days are but scarce. One in a village, and two, perhaps, in a town, are quite as many as we can reasonably expect to find. The kind hearted Alan of my boyhood has long since been beckoned away from his neat little cottage by the Yew-tree Coppice, but his simplicity and his kindness are gratefully remembered.

We used to call Dame Ashley "the Croaker," because she was always complaining, and ever anticipating evil. We could never get comfort

from Dame Ashley. If the weather was bad, "Wet it is, and wet it will be," she used to say, "for the wind is in a rainy quarter." When it was fine, "There is a storm brewing, and you will have it before long," was her cry. If a villager was well, "It will not be so always," she would say; "by and by the colour will be taken out of his cheeks:" and when a villager was ill, then the remark was, "I tell you that he will never recover, death was in his face the last time I saw him." This habit of always looking at the shadowy side of things furnished us boys with much amusement, and to set old Dame Ashley "a croaking" was good sport to us at Holyrood School.

It was too common a thing with us to see drunken Andrews stagger up the village, and to hear him bawling aloud some ribald song. He had some good qualities, but he drowned them in drunkenness.

Poor drunken Andrews! he could quaff  
The well-filled cup, and loudly laugh;  
For not a jollier soul than he  
E'er joined a jovial company;  
Or told a longer, merrier tale;  
Or boasted more of beer and ale.  
But just as soon will grapes adorn  
The branches of the pointed thorn,  
And figs on thistle plants abound,  
As peace in such a heart be found.

Andrews drank himself to death, and his wife and children went where all said they must go, one day or other, to the parish workhouse.

Madam Norton, at the large house with the shrubbery, was a real lady; and Major Montrose was a fine specimen of the old English gentleman; we all held them both in high estimation, but, boy-like, we thought more of those with whom we could companionize. Ben the boatswain was with us a prime favourite. Ben had been to the north, among the icebergs and polar bears—the whales and the walruses, as well as to the East and West Indies, and the Marquesas in the Pacific Ocean; and what was still better, he loved to talk of what he had seen, as much as we loved to hear of it. Oh, what sunny seasons had we used to pass with Ben the boatswain, listening to his long yarns of ships and blue-jackets, and sunny islands, and bread-fruit, and coral reefs, and tatoed chiefs, and cocoa nuts, and cannibals, and carved canoes, and macaws and monkeys. Ben was never tired of talking, nor we of listening to his tales.

Peregrine, the waiter at the village inn, was an incorrigible punster; hardly could he speak without a pun dropping from his lips. It mattered not on what subject he spoke, for he could pun upon everything. I was once present when a stranger dropped in requiring something for dinner in a great hurry. Peregrine told him that a gentleman had just been dining from a plump chicken, and of course had not eaten it all.

“Well, bring me a wing and a merry thought,” said the stranger.

“Excuse me, sir,” said Peregrine, “I am *sorry* to say that the *merry thought* is gone, and that the *wings* have *fled* some time since, but after your long walk, you have appetite enough for a *leg*,—I will put my best *foot* foremost and bring it directly.”

In a little time he made his appearance, observing as he placed the dishes on the table, that though the *greens* were rather *brown*, the *fowl* was a very *fair* article. He then stepped to the side-board to fetch, as he said, some *fresh salt*, adding, that if he drank *wine* or *ale*, he should be happy to be his *porter*.

When Peregrine understood that the stranger intended to stop at the next town, he gave him a few words of information respecting the different inns.

“Travellers, sir, are pretty well *pecked* at the *Pigeons*,” said he; “all who go to the *Blue Gates*, I believe are *taken in*. Those who put up at the *Fox* are *geese* for their pains, and I promise you a *long bill* if you take a fancy to the *Stork*. To my mind, for a small public house, the *Jolly Beggars* is very *respectable*, and the landlord of the *Bear* is a *civil* man, but if you really want a *peaceable* inn, the *Fighting Cocks* is the only place for you.”

Weak-minded William dwelt alone; he dressed in strange clothes, lived on strange food, and always acted in the strangest manner. Believing as he did that the whole neighbourhood

belonged to him, he used to go his rounds drest in a loose, ragged great-coat of many colours, and a leathern girdle about his loins, to see after his property.

In the sunny seasons of youth, a boy is sure to be fond of sailors. An old Sea Captain, a sailor like Ben the boatswain, or a one-legged, blue-jacketed tar going about with a ship, is the delight of his heart. Old Captain Collard was a favourite of mine; he was a kind-hearted, Christian man, and some called him a philosopher. He lived at the White Cottage, with a flag-staff at the top of his summer arbour. He had spent the better part of his life in trading to Africa and the East. A droll man was the Captain in his way, and you might always tell when he was about to enjoy a joke, by a twitching in one of his cheeks which he could not repress. One day, as I and my tutor were going by the cottage, the Captain, who was at work in his front garden, spoke thus to my tutor—I saw his cheek twitching at the time:—

“What odd tempers there are in the world, some are gay, and some grave; some like the company of their messmates, and some prefer to be alone; some weary you with their talk, and some are as silent as if they had been brought up on desert islands like so many Robinson Crusoes.

“I have been talking to old Jack, who is now living with me, for I saw him walking round the garden yonder behind the cabin rather

glumly. Take him altogether, he is an odd fellow. He seems never to shun, nor to seek any one; leave him to himself, and he will mope by the hour, or the whole live-long day together, without speaking a word. I hardly know what to make of him.

“Most sailors like to spin their yarns, and travellers to tell of their adventures, but this is not the case with him. He has passed a part of his life on board ship, and has seen more of the Coast of Africa than you have, I dare say, and yet if I did not know more about him than what I have heard from his own lips, I should know but little.

“There is something in the figure-head and general cut of old Jack that catches the eye of a stranger at once, and marks him out as a curiosity. He is thick in the body, short in the leg, small in the head, long in the neck, and is rigged out in an unaccountable manner. Though he has been ashore these six months, he has worn none but the clothes he brought with him from abroad. I never saw Englishman, Scotchman, Welchman, or Irishman like him. It looks so odd to see him walking about, always drest in leathern trousers, with a thick, stiff, P. jacket on his back, but I suppose he has been used to it.

“Jack,” said I, being rather in a droll humour, “did you run up the ratlins much when you were on board ship? You have been five and

twenty minutes in walking once round the garden, and if you mounted the mast at the same rate to take in a reef in a cap-full of wind, you would be likely enough to get a rope's end for your pains. Did you ever run to the Post-office, Jack, with a letter, when you were afraid of being too late?"

Some people can take a joke, and some cannot. Jack looked rather sullen, and gave me no reply, so I began to talk on another subject. "Jack," said I, "you do not look as if you had much shot in the locker, and if you are an old curmudgeon of a miser, where you stow your money bags I do not know, but tell me the truth, did you scrape up much gold at the gold Coast when you were in Africa? Could you not manage now to screw out money enough to make yourself a little-shipshape, for your old rigging begins to look sadly weather beaten?"

Old Jack did not relish, I suppose, this subject any better than the last, for he looked quite as sullen, and remained quite as silent, so I tried again, determined that if he still kept in the same temper, to leave him to himself. "Jack," said I, "what is it that makes you so silent, and so fond of moping about by yourself? Have you anything on your mind? If you have done any injury to the poor Negroes, or had any hand in the Slave Trade, tell me at once. I never suspected you of either the one or the other, or of piracy, or mutiny, and though little can be said,

I am afraid, for your activity or industry, I really do not think you would willingly hurt either man, woman, or child. What say you, Jack! Answer for yourself! Have you always been true to your colours? Have you ever had any hand in the slave trade?

Here Jack, who had no disposition to talk with me, turned himself round and walked slowly towards the bottom of the garden, where I left him, all alone with his back towards me. As I said before, what odd tempers there are in the world! Some are gay, and some are grave; some like the company of their messmates, and some prefer to be alone; some weary you with their talk, and some are as silent as if they had been brought up on desert islands, like so many *Robinson Crusoes*.

You may, very likely, wonder at this conduct in old Jack, especially when I tell you, that ever since he came to my snug cabin, I have always treated him with the greatest civility and kindness; but, for my part, I do not wonder at it at all, for I rather think that I know the reason of it. If I am right in my guess, old Jack has no more objection to my talking to him about his having been on board ship, or his money bags, or the slave trade, than about anything else, and the real reason why he does not talk with me is — because he cannot, he being not an old Sailor, as I suppose you take him to be, but — An old Tortoise.



Here the twitching in the cheek of the old Captain visibly increased, and I saw that he heartily enjoyed having taken us in as he had done. After a short pause he went on thus more soberly.

“Were you to see old Jack and to watch his habits, you would be amazed at him, that is if you have never examined a tortoise particularly. His uncouth, scaly legs, his thin flabby neck and shoulders, covered with a loose leather-like skin; his snakey head, wide mouth, fair tongue and hard fleshy tail, with the shell that serves him at once for a P. jacket and a cabin to live in, altogether make him one of the oddest creatures in the world.

“The other day I minuted him with my chronometer, and found that he was just five minutes in walking ten yards. Well might I ask him, in my drollery, about running up the ratlins, and if he had ever set off to the post-office with a letter, when afraid of being too late. His gait is so odd that he seems rather to make a stumble than a step every time he moves forward. On the least alarm he draws his head and his uncouth legs into his shell, where I question if they would be hurt were a hogshead of sugar to pass over his back. This morning, while regarding his unsightly legs, I gave him a piece of advice. ‘Jack,’ said I, ‘if ever you go into company, never put on silk stockings.’

“It would be a hard matter to say what old Jack lives on generally, but in his rambles round

the garden, he has played sad work with my Virginia Stocks. The other day I caught him eating a scarlet poppy. To see him with his wide mouth, stowing away the glowing flower, was quite a picture. If he be more fond of one plant than another, it is of the white lily, the leaves of which he appears to delight in. The other day I pegged a white lily plant all round with short pieces of wood to preserve it; old Jack seeing that he was shut out from his white lily, directly shaped his course towards another.

“How mysterious are the ways of our Almighty Maker in the formation of his creatures, and how little can we comprehend the wisdom of his designs! This poor tortoise will soon be slumbering away the wintry months. Poor reptile of a foreign clime! Crawling creature of the dust! He who made thee, has adapted thee to thy habits, and the parts thou hast to perform. In thy apparent loneliness and solitude, thou hast thy enjoyments perhaps equal to those of the feathered races that so loudly sing their Maker’s praise. He who made thee careth for thee, for He shutteth up thy faculties in sleep while the storms of winter are abroad, and waketh thee to behold and enjoy the sunshine of spring and summer. Would that thou couldst praise Him, but as thou canst not, it becometh us to praise Him for thee. ‘Truly the Lord is good, and his tender mercies are over all his works.’”

I walked on alone after hearing these remarks, talking to myself and the more I mused upon what Captain Collard had said, the better I liked him.

Old Frank Gilbert had in him much of character. Frank was once persuaded to buy an Almanack, and the following remarks contain his reasonings and opinions upon the matter.

“No, I won’t buy an almanack! why should I? Where’s the use of throwing away money for an almanack, when I can do very well without it?”

“I can see well enough whether it is *wet* or *dry*. I can feel whether it is *hot* or *cold*. My rheumatism tells me the day before of every *change in the weather*, and my landlord never makes a mistake in pointing out to me the *Quarter days*.

“I ought to know when the *sun rises*, for I am always up before him,—and the time he *sets* too, for I go to bed a good while after him. Why should I buy an almanack to tell me what I know very well without it?”

“As to the *stars*, I know the big ones from the little ones, and I take it my neighbours know right little more. There is little got by yawning up at the sky, when all *honest* folks should be a-bed, unless it be a cold and a sore throat, and I want neither the one nor the other.

“What a fuss is made about eclipses. Here, when the *sun* and the *moon* are to be plainly

seen, nobody will so much as look at them, but when one half of either of them is hidden, all the world runs out to gape and stare. This comes of your almanacks!

“Some time ago all the almanacks were top full of a *comet* that was to be seen. I heard enough about it, but as to seeing it, that was quite out of the question. Mr. Sykes, the schoolmaster, showed me a bit of a star that he called the comet, but if that was the comet, I never wish to see another. I expected a tail half across the sky, but that he showed me had no tail at all that I could make out.

“Both *Feasts* and *Fasts* are out of my way, and if I can't have the first, I won't be put off with the last, I promise you. Looking at a Feast in an almanack, is like looking at a roasted joint in a cook's shop window. It whets the appetite, but does not satisfy it.

“There are but two kinds of *past events* that I care about, those that vex me, and those that please me; the last I am sure not to forget, and the first I don't wish to remember.

“What have I to do with the *tides*, who live full fifty measured miles from any seaport. Bartlemas and Lammas tides are the only tides that I think of, and that is because my birthday happens on the one, and my wife's on the other.

“Some almanacks give us the *fares of cabs*, but I never set my foot in a cab yet, and

perhaps never shall. They give us, too, the *rates of portage*, but I am obliged to be my own porter; and, therefore, I won't buy an almanack, that I won't.

“Time back almanacks used to tell us about the *postage of letters*, afraid that the letter-carrier should forget it, I suppose.

“I want to know nothing about the *Bank of England*. My bank is the black money jug in the corner of the cupboard, and I can manage that without an almanack to help me.

“Some of the almanacks tell us about *lopping timber trees*, but I have none to lop, and about *shoeing horses*, but I have got none to shoe. It would be a piece of folly in me, then, to buy an almanack.

“But there's another reason that weighs a good deal with me, and that is this. If I was to buy an almanack, I could hardly get any time to read it, and my neighbours would be borrowing it for ever. Once for all I say, then, that I will not buy an almanack.

“But let me for a moment look on the other side of the question, for fair play's a jewel.

“An almanack would cost me sixpence or eightpence,—that's no great matter. Often and often have I been fool enough to spend more than that at a public house at night, without having anything to show for it in the morning, whereas I might look at the almanack, and get something good out of it all the year round. This a little disposes me to buy an almanack.

“If I don’t much care about an almanack, my son Thomas is very fond of one, and if I have no spare time to look at it, he has. Thomas is a good lad in the main, and ought to be encouraged. He has learned at the Sunday school to read like a schoolmaster. It strikes me that I have been a little hasty in saying I would’nt buy an almanack.

“I said my neighbours would be always borrowing the book, but what if they did. It is a poor tale if I can’t do a good turn to them, who do so many for me. Why, it’s almost worth while buying an almanack, on purpose to lend it to them. I begin to think that I am standing in my own light in not buying an almanack.

“In some almanacks there is a text of Scripture for every day in the year, and remarks to put one in mind of one’s latter end ; now, nobody wants these more than I do, for my old Bible has more dust on the cover than it ought to have. I’ve been sadly too thoughtless in these matters, and the sooner I turn over a new leaf the better. I have half a mind to send Tom off to buy an almanack.

“My wife says we *must* have an almanack, and it’s ten to one if she lets me have any peace till we have one. I did’nt think of that before. She’ll be ding-donging me for ever. Peace is worth buying at any price ; after all, I believe that I really must have an almanack.

“If I buy one it will please Tom, and it will

please my wife, too; and when I see them both pleased it will please me, and then we shall all be pleased together. When all's said and done, there's a deal in a good almanack that's worth knowing, and a good one I'll have, if I have any. If I don't buy one, my wife will; we shall have angry looks and hard words, and it will come to the same thing after all. My mind is almost made up, I am almost determined to buy an almanack.

“And now, as I have said something for and something against almanacks, let me sum up both sides of the question. The whole damage of buying an almanack only comes to sixpence or eightpence, and for that, I can make myself wiser, do a kind turn to my neighbours, amuse my son Tom, avoid a quarrel, please my wife, promote peace in my family, and perhaps get a blessing to my own soul. Now, if these things are not worth eightpence, it's a pity. I'll say no more about the matter. If it takes the last eightpence in the black money jug, I'll buy an almanack.”

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## Chapter Fourth.

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### CHEERFULNESS AND GOOD TEMPER.

No one can thoroughly enjoy the sunny seasons of boyhood, without encouraging cheerfulness and good-temper. A peevish, whining, desponding boy is a reproach to himself, and a trouble to all around him. How shall he who is overcome by trifling trials when a boy, make head against heavy, serious, difficulties when he becomes a man? "I would not," says one speaking of boys, "give a button-top for a fearful, faint-hearted fellow, who, when he happens to fall in a game of play, rises slowly, limps along piteously, sets up a loud cry, as if he had broken an arm or a leg, and, blubbering, gives up the game. Give me the boy, who, when he has fallen, hastily scrambles up again, mingling a laugh with the wry face his pain obliges him to make, rubbing his knee, shaking the dust from his jacket, and starting off again gallantly and good-humouredly after his companions."

Whether your troubles be light or heavy, never give way to sorrow and despondency.



Never look sad, nothing's so bad  
 As getting familiar with sorrow;  
 Treat him to-day in a cavalier way,  
 And he'll seek other quarters to-morrow.

Long you'd not weep, would you but peep  
 At the bright side of every trial;  
 Fortune, you'll find, is often most kind,  
 When chilling your hopes with denial.

Let the sad day carry away  
 Its own little burden of sorrow;  
 Or you may miss half of the bliss  
 That comes in the lap of to-morrow.

When hope is wreck'd, pause and reflect,  
 If error occasioned your sadness;  
 If it be so, hereafter you'll know  
 How to steer to the harbour of gladness.

If there be a pleasant sight in the world it is to see man or boy throw away troubles as a tight rope throws off the stone that is cast against it. "I have known trouble," said a cheerful, rosy-faced man, "I have known trouble, but it is of little use to be down-hearted. We get more fruit by climbing the tree, than by sighing for it under the branches. My life may be told in few words. When young, I worked at the bottom of a saw-pit; then at the top; I bought the piece of timber that I stood upon; turned wheelwright, then carpenter, afterwards builder; and am now thriving with a family of a wife and eleven children. I could not have done this if I had been down-hearted."

If we could only see at one glance the sunshine that cheerfulness has flung upon the world,

and the shadow and gloom that despondency has spread among mankind, we should be ashamed, and with reason, too, of our down-heartedness. A cheerful, grateful, and persevering spirit is worth a hat full of diamonds.

If the object before thee be virtue; go through it,  
And let it thy soul and thy talents engage;  
With pleasure regard, and with vigour pursue it;  
Thy youth shall be blest, and contented thy age.

But if it be evil, and promise thee sorrow,  
What time the gay dreams of thy boyhood are flown,  
If the joy of to-day, threaten grief on the morrow,  
Both now and for ever, oh, let it alone.

Oliver Higgins was one of the most cheerful men who lived within a mile of Holyrood Academy. "Come round me, boys," said he, one half-holiday, when a few of us had strolled as far as his cottage, "come round me, for I have something to tell you. Oh, how I do like to make your blue eyes sparkle! If there be one among you who prefers a drawing in Indian ink to one in colours—or the face of an African to the face of an European, he and I shall by no means agree. I have a receipt for happiness, it is this: Holiday and entertainment. Suppose we go in partnership together! You find holiday, and I will find entertainment, and then we shall make up happiness between us! Agreed, boys, agreed." Saying this, he related to our great delight the following story of

## THE FIVE GIANTS.

When I was a boy, few things pleased me better than to hear a tale about a giant. Silly and untrue as were the stories that I heard, they vastly delighted me ; but were you now to ask what information they gave me, or what good I gathered from them, sadly should I be at a fault for a reply.

But if a tale about giants, that was not true and that added nothing to my knowledge, amused me, why should not a story about giants, which is true, and which gives good information, be equally entertaining to you? I see no reason why it should not be so, and, therefore, it is my determination to tell you the tale of the Five Giants.

Three of the five giants are old, so very old that you would hardly believe me were I to tell you their ages, and the other two are much older than many people imagine; but, notwithstanding the great age of these giants, their strength is not in the least impaired. They can travel as fast and do quite as much work as they ever did in their youthful days.

By and bye you shall know the real names of these five giants, but it will answer my purpose better, and give you, perhaps, quite as much entertainment, if, at first, I name them according to my fancy. The three old giants, Flare, Roar, and Blow, are known in every part of the

world ; but the two younger, Bounce and Rush, have not, as yet, travelled quite as far as their brothers. For the most part, all five of them are useful characters ; but if once they are in a passion, and this is too often the case, the sooner you are out of their way the better.

Giant Flare is somewhat yellow in complexion, with red hair, and has many good and companionable qualities ; indeed, in the winter, when people like to gather round the friendly hearth, he is one of the most agreeable creatures in the world. No wonder then that he should be so much sought after. He is invited by the prince and the peasant, and accepts the invitations of both freely, so that on the same day he is to be seen in the poorest cot, and the proudest palace.

But besides his companionable qualities, Giant Flare is a capital cook, so much so that he has been employed by all the crowned heads in all the quarters of the world. He is very useful in mining operations, and in smelting ore ; and then as a manufacturer, he is quite at home, being equally clever in making a copper saucepan, a brass warming-pan, a silver snuff-box, and a golden sovereign.

You will begin to think well of Giant Flare, but truth is truth, and, as I told you all the five giants are sad fellows when in a passion. Giant Flare has many a time burst out into a perfect phrenzy, and done mischief that could never be repaired. If he is not used well, he thinks

nothing of burning a person's house down. He has been the means of destroying many fine forests, and, on one occasion, when in London, to his disgrace be it spoken, with the assistance of one of his brothers, Giant Blow, he set almost a hundred churches and as many as thirteen thousand houses, all in a blaze.

