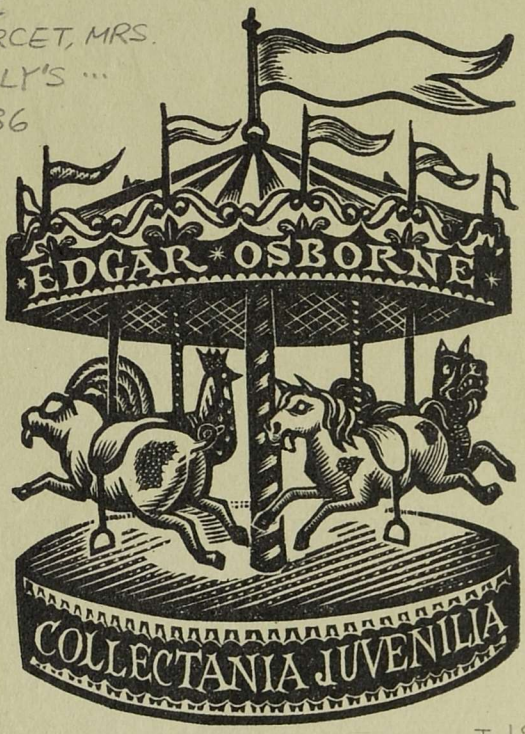

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WILLY'S HOLIDAYS.

LONDON:
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New-Street-Square.

WILLY'S HOLIDAYS;

OR,

CONVERSATIONS

ON

DIFFERENT KINDS OF GOVERNMENTS.

INTENDED

For Young Children.

BY JANE MARCET.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMAN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1836.

PREFACE.

NOTHING appears to me to render a subject so intelligible to a child, as to bring it home to himself. It was under this impression that I have endeavoured to draw familiar parallels between daily occurrences in the limited circle of a school, and those which go on in the more enlarged sphere of a country. In this way I have collected together a few notions respecting governments, which, being treated in the simple language of child-

hood, will, I trust, prove clear and not uninteresting to my little readers. Correct ideas on such a subject cannot, as it appears to me, be too early inculcated, if it were only to prevent the false impressions which children inevitably acquire in their intercourse with ignorant and prejudiced people.

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WILLY'S HOLIDAYS.

HOW WILLY GETS INTO DEBT.

WILLY was sent to school at seven years old. The first time he came home, his Mother observed that he was more grave than usual; and yet he declared that he liked school very well, was fond of his playmates, and stood high in his class. "Then what is the matter with you, my dear boy?" said his Mother, kindly. "Although you are happy at school, I am sure you

cannot be sorry at coming home to see us." The child, touched by his Mother's fondness, burst into tears, and said, "Oh, no, Mamma; but I have done something I don't like, and I am afraid it is very wrong."

"Let me hear what it is, and I will tell you," said his Mother; "and even if it is wrong, I think I can forgive you, as I see you are sorry for it."

This encouragement cheered up Willy, and he began to explain the case. "The first day I was at school, Mamma, the apple-woman came, and I spent all my sixpence in apples; and you know it was to last me a week."

"Then I fear, Willy, that you got the natural punishment of your greediness, by making yourself sick."

"Oh, no, Mamma: I ate only one or two, and gave all the others away."

"Well, that is much better than being greedy," replied his Mother, patting his cheek.

"Oh! but, Mamma, I have not told you all yet," said Willy, colouring. "The next day the tartman came with a large basket of such nice tarts! You cannot think how good they looked, and the boys almost all of them bought one; but I had not a single penny left."

"I suppose, then," replied his

Mother, " that one of the boys, to whom you had given an apple, gave you a tart ?"

" Oh, no, Mamma; but they bought only one each ; for they said somebody else would come the next day, and they would not spend all they had at once."

" As you did, my foolish little Willy ; but you are not come to the wrong thing yet. I hope you did not take a tart from any of the other boys."

" Oh, no, Mamma; not so bad as that. I only borrowed a penny of one of the boys, and said I would pay him out of my next week's allowance."

" It would have been better to have been less prodigal of

your apples, and not to have borrowed. However, this is a fault easily repaired by paying the debt."

"Ah! but, Mamma, that is not all. The next day came the toyman, with such a number of pretty toys! — oh, dear, how beautiful they did look! — and many of the boys had saved up as much as sixpence or a shilling, on purpose for the toyman, for he comes very seldom; and one boy bought a drum, and another a fife, and then they said, 'Let us make a regiment of soldiers,' so they each bought something fit for a soldier, and there was a gun left for me, but I had no money to pay for it. I

was so vexed I thought I should have cried. I longed so much for the gun to march along with the rest. So, at last, the toyman said he would let me pay him the next time he came, if I would pay him a penny more than the price of the gun. So I had the gun, and was so glad and so happy, marching about with my comrades. But was it fair, Mamma, for the man to make me pay a penny over for giving me credit?"

"Quite fair," replied his Mother. "The toyman wants money to carry on his trade of buying and selling toys. He sells them for more than he gives for them, and it is thus he gains

his livelihood. Now, the next time he buys toys, he must buy one toy less, because you did not pay him for the toy you bought; so he will have one toy less to sell, and he will make less profit."

Willy did not seem thoroughly to comprehend this, and his Mother said she would tell him a story that would make him understand it. "But first," said she, "I want to know whether you have told me of all your debts?"

"Oh dear, no! Mamma," exclaimed Willy, sighing; "for two days afterwards there came a man from a fair with a roundabout, and every boy who could

pay a halfpenny had a ride: four at a time; one on a wooden horse, another in a gig, another in a boat, and another on a wild beast,—only made of wood. They whirled round merrily; oh, how I did long for a halfpenny! Tom Harley saw I did, and offered to lend me one. I could not refuse; so I leapt on the wooden horse, and off we went. When the ride was over the man called out, 'Won't you have another turn, young gentlemen?' They all said yes, and I did not know how to say no; so on and on we went, till we had each had three pennyworth of rides, and I had only Tom's halfpenny to pay for them all! I did not know what

to do, till some of the boys very good-naturedly lent me two-pence halfpenny.

"Then, Mamma, there is but one thing more. A poor brick-layer's boy fell from a ladder and broke his leg; the boys clubbed sixpence each to hire a cart to send him to the hospital. And I did not mind borrowing for that; for I would rather have gone without my allowance for a month, than not have given my sixpence like the others."

"You were right there," said his Mother. "Let us now consider how all these debts are to be paid. We must first take an account of what they are. His

Mother then took up a pen, and wrote as follows :—

	s.	*d.*
Borrowed for a tart - -	0	1
Ditto for a gun - - -	1	0
Ditto for a roundabout -	0	3
Ditto for a poor boy - -	0	6
Total -	1	10

"Oh, Mamma!" cried Willy, with a look of earnest entreaty, "you have so much money in your purse! If you would but give me two shillings I should pay it all, and have something over."

Willy's Mother would have been quite as glad to have given him the two shillings, as he would have been to receive them; but when she considered

that he had spent his money thoughtlessly and extravagantly, she was convinced that if he felt the inconvenience which naturally arises from such a fault, he would be more likely to correct it, than if she paid his debts at once.

Willy observing his Mother hesitate, said, in a supplicating tone, "Only this once, Mamma, and I promise you I will never borrow any more."

"I am sure you believe so, Willy; but if a strong temptation came in your way, you cannot be sure you would be able to withstand it. You know that you could not resist the toyman, nor the tartman; so do not ask

me, my dear boy, to do what I ought not. I know that you would wish to do what is right; and it is right for every one to pay his own debts."

"Well, Mamma, I can do that," said Willy; "only it will take such a long time! The boys said, that if I would lay by threepence a week out of my allowance, in two months there would be money enough to pay every body."

"That is a very good way," replied his Mother; "but do you think that you will be able to resist all temptation to spend it?"

"Oh, yes; I have got a little box to put it in, and Tom Har-

ley will keep it for me, so that I shall not be able to spend it: but then, only think what a long time two months is, and I hate so to be in debt. I cannot help thinking the boys must despise me."

"You will be much more likely to regain their good opinion by paying your debts out of your own pocket, than if I assisted you; but it is true that it will require patience to get through these two long months: it is much easier to make debts than to pay them."

THE ORANGE BOY;

A STORY.

