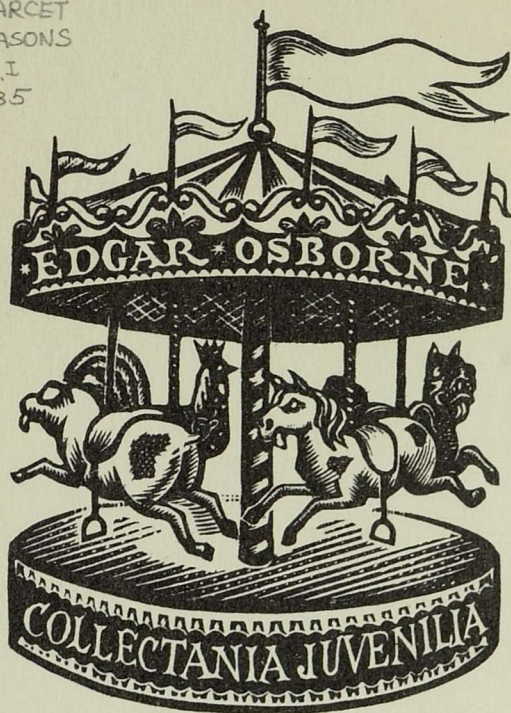
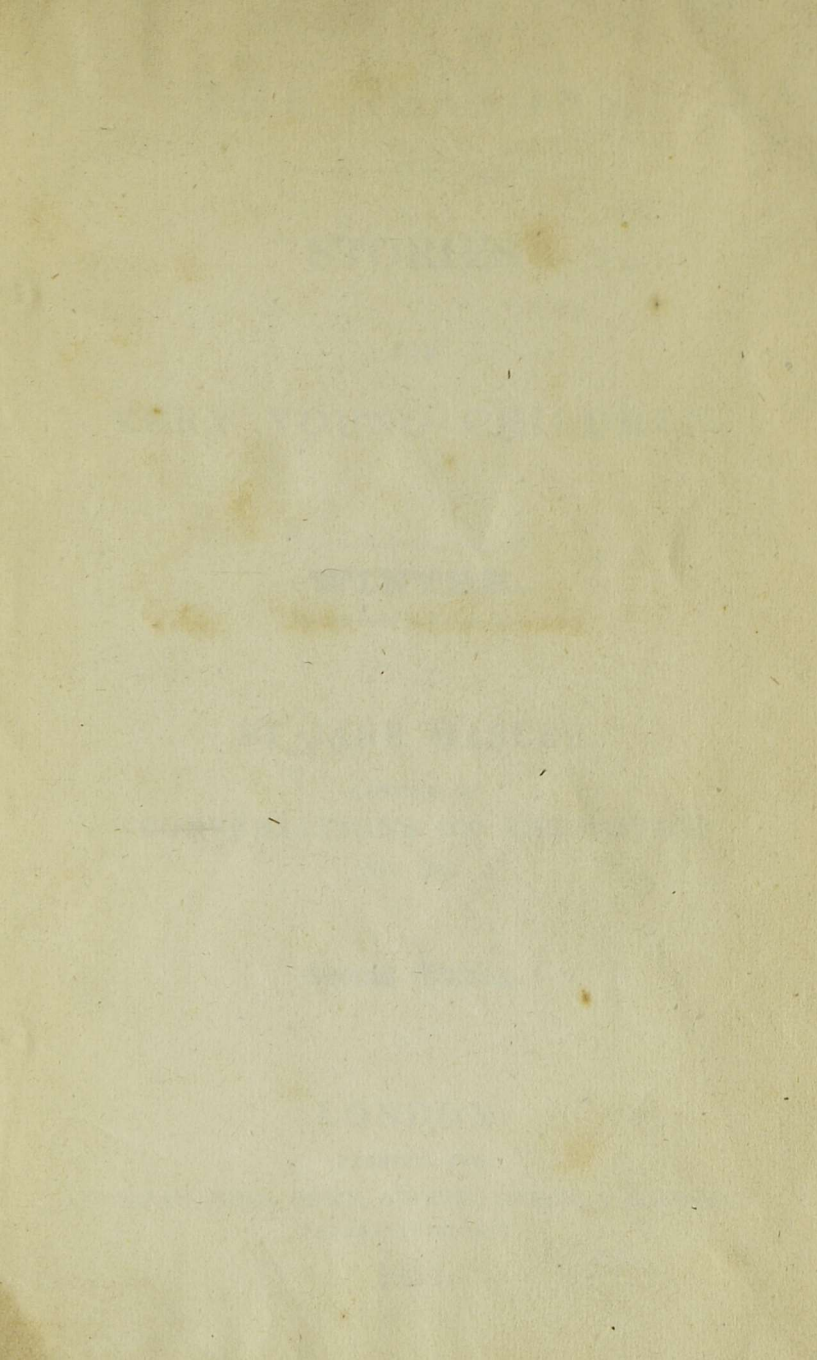


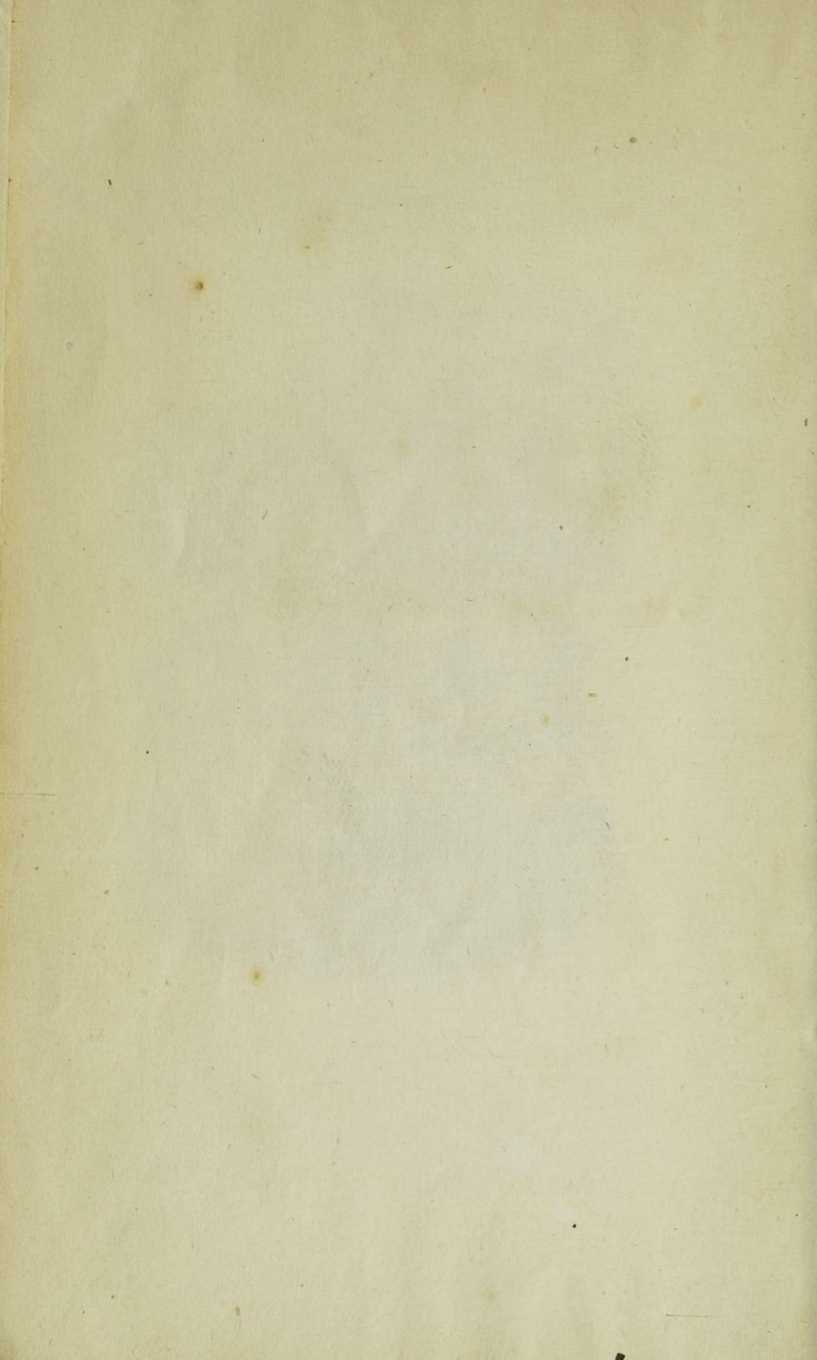
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THE SEASONS.

