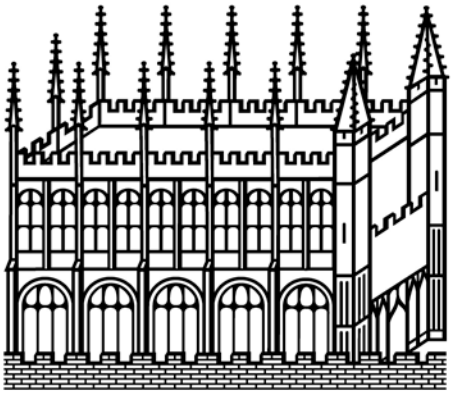

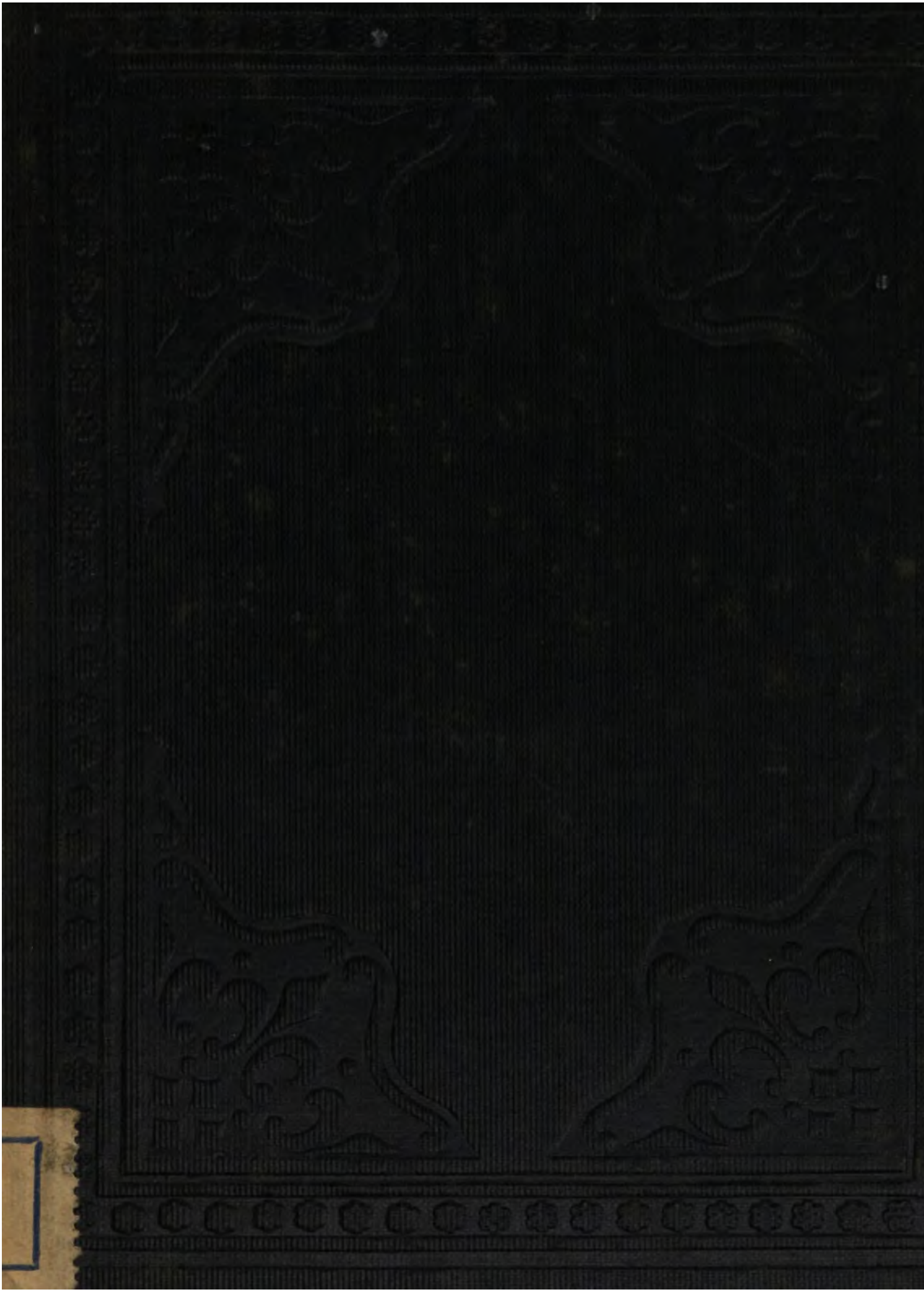

Amy Kay.


J.C.BREWER

Amy Kay.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"HOURS OF CHILDHOOD."

LONDON:
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.
EXETER: H. J. WALLIS.
PLYMOUTH: ROGER LIDSTONE.
MDCCCXLVIII.

PLYMOUTH:
Printed by R. LIDSTONE, George Street

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL

DEDICATED, WITH AFFECTIONATE LOVE,

To Edward,

SON OF CAPT. WOOLLCOMBE, R.N.,

OF HEMERDON.

AMY RAY.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

CHILDREN, little children, will you take a journey with me—a long, long way for some of you—to lovely, verdant Devon. Will you come? Yes!

Well, then, how shall we go? The railroad will not take us to the home that I would show you. It has not yet been made there, and I hope it never will. A railroad is not pretty to look upon in pleasant country spots.

Shall we travel by the coach? But

then it is so noisy, and so dirty, and so often is upset, and then you might be hurt, and that would never do. Your friends would be very angry with me, if you came to any harm upon this journey.

What do you think of a balloon? We should see a great deal of the world, I have no doubt; but as I have never been in one, I fear I should be so frightened, that I should not be able to speak to you on the way; and perhaps we should not be able to stop our airy conveyance when we wished, and that would be rather unpleasant.

Suppose, now, I was to take you on this journey without a carriage at all. Do you think I could do it? Let me try. Sit quite still, and fix your sparkling eyes on me, and give me your little hearts, and

I will place them carefully on mine, and bear them to the home that I have told you of.

CHAPTER I.

YES! we are in Devon now. These spreading trees and unclipt hedges tell us so. Look at its lofty hills, touching, with rugged point, the sky. Hush! what is that distant rushing sound? The sea,—the splendid rolling sea. We are very near it now; there is but a hedge and a few grass fields between us and its waves.

Now you can see it. The winter has arrived, and its waters foam and dash themselves along, as if, like children, they too felt the cold, and sought, by exercise, to warm themselves. It grows dark; do not gaze too long upon the sea, you shall

look again to-morrow. Now follow me up this lane; its trees are leafless now, but you shall see it in the summer time, when the branches twine and hang their leaves so thick, that cool and pleasant is the shade, and many are the roses sweet, and honey-suckles there, the noon-day sun knows nothing of.

How green these meadows on our right, and in the flowery month of May, how gay the orchards on the left, with buds and blossoms red and white. It is a long lane, but we have nearly reached the end. Now it widens, and you see part of a thatched roof, peeping between the branches of that large oak tree. That thatched roof is the roof of the home I am taking you to. How lovingly the ivy clings around the walls, covering every

stone. And mingling here and there are monthly roses, which, in spring and summer time, are gay and sweet. Each chimney has its clouds of dark gray smoke, which speaks of warmth and comfort in this home.

Look through the sitting-room window, the fire blazes, and lights the room with its cheerful flames A stout handsome old man sits by the fireside in an easy chair; the fire-light dances on his pleasant face, and sparkles on his spectacles. A lady sits opposite, knitting busily. How sweet and kind her aged face, how silvered white her hair. A clock (by its sound, not very far off) strikes eight.

The old man starts,—"Eight o'clock! it is time the children were here. I will ring the bell and have the candles and

supper brought in, that we may be ready for our travellers when they come; they will be cold and tired, I dare say, poor little things. Dear little orphan grandchildren." And the eyes behind the sparkling spectacles grew dim.

The bell has been rung and the supper brought in, and Rachael, the old and long-tried servant, comes in too, to tell her mistress that every thing is prepared; the fires are burning briskly in nursery and school-room, and the cradle is ready, and the elder-wine getting quite furious from over-boiling; and she wishes they would come.....Well, dear old Rachael, I think your wish is heard; the sea-side pebbles, on the entrance road, crush loudly as some wheels pass on, and draw more near,—and now they are at the door.....

What, has the wind blown out the candle. Never mind, Grandmama has lighted another. Open the carriage door, let down the steps,—take care, Nurse, how you get out, with Baby in your arms. Now make haste and come into the warm room.

How cold and tired you look, dear Ernest and Amy Ray. Well, if kind and loving hearts can warm and cheer, you will soon be warmed and cheered.

"Dear children, I am so glad to see you here at last," the old man said, and took one on either knee, kissing them fondly. "What a man thou art grown, Ernest, and yet you are but twelve."