When Buonaparte set out to conquer Russia, Giant Flare resisted him, and would not let him go further than Moscow; and when the Spanish Armada invaded England, he boldly attacked the Spanish ships, and was one of the principal means of scattering and putting them to flight. But now let me tell you of Giant Roar.

This giant is about the same age as his brother of whom I have said so much, and, like him, has done both kind and illnatureed deeds in his time. He is fond of constructing baths, and fishing-ponds, and canals, and of rendering assistance in cultivating gardens. He is largely connected with ships and sailors. Many think that he has more power by sea than by land, but some of his mad pranks will surprise you.

A long time after the Thames Tunnel was begun under the river at London, and when thousands and tens of thousands of pounds had been spent, in an angry mood he set his foot against the bottom of the river, and crushed in the Tunnel. Since then, he has behaved better, and allowed them to finish the work; but for a

time, this prank of his occasioned great confusion.

I have seen him, myself, in his tantrums, play terrible tricks ; and a traveller told me, that once, when he met him at the falls of Niagara, in America, he roared like a bedlamite, foamed at the mouth worse than a mad dog, and at last flung himself headlong from so high a precipice that he expected to see him dashed into a thousand pieces. Whether the Americans had used him ill, or not, I will not say, but certain it was that his rage appeared unbounded.

You will think that what I have already said of Giant Roar is bad enough, but, on one occasion, he was even yet more ungovernable, for, rushing abroad in his fury, he destroyed, at one time, more lives than ever had been destroyed since the world had been made. Many of his victims struggled hard with him to the utmost, but he came upon them by surprise, and they were neither swift enough to escape, nor strong enough to resist him.

Giant Blow is kind, whimsical, mischievous, and dangerous by fits. One day, as I went by the Common, he was good-naturedly helping a group of boys to fly their kites, I hardly think they could have managed without his assistance; but in less than ten minutes after, he tore two of their kites all to shivers. The very same day he snatched Widow Woodward's shawl from her back, and ran off with it, broke half-a-dozen

clothes lines, tossed about the clothes, and then all at once violently pushed down a large stack of chimneys. You see by these actions how little he is to be relied on.

Giant Blow is a great traveller, for he sailed round the world with Captain Cook, and helped Columbus to discover America. Indeed Columbus could not have gone without him. Were he and Giant Roar to withdraw the assistance they give to seamen, it would at once put an end to all merchandize, and not a single ship would be able to sail upon the seas.

But though Giant Blow is one of the best friends in the world to sailors, he often treats them very harshly, knocking their vessels to pieces, and flinging them into the raging deep. Hundreds of gallant ships, and thousands of hardy tars has he destroyed in his time.

Giant Blow grinds a great deal of corn, and has a method of his own for cooling the earth in hot weather. Common report says, that, on some occasions, he has removed the plague; and no physician on the earth has effected such extraordinary cures as he has done. If every one that he has kept in health were to give him a fee, of all doctors in the world he would be the richest.

Giant Blow is well known in the West Indies, where he has at different times made great confusion. When once his loud voice is heard, a general terror and consternation is spread around;

for it is well known, that, in his passions, he spares neither friend nor foe. With his great strength he lays about him in all directions, stripping the trees of their foliage, and furiously tearing them up by the roots, flinging the roofs of the houses in the air, and battering down the walls on the heads of those who dwell in them. On he goes, till loud cries of distress are heard, and heaps of rubbish and rafters, and the dead bodies of men, women, and children be mingled together in confusion on the ground.

You have not, from what I have told you, I daresay, formed the highest opinion of Flare, Roar, and Blow; and I fear that the characters of Giants Bounce and Rush will be very far from perfect in your estimation. You shall have, however, the best account of them that I can give you, and then you will be able to judge more correctly.

Giant Bounce, of all the family of the giants, is certainly the most peppery in his temper. His brothers usually give some notice of their outbreaks, and rise in their position by degrees; not so Giant Bounce; at one moment he is quiet as a lamb, and at the next much fiercer than a lion.

In complexion he is much darker than the others; indeed he has an ugly, grim, and very forbidding appearance, which well suits his disposition. He is the friend of duelists and highwaymen, and this of itself would be bad



enough, if I had nothing else to bring against him. He has done some good, certainly, in his day; but take him for all in all, it might have been well if his friend, the Monk, who first introduced him into society, had been otherwise employed.

You would hardly think from the kind way in which he amuses children, by making them squibs and crackers and other fireworks, that he was half so mischievous as he is; but as I have told you the truth about his brothers, so will I tell you the truth about him. I cannot say that he does not make himself useful at times, for, in deep mines, he often does more work, in one hour, than the miners could do without him in a whole day; yet still he is a dark, designing, cruel character.

It is true that some years ago he went against a terrible pirate and robber, who lived on the coast of Barbary, destroying his ships, knocking his fortifications about his ears, compelling him to give up all the Christian slaves he had in his dungeons, and making him promise to behave better in future. It is true, also, that he helped Nelson to gain the victory at Trafalgar, and Wellington to win the battle of Waterloo; but it was not because he had any love for England that he did these things; and that I can prove.

If there had been any desire for England's welfare, would he have had anything to do in the plot to blow up the Parliament House? Would

he have offered to help the French, the Dutch, the Spanish, the Russians, the Prussians, and the Austrians, when they were at war with us? No! whatever other people say of him, I say that he is a hasty, cruel, treacherous, blood-thirsty monster. It was he who first persuaded people to make guns, pistols and cannon mortars, bombshells and congreve rockets, so that widows and orphans have been multiplied by him, and millions of men by his means destroyed.

I have now come to the last of the giants, and his character shall be summed up in a few words. If you remember, I told you that in winter nights Giant Flare was a very agreeable companion, and the same thing may be said of Giant Rush. When the tea-urn simmers, and friends gather round the winter tea-table, Giants Flare and Rush ought always to be there. They are good company even when you have them one at a time, but still better when they are together.

Giant Rush is thought to be younger than his brother Bounce, but of this I have some doubt. Of the two, however, he is by far the most industrious. He draws up water out of mines; he blows the bellows of the blast furnaces; saws timber, grinds and polishes metals, makes carriages run without horses, and forces ships through the waters of the great deep, against both wind and tide. Besides these things, he has latterly begun to print newspapers and

books, and in this department he will make himself more known than ever. These are his good deeds, but his bad ones are a sad reproach to him.

Would you believe me, that some time back he undertook to do more destruction, and to destroy more lives in one hour, than Giant Bounce could in a day. Few people thought better than I did of Giant Rush before this, and to speak the truth, I hardly thought the report was true. But when I saw him, with my own eyes, fire sixty or eighty bullets out of an iron tube in less time than Giant Bounce could fire with the same instrument, I thought to myself, "Oh! if he can do this, he can do any thing."

The giant then went into a large field, and pointing a cannon at a high sand bank, he fired off a complete stream of cannon balls, enough, I should think, to bring down a house, if not a church to the very ground. In short, I was quite frightened at his invention, and all that I hope now is, that no one will give him the least encouragement in his horrid undertaking.

Having now related what may appear to you rather a wonderful story, I must proceed to tell you the real names of the five giants, though it is by no means unlikely that you have already guessed them. The five giants Flare, Roar, Blow, Bounce, and Rush, are, then, neither more nor less, than the five gigantic powers, Fire, Water, Wind, Gunpowder, and Steam; and

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though I may have related their adventures and achievements somewhat fancifully, if you will examine them you will find that they are strictly true. The influence of these giant powers in the world has been very great; and as your attention is now drawn to the subject, you will, perhaps, be disposed to think upon it more than you have already done, connected so closely as it is with the comfort, the luxury, the knowledge, and indeed, also, with the happiness and misery of mankind. Had I been disposed, I might have made my relation much more wonderful, but I trust you have received from it, as it is, some amusement, and that it has not been altogether without instruction. It may be long before you again hear a true story of five giants, you will therefore do well to try to turn it to advantage; and to inquire what it is, in each case, that gives force to the power, and to admire that in and with all the powers, although man is allowed to make much use of them, and often to set them in operation, yet there is a greater Hand than his, though all unseen, which alone can control them.

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## Chapter Fifth.

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### SCHOOL OCCURRENCES.

THERE are always occurrences of one kind or other taking place among schoolboys to set their eyes sparkling and their pulses playing. Some private enterprise, or some public expedition is to be undertaken, or an unexpected visitor at the school obtains them a half-holiday, or the old errand woman brings them a parcel that looks vastly like a huge plum cake wrapped up in strong brown paper; and even if a disappointment or a trouble comes, it is usually of short continuance. The well known lines,

“The tear down childhood’s cheek that flows,  
Is like the dew-drop on the rose,  
For when the summer breeze comes by  
And waves the bush, the flower is dry,”

are almost as applicable to boyhood, as they are to childhood. It is the very birthright of childhood and boyhood to have no lasting cares, and to be easily made happy.

Spring is a pleasant time to boyhood, and

when the sun is shining, the flowers blooming, the green trees waiving, the birds singing, the balmy breeze blowing, the spirit rejoices, and the heart feels happy.

Summer is a pleasant time to boyhood, when the noontide ray gilds up the woods, the waters, and the mountain-top, when the air is filled with odours, and the laugh of the merry hay-makers is heard in the woods.

Autumn is a pleasant time to boyhood, and the golden grain, and the laden fruit trees, and the varied foliage, and the kindling heavens, and the rich yellow garniture of fields and hedges, are gazed on with joy.

Winter is a pleasant time to boyhood, and the schoolboy loves to walk abroad with a hardier spirit when the frosted snow lies on the ground, and the trees are hung fantastically with rime, for then wonder is awakened in the mind, and the pure, sharp, bracing air gives a cheerfulness to the spirit.

To the schoolboy the arrival of a fresh scholar is an occurrence of some importance. His age, his size, his progress in learning, and his dress, are all points that are scanned with attention, and an opinion is formed either for or against him.

There must of course be a great difference in the dresses of boys at a boarding school, who are clothed according to the fancies, or means of their parents. Some dress their sons plainly,

others are fond of seeing them set out in showy attire,

But a blockhead, dress him as you will,  
Must be at best, a blockhead still.

Boys themselves often get foolish notions about dress, and the Sunday clothing of boarding school scholars is sometimes much noticed and talked about among them. A showy waistcoat makes a great sensation, but it is better to attend to the inside of the head, than to the outside of the heart.

There were two fresh comers one Midsummer at Holyrood, of the name of Brown, who quite surprised us with their showy dresses. Their linen was finer, their caps were more ornamented, and the silver spoons they brought with them were heavier and more elegant than those belonging to the other boys. These Browns wore hunting watches, too, which we looked at with envious and admiring eyes.

We thought very highly of these dressy boys, when they first came among us, and admired their new clothes with glittering gilt buttons, walking respectfully round them, when they pulled out their watches to tell us the time of day, which they did very often.

But the high opinion we had formed of the Browns was not to last long, for they had been spoiled at home, and showed bad dispositions at school; besides which, neither of them was clever at play, or forward at his book. It was

soon discovered that they were sad dunces, and what was still worse, so far as our opinion was concerned, bad runners, bad climbers, bad jumpers, and bad hands at cricket, pegtop, and ringtaw. Not all the fine linen, tasselled caps, silver spoons, and hunting watches in the parish after this could have kept them up. The Browns had had their day—their sun had set. The sight of their watches grew common-place, and we thought little about their silver spoons. Indeed it half cured us of coxcombry when we saw that such dull, and ill-disposed boys were more showily dressed than any others in the school.

There are other Browns in the world besides my two schoolfellows, who for a time attract attention by the gaiety of their dress, and costliness of their ornaments, in spite of the emptiness of their heads, and the hollowness of their hearts; but let us leave them to themselves, without indulging in bitterness or ill-nature, convinced that useful knowledge and virtuous affections, though they may not always be duly esteemed, will ever yield to their possessor increasing satisfaction.

Two or three of us having heard of a kite called a Russian kite, we determined on making one, as soon as we could get the necessary materials. What we principally wanted was a quantity of dry parchment. By little and little we contrived to get enough, and then we set to work.



This was no trivial undertaking, for never having seen a kite of the kind, and having but a very imperfect knowledge of the manner of making it, we had difficulties enough to overcome. Then again, the affair was to be kept a profound secret from our companions and from the people in the village. Our workshop was a spare hayloft, to which we retired by stealth. Passing through a stable, we climbed up through a hole in the cratch to the loft in question, taking up with us our wood and wire, string, paper, and parchment, borrowing a glue-pot of the carpenter when we required it.

The kite we made was not very different from a common kite, but more of a square form, and very large, being full six feet high. It was very strong, and all round the edges were pasted loose pieces of dry, hard parchment; other pieces of parchment were glued on the body of the kite, that the loose pieces might flap against them.

We succeeded admirably in keeping our secret, and one dark, windy night, about eight o'clock, fastening with a wire a yard long a can filled with pitch to the end of the tail, we sent up our kite, after setting fire to the pitch. Never having had to do with such a kite before, we had no conception that it would make half the mischief which it did. No sooner was the kite up high in the air, than the pieces of dry parchment, blown by the gusty wind, began to beat against one another, making altogether a noise

as if planks of wood were being dashed against each other in the air. The dogs began to bark, the people ran out of their houses, and the village was soon in an uproar.

Dark as the night was, it was a sunny season with us when first our kite mounted, and began to flap its resounding wings, but afterwards we felt no small alarm at the consternation we had occasioned. A little harmless mirth was all that we had expected, so that we were not at all prepared to meet the commotion we had made. The noise itself was quite enough to create astonishment and alarm, but when the people saw the fire in the air, that puzzled them, and alarmed them worse than ever.

When the kite was fairly over the church spire, we tied the string round the trunk of the big ash tree, which then stood at the end of Palmer's Close, and walked up the village, where groups of people were collected together in different places, talking about the strange noise and the unaccountable sight.

Old Frank Gilbert gave it as his opinion that it was a meteor. Ben the Boatswain said that he had seen hundreds of fire-flies abroad, but this beat all that he had ever set his eyes on. Horton, the blacksmith, had read in a book, some years ago, of a comet that would come nearer and nearer to the earth, till at last it did it a deal of mischief, but he hardly believed it. Old Connor, the parish clerk, who was con-

sidered to be the most learned man among them, talked about latent fire, electric fluid, and atmospheric combustion, but no one seemed to understand what he meant. The most common opinion was, that it was a great mystery, though Dame Ashley declared her full persuasion that it was nothing more nor less than an evil token.

As I said before, we had no thought that the pieces of dry parchment would make half the clatter they did, or that the folks would be so much scared at the can of burning pitch. We drew off the kite to a distance, and then brought it down by winding up the string, not daring to acknowledge our prank till the affair had a little subsided. Young people ought to consider before they engage in any frolic, how far their amusement may give pain to others, and whether it is right to purchase a pleasure at the expense of those who can derive no advantage from their undertaking.

To be a good runner, jumper, and climber, enables a boy to take rank among his school-fellows. I have not forgotten one of my early races; no! no! I am not likely to forget that race. But you shall have a full account of the affair. Boys enjoy many sunny seasons from the narrowness of their knowledge of the human heart: in agreement with the adage, "When ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," they often reap a full harvest, when, if they knew more, they would only glean a few scanty ears.

“Empty praise” is frequently more valued by them than “deserved commendation.” They *will* think themselves somebodies in this crowded world, and after-years alone show them that they are but ciphers among mankind.

My schoolmaster often amused himself during play-hours in making us boys run races for his amusement. I say, for *his* amusement, but I do not say that we had any disinclination to the sport. He matched us according to our size and years, and placing two boys together side by side, he shouted aloud, “One! two! three!” clapping his hands together in pronouncing the last number, as a signal for the start. Away went the candidates for the praise of swiftness, while sounds of encouragement and disapproval from their schoolfellows rang in their ears. “Now, Peter!” “Well done, William!” “I told you he would win!” “Ah, heavy foot! I always said he was a bad runner!”

Such were the sounds that cheered or depressed the straining boys who bounded over the play-ground, with the eyes of the school upon them, not less eager for praise and not less dreading the disgrace of defeat than the older heroes of the Olympic Games. But it was at the conclusion of the race that the conqueror had his sunny season, for applauding shouts filled his heart with triumphant joy. The winner of the Newmarket Stakes never felt more uplifted by the huzzas of the assembled crowd.

Boyhood! boyhood! many are the sunny seasons that shine on thy head and thy heart!

Our master came among us in the play-ground one holiday afternoon, and began to put in practice his favourite amusement, which gave little pleasure to those who were not good runners, they kept aloof, and came reluctantly forward when called upon to try their speed. I was one of those who endeavoured to escape observation, for some of my schoolfellows were fleet ones, and I did not rank highly among them for speed.

As I was shuffling away, my name was called aloud by the master, and I felt sure that he was going to make me run with a boy who would be very likely to be the winner of the race.

“Come,” said my schoolmaster, “you must try your best, for you are going to run with Peter, who ranks as the swiftest among you little ones.”

“Peter is sure to win,” whispered the usher to the master, and I heard what he said with a desponding heart. My schoolmaster made no reply, but placed me and Peter together, side by side. Peter was as blithe as a lark, but I was sadly chopfallen.

“Now try your best!” said my schoolmaster, “the winner shall have this large orange which is heavy, and thin in the rind,” and he held up the prize to our view. “One! Two! Three!” cried he, clapping his hands, and away I went with the crack runner of the little ones.

The shouting of my schoolfellows gave me little encouragement, for their deriding jokes were aimed at me, and all their praise was poured on the popular Peter. I, however, did my best, and tried my opponent so hard, that if a yard of string had been tied to our jackets, it would have hung loosely between us for the greater part of the race. Still Peter kept slightly in advance, and I must have lost, had he not stumbled and fell just as he was about to be a winner, and considered the orange as his own. This accident lost him the race, and the applauding shouts of my schoolfellows sounded like music in my ears.

But my work was not yet done, for my master, moved by Peter's complaints, and taking his accident into consideration, made us run again for the orange. Perhaps Peter was discouraged by his first failure, and perhaps I was heartened on by my unexpected success; but however this might be, I took the lead, and kept it too, coming in a happy winner. That *was* a sweet orange which my master placed in my hand as I advanced towards him with a flushed face and a merry countenance.

I held my head an inch higher for the remainder of the day, and thought that every one was thinking and talking about me. All seemed sunshine to my dazzled vision. It was my ignorance alone that made everything so bright around me.

My schoolmaster was a great politician, and loved to talk over passing events. Europe was in arms in those days, and there were battles enough, and more than enough, to furnish him with topics of discussion. I went into his study on the evening of that memorable day on which I won the race, for he sometimes summoned us there singly, to question us about what we had learned during the day.

The usher was sitting with my master when I entered the room. A newspaper was on the table before them, and they were talking about a battle which had just been fought abroad, and praising the tactics of a celebrated general, but I never doubted for a moment that they were talking about me.

“It was the quickness of his movements that gave him the advantage. The other made a slip which his opponent would never let him recover. Oh, he is a clever fellow, and knows how to act when accidents are in his favour!” said my master, as he turned from the usher, to question me about my progress in learning.

“But I won the race fairly a second time, Sir,” said I proudly, “when there was no accident in the case.” My master at first looked surprised at this speech, but he soon understood my error; as for the usher, to hide his mouth, he hid his face in his handkerchief.

“So you did,” said my master with a smile. “A clever boy you are, and an excellent runner.

You may go now, and send in another of your schoolfellows."

Leaving the room with a proud step, I heard loud laughter after closing the door, but my ignorance at the time spared me the mortification of knowing that I had claimed for myself the praise that my master was bestowing on the famous Napoleon.

As I said before, boys enjoy many sunny seasons, because knowledge has not destroyed their self-esteem, and taught them that they are ciphers in the opinion of those around them. Frequently do they reap a full harvest when, if they knew more, they would only glean a few scanty ears. Boyhood! Boyhood! Many are the sunny seasons that shine on thy head and thy heart!

Often since the days of my youth have I smiled at the race I ran with my schoolfellow Peter, and the mistake I made when my schoolmaster spoke of the famous Napoleon.

As a small farm was attached to the schoolhouse, there were stables and barns close to our play ground. Every now and then complaints reached our master that the horse beans went very fast out of the corn bin. Many attempts were made to find out the thief, but all in vain. At last our schoolmaster hit upon a plan that succeeded capitally. No one could get to the corn bin without passing through a very narrow doorway, which stood in a passage where little light came, and this enabled our master to dis-



cover the rogue. Calling us all up before him, he told us that whoever the thief was he could no longer steal the beans without being found out, for that he had well chalked the round post against which the door shut, and if he found any one with chalk on his clothes, he should know at once whom he ought to punish. Our master suspected who the rogue was, and acted accordingly.

The next evening, in spite of all this care and precaution, the horse beans went as usual. Old Luke the ostler declared that the salver was half full when he left it in the bin, and that when he went to it again, there was only about a handful of beans at the bottom of it. We were directly called up to be questioned about the matter, boarders and day scholars all together.

On examination not one had a bit of chalk on his clothes, but our schoolmaster told us to stand still a minute where we were. He then walked to the back of us, and had no sooner again mounted the stage on which his chair stood, than he ordered Miles Hollis, a day scholar, who wore a smock frock, to come up to the desk. Miles turned very white when he was told to empty the horse beans out of his pocket, for he was the thief sure enough, and a hearty flogging he got for his pains.