STORIES

FOR

VERY YOUNG CHILDREN.

WINTER.

BY JANE MARCET,

AUTHOR OF

“CONVERSATIONS ON CHEMISTRY,”

&c. &c.

Second Edition.

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STORIES

FOR

VERY YOUNG CHILDREN.

WINTER.

THE FALL OF SNOW.

“ OH, Mamma ! ” cried Willy, running into his mother’s room, “ come and look at the windows, see what a number of bits of paper are falling.” He then attempted to count them — “ One, two, three, four, five — oh, I can never count them, there are so many.”

Mamma, who was not yet up, began to rub her eyes, and looking at the window, saw that large flakes of snow were falling. She knew that Willy had seen snow the winter before, but he was then only three years old, and had forgotten it. As soon as she was dressed she opened the window, and told Willy to put out his hand and catch some of the white flakes which were falling; several fell into his hand, but before he could draw it in to show them to his Mamma they were gone.

“Where can they be gone, Mamma?” asked Willy; “I am sure they did not slip through my fingers, for I held them close

together, and they did not fly away, or I should have seen them go."

"No, my dear, they are melted by the warmth of your hand." Mamma then explained to him that what he saw falling was snow ; that snow was made of water, which, in winter, when the weather is very cold, freezes, and turns to snow. Willy said "that the snow had felt very cold to his hand." — "But your hand was very warm to the snow, and so it unfroze it, and turned it back to water." Willy looked at his hand, and found that the palm, on which the snow had fallen, was wet.

"That is the snow which the

warmth of your hand has turned to water, and that is called melting the snow."

Willy wondered, for all this was quite new to him.

"But look, Mamma; the snow on the ground is not melted?"

"Cannot you guess why, Willy? try — what was it made your hand melt the snow?"

"Why, Mamma, you said it was the warmth of my hand. Oh yes, I do guess it now; the ground is not warm like my hand, so it cannot melt the snow."

Willy could not help looking at the pretty flakes of snow. The snow fell so fast that the ground was soon entirely covered

with it, and he saw a number of little boys playing with it : they took it up in their hands and made it into balls, and then threw it at each other. At first Willy was afraid they would hurt each other, but when he saw that the ball of snow broke all to pieces when it struck one of the boys, and that the boy only laughed, and began gathering up the snow into a ball to throw back again at his play-fellow, he saw that the snow did them no harm. He also longed to go out to play with the snow ; but his Mamma told him he must wait, till the fall of snow was over, and then she would take him out, and he

should play with the snow that was on the ground. Willy was very impatient; he stood looking at the window, and thought the snow would never cease; but he was accustomed to obey, and to obey without grumbling.

“Where can all this snow come from, Mamma?” said he.

“From the clouds, my dear; those black clouds up yonder. They pour down rain, when the weather is not very cold; but when it is very cold the drops of rain are frozen into flakes of snow.”

“Oh how I wish the sun would shine,” said Willy, “and the snow fall no longer, that I might go out.”

“The sun does shine,” said his Mamma; “but you cannot see it, because those black clouds hide the sun from you.”

“Oh no, Mamma,” cried Willy, “there is no sun now any where; look all round, there is nothing but dark clouds.”

Mamma smiled, and lifting up her black silk apron, so as to hide her face, exclaimed — “Oh, poor Mamma, she has no more face.”

“Yes, but she has,” cried Willy, laughing and peeping behind the apron; “it is only the black apron that hides it.”

Just then the clouds began to part, and Willy saw a beam of sunshine coming from between

them ; and he said, “ I think, Mamma, I can get a peep behind the corner of the black apron that hides the sun.”

“ The sun always shines when it is daylight,” said his mother ; “ for it is the sun which makes the daylight.”

Soon afterwards the sun shone brightly, the snow ceased falling, and Willy ran to put on his things to go out.

“ I am ready, Mamma,” said he, as he came back into her room, with his hat on, and a warm shawl.

“ That will not do now, Willy ; you must ask Ann to put you on a great coat, for it is quite winter weather ; it is a frost,

and this shawl is not warm enough : besides, you must put on your little boots, for the snow would get into your shoes."

" I should not mind it if it did," replied Willy.

" Ah, but the warmth of your feet would do like the warmth of your hands, — it would melt the snow into water, which would wet your stockings ; and then, perhaps, you would catch cold, and be obliged to stay in doors instead of playing with the snow."

Willy thought he should not like that at all ; besides, having never worn a pair of boots, he wished very much to put them on for the first time. He thought

Ann was a terribly long time in lacing them, so impatient was he to be out ; and he began kicking about his legs to hurry her. But she told him that only made her longer, for while his feet were jigging about she could not get the lace into the holes, which were very small, the boots being new. So William found that the best way was to be quiet ; then Ann went on lacing as fast again, and had soon finished.

Willy strutted about in his new boots, showed Mamma how he looked like Papa in boots, thought himself a little man, and was so much pleased that he forgot the snow ; till Mamma asked him whether he had put

on boots to walk about on the carpet.

“ Oh no ! ” cried he, suddenly recollecting the snow ; “ let us go, Mamma ; let us go out directly.”

Then Mamma took his hand, and they went down stairs, and when they opened the street door, there came in such a cold wind, that Willy could not help exclaiming — “ Oh, how cold it is ! ” But he soon forgot the cold in the pleasure he took in trampling in the snow : he found that it was very soft, and that every step he took his feet made a deep print in the snow, for it was now lying about three inches thick on the ground.

“ Indeed, it would have been over my shoes,” cried he ; “ but it cannot get into my boots, they are so much higher, and they keep my feet so nice and warm ; but then, Mamma, my warm feet will melt the snow.”

“ No,” replied his mother ; “ there are your boots between your feet and the snow, and the warmth of your feet will hardly get through them. Besides, if it did, the melted snow would not get through your boots very easily to wet your feet.”

Then Willy began kicking up the snow, as he saw the other boys do to amuse themselves ; and he met Harry, one of his little friends, who was come out

to play with the snow also ; so they played together, gathering up as much snow with their hands as they could hold, and squeezing it together into a ball as hard as they could, and then throwing it at each other : they ran after each other with their snowballs, and played all sorts of gambols ; till, at last, Willy cried out — “ Well, I am sure it is hot enough now, and I don’t want my great coat.”