"Oh, I am more than that, Grandpapa; I shall be fourteen next March, and then I shall go to sea. I am to be a sailor, you

know, like my own (and here his voice faltered), own Papa."

"God grant you make as good a man, my child, and thou wilt be loved as he was."

"And, Amy, little dark-eyed girl, what do you wish to be? You must be ten years old,—and that is a very great age,—perhaps you would like to be a soldier?"

"Oh, no, Grandpapa, I don't wish to be any thing; but stay with you all my life, and love you, oh! so dearly."

Grandmama has the Baby in her arms, and the tears fall from her eyes upon the little face, as she kisses and lays it on her bosom, and thinks of its father and its mother, both so dear to her, and taken now to a better world; but still she weeps for them.

Now for supper. Carry away the shawls and cloaks, Rachael, and take Nurse and Baby to the warm snug nursery.

Nay, pretty baby Helen, it is not worth while to open your eyes, you will soon be undressed, and in your cradle, and then you must shut them again. See, Rachael has held your pillow to the fire, to take the chill off, as she says; and of which chill there is a great deal on every thing to night, both in doors and out; but it is not every where that the chill finds kind Rachaels and fires to remove it.

Well, Helen, thou art asleep now, and Ernest and Amy kiss thee softly in thy bed, and walk with gentle step, lest they should disturb thy slumber.

The house is built on, or rather in a

sloping bank, the highest part of which rises above the roof, and bears trees and clustering shrubs upon its brink, beside which is a pleasant walk, and beyond again, an orchard. Some withered leaves still hang upon the trees; but the wintry wind, passing coldly by, blows them from the branches to the bank, down which they roll, with rustling, rattling noise, towards the nursery window, against whose casement they tap, with restless, quivering sound, as if to ask for shelter. But all are asleep within; they do not hear thee, withered leaves. The Baby sleeps by her Nurse's side; Amy lies, snug and warm, in her little crib, placed within the large red curtain.

The fire still burns, and seems unwilling to lose sight of Amy and her sister, each

coal appears so long in growing dim. One flickering flame still lives; its pale faint light falls on sweet Amy's face. Now it is gone.

CHAPTER II.

THERE are two clocks in the house; one down stairs in the store-room, the other up stairs by the nursery door. And these clocks, when they had struck twelve last night, began, as all well-regulated wound-up clocks will, with one o'clock again, and so went on making longer strikes every hour, and getting nearer and nearer to twelve again. But they are only half way yet, having just struck six,—that is, the nursery clock has; but for some reason, best known to themselves, they never could agree exactly as to the time of day or night. Whether it was that the nursery clock being up stairs, and

nearer the sun, thought, that in consequence of such an exalted situation, he ought to know most about it; or whether the store-room clock, from being situated in a busier part of the house, got minding other people's affairs instead of his own, and so lost time, I cannot say for certain; I only know, that the clock by the nursery door always struck five minutes before the other, and did so with such a loud determined voice, that it is a wonder to me how the clock in the store-room found courage to strike at all, particularly as by his doing so after the other, he insinuated that his rival on the stairs had been telling fibs.

Daylight is yet in a very feeble state, so feeble that the servants who are beginning to get up are obliged to mingle

with its glimmering the yellow flames of long slim tallow candles, best known to house-keepers by the name of "long sixteens," so called, I believe, because they are sold so many to the pound, and are longer than "short twelves," which are not so popular. They are very cold (that is, the servants, not the candles) and sleepy too, and as they blow out their candles, in consequence of the daylight being more decided, they think, if they were but ladies and gentlemen for one week, how they would lie in bed.

"Children, children, are you dressed? Who is ready for a walk before breakfast, this fine frosty morning?"

"I am," said Ernest, coming out of his room, and running violently down the

stairs, whistling his favourite tune, "Rule Britannia," with great glee, always stopping at that part of the song where the words—

"Britons never will be slaves!"

occurs, to give the determination greater force, by speaking as if he thought it not improbable that a slave-merchant might be lying in wait for him behind some door, and that the above-mentioned determination would have the effect of sending him off; though why Britons should suppose that any body wants to make slaves of them, I cannot think.

"I am ready, Grandpapa; where are you going? Shall I call Amy? I dare say she would like to walk too."

Off he ran to the nursery, two stairs at

a time, thus reducing the usual number of twenty, by the best calculation, to ten, and met his sister ready for the walk. "Run down, Amy; I must go in and give Baby a kiss, and then I will overtake you." And the strong active boy stole with gentle step to the cradle, and kneeling down, took the little hand upon the coverlet in his own, and kissed it softly and tenderly, as if he thought it resembled snow, in nature as well as whiteness, and would melt away at his touch.

"Is it not cold, Amy? I should think so, rather. Well, we shall be warmer when we get to the top of this field. Shall we see the sea, Grandpapa, from this field?"

"No, Ernest, we must walk a little further yet. Run on and open the gate,

then we shall walk a little way down this lane, and then take another to the right, and when we have walked a short time up this one, we shall see a gate on the left. Here we are, now open it. What do you think of this for a steep hill, children? However, if you want a peep at the blue sea this morning, you must climb to the top first; so off with you, and make haste, or we shall keep Grandmama waiting with the breakfast."

Well, rashers and fried potatoes do not come amiss after a walk in the frosty air; and they not only came in good time, but disappeared in quick time, inasmuch that a second supply was ordered.

"Amy, will you come down on the sands with me, and climb about on the rocks?"

"But how do you know that the tide is out?"

"John has been down for a cart-load of sea-weed, and he says it is quite low water now."

The waves sparkled brilliantly in the sun, and rolled in a calm orderly manner towards the beach, bringing with them sea-weeds of all colours, and shells of all shapes, as peace-offerings to the sands and rocks, against whose restraining power they so often rebelled.

"Amy, do you know, Rachael tells me her husband was a sailor, in the same ship with Nelson, at the battle of the Nile and Trafalgar. She is as proud of Nelson as I am, and talked to me a great deal about him this morning."

"And what is become of Rachael's husband? Is he alive now?"

"Oh, he is not alive now, I know. I rather think he was drowned."

"I dare say," said Amy; "it is very likely."

"What do you mean by its being very likely?"

"Why, I think, sailors are generally drowned, first or last."

"What nonsense, Amy; what dismal ideas of going to sea you have. Think of Nelson, he wasn't drowned."

"No; but then he was shot."

"Yes, and shot, fighting gloriously for his country. And, Amy, Rachael tells me, that when he was carried dying to his cabin, his last look was at the scene of action, and seeing some part of the rigging

of the ship out of order, commanded it to be attended to; and one of the officers who supported him, said, sorrowfully, 'Ah, my lord, if you had not worn those orders on your breast, the enemy would not have distinguished you from the rest.' But Nelson, raising his dying form, said proudly, 'I have won them, and will wear them.'"

"Oh, I dare say, it is all very wonderful, Ernest; but I cannot bear the thoughts of your going to sea. How lonely I shall be on these rocks when you are gone,—how I will watch the waves in a storm, and think of you in a rolling, tossing ship, perhaps wrecked, and clinging to rafts and rocks,—oh! it will be so dreadful." And Amy's tears began to flow.

"But, Amy, you must not think of me

in any such way. You must not think of me clinging to rafts and rocks; you must think of me bounding gaily over the waves, and landing in wonderful foreign countries, and bringing away beautiful birds and flowers for my dear little sisters at home. That is right, laugh away,—and now for a climb up these grand old rocks.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTMAS came, and Grandmama and her children were very busy in the village distributing warm garments and soup to their poor neighbours. And dear Grandmama had kind comforting words for all, that made their Christmas gifts more precious; and blessings from each lowly roof, followed her as she went.

The beautiful old village church stands close by the manor house. There is no burial ground without the church, but within are many ancient vaults. The ivy grows with rich luxuriance from the basement to the tower; and would, if it were not cut back, cover the very face of

that deep-toned clock, who solemnly and grandly, as a church clock should, tells the simple villagers below, how time flies on.

The green turf slopes so gracefully around, and bears upon its surface, trees of giant growth, marking, with many a bend, the village path to church, and clustering round that edifice, as if to guard its time-worn stones from violence and storm, and twining their branches o'er the roof, seemed to talk and murmur, bowing their heads with grave significance, of what had passed within those ancient walls;—of new-born babes who had been christened there, with friends and loving relatives around; and then in after years, —long years to them, yet but as yesterday in the eyes of One,—were borne by weep-

ing mourners through the porch, and laid, with holy words and holy thoughts, low in God's sacred consecrated earth.

It is Christmas day. The snow fell fast last night, and has lain so thick upon the ground, that the church path was obliged to be swept early this morning, to enable the old women to walk dry footed to church.

