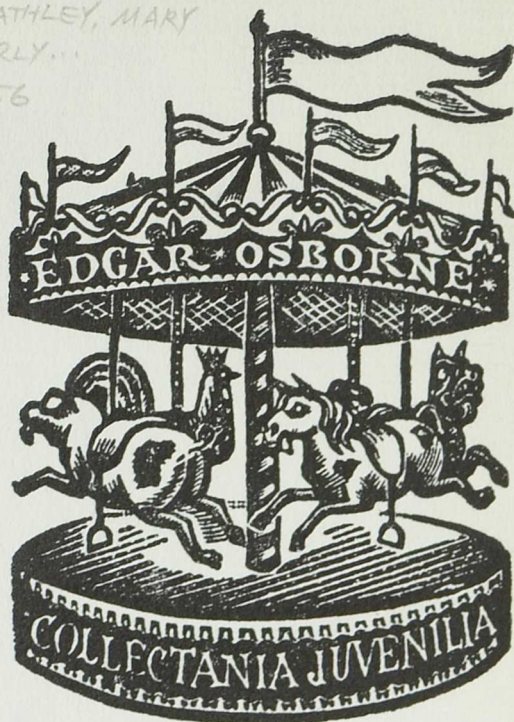


The book cover features a highly ornate, symmetrical border in a dark green or brownish-gold color. The border is composed of intricate, swirling floral and foliate motifs, creating a dense, lace-like frame around the central text area. The background of the cover is a lighter, mottled green or olive color, showing signs of age and wear.

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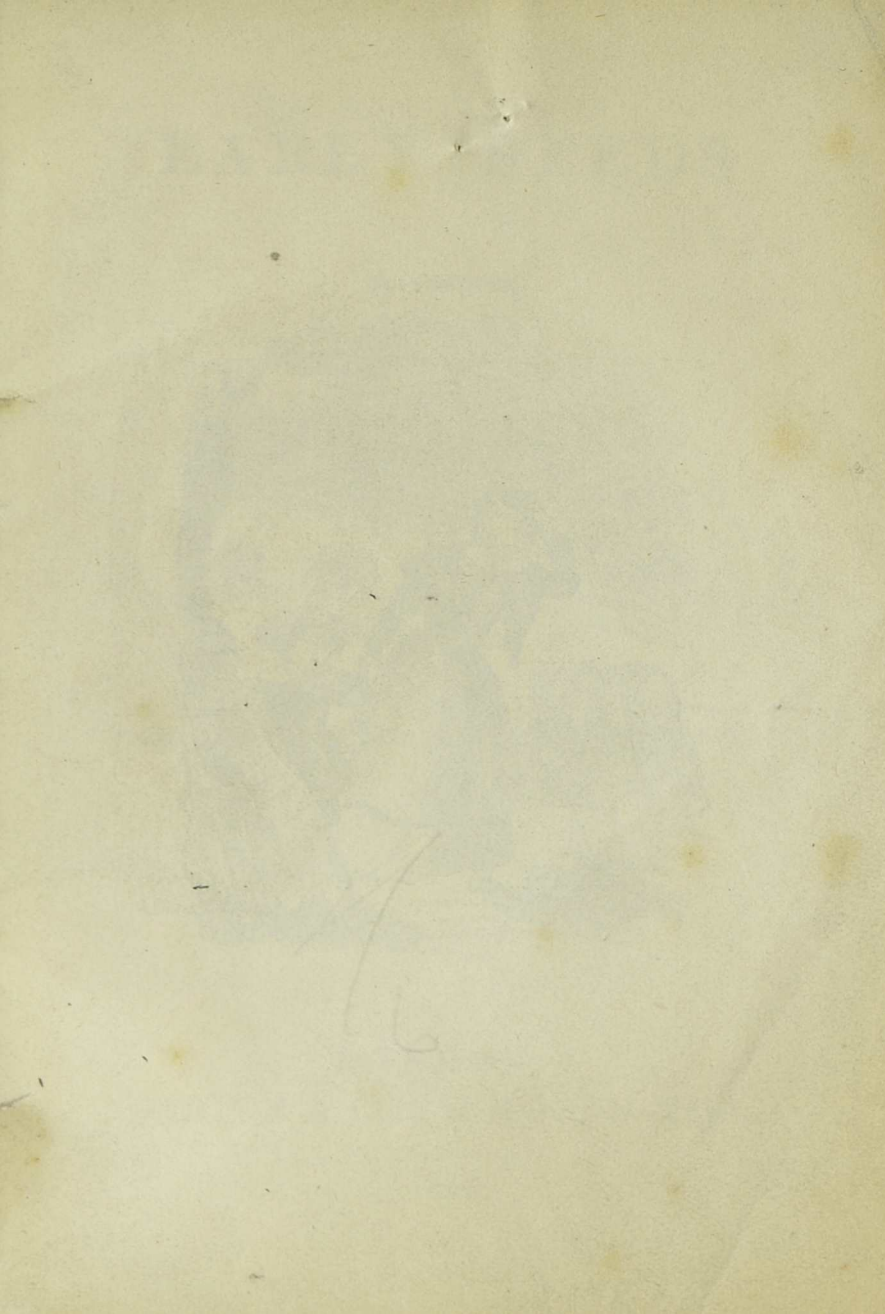
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EARLY SEEDS