“ The weather is not at all warmer than it was,” said his Mamma ; “ but you have been running about so much that you are very hot, and if you pulled off your great coat now,

the cold air would blow upon you."

"Oh, how pleasant that would be!" cried Willy, interrupting her.

"But," continued she, "it would certainly give you cold, and perhaps oblige you to stay within doors."

Then Willy thought it better to keep on his great coat, though he was so hot. Just then Harry, running after him, threw him down, and he rolled about in the snow, crying out, "How nicely this cools me!"

But his Mamma would not allow him to remain there, and told him it was now time to go home. Willy was very, very

sorry to leave such pleasant sport, and begged so hard to stay a little longer, that his Mamma knew not how to refuse him, so she granted him ten minutes more ; and looked at her watch to know when the ten minutes would be over.

“ Harry,” said Willy, laughing, “ I wish I could get inside the watch, and stop it ! ” Then they agreed that, as they must soon go in, they had better each make a very large snowball, to take home with them ; and when Mamma called Willy, saying the ten minutes were over, he had made a snowball nearly half as big as his head, and he carried it home with him.

THE SNOWBALL.

WHEN he got home, Willy was in a hurry to set down his snowball, because it was very heavy: he was going to place it on the table, but Mamma cried out, "Oh no, not upon my table; it will make it all wet:" then Willy offered to set it down on the floor — "No, that will spoil my carpet."

"Well, then, Mamma, what am I to do with it?"

Mamma got a soup plate, and Willy put it in, and it looked like a large pudding in a dish.

"Is it good to eat, Mamma?"

“ It tastes like what it is, my dear, water,—which, you know, has not much taste.”

“ Then I think, Mamma, it is better to drink than to eat.”

“ You cannot drink it when it is frozen into snow,” said Mamma; “ but I will mix something with it, which will make it good to eat.” So Mamma went to the closet where the sweet-meats were kept, and she took out a pot of currant jelly, and mixed some of it with a little of the snow from the snowball, and then bade Willy taste it. It was very cold, so that Willy began by making a wry face; but as soon as he had tasted the sweet jelly, he thought it very nice.

“How chilled your hands are, my dear,” said his Mamma.

“Oh yes, indeed, my hands are almost frozen like the snowball; it was holding that ball, Mamma; it took all the warmth out of my hands. I am glad, however, they did not melt the snowball.”

“They have melted some of the outside,” replied his mother; “for see, your little hands are quite wet, and your gloves, I fear, quite spoiled.”

“Then you see, Mamma, the warmth of my hands got through the gloves to melt the snow, though the warmth of my feet could not get through my boots.”

“Your boots are much thicker than your gloves, my love.”

Willy could talk of nothing else all day long but the snow : he thought the trees looked beautiful, with the boughs laden with snow ; and when the wind blew some of it off, he said it looked like the powdered sugar that was strewed over his pudding. When he was sent into the nursery, he took his snowball with him, and begged Ann to take care that nobody meddled with it, for he meant to take it out with him to-morrow to play with. When he went to bed, he put the snowball in the plate on the chimney-piece, thinking it would be safer there than on the table, and he kept looking at it till his eyelids

were so heavy that he could keep them open no longer; but his thoughts were so bent on his dear snowball, that I make no doubt but that he dreamt of it. When he awoke next morning, however, he had forgotten it; but the sight of the plate on the corner of the chimney-piece nearest his bed soon recalled it to his memory, and he jumped up in his bed, crying out, "Oh! where is my snowball? who has taken away my snowball? The plate is empty." Ann declared no one had meddled with it. Willy was sure that since she had not, the dog or the cat, or some one or other, must have taken it. He began to be out of

temper, and was very near crying. His mother, hearing the child speaking in an angry tone of voice, came into the nursery to know what was the matter. As soon as he saw her, he burst into tears, and said — “ Oh, Mamma, my nice snowball, my great big snowball that you let me make yesterday, and I liked so much, is gone, and I cannot tell who has run away with it.”

“ I shall not let you make another,” said his Mamma, looking very serious, “ if, after amusing yourself with it one day, you cry about it the next. Come, dry up your tears, and I will show you what is become of your snowball.”

Willy quickly dried his eyes, for he thought his Mamma had found the snowball ; but that was not the case, — she could only explain to him how it had disappeared. She took the plate down from the chimney-piece, and showed him that it was full of water. “ Where do you think this water comes from, Willy ? ”

He looked very blank, and after a little thought answered, “ From my snowball. I suppose it is melted ; but how came it to be melted ? I dare say somebody has been holding it in his warm hands. Have not you, Ann ? ”

“ Not I,” replied Ann ; “ I

am not so fond of handling cold wet snowballs.”

“Then who can have done it?”

“Nobody, my dear,” said his Mamma. “Is there no warmth in any thing but hands that can melt a snowball? Look at that blazing fire, Willy, and tell me whether it is not hotter than anybody’s hands.”

“Oh, much hotter,” cried Willy; “but then it could not lay hold of the snowball—I mean, it did not touch it.”

“That is true, my dear; but tell me, when you warm yourself by the fire, do you touch it?”

“No, indeed,” replied Willy; “for if I did I should burn my-

self: besides, you know, Mamma, you do not let me go close to the fire; and you say I shall get warm enough if I go no nearer than the border of the rug."

"Though you do not touch the fire that burns in the grate, heat comes out of the fire and touches you, and warms you, and every thing else that it touches."

"Oh yes, Mamma, it warms all the room; and when I go into the passage, where there is no fire, it feels so cold."

"Well, if the heat from the fire warms all the room, I suppose it warms every thing in the room; does not it, Willy?"

“ Oh yes,” said Willy ; “ only feel the chimney-piece, Mamma, how hot it is !”

“ And what was it stood upon the chimney-piece, Willy ?”

Willy blushed, for all at once he thought that it was the heated chimney-piece which had melted his snowball; and he thought he had been very foolish to put it so near the fire, and very wrong to complain so much of its being melted, when it was all his own fault. “ Another time,” said he, “ I will place it at the furthest corner of the room, as far from the fire as possible.”

“ That will not do, Willy.”

“ Then, Mamma, I will hang my great coat on a chair before

the fire for a skreen, and the heat will never be able to get through that thick cloth."

"That will not do either, Willy," repeated his Mamma. "You said that the fire warmed the whole room, and there will be warmth enough in any part of the room to melt your snow-ball."

"Then, Mamma, I will put it out in the passage, where there is no fire at all, and it is so cold it cannot be melted there, I am sure;" and Willy began to jump about, quite pleased, and not a little proud, that he had at length found out a place where his ball would not melt. But when he was quiet, and looked at his Mamma

for approbation, he saw her smile ; but from the look of her eyes, he began to think that perhaps he might still be wrong. “ Why, Mamma, it is quite cold in the passage — as cold as possible ! ”

“ Do you remember, Willy, how much colder it was when you opened the street door ? Out of doors it is so cold that water freezes, and snow will not melt ; but in doors it is warmer, so that water will not freeze, and snow will melt. Your snowball would not have melted so soon as it did on the chimney-piece, if you had placed it at the furthest corner of the room. ”

“ And it would have been still longer in melting, if I had

put it out in the passage," said Willy.

"Yet still it would have melted," continued his mother, "unless ——" there his Mamma stopped to let Willy finish the sentence.