Miles thought that he should be quite safe in taking the beans if he kept clear of the chalked post which he could just see in the shadowy

passage, but in trying to do this, he had rubbed his back against the outer door-post which our master had blackened with soot. Never sure was a dirtier smock frock ever seen ! Dishonesty, in man or boy, is a mean, contemptible quality. Its weakness is great, its wickedness still greater.

A school adventure, somewhat striking, has been related elsewhere, by one who was a companion and friend to me in my youthful days. I will here introduce his interesting narrative.

“It was near the close of a day in autumn, when two ill-looking fellows called at the school, requesting permission to sleep in the barn. Their appearance and their request seemed very suspicious, and we soon put it down as a settled thing that they intended to rob the house during the night. Our master being from home, the men were refused permission to lodge in the barn, and went away muttering to themselves. Presently some of our schoolfellows, who, acting the part of scouts to our general body, had watched the men, arrived with the alarming intelligence that they had gone up a lane, and whistled loudly, when a third man joined them ; finally, they all went away together.

Although considerable fear was excited among us, it was not to be supposed that thirty or forty schoolboys were to be long intimidated by two or three men ; but, as it was confidently believed that an attack would be made upon us, the ne-

cessary preparations for defence took place. All our bats, tipcat-staves, and sticks were got together. The very pitchforks in the stable and barn, and the cutting-knives on the hayricks were collected. Every one had a weapon; and animated by our numbers, we began to talk largely of the achievements we should individually perform.

Well do I remember that among our offensive and defensive weapons was an old rusty scythe, the very appearance of which was terrible. It was universally agreed that the rogues would stand no chance against the scythe. Each of us in turn took up the deadly instrument to show how we could play the character of Death, and mow down our enemies. Truly "childhood and youth are vanity."

As night approached, we became somewhat more temperate in our words and actions; but having committed ourselves to each other by our boastful expressions, we displayed as little as possible of the fears we felt. Bedtime arrived, and we retired to our several apartments.

The room which we expected to be attacked was over the school; sixteen or eighteen of us slept there together. In that room many ridiculous exploits were acted, in showing each other our different methods of attack, and the way in which we should knock down the rogues as they came up the stairs. In this way, poor foolish lads as we were, did we manifest our

folly ; but "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child."

When we were all in bed, half undressed, with our weapons so placed that we could get hold of them immediately, we attempted to keep up our declining courage by conversation, but, somehow, we could think of nothing but dismal tales of housebreaking, footpads, and desperate highwaymen. With these, for a season, we afflicted each other, till imperceptibly growing weary, some of us fell asleep. Our usher, who was very young, and slept in the same room with us, at last came to bed ; but instead of affording such of us as were awake any encouragement, he expressed his apprehensions for our safety in alarming terms, and deposited his weapon under his pillow to be ready in case of need. A silence of some length took place ; some of us were asleep, and very few of us quite awake, when a most tremendous crash against the door in the schoolroom below, summoned us to realize our imaginary heroism.

We all leaped out of bed in an instant, and snatched up our weapons ; but no one had the temerity to advance. Our usher, whom we expected to lead us on, terrified us as much by crying out that he could not find his weapon, and that we must advance against the foe. How faithfully can I, even now, go back to that fearful moment ! It is stereotyped in my remembrance.

We stood, statue-like, until he had found his weapon, when with much trepidation, we joined him. Another violent blow now burst open the school door, with a thundering sound, and footsteps were heard advancing across the school. The bottom of the staircase was defended by a second door, which was soon burst open also, and a heavy tread began to ascend the stairs. The critical moment had arrived, and our usher led us on to the attack.

We drove the man back who, with a heavy tread, had partly ascended the stairs, and chased him across the school, but the fellow hastily shut the door, and held it on the outside that we might not overtake him. In vain we tried to wrench open the door, and concluded that the rogue was uncommonly strong to pull against us all. Two or three boys jumped on a desk, and opened the window, through which they plainly saw a man pulling at the latch of the door with all his might. The fellow was at length overcome, and he then loosed his hold. We followed him as he ran off with great alacrity. Some said that he went one way, and some another, but none could lay hold of him. On searching the garden, we found a large hole through the hedge of an arbour, and, as many said that they saw him run in that direction, we doubted not that he had effected his escape. Returning to our dormitory, we felt very thankful for our preservation, though I question if

one among us lifted up his heart in grateful acknowledgment to Almighty God.

After a silence of some length, our usher appeared very restless and uneasy, saying that we still might be in great danger, and that he was determined to go round the premises. He asked one of us to accompany him, but this appeared so rash, and so ill-suited to our situation, that no one replied. He then required the biggest boy to go with him, calling him by his name, but this he absolutely refused to do, saying he had had enough of it already. Another name, and yet another, was called in vain.

One of my schoolfellows leaped into my bed, and grasped me round the middle in such an agony of apprehension, that he shook as though afflicted with the palsy or the ague. Almost every name had now been called but mine, and I lay in dreadful foreboding of an unwelcome invitation. At length our usher asked me to accompany him; and, though I felt very reluctant, being terribly afraid, yet the opportunity of making myself famous by doing what all my schoolfellows had declined, so far affected me that I consented to go. By what poor, vain motives is the human heart influenced! We put on our clothes, armed ourselves well, and then sallied forth once more in quest of the robbers.

Our usher did not fail to refresh my memory,

every five minutes, by reminding me of the danger we might be in ; and I really expected, at every turning, that the villains would leap upon us. He led me all round the premises, and then proposed that we should again examine the arbour in the garden. Thither we went, and surely I never shall forget my sensations when, after frightening me all he could, he burst into a loud laugh, telling me that the whole affair was nothing but a plan contrived to punish the boys for their boastful expressions of courage.

This plan had been principally concerted by the cook, and it was carried into effect by means of the servant girl.

The doors had been left unfastened by our usher, that the servant girl might bang them open, and when we all were pulling at the door, with the rogue on the other side, our usher, unnoticed by us, placed his foot at the bottom of it, to prevent our wrenching it open.

As the cook had sat up till near midnight to enjoy our terror and confusion, we thought it but fair that she and the servant should be frightened in their turn. Accordingly, we shook the outside shutters of the house violently, and made such noises, that they were firmly persuaded, believing us to be in bed, that the real robbers were come at last. Peeping through a crevice in the window-shutter, we saw them both standing together motionless

with terror, when giving a parting rattle at both the back and front doors, we retired for the night, heartily enjoying the consternation we had occasioned. By this affair I acquired much more credit for courage among my schoolfellows than I deserved."

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## Chapter Sixth.

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### COUNTRY WALKING AND RIDING.

OH credulous, confiding, open-hearted, happy boyhood! Age and experience lessen our admiration of many things around us, while boyhood estimates them at their highest value. The boy sees the surface of things, and finds enough there to gladden his heart and to make his eyes sparkle with pleasure.

Let a boy sit in the presence of a soldier, and the military man will seem a hero in his eyes. He does not enquire if he has seen service, or doubt his skill in the use of weapons. The scarlet coat, the bright orange ornaments that glitter upon it, and, above all, the sword that sleeps in its scabbard, are credentials that gives unchallenged importance to the soldier.

Let a sign-painter show his gaudy performances to a group of schoolboys, and he will meet with as much admiration, as if he equalled Titian in colouring. A musician, though his highest achievement be to fiddle at a fair, may gather

boys around him who will rank him among the masters of his art.

A knife-grinder is a skilful craftsman and first-rate mechanic among the urchins that surround him, as he stops in the street and watches the sparks that fly from the blades, as he works at his wheel. Country boys from their lesser insight into busy scenes, have more credulity, more curiosity, and perhaps a keener enjoyment of new sights than those who dwell in a town.

Common country occupations, too, have a constant power of pleasing and interesting young people. The ploughman, the mower, the reaper, the thresher, all find youthful admirers, who sometimes watch them at their work, and wish for their skill in handling rustic implements.

But if country occupations please young people, what shall we say of country amusements? The hunters themselves, eager as they are in the chace, do not enjoy their sport more keenly, than the country boy does, when he sees them mounted in their red and green coats, leaping the fences, and following the hounds. The rider of the winning horse in a steeple-chase does not enjoy the huzzas of the spectators, and experience more pleasure in his gains, than the country boy does in seeing the sight from the branches of some tree where he sits perched in safety surveying the fields around. Now it is this very surface-seeing, this confiding faith

that things are what they appear, which gives so many sunny and cheerful hours to boyhood.

Talk of sunny seasons! why the whole life of a country boy, if he have health, and fall not into unkind hands, is a succession of sunny seasons. The green fields and lanes are his play ground, and a flower, a mushroom, a bunch of nuts gathered from the bough, or half-a-dozen blackberries plucked by his own hands from the bush, are a feast of delight to him.

From our earliest childhood we all yearn for the country, even before we know what it is. "The infant in arms makes known its desire for fresh air, by restlessness; it cries—for it cannot speak its want,—is taken abroad, and is quiet."

All children love to "go out;" they prefer the grass to the footpath; and to wander instead of to "walk as they ought to do." They *feel* that,

"God made the country, and man made the town."

While they are conducted along the road, their great anxiety is to leave it. "When shall we get into the fields?"

They seek after some new thing, and convert what they find to their own use. A stick placed between the legs, a wisp of grass, or a stone, drawn along at the end of a string, is a cart. On the sides of banks, and in green lanes, they see the daily issues from the great

treasury of the earth,—opening buds, new flowers, surprising insects. They come home laden with unheard-of curiosities, wonderful rarities of their new-found world; and tell of their being met by ladies whom they admired, and who spoke to them.

As children increase in years they proceed from particulars to generals—observe the weather, sun-rising and sun-setting, the changing forms of clouds, varied scenery, difference of character in persons. In a short time they know so much as to think they know enough. They enter upon life, and find experience—the schoolmaster is always at home.

In manhood the instincts of childhood, recollections of our old love, return. We would throw ourselves upon the bosom of nature—but we are weaned. We cannot see her as we did, yet we recall, and keep representations of her features; throne landscapes and forests in portfolios, and place Claudes and Poussins in our rooms. We turn from nature herself to look at painted shadows of her; and behold pictures of graceful human forms till we dream of human perfection, and of our being, still, “a little lower than the angels.”

It is not the woods, the brooks, the hills, the vallies and the green fields alone that we love, but the very paths by which we pass from one delightful scene to another. They are pleasant in themselves, and they make secluded places

more agreeable. We feel, when quitting the field paths, like schoolboys wandering out of bounds. "I love our real English footpaths. I love those rustic and picturesque stiles, opening their pleasant escapes from frequented places, and dusty highways, into the solitudes of nature. It is delightful to catch a glimpse of one on the village green, under the old elder-tree by some ancient cottage, or half hidden by the overhanging boughs of a wood. I love to see the smooth, dry track, winding away in easy curves, along some green slope to the churchyard, to the embosomed cottage, or to the forest grange. It is to me an object of certain inspiration. It seems to invite one from noise and publicity, into the heart of solitude and of rural delights. It beckons the imagination on, through green and whispering corn fields, through the short but verdant pasture; the flowery mowing-grass; the odorous and sunny hayfield; the festivity of harvest; from lovely farm to farm; from village to village; by clear and mossy wells; by tinkling brooks, and deep wood-skirted streams; to crofts, where the daffodil is rejoicing in spring, or meadows, where the large, blue geranium embellishes the summer wayside, to heaths with their warm, elastic sward and crimson bells, the clithering of grasshoppers, the fox-glove, and the old gnarled oak; in short, to all the solitary haunts, after which the city-pent lover of nature pants, as 'the hart panteth after the water

brooks.' What is there so truly English? What is so linked with our rural tastes, our sweetest memories and our sweetest poetry, as stiles and field-paths?

“It is along the footpath in secluded fields,—upon the stile in embowered lane,—where the wild rose and the honey-suckle are lavishing their beauty and their fragrance, that we delight to picture to ourselves rural lovers, breathing in the dewy sweetness of a summer evening vows still sweeter. It is there, that the poet seated, sends back his soul into the freshness of his youth, amongst attachments since withered by neglect, rendered painful by absence, or broken by death; amongst dreams and aspirations which, even now that they pronounce their own fallacy, are lovely. It is there that he gazes upon the gorgeous sunset,—the evening star following with silvery lamp the fading day, or the moon showering her pale lustre through the balmy night air, with a fancy that kindles and soars into the heavens before him,—there, that we have all felt the charm of woods and green fields and solitary boughs waving in the golden sunshine, or darkening in the melancholy beauty of evening shadows. Who has not thought how beautiful was the sight of a village congregation pouring out from their old grey church on a summer day, and streaming off through the quiet meadows, in all directions to their homes?

“Those good old turn-stiles too—can I ever for-

get them? the hours I have spun round upon them, when a boy; or those in which I have almost laughed myself to death at the remembrance of my village pedagogue's disaster! Methinks I see him now. The time a sultry day;—the domine a goodly person of some eighteen or twenty stone;—the scene a footpath sentinelled with turnstiles, one of which held him fast, as in utter amazement at his bulk. Never shall I forget his efforts and agonies to extricate himself, nor his lion-like roars, which brought some labourers to his assistance, who, when they had recovered from their convulsions of laughter, knocked off the top and let him go."

Let us watch a school-boy as he strolls across the fields, loitering along alone amidst country scenery. It is a sunny hour with him in more senses than one, for the sun shines brilliantly above his head, and the fields and the fresh air have a sunny influence on his mind.

It has been said, that the sailor, the servant maid, and the school-boy enjoy a holiday more than any other persons in the world. But which enjoys it most of the three? Perhaps the school-boy, for he is younger in life. The world is newer to him than it is to the others, and his holidays are as yet fresher and fewer.

Our school-boy is walking over the fields, perhaps sent on some errand to deliver a packet, or a message, with a useless charge to be quick

in going and returning. Useless indeed! Those who require speedy messengers must not dispatch school-boys across green fields. Nature has too much to show to the loiterers to allow of their going quickly onward and looking neither to the right nor to the left.

The bee, the bird, the butterfly,  
Will quickly catch the trifler's eye,  
And corn-flower blue and poppy gay,  
Will make him loiter on his way.

Our school-boy is now climbing a high stile, and he sits there awhile; not because he is tired, but that he may look a moment at the lark as it rises upwards in its spiral flight until it becomes a speck in the glare. It tries even his keen eye to keep it in sight. Anon he wipes his watery eyes, for he has looked at the soaring bird as it crossed the burning rays occasioned by the too dazzling light. This is but a trifling inconvenience, he pockets his handkerchief, descends from the stile, and continues his way.

He glances at the hedges as he walks onwards, not to admire nature and apostrophise, or even to think about the loveliness of the scene, he is too happy for that, but he is fond of the leafy fences that divide field from field, knowing that at different seasons, nuts, and sloes, and blackberries and birdnests are to be found there.

The cows and sheep that graze near the footpath are far from being uninteresting in his eyes, and though as yet he has not had lessons in



music his ear enjoys the harmonious notes of the singing-birds without even thinking that he is listening to them.

He comes to another stile and climbs hastily over it, without resting, for a favourite spot is within view, and he directs his steps towards it, intending to remain there awhile ere he proceeds onwards. The path winds by the side of a large pool. It is here that our school-boy lingers. He longs to use his pocket knife and cut some bulrushes that stand erect in the water that is deep enough to protect them from his attempts. Then he seeks for flat stones that he may make ducks and drakes, as he terms them, and skim his missiles over the surface of the pool.

He becomes tired at last of his amusement, and seats himself on the bank where the water is deep. A shoal of fish glide within sight, and one larger than the rest remains stationary for a time, while the school-boy eyes it eagerly, and longs for a rod and line that he may try his skill as an angler, but the large fish swims away, and other things engage his attention.

He is no landscape painter, but yet, not knowing why, he enjoys the beauty of the scene around him. He admires the sparkle of the water when the wind ripples the surface of the pool, and the sun's rays fall upon it, and he admires its blackness too, in a part where branching trees are waving, whose shadows strike downwards towards fictitious skies.

Cattle are standing to cool themselves in the shallows, and he observes the cows closely, as they advance nearer towards deeper water, wondering how far they will venture towards the depths, but the careful kine stop when he wishes them to go onward.

A dragon fly now diverts our boy's attention. He is charmed with its gauze-like wings, and its body glittering in green and gold. He wantonly tries to strike it down with his hat, but the insect escapes him, and hovers over the protecting pool.

Our school-boy now knows he has really loitered too long, and thinks of scoldings to come, that make him look grave for a moment. But gravity does not dwell long on the face of a country school-boy. He leaves the pool and hastens onwards—tries his speed at running, and makes experiments in jumping to fit him for future feats on the play-ground, where he hopes to surpass envious rivals. At last he arrives at the place to which he has been dispatched, delivers his packet, and scampers back to the school again, to make up for lost time, with the hue of health on his cheek, and emotions of happiness in his heart.

We have noticed a boy, when he was taking a solitary walk in the fields, now let us look at one who is about to enjoy a ride along country lanes. What is there that a boy will not ride? Nay, what is there that he does not ride? Take

the whole stud of hobby horses inanimate and animate from the walking stick to the waving bough of the oak, from the low back of the dog, to the high back of the cart horse, and his riding sunny seasons are without number. From the very hour he dismounts his rocking horse, till he is qualified to go a hunting, he passes through every possible gradation of horsemanship, and every thing that can bear his weight and move, is in turn mounted and ridden. His father's knee is, doubtless, his first nag, and then as the case may be, the swinging gate, the rotatory turn stile, the ascending and descending see-saw, the suspended rope, the bush harrow, the cart, the waggon, dogs, sheep, goats, pigs, asses, mules, cows and horses are pressed into his service. It is very uncertain what steed he may mount, but it is very certain that he must ride; whether he saddles "White Surrey for the field to-morrow," or the shaggy long-eared Arabian of the common, is to him a matter of very little moment, so that he can have a scamper.

There stands Farmer Johnson who is going to send his nephew Frank on some message, and he is talking to the boy who sits demurely on a pony, and listens to his uncle's words.

The farmer charges the boy not to ride too fast, and to bring the pony back again, cool, and in good condition, but demure as Frank looks, he is not the boy to be trusted.

He sets off, however, at a slow trot, and

Towser, the great yard dog, is allowed to accompany him in his ride.

There is no deceit about Towser, he gambols and frolics round and round the trotting pony, but his little master represses his exulting feeling, for he knows that his uncle's eye is upon him. Now he reaches a turning in the road that places him out of view from the farm-house, yet still he rides steadily onwards. But there is mischief in his sparkling eye, and the pony, who knows his ways, is expecting to be urged to increase his speed.

See the boy alights from the pony. What is he going to do? Ah Frank! Frank! so young, and yet so shrewdly selfish, he has pulled a spur from his pocket and is fitting it to his heel. Now he mounts again and begins to display his horse manship. The pony becomes restive, and rears and throws out his heels, but the boy keeps his seat on the saddle, and away he goes at full gallop.

Towser for a time keeps neck and neck with the fleet-footed pony, but at length follows panting behind. The young conqueror then slackens his reigns, ceases to goad with the spur, and the pony's pace becomes slower, until he sinks into a sober trot, and they go on at a pace that the farmer himself would approve, along the lonely lanes.

There is a pond by the way-side in which our boy must make a splashing; whether the pony wants to drink or not, he must go into the water, and if Towser, too, can be persuaded to take a swim it will increase the boy's pleasure.

The youngster rides into the pond, making the water whirl around him. The pony drinks, and then turns towards the road, but this attempt at retreat does not suit the boy. He urges the animal towards the deeper parts, lifting up his legs till his knees are almost as high as the pommel of the saddle.

Towser enters into his young master's frolics, and swims boldly before him in the water, inviting the reluctant pony to go on towards uncertain depths.

After making many circuitous movements, the pony is allowed to regain the road.

Now for another gallop! Away they go, Towser and the pony, the former taking the lead, leaving a trail of moisture behind them; again the pace becomes a sober one, and the panting animals become partly dry, when Frank alighting, takes the spur from his heel and once more conceals it in his pocket.

He will now continue his way at a steady pace, hoping to conceal his doings from his uncle, the farmer. In this he will most likely fail, and not so soon enjoy another ride as he imagines. Frank! Frank! in deceiving others thou deceivest thyself! while open-heartedness shall walk erect, the deceiver shall go bending and blinking through the world.

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## Chapter Seventh.

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### ROAMING AND READING.

THERE are sunny seasons with the young in Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, and that may be regarded as one of them, when a group of choice companions set off to some favourite spot or commanding eminence, with an entertaining book, every one taking his turn to read. Never was the sky brighter, the air purer, nor the leaf of the tree greener than on the Spring afternoon, when three of us set off from Holyrood, on a stroll to Litherton Top. There had been a delightful shower, and the sun and the rainbow appeared in the sky together.

O Spring, I love thee dearly,  
 And I give thee greeting cheerly,  
     As thy beauty brightly glows!  
 Though secret sorrow woundeth,  
 The song of joy resoundeth,  
 And my heart with rapture boundeth  
     As thy balmy zephyr blows.

When we reached Litherton Top, the rocky shelf that formed our favourite seat was as dry

as a barn floor. We sat down, and Melville read the following story :

### THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

It is a fine summer's morn, and the sun is shining on the hills and the valleys, on the waving woods and the flowing river. Never did the birds sing more sweetly, and never did the landscape look fairer than it does now.