TO PRODUCE

Spring Flowers.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"CHICK-SEED, WITHOUT CHICK-WEED," ETC.

LONDON:
DARTON & CO., HOLBORN HILL,

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THE PEN AND INK.

MAY I use the pen? Do let me use the pen. No, you may not use the pen. And you may not dip it in the ink. See, it is all wet. Do not do so. You can sit by me, and see me use it.

Why do you use the pen if I

may not? You are not so big as I am. I am big, I may use a pen. One day you can do as I do. But not yet.

The ink is red. Why do you use red ink? It is not all red. The old pen has not red ink in it. Now I can not see to use my pen. The sun is set. Put the pen up in the box. And put the lid on the ink. Now let us go. May the dog go too?

Yes, he may go. Put on the new hat, for we can go and see Joe.

THE BOY AND THE ANT.

A BOY saw an ant one day. It ran to get out of his way. But the boy was not a bad boy. He put a bit of his bun by the ant. And the ant saw the bit of bun. And the ant did not run on. But it ate the bit of bun. And the boy saw it eat, and he was gay.

The ant can do no ill to any one.

Run to me, my own boy.

The bad dog has bit the old cat.

The bee can fly to sip dew out of the bud.

Let us go out to see the sun set.
Do not let Tom get at the hot
tea.

The cow is not to eat the wet
hay.

May I not go to bed now?

See, the sky is all red.

Let us go to the sty and see the
pig eat.

Why do you go out in the wet?

Tom has a cup, and Joe has a
mug.

Let me see the cup and the
mug.

WHAT IS TEA?

Boy. WHAT is tea, mamma?
Does it grow?

M. Yes, my dear. It is the leaf of a tree. Men pick it, and dry it on tins over a fire. Then it is fit for use.

Boy. It does not grow here, does it, mamma? I have not seen any leaf like it.

M. No, it does not grow here. But in a land very far off over the sea, in Asia. But you may have seen a leaf like it. I dare say you do not know what the tea leaf is

like. It is so dry when you see it, that you can not know its real shape. And it is not till it is wet that it will open. And even then we do not often find a whole leaf. The next time I find one when I make the tea, I will call you and show it to you.

Boy. Thank you, mamma, I shall like very much to see what it is like. What is the name of the land that tea comes from, mamma?

M. China, my dear. And the people in China do not put any milk and sugar in their tea as we do.

THE DARK.

Boy. O, NURSE, pray do not take away the light. It is all so dark, I do not like it at all. Pray, nurse, come back to me with the light.

N. My dear boy, what is it you fear? The dark will not hurt you. You are as safe in the dark as in the light. Do not you know you are?

Boy. O yes, I know God is as much with me now, as if it was day. But I can not help it, nurse; I saw a white thing there, and I do not know what it is.

N. I will get the light, and then

we shall see; but I am sure we shall find it is not anything that will hurt you. I did not think you were so silly. There, now, what do you think it is?