"Unless," cried he, "I had put it out of doors."

"You are right now," said his Mamma.

"Oh then, dear Mamma, let us go out, and I will make another snowball, and bring it home, and keep it out of doors."

"In doors and out of doors at the same time, Willy?" asked Mamma, laughing.

"Not out of doors, then, but out at the window; will not that do as well?"

“ Quite as well,” Mamma replied, “ for it will be in the open air. Whether you put it out by the door or out by the window can make no difference, so as it is out of the warm house.”

This being settled, they went to breakfast.

ANOTHER SNOWBALL.

As soon as Mamma was ready, after breakfast, she called Willy, and said, "Before we go out, one thing I must tell you, Willy — when I let you bring home a snowball yesterday, it was to amuse you and make you happy, not to make you cry, and even something worse."

"I know what you mean, Mamma," said Willy, colouring; "but if you will let me make another snowball, I promise that it shall not make me naughty any more, even if it melts again."

"It is easy to promise," re-

plied his Mamma ; “ but do you think you will be able to keep your promise, if you should again lose a snowball ? You are but a little boy, Willy, and I doubt whether you can command yourself yet.”

“ Command myself, Mamma ! how can I do that ? I know that you command me, and Papa commands me ; but how can I command myself ?”

“ Suppose that you felt as if you were going to be out of temper, or to cry, you should say to yourself, or think to yourself, — ‘ Willy, you must not cry, you must not be cross ; it is wrong to cry, it is wrong to be naughty ; ’ — that is the way to

command yourself—but that is not all, you must also know how to obey when you command.”

“ Oh, Mamma, I know how to obey commands ; I am used to obey you and Papa, so I shall know how to obey myself.”

“ Well, my dear, we shall try ; but I assure you it is not very easy for a little boy of your age to be able to command himself, and to keep a promise.”

“ Indeed, Mamma,” said Willy, “ I am not such a *very* little boy ; you know, I shall be four years old next birth-day ; and I am three years older than Sophy ; and Ann sometimes says that I am a great big boy.”

“ Whether you are big or little

I do not much care ; but whether you are good or naughty I mind a great deal."

" Well, Mamma, only try, and you will see."

" I will, my dear," replied his Mamma.

They then went out, and found that a great deal more snow had fallen in the night, which made it so deep on the ground that Willy could hardly lift up his feet to walk through it, and when he tried to run, down he was in the midst of it ; but this was only fun to him, for the snow was as soft as a feather bed : he scrambled up again as well as he could, when something came and knocked him down

again. It was a good hard blow he got, but still it did not hurt him ; and when he looked up, he saw that it was a great lump of snow which had fallen from the branch of a tree over his head.

“ Indeed, my dear, we must not stay here,” cried his Mamma. “ I shall have my bonnet and cloak spoiled more even than if the snow were falling from the clouds, for then it comes in light flakes ; but from the trees it falls in great masses.” So she took Willy to a part of the walk where there were no trees, and there he made his snowball, and brought it home, and put it out at window : he would gladly

have kept the sash of the window open, but this Ann would not allow; so he stood at the window watching his ball through the panes of glass, and he saw there was no water in the plate, so he thought to himself—"My ball is safe; it does not melt; I shall keep it a great long while to play with;" and he jumped about for joy, and once or twice, when Ann was busy about the room, he ventured to open the sash for a moment to feel his ball, and it was quite hard, and so cold, "so very cold, that I am sure it is not melting," said he.

The worst of it was, that when night came the shutters were shut, and he could see his

ball no longer. He wished sadly to take it in, and could not help thinking it would be safer within doors, than left out there all alone, in the cold and the dark. He asked Ann, but she fell a laughing: — “The cold is just what suits it, my dear; if you take it in, it will be sure to melt as it did yesterday.” So Willy was obliged to make up his mind to let it remain out all night; but when he went to bed, and had wished his Papa, and Mamma, and Ann, good night, he went to the window, and opening a fold of the shutter, said, “Good night, snowball; now mind you don’t melt before to-morrow morn-

ing." But, alas ! the poor snowball did not mind, or rather it could not mind ; for the next morning the sun shone very bright, and its rays fell full upon the snowball ; and, though it was winter, the rays were warm enough to begin melting the snowball : first they melted the surface, that is, the outside, and made the snowball quite wet ; then the water which came from the melted snow dribbled down into the plate, and the sunbeams, which became warmer as the sun rose higher in the sky, melted the next surface, and every surface that was melted the ball became smaller and smaller, till, when Willy awoke

and got up, it was dwindled away, so that it was no larger than an apple. Poor Willy was wofully disappointed: the colour came into his cheeks, and the tears into his eyes, when he suddenly recollected the promise he had made his Mamma, not to put himself out of temper about the second snowball; so he tried all he could, and winked his eyes to prevent the tears from falling; and he said to Ann, who was dressing him, “Now, I am not naughty about the snowball, am I?”

“No,” replied she; “you bear it like a man.”

This praise gave him spirits; and as soon as he was dressed,

he ran to his Mamma, told her that his ball was almost quite melted, but that he had not cried about it, nor even been out of temper.

“ I am very glad of that, my love,” said Mamma, taking him on her knees and kissing him. “ Now I see that you can remember your promise, and keep it, I shall trust you another time.” And Willy thought how much happier he was when his Mamma kissed and caressed him than when she was vexed and angry with him, as she was when he cried for the loss of the first snowball.

THE SUN.

“MAMMA,” said Willy, “did not you say that the snowball would not melt if I left it out in the air?”

“I did, indeed, Willy; but I forgot the sun, and forgot to tell you that you should have placed it in a window on which the sun did not shine in the morning; for the sun’s rays are so warm, that they will melt the snow, more or less, though it freezes very hard.”

“But,” replied Willy, “the sun shines on all the windows, Mamma.”

“ On all that are on this side the house ; but run into the dining-room, and see whether it shines in at the windows there.”

Willy set off as fast as he could go, for he was always fond of a scamper ; and when he reached the dining-room, there was no sun shining in at the windows ; and he went and looked out through every one of them, but could not see the sun up in the sky. “ I wonder what is become of it,” thought he to himself ; “ for there are no clouds to hide it.”

Then his Mamma showed him that the sun could not be on both sides of the house at once. “ But it will move round

to the other side of the house, and shine in at the dining-room windows in the afternoon," continued she; "so that the room will be warm by dinner-time."

"It is very cold now," said Willy, "though there is a fire: much colder than this room."

"We have here not only a fire, my dear, but the sun shining in at the windows; so no wonder that it is warmer here. This room looks towards the east."

"The east! — what is that, Mamma?"

"The east is where the sun rises in the morning; and the west is where it sets in the evening. Can you remember that?"

"I will try, Mamma."

So, in order to get it by heart, he began singing — “ East and west, east and west.”

“ Oh ! ” cried Mamma, “ if you make a song of it, you must turn it into rhyme.”

“ I don’t know how, Mamma : will you make a song of it for me ? ”

So Mamma reflected for a minute or two, and then she said to Willy, “ My song asks a question of the sun, —

“ ‘ The east or the west — which like you the best ? ’ ”

Then the sun answers —

“ ‘ The east when I rise, when I’m setting the west. ’ ”

“ But that is all make-believe, Mamma ; for the sun cannot

hear what you say, and it cannot answer you."

"Oh yes, my dear; there is a great deal of make-believe in verses."