THE next day Willy's Mother told him the following story: —

"A poor boy named Harry Wilson, one day that he was walking in London, saw a lady with two children, who was crossing the street, without observing a carriage, which was driving at full speed against them. The lady, who carried the youngest child in her arms, had just passed, when, alarmed at the sound of the carriage, she turned round and beheld her eldest son, who, in affright, had

fallen at the feet of the horses. They were so spirited, that the coachman had the greatest difficulty in reining them in; and the poor child must have been run over, if Harry had not, with great presence of mind, sprung forward, seized him, and carried him in safety to his mother's arms. She burst into tears of joy; and thanking Harry with the warmest expressions of gratitude, pulled out her purse and put a sovereign into his hand. Harry stared at the gold; and concluding she had made a mistake, told her it was not a shilling, but a sovereign, that she had given him. 'Keep it,' she said; 'you well deserve it for saving my

dear boy's life; but if you are as prudent as you are courageous, you will not spend it idly, but try to turn it to account.' Harry, overjoyed at the possession of such a treasure, returned home to relate all that had passed to his father; and, showing him the gold, asked what the lady could mean by desiring him to turn it to account.

"'Why,' said his father, 'she wishes you, instead of spending it, to make it increase.'

"'How can I do that?' replied the boy; 'I may lay it by and not spend it, but it will never increase; money will not grow.'

"'That is true,' returned his

father; 'but there are other means of increasing it. Suppose you were to buy a quantity of oranges with your sovereign, and carry them about the streets and sell them, you would be able to sell them for more than you paid for them. The sovereign is worth twenty shillings; now, if you sell the oranges for more, your money will be increased.'

"Harry liked the thoughts of selling oranges very much; so his father took him to an orange merchant, whose warehouse was full of boxes of oranges, and he inquired whether he could buy one of them for a sovereign. They gave him one of the smallest, and his father carried it home. He

then filled a basket with oranges, which he told Harry to carry about the streets and sell for a penny each. Harry went about crying, 'Fine oranges, a penny a piece; who 'll buy my oranges?' The first day he sold about fifty oranges, and at the end of the week he had sold all that the box contained, excepting a few which he had given to his brothers and sisters, and two or three which he had eaten himself. He now began to count over the money he had received for the oranges, which he had carefully laid up in a box. It was some trouble to count it, for he had taken almost the whole in halfpence; so he piled these

up in heaps of twenty-four, which made a shilling each, and to his surprise he found that he had got twenty-eight shillings. 'So, then, my sovereign is turned into twenty-eight shillings,' said he, exultingly; 'father was quite right in saying that it might increase, though it would not grow.' It then suddenly struck him, that it might not be fair to sell his oranges for more than they cost him, and he ran to ask his father about it. 'It is quite fair,' said his father; 'you have had the trouble of carrying them about the streets for a week, and it is right that you should be paid for your labour; if you had not been occupied in selling

oranges, you would have gone on errands, or I should have given you something or other to do, as I usually do.'

"'Yes; but, father,' replied Harry, 'when I go about such odd jobs, I do not gain more than two or three shillings a week, and now, you see, I have got eight shillings!'

"'That is because you had a sovereign to begin with. No person can set up in any trade unless he has some money to begin with.'

"'No, to be sure,' replied Harry; 'he must have money to buy the oranges, or whatever else he wants to sell. But I wonder, father, that people don't

all go to the orange merchant to buy oranges, he sells them so much cheaper than I and others do, who cry them about the streets; for you know he sold me as many oranges for twenty shillings, as I sold again for twenty-eight shillings.'

"'The orange merchant sells them *wholesale*, that is, a *whole* box at once, a great many at a time: if he opened a box and sold them retail, that is, only a few at a time as you did, he must have a man to stand at the counter on purpose to serve the retail customers; the wages of that man might, perhaps, be eight shillings a week; so he must sell his retail oranges at a

penny a piece, as you do, or he would lose by them.'

"'Then does he get nothing by the oranges he sells wholesale?' inquired Harry.

"'That is rather a foolish question, Harry. Men do not buy and sell for their amusement, as children sometimes do; they carry on their trade for the purpose of gaining a livelihood; and what they gain on the sale of their goods is called *profit:* thus, the orange merchant makes a profit by selling his oranges for more than he paid for them, as you gained eight shillings profit by the sale of your oranges.'

"'And where did he buy them so cheap?' inquired Harry.

" ' He bought them in distant countries where they grow, and are much more plentiful and cheaper than they are here.'

" Harry was quite satisfied with this explanation, and returned to the orange merchant to buy another box; ' but now,' said he, ' that I have twenty-eight shillings, I can buy a larger box.' Harry ventured to ask the merchant what country the oranges came from; he told him it was Portugal; and finding that he took an interest in his merchandise, took him down to the wharf where there was a vessel unlading oranges. Harry was astonished at the immense number of chests there were; the

merchant told him, that 'he wrote to a correspondent at Lisbon, a town in Portugal, to buy these oranges for him; and after that, he had to pay their freight, that is, the expense of their being brought over in the ship; and yet,' said he, 'I make a good profit by selling them here wholesale.' 'And so do I,' said Harry, 'by selling them retail; for I got eight shillings profit on the box I bought of you.' 'That is quite right, my lad,' said the merchant; 'and now that you have twenty-eight shillings to lay out, I will let you have a much larger box.' Harry was very glad that the orange merchant was not

displeased at his selling the oranges dearer than he did himself, for he could not help fancying that he might have thought it wrong. By the sale of this larger box of oranges, Harry made above thirty shillings; and he went on buying wholesale, and selling retail, till he made a good deal of money, and was able to purchase a new suit of clothes, which he wanted sadly. He bought also a little table, with which he made a stall; so that he had not the trouble of carrying the oranges about in a basket, and could spread out a great many more on the stall than he could carry in a basket; and they were rubbed so bright,

and looked so nice, and he was so clean and tidy in his new clothes, that people liked to buy of him, and so he sold a great number of oranges."

When Willy's mother had proceeded thus far, she said, "the story was so long, that she thought she must finish it another day."

"I am sorry for that," said Willy, "it is so amusing; and now I understand all about buying and selling, wholesale, and retail, and making profits; but there is nothing about borrowing money, and paying something over if a man gives you credit, as the toyman did?"

"We shall hear something about that to-morrow, Willy."

THE STORY CONCLUDED.

THE next day Mamma went on with her story as follows: —

"One day a lady with two children came to Harry's stall, and he recollected that she was the lady who had given him the sovereign; but she did not know him again, because he was so much better dressed. She bought six oranges; but when she was going to pay him, he would not take the money, saying, 'All these oranges I owe to you, Ma'am.' The lady then looked full in his face, and knew him, and expressed great pleasure at

seeing him again, and so much improved in his condition. 'You have, indeed, turned your money to good account,' said she. 'It was owing to your desiring me to do so, Ma'am,' replied Harry; 'and my father told me how to do it.' The lady accepted the oranges, because she knew it would give Harry pleasure, and it did so; for though he knew that the lady could afford to pay for them, it was the only means he had of showing her his gratitude. It happened that the lady lived in the neighbourhood, and whenever she wanted oranges, she sent to buy them at Harry's stall, so that she became one of his best customers.

"Harry had a friend named

Robert Dixon: he liked him, because he was a good-natured and a clever boy; but he was heedless and idle, and Harry's father had sometimes warned him that he was a dangerous companion, as he might lead him into bad habits; but this was before Harry sold oranges, for now he was too busy at his trade to be in any danger of growing idle.

"One day that Robert was lounging about the stall, and yawning for want of something to do, Harry thought to himself, I wish I could make poor Robert industrious, then he would be as happy as I am; and he asked him whether he would like to sell oranges? 'To be sure I

should,' replied Robert; 'but how can I? I am not so lucky as to get a sovereign.' 'And if I were to lend you one,' said Harry, 'would you mind and attend to your business?' 'Oh, that I would, I promise you,' replied Robert. So it was settled, and the two friends agreed to keep their stalls close together, that they might have a little chat when there were no customers. 'But then,' said Robert, 'I must not sell oranges, for I might take away some of your customers, and I am sure that would be an ill return for your kindness.'

"'True,' said Harry, 'we should hurt each other's trade; but then what can you sell?' They thought about it a good

while, and at last decided that Robert should sell hot coffee for labourers' breakfasts before they went to work. 'And chestnuts, too,' added Robert; 'for I can roast them by the same fire that boils the coffee; and people will not want coffee all day long.' But then it required more than a sovereign to set Robert up in this trade; for he must buy a stove, and charcoal to light it, a coffee-pot, teacups, and several other things besides the coffee and chestnuts he meant to sell. So Harry consulted his father, who approved of his son's intention of reclaiming Robert from his idle habits. 'But,' said he, 'it will cost two sovereigns to buy all that will be required to set

up a coffee-stall: you are now rich enough to be able to lend him that sum, but he must pay you interest for it.'