Boy. I do not know, nurse; what is it?

N. It is your white kite which you hung up on that nail just now, my dear silly boy.

Boy. Well, it was silly, nurse; but I could not think what it was. But now I know, I am not afraid. You can take away the light now, nurse; good by.

N. Good night, dear, and now shut your eyes and go to sleep.

THE PLUMS.

“THE plums are ripe, aunt; may we go and pick them?” said Mary Lane one hot day. “We will not eat any of them, aunt.”

“If you will give me your word, Mary, not to eat any of those you pick, you may go,” said her aunt. “But if you can not give me your word, then do not go. For the plums are very nice, and I am sure when you pick them, you will want to eat them very much. But they are not good for you, and if you eat them they will make you

ill. But I mean to make them into jam, and you may have as much jam as you like. So do not eat the raw plums."

"No, dear aunt, we will not," said Mary; "John will help us, and you know, aunt, he is too big to care for plums."

"I do not know that," said her aunt, "but I know that John will not take any, for I have told him I do not like him to eat raw plums. And John will not do what I do not like him to do, I am sure. So you may go, my dear. And tell Jane she must not eat any, but that she may have

some jam when I have made it." So Mary, and Jane, and John, all went to the old plum-tree. And John got up the tree, and then he could pick the plums, and Mary and Jane put them in the basket.

And they did not any of them eat one plum. They were good, and did as they had been told to do. If they had eaten some plums, their aunt would not have seen them. For she was in the house, and they were in the field a long way off. But they knew that God can see us in the house or in the field, and that he knows

all we do. And they would not dare to let Him see them sin.

They got so many plums, their aunt could not think how it was the old tree had borne so many. And she was quite glad, and said they had been very good. And when she had made the plum jam, she gave them as much as they could eat, and it was very nice.

And Mary and Jane planted some of the plum-stones in their little gardens, for they thought it would be a good plan, as the plum-tree was getting so old, to have a few nice young trees growing up in its stead.



THE TWO PIGS.

THERE were once two pigs who lived in the same sty. They were black pigs, and they were so much alike, that you would not have been able to tell one from the other, if it had not been that they were so unlike in their ways. For one was a clean pig, and the other a dirty pig. The clean pig kept his side of the sty so clean, that it was quite a treat to see it. And when the man took nice fresh straw to the sty at night, the clean

pig got his share of it, and laid it down for a bed. So he was dry and clean, and slept so well. And his coat shone like jet.

But the dirty pig used to lie down on all the dirty wet straw that had been in the sty for a week. And he never made up such a clean dry bed as the other one did. So he was all over mud and dirt, and did not look like a black pig, but as if he was grey. Then one day the man came to the sty and said, "Now I do not want two pigs any more. I am going to kill one to make bacon. I will not take the clean pig, for I

quite like to look at his nice tidy ways; but, as to that dirty pig, I shall be quite glad to get rid of him, for his ways are so nasty and he looks so ugly, that I think we shall get on much better when he is gone." So the dirty pig was sent away that very night. But the clean pig lived there for a long time, and all who saw him said they never had seen such a neat clean sty.

Did you ever see any little boy or girl at all like the dirty pig in their ways? I am afraid I have heard some say, "I do not like to be washed."

THE LAZY MAN, WHO HAD BEEN A LAZY BOY.

SEE, what a lazy man! He has gone to sleep. And while he is asleep a poor dog comes up to steal some of the meat.

If the man should chance to wake up I am afraid the poor dog will be sorry for it. The man's name is David Bone, and he is a very, very lazy man. And do you know how he came to be so lazy? I will tell you. When he was a little tiny boy, he used to lie in bed very late in the morning



His mother told him to get up at seven. But no. David liked better to lie in bed. So he used to lie half asleep till nine o'clock, and when he got up he was cross and stupid, and often said, "Will it not soon be time to go to bed again?" And if he was sent out on an errand, he often sat down by the side of a hedge and fell fast asleep. And so as he grew up he got worse and worse. The older he was the more sleep he wanted. And now he is a man he can scarce keep awake at all. He sleeps in church, and he sleeps when he sits in his shop, and they say that he

often goes to sleep with his knife and fork in his hands at dinner. How sad to think of losing so much time! You know we shall one day have to give an account of all our time, and the way in which we have spent it. This ought to make us very careful not to waste any. And we can scarce waste it in a worse way than by sleeping over our duty as David Bone does.