"But how does the sun set, Mamma? — what does that mean?"

"I will show you from the windows of the dining-room, this evening, my dear."

In the afternoon, while Willy was playing in the nursery, his Mamma called to him to come and see the sun shining in at the dining-room windows.

"Oh, oh, Mr. Sun!" cried Willy; "you are coming to pay a visit in this room now, are you?"

Then Willy slipped away in a hurry ; and his Mamma wondered what he was gone for. Willy was gone to see whether the sun still shone in at the drawing-room windows as it did in the morning ; but he found it was not to be seen there. So he came back, and told his Mamma he understood how the sun had moved in the sky, and come over to the other side of the house. “ How red it looks, Mamma ! — What is the matter with you, Mr. Sun ? I hope you are not in a passion.”

“ No,” said Mamma, laughing at Willy’s fun ; “ but he often looks red when he is going to set.”

“ Why, Mamma ? ”

“ That would be too difficult to explain to you, my dear, till you are much older than you are now.”

“ Oh, now, pray do, Mamma,” cried Willy, coaxingly : “ you know I always understand what you explain to me.”

But Mamma gently shook her head. So he added, “ Almost always.”

“ That is true,” said his Mamma ; “ but it is because I do not explain to you what is too difficult for you to understand. Look, Willy, at those beautiful red clouds : it is the sun shining on them which makes them look so red.”

“ They look, Mamma, almost as if they were on fire, burning.”

“ No,” replied she, “ they are not burning ; they are made of water, just like the black clouds which hid the sun this morning.”

“ Were you ever up in the clouds, Mamma, to see what they are made of ?”

“ No, my dear ; but sometimes the clouds come down to us. The first time they do, I will call you to see them.”

“ Oh ! I shall like that very much, Mamma : but are you sure they will not fall upon my head, and hurt me ?”

“ Yes, my dear,” said Mamma, smiling ; “ I should not call you to see any thing that would hurt

you.—Now the sun is just going to set, Willy. Look ! it is going down behind the hill yonder.”

“ In the west, Mamma: I don’t forget that when the sun sets it is in the west. And is it gone to bed there ?”

“ No,” replied she: “ people say sometimes that the sun is gone to bed ; but that is make-believe, or fun.”

“ Then, where is it gone, Mamma ?”

“ It is gone to make daylight in other countries a great way off: it would not be fair if it always stayed with us, and left other places in the dark.”

“ No, indeed,” cried Willy: “ besides, we do not want its light

when we are asleep at night : so we can spare it then very easily.”

“ Yes,” said Mamma ; “ we will let it go to make daylight in other countries while we are asleep.”

Willy thought for a moment, and then exclaimed, — “ How funny, Mamma ! Then the sun makes it daylight in those other countries when it is dark here ? ”

“ Yes,” said she : “ the sun cannot be here and there at the same time : so when it is daylight here, it is dark night there ; and when night comes here, it is because the sun is setting, — that is, going to shine in another country.”

“ There ! it is going, Mamma.

Good night, Sun ! Oh, no ; I must not say good night, Sun, for it is never night to the sun, but always day ; for wherever he shines he makes it daylight. — Then, Mamma,” said Willy, “ the little boys in the country where the sun is now going are not going to bed, I suppose ? ”

“ No, my dear ; they are just getting up ; they are just beginning to see the sun. And what do you say when you are beginning to see the sun ? ”

“ Ann showed it to me the other day ; and she said, ‘ Jump out of bed, Willy, and come and see the sun, it is just rising.’ ”

“ Well, then,” continued Mamma, “ now that it is set to us,

the little boys in the country it is gone to see it just rising ; and perhaps their nurses may call to them to jump up and look at it. But, Willy, you must be off to bed now ; and, perhaps, you may awake to-morrow morning early enough to see the sun rise, when it returns to us.”

“ Oh yes, Mamma ; and then the little boys in the country it leaves will be going to bed ! How funny that is ! ”

Then he sprang on his Mamma's lap to kiss her, and ran up to bed.

SLIDING ON THE ICE.

THE next morning, Harry came to play with Willy. He was very glad to see his little friend ; but yet he looked downcast, for he could not help thinking of his snowball. He told Harry the disasters that had happened to his two snowballs ; and then added, “ It was to show it to you, Harry, I wished so much it should not be melted ; and I thought how nicely we could have rolled it about together. It was so large, Harry ; you cannot think how large ! ”

His father just then came into

the room, and his mother told him how well Willy had behaved upon the loss of his snowball ; and Willy was pleased to see his father look at him smiling, and his eyes shining bright, as he knew they did when he was happy.

“ Well, Willy,” said he, “ since you are a good boy, I shall take you and Harry to a place where you will be amused.”

“ Where is it ?” cried the two boys at once ; “ where can it be ?”

“ Patience !” cried Papa : “ you will know in good time. Go, Willy, and put on your hat and greatcoat : you see Harry is ready, for he has not taken off his.”

Willy tripped away, and was equipped for his walk in a few minutes ; and off they set, full of impatience to know where they were going. But they could not get on fast on account of the quantity of snow : in some places it was so deep, being drifted by the wind, that they were up to their knees, and Papa was obliged to lift them out. They now and then stopped to gather up snow to make into snowballs, and throw at each other ; but they were too impatient to see where they were going, to detain Papa on the way. They turned first to the right, then to the left ; at length they came to a turning in the road which the boys re-

collected, because it led to to a pretty round pond; which Harry said always put him in mind of his book of verses; and he repeated to Willy —

“ There was a round pond, and a pretty pond too,
And about it wild daisies and buttercups grew.”

“ And can you read that in your book ? ” said Willy.

“ Oh, yes,” replied Harry; “ and a great many other pretty verses.”

“ How I wish I were five years old,” cried Willy, “ that I might read pretty story-books ! ”

“ But,” replied Harry, “ you will not read at five years old

unless you try to learn. There's old Ralph, who works in our garden — I dare say, he is near forty years old, and he cannot read, because he never learnt; and he sends all his children to school, that they may learn. He says he is so sorry not to be able to read himself."

"Poor old man!" said Willy. "But I learn to read though I do not go to school; Mamma teaches me."

"And why cannot you read, then?" asked Harry.

"Oh, because I only learn my letters; but I know them all now pretty well; and I begin to spell some little tiny words, such as cat, hat, bat."

“ You are a fine scholar, indeed ! ” cried Harry, laughing : “ if you do not make more haste, you will never be able to read story-books when you are as old as I am.”

“ Well, I will try to take more pains when I am at my lesson. Mamma says that my head turns like a whirligig when I am reading, and that I look at every thing but my book.”

“ That is not the way to learn to read,” said Harry.

“ Well, Harry, you shall see how quiet I will be, and what pains I will take when we go home, and Mamma hears me my lesson.”

They now came within sight

of the pond. — “ Oh ! Papa,” cried Willy, “ I know now where you are going to take us ; it is to the pond yonder, to play at ducks-and-drakes (a game which both the boys were very fond of) ; but why did you not bring Mamma too ? she plays at ducks-and-drakes better than anybody ; she can make the stone jump in and out of the water five or six times running.”

“ But I am not going to take you to play at ducks-and-drakes, Willy.”

“ Oh, do, pray, Papa,” said Willy, in a supplicating tone : “ only just for a little while ; we are so near the pond ; and Harry is as fond of throwing

stones into the water as I am. Are you not, Harry?"