Grandpapa and Grandmama, with the children, have just entered the porch, and stand on the step a few minutes, to shake many an old friend by the hand, and wish them a merry Christmas. How gay the dear old church looks with its decorations of evergreens. And stay, raise your eyes to the arched roof. Has the ivy on the outside grown inquisitive concerning the

inside of the walls it covers? or do those two young tender shoots, with their pale green leaves, seek shelter from the cold without, that they have forced their way through man's handiwork, and creep with clinging growth along that lofty roof?

The church is not full yet; many, both old and young, are still on their way. The trees shake their snow-laden branches as they pass, and sprinkle many an old lady's best bonnet with its glittering morsels. The village boys nudge each other, and whisper, with chuckling glee, of the snow-balls they will make in the afternoon. They hope it will not thaw, and look with delight at their snow-covered feet; for believe me, *they* have not walked in the narrow swept path to church, but kept the thickest part all the way, in order to

prove the depth of this their favourite downfall, which, from its rising above and consequently falling into their shoes, and soaking their stockings through and through, affords them intense delight.

Now for the dinner, cook. Where is the red-berried holly to decorate the roast beef and pudding? Now send it steaming to the dining-room; there are hungry ones there, I can tell you, cook, and are not likely to detect any little errors you have made in the seasoning of that pudding, so now sit down and cool your heated face.

Well, Grandmama's ginger wine is not to be despised,—at least, Ernest and Amy think they have never tasted any thing so nice. Baby Helen is brought down, and placed in Grandpapa's arms, and he

kisses her pretty innocent face, and places her on his knee, leaning her little head upon his arm.

And now he fills his glass, and raising it to his lips, gives his Christmas toast, in the words of his open kindly heart, to the health of his "wife, children, grandchildren, and all friends."

CHAPTER IV.

DRAW the window curtains close, and shut the door. Put more wood on the fire. How it blazes, and joins in a roaring duet with the wind, as its flames meet it in the chimney.

"Now, Grandpapa, do tell us a story."

"A story, Ernest! how do you know that I can tell you a story?"

"Oh, I know you can, if you try. Tell us something that you did when you were a boy."

"But I was such a naughty boy, you would not like to hear what I did; Amy would be shocked."

"Oh, no, I shall not be, Grandpapa:

do tell us something, I dare say it will be good fun."

"Well, I will try and recollect some of my school pranks for you; only you must bear in mind, that what I did was so naughty, you must never think of doing the same."

"Until Tom Hennick came to school, I was considered the most mischievous and daring of all the boys. The cane and I were on terms of the most intimate acquaintance; in fact, scarcely a day passed without my feeling the strength of its friendship. I used to tell the boys that they were much indebted to me for keeping Dr. Readyrod's hand so well in it; for when their turn for a caning came, it was administered with a sharpness and dexterity, accompanied with a thorough know-

ledge of the art, which nothing but his daily practice on me could have caused.

"But, as I said, Tom Hennick surpassed me in mischief when he came to school; but as he was very glad to have a companion in wickedness, we were soon great friends. And to be sure, what fun we used to have, —that is," said the old man, recollecting himself, "I used to think it fun, my dears; but, of course, I don't now. The school-house was situated near a small town: there was no play-ground attached to it, and a railing enclosed a little piece of grass land in front of the house, with a row of tall poplar trees against the windows. The entrance gate opened into the turnpike road. We had a play-room in the house, and the run of the fields behind; but our great longing and desire was for a wood,

about a mile distant, having a wide deep river running through it. Now Tom Hennick's parents lived near this wood, and Tom had explored many parts of it, and lost himself a dozen times in trying to get out of it; and he would talk of the nuts and blackberries, and the trout in the beautiful river, until he made me nearly mad with wishing to be there. Well, one fine night in August, when we were in bed, Tom, who slept next to me, put over his hand, and giving me a poke, said, 'George, are you awake?' 'Yes,' said I. 'What is the matter?'

"'Wait a minute,' said Tom, 'until I have seen if those stupid Smith's are asleep,—oh, they are fast enough, a deal faster than their own brains. Now, jump out of bed, George, and look out of win-

dow with me. Did you ever see such a lovely night? The moon makes it as light as day; I can see the country round quite distinctly, and count all the sheep in the field opposite.'

"'If you only want me out of bed to count the sheep opposite, I shall get in again; as I can count the sheep to-morrow,' I said.

"'But it is not that I want you for,' said Tom: 'what should you think of Windham Wood, and a plunge in the cool beautiful river, such a glorious night as this?'

"'Think, why that it would be splendid. But how could we get there without Dr. Readyrod's knowledge?'

"'Do you mind,' Tom replied, 'staying up the whole of one night? because if you

don't, we can manage it very well. This poplar tree stands so close to the window, that we could slip down by it famously; and then what are our legs for, if they don't carry us to Windham Wood?'

"'Shall we go to night?' I asked.

"'No, not to night; for though there is a good moon now, there will be a still better one next Tuesday, according to my Almanack. It is Saturday to-morrow, so we shall have a few days to think and talk about it; only don't say a word to the boys, particularly the Smiths, they are so sleepy and dull, they never understand a lark.'

"My dear children, I don't think I had better go on with this story," said Grandpapa, "it is so wicked, and I am afraid it is corrupting you already; for your eyes

are looking as mischievous as Tom's and your Grandfather's did on that moonlight night, and you do not appear the least shocked at our evil intentions."

"Oh, please to go on,—do please to go on, dear Grandpapa."

"Well, then, days passed on, and Tuesday came, and I was so occupied thinking and planning about the wood, that I had not time to get into any mischief beyond my thoughts, and as I took care to get my lessons perfect, I did not see or feel the cane for some days; in fact, so good was I, that Dr. Readyrod was heard to say, 'he really had some hopes of me yet.' Poor man, he little thought he was hoping against hope.

"Tuesday night came. Every body went to bed before ten, and at half-past,

Tom and I intended to make our escape. I had a watch to regulate our movements. The moon shone bright and clear, and when all was quiet, we opened the window gently, and first Tom, and then I, slipped down by the poplar to the ground, climbed over the gate, and ran quickly on the road in the direction of the wood. And what a noble wood it was, and how grand it looked in the moonlight. Boys as we were, and full of the glee which our stolen ramble afforded us, we could still feel its beauty. We soon found our way to the river side, and watched its waters glistening in the moonlight.

"We climbed up many a high tree, and took a peep at many a wood-pigeon's nest that night, but we did them no harm; for though we were in high spirits, the quiet

peacefulness of that clear summer night seemed to fill our hearts with kindness. At about three in the morning, having had an hour's chase after some wild rabbits we had turned out, we felt very hungry; so we gathered plenty of sticks, and piling them together, set them on fire with the help of our tinder box and an old exercise book, with which we had come provided; and emptying our pockets, we produced a goodly heap of potatoes and apples, which we placed in front of the fire and watched the roasting of with great interest.

"We intended to get back to school by five in the morning, and to get into our beds again before we were missed. By the time our repast was roasted and eat, it was four o'clock, so we thought if we were to have a plunge in the river before our re-

turn, it was time to see about it; so we ran with all speed to the river side, and having chosen a spot where there was a small sandy beach, from which the water deepened and deepened gradually, we took off our clothes, and hanging them on the bushes near, to attract our attention the more readily to the spot, in case of our swimming to any distance, jumped in with a feeling of glee, that I should think school boys out on the sly alone can feel. We swam, dived, and plunged to our hearts' content, frightening the fish, old and young, from their sleeping places, under the rocks and banks. After half-an-hour of this enjoyment, we dressed quickly, and ran back to school as fast as we could, and a mile is no great journey for active boys.

"Every thing and every body appeared

quite quiet. Tom sprang lightly up the tree, and jumped in at the window, and turning round, said triumphantly to me, 'I say, this shan't be the last night for Windham Wood, eh, George?'

"'I should think not, my boy,' said I; when—oh! how frightened I was!—a large hand took hold of my right leg, and looking down, I saw Dr. Readyrod's twinkling black eyes raised to mine, with the word 'cane,' written in each of them."

"Oh! Grandpapa, what could have brought him out so early?"

"Why, my dears, one of those young Smiths, happened (a very unusual thing for them) to awake early in the morning, and seeing our beds empty, alarmed the house, and the Doctor had just come down in time to catch me by the leg."

"And how did it end, Grandpapa?"

"The leg, my dear? In a foot, of course."

"No, no, Grandpapa; your adventure, how did that end?"

"I am sorry to say, my dear children, that the end was of rather too painful a nature to bear repeating; I can only tell you that the Doctor's arm and the Doctor's cane had not lost strength by the few days' rest I had given them."

CHAPTER V.

AFTER the Christmas holidays, Grandpapa thought it was time for his Grand-children to re-commence their studies, Ernest in particular, as he was to enter the Navy so soon; in fact, they were expecting to hear every day of his appointment to a ship. There was a very good school in the neighbourhood, within a walking distance for Ernest; so he attended regularly every morning for some hours, studying, with one of the masters, navigation and other subjects considered most necessary for the education of a sailor.