People only want a few hours' sleep out of the twenty-four, and those who take more than seven or eight are much less active than others who are content with this number.

THE BOY WHO DID NOT
LIKE TO GO TO BED.

Now I will tell you of a little boy whose fault was not like David Bone's. Robert Dale did not like to go to bed. He thought it was like a baby to go to bed early, so he used to beg every night to stay up a little later, till at last he sat up to supper always, and then he felt quite happy. But little boys and girls want more sleep than grown-up people do. They run about all day and get tired, and it is right that they should have

plenty of sleep. And it does children a great deal of harm to sit up late, and, above all things, it is bad for them to stay up and eat supper. I wonder very much that Robert's papa and mamma let him stay up, but he teased so much, that they were unwise enough to let him do as he wished. For a little while all went on very well, and Robert was very happy, and fancied he was like a man. But men are not often so silly as to do what is not good for them, and if a man was told he would be better if he went to bed early, I think he would do

it. But Robert sat up, and at last he began to look very pale and thin. He could not eat; and when he was in bed he used to lie awake and could not get to sleep. Then his papa was sad and sent for the doctor, and the doctor said Robert must have change of air. So he was sent to an old aunt in the country, and he was very much pleased to go, and thought he should be very happy. But the first night he was sadly vexed, when his aunt told him as the clock struck eight that he must go to bed. He began to beg to stay up as he did at home, but his aunt

was firm, and told him she did not like little boys to sit up late. Well, after a little while, Robert got so much better, that he could eat and run about as well as ever, and his colour came back, and he was out all day, and used to be quite glad when eight o'clock came that he might go to bed. Then when he was quite well he went home again, and he never asked to stay up to supper again, for, as he said to his papa, "I am sure it is not good for me. I was so well all the time I was at aunt's and went to bed at eight, and I do not want to be ill again."

THE STORM.

CHARLES and his mamma have been out to see a poor woman who lives by a wood. And the way to her cottage is across a great many corn fields. It has been a very hot day, but now the sky is all dark, and just as Charles and his mamma are about half way home, the rain begins to fall, and the lightning shines over the black clouds. Charles is afraid, for he is a very little boy, and he does not like to be out in the storm. Let us hear what he says to his mamma as he runs by her side.

Charles. O mamma, do let us stay under this nice large tree. It will keep the rain off. You do not know how wet I am. See, my jacket is quite wet through. Do let us stand up here.

Mamma. No, my darling, it is not safe to stand under a tree when there is lightning. We must go on as fast as we can. We shall very soon get home.

Charles. O what a flash, mamma! and hark! do you hear the thunder? So very loud. What shall we do?

Mamma. All we can do, dear, is to walk as fast as we can. I can see

our house now, and we shall very soon be there. Do not be afraid, darling, God will take care of us, I trust. Do you know what I used to be told when I was a little girl, and was afraid of the thunder? My mamma told me that it was the voice of God. Then, if I had been naughty, I was very much afraid. But if Charles is a good boy, and tries to do all that he ought to do, he need not be so much afraid. For God loves those who love him, and they will love to hear his voice.

Charles. I will not be afraid, mamma, I hope we shall be taken

care of. I know God *can* do every thing. But yet I shall be glad to get home; there is no harm in that, is there, mamma?

Mamma. No, indeed, my boy. I long very much to see you safe in bed.

Charles. In bed, mamma? I have not had my tea.

Mamma. No, darling, but as soon as we get home I must put you into bed, or you will take cold from having got so wet. But I will come up and have my tea with you in your little room, and after tea I will talk to you about the storm, and try to tell you what it

is that makes the lightning. Will you like that?

Charles. O yes, mamma. What fun it will be to have tea in bed. And so nice for you to be up with me, mamma. Now we are home. How glad I am!