"Harry knew not what interest meant; and his father explained to him that it was paying for the use of the money. 'You have learnt now, Harry,' continued he, 'that money makes money. If you had not had the sovereign to begin with, you would not have made all the money you possess; nor can Robert, you see, set up in his trade without money to buy what he wants: as he has got no money, he must borrow it, if he can find a friend who will be kind enough to lend it; but it is only fair that he should pay

something for the use of it, for, while he is using it, you cannot use it and make a profit by it yourself.'

"'But how can Robert make profits by his trade if he pays me for the use of the money? It will run away with all his profits?'

"'Oh no,' replied his father. 'The proper interest for two sovereigns is two shillings a year, and you know he will be able to make much greater profits than that, if he minds his business.'

"'A great deal more, indeed, in a whole year,' cried Harry; 'for I make as much as two shillings in a day.'

"Robert soon after set up his stall close to Harry's, and the two boys were very happy together. Harry sometimes, when he had an over-ripe orange, would cut it open, and share it between himself and his friend; and he often cut out a piece to give to a poor child who looked with longing eyes, but had not a halfpenny to buy one. As the summer came on, Harry found that oranges were going out of season, and that it would be necessary for him to change his trade. So he consulted with his friend what he should deal in, and they settled it should be strawberries, and then cherries, and all the different fruits as

they came in season, till he returned to oranges the next winter. This was very agreeable; for, besides the profits Harry made, he and his friend could eat a little fruit every now and then; for, when it was growing stale, they ate it, instead of letting it rot and be good for nothing.

"One day, Robert was so busy talking and laughing, that he forgot his coffee-pot, which boiled over, and some of it was lost. He put in more water to fill it up; but this made it weaker, and his customers complained that it was not so good as usual; and they threatened to go and breakfast at another

stall, if he did not serve them better in future. Then Harry said, ‘ You see, Robert, what it is not to mind your business : if this happens again, you will lose many of your customers, and then how are you to make profits ?’ Robert was more attentive and careful afterwards for a considerable time.

“ One summer’s evening, as the two boys were walking out, after having put away their stalls, they passed by Astley’s Theatre, and were tempted to go in. They had money in their pockets, and could afford to give themselves such a treat, and a great one it was, but it kept them up late at night. Harry

was so much afraid of not rising in time the next morning, that he begged his father to awaken him. Robert was not so prudent, and overslept himself; and about six in the morning, when most of his customers came for their breakfast, he was not there. Harry made the best excuses for him that he could; but they were much displeased, and went to breakfast at another stall, and some of them were so angry that they would not return to his stall another day, which lessened Robert's profits considerably, so that, the next time he went to the grocer's to buy a stock of coffee, he had not money enough to pay for it. Robert was much

at a loss what to do, for he did not like to borrow more money of his friend Harry; and the grocer, seeing his distress, said, that, as he believed him to be an honest boy, he would give him credit for the sum. 'But,' added he, 'you must pay me interest for it; for giving you credit is just the same as lending you money, only I lend you coffee instead of money; and the coffee, you know, is worth as much as the money it costs.'

"Robert agreed to this: as he grew older, he became more steady and prudent; and, in the course of time, not only paid the grocer, but also Harry the two sovereigns he had borrowed of

him. Some years after, Harry grew rich enough to set up a fruiterer's shop: he was then of an age to marry, and his wife helped to keep the shop and serve the customers. Robert always remained at his stall; for, though he had the good sense to see his errors, and to improve in steadiness of conduct, he could never entirely get over his old habits of carelessness."

HOW THE KING HAS AN ALLOWANCE LIKE A SCHOOL-BOY.

The following day Willy, as he entered his mother's room, exclaimed, "Oh, Mamma! only two days have passed, and how many there are in two months! I think I shall never get to the end of them, and be able to pay my debts. I wish I had as much money as the king, and then I could buy every thing I chose, without ever getting into debt."

"I am not sure of that," replied his Mother, smiling.

"Why, Mamma, the king has

as much money as he likes; has he not?"

"No, indeed, the king has an allowance just like you, my dear; and, just like you, he sometimes spends more than his allowance, and is obliged to borrow money to pay his debts." Willy opened his eyes wide with astonishment, and asked who gave the king his allowance.

"It is the people of England," replied his Mother. "The king, you know, governs the people; that is, he makes them obey the laws, and suffers no man to do wrong, or to injure any one without being punished; but as it is impossible for the king to do this by himself, he must have a

number of men to help him to govern. These men, who are called his ministers, must be paid for their services."

"Just as you pay Thomas and the coachman their wages," said Willy.

"Yes; only the ministers, instead of waiting at table, or driving the carriage, help the king to govern the country; and as this is much more difficult, the king's ministers must be men of very good education; so they are chosen from among the first noblemen and gentlemen of the country, and are paid much more than common servants. Then there must be constables to take up people who have committed

any crime, and to put them in prison: jailors to keep them there; judges to try them in a court of justice. Besides that, the king pays all the soldiers and sailors, and buys them food and clothing, and has ships built for the sailors, and barracks for the soldiers to live in."

"Oh dear," cried Willy, drawing a long breath, "what a number of sixpences he must have to do all that!"

"Yes, indeed," replied his Mother; "for, instead of buying sixpennyworth of apples or tarts, he buys whole flocks of sheep, and droves of cattle, to feed all the soldiers and sailors; and, instead of buying a shilling

gun, he buys thousands of large real guns, which cost above a guinea a piece, besides drums and fifes, and all his soldiers' dress and accoutrements. Then, instead of taking a ride on a wooden horse in a roundabout, he buys hundreds of horses for his cavalry; and, instead of giving sixpence to one poor man, he must take care of all the poor soldiers and sailors that have been wounded in battle; and, if they should die, give something to their wives and children."

"Oh dear, Mamma!" cried Willy, quite overpowered by the immensity of the king's expenses, "I am sure it is no wonder he gets into debt."

"It is not for these things he gets into debt, Willy: their cost is reckoned up beforehand, and the people not only give him money enough to pay for them, but a great sum besides to pay his own expenses; that is to say, his house and furniture, and servants, and carriages and horses, and his dinners and suppers, and those of all the people who attend him and his family; and many of these are great lords and ladies, and have very high salaries."

"Well, I do wonder how the people can ever get money enough to give the king to pay for all these things."

"You know, William, there are a great many people in England, more than you could ever count."

"Then, perhaps, every man gives him sixpence?"

"No, that would not be fair. Rich people give more than poor people, for they can afford it better; but though the poor have but little, it is as important to them, that that little should be secured to them, as it is that the rich should possess their greater wealth in safety. These sums of money, which are paid to the king, are called *taxes*."

"Oh, I remember, Mamma," cried Willy, "a man coming

with a large book full of sums, and you paid him a great deal of money; and I asked what you paid him for, for you bought nothing of him, and you said it was taxes, but that I was too little to understand what taxes were: so I asked no more, because you do not like to be teazed; but I thought that taxes must be something very nice, or very pretty, to cost so much money."

"Well, now that you understand what they are, you may imagine what a quantity of money the tax-gatherers must collect all over the country, for every body pays taxes except the very poorest people."

"That is quite right," said Willy, with an air of satisfaction; "if they can't afford to pay for being governed, the king ought to take care of them for nothing. But, Mamma, might not some men make believe to be very poor, in order not to pay taxes?"

"The men who collect the taxes do not ask the people whether they are rich or poor, but judge from their manner of living. If a man lives in a large house, he is supposed to be richer than one who lives in a small house."

"Then," said Willy, "does the man who comes for the taxes settle how much is to be paid?"

"Oh, no; that would be too

difficult for him to do. It is all settled beforehand by the Parliament, who make the laws. A man, you know, pays more rent for a large house than for a small one; so he pays taxes according to the rent of his house. Then, if he keeps a carriage and livery servants, he must pay taxes for them, because he must be rich to be able to keep such things."

"Then," said Willy, "poor people who keep none of these things pay no taxes?"

"They do not pay any to the tax-gatherer," replied his Mother," but they pay something towards the king's allowance in another way. Beer, and tea, and

soap are all taxed, just as large houses, and carriages and servants are. Now, though the poor can do without large houses and carriages, and livery servants, they cannot so easily do without beer and tea to drink, and soap to wash with."

"And does the taxman go about to the poor people who drink beer and tea?"