Amy's mornings were spent at home with a daily governess, who was also her instructress in music, in which Amy took

great delight. Her music lesson was always a pleasure. She had commenced at a very early age, consequently she had overcome the first dry difficulties, and could now play with ease and enjoyment the beautiful melodies that were given her. But she was not fond of her other studies. Geography she took most interest in; for she said, as her brother might be sailing in all parts of the world, and stopping at all kinds of places, she should never know where he was, unless she learnt and remembered the names and situations of countries, towns, and ports,—oceans, seas, and rivers.

To arithmetic, she had the greatest objection, and said, as many little girls do, that she saw no use in it. It certainly was useless her saying so, as her governess was

very firm, and insisted on the propriety of her learning arithmetic as well as music, and said, that the difficulties were all made worse by Amy's hasty temper.

It is a fine afternoon in February; the sky is clear, and some of the buds on the trees are beginning to look red. Amy sits at the school-room table, doing something with a slate and pencil, which appears to be giving her any thing but satisfaction. The down-stair clock has just struck three, in direct opposition to the up-stair one, who asserted that hour to have arrived five minutes before. The birds are warbling native airs in the garden, Ernest is singing "Rule Britannia" in the passage..... "Oh, Ernest, I wish you would be quiet, and not keep on

singing that everlasting song. It is such nonsense, too, about Britannia ruling the waves. I believe the waves rule Britannia's ships, much oftener than she rules them."

"Why, Amy, what is the matter? won't the sums come right? what are they?

"Oh, the first is a horrid Compound Subtraction."

"Compound *dis*traction, I should think, to look at your face."

"Well, it is enough to distract any one. What is the use of taking one sum from another, when, according as I prove it, there is so little left, that it is not worth leaving; and then it does not come a bit like the answer in the book: but, of course, nobody would ever think that the book was wrong."

"And what is the other difficulty, Amy?"

"A long Rule of Three sum, which won't come right by any manner or means. 'If a lady gives, for one Indian shawl, £35 16*s.* 8½*d.*, what must she give for fifteen ditto?' The idea of any lady wanting fifteen Indian shawls! and if she did, she would soon see what they came to when the bill came in, I should think; so I cannot do it and I won't do it." And the angry girl pushed the slate from her with so much violence, that it fell off the table with a loud crash to the floor.

The noise of its fall, and one look at her brother's grieved face, brought Amy to herself. A crimson blush of shame covered her face, and she sat quite still, with her eyes fixed on the pattern of the

table-cloth, as if huntsmen riding in the air, upon queer looking horses, after stags with two legs and one horn, had never been looked at before. Ernest raised the slate from the floor, and, looking over the sums, saw that the mistakes were so few in number, and so slight in themselves, that a little more patience from his sister would have prevented or corrected them.

After a few moments' silence, Amy arose, and going to her brother, said in a low voice, "I have been very wrong, Ernest, to be so passionate, and I dare say, if I had had patience, you would have helped me; but now I do not deserve it."

"Amy, dear Amy," said her brother, putting his arms around her, "it has grieved me much to see you passionate

still; for since our dear Mother's death you have been so patient and gentle with all, that I began to think I should never see you in a passion again."

"Oh! I am so very, very sorry, dear brother," said Amy, while her tears fell fast.

"Let me talk to you a little, Amy; there is something I have been wishing to say to you before I leave home and go to my ship. When I am gone, there will be no one who ought to be so much with, and so dear to Helen as yourself; and you are so much older than she is, that she will naturally look to you for help and guidance; and if you are impatient with others, you would not be able sometimes to help being impatient and passionate with that dear little one, fondly as you

love her. Then, Amy, sister Amy, for your absent brother's and dear Helen's sake, be patient, gentle, and forbearing."

And Amy promised — with her arms about that brother's neck, his kiss upon her cheek — to try and check the angry thought, and still more angry deed.

CHAPTER VI.

TOWARDS the end of April, came a letter, announcing Ernest's appointment to the *Velocity*, a ship of which, to Grandpapa's great joy, an old friend of his was the commander. The ship was expected to sail for the coast of South America about the end of May, and Ernest was to join her at Portsmouth no later than the second week of that month; so that in three weeks' time, his sailor-life was to begin. The time for preparation was so short, and there was so much to be done, that every one was very busy. There was the sea-chest to be ordered and made, with all kinds of contrivances for putting quan-

tities of things into small places; and then Ernest was to be measured for his first uniform,—an important and proud thing for a boy of fourteen. Dear Grandmama and Rachael were in a perpetual state of anxiety and bustle with regard to his other garments,—the additional new ones to be made, the best of the old to be repaired with Rachael's strongest and neatest work. Amy hemmed and marked his handkerchiefs, and helped as much as she could; and all were so much occupied that there was scarcely any time to think of the sorrowful parting. And Rachael kept up every one's spirits with such wonderful predictions of Ernest's rise in his profession, that the idea of his being otherwise than a Captain in three years' time, and an Admiral any day after, ap-

peared impossible; and always having a long anecdote of her hero, Nelson, ready at the shortest notice, she was a very useful and important personage at the young midshipman's out-fit.

Days went quickly by, as days will when each hour brings its work, and the day before Ernest's departure arrived, and there was not a heart in the house that did not feel sad, and not only the house, but the village too; for his open, kindly nature had endeared him to all. And many were the kind words and blessings he took with him to sea, from his humble cottage friends.

"One more walk on the dear old rocks, Amy. It is a lovely evening, and we will take Helen with us without Nurse,—we don't want her; for I will carry Helen down the lane, and when we are on the

firm beach, she can walk a little, if we each take a hand. I should like to have both my sisters with me to night."

"I will run and put on Baby's bonnet, Ernest; we shall soon be ready."

Little children, have you ever left your homes for any time? If you have, did you not find, when the time for departure came, that your home appeared more beautiful than ever?—the flowers, sweeter and of brighter hues? Those spreading trees, they surely never looked so large, so graceful in their shape as now, and yet you have seen them every day. Your friends appear more kind, far dearer than they ever were, and your heart grows sadder and more sad at leaving them. All this Ernest felt, as, with a sister in his arms, another by his side, he walked along the

shady lane to the beach. The wood-pigeons were very plentiful in that neighbourhood, and as they flew from tree to tree, uttering their soft cooing notes, they seemed to speak so sadly, so endearingly to him of the home he was about to leave, that his eyes filled with tears, and he pressed little Helen's face against his own, that Amy might not see them. And the sea, how blue it looked, peeping between the trees, as a turn in the lane brought it in sight;—its waters so peaceful, calm, and smooth, as if a storm was fabulous,—a thing talked of, certainly; but never taken any part in by themselves. Oh! fickle, changing sea!

Ernest and Amy led Helen close to the water's edge, enjoying her delight as she played with the rippling waves; running

after them as they receded, and then just letting them touch her little feet, was chased by them in return. And those calm summer waves seemed to like the childish play; for the pleasant rippling sound they made, was not unlike the little one's soft laugh. Now, Amy, we will take Helen to 'Thunder Hole.' I don't suppose she has ever seen or heard the noise the waves make there."

I don't know who gave it the name of 'Thunder Hole,' but it is a very good one. In the calmest day, the waves are noisy there. It is a cave in the rocks, of the depth and length of which the sea alone can tell. The waves grow angry as they approach its opening, and enter with a headlong eager rush, as if there was hidden treasure in its depths, that they had

heard of, and would bring to light one day, if they could move it, and they would try,—they would try. And so they rolled in and out, in and out, day after day, night after night, and had done so for years, and will for years to come, with that deep, deep, thundering sound.

On the children's return from their walk, they found their Uncle Edward, with whom Ernest was to travel to Portsmouth, was arrived, and in the school-room, by Rachael's desire, inspecting the sea-chest, and all the wonderful contrivances. In the evening, Uncle Edward told Amy she would have plenty to do after Ernest was gone, as he was going to send her a little invalid cousin to nurse and take care of,—that Rachael was going to his house on

Monday next, and would return with Edmund on the following day.

"How old is he?" Amy asked. "And has he been very ill?"

"He was five years old a few days ago," said her Uncle, "and has been very ill for many weeks; and he is so feeble, that he can take very little exercise; but Grandmama says, the sea air will soon make him strong; and I intend him to be your little charge, Amy."

They travellers were to start so early in the morning, that Rachael was to give them their breakfast before they left, without disturbing the rest of the house, more than such early gettings up always do.

Each flower raised its lovely head,
And in the air its fragrance spread.