Harry readily assented. Then Papa smiled, and said,—“Well, boys, you may play at ducks-and-drakes if you can.”

“We can, a little, Papa. I can make a stone jump up out of the water once, sometimes, but not always, I know; but Harry can do it better than I can, because, you know, he is older.”

“Well, we shall see,” said Papa, laughing; “but I doubt your making a stone rebound from the *water* either of you to-day.”

As they approached the pond, they observed there were a great many people standing round

about it ; and, when they got very near, Willy cried out in a tone of affright, — “ Oh, dear Papa, look at all those boys in the pond ! — they will be drowned ! I am sure they will be drowned ! ” And the tears rushed to his eyes.

His Papa said, “ Don’t be afraid, Willy ; I assure you there is no danger.”

Then Willy (who had not dared to look at them) opened his eyes as wide as they could stretch, to be sure that what he saw was real ; for it looked as if the boys were walking on the water, just as if it had been dry ground. “ How can it be, Papa ? ” cried Willy : “ is the water hard, and can they really walk upon it and not fall in ? ”

“ Yes,” said his father ; “ the cold weather has frozen the water, and turned it into ice ; and ice is solid and hard, so that you may walk upon it ; and it is very slippery, so that you may slide upon it also. Look at those little fellows !—they set off with a run, and then slide away.”

Willy’s fear was by this time so completely gone, that he not only looked at the boys walking, running, and sliding, but begged his Papa to let him also go on the hard water.

“ It is true that it is hard water,” said his Papa ; “ but it is much shorter to call it ice.”

He then took them on the pond : and Willy, when he felt

how slippery it was, held fast by his Papa's coat ; but Harry, who had often walked on ice before, could manage very well for himself.

“ And is all the water in the pond hard, Papa ? ”

“ No,” replied his father ; “ only the surface ; that is, the upper part of the water. When first the weather is cold enough to freeze water, it is called a frost : but, then, no one could venture to walk on the ice ; for it is so thin, that, if you stepped on it, it would break, and you would fall into the water underneath. But, every day, a little more, and a little more of the water freezes ; till, after several

days, the ice grows thick enough to bear your weight. That is the case now: the frost has lasted about a week, and you see the ice is thick and strong enough to support the weight not only of boys but of men also."

His Papa then showed him a piece of the ice which had been broken, on purpose to see how thick it was: and he took hold of his hand, and ran with him as the other boys did, and finished the run with a slide. Harry followed, and could run and slide alone.

"What fun this is!" cried Willy; "I like it much better than playing at throwing stones in the water. Don't you, Harry?"

But Harry did not hear what he said ; or, if he heard, he did not attend to it, for he was busy looking at a great boy who was fastening something on his feet, over his shoes : it looked like pieces of iron ; and, when he had finished, he got up and began sliding on the ice, quite in a different manner from the others. He did not begin by a run, but fell sliding first on one foot, then on the other ; and went so fast, and it looked so pretty, that Willy began jumping and laughing, as he always did when he was much pleased.

“ Oh, do look at that man, Papa, how funny he is : he leans so much on one side, that I fancy

he is just going to tip over ; then he stretches out one of his arms, and that brings him back again."

" Yes," replied his father : " when he leans so much, he is too heavy on one side, and would certainly fall if he did not stretch out his arm on the other side : that makes him heavier on that side, and so brings him upright again."

" But, look, Harry, he seems as if he was always going to fall on one side or the other."

" Yet he never does," replied Harry : " so you may see he knows how to manage it ; and it looks very pretty to see him swing about so."

" Is it those iron things which

he has fastened to his feet that make him slide about in that manner?"

"Yes," said his Papa; "it is called skating, and the irons are called skates. Look, now! he is moving on the ice in the form of an S."

"Oh, what a great big S!" exclaimed Willy. Then turning to Harry, he said,—"You see, Harry, I know the shape of an S."

"Indeed," replied Harry, "if that is all, you are but a bit of a dunce."

Willy coloured, and well he might; for was it not foolish, knowing so little, to boast of what he knew?

He wanted sadly to have a pair of skates. "You would not know how to use them if you had," said his father: "it requires more strength and more cleverness than you have, my dear. Some things are fit for little boys, and others for great boys, and others for men: it is quite enough for you to slide, I think."

So off Willy set for a slide; he was in too great a hurry, and down he fell. He scarcely hurt himself (I believed only bruised his elbow a little), and he was up on his feet again in an instant.

"So, Willy, you want to learn to skate before you know how to

slide," said Papa, laughing; and he patted him on the head, and showed him how he should manage to slide without falling. When they had had a few more slides, he told them it was time to go home: and, indeed, it was full time; for what with the sliding, and what with walking through the deep snow, when they reached home they were quite tired. They were very eager, however, to tell Mamma all they had seen, and all they had done too; for, if he could not skate, Willy was not a little proud of being able to slide, though it had cost him a fall or two.

When they had finished their story, Mamma said that it was now time for Willy to say his lesson.

“What! now that I am tired, Mamma?”

“Well, then, rest a little first.”

But just then he recollected what he had said to Harry about taking pains to learn to read. So he ran and fetched his book immediately; and did not look off from it to see what was passing in the room, above once or twice: once when the door opened. How could he help turning round to see who it was came in? It was only the footman, who came to put some

coals on the fire. "It was not worth while to look off for that," thought he; "so if the door opens again, I will not turn my head." But, soon after, a carriage stopped before the house; and as he was standing close by the window, he could not help taking a peep to see what carriage it was.

However, when the lesson was over, his Mamma said he had been much more steady than usual, and that he was a good child.

"It was all because I want so much to read in story books by myself, Mamma, like Harry."

"That is a very good reason," said his mother; "but I hope

you wish to mind your lessons to please me also."

"Oh yes; I will another time, dear Mamma," said he, stretching out his little arms to embrace her; "but to-day I was thinking so much about Harry's story-books, that I thought about nothing else."

TEA TABLE TALK.

ONE morning that Willy was in the parlour at breakfast-time, he enquired what was all that smoke which came up out of the tea-urn.

“It is not smoke,” said his Mamma; “it is steam.”

“It looks just like smoke,” cried Willy.

“No, not exactly, for it is white, and smoke is more frequently black.”

“Then what is steam, Mamma?”

“It is made of hot water, my dear.”

“ I do think every thing is made of water,” cried Willy. “ Snow is made of water, and ice is made of water, and steam is made of water.”

“ There is this difference,” said his Mamma; “ water is turned into snow and ice, when it is very cold; and water is turned into steam when it is very hot.”

“ But, Mamma, it is not very hot to-day, I am sure: look, there is snow falling as fast as it can fall.”

“ The weather is not hot, certainly,” said his Mamma; “ but the water in the urn is very hot, for it has been boiling over the fire for our breakfast, and the

steam rises from that." Mamma then held a teaspoon over the steam, and the steam was stopped by the teaspoon, which in a short time was covered with it; and the steam was cooled by the cold teaspoon, and turned to water again, — small tiny drops of water; but Willy saw that it was water, and he not only saw it but he felt it too, for he put his finger into the spoon, and felt that it was wet.

"This is not a cold teaspoon, Mamma," said he; "for it has almost burnt my finger, it is so hot."

"It was cold before I put it into the steam. What do you think has made it so hot now?"

“ Oh, the hot steam, to be sure ! ”

“ Then you see, Willy, the steam has warmed the spoon, and the spoon has cooled the steam, and turned it into water.”