"No; he goes to the brewer who brews the beer, and to the teadealer who sells the tea, and to the soap-boiler who makes the soap; and he makes them pay a tax on all the beer they brew, and the soap they make, and the tea they sell."

"Well, then, Mamma, if the

brewer, and soap-boiler, and tea-dealer pay the tax, the poor people do not?"

"The brewer, and soap-boiler, and teadealer could not afford to pay the tax, if nobody paid it them back again. This is the way they manage; they sell the beer, and tea, and soap a little dearer than they would do if they had paid no tax on them; and thus they get repaid by the people who buy the beer, and tea, and soap. So you see that it is those who drink the tea and beer, and use the soap, who really pay the tax. But now, Willy, if you are not tired of talking of kings and taxes, I am; so go and play in the garden."

HOW THE KING GETS INTO DEBT LIKE A SCHOOL BOY.

WILLY was impatient the next day to hear more about the king, and his getting into debt: and went early into his Mother's room, and, after kissing her, began by this question, — "If the king gets money enough by the taxes to pay for all he wants, how can he run into debt?"

"I thought, Willy," replied his Mother, "when I allowed you sixpence a week, it would be enough to pay for all you wanted, or at least for as much as you ought to want; and yet you see that you got into debt?"

"Oh, Mamma, I am but a little boy: grown up men know better, especially kings."

"I assure you that grown up men, and especially kings, very often run into debt; and that is the reason I am so anxious to cure you of this fault whilst you are a child, for it is a very serious thing when grown up men, and especially kings, run into debt."

"Well, I can't imagine how the king can do so, having so much money!"

"However great the sum of money he is allowed," replied his Mother, "if he spend more, he must get into debt. It is not wealth or riches that prevents your getting into debt, but

economy. Economy makes you careful not to spend more than you have, whether you are a king or a schoolboy. His Mother then told him there was another cause which sometimes obliged the king to make debts, and that was going to war. She explained to him that a great many more soldiers, and sailors, and ships were then wanted, than when the country was at peace.

Willy wondered why any should be wanted in time of peace; and his Mother said, that it was necessary to have some troops ready to fight in case a war should break out suddenly. That, if we had no sailors and

vessels ready to defend the country, an enemy's troops might land, and do us a great deal of injury; and that, if there were no soldiers to fight them when they landed, they might conquer the whole country.

"Oh, Mamma!" cried Willy, indignantly, "I am sure every body would go and fight rather than let the country be conquered, even the boys at our school: those who are big enough, I mean," added he, colouring up, as he saw his Mother smile at his show of bravery.

"I dare say they would, my dear," replied his Mother; "for all good people love their country, and would risk their lives,

rather than let it be conquered. But those who are not soldiers, however brave they may be, cannot understand fighting so well as those who are soldiers. It is, therefore, better to have regular soldiers to fight in battle, and to have some ready in time of peace in case of a war breaking out. But you can easily understand that, during a war, the king must have a vast number more soldiers and sailors than in time of peace, and will want a great deal more money to pay them."

"Oh yes," said Willy, "I remember when Jack the plough-boy was made a soldier, I wondered that he should like better

to go and fight than to work in the fields; and he said the king gave the new soldiers so much money and such fine clothes, that he went for the sake of that, though he liked ploughing better than fighting."

"And well he might; for when he ploughs the fields and sows the corn, he produces food to make people live, and when he is a soldier, he may perhaps be killed himself, or kill other men. Now I think it is much better to make people live than to make them die. Don't you, Willy?"

"To be sure, Mamma; but I like being a *make believe* soldier, with the schoolboys, for then we march about and amuse our-

selves, and, if we fight, it is only in fun, without doing any harm."

"Very true; but some boys are so fond of being soldiers in play, that when they grow up they like to be soldiers in earnest."

Willy then inquired, whether it was wicked for soldiers to fight in earnest?

His mother said, that it was right to fight to defend your country with all your might from a foreign invasion; but that wars were often made from very foolish causes. One king would sometimes take offence at something another king said or did, and so go to war on a point of honour, without considering how

much blood the people would shed, or how much money they would spend, to maintain this point of honour.

"Just as the boys at school do," said Willy, "they think a battle will set all right, but then they do not shed any blood."

"If kings, when they quarrelled, fought their own battles, as school boys do, it would be another thing, for they would then shed no body's blood but their own. But that cannot be, and if a war is a just one, it is better that the king should stay at home and attend to the government of his people, and leave the troops to be commanded by the generals of his army. As for

the soldiers themselves, it is always their duty to obey, for they cannot judge whether a war is just or unjust. But of whatever nature it be, a war always costs a great deal of money, much more than the king's allowance will pay; so he is obliged to borrow, and people are very willing to lend him money, because he pays them interest for it."

"Oh," cried Willy, laughing; "that is just as Robert paid Harry, two shillings a year, for lending him two sovereigns to set up a stall; but the king must have borrowed a great deal of money, and it must have taken a great many shillings to pay the interest."

"Yes, and a great many guineas too, more than the king could pay unless the people increased his allowance. So when the king goes to war, he asks his parliament to let him have some more money, to be able to pay the interest of his debt."

"Well," said Willy, "if I was king, I would not ask the parliament to give me money enough to pay the interest of what I had borrowed; I would ask for enough to pay the whole debt at once."

"You do not consider," said his mother, "that this money can be raised only by making more taxes; and if the taxes were so very much increased as

would be necessary to pay the whole debt, the people could not afford to pay them, and would be ruined."

Willy then inquired how the king got money to pay his debts at last; and his mother told him that it was a very difficult thing for the king to pay his debts. "A great while ago," said she; "before either you or I were born, there was a very long war, which obliged the king, who then reigned, to borrow large sums of money; and when the war was over, the king wishing very much to pay his debts, consulted his ministers to know how it could be done, and they agreed that the best way would be, to lay by

a good deal of money every year, so that in time a sufficient sum would be collected for him to pay his debts."

"Just as I do," said Willy; only I put by some every week; but the king must have put by a great deal more than I do: what a large box he must have to keep it in!"

His Mother told him it was so large that it was necessary to keep it in a house instead of a box, and that the money put by to pay the king's debts was called the *sinking fund.*

"Oh then, Mamma," exclaimed Willy, "I shall call the money I put by in my box my *sinking fund;* and how long was

it before the king paid all his debts? more than two months, I dare say!"

"Though it is so long ago, they are not paid yet," said his Mother; "for unfortunately, before there was money enough collected in the sinking fund, another war broke out; and then the king, instead of borrowing all the money he wanted, took some out of the sinking fund; and when once he had begun, he went on taking money out of the sinking fund, till at last there was very little left in it."

"What a pity!" said Willy. "I am sure I shall not do so with my sinking fund, for I am resolved to pay my debts."

"I hope when next you return from school, my dear, to hear that you have kept this resolution," said his Mother. "We have now talked enough, so go and play."

A CURIOUS WAY TO PAY DEBTS.

The next day Willy returned to school: he became very prudent, spent no more than threepence a week, and out of that contrived often to buy something for a friend. It is true he also received presents from the other boys, for he was beloved for his generosity, especially now that he was not extravagant and always wanting to borrow money. He had, however, several temptations to resist, when a pedlar came and offered knives of every description, scissars,

pocket-books, and I know not how many tempting things, for sale; but he remembered the king's sinking fund, and he took a pride, as well as a pleasure, in adding three pence weekly to his own, without ever taking any thing from it.

The toyman returned at the end of a month. Willy had then a whole shilling in his box, which he paid him; and he longed exceedingly to be able to pay the boys of whom he had borrowed halfpence, some of whom really wanted their money. About this time his friend, Tom Harley, had a visit from an uncle, who gave him half-a-crown. Willy had then six-

pence in his sinking-fund box, and he thought that if Tom would but be so kind as to lend him another sixpence, it would just make up the sum to pay all his debts, and he should be free. Tom Harley good-naturedly agreed to this proposal: the boys were paid, and the next time Willy came home from school, he told his Mother of the clever contrivance he had thought of to pay his debts so much sooner than she expected.

His Mother could not help laughing, and said, "Take care I do not call you *silly Billy*, as I do sometimes when you are foolish."

Willy was a good deal dis-

composed at being laughed at, when he had expected to have been praised; and said, "Why, Mamma, it cannot be foolish of me to pay my debts."

"No, certainly; but when you pay your debts with borrowed money, you only change the debtor. You owe just as much now as you did before, only you owe it all to Tom Harley, instead of owing it to the other boys."

"Indeed," said Willy, "that is true! how could I be so foolish."