The bees hung thick on every flower,
Gathering honey for their store,
And worked and talked, with busy hum,
Of work both done and yet to come.
A fairy stream of water clear
Rippled by the garden near,
A rustic bridge across it thrown,
The rails with roses overgrown,
Bent till they touch'd the streamlet's wave,
As if their sun-warmed buds to lave.
Beneath a stately Lily lay
A sleeping child—'twas Amy Ray.
She seem'd to have wept herself to sleep,
For many a tear was on her cheek,
And now and then a stiffled sob
Seem'd to tell of sorrow's throb;
And as the breeze above it sped,
The Lily bow'd her graceful head,
And slowly, gently, bending low,
She seem'd to kiss the dear child's brow,
And left a sparkling dew-drop there,
As if she wept that one so fair
Should know or feel a thought of care.

CHAPTER VII.

"Do you hear any thing of the carriage, Amy?" said Grandmama. "I think Rachael and Edmund will be here soon. Poor little fellow, I hope we shall soon be able to make him strong."

"I think I hear the carriage now, Grandmama; but it is so dark that I cannot see any thing. Yes, I hear it on the gravel in the entrance now."

They went to the front door, and Grandpapa took a little pale boy from Rachael's arms, and carried him into the sitting-room, and sat down with him still on his knee, while Grandmama and Amy took off his numerous wrappings. He was

a lovely child. His light brown hair hung in natural silken curls around his brow and neck, and his sweet blue eyes, as he gazed on those beside him, seemed to speak with holy look of that bright Heaven, where so lately he had nearly gone. Well, Rachael has not been idle since her return; for she has just come in with a thick compound in a basin, which she says is very nourishing for an invalid after a journey, and of which, in the generosity of her heart, she has made a sufficient quantity for the strongest man's supper; and as, of course, Edmund's appetite, when compared with that of the strongest man's, is a mere trifle, still he eats a good deal, and praises it so much, that Rachael is delighted, and carries him off to bed in triumph, prophesying that he will be a

second Sampson in less than no time; though what length of time she meant by that I cannot tell, but should fancy, it was a kind of time the nature of which was rather too rapid for her or any one else to comprehend.

Edmund slept very well all night, and was not the worse for his journey. Amy said she would take him down on the sands as soon as her morning lessons were done; but then she remembered that he could not walk so far; but Grandpapa soon settled that difficulty for her, and said that when he went out to ride after dinner, he would take Edmund before him on his horse, as far as the sands, and leave him there with her until he came back from his ride, which might not be for two or

three hours, so they would have plenty of time for playing about and enjoying the sea air.

When the afternoon came, the plan was found to succeed very well. Amy, with her sister and Nurse went first, and were on the beach ready to receive Edmund, who enjoyed his ride exceedingly, and was rather unwilling to take away his hands from the horse's long mane, which he had been pulling hard all the way, under the impression that it was a kind of bridle. He was astonished at the sea, and at first a little afraid of it. He told Amy he did not think he had ever seen the sea before, for his Mama told him that he was a baby when he was staying with Grandpapa before; but his fear soon vanished when he saw how unconcerned little Helen was

with the noisy splashing waves, when her searching after various pebbles and many-coloured sea weeds led her to the water's edge, where she crouched down with her face, hands, and knees, close together, looking like a little bundle, and nothing else; in which position she would remain until she had filled both hands to overflowing with sundry damp specimens of the ocean's growth, when rising slowly and with some difficulty, owing to the weight of her treasures, she would gradually resume the shape of a child.

Edmund soon began to help her, and between them, they soon made a good-sized heap of their gatherings, which heap, on their leaving the sands, they were so unmerciful as to insist on poor Nurse's carrying home. But at last they were

prevailed on to be contented with one stone and a long piece of sea weed each; and having chosen the largest and the wettest, they were coaxed away from the scene of their labours, with the promise of seeing their heap again to-morrow; which promise, had they known that the waves near which they had left their treasures were not very likely to stand still all night, they would not have put much faith in.

Edmund grew stronger and better every day, in consequence, Amy thought, of the beautiful sea air; but Rachael, though she allowed there was some strength in it, still thought the basin containing the supper of her own making was first and principal in the seeking and finding of health, putting land and sea breezes quite in the back-ground.

The grounds and woods of the manor house joined Grandpapa's fields, and the children were allowed to play there whenever they liked, and Amy liked it very often; for the woods were so close, that she and her sister could play there without requiring Nurse to look after them, and Amy was very proud to be trusted with the care of Helen.

This afternoon, Edmund is strong enough to go with them. It is a lovely wood, deepening in shade and coolness as they walk on towards Amy's favourite spot, where an immense oak stands at the head of a large pond, or lake, as the children call it, for so it seems to their young eyes, and spreads its huge branches, each in itself a tree in size, over many feet of soft green turf. Ash, beech, and fir,

stand on either side of the lake, dipping their lowest branches in its waters, bowing gracefully to the water-lilies there, who raise their heads above the lake's soft fairy waves, and opening wide their snow-white leaves, gaze with golden eye towards the sun, whose beams, there unobscured by trees, shine brightly on the water, mingling their light and warmth so softly with the shadows, as to render this spot of Amy's choice, cheerful and bright amidst the shade.

"Now, Edmund, sit down with Helen on this stone seat, on the velvet carpet in my green drawing-room, and rest yourself after your walk, while I gather you some strawberries. How pretty they look, peeping from behind and under their green leaves. It is no use trying to hide

away, little berries; you are so bright and red, I shall soon find you out. Now, Edmund and Helen, eat away. Oh, fie! Baby; you are taking more than your share. Are they not cool and nice?"

After they had rested a little, they walked on into the wood, and came to a part where some men were cutting down trees. The children had never seen a tree cut down, so they stood at a distance, watching the work. It was a large elm tree, which, a short time since, was as green and lovely as any in the wood; but, a few days ago, it was struck by lightning, and its noble branches, with their thick green leaves, were blackened and burnt by that scorching flash. The men have nearly cut it through; but it is hard work, they say, the trunk is so large, and they

are cutting at the widest part, close to the ground. Now it is cut through—it falls—but not to the ground. It seemed to the children, as they gazed, as if the oak across the path did not like that his old friend, the elm, with whose branches he had twined his own on many a windy night, should fall unheeded to the earth; so caught the falling elm upon his own firm spreading boughs, and bent his head, with acorns crowned, upon the withered tree, as if he grieved and sorrowed for his poor old friend.

The children, coming back to their lake again, gathered the wild flowers on its banks, and then arranged them in nosegays gay and sweet. The church clock struck five. Each stroke came slowly, solemnly through the air to the

wood where the children sat and listened.

"How beautiful it sounds," said Amy, "and how quickly the time has passed since we have been here. It was only three when we came into the wood."

"Yes, it has passed very quickly," said Edmund. "What was that noise, Amy?"

"I did not hear any thing, dear."

"Now, Cousin Amy, now you hear it. It is a soft low noise."

"I think it is the breeze that has sprung up, Edmund, passing through the trees. We had better go home now, for fear you should take cold."

"Perhaps," said Edmund, thoughtfully, as he arose to go, "it was Time passing."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE summer months passed away, and Autumn came, making, with its winds and early frosts, sad havoc with the flowers that Summer left; blowing the leaves of some away, and covering the buds of those who still wished to have one more peep at the blue sky, with such a thick sparkling coat of white frost during the night, that when the morning came, the poor little buds could not raise their heads or open their eyes. And when Autumn had done all the damage it could to the productions of Summer, it began to clear the way for its successor, Winter;

turning the leaves yellow, red, and brown; and then, as if not pleased with either of these colours, blowing them, with angry gusts, away; strewing, at the same time, the old country seats of the rooks in rude disorder on the ground;—in fact, Autumn worked so hard from September to November, that when the last week of that month came, it had nothing more to do but wait quietly until December, and Winter took possession of the country altogether, to freeze it, to thaw it — to rain, hail, snow, and blow upon it by turns.

The thirtieth of November is Amy's birthday. She is eleven years old, and expects all her young friends to spend it with her. It is a fine dry day, and she and Edmund walk up and down before the entrance, to watch their arrival, and

run with glee to open the gate, as, in parties of three or four at a time, they make their appearance, all very red in the face with much running and little breathing. They are all arrived now. What a large circle of acquaintance Amy has,—fourteen, fifteen, no less than sixteen little ladies and gentlemen. It is no wonder that the kitchen chimney smokes so, when its fire has to work for so many appetites.

"Now, then, what shall we play at?" asked Amy; "for it is so cold, we had better keep moving."

One proposed that they should play at 'Robbers;' though however such a ferocious-sounding play could have entered the head or imagination of such a perfect innocent as the boy looked, I cannot tell;

but he proposed it boldly, as if robbers were his intimate friends, and had been his companions from his cradle. Another hinted at 'Mail Coaches,' as a capital play for a cold day; and as it was a novelty to many present, they decided on beginning with this, and turning 'Robbers' when they ceased to derive benefit or pleasure from 'Mail Coaches.' The summer-house on the bank, is the coach-office or starting-place; and Amy's double-seated wooden carriage is raised to the dignity of a royal mail; but this is only one, and as the chief delight consists in there being a rival and opposition coach, the children from the manor house have a large one in their possession, and the eldest boy offers to run home for it, and says he will be back again in ten minutes. So off he runs at a good

speed, and while he is absent, Amy goes to Grandpapa for a ball of twine for harness and reins.