Do you see the mother with two of her children at the cottage door? She is a widow. Sometimes she speaks to her children, sometimes she looks up at the bright, snowy, white clouds, and sometimes on the distant country. No wonder that she should sometimes gaze around her on the prospect, for it is a lovely one.

But do you really think she is musing on the scene before her? No, indeed she is not; widows that live in cottages, and have children about them, are not in the habit of standing in that thoughtful manner to gaze on country scenes; they have something else to employ their time and thoughts. It is generally as much as they can do, poor things! to get together the bits and drops to support their family; there is work to do, and the children to attend to, and the pot to boil. She is not thinking about the bright sun, the hills and the valleys, the waving woods, and the flowing river; she hardly knows that the birds are singing at all; all her thoughts

are at sea ; her eldest son William is a cabin boy, and she is thinking how brightly the sun must shine on the heaving ocean.

It is mid-day, and the widow and her three children are seated at the deal table to dinner ; the daughter was seven years old last Easter, and her brothers are nine and five. The daughter has asked a blessing, the potatoes have been served, and the children are as lively as lambkins in the flowery field. But what is it that occupies the attention of the mother ? She sits motionless, looking on the earthenware dish before her, seemingly forgetful that she has food in her mouth, for her lips move not. I see how it is ; she is far away over the wild waters ! She is thinking of her William, and the dinner that he may be eating on board the Dolphin.

It is evening, and the sky is obscured ; the sun has not yet set, but the heavens grow dark ; the change has come on suddenly from glare to gloom. The wind, too, has risen, and is, even now, increasing. Nay, look how the tops of the laburnums are waving to and fro. Any one may see that a storm is brewing : the wind whistles up the rocky lane, and sounds hollow ; sure enough we shall have a rough night of it. I will hie me in doors, under cover ; many a one will be wet to the skin before morning.

But see ! The widow is leaning over the orchard gate, and looking towards the old yew tree in the churchyard. Perhaps she is thinking



that if the storm comes on, it will blow the fruit from her trees, or sweep away the thatch from her frail-built cottage, or upset one of Farmer Hall's elm trees, or blow down the old yew in the churchyard. Not she, indeed; little would she care, at this moment, if her orchard were stripped, if the thatch of her cot were whirling in the air, if the old yew tree in the churchyard were blown down, or half-a-dozen of Farmer Hall's elm trees were torn up by the roots. The truth is, she is not thinking about them; she is only thinking, that if a storm should take place at sea as well as on land, what will become of her son William.

It is midnight; the children of the cottage are fast locked in slumber, but the widow is yet awake. The wind howls fearfully, and the storm is all abroad. The casement rattles as the drenching rain is driven against it. The cottage trembles as the heavy crash of thunder breaks over head, and the flashes of lightning seem to set the whole sky in a blaze.

The widow trembles in her bed; surely it is enough to make her tremble, for the lightning and the thunder are terrible, the drenching storm is like a deluge, the frail cottage can hardly endure such a tempest much longer, and the storm may ruin her.

Ah, you know not the strong affection of a mother! I tell you that these things trouble her not; she is not thinking about them. That

poor woman, though she lies trembling, is bold enough to walk abroad in the tempest, to bear the blustering winds and drenching rain. Neither the loud claps of thunder, nor the sheeted and forky lightning, would keep her within doors, if the welfare of one of her children required her to leave her cottage. But what makes her tremble ?

Ah ! What makes her tremble indeed ! I will tell you. Long after the children were asleep, she sat at the window watching the progress of the storm ; she bent her knees, and held up her hands in prayer, but her faltering lips prayed only for the safety of her son : her son William is in all her thoughts. The bed is now shaking beneath her ; how must a ship shake on the raging ocean ! She hears the rain pouring down ; how soon it must drench a sailor's jacket through and through ! The thunder and lightning are terrible even in a cottage ; what must it be on the wide unsheltered sea ? What, if her William should be struck by a flash, or be blown from the giddy mast ; or what, if the vessel should be wrecked in the middle of the raging deep !

Again it is a goodly summer's morn ; the rain has given over, the winds have fallen, the tempest is heard no more. The sun is gilding the landscape, and all is calm ; but, is it all calm in the widow's heart ? No ; she yet sees in her memory the forky flash ; she yet hears the strife

of wind and rain ; she fears that dismal tidings may reach the cottage : her duties are done as before, but, now and then, she is lost in thought, and when any stranger stops at the cottage gate, she gives a start.

Days, and weeks, and months have passed ; the leaves of the trees are beginning to change colour ; the fields are white unto harvest, and in some of them the labourers are cutting down the corn with the sickle, and binding it into sheaves. The widow is getting her fruit from the apple trees in her orchard ; she is shaking the branches with a pole, and her children are filling their baskets.

What is it that has suddenly caught the quick eye of the poor widow ? Her cheek burns again, and now it is deadly pale. I see a sailor boy at the orchard gate, laden with a bundle, some sticks, and a bird-cage. His jacket must be a new one, and his cheek is red as a rose. The pole has fallen from the widow's hands ; the children have overturned their baskets of fruit, and with their mother are flying towards the gate : in a moment the sailor boy is locked in his mother's arms.

William has liberty to leave his ship for a fortnight. He has been in foreign parts ; he has behaved well, and gained the good will of his captain ; he has brought his sisters some beautiful sea shells, his brothers some capital bamboo sticks, but the parrot in the gilt cage,

and the gold in the leathern purse are for his mother.

The widow has ascended the staircase to her chamber: in the fulness of her heart she has kneeled down to offer up praise to the Father of mercies for all his goodness. She has confessed, with tears, her folly and sinfulness in doubting his protecting care; she has prayed that she may no more dishonour him by a want of confidence in his mercy, and has besought him, for the Redeemer's sake, to accept her thanksgiving and praises, for bringing back her son in safety, for wiping away her tears, and making her heart dance for joy.

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There was but a short pause at the end of this story before the book was passed to me. The glowing sky, the goodly prospect, the sweet, fresh air, and the stories, altogether, made us happy. The piece that I read was

### THE POOR MAN AND THE BISHOP.

A worthy man of Paris town,  
Came to the Bishop there;  
His face, o'erclouded with dismay,  
Betray'd a fix'd despair.

“Father,” said he, “a sinner vile  
Am I against my will;  
Each hour I humbly pray for faith,  
But am a doubter still.

Sure, were I not despised of God,  
He would not leave me so,

To struggle thus in constant strife  
Against the deadly foe."

The Bishop to his sorrowing son  
Thus spoke a kind relief :—  
"The King of France has castles twain;  
To each he sends a chief.

There's Montelherry, far inland,  
That stands in place secure;  
While La Rochelle, upon the coast,  
Doth sieges oft endure.

Now, for these castles both preserved,  
First, in his prince's love,  
Shall Montelherry's chief be placed,  
Or La Rochelle's above?"

"Oh, doubtless, sire," the sinner cry'd,  
"The King would love the most  
That man whose task was hard, to keep  
The castle on his coast."

"Son," said the Bishop, "thou art right,  
Apply this reasoning well:  
*My* heart is Montelherry fort,  
And *thine* is La Rochelle.

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This piece pleased us all exceedingly, and the more so, as we had never met with it before. I determined to commit it to memory, which I afterwards did. The book being handed to Carter, he read to us the following striking tale :

### BENKALED.

The unprejudiced mind will not refuse a lesson of instruction, though presented in the envelope of an Eastern tale.

“There is no God, but God, and Mahomet is his prophet!” said Benkaled, as he arose from his devotions; with his eyes fixed on the ground he departed from the mosque, and with a melancholy air silently paced the streets of Bagdad.

Benkaled was the son of Mahommed Khan, and lived during the caliphate of the mighty Haroun Alraschid. The Caliph had loaded him with distinguished honours, but Benkaled knew how to estimate the friendship of princes. The reverses of his life had taught him the instability of prosperity when dependent on royal favour.

His master, the mighty Caliph Haroun Alraschid, was brave, disinterested, and generous; but sudden in his wrath as the simoom, and ungovernable in his fury as the moving sands of the desert. He had recently sullied his glory by the slaughter of the innocent Barmecides. Jahia Benkaled, and his sons Fadhel, Jaafar, Mohammed, and Musa were the victims of his cruelty and rage, and Benkaled justly feared lest any sudden emotion which accident might excite in his mind, should render him the object of his fearful displeasure.

Benkaled was possessed of great riches, but they could not make him happy. The former part of his life had been peculiarly unfortunate. The same day that beheld him sitting in the Divan, magnificently arrayed in the robes of dignity and authority, had witnessed him, stript

of his honours, stretching his fettered limbs in a loathsome dungeon. Deeply impressed with the remembrance of his misfortunes, though surrounded with splendour and magnificence, his happiest moments were embittered by the reflection that his only son Hassan, the object of his tenderest affections, might possibly inherit, with his father's riches and honours, his calamities and misfortunes. These apprehensions, which had caused him so much uneasiness, were at length removed by the great indulgence of Alla, to whom he had preferred the petition that his son might be wholly exempt from the fluctuating circumstances and manifold miseries of mankind. In a vision Mahomet assured him that his request was granted, and that his son, free from the afflictions incident to humanity, should uninterruptedly enjoy perfect happiness.

Benkaled now looked forward with pleasure to the time when his son would be sensible of the inestimable gift conferred upon him, fully persuaded that, whatever difficulties he had encountered, he should now pass the remainder of his days in happiness and tranquillity. Retiring from the cares of public life, he enjoyed for a season that repose to which his services had so eminently entitled him, but the Caliph could not easily brook the absence of a man whose wisdom and discretion had rendered him indispensably necessary to the interests of his sovereign. He therefore once more required his

presence, and that he might be the more benefitted by his counsel, ordered apartments in his palace to be prepared for the reception of his venerable counsellor; and, as a further proof of his regard, offered in marriage to Hassan his son, the daughter of Mustopha the rich, as soon as Hassan's age would admit of such an arrangement. These proposals of the Caliph were received by Benkaled with every demonstration of gratitude and joy. He removed to the palace, and only awaited the arrival of his son to complete his happiness.

Hassan, who for a considerable time had been absent from his father on his travels, and for the benefit of his education, at length returned. Benkaled welcomed him with the warmest affection, but was surprised at the seeming apathy with which his son received his embraces, and knew not how to account for the singularity of his behaviour.

The Caliph having heard of the arrival of Hassan, ordered him to be at once conducted to the royal presence.

Hassan approached the throne of the mighty Haroun Alraschid with the same indifference he had shown on his arrival at the palace; he heard the most flattering compliments pronounced by his sovereign, and listened to his assurance of uniting him with the daughter of Mustopha, with the most perfect coolness. The Caliph, disgusted by his apathy, arose from the throne,



and commanding Benkaled to accompany him, retired to a remote part of the palace, where he required an immediate explanation of the conduct he had witnessed.

Benkaled, though equally grieved and enraged by the ingratitude of his son, disguised his sentiments, artfully attributing the behaviour of Hassan to the reserve of his character—to his astonishment at the splendour and magnificence which surrounded him, and to the want of language to express his feelings of gratitude towards his royal benefactor.

Notwithstanding the ascendancy Benkaled had gained over the mind of the Caliph, it was with the greatest difficulty he prevailed upon him to believe that his son was not insensible to his generosity.

On returning to his apartments, Benkaled upbraided Hassan in the strongest terms with want of affection for his father and attachment to his prince. It was in vain that he magnified the riches of Mustopha and the charms of his daughter, or threatened him with the Caliph's displeasure; Hassan coolly replied that any change in his circumstances was unnecessary, he being already perfectly happy.

Benkaled was now more wretched than ever; he had prevailed on the Caliph to give Hassan another opportunity of testifying his gratitude and attachment, and dreaded the event of an interview, which, in all probability, would ter-

minate in the disgrace and banishment of his son. Overcome with the violence of his grief, he sought his chamber and sunk in slumber. His mind was yet agitated and absorbed by the past, and in the heat of his imagination he accused Alla as the author of his calamities, in withholding from his son those honours and enjoyments which the Caliph had been willing to bestow.

In his slumber Mahomet entered his apartment, and having rebuked him for his injustice in impiously imputing to his Creator evils which he had brought upon himself, observed, that had the happiness of Hassan been capable of receiving any addition, it could not have been that "perfect happiness" which the indulgence of Alla had allowed in answer to his prayer.

Benkaled now saw the folly of his request, as he had thereby deprived his son of every gratification arising from his affection, or the friendship and generosity of the Caliph. Humbly imploring forgiveness for his impiety and presumption, he begged that his second request might be allowed him, which was, that Hassan his son might enjoy a degree of happiness not subject to diminution, yet capable of being increased by any fortunate circumstance.

Mahomet assured him that he was empowered to grant him this request also; and having warned him against impious accusations, left him to repose.

In the morning Benkaled held a conference with his son, and was surprised at the change he perceived in his disposition. Hassan returned the salutations of his father with respect and reverence, and expressed his desire of assuring the Caliph of his attachment to his person, and his gratitude for the princely honours he had so generously bestowed.

Benkaled rejoicing at the alteration in the sentiments of his son, ordered him to prepare for an immediate interview with the Caliph. This preparation was, however, now unnecessary. The enemies of Benkaled alarmed at the repeated and distinguished marks of favour which he had received, circulated a report that he privately aspired to the throne. The rumour had been spread around with such industry, that it had reached the ears of Haroun Alraschid, who, while he deliberated on the truth of the tidings continually brought, was confirmed in his suspicions that evil was intended him, by the remembrance of Hassan's conduct.

Enraged at the duplicity and base ingratitude of a man whom he had ever considered his most faithful adherent, and on whom he had lavished his favours with a profusion characteristic of the magnificence and generosity of "The Mighty Caliph," he, in the first transport of his anger, ordered Benkaled to be seized and cast into the dungeon of the palace, laden with the heaviest irons. Hassan was left at liberty, and his con-

duct watched, in order to ascertain the means whereby the plot of the conspirators was to be accomplished.

Benkaled, though considerably alarmed at his arrest, doubted not that he should soon be liberated by the attentions of his son who, he believed, would immediately offer himself a hostage for his father, in which case he should have an opportunity of convincing the Caliph of his innocence. He had received the word of the Prophet, that his son should receive an increase of happiness from every fortunate circumstance, and what circumstance could be more fortunate than an opportunity of liberating his father, thereby ensuring the possession of honours, which otherwise he could not hope to attain.

But Benkaled had forgotten, that in agreement with his request, Mahomet had promised the happiness of his son should not be subject to diminution.

Hassan felt no uneasiness at the imprisonment of his father, nor took any precaution to obtain his release. The friends of Benkaled, by the most earnest supplication, conjured him in vain, he remained obdurate and insensible.

When Benkaled heard of the conduct of his son, he exclaimed against him as a monster of ingratitude, who, fully absorbed in his own pleasures, felt no compassion for the calamities of others; disowning him as his son, he gave himself up to despair, and accused Alla of

having given him a son so destitute of pity and compassion ; so abandoned and deficient in affection, that, while pursuing his own pleasures, he could suffer the author of his existence to perish in a dungeon. Oppressed by his sufferings he sunk into slumber, and repeated therein his accusations. The sudden entrance of Mahomet, and the conviction that he had again accused Alla with injustice, oppressed his bewildered imagination, and abased by a sense of unworthiness he again implored forgiveness.

Mahomet forbore to increase the agony of his mind by upbraiding him with his impiety, but endeavoured to convince him that his calamities were not the effect of his son's indiscretions, but of his own ; that the promise he had obtained of Hassan's happiness being subject to no decrease, had prevented his son from feeling his father's misfortunes ; that pity and compassion were qualities which, for a season, embittered the happiness of their possessors, and could not, therefore, be expected to reside in the breast of Hassan. Benkaled, overcome by the truth of these observations, acknowledged that the last request he had made for his son was equally absurd with the former one, but hoped that his third and last request, if granted, would prove that the lessons he had received were not lost upon him.

Mahomet having informed him that he could consent to his desire, Benkaled humbly peti-

tioned that his son might be stripped of that happiness which had rendered him an object of abhorrence, and once more be made subject to the pains and pleasures, the delights and disappointments, which are alternately suffered and enjoyed by the human race.

Benkaled soon found the happy effects of a reformation in the conduct of his son. Hassan saw with regret, the fatal consequences of his recent behaviour. That affection which had so long been frozen in his breast, now glowed with redoubled warmth, and prompted him to an immediate alleviation of the sufferings of his father.

The situation of Benkaled was thought to be desperate by most of his friends, but he had an advocate in the person of his son, fully competent to disperse the false and malicious machinations of his enemies.

Haroun Alraschid, surrounded by those who sought the destruction of Benkaled, felt the loss of his venerable counsellor. The flattering lips of his attendants endeavoured to dissipate the gloom and melancholy settling on his brow. His power, his riches, his glory, and his learning; his repeated travels from Chorasin to Egypt; his pilgrimages to Mecca, and his invasion of the dominions of Constantinople, were the inexhaustible themes of their adulation; but everything was insufficient to eradicate the rooted sorrow of his bosom, until Hassan, by a

persevering and devoted interference in favour of his father, had convinced him of his innocence. Then Haroun Alraschid once more resumed his tranquillity, and with joy received into his confidence his beloved Benkaled.

Reinstated in the favour of the Caliph, possessed of his former honors, and the affection of his son, Benkaled in the transport of his joy clasped Hassan to his breast, and with gratitude returned thanks to Alla, for the bountiful benefits he had bestowed; fully convinced, that his wisdom and goodness had endued man with those qualifications best adapted to his state, and the happiness of his species; and that a compliance with his vain and presumptuous desires would but produce guilt, remorse, and disappointment.

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## Chapter Eighth.

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### GAMES AND RECREATIONS.

SUNNY are the seasons which are passed by a boy in his games and recreations. Happy boyhood! What knowest thou of care! Give thee a gleam of sunshine and a blackberry bush, and thou art happier than a king.

“Thy cheerful heart and sparkling eyes  
A crown and kingdom would despise.”

There are seasons, however, in which boyhood sighs for what at other seasons it has no desire. A well-known writer has strikingly set forth the disposition of the young to exchange boyhood with all its joyous capers, for manhood with all its gloomy cares. He is happy caparisoned as a horse to his schoolmate, and yet he wishes to become a man.

“Yet he would gladly halt and drop  
That boyish harness off, to swop  
With this world's heavy van—  
To toil, to tug. O little fool!  
Whilst thou canst be a horse at school  
To wish to be a man!



Perchance thou dream'st it were a thing  
To wear a crown — to be a king !  
And sleep on regal down !  
Alas ! thou know'st not kingly cares ;  
Far happier is thy head that wears  
A hat without a crown."

Perhaps it is hardly correct to say that a boy ever wishes to change the sunny seasons of his youth, for the sober duties and cares of manhood. He rather yearns to become his own master, and to secure what he thinks manhood alone will enable him to attain, than wishes to forego his youthful enjoyments. When a boy draws a picture for himself, he can make as bright a sky, and as gay a rainbow as he pleases, and this he usually does when the future is painted by his fancy.

"In painting future years what glowing skies,  
What suns, and sunny clouds, and goodly rainbows rise !"

The hearty, healthy, out-door pastimes of boyhood, are ever new and ever delightful, and sunny indeed may the seasons be called in which they are indulged. Ask the player at cricket if it be not a sunny season with him when flushed with his exercise he stops, or catches the ball adroitly—when he bowls down the wicket of his adversary, or has a successful inning, scoring a high number and winning the game?

Ask the runner at prison base, when, after a

noble and well contested run, he overtakes his adversary. Or the ball player when he finesses by planting the ball gently just above the line when his opponent is a long way from it, or takes the advantage when he is near it, to send the ball flying out far and high above his head? Ask, then, if prison base and ball playing are not sunny seasons?

Ask the kite flyer when the sky is bright and blue, and a gentle breeze is blowing, and the kite that he has fashioned with his own hands and painted with glaring stars, is mounting high in the heavens above all other kites that are abroad, what are his emotions? And ask the snowballer, pelted as he has been by his companions, and bespattered as he is from head to foot—whose cheek is glowing, and whose warm blood exercise has sent spinning through his veins from his finger ends to his toes. Ask him if it is not with him a sunny season?

It is not when borne along by the full tide of youthful excitement that a boy wishes to be a man, for he is far too happy then to wish to be anything but what he is. It is in his more sober moments, when yearning for a something that he possesses not; when longing for more liberty and more power, that he gives way to his dreamy desires. Boyhood, after all, is dear to him, too, if he live till his hair is as white as flax.

“How sweet is the spring-tide of life, when the eye  
Is lit up like the sunbeam that lightens the sky;

When the heart, and the pleasures around it agree,  
And the hope is as fresh as the leaf on the tree !  
In manhood a thousand vexations annoy,  
But the blithest of pleasures is known by the boy,  
When he runs with delight at his schoolfellow's call,  
To his kite and his peg-top, his hoop and his ball."

There are sunny seasons for a boy when he digs and weeds his little garden ; true it is not so large as gardens usually are, being only a few yards long, and a few feet wide, and equally true it is that it contains not so many flowers as gardens generally do, but still it is his own, and that makes amends for every thing.

" No flowers that bloom in all the world beside  
Are like his roses and his London pride."