"Well, Willy," continued his Mother, "I must tell you, that the ministers of the king who first made the sinking-fund, fell

just into the same mistake. You must know that, when the war was over, the king being as anxious as you were to pay his debts, and having almost emptied his sinking fund, told his ministers that, if they could think of any means of replenishing it, he should be very glad. So they thought a great deal, and at last one of them hit upon a plan which he fancied was very clever, and that was to borrow a large sum of money to put into the sinking fund, in order to make up for what had been taken out during the war; and he was so much pleased with this contrivance, that he never once thought that bor-

rowing from one person to pay another, changed the debtor without paying the debt."

"How could the king's minister be so foolish?" exclaimed Willy.

"It is certainly very surprising," replied his Mother, "and the more so as the king's ministers are generally some of the wisest people of the country; and it is very proper that they should be so, for there is nothing so difficult as to be able to govern well, and not make such mistakes."

"But I thought, Mamma, it was the parliament that helped the king to govern?"

"The parliament," replied

his Mother, "helps the king to make the laws, but not to govern. I will explain the difference to you to-morrow."

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAKING LAWS AND MAKING PEOPLE OBEY THEM.

"WELL, Mamma," said Willy, "to-day, you know, you promised to tell me the difference between making laws and governing the country."

"True," replied she: "governing the country consists in executing the laws, that is, in making the people obey them. This is done by the King and his ministers; but if the King and his ministers made the laws without consulting the wishes of the people, the people might

not like them, or think them just and right, and be unwilling to obey them. So the King gets the people to help him to make the laws, and then it is very fair that they should be compelled to obey the laws they have themselves helped to make, or be punished for disobeying them."

"Oh yes," observed Willy; "I recollect reading in little Arthur's History of England, that the people used to go and help the King to make the laws; but that they found it so troublesome to leave their homes and their families and their business, that they agreed among themselves to choose two persons for every great town, and as many

for every county in England, and these persons were to represent all the people of the town or the county, that is, to stand in their place, and help the King to make the laws."

"This was a very good plan," said his Mother; "for the people in general could not go up to London for that purpose, nor could many of those who lived in London spare time to make laws; for, if a man keeps a shop, who is there to take care of it while he is making laws? and if he is a journeyman or day labourer, it is still worse; for it would prevent his earning his livelihood, and his family might be starved."

"But, Mamma," inquired Willy, "do common labourers know how to make laws?"

"Certainly not so well as men of education," replied his Mother; "and as the people know this, they take care to choose for their representatives men of good education, and who have no shop or other occupation to prevent their giving their whole time and attention to the laws. These men," said she, "are called members of Parliament, and sit all together in a large room, called the House of Commons; and there is another large room called the House of Peers, because all the Peers of the country sit in it."

Willy inquired who chose the lords; and his Mother said that they were not chosen, for there was a very old law in England which gave every nobleman a right to sit in the House of Lords as soon as he came of age, that is, was twenty-one years old. But the noblemen of Scotland and Ireland had only a right to choose some of their number, sixteen for Scotland, and thirty-two for Ireland; and these represent the whole of the nobility of Scotland and Ireland, in the same manner as the members of the House of Commons represent the whole of the people of England. These two Houses are called the Parliament; and it is

the Parliament, together with the King, who legislate, or make the laws.

"Well, I like the House of Commons best," said Willy; "and I dare say they are the cleverest, are they not, Mamma? For, you know, all the lords sit in the House of Lords, whether they are good or bad, or wise or foolish, only just because they are born lords: now, in the House of Commons, the members are chosen, and of course the people take care to choose the wisest and the best men to represent them."

"On the other hand, you must consider, my dear," said his Mother, "that noblemen,

being generally rich, can afford to have good educations, and have time to learn a great deal, if they will but do so. Then, in general, it is men who have distinguished themselves for something remarkable that are made noble. Either a great general, or a great lawyer, or a great statesman: in short, some one who has done great service to his country, and who is rewarded by being made a nobleman. Now, the children of such distinguished men would very naturally try to imitate their father, and would be sadly ashamed of doing any thing that would disgrace him. I know a large family of brothers, whose

father was one of the wisest and best men that ever lived: well, his sons were so desirous of imitating his virtues, that I am sure they are all better men than they would have been had their father been an ordinary man."

"Well," said Willy, "I shall try all I can to do like Papa, though he is not a lord."

"Then it is true," continued his Mother, "the children of noblemen are very apt to be spoiled by the flattery of the servants and people about them, and to be proud of their titles and consequence."

"We have three little lords at school," said Willy: "*lord-*

lings we call them, whenever they are proud of their titles; so you see, Mamma, we laugh at them sometimes, instead of flattering them. One of them is so stupid, I am sure he will never be able to make laws; another is pretty well, minds his lessons, and does much like the other boys; but you cannot think what a clever boy the other is, Mamma, and so good-natured. Oh, what nice laws he will make when he is grown up!"

"Well," said his Mother, "the parents of these young lords acted very wisely in sending them to school where the boys treat them as equals, and

do not flatter and spoil them, as it too often happens when they are brought up at home. I once knew a little lord, who, the first time he went to school, was asked his name by the other boys, and he would not tell it, but said, with an air of superiority, 'I am a lord:' upon which one of the boys, to show how little he cared for lords, knocked him down, saying, 'That is to teach your lordship better manners.'"

"Oh, poor little lord!" said Willy. "However, it served him right; and I dare say he took care not to be proud of his title any more."

"That he did; for he is now

one of the noblemen the most distinguished in his speeches in Parliament for his love of freedom and equality."

"But pray, Mamma, tell me how do the Parliament make the laws?"

"When a new law is proposed," said his Mother, "it generally begins in the House of Commons, and there the members consult together about it. Some speak in favour of it, and tell all the good they expect it will do, and others speak against it, thinking it will do more harm than good; but if at last they come to an agreement to make the law, they send it to the House of Lords, and there it is

talked over in the same manner as in the House of Commons: if they also agree to it, there is only one more person to consult, that is, the King; and if he consents to it, the law is made; but if he does not, he says *Veto.* Are you Latin scholar enough, Willy, to know what that means?"

"Oh yes, Mamma, I have seen it in the grammar: it means *I forbid;* but I think it would be very ill-natured of the King to say *Veto*, when all the nobles of the House of Lords, and all the members of the House of Commons, agree to it."

"You are mistaken, Willy, for probably they do not all

agree to it, but only the greater number: it would be very difficult to get so many men to be of the same opinion, especially when they had been arguing and disputing about it."

"So I thought, Mamma; for I know at school the boys would never agree what game they were to play at, if they were each left to choose; but this is the way we settle it: we make all the boys who choose one game stand on one side, and all the boys who choose another game stand on the other side, and the greater number choose the game."

"They do just the same in the two Houses of Parliament,

and decide according to the majority, or greater number; and when the two parties are nearly equal, they are counted over to know which is greater."

"That is exactly what we do at school," said Willy. "One of the boys goes round and counts them."

"I wonder," continued Willy (who seemed to acquire consequence from his school being compared to the Houses of Parliament), whether they ever dispute and quarrel as we do, before we decide."

"I must own," said his Mother, "that in some instances they have behaved too much like schoolboys, but in general

their debates are carried on with order and propriety, the great speakers being some of the cleverest and wisest people of the kingdom; and there is more eloquence, or beautiful speaking, in the Houses of Parliament, than in any place whatever."

"And does the King go to the Parliament to give his consent to a new law, or to say the terrible word *Veto?*"

"Yes; or he may send one of his ministers in his stead. But he generally goes himself, once a year, when the Parliament first meets. He goes then in great state, and sits upon a fine throne in the House of Peers, and then he sends to the

members of the House of Commons to desire they will come and hear his speech. Do not you remember, Willy, my taking you once to see the King go to Parliament in a fine gilt coach, drawn by six beautiful cream-coloured horses, all dressed out with blue ribands?"

"Oh yes," replied Willy, "I remember; and a fine sight it was. But why did the King have so many soldiers about his carriage, Mamma? I am sure he could not be afraid the crowd would hurt him, for they cried 'God save the King!' all the way he went, and made hurras almost as loud as the cannon."

"That was to show that they

loved him and liked his government; and the guard, which is called a guard of honour, is much more a mark of respect than of protection."

"And what is the King's speech about?" inquired Willy.

"The King tells the Parliament all he has done since last they met; and as soon as he has finished his speech he goes away, that they may be at liberty to talk about it without restraint."

"Oh dear! how much I should like to hear them, Mamma! Do not people go to hear them sometimes?"