Mamma. Run up stairs and ask nurse to take off your wet things as quickly as she can, and rub you well with a warm towel, and put you to bed, and I will soon come up to you.

THE LITTLE DUCKS.

Ann. Do not hurt the little ducks, James. Poor little things!

James. No, I will not hurt them, *Ann.* But I want to see the old hen. I want to see how she will look when she sees the little ducks go into the water. She will be in a fright. She will think they will be drowned. Now they are going in. See how quick she turns her head round. And here comes the cock too, running as fast as his legs will carry him. Is it not fun to see? They think the ducks are their own children,



Ann. No, I do not think it is fun. It is very cruel. And papa was very angry when he found John had put ducks' eggs in the old hen's nest. For you know the hen has not got reason. She does not know that the ducks can swim because they have webbed feet. She does not know they are not her own children. She sat upon the eggs and hatched them, and of course she thinks that they will be drowned, as her own chickens would be if they went into the water. Papa says it is very wrong to hurt the na-

tural feelings of even a dumb creature.

James. Well, if papa says so, I will not laugh at her any more. But it does seem very odd to see her first feeding her chicks, and then running off to scold the naughty little ducks because they will run to the water. My dear Mrs. Hen, don't be uneasy. They are safe enough.

Ann. I will take away the dish of water, then they cannot get in it and tease the poor old thing.

James. Well, I think that is cruel, Ann, for the ducks like it.

Ann. They will do very well

without it for a day or two ; and papa said as soon as the new man came, they should be taken away from the old hen. It would be much better to hatch the eggs as they do in Egypt than to give them to the wrong mother.

James. How do they hatch eggs in Egypt, then ?

Ann. By *artificial* heat. In a sort of oven, where they are often turned by a man who stays there all day on purpose.

James. How hot the poor man must be ! Why do they do so ?

Ann. Because the Egyptian hens are very careless mothers.

THE GOOD BOY.

How calm and still it is in that room. The day is over. Night is coming on. And before the little boy and girl go to bed, papa gets the great Bible and reads a chapter. Robert sits by his side, and is very good. He does not kick his feet about under the table, or make faces at his sister to make her laugh. Nor does he play with pussy, as I have seen some little boys do even when the Bible was being read. Robert is better taught than such sad boys as these. He sits *still*, and he not



only keeps his eyes and his hands still, but he listens with his whole heart to what his papa reads. And Kitty stands still too, and tries to do as she sees her brother do. He is older than she is, and of course she looks to him and so tries to copy him. Robert knows this, and it makes him all the more careful to do what is right. He knows that if he is naughty, that if he plays with the cat, or looks out of the window, or even does not *attend* while his papa is reading, that little Kitty will see it, and that very likely she will then do just the same. Robert knows

that if she did wrong because he did it, the fault would be more his than hers. So he does what he ought to do, and then he is happy to see her do the same, and feels that it is he who helps her in it. Think of this, elder brothers and sisters, and try, my dear children, to bear in mind, that you set the *example* to your little brothers and sisters. That, as you do, so will they. If they are naughty because you have been so, yours will be the fault. But how happy it will make you to see them trying to do well, because they have seen you good.

THE RASH PROMISE.

Mary. O Cook, puss has stolen the meat. I saw her jump off the table. I did not know she was doing wrong, but now I see she has got a great piece of meat in her mouth.

Cook. Well, miss, never mind. It is her own bit of meat, which she was to have for dinner to-day and to-morrow, and now she has got it all to-day, she must go without any to-morrow.

Mary. O Cook, but she will be so hungry. Can you not tell her

not to do so again, and not punish her in that way ?

Cook. She will not know what I mean if I talk to her. The only way to make a cat mind if she is naughty is to beat her, or else to keep her without food. A little girl may be spoken to, and can understand, but a cat has no reason. But I am busy, miss, I cannot stay to talk to you now. So Mary went up to her mamma and told her what puss had done, and how cruel Cook was going to be, for that she meant to keep puss without any dinner to-morrow. And her mamma said, “ Well, if

you will spare her some of your dinner to-morrow, she need not go quite without." And Mary said, "O yes, that I will, she shall have all my dinner."