“ Now, Mamma, let us catch a little of the smoke that is going up the chimney, and see if the spoon will not turn that into water.”

Mamma took another spoon, and held it in the smoke, and after some little time the bright silver began to look dingy, and then it was covered with little blacks. Willy touched it, and said, “ No, it is not wet ; so smoke cannot be made of water.” Then, looking at his fingers, he exclaim-

ed, " Oh, Mamma ! how I have dirtied my fingers with these nasty blacks ! "

" No wonder, " answered his Mother ; " for these little blacks are very small bits of black coal that fly up from the coal while it is burning : it is the heat of the fire which changes them into smoke. "

" Then, Mamma, " said Willy, " though smoke is not made of water, it is like steam in one thing, for it rises up because it is so hot. "

" Very true, " said his Mamma ; " coal is turned into smoke by heat, just as water is turned into steam by heat. "

Mamma then began pouring

out the tea, and Willy observed that the water she poured out of the teapot was of a yellow colour, and the water she poured into the teapot was quite clear and without any colour.

“ I wonder what happens inside the teapot, Mamma,” said he ; “ for the water goes in white and it comes out yellow. I think you must have some yellow paint in the teapot to change its colour so.”

“ No,” said Mamma, laughing ; “ I should not like tea if it were made of paint. You know, Willy, that paint is not good to eat or to drink.”

“ Oh yes, Mamma ; for when you are painting you will not al-

low me to put the paint to my mouth; no, nor even my fingers, if I have daubed them with paint."

"Well," said Mamma, "I will show you what it is that makes the water yellow." She opened the tea-caddy, and showed him the tea within it. "You know, Willy, that when I make tea, I take out a few teaspoons full of this tea, and put it into the tea-pot; then I pour water from the urn upon it; and it is the tea that makes the water yellow."

"But the tea is black, Mamma, so it ought to make the water black instead of yellow?"

"The colour of the tea leaves, it is true, is dark, rather of a

greenish-brown colour, but the juice within the leaves is of a yellow colour; and it is that which colours the water."

"Leaves, Mamma! What do you mean by leaves? I see none. The tea in the caddy looks like little bits of dry—I don't know what—dirt, I think."

"But let us see, Willy, what it looks like, after it has been in the teapot." So she opened the lid, and took out some of the tea with a spoon, and she spread some of the little bits of dry dirt, as Willy called them, upon a plate; and he was quite surprised to see that they were leaves, or rather pieces of leaves, for there were half leaves and

quarters of leaves; but they could scarcely find one whole leaf. He saw clearly, however, by their shape that they were leaves, and by their colour, for they were green. Then he compared them with some of the tea in the caddy, and exclaimed, "They do not look like the same thing!" He tried to unrol some of the dry tea, and spread it out upon the plate, as Mamma had done the tea she had taken out of the teapot, but it broke all to pieces, it was so brittle.

"How can there be any juice in this dry tea, Mamma?" asked Willy. "I am sure there is nothing wet or even sticky in it."

"The juice is dried up in it,"

replied his Mother, “but the hot water melts it, and when it is melted it comes out of the leaves into the water and colours it; and then we call the water tea.”

Willy wondered that the green tea leaves should make yellow tea.—“Then I dare say, Mamma, strong tea is when there is a great deal of the juice melted and mixed with the water, and weak tea when there is only a little.”

“Just so,” said his Mamma. “And how do you think I contrive to make it strong or weak?”

“Why, you pour it out first for me, I know, Mamma, before there is much juice melted, and

then you let it wait longer in the teapot for you and Papa, for more juice to melt, and then it looks stronger."

"Yes," said Mamma; "the more juice is melted the stronger it tastes of tea; but strong tea is not good for little boys: so when I treat you with a little tea, I pour it out before much juice is melted."

"Do, pray, Mamma, give me a little of the dry tea out of the caddy."

Mamma enquired what he wanted it for.

"Oh, that is a secret, Mamma: I cannot tell you now, but I will by-and-by."

Then his Mamma gave him a

teaspoon full of tea, and he ran away with it into the nursery. His Grandmamma had given him a set of doll's tea-things, and he thought he should like very much to make some tea in his tiny teapot, and take a teacup of it to his Mamma. He begged Ann to get him a little sugar, and a little milk ; and while she was gone to fetch some, he put the tea into the pot, and poured some water out of the water-jug over the tea ; and as soon as Ann returned with the sugar and milk, he poured out the tea. — “ This will never do for Mamma,” thought he ; “ it looks like plain water. I must let it wait longer in the pot, to melt more of the

juice ;” so he waited and waited, and then tried again ; but it would not do : he could not make the tea strong ; and he was quite vexed, and began to feel cross, because he was disappointed in the pleasure he expected of surprising his Mamma by bringing her a cup of nice strong tea ; so, instead of thanking Ann for the trouble she had taken to fetch him the milk and the sugar, he spoke to her quite out of temper.

“ If you behave in that way, Willy,” cried Ann, “ do not ask me to go for what you want another time. I will fetch and carry willingly for good children, but not if they are cross.”

Willy now found out that he really was cross : he did not know it before, because he was thinking of nothing but his disappointment. So he remembered what his Mamma had told him, and thought, “ Now I will try to command myself not to be cross, and instead of being out of temper about the tea, I will go and ask Mamma why I cannot make it strong ; but then I cannot surprise her with my nice tiny cup of tea : that is a great pity ; but being cross will do no good.” So he went to his Mamma, and told her all about it ; and she explained to him that the reason he could not make good strong tea was, because he

had used cold water instead of hot water. "Now," said she, "cold water will not melt the juices, at least not nearly so well nor so quickly as hot water; and the water must not only be hot but boiling to make good tea."

The next morning, when Mamma was at breakfast, she called Willy to bring his little teapot, and make some tea with the hot water from the urn. Willy ran to fetch his teapot; but when he opened the lid to put in the tea, he found that it was full already.

"Oh, I forgot to empty the cold water tea," cried he; and he emptied it into the slop basin, and was surprised to see that the tea was of a strong yel-

low colour. "Look, Mamma!" he cried, "the cold water has melted the juices of the tea leaves at last."

"Yes, it has; but it has taken all day and all night to melt them, and now it has made cold tea; and I think hot tea this cold weather is much better."

Willy then made some tea with hot water in his little teapot, and it was as good as that which his Mamma made in the great teapot.

"You will not ask me for any tea from my teapot to-day, Willy; you have got enough in your own."

"Oh, but I shall, Mamma," cried Willy; "because I want

you so much to drink a cup of my tea; that was the secret; and I meant to surprise you, and bring you one of my tiny cups on a little waiter: would not that have surprised you, Mamma? and when I could not make the tea strong, I was so sorry that I had very near—you know what, Mamma?” said he, looking down and blushing.

“ Well, I am very glad it was only very near, Willy: I suppose you commanded yourself to be good.”

“ Yes, Mamma; and I obeyed so well, that the tears went back again into my eyes, and I did not cry.”

“ That is a good boy,” said his Mamma, giving him a kiss. —

THE SPARROW.

“ OH, Mamma! Look at that little bird, hopping about on the balcony,” said Willy.

“ Poor little bird !” said his Mamma; “ now all the ground is covered with snow, he does not know where to find any thing to eat.”

“ Poor little bird !” repeated Willy, in a tone of compassion : “ let us give him some of our breakfast.”