"Men do; but women and children, except the sons of members, are not admitted. I

often regret this for myself, Willy, but not for you, for it would be impossible at your age to understand them."

"But then, Mamma, could not you explain it to me?"

"We have talked quite enough about the Houses of Parliament to-day, Willy: you must wait till to-morrow, and then I will see what I can do."

ON FLOGGING SOLDIERS AND SCHOOL BOYS.

WILLY was very impatient to hear about the speeches in Parliament, and came early into his mother's room. She told him that it would be impossible for her to give him any idea of the eloquence with which the members of Parliament spoke in arguing or debating about a law, but she might, perhaps, make him understand the manner in which it was done. "I cannot think of a law," said she, "that you could understand, Willy; but

we might suppose one: what sort of a law would you like?"

Willy reflected for some time, and then cried out, "Oh, Mamma! I should like of all things that they would make a law that schoolmasters should not flog the boys."

His mother could not help laughing; but she said, "Very well thought of, Willy; for the House of Commons have lately been busy debating about a law to prevent flogging."

"Indeed!" cried Willy, interrupting his Mother, and quite overjoyed.

"Ay, Willy, but you would not let me finish: it was not to prevent the flogging of boys, but

of soldiers; and they are much more severely whipped than you ever are at school."

"Oh, Mamma! I have never been whipped, I assure you; but I am obliged to stand and see the other boys flogged, and it makes me so sick! But if the Parliament make a law against flogging soldiers, I am sure the master ought not to treat us worse than the soldiers; so I hope, perhaps, I never shall be flogged."

"Endeavour not to deserve it, Willy, for that is the surest way of escaping."

Well, Mamma; but now tell me all about the law."

"It was proposed and read in

the House of Commons; then one of the members rose from his seat, and made a speech in favour of it. He talked of the cruelty of the punishment, of the shame of treating men like brutes: that soldiers, who have any right feeling, think themselves degraded and good for nothing after having suffered such a disgraceful punishment; so they care not what they do, and really become good for nothing: that those daring men, who brave both the pain and the disgrace, only become more hardened by it; — and thus he goes on for an hour or two arguing against flogging."

"Well, I think he might have

persuaded them all in less time than that."

"Oh no, Willy; when he sits down, another member rises and makes a speech in opposition to him. He says, that without flogging it would be impossible to preserve discipline in the army; that is, to keep the soldiers in order, and make them obedient; and that without discipline, the soldiers would not fight well in battle: and so he goes on, and makes it out that the country would one day or other be conquered, if soldiers were not flogged when they do wrong."

"To be sure, I never thought of that," said Willy, pensively;

" it would certainly be worse for the country to be conquered, than for soldiers to be flogged."

" Then," continued his Mother, " another member gets up and observes, that in France and Germany the punishment of flogging is not allowed, and yet that the soldiers are very well disciplined."

" Oh, how glad I am ! " exclaimed Willy, jumping up and clapping his hands ; " then we should not be conquered."

" But another member observed, that it was very true that in France and Germany they did not flog the soldiers, but they shot them ; and he asked, whether a soldier had not

rather be flogged than be put to death ?"

"Indeed," said Willy, with a long face, "I would rather be flogged than shot. I hope some other member got up and contradicted him."

"Yes; he said, that the punishment of death was, at least, but rarely inflicted, and only for very great crimes; and that solitary imprisonment, and feeding on bread and water, would do just as well as flogging. Well, after talking it over for three different nights, and consulting the principal officers of the army about it, it was decided by a majority of votes that the law could not be repealed at present."

"Oh dear, how sorry I am!" exclaimed Willy; "but, indeed, I do not think it was fair to consult the officers, for you know they are like the master of a school, and, I dare say, like flogging."

"There are, I believe, very few officers who are fond of flogging; and no persons are likely to be such good judges of its effects upon soldiers; but it is true, that having been long used to order the punishment, they may not only cease to consider it as cruel, but they may also find that it is a very easy mode of punishment, and saves them a vast deal of trouble. However, they were desired to flog

as little as possible, and to accustom the soldiers, by degrees, to other punishments, so that in time the law might be repealed with safety."

"Well," said Willy, "I wonder what they could find to say, to talk of it three nights."

"It is one of the rules of Parliament, that when it is proposed to make a new law, or repeal an old one, the law must be read over three several times in the House, and the members are at liberty to debate on it each of those times, or even oftener if they think right. This is a very wise regulation; for making a new law, or repealing an old one, is a very important thing, when

you consider that the people are obliged to obey the new law whether they like it or not, or whether it is good or bad. It is therefore right that a law should not be made in a hurry, but that the Parliament should be allowed full time to consult and inquire about it, in order to be sure that it will do more good than harm."

"Harm, Mamma!" repeated Willy; "to be sure, the Parliament never make any laws that do harm!"

"The laws of a country," said his mother, "are like the rules of your school, they prevent your having so much liberty as you would otherwise have."

"Oh then, indeed, they do

some harm, Mamma, certainly; for I am sure all the rules of the school are very tiresome: you can hardly ever do any thing just when you like, and how you like; there is no liberty but at play-time."

"There may possibly be more rules than are necessary," replied his Mother; "but how do you think the school would go on without rules? You have said, that even during the play hours you were obliged to make rules for yourselves, in order to come to an agreement at what game you should play; and I fear that the boys would have a still greater difficulty to agree when

they should come in from the play ground to school."

"Yes, indeed," said Willy, laughing. "If there were no rules to settle what we were to do all day, there would be a great deal of disputing about it; and quarrelling and fighting too, for there would be no rules for punishing naughty boys, you know; and I believe most of the boys would play all day, and very few would work so hard as they are obliged to do now."

"And if, when you came home at holyday time, Willy, I found you had made no progress in your learning, but had grown quarrelsome and disobedient, I should tell the master that I did

not choose my son to grow up an ill-tempered dunce; and that he must manage his school better, or I should send you to some other which was better regulated. So you see, Willy, that the boys of a school require rules to govern them, as much as the people of a country require laws; and they must, both of them, put up with the evil in order to have the good. That is, they must put up with the restraint, that they may enjoy the order, peace, and security they produce; that is what I meant, when I said, that a law should do more good than harm. For if the rules of a school are more than are required to keep the

boys in order, or that the laws of a country put more restraint on men than is necessary to preserve good government, they are bad."

"Oh, but then, you know, Mamma, the people help to make the laws; I mean they send members of Parliament to do it for them, so they take care not to make laws the people would not like; but the boys at school do not make the rules, it is the master does it; and we are obliged to obey them, whether we like them or not."

"That," said his Mother, "is like the sovereign of a despotic government, such as those of Russia or Constantinople."

"Oh do pray tell me about them, Mamma?" said Willy.

"Not to-day, my dear: we have talked quite enough about laws and governments, so we must put it off till to-morrow."

ON DESPOTIC SOVEREIGNS.

Willy had, at this time, a week's holydays, so that he was able to carry on his conversations with his Mother without interruption. He was very eager to hear about despotic sovereigns; and his first question was, whether a sovereign was like a king?

His Mother told him, that sovereign was a name given to any one who governed a country: thus, our King was Sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland; the Emperor of Russia was Sove-

reign of that country; the Sultan was Sovereign of Turkey, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany Sovereign in his dominions. "But," said she, "though these are all sovereigns, they have not only different titles, but govern in a very different manner. The sovereign in a despotic government is called an absolute monarch, because his power is absolute or uncontrolled, and he makes what laws he chooses, without consulting his people; indeed, he very often reigns without any law but his own will."

"Oh, dear, I should not like to live in such a country, it would be so much like a school:

I dare say there is a great deal of flogging there?"

"Yes, indeed, Willy; but it is much worse than a school; for if the master governed the school badly the parents would take his scholars away, and the master would be ruined. The master is thus answerable to the parents of the children, and that makes him careful how he governs them; but an absolute monarch is answerable to no one, and he may do just what he pleases."

"And do the people learn a great deal in those countries where there is so much flogging?"

"Oh no, quite the contrary:

a despotic prince does not get the people flogged in order to make them learn, but in order to oblige them to do whatever he commands, let it be ever so foolish or so wicked. He likes his subjects to be ignorant because he knows that if they became learned and wise, and understood how to make laws, they would no longer obey him, but insist on having a better government, and assist in making the laws themselves."

"Well, but, Mamma, as an absolute monarch can do whatever he pleases, suppose that he happened to be a very good man, and very clever too, he would understand how to make laws

better than the people themselves."