But when the next day came, Mary was hungry as well as puss, and she did not think any longer of giving up all her dinner. Indeed I do think she would have forgotten all about it, but puss seemed to have heard what she said, and did not forget. And when Mary heard mew mew by her chair, then she thought of what she had said the day before, and she felt very sorry, for she

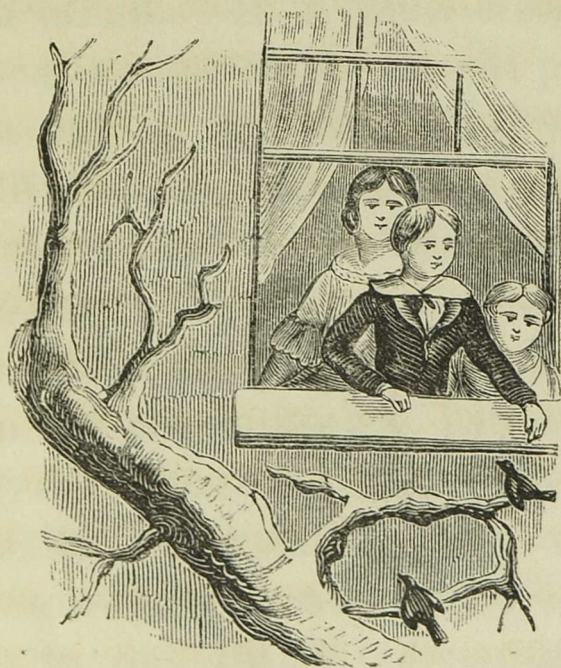
was very hungry. But puss went on mew mew, and so Mary at last gave her half. When we make a promise, it is our duty to keep it; and so we had better be very careful what we say.

I dare say, Mary did not make a rash promise again for a long time; for though, when she was not hungry, it was easy enough to promise away her dinner, yet when the time came for keeping her word, she found it very hard indeed. Think of the future, when you speak; it will save you many a painful hour.

THE LITTLE BIRDS.

It is cold winter. The leaves are all gone. They have fallen on the ground, and will never look green again. But never mind ; if we live till the spring, we shall see pretty fresh buds, and bright new leaves will burst forth. But it will be a long while before that happens, and, in the meanwhile, what will the poor little birds do ? The ground is all over snow. They cannot find any food. They hop here and there, and chirp, but it is all snow, snow, and at last they are so hungry that

they get quite bold, and fly close to the windows to ask for food. And they see tables by bright fires, and there is nice bread on the tables, and happy little children sit round them, and eat their breakfasts. Will not the little children think of the poor little hungry birds, and spare them some crumbs? Yes, see here are some good little children who open the window and give bread to the two starving robins on the tree outside; and they do not mind the cold air, for they are so glad to be able to do good to the poor birds. See how tame the poor



things are! They take the food out of the little boy's hand. And he takes great care not to make them afraid. It is kind always to save crumbs of bread, and put them out on the window-sill for the little birds. In summer they are often glad of a little extra food, for then they have young ones to feed, but in winter they often can get nothing to eat, and many die of hunger. If, then, you feed them every day, they will soon grow tame and come quite close to you, that is, if you take great care not to try to catch them, and make them fear you.

THE NAUGHTY DOG AND
CAT.

A DOG and a cat once lived in the same house. They were first taken to it when they were very young, and then they used to play with each other very prettily, so that everybody liked to see them. But as they grew older they began to bite a little too hard, and puss would run away with the dog's bones, and then he would growl and show his teeth, and be very cross indeed; and day by day they loved each other less, and took at last no pains to make each

other happy. So then people used to say, "Now they lead a real cat and dog life." It is a sad thing to begin to quarrel. We do not know how far we shall go if we once say an unkind word or even give a cross look. People have begun in this way, and have gone on till they have hated one another with all their hearts, and at last one has even been so wicked as to kill the other. And now hear what happened to this naughty dog and cat. One day the dog had a very nice bone. It was the bone out of a shoulder of mutton, and there was a great deal of meat