Now both coaches stand ready for the horses to be harnessed in; but it requires some little time to settle who will be horses, who will be coachmen, and who the passengers. All the boys want to be coachmen; but as, in that case, there would be no horses to drive, they agree to have that honour by turns, commencing with the eldest. There are four horses to each coach; they are very spirited, kicking, plunging, backing, and neighing in such an awful manner, that the old black horse in the orchard, comes up quite close to look at them. Each coach starts in a different direction, as the great delight is to meet and pass each other in the nar-

rowest places. They are capable of holding comfortably, three passengers, besides the driver; and all the rest of the children are scattered about the grounds, behind shrubs and trees, to dart out upon either coach as it comes in sight, and call loudly for places, without any regard to their being all occupied; and as the coachman is the last person to mind that, his object being to get every body he can into his coach, and leave as few as possible for the other, the passengers sit one on the top of the other, very thick indeed, until the under ones are obliged to give up, or rather get out, and take their turn at standing behind shrubs and trees.

They played so long at this game, that they had not time to begin another, before the dinner hour arrived; and it gave Ra-

chael and Nurse no little trouble to get the faces and hands of the late coachmen and horses into drawing-room order.

It is quite a light evening for November, so after dinner they go out to play again, as Grandpapa's house is hardly large enough for eighteen specimens of the human race to run wild in. The boy with the innocent face, again proposes 'Robbers;' and expresses the ambitious wish that he may be 'Captain;' but this the rest cannot allow. Their ideas of robbers, are of a dark and mysterious nature; and they could not submit to be governed by a small and fair-haired commander. So the tallest and darkest young gentleman is selected, and his cap ornamented with a branch of laurel, as the sign of his rank and honour. Half the

party are robbers, and the rest represent sober, inoffensive individuals; making the summer-house their home, and going to sleep with an immense amount of valuable property around them, which property is represented by faggots of wood, large stones, which are to cause the robbers much trouble in removing, and some lighter articles, in the shape of apples and oranges. They retire to rest accordingly, and snore in so frightful a manner, that they would have startled any thieves less hardy than those who now approach cautiously from the plantation, which, in their estimation, is a second Sherwood Forest.

Now, part of the play is, that the snoring individuals being robbed of all their worldly goods, must not open their eyes

or take the least notice of any thing while the robbers are there; the rule being, never to discover their losses until the next morning, which always comes as soon as the captain and his men are out of hearing. So when one of the sleepers feels himself raised by his shoulders and heels between two of the robbers, and carried from his warm bed into the open air, on account, he hears his bearers say, of a valuable watch in his pocket, the chain of which is so wound round his neck, that it cannot be removed without waking such a light sleeper, he does not open his eyes or cease snoring until he is laid down at the foot of a tree in the depths of Sherwood Forest, otherwise plantation, when his sleep is dispersed by a succession of little chuckling laughs, which sound ra-

ther peculiar, coming from a person so situated. The captain and the rest of his men soon return, and having put their stolen goods behind one tree, tie their prisoner with their handkerchiefs to another, and wait, in solemn array, the arrival of the injured inmates of the summer-house, who, according to the rules of the game, appear to know by instinct where the robbers live, and make their appearance early in the morning, to try and recover their stolen goods and captured companions. As soon as they come in sight, the robbers run and hide in the thickest part of their wood; and the seekers, when they have found and loosened their friend from the tree, run after the robbers. And now extraordinary changes take place in the morals and propensities

of all the party at a single touch,—the regulation being, that those robbers who are caught by the defrauded inhabitants of the summer-house belong to their party, and become reformed and worthy members of society on the spot; while those from the summer-house who fall into the hands of the robbers, get ferocious and dangerous directly, and express great contempt and dislike for their former inoffensive life. Much changing has taken place, and many converts made,—some for the better and some for the worse,—when an unexpected addition to the party is made, in the form of Rachael, who comes to tell them that dews are falling and fogs coming in, and if they (meaning the robbers and robbed) don't come in too, they will all get dreadful colds; and putting her hand on the

captain's jacket, quite unconscious of the desperate character he was a minute before, declares it is very damp, and hurries them all in by the nursery fire to air, while she brushes them down and washes them over, preparatory to their going down to tea.

After tea, the late captain offers to show the company some wonderful tricks with cards. He begins with taking a few cards, and holding them up, asks any body to choose one, and when that has been done, he puts them with the rest of the pack, and shuffles them all together, so that it appears quite impossible for him to find the card that was chosen; but he does, and lays it on the table, to the surprise of all the children, and Grandpapa too; for he draws nearer to the table, and puts on his

spectacles, as if he is determined to see through the next. Another card is chosen; but this time the pack is not shuffled, but dealt out in many little packets, and then gathered carefully up, and dealt out in as many little packets again, and so on for four different times. After the last, and not before, the young conjuror announces his knowledge of the card, and holds it triumphantly in the air. His concluding trick is much admired, inasmuch as it is united with a history of rather a doubtful and suspicious nature. He first shows how 'four diamonds lay in the ground,' and how 'four kings went to look for them, each taking a good spade with them,' urged to do so, it is supposed, by the exhausted state of their funds; the idea of four kings going out digging under

any other circumstances being unnatural. He then proceeds to show how the 'four queens,' not liking to have their consorts out of their sight, or doubting the possibility of the kings finding diamonds without their help, 'went to look after them, each taking a good heart!' But, now comes the tragic part,—'four knaves said they would go and rob them by the way;' and, oh! horrible to say, each took a large club with them.' But here, the story ends in the most exciting part; for though the cards are taken up and laid with their faces to the table in seven distinct packets, and the clever young gentleman can tell without looking, which contains kings and which queens; neither he, nor any one else can tell how the story ends,—whether the knaves find the

queens, the queens find the kings, or the kings find the diamonds.

It is a fine night, and Amy's guests are to walk home. The servants are come for them now, with a lantern a-piece, and many wrappers for the children; which, in order to keep their chests warm, are put on in such a manner as to stiffen their arms, and render them perfectly useless for the time. They are very merry, notwithstanding, and express themselves much delighted with the day they have passed.

CHAPTER IX.

EDMUND's Papa comes to see him sometimes, and says, now he is so strong and well, there is no occasion for Grandmama to be troubled with him any longer; but she thinks, as the air agrees with him so well, it would be a pity to take him away; for he is too young to go to school, and he is learning to read and write very nicely with Amy's governess. So Edmund stays, and Amy is very glad, for she loves him dearly. And when she sees how good and gentle he is with every person and every thing, she tries to be gentle too; for Amy is not ashamed to learn of a little child,—

one so much younger than herself. And when people try in earnest, they generally succeed in the end; though, as Amy finds, it cannot be done with one trial,—it will take many.

She has heard once from Ernest, and quite astonished Grandpapa with her knowledge of geography, finding so quickly, and showing him on the map, all the oceans, seas, countries, and islands her brother mentioned in his letter, as having been in or near.

One afternoon, a few weeks after Christmas, Amy was sitting at the school-room table writing to Ernest, giving him a long account of her birthday party, and telling him a great deal about her cousin Edmund,—and Helen, how well she could walk now, and that she meant soon to

teach her the alphabet. The letter was just finished, and lying open on the table, and was being read through, to see that the spelling was all right, of which Amy had her doubts and her Dictionary, at the same time, to correct any mistakes,—when Helen, who had been playing with her ball for some time in the passage, thought the room where her sister was sitting, lighter and larger for the purpose, and throwing her ball, as children of two years old are apt to do, without any idea of distance or object, leaving all to chance,—for the ball to go through the window or into the fire,—it most unfortunately fell on the table, upsetting the ink-bottle and its contents over Amy's neatly-written letter. It was very trying for any one's temper; but still, if Amy

could have thought for one instant, she would have recollected that to be in a passion would not wipe out the ink, or re-write her letter, and many times since her brother had left home, she had been able to think, and conquer her passion; but now she failed. Her face flashed with anger, and rising impetuously from her chair, she pushed it so violently back, that it fell, while she stood with clenched hands and foot ready to stamp the ground, gazing at her spoilt letter. The chair was a large one, and the noise of its fall brought Grandmama to the room. She saw in a moment what had happened; and telling Helen to run and play in the nursery with Rachael, she took Amy by the hand, and, leading her to the dining room, told her to sit down on a stool by

her side, and called Edmund, who was in the room, to do the same.