"That is sometimes the case," replied she. "The King of Prussia, for instance, is an absolute prince; but, instead of wishing to keep his subjects in ignorance, he has established very excellent schools throughout his dominions, and obliges the people to send their children to them; and he has done still more, for he has given his subjects laws which will, at least, secure them a good government during his life. But it very seldom happens that a despotic prince is either good or wise: he is brought up from his cradle as a spoilt child by all the peo-

ple about him ; flattered, coaxed, and indulged in his youth, by those who hope to be his favourites when he grows up, and reigns. But even should his government be wise and just, there is no certainty of its lasting, and when he dies his successor may be quite the contrary. There was, some years ago, an Emperor of Russia called Alexander, whose mother had taken such pains with his education, that when he came to the throne, he governed the people better than they had ever been governed before. A celebrated lady once said to him, that, for the first time in her life, he made her think, that a despotic

government was as good as a representative one."

"What is a representative government, Mamma?"

"It is a government in which the people send men to represent them, to help to make the laws, as they do in England and in France, and many other countries. But to return to my story; the Emperor Alexander answered, it is but a lucky chance that I govern well, and those who succeed me may do just the contrary. Unfortunately he was himself, a few years afterwards, persuaded by some bad people to alter his manner of governing, and the liberty he had allowed his subjects was ex-

changed for severity and hardships. So you see, Willy, how little the good conduct of despotic sovereigns can be depended on."

"Oh yes," said Willy; "besides, Mamma, if a despotic sovereign wished ever so much to make laws that would please his subjects, how could he know what laws they would like? for they do not send him representatives to consult, as they do in England; and he cannot go about to every man to ask him."

"No, indeed," replied his mother; "but despotic sovereigns in general think only of pleasing themselves, and care very little

whether the people like their laws or not."

"Oh, what a shame!" exclaimed Willy; "for a despotic sovereign is but one man, and the people are every body. Can any thing be so unjust as to make laws to please one man, instead of pleasing hundreds and thousands of men?"

"Very true, Willy; but an absolute monarch fancies that those hundreds and thousands of men whom he governs are all made to obey him."

"Then they must be quite foolish to think themselves so much better and greater than other people."

"They have been taught to

think themselves above all other men from their childhood, it is therefore no wonder they should believe it."

"It does not seem to me to be fair that men should be obliged to obey laws, they have not helped to make; I do not mean that every man should do so, but that they should choose people to represent them: I think it would be better to have no government at all than a despotic one."

Willy's mother did not agree with him on this point; she thought a despotic government better than none at all; for if there were no government, all the strong men might op-

press the weak, the poor rob the rich, and there would be no safety for any one, either in person or property.

"That is true," said Willy, "it would be just like the *Land without Laws**, where they were all so unhappy."

"A despotic sovereign," said his Mother, "could not have done so much harm to his subjects as the people did there to one another. Complete liberty is a bad thing, for men will be sure to injure each other. The right and proper liberty is, that men should do whatever they like, provided it does no harm to others."

* Willy's Stories, p. 104.

"Well, Mamma, I think our government in England much the best; for here we may do what is right, and not what is wrong; and the King consults with the people about making the laws, and is not a despotic sovereign."

"In one point of view, Willy, our king is as absolute as any prince, for the law of the land declares, that the King can do no wrong."

"Why, then," cried Willy with astonishment, "he may do whatever he chooses, and no tyrant can do more than that! Then, if he is angry with a man, may he order his head to be cut off without being tried and condemned in a court of justice?"

"He may order it, but no one would obey him, because the man who cut off the head would be himself tried for it, condemned, and put to death; for no man is bound to obey the King, if he orders him to do any thing that is contrary to the laws.

"When the law says, that the King can do no wrong, the meaning is, that his ministers, or whoever he orders to do any thing wrong, are liable to be punished if they obey him; this is called the responsibility of ministers, or, in other words, that they are accountable for whatever they do, and that it is no excuse for them to say the King commanded it.

"So when the people think that the King does any thing wrong in governing, instead of blaming him they blame his ministers; and the House of Commons, as the representatives of the people, send a petition to the King to beg him to turn away the ministers who have advised him to do what they disapprove; and very often the King is obliged to do so, though he may know he is more in fault than they are.

"There are many things that the King may do without consulting Parliament, and these privileges are called the King's prerogative; for instance, he may make war whenever he pleases."

Willy expressed great surprise at this; for he thought the people should be asked whether they thought it right to go to war or not.

"Do you recollect what the King is obliged to do to support the expenses of a war, Willy?"

"Oh yes, he is obliged to borrow money, and to ask the Parliament to increase his allowance, to be able to pay the interest of the money he borrows."

"Well, then, if the Parliament did not like the war, they might refuse to increase his allowance. Then the people would not lend him money, because he could not pay them interest for it; and so he would not be able to pay the

soldiers and sailors, and could not go on with the war."

"Then I dare say, Mamma, the King takes care before he goes to war to find out whether the Parliament like it or not, for fear they should refuse to increase his allowance."

"That certainly is a check," said his Mother. "Another branch of the King's prerogative is that of dissolving the Parliament; that is, he may send all the members away, and reign without them."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Willy, with a look of alarm; "and if the King chose to send his Parliament away, would he not be a despotic sovereign?" Then,

after a little reflection, he added, "But how could he get money, Mamma, if there was no Parliament to give him his allowance?"

"That," replied his Mother, "is the very thing which prevents our kings from governing without a Parliament; for the King cannot oblige the people to pay taxes without the consent of Parliament, and therefore could get no allowance."

"Then it is but a sort of sham absolute power that our king has, after all," said Willy; "for, if he can do no wrong himself, he cannot make other people do wrong for him; and if he declares war, and that Par-

liament don't like it, and if he tries to govern without a Parliament, he can get no money; and so he cannot do any of these things."

"Our kings, however, have sometimes made the attempt to reign without a Parliament," said his Mother. "There was once a king who was so much displeased with his Parliament, because they would not allow him to govern just as he chose, that he dissolved it and assembled a new one, hoping that the people would choose representatives who would be more willing to do what he wished."

"I think that was rather foolish of the King, Mamma; for

the people would be so afraid of being despotically governed, that they would choose representatives who would take more care than before, that they should not be so."

"That was exactly the case," replied his Mother. "The oftener the King dissolved his Parliament, the more difficult he found it to manage the new one: till at last the King and the Parliament came to a downright quarrel, and there was a civil war."

"Oh!" exclaimed Willy, "I know now what king you are talking of, Mamma. It is Charles the First, whom I read about in 'Little Arthur's History;' and,

after fighting a great many battles, at last, poor man! they cut off his head."

"Yes, it was Charles the First," replied his Mother; "and you may well say poor man! He was to be pitied as a man; for, though he was a bad king, he behaved with great kindness to his family, and I dare say would have been a good sort of man if he had been a private gentleman instead of a king; but he was unfortunately brought up to think that he might govern as he liked, and that it was the people who were doing wrong when they resisted him."

Willy inquired of his Mother how long the Parliament lasted,

if the King did not dissolve it. She replied, "Seven years; but it seldom is so long, as the King generally dissolves on the sixth year, if no circumstance happens to induce him to dissolve it sooner. Then," added she, "when the King dies, the Parliament is dissolved of itself, and the new King calls together a a new Parliament.

"But, Willy, what a length of time we have been talking," said his Mother, looking at her watch: "now you must go out, and to-morrow I will tell you of another sort of government."

ON REPUBLICS.

WILLY wondered much what was the sort of government his Mother was going to explain to him ; for she had told him about the sovereigns who reigned with despotic power, and about the government of England, where the power was limited by the Parliament. He could not conceive that there could be any other form of government, and was much astonished when his Mother said,

" In the government I am going to tell you about to-day,

Willy, there is no sovereign, neither king, nor emperor, nor sultan."

"Then, Mamma," cried Willy, with astonishment, "how can there be any government if there is nobody to command, and punish the people who do not obey the laws?"

"It is the people themselves who command. I do not mean that every man governs, but they choose representatives, not only to make the laws, but to execute them, or, in other words, to govern."

"Something like our Parliament, I suppose?"

"Like our House of Commons, at least; but in republics,

where the people govern, they are very fond of equality, and few republics have any noblemen."

Willy thought that very fair; yet, after a little reflection, he observed, that "if the people were all to be equal, they must all work alike to gain their livelihood; and then nobody would have leisure to study and become learned, and write clever books to teach the people."