left upon it. So he was very much pleased, and took it into his bed, where he gnawed and gnawed, and was quite happy. But puss, who heard the sound of his teeth, came to see what he had got, and peeped over the top of the basket, and when she saw the bone, she longed to taste it too. So instead of waiting till he had done with it, she put in her paw to try and get it out. Then the dog was in a sad passion, and he flew out of his basket and caught puss by the back and shook her well: and she made good use of her claws and teeth, and scratched and tore him

sadly as soon as she got loose. Then he bit her again, and so they went on till they were both fighting as hard as they could. They had quite forgot the happy times when they used to live so merrily together as a little pup and kit. Ill temper can so blot away good thoughts from our minds. Now, the dog was a great deal stronger than the cat, and at last he got hold of her by the neck, and held her so for two or three minutes to keep her from hurting him. He did not mean to kill her, at least he did not think of doing so, but when he let her go, at last, she

fell on the ground quite dead. Then his master was very angry with him, and said he would not keep such a cross dog any more in the house. So he was sent away to a very hard place where he had to help draw a truck all day, and where he got very few bones to pick, and had no time to pick them when he did. And if he had had reason, he would have repented very sorely for having lost his happy home through his own bad temper and passionate ways.

THE LITTLE BABY.

Mary. O! the dear little baby is come out of doors! See how glad it is to come out. Do let me hold it, Nurse.

Nurse. I am afraid you will let it fall, dear. It begins to jump about now, and it may spring out of your arms. You would be so sorry if it was to fall on the ground, would you not, dear?

Mary. Yes, indeed I should. When may I hold it?

Nurse. You shall sit down and have it in your lap. It will soon

learn to know and love you. I think it holds out its arms to you now.

Mary. O, the dear little thing! when will it walk and talk? I long so to see it run about, and to hear it say, "Mary."

Nurse. Ah, it will not do that for a long time yet. You know babies are months before they can even smile, and months more before they can speak. It cannot eat yet; it has not one tooth.

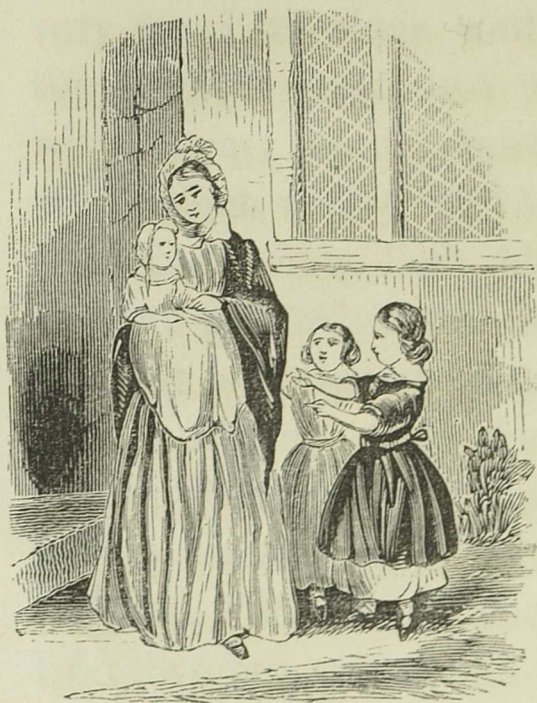
Mary. Well, I cannot think how it is, Nurse; when puss had kittens, they could walk in two or three days, and in two weeks they

ran about as fast as I can. And so could the little chicks that were hatched last week ; but this baby lies still in a cradle or your lap almost all day, and it is nearly six months old, is it not ?

Nurse. Oh, no, it is not six months old : it is not quite three ; but you see, my dear, it is not the same with children and little kittens or chickens. If chickens and kittens could not walk, what would their mothers do ? They could not carry them all about at once ; and then they have shorter lives. They grow up much faster than a child. A cat is quite grown

up when it is one year old ; and at one year old a child is still in arms, you know. Children ought to be very good to their mothers, for they have a great deal of trouble with them ; much more than a cat or a hen with their young ones. You know how little sleep your mamma gets with this baby, and how she is obliged to stay at home almost all day, that she may be able to feed it. She did all that for you once.