"One day," said Grandmama, "when I was a little girl (that was many years ago), my sisters and I were walking out with our nurse, gathering flowers, running, laughing and talking, when we heard the sound of a horse, coming at a rapid pace behind us. We looked round, and saw a man riding as fast as the horse could go, within a few yards of us. 'This gate, run to this gate,' said our nurse, dragging my sisters who were nearest to her into a gate-way on the opposite side of the road to where I was standing alone, having just filled both hands with wild roses from the hedge. I attempted to join them, and set off to run across the road, but got no further than half

way, when the horse came galloping on, and its rider not seeing, or unable to save me, from the rapidity of his riding, knocked me down, and passed on at the same wild pace. My sisters and nurse thought I was killed; for I lay quite still, and looked so pale."

"And were you killed, Grandmama?" asked Edmund.

"Why, my dear, as it happened so many years ago, and I am now telling the story to my Grand-children, I don't think I was; but the horse had struck me with his large heavy foot, and stunned me, and I was very ill for some time."

"And what became of the man, Grandmama?"

"I do not know, Edmund. If he had killed me, people would have searched

for him and had him punished; but I think it is very likely he never knew he had ridden over me or hurt me."

"How could that be?" asked the children.

"Why, my dears, he was, I afterwards heard, one of those unfortunate men who, instead of going quietly and soberly on their way, stop at every inn or public-house on the road, and drink more and more at each place, until they lose all command over their words and actions. And thus it was with this poor man. He did not know what he was doing, or how and where he was going, and so he rode over little me."

"Oh, Grandmama!" how very wicked the man was."

"Yes, he certainly was; and so are all

who follow his example. But I will tell you, Amy and Edmund, when I think other people, and even children, are as wicked, —when they allow their angry feelings to make them passionate, and so take possession of their senses, that they are as unable to control their actions as the man who rode over me. Yes, Amy, you may look surprised; but it is the truth, nevertheless. Suppose that, just now, when in your passion you threw down the chair, that Helen, your dear little sister, who was in the room, had been standing near it; might not a blow from that falling chair have been as dangerous for her, as the horse's foot for me?"

Amy's face grew pale at the thought, and just then Helen coming in and running to her, she took her in her arms,

and kissing her fondly, wept tears of love and penitence on that little sister's head.

And when night came, and the little one lay sleeping in her bed, Amy stood beside her, while Ernest's almost parting words spoke softly from her heart,—"For your absent brother's and dear Helen's sake, be patient, gentle, and forbearing." And Amy knelt beside the bed, and with her sister's hand in hers, prayed,—oh! how earnestly she prayed,—that her trespasses might be forgiven, and that she might no more be led into temptation.

The full clear moon glistened through the leafless trees; its silver rays fell in streams of light upon the sloping bank, through the latticed window of the room wherein the children slept. The younger

nestled by her sister's side, with dimpled hand upon her neck; that sister's arm across her thrown, with sweet protecting love. The dark brown curls of Amy's hair fell with many a wave, and mingled with the babe's soft golden ones. I wonder not the moon gazed there; it was a lovely sight, that sleeping pair.

CHAPTER X.

HELEN's education is begun, and if I may judge from the size of her first letters, on a very large scale; but I am sorry to say, her ideas of the value of those letters depend a great deal on the pictures that accompany them. Thus, 'A,' which is illustrated with an apple many sizes larger than the head of the boy who holds it, and who, if he ever did eat it, could hardly be alive now to tell the tale, has great attractions for her. 'C,' standing by a cat of huge proportions, whose whiskers, if he had been alive, would have been a great inconvenience from

their length, is a great favourite; she pats it with her little hand, and wishes Grandmama's cat was as large. 'H' is accompanied by a marvellous horse, whose front legs trot, while the hind ones gallop. 'K' is a king with such splendid robes, and glittering crown, the jewels in it being of all the colours of the rainbow, that no one could suppose he would ever like to take them off and go to bed. A few pages further on, his queen is represented in an equal state of splendour.

Helen has learnt the last letter of the alphabet to-day, which is placed beside an animal in shape like a donkey, but in stripes and colour like no animal that has yet been seen, I should think, though the book called it a zebra. When the letters have been all said well, Amy rewards her

sister with one or two nursery stories, great favourites with Helen, who does not object to their antiquated or fabulous nature. The most marvellous are "The Adventures of the Old Woman and her Pig," with pictures by an artist whose colours, at all events, were bright, if he was not; the old woman's gown being of the most brilliant hues, without any apparent attempt on the wearer's part to match those of her bonnet and cloak. A large watch and enormous pair of scissors hang at her waist, one hand holds a stick, the other a string, one end of which is fastened to one of the pig's legs, whose back is covered with little patches of red, yellow, and brown, and terminates in a tail of very curly propensites, and altogether, looks as much like a pig as the artist

could make it. The difficulties the old lady has in driving this curious-coloured animal home are very extraordinary, or she thinks so; for she tells the crab-stick, to which she first applies in her distress, that on coming to the style, "the pig *won't* go," and to make matters worse, she and the pig ought to have been at home "an hour-and-half ago." Now, I never did see a pig go over a style, and, therefore, cannot tell whether it is an obstacle that a pig can overcome or not. If it *is* possible, the pig's behaviour was certainly inexcusable, and showed a great want of good manners, in keeping his mistress waiting, and causing her to go out of her way to ask the assistance of a stick, fire, water, an ox, a butcher, a rope, grease, a rat, and a cat. Now, I believe all boys

have the lowest opinion of cats. I never knew a boy yet who, if one of those animals crossed his path, did not call out, "hiss, hiss, cat, cat!" and throwing a stone or his cap after it, set off at full speed in chase of the poor creature; and yet this despised animal was the only one who consented to help the old woman in her trouble; for stick, fire, water, ox, butcher, rope, grease, and rat all said, "I won't," while the cat not only *said* "I will," but began an instantaneous attack on the rat, who at the same time began to eat the grease, which had such an effect on the rest, that they began to do their duty too, and so quickly, that the stick soon began to beat the pig, and the poor old woman and her rebellious purchase got home in double-quick time.

CHAPTER XI.

Rise, thou glorious sun! the drowsy night is gone, and daylight waits thy powerful aid to mingle with, and then disperse, the summer mist, which hangs, like veil of gauze, upon the earth, covering the trees and flowers with glittering drops, which, as thy light upon them falls, show colours of the brightest hue,— now one, now another, with changeable rapidity. Now shed thy beams upon the sloping bank, and draw rich fragrance from the rose and jessamine, twined, with clinging growing love, upon the wall; and let the breeze their perfume bear through the

open lattice window, and awaken sleeping Amy there, with their scented burden, and thy own bright rays, thou cheering sun! Wake, Amy, wake; thou little knowest what heart-felt joy this sun, ere he has set, will shine upon,—whose loving eyes will gaze on thee,—whose best-loved voice thou'lt listen to. I almost think the sun must know; there seems such joy with every beam. And the birds, how merrily they sing, as they fly from bough to bough. "Wake, Amy, wake," they seem to sing; "come forth; the air is soft and clear. The flowers look so gay and bright, they only wait to fill thy hand. And we have nests, such pretty nests, with tiny eggs therein; and you may find them, if you can; we do not fear thee, little girl. We know that thou

art good and kind, and will not rob us of our young. So wake, Amy, wake, and breathe the sweet fresh air with us."

The manor wood is in its pride; the trees entwined with foliage of the darkest green. The lake's clear waters swell with the passing breeze, and gently sway the lilies on its surface to and fro. Children's voices mingle in the air; peals of merry laughter, and now and then a song, which, though begun alone, becomes a chorus ere the end, as one by one, the children catch the air, and sing as gaily as the birds.

It is the twenty-ninth of May, and Amy and her friends are making a beautiful garland of flowers and oak leaves. The climbers are hunting for

oak-apples, and throwing them on the turf beneath as they gather them. Some of the children are very far from having clear ideas about king Charles and the oak, not having begun history yet in any form, and not having been in the world many twenty-ninths of May to make garlands on; and those they had made, were constructed, I fear, thoughtlessly,—without any regard for historical facts. So Amy tells them all she has read about it;—how a horrid, wicked man, called Cromwell, for whom Amy has a truly loyal dislike, caused Charles the First to be beheaded, and his son, Charles the Second, to hide in woods and all kinds of places, for fear of being beheaded too, and sent armies in search of him. And one day, when the poor king was nearly

dead with fatigue and hunger, he heard Cromwell's men at a short distance, and as he felt he had not strength to run from them, he climbed up into a large oak tree beside the road, and creeping among the thickest of the branches, was hid so successfully by the arms of his brother monarch, — for you know the oak is the king of the forest, — that Cromwell's soldiers passed close by, and never saw him. "And so," continued Amy, "king Charles escaped. And some years after, when Cromwell died, he came to the throne; but according to my History of England, he did not make so good a king as might be wished, for which I am very sorry, as I always liked Charles since I heard the story of the oak, and made my first garland. But I dare say," and her

face brightened with a sudden thought, "my History of England may not be quite correct. Charles lived so many years ago; and, as Grandpapa says, 'ill news flies fast,' perhaps wicked stories are better recollected than good ones."