"That would not do at all, Willy. When I talked of equality, I meant equality of rank and equality of rights. The noblemen in England have, you know, titles and a higher rank, than we commoners. Then they have a

right to sit in Parliament, which commoners have not, unless they are chosen to represent the people. Now, in republics, there are no class of men who have privileges or rights different from the rest of the people. But wealth is a different thing. Men cannot be equal in wealth, any more than they can be equal in goodness or in abilities. A man who is industrious and clever and prudent will gain money and grow rich; and that is the natural reward of his industry: while a man who is idle and foolish will gain nothing, but spend or lose the money he has; and so he will become poor; that is the natural punishment of his

idleness and folly. When I said that in most republics men were equal, I also said equal in rank and rights."

"It is like liberty, Mamma," said Willy. "As there is a right and a wrong liberty, so there is a right and a wrong equality. People must have liberty to do a great many things — that is the right liberty; but they must not have liberty to do every thing, — that would be the wrong liberty: and people must be equal in many things — that is the right equality; but they must not be equal in every thing — that is the wrong equality."

"Very well, Willy; but do

you think you could tell me what are the things in which men should be free, or have liberty to do as they liked, and what are the things in which they ought not to be free?"

"Oh yes; they should be free to do what they like, provided it does not hurt other people; for it would not be right to allow them to hurt other people in order to please themselves."

"Now, can you tell in what things men should be equal, and in what things they cannot be equal?"

Willy answered, that "people should be equal in rank, and have equal rights; but that they could not have equal wealth,

because they were not all equally industrious or equally clever."

"You must, however, remember, Willy, that we are now talking of the liberty of a republic. In England we have a sovereign and nobles, who have rank and privileges superior to that of the people; but we are so happy, and so well governed, that it would be very foolish to wish to change. There was once a republic in Greece called Sparta, where the people were foolish enough to think that they ought to be equal in every thing. So the children were all brought up exactly alike, at public schools. Then the people were obliged to eat their meals together at

public tables, where they all ate of the same dishes."

"Oh, but Mamma, how could they contrive to make the idle men work as hard as those that were industrious?"

"That was impossible; so they determined that none of them should work, but that they should all be soldiers, in order to defend their country from enemies."

"But then who was to work for them?" inquired Willy; "for somebody must do the household work, and make their clothes, and plough their fields?"

"This is the way they managed: whenever they went to war, and took any prisoners, they obliged them to work for

them. The prisoners cultivated their fields, built their houses, made their clothes, cooked their dinners, and, in short, became their servants, or, rather, their slaves; for, instead of being at liberty to leave their masters if they were ill used, they were obliged to stay with them, and worked without receving wages."

"There was no equality there, I am sure," said Willy; "was not that very wrong?"

"Certainly," replied his mother: "in order to make themselves equal, they committed the greatest injustice on others."

"They were foolish people, Mamma, and did not know the

difference between the right equality and the wrong one."

"True," said his mother; "for it is very wrong to make men slaves, whether you use them well or ill, and very wicked to treat them cruelly. This republic of Sparta existed a great many years ago; you will read about it in the ancient history, when you are old enough to understand it."

ON SLAVERY.

WILLY had been much interested about the slaves of the Spartans, and he inquired of his mother, the next day, whether there were slaves in any country at this present time.

"I am sorry to say that slavery still exists in some countries," replied she; "but as people become wiser and better they see how wicked it is to deprive fellow creatures of their liberty, and in many places slavery has been abolished, that is, it is no longer permitted."

"Were there ever any slaves in England?" said Willy.

"There were in very ancient times," replied his mother; "but slavery was abolished before the Norman conquest, and it has long been one of the laws of England, that the moment a slave sets his foot in this country he is free. But, some few years ago, Englishmen were allowed to have slaves in the West India islands, several of which belong to England. It is a very distant country, where sugar and coffee grow. Now the weather is very hot in these islands, and the Englishmen thought it too fatiguing to work in the fields to cultivate the sugar and coffee,

so they sent across the Atlantic ocean to Africa, where the Negroes live, and they offered to give the kings of those countries knives and glasses, and fine clothes, and a number of other things, which they do not know how to make in Negro-land, if the king would give them in exchange some of the Negroes for slaves, to cultivate the sugar and coffee. Then the king of the Negroes used to go with his troops, and take all the people of a village prisoners, and sell them to the Englishmen, who took them to the West Indies, and made them work for them. But it was not the English alone who carried on this shameful

trade: for all the countries who possessed islands in the West Indies did the same; — French, Spaniards, Dutch, and many others; so that the poor Negroes were sadly tormented. There are a great many small kingdoms in Negro-land, and the kings were constantly going to war with each other on purpose to make prisoners, and sell them for slaves."

"What a shame!" exclaimed Willy, indignantly; "it is worse than the Spartans!"

"Well, Willy, you will rejoice to hear that this iniquitous trade has at length been abolished; and that it was England who had the glory of setting the example.

There was a very wise and very good man whose name was Mr. Wilberforce; he was a member of Parliament; and every year he made eloquent speeches, in which he described the hardships and cruelties the poor Negroes suffered. How they were driven every morning to their work in the fields by men with long whips, just like a herd of cattle; and were severely lashed if there was the least remissness in their labour; and he always concluded by begging the Parliament to make a law to abolish the slave trade; but though many people wished it as well as himself, during twenty years he never could gain a majority

in both Houses of Parliament for abolishing so cruel a trade."

"And why not, Mamma? Surely people are not so wicked as to like to buy slaves?"

"All those who had estates in the West Indies thought that they should be ruined, if they were not allowed to continue to buy slaves; for the poor slaves died very fast, and others were wanted to replace them. It is true that the Negroes being used to a hot climate, were better able to work in the fields than the Europeans; but then they were so wretched at being torn from their native land and wives, from their children and friends, that many of them died of grief. Others were

so hardly used by their masters, so severely beaten by their overseers, that they fell sick and died. For many years after the dreadful cruelties were made known, they were allowed to continue. But good Mr. Wilberforce was not disheartened; he persevered in his humane efforts; and after twenty years people grew wiser and better, and the Parliament gained a majority against the slave trade. The Lords agreed to it, the King gave his consent, and this wicked traffic was abolished."

"How glad I am!" cried Willy; "and I hope they made the French, and Spanish, and

all the other countries abolish it too, Mamma?"

"Oh! Willy, you forget that we do not reign over other countries; however, we did all we could to persuade them to abolish the slave trade as we had done; and many of them did; so that there are very few countries now where Negroes are bought and sold."

"But what is become of the Negroes who were made slaves before, Mamma?"

"They continued slaves for many years; but as their masters knew that when any of them died they would not be allowed to buy others, they were, perhaps, more careful not to over-

work them, or use them as ill as before; and they took more care of the health of their children, in order that they might be strong and robust enough to cultivate the sugar and coffee when they were grown up."

"But still they were slaves, Mamma!" said Willy, with a sigh.

"It is much more difficult to abolish slavery, than the slave trade, Willy; for however wrong it might be, the slaves belonged to their masters, who had bought them with their money, just as much as the sheep and cattle belong to the farmer who has bought them."

"But then they ought not to

have bought slaves," said Willy; "and it serves the masters right to take them away."

"No, Willy: the Government can only punish men for doing what is contrary to law; as long as the law allowed men to have slaves, the Government had no right to take them away, any more than they have to take away the sheep and cattle of the farmer."

"Then, Mamma, the Parliament that can make what laws it pleases, should make a law to destroy slavery, and let all the slaves in the West Indies be free, as they are if they come to England."

"That law was also pro-

posed," said his Mother; "but the masters of the slaves said that it would be very unfair, unless the money they had paid for their slaves was restored to them. Then the Government said, 'No, that would not be fair either; for the negroes will remain with you and be your servants, though they will no longer be your slaves; if you use them well they will not leave you; but as they will not be your slaves, you must pay them wages, and we will give you a sum of money to help you to pay their wages.' Then the people of England were so humane and generous as to give a very large sum of money to the

masters of the slaves, and a law was made that the slaves should all be free; you cannot think what rejoicing there was, Willy, not only amongst the poor Negroes in the West Indies, but amongst the people of England, who, being free themselves, could not bear that there should be slaves in any country which belonged to England."

"How good they were, Mamma; but Mr. Wilberforce must have been the most pleased of any body."

"At the abolition of the slave trade, I dare say that he was; and he lived long enough to know that the law for the abolition of slavery was on the point

of being completed. Thus he received the reward of the labours of his long and virtuous life at the moment of his death.

Willy's holidays being now over, he returned to school, and it was a long time before he had an opportunity of renewing his conversation with his Mother.

THE END.

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