Mary. Yes, I know she did, and I do love her very much for it. I hope the baby will love her too, when it is big enough.



Nurse. You must be a very good girl yourself, my dear, and always show your love by minding what your mamma says to you. Then, when the baby is old enough to know right from wrong, you will be able to set it a good example. This will be far better than *telling* it how to behave.

Mary. Indeed I will try, Nurse.

THE SILLY LITTLE MAN.

THERE was once a little man who wanted to be very tall. But it was of no use for him to wish, for he could not make himself any bigger, you know, and he was as big as he was meant to be ; so it would have been wise of him if he had been content. But no, he was always thinking, “ Oh, if I was but as big as Jack Hodge.” Now, Jack Hodge was a great tall fellow of six feet high, and the little man only just came up to his elbow. But he could never be easy, and

he thought at last he would make himself a pair of stilts, and walk with them, instead of on his legs. And so he did; and then, to be sure, his head was as high as Jack Hodge's, but his legs did not touch the ground, and everybody laughed at him. And one day, when he was walking over a wet lane, his stilts slipped, and down he came on his face all in the mud; and he could not get up for a long time, not till some one came by that way and untied his stilts for him. People do not know how silly they often look when they try to make themselves like other

people. God has not made us all alike, and it is our duty to be content with what he has done for us. Let us try to make ourselves as much better than we are as we can, but not one bit bigger. For little men on stilts do not look half so well as they would walking on their own little legs.

Some little boys and girls too are silly enough to be always trying to be men and women. Ah, my dear children, if you would but believe it, you are much happier now than you will be when you have all the cares and sorrows of life to bear.



THE KIND DOCTOR.

MR. JONES was a very kind man. He was a doctor, and had a horse, and he used to ride about to see the sick people, even if they lived ever so far off, and the weather was ever so bad. One night the moon shone, but it was very cold, and at last the snow began to fall. But Mr. Jones was so kind as to go out all in the snow and cold to see a poor woman who was very ill. She was poor, and he knew she could not afford to pay him any money for his

visits, or for the physic he sent her; but he went to see her just the same as if she had been a rich lady and had given him a guinea for every call. When he got about half way to the cottage, he saw something lying under a tree, and stopped his horse to see what it was; and he saw it was a girl who was bending over a little boy on the ground, and trying to keep him warm. Mr. Jones called out to the children to know what was the matter, and then the girl lifted up her head and looked very glad to see some one near her; and she told Mr. Jones

that she and her little brother had set off to find their way to his house to ask him for some physic for their mother, who was very ill, and that her brother had at last fallen down on the ground, and she did not know what was the matter with him. Then Mr. Jones saw they were the children of the very poor woman he was going to see, and he got off his horse and went up to the poor child to see what was the matter with him; and he saw that the poor little boy had fainted from the cold night air, and if the child had been alone, he might have lain there on the

cold ground till he died. But his poor sister, though she was not strong enough to carry him home, had kept him a little warm by folding her arms round him. And Mr. Jones soon poured something into his mouth that quite gave him new strength, and he opened his eyes and sat up. Then Mr. Jones put him on his own horse, and took him and his sister safely to their poor mother's cottage, and they found her a great deal better.

THE END.

AND now, little children, the book is at an end. I hope you have tried to read well with all your hearts; if so, I am sure you can now read a great deal better than you could when you first began it. Are you not very glad that you have learned to read? You have a great deal to thank your father and mother for in having you taught. You do not quite know how much trouble it is to teach a little child to read. I dare say you thought it was very hard work to learn. But I can

tell you that it was not half so hard to you to learn as it was to your parents to teach you; and while they were trying to make it all as easy as they could to you, very likely you were doing all you could to give them trouble. Think of this now. Now you know how pleasant it is to be able to read pretty stories, and now you see that you were taught to read for your own pleasure. And now make good use of your time, and read all the books that are likely to make you wise and good.—Farewell.

LLYFRGELL GENEDLAETHOL CYMRU

OLD TIME CHILDREN'S BOOKS No. 975

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