And sunny seasons there are, too, when a boy is busy with his rabbit pen, for the grey buck, and the black and white doe and her young ones, and the little trough cut with his own pocket-knife, and the rude hutch that he has had so much trouble to contrive, and his stock of bran, and his fresh gathered sour thistles, are all sources of great gratification ; but these seasons of gardening and rabbit keeping, sunny as they are, are not to be compared with the more heart-stirring pastimes of boyhood.

What a sunny season is that when the whole school turns out for a game of hare and hounds, or a stag chase, all life and cheerfulness, impatience and enterprise ? Such a scene have I now in my memory. I myself am the stag and Hol-

lins is the huntsman. Five minutes law has been allowed me to get ahead of the ardent pack that will soon be panting at my heels. Now the dogs are in full cry, and the hard pressed stag runs at the top of his speed. Making a dash down Holloway Rift, and climbing up the rocky watercourse that, garlanded with wild flowers, and intersected with roots of trees, leads up to the higher ground, I make for Yew-tree Coppice, and now I am pushing my way through branches and brambles; where my pursuers are, I cannot tell, but they know the neighbourhood and all the haunts and hiding-places, as well as I do. Hark! Hailstone Crag gives back the sound of the huntsman's horn. I am off for the Mossy Tump and Peter's Point, and can then look around me.

My pursuers have anticipated my course and turn me towards the brook. No matter! I am prepared. At the edge of the water under a bush is a large plank and a pole, with which we were accustomed to amuse ourselves. I get on the plank and ferry myself across the narrow brook, laughing at my companions who are obliged to run round to the foot bridge.

Again are the dogs almost up with me when I make for Peter's Point, a high piece of ground standing by itself, the steep end of which is at least twenty feet above the field below. Now they think they have me, but I have pulled a cord from my jacket pocket, tied it round my

waist, flung it over the projecting bough of a tree, and let myself down the precipice. My pursuers are again baffled, and away I go stretching across the country for the Dwarf Holes.

The Dwarf Holes in the side of a rock, lead from one to another, and none but the hardiest of us have ever explored them all. One of the dark avenues inside them is only known to myself; it winds gradually upwards to the top of the rock. I have been seen to enter, and the Dwarf Holes are explored in vain. The hounds are at fault, and the huntsman, winding his horn, has three times cried out

“Hoot and holloa,  
Or my dogs shall not follow!”

I make my appearance at the top of the rock to the astonishment and disappointment of all. Once more have I baffled my eager pursuers, and am off, with my handkerchief tied round my loins, for Beechy Wood, Grousely Moor, Horberry Bog, and the Tibberton Limekilns.

What a stag chase is life! What ups and downs! What yearnings after distant objects! What struggles to circumvent, and what strivings to overtake our fellows! Boyhood! Wouldst thou bound forward lightly, keep a clear conscience, carry in thy bosom a heart unburdened with evil, and make the most of thy fleeting moments!

“Shun delays, they breed remorse;  
Take thy time while time is lent thee;

Creeping snails have weakest force ;  
 Fly their fault lest thou repent thee :  
 Good is best when soonest wrought,  
 Lingerin' labour comes to nought.

“ Hoist up sail while gale shall last,  
 Tide and wind stay no man's pleasure ;  
 Seek not time when time is past,  
 Sober speed is Wisdom's leisure.  
 After wits are dearly bought ;  
 Let thy fore wit guide thy thought.”

What sunny moments are passed in pacing the dewy grass after mushrooms, every snowy white top appearing in the distance fresher and fairer than those we have already gathered! What a bountiful banquet, an absolute revel of enjoyment, does boyhood find in a blackberry bush, whose luscious fruit is the more sweet and refreshing on account of the sunshine that beams upon it! And as to the delightful treat of climbing the nut trees in a coppice, and bearing away a bag full of brown shellers, there is no language that can sufficiently set forth its delight. I can hardly fall back upon a sunnier season in the course of my life than that in which, on a glowing day, I once stood on the high boughs of some hazel bushes abounding in ruddy clusters, completely enclosed in a delightful labyrinth of branches, leaves, and fruit. The poet Wordsworth was a nutter, for he says—

“ Then up I rose  
 And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash  
 And merciless ravage ; and the shady nook

Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
Their quiet being ; and unless I now  
Confound my present feelings with the past,  
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned  
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
The silent trees and saw the intruding skies."

Nor should the recreation of bathing be left unnoticed among the sunny seasons of boyhood. To be able to plunge fearlessly from the high bank into the brook or pond, and to glide easily and gracefully through the clear water, is an advantage that every boy ought to attain, not only for his own pleasure, but that he may, if the exigency occur, render himself useful in saving human life. When a boy connects his own pleasure with the profit of others, he gives proof of a generous principle that is creditable to his heart. "Many excellent rules have been given to render swimming easy, but if a boy be determined to learn, and enters the water boldly with his playmates, he *will* learn, and in a short time too, without any other directions than those supplied by the example of his companions. Proper directions are of great use, but they are more useful to a boy after he can keep his head above water than before. Confidence enables a boy to swim, an attention to proper rules enables him to swim well."

The sunny seasons of boyhood are indeed numberless, and when to the cheerfulness of

youth is added knowledge and habits of reflection,—

“ When every thing that strikes the view  
Gives birth to some reflection new,  
From sea to sea, from shore to shore,  
This world has charms unknown before.”

At Holyrood we had our favourite trees, and much enjoyment did we derive from them. There was the Arrow Bridge Oak, a noble tree, and abundant in acorns and oak-balls. The Great Elm at Brookhouse farm, where for many years a raven built her nest. The High Ash by Blackwater Pond. The Old Yew Tree by the Ragged Windows, with its thousands of red yew berries upon it, and the Holly on Bilberry Hill. Many years ago I wrote a few observations on the Holly Bush; you shall have them here.

The morning was frosty, and the leafless trees hung with icicles, when the red berries of a holly bush attracted the attention of an idiot boy. He scrambled through the prickly barrier, and seized on the tempting fruit; but found it bitter to his taste, and surrounded with thorns. His hat fell from his head, his hands tingled with pain, his clothes were torn, and his face was covered with scratches.

And how many a misguided wretch, in the pursuit of pleasure, has been robbed of his patrimony, stung by his conscience, torn by his false friends, and lacerated by the unkindness of



the world! The man of the world is an idiot boy, and worldly pleasure at best but a holly-bush.

The idiot boy had forgotten his disappointment, when the sky was suddenly obscured, and a momentary storm descended on his head. Instead of enduring the temporary inconvenience, he thoughtlessly increased his misfortunes by taking shelter in the holly bush.

How parallel with the rashness of thoughtless humanity! When visited with the sudden blast of calamity or misfortune, hasty and petulant under our afflictions, though wounded by the world a thousand and a thousand times, we yet run to that world for comfort and security! Why, we might as well take shelter in a holly bush.

Mark how quarrelsome this bush appears: ever alive to the slightest insult, it pardons no fault, it forgives no injury, but immediately punishes the wilful, or inadvertent offender. Ah, my friends! in this sharpness of disposition, this quickness to revenge our supposed grievances, we all too much resemble the holly bush.

But let us take a nearer view of the holly bush. What a rattling it makes when disturbed by the winds! How rudely the boughs rustle against their brother branches, and how sharply are the leaves of the same spray pointed against each other!

I could think of the opposing interests of the

world—its wars, its rumours, its commotions; nation set against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; the party spirit of towns, the scandal of villages, and the feuds of private life; frequently branches of the same family at variance with each other. I could think of these things, I say, until I regarded the whole world as a holly bush.

And what are its inhabitants? Evergreens in appearance, glossy in their expression, soft and silky in their professions; but, desire their golden fruit, stand in need of their assistance, run to them for protection, lean on them for support, and you will confess with bitterness, that man, when trusted in, is no better than a holly bush.

But let us consider: the bitterest herb may be grateful to the smell, the most brackish water prove medicinal; and something surely may be said in favour of the holly bush.

It is tenacious of its rights, and jealous of its liberties; but it never attacks the liberties of others. It is ever ready to defend itself, but is never known to be the aggressor. Nations may here learn wisdom from the holly bush.

It is grateful in the darkest seasons; it repines not at the wintry winds.

“ Though cold its place, though lone its lot,  
It buds, it bears, it murmurs not,”

but in the bleakest storms and rudest blasts looks cheerfully towards the skies, and the fruit of

gratitude at the darkest season is abundant on its branches. And can we learn nothing from the holly bush?

Perhaps the little spray that I now hold in my hand was among the topmost branches of its parent tree, and bore its blushing honours thick upon its aspiring head, defying the wintry blast, and exulting in security; but it was untimely severed from the place where it grew, it was cut down in the glory of its youth.

And we may endure the rude ravage of time,  
And exult, though the loud, howling tempest may roar ;  
And we, too, may fall in the midst of our prime,  
And the place that now knows us, may know us no more."

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## Chapter Ninth.

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### SUNBEAMS AND SOBRIETIES.

WHAT a sunny season to boyhood is the month of May, when spring is dressed in her sweetest green, and garlanded with her gayest flowers! Wordsworth says,

“It is my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.”

He says also,

“All the earth is gay;  
Land and Sea  
Give themselves up to jollity,  
And with the heart of May  
Doth every beast keep holiday.  
Thou child of joy,  
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy  
Shepherd Boy!”

Edwards says,

“All ye that live on earth,  
And have your May at will,  
Rejoice in May as I do now,  
And use your May with skill.

Use May, while that you may,  
For May hath but his time;  
When all the fruit is gone, it is  
Too late the tree to climb."

Longfellow says,

"Maiden, that read'st this simple rhyme,  
Enjoy thy youth, it will not stay;  
Enjoy the fragrance of thy prime,  
For O! it is not always May!  
Enjoy the spring of love and youth,  
To some good Angel leave the rest;  
For time will teach thee soon the truth,  
There are no birds in last year's nest!"

Washington Irving says,

"I value every custom that tends to infuse poetical feeling into the common people, and to sweeten and soften the rudeness of rustic manners, without destroying their simplicity. Indeed it is to the decline of this happy simplicity that the decline of this custom may be traced; and the rural dance on the green, and the homely May-day pageant, have gradually disappeared, in proportion as the peasantry have become expensive and artificial in their pleasures, and too knowing for simple enjoyment. Some attempts, indeed, have been made of late years, by men of both taste and learning, to rally back the popular feeling to these standards of primitive simplicity; but the time has gone by, the feeling has become chilled by habits of gain and traffic; the country apes the manners and amusements of the town,

and little is heard of May-day at present, except from the lamentations of authors, who sigh after it from among the brick walls of the city."

And Leigh Hunt says,

"All you that are lovers of nature in books,—lovers of music, painting, poetry,—lovers of sweet sounds, and odours, and colours, and all the eloquent and happy face of the rural world with its eyes and sunshine,—you that are lovers of your species, of youth, and health, and old age,—of manly strength in the manly, of nymph like graces in the female,—of air, of exercise, of happy currents in your veins,—of the light in great Nature's picture,—of all the gentle spiriting, the loveliness, the luxury, that now stands under the smile of heaven, silent and solitary as your fellow-creatures have left it,—go forth on May-day, or on the earliest fine May morning, if that be not fine, and pluck your flowers and your green boughs to adorn your room with, and to show that you do not live in vain."

But boyhood require neither prose nor poetry to set off the month of May, or to call forth the joyousness of the youthful heart. The sun and the fresh air, the green tree, the flower and the warbling bird will do it at any time. It is sure then to do it in the month of May. The life current at that season hurries through the veins, the buoyant spirit rises, and his exultation is at its height. A boy, without knowing it, or thinking it, breathes the very breath of poetry in his

holiday enjoyments, when May is gladdening his ear, his eye and his heart.

It was on a May morning, that half a dozen of us, full and running over with happiness, made the best of our way to Furzy Scrubs, where many a splendid hawthorn stood blooming in all its glory. Oh! it was a transporting sight to gaze on, for the wild and broken ground far as the eye could command it, was a glowing garden. The hawthorns with their profusion of pinky white blossoms, and the green furze bushes with their rich yellow bloom, lit up by the sun-beams, were extravagantly beautiful.

We know not which was the fairest sight,  
The earth so gay, or the sky so bright.

It was no easy task to effect our purpose, which was to mount the hawthorn trees, and every one to sever a flowery bough; with these flowery boughs we marched away walking close together, under the glowing canopy which had cost us so much trouble, and afforded us so much gratification. Truly this was a sunny season.

In the evening of the same day our tutor gave us the following lecture, which, on account of its sobriety, appeared to us a complete contrast to our morning's cheerful enterprise.

#### OUR TUTOR'S LECTURE.

While I address you boys, I wish to speak plainly to myself.

Depend upon it the practice of saying much to others, and little to ourselves, is a bad one. That man is but badly qualified to deal with the hearts of others, who is inattentive to his own.

Nor is it a little attention to ourselves that qualifies us rightly to influence others. There is sad bungling work when a tradesman does not understand his business thoroughly. He who has ever put on a tight coat that pinched him up like a fowl trussed for the spit, or a pair of tight shoes that made him limp, as though he were walking barefoot on pebble stones, will understand me. The tailor who makes our clothes, and the shoemaker who makes our shoes, cannot fit us without serving an apprenticeship to their trades. Is it easier, think you, to fit the heart, than it is to fit the figure, or the foot? No, indeed. Again, I say, that he who would play well his part in rightly affecting the hearts of others, ought to be continually catechising his own.

Whatever you undertake, make up your minds to do it effectually.

He who would be a thorough workman must not be afraid of bending his back, nor above wearing the garb of his calling. Neither a blacksmith in a gauze apron, a mason with a silver trowel, nor a coal-heaver in kid-gloves, is ever likely to perform a creditable day's work, either for himself or his master.



It is a very awkward impediment in the way of those who desire to effect wonders in the way of architecture, that a substantial building must have a substantial foundation. For many years have I been a builder of those imaginary fabrics, "des chateaux en espagne," or more familiarly, "castles in the air," but for the want of that indispensable requisite, a firm foundation, their princely halls and goodly towers, have, somehow or other, constantly disappeared. Not one of these elegant and commodious dwellings have I ever inhabited for a day, no ! not for a single hour. With the experience of the past before me, I cannot honestly recommend castle building as a profitable occupation, for it has proved singularly unprofitable to myself.

A proper motive is the only good foundation for human conduct, it is the very root whence all our intentional actions spring. In every act of the will there is a motive, and we must know whence it arises, before we can rightly decide on the meritoriousness of any earthly act. The clock has weights to keep it in motion, and the watch has a spring for the same purpose. What the weights are to the clock and the spring to the watch, the motive is to the man.

In many instances it is by no means an easy thing to detect the real motive that is at work in the heart. But some actions are so palpably opposed to the motives which are assigned for their performance, that we run but little risk in the

conclusion, that they spring from a contrary source. The several callings of a town crier, a butcher, and a chimney sweep, are all necessary, in a state of society; but if a man were to protest that he had chosen the first, because he loved quietude; or the second, that he might indulge in humanity; or the last, on account of its cleanliness, we should be ready either to laugh at his egregious folly, or to be angry at his unblushing effrontery, and yet not more irreconcilable would such an assertion be with truth than many professions that pass current in the world.

Spare no pains to improve your talents, for talents well applied, like words fitly spoken, are as "apples of gold in pictures of silver." Talent is not of itself a good, it is only of value when usefully applied. It is a possession like that of riches, knowledge, or strength. He who has riches may relieve the poor; he who has knowledge may inform and guide the ignorant; and he who has strength may protect the weak. But if, instead of this, the rich man persecutes the poor; the man of knowledge misleads the ignorant; and the strong man oppresses his weak neighbour, their riches, knowledge, and strength, are worse than useless. Misapplied talent is the source of unnumbered evils. If every one made the best use of the talent he possesses, we should hardly know the world, it would be so altered and so happy.

I remember hearing of a young man who was

remarkably clever at "cutting six" with the broad-sword, of which accomplishment he was not a little vain. Never could he walk abroad with a stick in his hand, without indulging his favorite amusement, and the devastation he made among the thistles, nettles, and docks, was truly astonishing.

Unfortunately this young man was not quite so strong in the head as in the arm, and having been praised, somewhat injudiciously, for his prowess in the fields, he extended his campaigns to the gardens of his friends, where he began to lop away, with a lamentable want of discretion, the beautiful flowers with which the parterres were adorned. Here lay the heads of the proudest hollyhocks; there were scattered on the ground the fairest lilies, and yonder were prostrated the gayest tulips.

Now, had he been content to exhibit his dexterity in lopping down weeds, his vanity, great as it was, would have been tolerated with a smile; but when he rashly began to wage war against flowers, which were really beautiful, his insufferable conceit called forth universal indignation. Here was an instance of misapplied skill. Hardly do I know how he could have turned his talent, if talent it may be called, to any good account, but this is no justification of his turning it to a bad one.

He who has few talents and improves them, is richer and wiser than he who has many, and

neglects them. One man has a garden of a few rods which he cultivates with care ; another has a thousand acres in America unripped by the plough, and undug by the spade : the former every day eats the fruit of his labour, while the latter gains not from his estate a sheaf of corn, a truss of hay, or a single cabbage to put on his table. It is not what we possess, but the good we get from it, that constitutes our riches. It is not having great powers of mind, but putting such as we have to a good use, that makes manifest our wisdom.

Fail not to converse freely and honestly with your own hearts.

There is this great advantage in the habit of soliloquising, that we can say that to ourselves which we could never endure if said to us by another: we can rebuke ourselves with tenderness, or with severity ;—we can flap ourselves with a rod of feathers, or lash ourselves with a whip of scorpions; we can scarify the skin, or cut deep to the bone ; we can lance the little finger, or dissect the heart. There is no one in the wide world who can do these things to us without offending us, but ourselves.

What a costly thing is experience. We all ought to be wiser to-day than we were yesterday. I have not yet forgotten going to Ridgely-hill. Never having been there before, and the road being a little intricate, it is no great wonder that I did not go the nearest way. Field after

field was traversed by me, and lane after lane, and the road did certainly seem rather long.

When I came to the hill it appeared to be no light affair to get to the top of it, but to the top I was determined to go. No sooner had I clambered up high enough to see a little around me, than it was clear that in my approach a wrong turning had been made; adding, thereby, at least a quarter of a mile to my ramble. By the time I had gained the crag, half up the hill, it was equally plain that two wrong turnings had been taken by me, but when I arrived at the top, and traced the whole course of my ramble, my wrong turnings appeared to be nearer ten than two.

That it is with us as we journey onwards; the older we grow, the plainer we see the errors of our earlier years, and happy may he account himself, who, in age can discover but few wrong turnings in the days of his youth.

The habit of depending less on to-day than on to-morrow is a bad one. There are many important and promising days in the year, but to-morrow is of much greater promise than all the rest. Oh, what wonderful things are to be done to-morrow! When are bad habits to be abandoned? errors to be amended? debts to be paid? kindnesses to be performed, and virtuous enterprises to be begun? Why, to-morrow. We had no time yesterday, and are too busy to-day to think of these things, but to-morrow we will attend to them all.

It is a stange thing, while we sigh for our yesterdays, and feel ashamed of our to-days, that we should all agree to think so favourably of our to-morrows. To-morrow is, for the most part, the only day in the year with which we feel satisfied; other days, like a careless school-boy's copy book, are blurred and blotted, but to-morrow is a fair page, smooth and clear, and white as the driven snow.

To what shall I liken to-morrow? It is a juggler that deceives us; a quack that pretends to cure us, and thin ice that will not bear our weight. It is a fruit that grows beyond our reach; a shadow that we cannot grasp, a glittering bubble that bursts and vanishes away; a will o' the wisp that leads multitudes into the mire, and a rock on which mariners, without number, have suffered shipwreck. It is an illusion to all who neglect the present hour, and a reality to those only who improve to-day.

Few people think, sufficiently, on the fact that all our to-days were once to-morrows. If, then, we have already misused so many to-morrows which are past, how is it that we feel so sure of putting to a better use those which are to come? This is a fair question; and yet, where is he, in what land does he dwell, by what name is he called, who does not, in some way or other, place an undue dependance on to-morrow? To-morrow is only a promise; when it becomes to-day it is a possession; and, yet, while we

value ourselves on our shrewdness, we foolishly barter the possession for the promise.

“To-day is; to-morrow only may be,” is a thought that is worth committing to memory. How old the saying may be, “One bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,” I cannot tell, but age has not impaired its truth, nor the value of the lesson it contains. What we have we are sure of, what we have not, we may never possess.

We have all something to enjoy, and something to endure. As pilgrims passing through the world, we must expect to fare as pilgrims; the glare and the gloom, the calm and the storm, the exulting heart and the desponding spirit will be ours, but the old and the young, the man and the boy will do well to remember

While treading life's uncertain way,  
Beset with sin and sorrow,  
He only who improves to-day,  
Can hope for joy to-morrow.

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## Chapter Tenth.

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### RAMBLING ADVENTURES.

IN the sunny seasons of boyhood the future is ever painted in rainbow hues. It belongs to another period of life to anticipate evil. Youth is as hopeful of the future as age is mistrustful.