The garland is in shape like a mimic oak tree, not unlike the one beneath whose shade the children play; the frame-work is composed of slight pieces of wood nailed together, having wire for the slenderest branches; the trunk and roots rest on a flat board, to be covered with moss when the garland is finished, and the whole is supported by a tall pole, thickly covered with ivy. The youngest children gather baskets-full of flowers, and throw them in a heap at Amy's feet, as she, with two of the elder girls, arrange

them tastefully with oak leaves, and fasten them to their tree. The gentle blue-bell bends with meek and graceful air before the stately yellow iris, as, with many a wild rose-bud, they are mingled with the oak's dark leaves. And the blue-bell bends still lower yet, when a fair white lily from the lake, with pale forget-me-not, are placed beneath it on the tree; for its blossoms rest upon the lily's snowy leaves, while the lily's golden eye seems filled with love for the drooping sweet blue-bell. Clusters of fragrant honeysuckle, with many a bunch of sweet wild thyme are there; while the fox-glove, with its tapering stalk and many nodding flowers, crown the whole, and form the topmost branch of the garland-tree. The wild anemone and sorrel's

small pale flowers look so fair and delicate beside the rest, that the little girls mix them with the dark green violet leaves (the flowers alas! are gone), and place them in their bosoms. When the garland is finished, the pole on which it stands is placed by the boys, deep in the bank at the head of the lake, throwing the shadow of its flowers on the water.

On the opposite side of the lake there is great excitement; for the boys are crowding round half-a-dozen neatly-rigged little vessels, and talking very loudly of their different parts, in what I suppose they consider regular sea-faring terms; though whether they were genuine, or rightly applied, is more than I can assert. But they were certainly sufficiently wonderful to make the little girls and the youngest

boy look decidedly awe-struck. These ships are about to be launched, after which a regatta of a very brilliant nature is expected to take place. A dock for the ships is neatly cut in the bank, sloping gradually towards the water's edge. Amy and the little girls are to name each vessel before it is launched, and sit side by side on the turf, holding their dolls in their laps, who express intense smiling satisfaction at every person and every thing. The first ship is placed in the dock, having a slight string passed round it, and fastened to a stick. It is painted white, with a narrow green stripe. Amy calls it the 'Lily;' and, placing one on the deck of the pretty vessel, cuts the string that holds it, and away it glides gracefully into the water, bearing its fair

namesake to the companion lilies on the lake. They call the next the 'Blue-bell,' and another the 'Rose,' and so on to the last, which is called 'King Charles,' and bears a branch of oak upon its deck. The regatta goes off beautifully. The 'Lily' is decidedly a first-rate sailer; and though 'King Charles' evinces, at first, rather a strong determination to go under water; after being caught up very quickly by its tallest mast, turned upside down to let the water out, and undergone some mysterious operation with a pocket knife in its interior, it went very well, or in the expressive words of its owner, "like six o'clock."

The youngest boy is much excited with the proceedings, and has been nearly in the water head foremost many times,

owing to his great anxiety to see all and every thing; and he would have been there, without doubt, if he had not been fortunately in petticoats, by which means, Amy, keeping a firm hold on that part of his dress, saved him from a plunge in a colder and larger bath than ever his nurse subjected him to.

The glorious sun who rose in the morning and made the children's shadows so short at noon, that the shadow of the youngest child did not look like a child at all, bearing stricter resemblance to a ball, is beginning to sink, lengthening every shadow as he goes; but he has a good hour yet to shine, and Amy and her friends are happy at their play in the garden, on the bank, in the summer-

house, behind the shrubs, seeking, with merry laugh, their hiding companions.

CHAPTER XII.

How the sea sparkles where the sun's red golden light falls on its waves. How joyously they bound along, rising and falling, rising and falling, dancing to their own wild harmony. Waves, beautiful bounding waves, there is 'ONE' coming nearer and nearer every moment, whose heart—when a turn in the road, opened to him thy blue and sparkling waters—beat quick with love and happiness; for though he has for months been on the waves of seas and endless oceans, he calls thee "his best-loved, his own home waves." Waves, do you see him now? The coach with

four steaming horses, who have been galloping up hill and down for the last hour, much to the horror of some of the passengers, stops,—some one climbs nimbly from the roof,—some one's luggage is taken down and placed by the door of a cottage by the road side, as the owner says he will walk up the lane and send for it; and off goes the coach again, the guard playing a popular tune, which, owing to the ruts and stones, is rather dotted and uncertain in its time.

Waves, do you know him? He stands beside you now, taller and thinner, since he stood there last. The waves rise higher as he turns away and walks quickly up the lane, and rolling swiftly to the shore, seem to whisper as they go, "we know him; yes, we know him. The little

child who plays with us, has a loved and loving brother. Yes, we know him, and have kissed his feet."

The young ones, how they play and laugh. How full of glee their voices sound. Grandmama lays down her work and listens. It makes her a child herself, she says, to hear them.

The setting sun shines brilliantly upon the garden. A large white cat purrs demurely on one of the flower-beds, his eyes winking and blinking in the sunshine, his paws opening and shutting, with a slow, sleepy movement. Oh! little robin, do not come so near. Why did thy mother let thee leave her nest; thou art not old enough to fly,—hopping, fluttering on the ground. Oh! do not come so near! And

now, I fear, it is too late. He sees thee, little bird,—he crouches down upon the ground, moving his tail to and fro,—and now he springs—on thee?—no, happy little bird; Edmund sees thy cruel enemy preparing for thy death, and running across the beds, without any regard for the flowers,—for his heart is with the young bird,—he catches up the cat in his arms, just as he is about to spring, runs with him to the kitchen, shuts him in, and comes back to see what has become of the robin. He soon discovers him by his chirping. He looks so young, that Edmund thinks he must have fallen out of the nest; he catches him after some difficulty, and holding him gently in his hands, runs to call Amy to look for the nest with him. But what is his sorrow on coming to the flower

bed beside the stream and rustic bridge—which had been Ernest's garden ere he went away, and was still called so by Amy, and treasured for his sake—to see the tall white lily in the centre, which Amy had so loved and watched the opening of, lie broken on the earth. In his haste to save the bird, he must have stept upon the lily, for the marks of his feet were on the earth. Edmund hears his cousin and her companions coming,—he cannot move,—he fears Amy will be so angry,—he feels so very, very sorry, that his eyes fill with tears, and he can scarcely see the fallen flower, and bends his head upon the robin in his hands.

"Edmund, darling," said Amy, "what is the matter? Have you fallen down? are you hurt?" Edmund does not speak,

but points to the broken flower. Amy looks upon her fallen favourite—the colour rushes into her face—her eyes are bent on the ground—she does not speak—she is trying hard to conquer temper,—now two tears steal slowly down her face—she wipes them away—and, kneeling down by Edmund's side, throws her arms around him, and, kissing him fondly, says, "she is sorry for her broken flower; but she is not angry with him. She is not passionate now, and hopes she never will be more."

But whose arms are around thee now, Amy? Not Edmund's, for he holds his robin still. But who lays thy head upon his shoulder, and, kissing thee fondly, calls thee his "darling sister,—his own loved and patient Amy?"

"Yes! Ernest is come!—Ernest is come home!" the children cry; and, crowding round him for a moment, run off to the house with the good tidings.

Grandpapa, Grandmama, and Rachael, are soon in the garden, though they can hardly believe the news to be true; but Ernest's hearty kiss soon confirms it. Helen is a little shy of her tall brother at first; but she is quite happy now, and holding his hand, looks timidly in his face as he talks. And then Ernest tells them that his ship only arrived at Portsmouth yesterday, and he did not write, as he thought he should reach them as soon as a letter. And that for a whole month he should be at home, as the ship would not sail for some weeks. And how glad he was when the coach stopped, to see his

own dear waves again. And how, walking up the lane alone, and coming quietly in at the gate, he had seen Edmund point to the broken lily, and what joy it had given him to see Amy conquer her angry feelings.

Now the children play again, and the young sailor joins, with as much glee as any of them, and is the first to find the robin's nest; and his long arm restores the little bird to its family, and lifts the children up to gaze on the poor little wanderer nestling in between his brothers and sisters. Grandmama and Rachael go in to prepare such a supper, as Ernest, at least, has not seen for many months.

Amy's little friends gather the blossoms from the fallen lily, and fastening them

with ivy leaves together, form a fair and fragrant wreath, and placing it on Amy's brow, say, "The flowers look far lovelier there, than on the lily's stem."

PLYMOUTH:
Printed by ROGER LIDSTONE,
George Street.