Oh! those were the days! Those were the sunny seasons of our boyhood, when, waking early, our day-dreams sweetly stole upon our thoughts. The pleasant sunbeams that streamed aslant through our casement as if to wake us, told us that the lark was warbling in the air, and the speckled-breasted throstle whistling in the hedge, though we heard them not. We knew that the balmy air was abroad, though we felt it not; and we were certain that the fresh dewy primroses and the cowslips were glittering in the beam, though we saw them not. What delicious feelings of green boughs, and buds and blossoms. What fairy scenes of bowery lanes, and brooks, and sequestered copses broke upon our fancy, as one after another we awoke to consciousness, and prepared to steal an hour's enjoyment, before we entered on our



daily tasks! True it was that we were pent up in our dormitory, and that the locked door at the staircase foot was a barrier that we could not pass, and equally true it was, also, that a penalty awaited those that wandered out of bounds—but these impediments only made us more eager for enjoyment. We were too bold to fear, and too heartily in love with liberty not to purchase it at a little hazard. Some slept ingloriously, or were confined by their timidity to their beds, but some of us were bolder. Our chamber was over the schoolroom, only a storey above it; so, dressing ourselves in haste, and opening the casement, we, in turn, dropped from the window, and sallied forth on our morning ramble. Oh! those were the days!

For one little hour the world was our own, with all its freshness and its fragrancy. Authority slept, and already had we won our way into the fields. No doubt the sky was bright and blue, and the violets sweet, but we regarded them not. Schoolboys seldom do when they have a holly stick to cut in a distant hedge; or rushes, or water lilies to gather in a distant pond. We saw nothing but the delightful beauty of a spring morning—heard nothing but the cuckoo, and felt nothing but the exultation of schoolboys who had faced danger, overcome difficulty, and thus, as it were, paid beforehand for their holiday hour. “Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is

pleasant," even though afterwards turned into bitterness. Fields and lanes were traversed, coppices were visited, hedges were climbed, ditches and narrow brooks were leaped over,—on! on! on! There is nothing in the world like a ramble!

But was it all sunshine? Had we no losses and crosses, and accidents and disappointments! Losses and crosses, and accidents and disappointments to be sure we had, and what would our stolen ramble have been without them?—What if one did roll into a bed of nettles; another get a thorn in his finger, a third tear his trousers, and a fourth lose his pocket knife? These things were not without their advantages, for they made us more careful another time, called up within us a spirit of endurance and achievement, and excited sympathy for one another. It might be wrong, nay it was wrong to rise from our beds so early without permission; to drop from the casement at the hazard of broken bones, and to wander out of bounds in defiance of lawful authority; but the difficulties and trials we met with did us good, calling forth our resources, exercising our courage, moulding us and fashioning us to endure and to persevere in after life, when nobler objects were before us. Oh, it is a glorious thing to be able to persevere in a good cause, in spite of all impediments.

Wouldst thou pursue some glorious track,  
And does thy bosom burn

When disappointments beat the back;  
Return! Again return!  
Though thousand evils rise along  
Thy path in proud array;  
Yet nobly strive against the throng,  
And thou shalt win thy way.

But now we are returning from our ramble laden with spoils, two hooked holly sticks, and three knobbed hazels, a May bough in full bloom, a bundle of rushes, a posy of white and yellow water lilies, and a linnet's nest, with five bluish white spotted eggs. Shame on him who tore it from the furze bush in spite of the remonstrance of his companions! We are arrived at Broomy Hill, where the high bank is blue with harebells, some are trimming their sticks, and some are tying up their rushes and water lilies, while one is climbing a tree to get the ruddy oak balls that grow upon its branches—Hark! hark! The sound of the school bell is heard borne on the morning breeze—the pocket knives are hastily shut up, the sticks are rudely grasped, the bird's nest is dropped and the eggs are broken, the rushes and water lilies are huddled together, and the climber, at the risk of his neck, hurries down the tree. Five minutes have we to run a distance of three quarters of a mile—Off we go! scampering over the fields and hedges. Our booty being hastily hidden, we hurry into school with glowing faces. Luckily our Master and tutor have been detained in conversation a minute or two beyond their time, and we escape

the punishment we should otherwise have endured.

When sunshine, breezes, fruit and flowers,  
Fill up with joy the rosy hours,  
How grateful, mid its pleasures free,  
The heart of Boyhood ought to be!

A ramble in Autumn is a sunny season to boyhood, for every hill he climbs, and every turn in the lanes presents him with a new scene, a fresh source of pleasure.

Half a dozen of us from the school are again on our rambles, while an Autumnal sun with a ruddy glare is lighting up the skies. Bushy Scrubs is just before us, a piece of pasture land half covered over with furze, broom, large thorn bushes and brambles. There are two brown ponies and a gray horse grazing on it, while five or six young steers are pushing their way through the bushes and brambles. The grey horse is switching away the flies from his sides with his tail, the ponies are galloping round the piece, and one of the young steers is capering about couthly with a bramble hanging to his tail.

We have left Bushy Scrubs behind us, and are now near the hollow old oak at the corner of the Ten Acres. That oak, they say, is between two and three hundred years old, and a serpent-like ivy tree has it in its folds, writhing round it from the bottom of its hollow trunk, to the top of its highest branches—but we have no time to look at it. The throstle is warbling from a thorn

bush, and the loud and clear harmony of the blackbird is heard from the coppice on the left, but we have no time to listen. On we hurry, full of hope, ardour and happiness. The pleasures of a holiday-loving schoolboy are rather snatched than lingered on. Uncertainty is written on all things, though boyhood is inattentive to the warning inscription—

“For what is our life but a day!  
A short one that soon will be o'er!  
It presently passes away,  
And will not return any more.

To-morrow may never arise,  
And yesterday's over and gone;  
Then catch at the day as it flies,  
For 'tis all we can reckon upon.”

Such are not the thoughts of boyhood in an Autumnal ramble. On we go.—We are now passing the fold yard of Farmer Higgins. Long are the manes and tails of the shaggy colts that are moving about there, up to their knees in straw. There is no end to the geese, turkeys, and poultry, and the spread tail of the peacock, and the snowy plumage of the white pigeons, wheeling round the farmhouse in the air, are goodly to gaze on. The rat catcher has just put two ferrets in the holes by the stable door, where a terrier and three or four men armed with sticks are waiting for the rats which they expect to be driven out of their holes—On we go!

In the lane we meet little Lucy Williams and her mother the widow. Lucy is a funny little creature, with a merry face, that not only laughs itself, but sets others laughing also. There is sunshine and gladness in her bright blue eye. A gentle, smiling, giggling, laughing child, is dear little Lucy.

Alan Hands is in his little garden, for he prides himself upon his flowers, and well he may, though the best of them are over now. I heard of a florist who once made a sort of dial of his flowers.

'Twas a lovely thought to mark the hours  
As they floated in light away,  
By the opening and the folding flowers,  
That laugh to the Summer's day!

Alan Hands has kindly given each of us a flower, but they would be much safer in his garden than with us. We shall want to use our hands, by and by, and then the flowers will be flung aside—On we go!

Here is Caryfort Camp, the scene of many a friendly contest between the young soldiery of Holyrood. It is the battle field of many a boyish struggle! But I must tell you of Crazy Cawthorn.

Crazy Cawthorn, for what cause no one knew, frequented Caryfort Camp in summer and in winter, in the hot and the cold, in the wet and the dry, in the midday glare, and the midnight

gloom. I have seen him there, too, with his sparkling eyes fixed on the golden glories of the setting sun, clapping his hands with joy and crying aloud, "He is higher than the mountains! He is deeper than the deep, deep sea!"

One stormy night as the shepherd from Broomy Grange was returning home, having been in search of some strayed sheep, he came to Caryfort Camp. It was fearfully dark, and he missed his way, so that in a dozen more steps he would most likely have fallen over the high ridge into the gravel pit below, had he not been prevented by what followed. The clock of the Stoke Church struck twelve just then, a flash of lightning made the place for a moment as bright as day, and Crazy Cawthorn, who was standing on the very edge of the high ridge, clapped his hands and cried out louder than usual, "He is higher than the mountains! He is deeper than the deep, deep sea!"

Poor Cawthorn was but young when he died, and went off very suddenly. His mother, when he was too ill to go abroad, watched over him continually. Just before he departed, she told him to trust in God, when with his remaining strength he broke out into a laugh, feebly clapped his hands, and faintly uttered the words, "He is higher than the mountains! He is deeper than the deep, deep sea!"

We are now at the old moat; the drawbridge is useless, though a part of it is still remaining.

There! a water rat has just jumped from the bank into the moat, and a wild duck has dived under the water. How shall we get at the bulrushes that are growing at the edge of the deep, dark water? The moat is muddy, and deep, and dangerous, and we have an undefined fear that some strange, snake-like creature, were we to venture in, would twist round our legs, from among the black roots of the sedge and rushes. No matter, the bulrushes we must have. We cut two long sticks from the hazel hedge, one of them has a hook at the end, a pocket-knife is tied fast to the other stick, with a piece of string, and now with the armed stick we cut through the roots of the bulrushes, and with the hooked stick we drag them to the shore. Here we are with a noble bundle of bulrushes; and on we go!

These are the Tibberton Limekilns, where a fearful occurrence once took place one dark night. A highway robbery was committed at the turn of the road yonder by two footpads. Some farmers came up at the time and the villains were pursued, when one fell into a bog and was smothered, and the other it was thought had escaped, but some time after the lock and barrel of a pistol were found in the lime kilns. On the place being examined it was clear that some one had attempted to scale the precipice above the burning kilns, and had fallen, so that of the two footpads no doubt one perished in Horberry bog,



and the other was burnt to death in the Tibberten Limekilns.

“A wasp’s nest! a wasp’s nest!” cries out the foremost of our party, as we proceed. We throw down our bulrushes, break boughs from the nut bushes, and tearing a stake from the hedge, advance at once to the attack. A turf is hastily placed over the hole of the nest, the stake is driven into the bank, and while the rest brandish their branches, one tears up the nest with the stake. The wasps now become the assailants, and spite of our stake and nut boughs compel us to a precipitate and dishonorable retreat. We snatch up our bulrushes, and as we hurry off threaten a night visit, shovel, gunpowder and destruction to our victorious enemies.

In crossing the turnpike road we fall in with a one legged sailor, carrying a model of a full rigged man of war. The very thing! He talks of the stem and the stern, the main sail, flying gib and the scrapers,—spins his yarns to entertain us, tells of the cap full of wind off the Cape, the storm in the Bay of Biscay, the wreck in the chops of the Channel, winding all up well with “poor Jack” being under the weather, with no shot in the locker. Our admiration and pity are excited, our hearts open. We have not much money, but what we have we give, and part from our poor friend, one of us repeating the lines

“God and our Sailor we alike adore  
In times of fear and danger—not before;

The danger past, both are alike requited,  
God is forgotten and the Sailor slighted.'

And too true is the accusation. Youth, man-  
hood and age in this respect are all faulty.

How oft when threatening dangers lower,  
Doth God in mercy prove his power,  
And succour give from pain and tears,  
In youth, in manhood and in years!

How oft when peril's hour is past,  
And blows no more the stormy blast,  
Do we forget the chastening rod,  
And loving kindness of our God!

We have gradually wandered in a somewhat circular course, and have now reached the Unked House. At this time of day, and half a dozen of us together, we boldly enter the crazy dwelling, but gaze not without awe on its ruined roof, falling ceilings, dilapidated walls and broken windows. At nightfall we durst not approach the place, for strange things have been whispered of this wreck of a habitation. Boldly we talk of spending the night there alone, and laugh at the foolish fears of those who are less courageous. Boasting boyhood! How short-lived is thy courage!

Bold is the boy by day, who when the night  
Has flung her shadows, trembles with affright.

On the patch of waste ground are two donkeys, and the two youngest of my companions

mount them, but no sooner are they on them than they are off again, for the donkeys lay down their ears and kick up their heels, and over their heads go their unpracticed riders.

At the edge of Collerton Copse a gang of gipsies have pitched their tent. The swarthy faced, dark haired children of the green lane and the shady wood, the moor and the moonlight, are enjoying their liberty and their leisure. The tones of the merry violin are heard, and the fire, and the three sticks, and the suspended black pot, and the grazing donkeys are seen. Fain would the damsel in the black hat and coloured kerchief over her head, tell us our fortunes, but the Sailor with his full rigged man of war has carried off our funds as prize money, so we must, like "Jack and Tom" of old, go and seek our fortunes for ourselves.

As we proceed, a hare springs up from a fern bush, and we give chase, but the faster we run, the farther we are left behind. A squirrel runs up a tree, and takes a flying leap to the branches of an other. By and by we find a hedgehog on a sunny bank, but he rolls himself up into a bristly ball on our approach. A flock of wild geese at a great height fly over our heads, and as we cross the Park in our homeward course, we stop to gaze on the tame swans that are swimming, with their snowy white feathers and their soot black legs, on the winding stream.

At last we come to the chesnut trees. Prickly bosses that have fallen from the branches, have burst on their descent, and the chesnuts inside them are visible, but with these we are not satisfied. We mount the trees, knock down the prickly clusters, and return to school laden with our bundle of bulrushes, and our handkerchiefs filled with chesnuts, thus finishing up the sunny season of our holiday ramble.



## Chapter Eleventh.

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### PLANS AND UNDERTAKINGS.

THOUGH school boys are never happier than when among hills and valleys, and fields and old green lanes, and coppices, and commons, and overgrown brooks and ponds, and shadowy nooks and dells and dingles, yet are there sunny seasons within doors, in which they revel and delight. It is a sunny season when a new book of adventures, or of voyages and travels, makes its appearance among them, and is read by an ardent spirited boy surrounded by a listening and admiring throng. It is a sunny season when a parcel from home is opened by one of a free heart and generous hand, who has at least as much pleasure in slicing up his cake for his companions, as in partaking of it himself. And it is a sunny season, when a boy, who has made some progress in drawing, sits down in a leisure hour with his new colour box before him. There it lies! The smell of the cedar wood is pleasant, and the twelve colours in which red, and blue, and green, and yellow prevail, and the

small drawer well supplied with colour brushes and pencils, are delightful to gaze on.

But there are plans and undertakings, too, among school boys, that call forth their powers, that manifest their qualities, and yield them an abundant harvest of gratification. I could mention many of these that bound together the leading spirits at old Holyrood Academy, but our Newspaper project, our undertaking to establish among us a Manuscript Journal, was a measure too important to be lightly passed over. "The Holyrood Chronicle" would now be looked for in vain. I will at least snatch one remaining number of it from oblivion, giving a copy of it as it now lies before me.

"The Holyrood Chronicle," though written and not printed, had quite a Newspaper-like appearance. It usually contained Advertisements, Literary and other announcements, a Leading Article like that in "The Times," Foreign Intelligence, Parliamentary Debates, Domestic Affairs, Police Reports, and Miscellaneous matter, and was, as the production of school boys, a very respectable publication; but let the following copy of the only number of it now in existence speak for itself.

#### THE HOLYROOD CHRONICLE.

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WANTED.—The sum of £1,000 by a person

who has no reason to believe that he shall ever have occasion to repay the same. A liberal percentage will be allowed.

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**WANTED.**—A situation wherein the advertiser will have nothing to do, and where the salary will be liberal.

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**WANTED.**—By the Patentee, a few spirited young fellows, on whom the powers of an Improved Guillotine may be illustrated. Liberal wages will be given, and the freedom of the City.

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**TO CAPITALISTS.**

Several fine Freeholds, which have been mortgaged to double their real amount, may now be obtained by merely paying off the mortgages. This is an opportunity that ought not to be lost sight of.

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**PARTNER WANTED.**

The Advertiser, who has no capital, has no objection to take in a Partner who has. Being unaccustomed to business he will expect the coming-in Partner to bring in an Established Concern, and to be fully able to take upon himself the entire management of the business.

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## TO BE DISPOSED OF,

By private contract, a capital cargo of Rums and Sugars, closely stowed in the hull of a vessel lately sunk, and now lying in twenty fathom water in the chops of the Channel. The cargo may be examined at the convenience of those disposed to purchase, and if desired the goods will be allowed to remain a reasonable period on the premises.

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## NEW THEATRE.

On Friday next, by particular desire, will be performed the new Tragedy of

Oh! Oh! Oh!

The part of Moody by the Manager.

After which will be presented

The new Comedy of

Hah! Hah! Hah!

The part of Risible by a Gentleman  
in the gallery.

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## CHING-TA-TOO STEAMER.

Starts from the Tower stairs every other morning at ten. This fine Steamer will afford an excellent opportunity of a pleasurable trip to the East. It will breakfast at Gibraltar; dine at the Cape; tea at Bombay; and arrive to a



late supper at Cochin China. Those whose *friends* reside at *Botany Bay* will do well to avail themselves of this eligible mode of conveyance.

Apply for tickets to Captain Whang-ta-who, at the Pekin Coffee House.

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#### LEADING ARTICLE.

Such are the crooked politics of belligerent nations, that an armistice is generally employed in preparations for more extended warfare, a treaty of peace often the most prolific source of discord, and an alliance of kingdoms for mutual protection, frequently the very means by which they endeavour to annoy each other. Had not the leading powers of the earth been lashed with scorpions, had they not been bruised and broken by prolonged battles and bloodshed—had they not been, as it were, crippled and crushed into quietude—they never would for so long a period have allowed the sword to rest in its scabbard, and the cannon to suspend its fiery breathings of desolation and death. The combatants have now taken breath, and we think we perceive the tumultuous risings of restless ambition, the renewed desire to plague the world with battles, and to saturate the earth with blood. We look on different nations as rather desiring war than seeking peace, as restrained, not by principle but by policy. We would not willingly turn alarmists, but we think it scarcely reason-

able to conclude that the contending interests now brought into collision, of so many powers, will be adjusted without the customary arbitration of the sword. All may appear at present comparatively quiet, but

Treacherous quietude is widely spread  
 When hoary Etna broods some deed profound ;  
 Scarce smoke the ashes o'er his angry head,  
 And silence unmolested reigns around.

Like the pent-up fury of the mountain, the fiery passions of the nations may burst forth, and happy will England be if she escapes the spreading conflagration.

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PALIAMENTARY DEBATES,

HOUSE OF LORDS.

A few petitions were presented, after which the House adjourned till the 32nd instant.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

This being the day appointed for the long expected motion of Colonel ——, the house was filled at an early hour. After some preliminary business had been arranged, the gallant Colonel arose, and in a speech replete with feeling, erudition, and eloquence, thus addressed the house :

“It is, Mr. Speaker, with extreme diffidence that I rise on the present occasion,” (cries of hear ! hear ! from every quarter.) “It is with extreme diffidence,” repeated the gallant officer,

“that I rise on the present occasion.” (Unbounded applause!) “It is,” again reiterated the honourable and gallant member, “with the most extreme diffidence that I rise to deliver my sentiments on the present occasion,” (deafening and clamourous approbation here was manifested, and the eloquent and gallant member resumed his seat amidst the most rapturous applause).

So great was the sensation produced on the house by the resistless eloquence of the gallant Colonel, that the motion was carried unanimously. As the time occupied by the eloquent and gallant member in his argumentative, able, and indeed, irresistible appeal, was considerable, the house adjourned, at the close of one of the most able and manly speeches which had ever been delivered within its walls.

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MR. EDITOR,—However edified I am by the Editor of the Holyrood Chronicle, it does not prevent me from falling into a passion with the printer. If you have any respect for my peace, or the propagation of your own principles, you will pay a little more attention to the type of your paper.

While Editor's indite with force and ease,  
Let Printer's speck their i's and cross their t's.

Your obedient Servant,

*Daniel Dimsight.*

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## POLICE REPORTS.

An Irishman full six feet four, whose clothes appeared to be made for a person about four feet six, was placed at the bar before Sir Richard —, he having been found in a second storey, with a silver candlestick in his pocket.

*Sir Richard*—Well, Patrick O'Tralligan, what have you to say for yourself?

Nothing at all, your Honor, and I would be glad if your Honor would let the matter drop.

*Sir Richard*—Ay! but you must please to drop a word or two first, to explain how you could be found in a chamber belonging to another, with a silver candlestick in your pocket.

That is a misfortin that your Honor will be too good to upbraid me with. I will make the matter as clear as a porter pot. I was going home, it could not be later, anyhow, than twelve o'clock, for I likes to be at home early, and to go to bed sober. Well! my foot slipped off the coping stone, and I fell through a cellar window. Knowing that I had no business there, anyway, your Honor, I tried to get out again, but mistook my way, and somehow found myself up stairs.

*Sir Richard*—You must try again, Patrick O'Tralligan, for the house in which you had the misfortune to be found, had no cellar to it.

O then, your Honor! It's a clear case that when my foot slipped, I must have hurt my poor

head in my fall, and it so bothered me that I didn't know what I was doing, or where I was going.

It is needless to say that poor Patrick O'Traligan was committed.

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#### CHARACTER.

True elevation of mind—true dignity of soul, can only thoroughly be enjoyed by the man who is proudly conscious while moving among his fellow men, that—his boots and shoes are polished with “Warren's jet blacking.”

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#### QUERY.

Why is making a man happy, the same thing, with some people, as shooting him through the head?

Because it is giving him satisfaction.

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## Chapter Twelfth.

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### BIRDSNESTING, AND COUNTRY VISITS.

WHAT sunny seasons had we used to have at Holyrood, when the time of birdsnesting came round, but by birdsnesting I mean rather the finding than the taking of birdsnests. I was a birdsnester taking eggs and young birds, for one spring only, and ever after renounced the cruelty, while I retained the enjoyment of the pastime.

How varied are the haunts and the habits of the feathered race. Some flit along near the ground, some winnow their way in the sky, some frequent the hill, and some the lowly dale.

The past comes over me as I look back at my youthful days. I am with my companions roaming the lanes and fields from Bilberry hill to Horberry bog, and from Brookhouse farm to Tollerton wood. I can almost see the trees that were then growing, and all but hear the birds that were then singing!

On the edge of the wood in the old hollow ivy-covered tree, an owl is hooting hideously. Her

nest is there. How often have I climbed that old tree. Memory takes me back to the sunny seasons of boyhood.

On a twig near the brink of the brook sits a king-fisher, with his shining green head and wings spotted with light blue,—his back and tail are azure, his breast is white, the under part of his body is orange, and his legs and toes are red. Now he is hovering over the brook like a hawk, and now darting into the water for his prey with the swiftness of an arrow from a boy. The king-fisher's six white eggs, are lying in a hole on the bank of the brook.

On we go, my companions as happy as myself. One finds on the dried grass scraped together by the pewit, or lapwing, for a nest, four olive coloured eggs spotted with black. Another climbs the tall elm to a crow's nest, and a third discovers among the reeds of the dark pond the nest of flags and water-grasses of the water-hen.

In the thorny bush in the hedge row by the tall elm tree a blackbird has built her clay-lined nest, with an upper lining of dry hay, and when we approach it, the little pin-feathered younglings, for there are four or five in the nest, stretch out their bare necks and gape altogether, opening their mouths so wide that a finger might be put down their throats.

Here is Ragstone Top, ragged and bare as it rises from the river, whose rushing waters are

forcing their way between the rifted rocks. A hawk has built her nest at the point of the cliff, where the stunted bush springs from the dark fissure. They say that a reckless climber once fell from the peak above, right into the river.

Yonder is yew tree coppice full of romantic paths, of snug comfortable nooks and cozy corners. Many a jay's nest and many a quince's or wild pigeon's nest a mere layer of crossed sticks, have I climbed up to there in my time.

Here in a hole of the bank close under the hedge is a wren's nest, with a hole hardly big enough to put your finger. Let it alone! Let it alone!

On we go, revelling in enjoyment through changing scenes, visiting the furzy common, stretching out towards the distant wood,—the old stone quarry, fantastically hung with beautiful creepers, red, purple and green, where the sand martin builds her nest,—the Park, studded with clumps of firs and high elms, where the rooks have established their colony,—orchards, hedgerows, ponds, brooks, fields and lanes, finding in our way the nests of the blackbird, the linnæ and the skylark, the bullfinch, gosschat and whitethroat, the thrush, the piefinch and the woodpecker, till weary of foot and tired of holiday, we once again retrace our schoolward steps.

Among the many who have written on boyhood and rural scenery, none has surpassed William Howitt. You are again a boy sur-



rounded by Country sights, you hear Country sounds, and absolutely appear to breathe Country air, while lingering on his delightful pages. But while I thus pay him a just tribute of admiration, I cannot subscribe to his peculiar opinions on Birdsnesting. Mr. Howitt's remarks will, I fear, be very influential among boys, removing the scruples of the tender-hearted, and making the cruel more relentless; but as he holds his opinions in sincerity, he has an undoubted right to avow them. There is so much openness and honesty of purpose in the way in which he has expressed himself on Birdsnesting in his Boy's Country Book, that I feel sure he will not object to my here quoting his opinions for the purpose of testing their value. Though I differ with him in opinion, I gave him as full credit for the uprightness of his intentions as I claim for my own. Under the impression that, were he at my elbow, he would rather wish than otherwise that his views should be thoroughly considered, I will venture to quote largely from his interesting volume.

“A great hue-and-cry has been raised against birds'-nesting. It has been denounced as cruel and savage; and boys have been warned against it in well-meaning books as a deadly sin, and a thing not to be thought of: but the fact is, that while there are boys and birds'-nests, there always will be birds'-nesting. There always was since the foundation of the world, and I verily believe

there always will be till its end. It is an instinct, a second nature, a part and parcel of the very constitution of a lad. There is nothing in all country life that is so fascinating, that so absorbs and swallows up in its charms the whole boy, as birds'-nesting. You may persuade the lad not to eat apples before they are ripe; not to pull off the nuts while they have nothing in them but a mere pith; not to catch butterflies, or run after cockchafers; but you will never persuade the real, active, healthy, inquisitive, spirited lad, not to go a birds'-nesting. What is spring, and what is the country, without birds'-nesting?"

“‘What!’ a whole host of humane voices will exclaim—‘do you advocate the cruelty of birds'-nesting!’ Softly—I have said nothing of the cruelty of birds'-nesting: it is the cruelty that I abominate, and would wish to see done away with. Are cruelty and birds'-nesting inseparable things? By no means. The cruelty is all that we want to be rid of, but to be rid of that, it is not necessary to abandon birds'-nesting itself; one of the most interesting, delightful, healthful, and, I will add, improving recreations that a country lad can engage in. I know, indeed, that endless are the cruelties that are practised in birds'-nesting, and no one abhors them more than I do; but while I would be amongst the most zealous remonstrants against these cruelties, I would at the same time say to every lad, by

all means while you are lads, and are in the country, hunt birds'-nests every spring."

"This is the grand lesson that parents should everywhere teach—That all living creatures are sensitive like themselves, and that while they admire the beauty of bird or moth, or any other living thing, they must have a care of inflicting pain upon it.

"It is, then, entirely on this principle, that I would have birds'-nesting conducted. Birds'-nests and eggs are too beautiful and curious not to be sought after and admired; but they are to be appropriated only in such a manner as is most consistent with humanity; and on no account are young birds to be taken by boys."

"The great Author of Nature did not disdain to legislate in the Jewish law on this very subject of birds'-nesting. Here are his sacred provisions on this subject in the 22nd chapter of Deuteronomy. 'If a bird's-nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young. But thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.'"—verses 6, 7.

"On the first view of this clause in the divine law, it appears that we are permitted to take young birds. But the fact is, that the Jews

were so permitted, but we are not. Many things were permitted to the Jews, that are not permitted to us. We exist under a higher and more humane dispensation. We are Christians, whose guiding law is love; and the heavenly injunction to do to others as we would be done to, extends to every living creature. We are bound not to inflict unnecessary misery on them, and we have only to call to mind what has just been said, to see what is the misery produced by the taking of young birds by boys. It follows, then, that boys may take eggs only, and that under regulations based on the same grand rule."

"What I would say to boys, then, would be—nests and eggs you naturally desire to have; but take no more nests than what you want to put your eggs in; and for this purpose take, if possible, only such as are built in any public situations, as by road-sides and other places, where it is impossible they can long escape. The sooner these nests are taken, in fact, the better it is for the bird; for instead of being left to sit on her eggs for a fortnight, perhaps, or even till she has hatched them, and then to have them taken, it is much better for her to have her nest taken at once, and a chance given her of building in a more retired spot. Take, then, only such nests as are certain to be taken, and then in gathering eggs mind this rule: never take the whole number of eggs out of any nest that is in a secluded situation, where there is a

probability of the nest escaping. If there be only one egg in, leave it till there are more. If there are three or four—five is the average number of eggs in general—take only one or two. By this means you will soon collect from different nests any number that you may desire, and yet inflict no grievance on the parent bird; for birds are no arithmeticians, they can't count their eggs; and while they have one or two left, they seem as perfectly contented as if they had a dozen. But never take all that the nest contains, if it be only one, for then the bird will very probably forsake the nest altogether. By this system of merely levying a tribute, as it were, to your admiration of these beautiful little natural productions, you may gratify the most ardent desire of the possession of birds' eggs of every kind without the slightest commission of cruelty. It is true that you prevent the full increase that there would otherwise be of birds; but this is, in my opinion, no cruelty whatever, but on the other hand, rather a humanity. Providence has evidently provided for every casualty that can attend birds, for in spite of the wholesale ravages that are now committed on their nests, there is no apparent decrease of their numbers. If a certain quantity of eggs is not destroyed, the flocks of small birds become so immense, that the farmers are obliged to shoot them by hundreds to keep down their numbers. By a moderate and considerate ap-

appropriation of part of the eggs, you therefore effect the object which is actually necessary to the farmer, without the pain and death which he is afterwards obliged to inflict."

"Many a time, as I have said, I used to stroll off before breakfast; right away through the dewy fields, till the stitches of my shoes were washed white as snow, and my shoes themselves lost every bit of black from them, and were as soft as tripe. I had this nest to visit, to see if it were finished, and that, to see if the bird had yet laid an egg, and the other to see if she had begun to sit; and then that bush was so attractive, and that bank so likely for a nest; and how beautiful it was when the yellow-hammer flew off and showed her neat round nest, built of dry grass and lined with black horse or cow hair, with its curiously scrawled eggs, lying amongst the green mercury in the bank. A robin was seen sitting with his red breast, and caring nothing for me; or the chaffinch's nest, so lovely in its spangling lichens, was discerned in the black-thorn! Ah! my basin of new milk and my hot roll were delicious after such a round."

As Mr. Howitt has so forcibly pointed out, and so strikingly illustrated the cruelty of taking young birds, it is only a part of his argument to which I will now refer.

The first reason assigned, if reason it may be called, in support of the practice of birdsnesting, is this, "While there are boys and birdsnests

there always will be birdsnesting. There always was (birdsnesting) since the foundation of the world, and I verily believe there always will be till its end."

Now a thing is not of necessity right because it has long existed. Envy, anger and hatred have been in existence quite as long as the practice of birdsnesting.

Mr. Howitt says, "Birdsnesting is an instinct, a second nature, a part and parcel of the very constitution of a lad,"—but I scarcely think that he would allow the argument were I to contend that because a disposition to revenge was an instinct, and a part and parcel of our constitution, that it was right and need not be restrained.

"There is nothing," observes Mr. Howitt, "in all country life that is so fascinating—that so absorbs and swallows up in its charm the whole boy as birdsnesting,"—but is a thing right because it is fascinating and absorbs and swallows up in its influence those who are attached to it? If so, gaming is right, for it fascinates and absorbs its votary as much and more than birdsnesting does the boy.

When a cause is brought into a court of justice, the jurors are bound "Well and truly to try the issue between the parties, and a true verdict give *according to the evidence*. Now, if in trying Mr. Howitt's argument in favour of birdsnesting, the reader has to decide *according*

*to the evidence*, the verdict must of necessity be given against him. I do not dogmatically affirm, that birdsnesting is wrong, though I believe it to be so, but I may venture to affirm that Mr. Howitt has altogether failed in endeavouring to prove that it is right.

Let us suppose two boys on a birdsnesting expedition. After prowling the lanes and fields for some time, and prying into every place, they discover in a shady and retired spot the nest of a piefinch containing five eggs. The finder of the nest is about to tear it from the bush, when his hand is arrested by his companion, who reminds him that the Boy's Country Book forbids a boy from taking more nests than he really requires to carry his eggs in, and that he ought not, on any account, to take all the eggs.

The finder of the nest, being a shrewd lad, stoutly contends that even if that is the case he has a right to take the nest, because he does require it to carry his eggs in, he having no other. As to taking all the eggs, he has no objection to leave two or three of them behind, if his comrade will only tell him where to leave them, but he cannot stick them up in the bush. Puzzled by this plain dealing, and not being provided with a rule to guide him in this case, he gives way, when the other boy tears the nest from the bush, and bears away the five eggs triumphantly without compunction, feeling himself indeed justified by the Boy's Country Book.



On go our birdnesters, who soon after are lucky enough to find the nest of a writing-master or yellow hammer, containing also five eggs. One would suppose that here the Howittlaw would be respected, and that the nest would not be taken, but when once the right to rob a bird of its eggs and nest is conceded to a boy, or the right to rob a black African or a red Indian of his possessions is conceded to a man, neither the one nor the other will ever be at a fault for a reason why he should avail himself of it to the utmost. Young Wilful, he who tore from the bush the nest of the piefinch, now maintains that according to the Country Book, he has a right to take the nest of the yellow-hammer, for it is bigger than that of the piefinch, and that the latter will never hold all the eggs that he knows he shall find. Again his comrade, the champion of mercy, is at fault for a reply, and up from the mowing grass the nest of the yellow-hammer is torn.

Hitherto the Howitt law has been a dead letter, evaded by ingenuity and covetousness; but presently a throstle's nest is found, which is immediately condemned on the same principle as the other nests. Young Wilful declares that he means to climb an ash tree to a magpie's nest, and as he cannot bring down the nest of the magpie, and as the yellow-hammer's nest will not hold the eggs he has, and those of the magpie which he intends to have, so he cannot

do without taking the throstle's nest. This course, being in strict conformity with the rules laid down in the Country Book, or, at least, not an infringement of them, according to the boy's wilful interpretation, is adopted, and the nest of the throstle, the third nest taken with impunity, is pulled with all its eggs from the hazel hedge. We see, then, that in instances without number, the intention of the Howitt law to protect the nests of birds may be altogether unavailing. When a law of mercy is to be explained and executed by the wilful, the rapacious, or the cruel, what likelihood is there of its being effectual.

But having been unsuccessful with our first birdsnesting party, let us try another. Let us suppose that two somewhat tender-hearted boys sally forth, taking with them an old nest, which they have by them. A hedge sparrow's nest is soon found, containing five beautiful blue eggs. The Country Book will not allow all to be taken, and a contention arises whether one, two, three, or four shall be left in the nest. Angry words pass, mercy prevails, and only two eggs are taken. Here the bird, the owner of the nest, has fallen into good hands.

By and by other birdnesters arrive, and as their quick eyes discover marks of the feet of those who have preceded them, they soon find the nest of the unfortunate hedge sparrow. They might lawfully take two, but they are not

cruel, and only take one, because the Country Book says that one or two should be left in the nest. Their forbearance, however, stands the poor bird in very little stead, for a third party follow on their track, who finding two eggs in the nest, and knowing that they cannot lawfully take both, limit themselves to the taking of one, leaving the poor bird, as Mr. Howitt says, “seemingly *contented* ;” but as I believe in reality *sorrowing* over its solitary egg, the remaining wreck of its ruined fortunes.

Believing as I do, that the practice of taking eggs from birds has a bad influence in most cases on the disposition of a boy, I would willingly encourage him to adopt a different course. He is but a poor lover of nature, who cannot see a toad without pelting it with stones, a butterfly without crushing its fragile wings, and a bird on its nest without robbing it of its eggs. One lark in the heavens is worth a dozen in their cages, and the green egg of the blackbird, the clear white egg of the kingfisher, and the spotted egg of the water wagtail, are far more beautiful in the nests to which they belong, than when seen dangling on a string, or suspended against a wall.

To every boy would I say, encourage a taste for simple pleasures, and revel in Country scenes, but let all your objects be associated with virtue, and your love of nature be unstained with inhumanity.

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What season is more sunny to boyhood than that of a pleasant visit, be it in summer or winter ?

Pleasant it is to visit at a cottage, where the simple manners, the freedom from restraint, and the desire to please, all find their way to a boy's heart. Roger has something to tell about a snake, a fox, or a badger, or a story of the Unked House or the old Pond or the Forty Acres, or something else that is vastly entertaining, and his wife is sure after the plain fare to produce some little nicety when least expected. But of all visiting, a visit to a farm-house holds the highest place in a boy's estimation.

Oh it was a sunny season with some of us at Holyrood when the time of sheep-shearing came round, for when the shearing was all over, and the poor silly sheep, despoiled of their clothing, clipped as close as the shearers and shears could clip them, wandered about in the sunny fields, not knowing one another, and scarcely seeming to know themselves. A feast was given at Woodhouse Farm, where lived the father of one of my schoolfellows. Happy was he who then stood well in the good graces of Abel Barton, for he was sure to be invited to the feast. Abel and I were school cronies, and often did he take me to the house of his father.

Well do I remember my last visit to Woodhouse Farm. We had roamed over the fields, climbed up the hay ricks, been among the cattle,

the sheep, the pigs, and the poultry, and romped and tumbled on the clean dry straw in the barn, when we were summoned to partake of the good cheer that smoked on the abundant board.

It was a sunny season for schoolboys to partake freely of the fowls and the ham, the puddings and the pies, the custards and the syllabubs, to crack as many nuts as we liked and to play at what games we listed. And scarcely less sunny was it, to go into the great kitchen where the farming men, in their white frocks, or their brown coats and red waistcoats, were drinking the nut brown ale poured out from a foaming can, and telling strange tales, and singing uncouth songs in uncouth voices, and laughing till the walls rang again, and dancing in their thick soled, hobnailed shoes on the stony kitchen flour. Yes! Yes! It was a sunny season!

Let me here sketch a sunny season of boyhood, enjoyed by me after my schoolboy days had flown. Let me sketch the past as though it were present.

The ride is delightful, but where is there a country ride that is not delightful in fine weather. As we advance the roads become more and more beautiful, the prospect more and more extensive, and the foliage more and more abundant until Larches Green is before us.

I wish I could introduce here a little sketch in pencil of Larches Green! Nothing could be more agreeably imposing than the fair mansion,

with its aristocratic avenue of trees on each side, with dark luxuriant plantations behind ;—the winding walks and grottos—the sweeping lawn, reaching to the splendid plate glass windows, unbroken by one solitary flower bed.

Then, again, the long drive through the avenue with the tall trees meeting over your head all the way—the luxuriant shade, the dashing suddenly into the very centre of the scene, emerging from the trees, and bursting at once into a fairy-like expanse, is delightful. Such a boundless sea-like scene, with high ridges, rising over high ridges, with blue foliage melting into the distant blue hills, the peaceful spire of a village church, and the castellated turrets of a neighbouring chateau!

But there is no time to attend to these things now. Lights are flashing within. Two or three liveried servants are already at the door. You perceive the happy faces in the drawing room, the bright winter fire, the sofas and ottomans; you alight, enter the hall, disrobe yourself and pass through saloons and galleries well supplied with lamps and vases, and statues, and flowers and pictures, and servants, and every thing animate and inanimate that can add interest to the place.

We now are about to enter the drawing room, and are met half way by an elegant and indescribable group.

First comes one personifying winter, dressed in a very elegant, tightfitting cloak, trimmed in every direction with snow white fur, and underneath a scarlet and black velvet dress, with a dark blue velvet bonnet and feathers. Then a lady close behind in black satin,—another, with raven locks, a rather piquante face and stateliness of mien, in a silk dress of various colours, harmonizing together in such a manner that it is impossible to say which colour has the ascendancy. Other forms of grace and beauty advance in succession. From different portals come different people, and the interest of the scene increases. I am bewildered; there are so many persons, and things, and avenues, to occupy and distract my attention. As soon could I comprehend the intricate extent of the British Museum as the interminable mazes of Larches Green!

Our hospitable entertainer, with several gentlemen, including one with a dazzling white embroidered satin waistcoat, and white cambrick handkerchief, are conversing with a distinguished individual in a black coat and white waistcoat, when the door is thrown open and in comes our excellent and admirable hostess with a goodly train of ladies. Never sure did a party get so immediately acquainted with each other! In five minutes all are at perfect ease, conversing as though they had been bosom friends for

years. There is no constraint, hauteur, or apparent reserve, none of that icy coldness and chilling frost which we so frequently find.

That interval of time immediately before dinner has been stigmatized as the most silent and woeful of any in the course of a visiting day; but it certainly is not so here, for endless subjects of conversation, and endless different remarks suggest themselves. How can it be otherwise, with the boundless prospect, the glowing fire, the goodly glasses wreathed with holly, misletoe, ivy and laurel, the vases ornamented with drooping fir, the number and positions of elegant persons present—some lying on sofas, some reclining on easy chairs, others standing to converse, or gazing from the windows.

The dinner bell rings. The Captain conducts our fair hostess into the dining room. I have the honour of escorting an interesting Mademoiselle, the younger of two sisters. Other well-paired couples follow in succession, vieing with each other in dress, elegance, and personal appearance. Our seats are taken, and we soon are fully engaged with table attractions.

But before the twilight has spread its shadows to be dispersed by the glowing tapers, let me just give a glance at the room. You are struck with the immense plate glass windows, reaching almost from the cornice to the carpet, each composed of two panes of glass only; thus your view is not intercepted by cross pieces of wood,



and the effect is excellent. It looks as though there were no window there at all. A carpenter once, when employed on the premises, took up a heavy billet of wood, intending to throw it out of the window, altogether unconscious of the crystal barrier that intervened, with such force did he throw the billet, that the clear, beautiful window was shivered to pieces.

This plate glass, though not proof against a billet of wood forcibly thrown against it, has much strength. A large dog, on another occasion, seeing his master, a Captain, inside the drawing room, made a violent spring to jump into the room to him; so violent was the rebound from the glass, that poor Pompey was rolled completely over on the lawn, apparently much surprised at so unlooked for a rebuff.

To describe the dinner would be to effect an impossibility, because such a dinner is altogether indescribable. A breakfast, a tea, and even a pic-nic-party dinner might be attempted—but a dinner on an ample scale, elegant and abundant, and especially a Christmas dinner—defend me from so hopeless an enterprise. Let me proceed.

The broad breasted turkey, the princely sirloin, the fair pheasants, the truly English plum pudding, the custards, the mince pies, the jellies, and the every thing have disappeared, the bottles have ceased to pursue each other round the table, even the princely pine apple from its enviable

throne in the centre, looks mournfully down upon the wreck of the feast, and the ladies have departed. Let us then follow them.

The drawing room is ornamented with large mirrors reaching from the ceiling to the floor. These are tastefully wreathed with evergreens. Evergreens are on the chimney piece, on the side tables, on the ornaments, on the ladies dresses; evergreens are every where, and then there are hot-house plants of varied kinds, some tall and elegant, diffusing around a grateful odour. The curtains are closely drawn, the lights are brilliant, the fire clear and bright, the assembled guests animated, the conversation interesting, the whole spectacle wondrously attractive, and the room, reflected by the mirrors, appears without end. Music commences, and voices more musical swell the harmonious sounds.

A change has taken place in the scene, for having stolen away from the drawing room, I am accompanied by one of the party, belonging to the household, and we are making a tour of discovery, with the assistance of a lamp, among the winding galleries and ascending staircases of this extended abode. We have reached the crimson chamber, a large room all hung with crimson. The curtains, the bed furniture, the paper, the carpet, all are crimson, and the cheerful fire that is now flaring in the grate, is crimson too. Near the bed stands a writing table well supplied with materials for writing.

On we go, through doors that lead on either side from room to room: the Drab room of our excellent host and hostess, corresponding with the crimson room, except in colour—has been visited; the Blue room, the White room, and rooms of all colours to the amount of thirty and upwards, have we explored, with the Picture gallery, the Ball room, the Servants' hall, the Organ room and the Nursery, in which, in a gilt cage, is an entertaining parrot. We return to the Drawing room, and sprightly conversation and harmonious music and elegant and intellectual pastimes, close the sunny season of this visit of my boyhood.

Sometimes it is well to contrast a sunny with a shadowy season, for all sunshine is as bad as all shade. Sunshine and shade, enhance each other's value.

“Like pearls upon an Ethiop's arm,  
Each gives each a double charm.”

“Death's visits to the village” may be read with advantage by all. I will here then introduce it to the attention of my readers.

Death came up the village. It was in the *Spring*: the fresh leaves were budding forth, and the snow drops were peeping out of the ground. He went into the thatched cottage by the ash tree, where sat old Roger Gough in his arm-chair, with his brow wrinkled and his hair white as flax. Roger was taken with the cramp

in his stomach, and soon ceased to breathe. "What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?"

The wheelwright's wife sat with her baby, her first born, in her lap. It smiled as it lay asleep, and breathed softly. The mother went on mending stockings, every now and then casting a fond look at her little treasure. That day week its gentle spirit departed, leaving its fond parents half heart-broken. How uncertain is human life! "It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

Death went down the village in the *Summer*. The heavens were bright with sunbeams, and the earth seemed to smile; the gardens were in their glory, and the merry hay-makers were busy in the fields. The sexton's son had long been ailing, and all agreed that he could never struggle through the winter. The red tinge on his cheek was not of a healthy hue: consumption had marked him for the grave. He had taken to his bed a fortnight, when his head fell back gently on his pillow, and he went off like an infant going to sleep. "As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and is gone: and the place thereof shall know it no more."

Butcher Hancocks was the strongest man in the parish; but he was no match for Death.

His chest was broad, his arms were sinewy and strong, and his frame bulky and well knit together. "As hearty as Hancocks," was a common adage. No matter! sickness soon robs the stoutest of his strength, and brings down the tallest man to the ground. The fever fastened upon him, so that one hour he raged with heat and thirst, and the next his teeth chattered with cold. His neighbours carried him to his grave. "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as a handbreath; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity."

Death crossed the village in the *Autumn*. The orchard trees were bending beneath their load, the sickle was at work among the wheat, and the scythe was sweeping down the barley. Never was known a more abundant year. The loaded teams were seen in all directions, and the gleaners were picking up the scattered ears from the stubble. Farmer Blount was a wealthy man, he was in the cornfield with the reapers, when he suddenly fell to the ground. Some said that he was struck by the sun, and others that it was a fit of apoplexy; but, whatever it was, Farmer Blount never spoke after. You may perhaps have seen his tomb by the stone wall of the churchyard, with the iron palisades round it. Truly may each of us say, "There is but a step between me and death."

Widow Edwards lived in the shed at the back of the pound. It was a wretched habitation; but the poor cannot choose their dwelling-places. The aged widow had wrestled hard with poverty; her bits and drops were few and far between. Her son, who ought to have been a staff for her old age to rest on, was at sea. He was roving and thoughtless; but there is a heart-ache in store for him on account of his aged mother. Death found the widow alone, lying on her straw. No one was at hand to comfort her, or to close her eyes. "Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

Death went round the village in the *Winter*. The icicles were a foot long, hanging from the pent-house in the carpenter's yard; and the snow lay here and there in heaps, for it had been shovelled away from the front of the cottages. Not a stone's throw from the finger-post at the entrance of the village dwelt Abel Froome, the clerk's father. For years he had been afflicted; but his mind was stayed upon the Rock of Ages, and he loved to think of eternal things. He had lived to a goodly old age; and as a shock of corn ripe for the harvest, he was ready to be gathered into the garner of God. While his days were numbering, his heart had applied unto wisdom; and he knew Him, whom to know is eternal life. Death found him sitting up in his bed, with the Bible in his aged hands; and the last words that faltered from his lips were, "Lord, now lettest

thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Thus died Abel Froome: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

The habitation of Harry Tonks was in a wretched plight when Death crossed the threshold. Harry was an infidel, and scoffed at holy things. His days were mostly spent in idleness, and his nights in poaching, and in tippling at the Fighting Cocks. Often had Harry defied Death at a distance, as a bugbear; but when he came in reality, he trembled like a child. Pain racked him, and poverty distressed him; but that was not all, for his conscience was at work within him, and his mind was disturbed. "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" It was a horrid sight to see Harry clenching his hands, tearing his clothes, and gnashing his teeth in anguish, and quite as bad to hear the curses he uttered in his despair. He died as the wicked die, without hope, "Driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world." "Rend your heart, and not your garment, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."

If Death goes up and down, and across and around the village, at all seasons of the year; if he takes away the young and the old, the feeble

and the strong, the rich and the poor, the righteous and the wicked. how long will he pass by *thee*? Is it thy prayer—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

In the sunny seasons of boyhood there is sometimes a great deal to be repressed; for, as a ship that carries too much sail and too little ballast is blown about by every wind, so an ardent boy who has little judgment is continually getting into difficulty. He requires to be watched over, and sometimes to be put back.

Whether it was that my schoolmaster, whose knowledge of arithmetic was very limited, really entertained a fear of my getting ahead of him, or whether it was done with a view to render me more perfect in figures, I cannot absolutely determine, although I always suspected the former was the motive; but certain it is, that for a long period in my schoolboy days, every time I returned to school after the holidays, I had to begin again. If my last account book began at the Rule of Three or at Practice, however far I had advanced in the half-year, back again I was put. There was no reason assigned for this, but as a matter of course I had to begin again.

But mortifying as this system of being put back was to me, I dare not say that it was not attended with advantage. Perhaps I was proud, and this humbled me!



Perhaps I was soaring too high, and this plucked a few plumes from my wings! Perhaps, like a rose-tree, I was too sprouting and too forward, and required pruning! Youth is often in this situation, throwing out exuberant offshoots that require clipping and cutting.

It would be an excellent plan if every boy would make up his mind the moment he found himself going wrong in any thing, to go back and begin again. This would save him from many an error, and from much sorrow.

In many things we have no opportunity to begin again. He who thoughtlessly gets into a boat on the sea shore, if carried out by the tide into the wide ocean, may wish to undo what he has done, and to begin again, but he cannot. He who recklessly mounts a fiery and unbroken steed, when he finds that he is being carried swift as the wind in the direction of the precipice, may wish to return to the quiet and safe spot where he mounted, and begin again, but it is impossible: on he must go. Remember, then, that sin is a dreadful thing: you may have neither the time nor the opportunity to abandon an evil course, therefore avoid it, hate it, strive against it, and pray against it with all your heart, and with all your soul.

It was a pleasant thing on a sunny day, to revisit Holyrood after an absence of twenty summers and winters—and to gaze again on the dear old haunts where the sunny seasons of my

boyhood where passed. Holyrood was no longer a school, but as I entered the village a party of light-hearted boys were romping on the green, just as we used to do of olden time.

I roamed over the old places, almost all of which had changed their character, but had I not changed mine! Was not the boy become a man, and had not the bright brow of youth been shadowed with reflection and sobriety! I visited Mossy Tump, and Peter's point, and Caryfort Camp, and Tibberton Limekilns, I wandered near Grousely moor, and Bilberry hill, drank of the water of the Red Rock fountain, explored the Dwaft holes, and climbed up the ragged sides of Holloway Rift, as I did in days gone by. The thoughts of my schoolmates came over me, especially those who were my immediate friends. My old schoolmaster, and my tutors too, as well as the characters of the village, flitted before me,—Allan Day and old Robin Roe. Terrible Tooke and Dame Ashley, Major Montrose and Madam Norton. Frank Gilbert, Captain Collard and Crazy Cawthorn. It was like living over again the days of my youth.

It seemed as if the merry peal of the distant bells that struck up as I stood on the top of Hailstone Crag, was meant to welcome me to the haunts of my boyhood. Pleasant as is the chimes of the Village bells, at all times, calling up a sober joyousness in the spirit, and awaking

sweet and friendly, and affectionate and holy associations, it was doubly so to me on that occasion, when my heart struggling with mingled emotions, stood in need of something to give it a settled joy. That merry peal coming as it did over the beautiful scene, borne on the perfumed wings of the wind, was as a cordial to me. It gave a sunny brightness to my thoughts, and lit up the past, the present and the future with a golden beam. Youth has its many pleasures, and age is not without its enjoyments, but believe me, my young reader, unless the sunny seasons of boyhood are associated with virtue, the sunny seasons of age will be but few. Could I do so, I would set the words before thine eyes in letters of gold, yea grave them, as with an iron pen on thy heart, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths."

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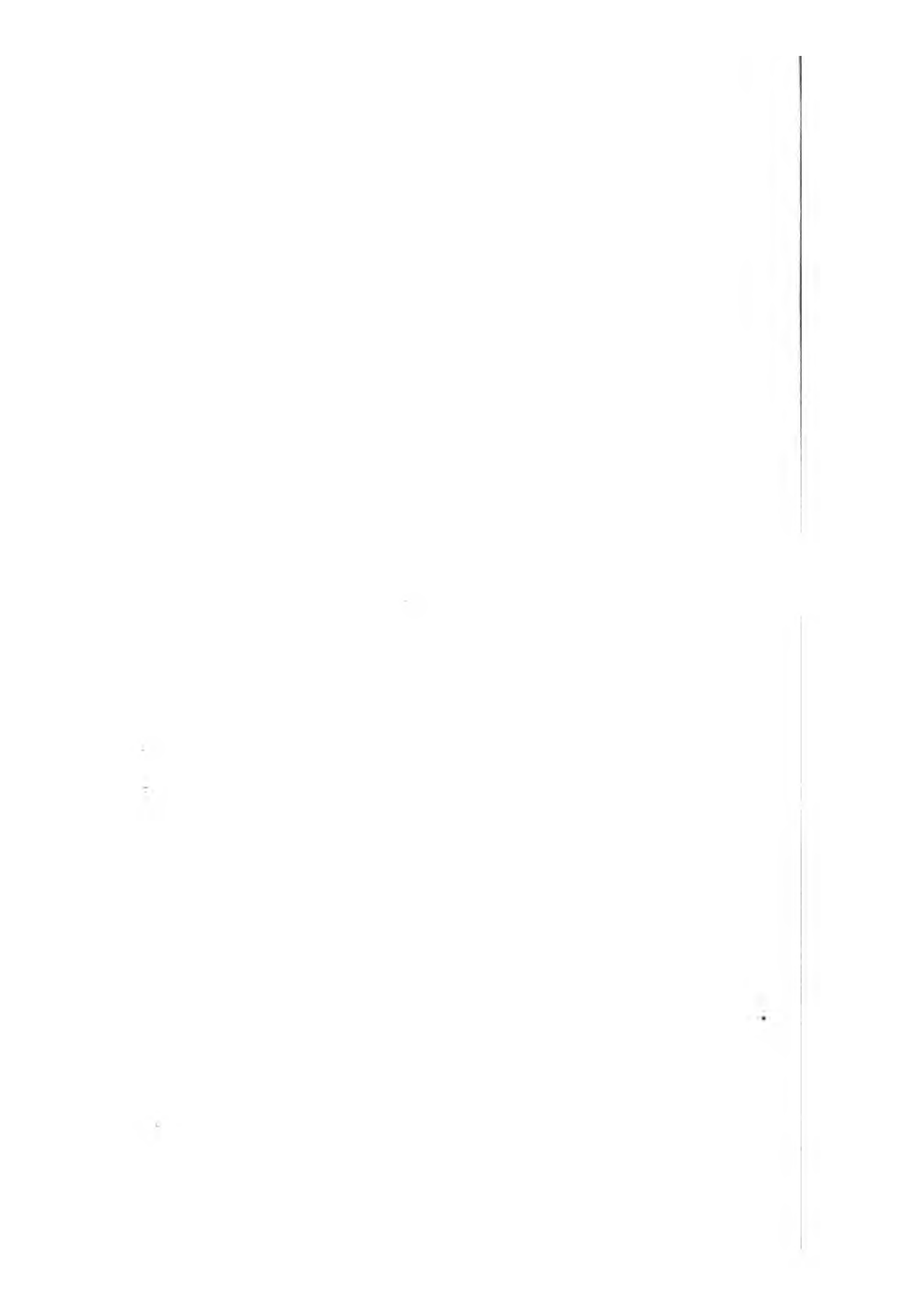
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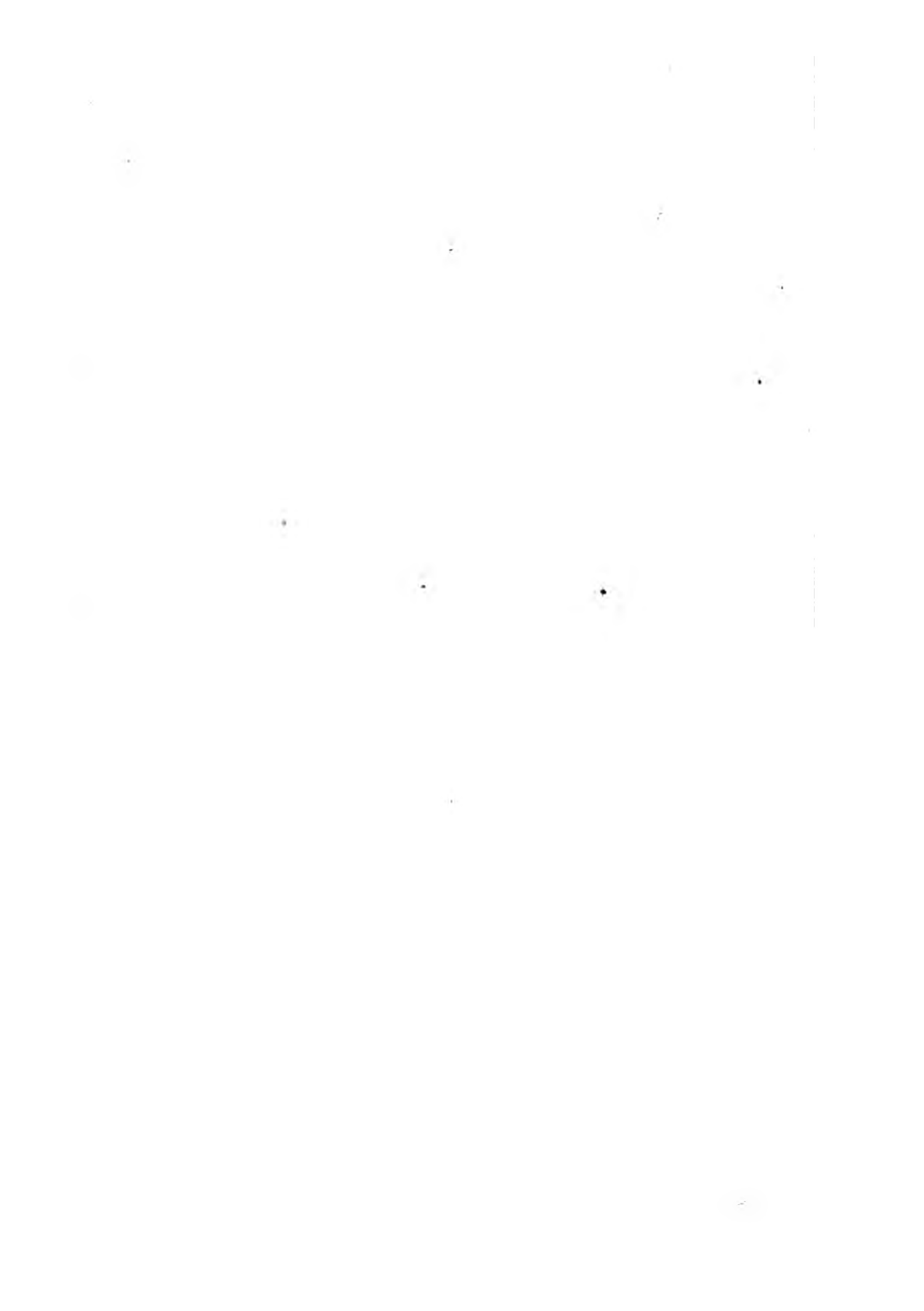
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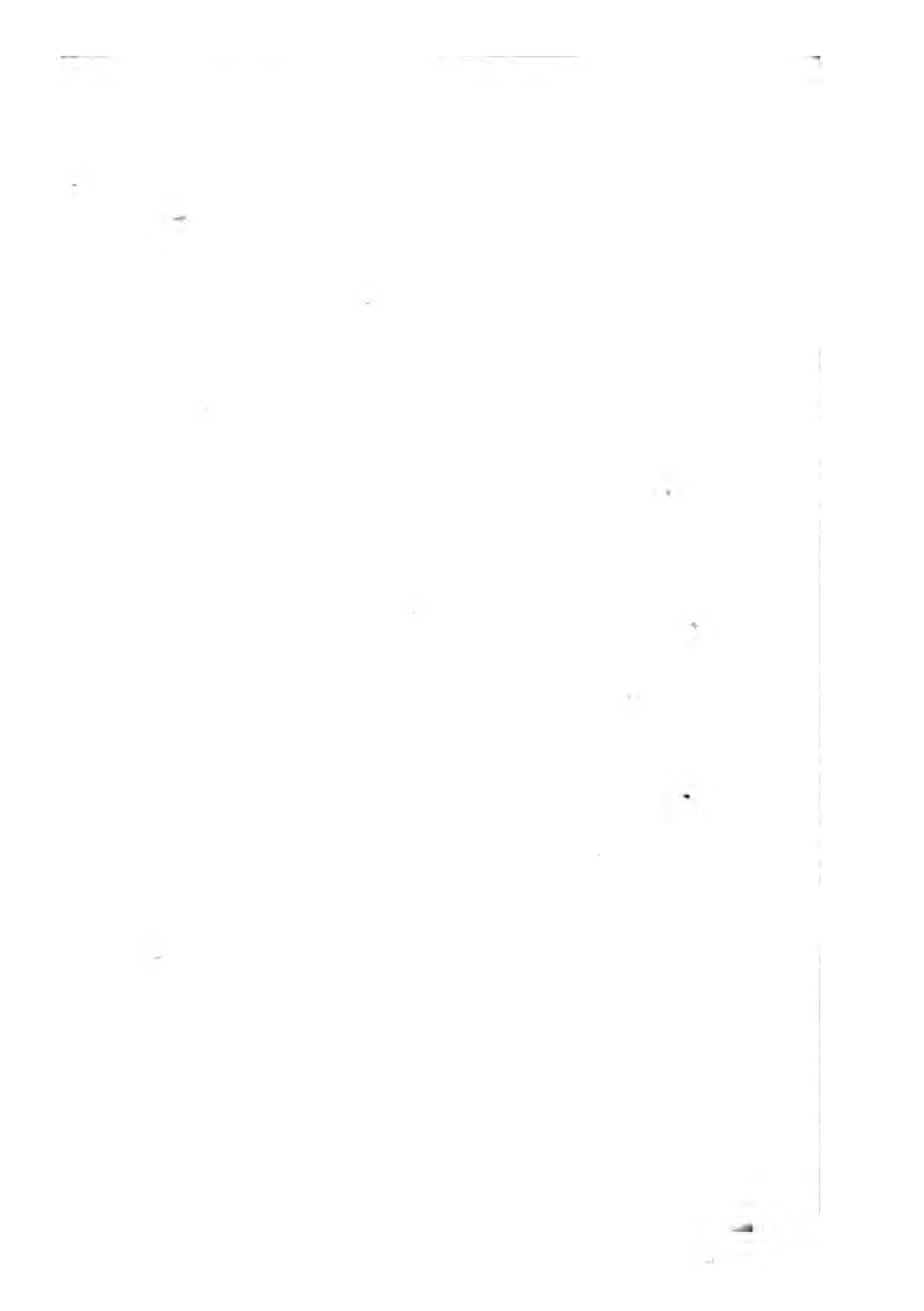


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