His Mother told him the bird would not like tea ; but he might gather up some of the crumbs of bread on the table-

cloth to give him. Willy was in such a hurry to feed the bird, and made so much noise in running to the window, that he frightened the bird away.

“It is gone, Mamma! Flown quite away! — Oh, you foolish little bird! I am sure you thought I was going to hurt you, and I was only going to give you some good breakfast.”

“Oh, foolish little Willy!” said Mamma, “to make such a noise, and frighten away the bird. How could the bird know what you were going to do? perhaps he thought you were going to catch him, and keep him in a cage. If he had seen the bread, and you had made no noise to

frighten him, I dare say he would have stayed to eat it."

"I will throw the crumbs on the balcony, Mamma; perhaps he is only perched upon one of the branches of that tree; and if he sees the crumbs he may come back again."

When Willy had strewed the bread, Mamma shut the window so gently, that it made no noise, and Willy stood quietly looking to see whether the bird would come back again. In about five minutes, which Willy thought a long time, he saw the bird fly out of the tree and perch upon the balcony, coming on, hop, hop, hop; looking first on one side, then on the other, to

see if there was nothing to fear. Willy went on tiptoe up to his Mamma, who was writing, and, pulling her sleeve, he whispered so low that his Mamma could not hear what he said; but she guessed that it was to tell her that the bird was come back again; so she looked up, and saw it hopping up to the bread, and then it put down its little beak and picked up one crumb of bread, and then another. Willy was so much pleased, and so afraid of frightening the bird away, that he scarcely moved or spoke, till at length he said,—“How much I should like to have that nice little bird in a cage, Mamma.”

“But the bird would not like it at all, Willy.”

“Oh yes, he would, Mamma; I should give him such good breakfasts and dinners, and keep him warm, instead of his flying about in the cold snow, where he can find nothing to eat; I should love him so much, that, I dare say, he would grow fond of me too.”

“I do not think he would grow fond of you, if you took him away from the birds he loves: perhaps he has a mother, and he would be very sorry to see her no more: do not you think so, Willy?”

“Oh yes; I should not like

any body to take me away from you, Mamma, I am sure."

"Well, then, I believe, he would be happier, my dear, flying about in the cold snow, and getting very little to eat, than to be shut up all alone in a cage, though you loved him ever so much, or fed him ever so well." Just then the sparrow (for that was the name of the bird), having picked up the last crumb of bread, hopped once or twice, to see if there were any more, and finding none, it stretched out its little wings, and flew back into the tree.

"Mamma," said Willy, "I dare say that tree is its home, for you see, it is gone there

again ; and if it lives there, it can see when I strew crumbs of bread on the balcony ; so I might feed it every day, without putting it in a cage.”

“ That is a very good plan, my dear : if the bird finds bread every morning, I dare say he will come and fetch it, and you will have the pleasure of seeing him, and of doing him good, without shutting him up.” The next morning the crumbs were spread on the balcony, and the bird popped down from the tree to pick them up : this continued several days, till at length the little bird, finding that Willy did him good and no harm, was no longer afraid of him, so that

Willy could go close up to him; and at last the sparrow would come and peck the bread out of his hand.

“Mamma, I think he is lame, for he does not walk with both his legs; he hops about.”

“Little birds hop instead of walking; and they commonly go to sleep for the whole night, perched on one leg on the branch of a tree.”

“Oh, how tired they must be, Mamma!”

“I do not think they are, for if they were, they would stand on both legs or lie down.”

“I am sure I should be tired,” said Willy.

“But then you are not a bird,

Willy ; you are not made like a bird ; and you do not feel like a bird."

" How I should like to be made like a bird, Mamma, and have wings, and fly about in the air, and perch upon the branches of the trees."

" And should you like to put your mouth down to the ground, to pick up all you eat."

" Oh no, indeed : the poor bird has no hands ; I should not like at all to have no hands ; for I could not play with snow-balls, nor draw my cart, nor turn over head and heels, nor—I do not know how many things."

“ You would not be able to turn over the leaves of a book without hands ; but, perhaps, you would not much mind that.”

“ Yes I should,” cried Willy ; “ for I could not look over the book of pictures without turning over the leaves. Then, Mamma, you know, I mind my lessons much better than I did. — Well,” continued Willy, after thinking a little, “ it is better to have hands than to have wings like a bird. I wonder whether the sparrow would like to have hands better than wings ?”

“ Oh no ; he would not know what to do with hands ; and he would not know what to do without wings. » He lives up in

the trees, so he wants wings to fly there. Wings are best for birds, and hands for little boys."

"There is my little sparrow again," said Willy; "I think he must be hungry, and want some more bread." He then begged Mamma to open the window; and whilst he was throwing crumbs of bread to the bird, he saw a large cat at the other end of the balcony, looking as if she was silently watching the sparrow. "Oh, Mamma," cried Willy, "there is pussy coming to play with the bird."

Just as he said this, the cat gave a great spring, and jumped upon the sparrow; but it was not to play with it, but to kill it and

eat it, for cats are very fond of eating birds when they can catch them. Willy heard the poor little bird squeak, and flutter its wings, and soon found that the cat was not at play with it, but hurting it; so he ran to drive away the cat. The cat ran away, but carried the bird in its mouth, which was squeaking all the while, as if he was calling Willy to save him. Luckily Mamma, who heard what was passing, came to the balcony in time. She held a stick in her hand, with which she gave a blow to the cat, which made it drop the bird, and run away without it. Willy picked it up; and the poor little bird trembled so that

Willy was afraid the cat had hurt it sadly ; but Mamma felt its little bones, and found there were none broken. — “ I hope he is only frightened,” said she : “ we will lay him in a warm corner on the sofa, and by-and-by, I dare say, he will be well again.”

“ Oh, if that naughty cat comes again,” said Willy, reddening with anger, “ how I will beat him !”

“ No,” said his Mother ; “ that would be wrong ; I struck the cat to save the poor bird ; for if he had carried it away, he would certainly have killed it and eaten it : but cats, when they

are not fed in the kitchen, live upon mice and birds, so you should not be angry with them for it; it is natural to them to do so."

THE THAW.

ONE morning, Mamma called Willy, and said, "I promised, my dear, to show you when a cloud was falling: look out at the window, and you will see one now."

Willy ran to the window, in a great hurry, to see what he thought must be so strange a sight. He looked first up in the skies; then he looked to the right, and then to the left: nowhere could he see any thing falling.

"Why, Willy, where are your

eyes?" said Mamma: "*I see a great many things falling.*"

"Where?" enquired Willy, eagerly: "I can see nothing at all but drops of rain."

"Well; and what are drops of rain made of?"

"They are made of water," replied Willy.

"And what are the clouds made of?"

"Why, you said, Mamma, they were made of water too."

"Well, then, my dear, when a cloud falls, it does not come down plump upon your head like a pail of water, as you were afraid it did, but it falls in drops, and those drops are called rain."

“ How funny ! ” cried Willy.
“ Then rain is a cloud tumbling down to the ground ? ”

“ Yes, it is, my love ; but it is called a cloud only when it is up in the skies ; and rain, when it falls to the ground. ”

“ And, up in the clouds, is it in drops, Mamma ; or all in one, like a pail of water ? ”

“ In drops, ” replied his mother, “ much smaller drops than rain : it is more like the little drops that we caught in the tea-spoon when we held it over the steam. ”

“ Oh yes, I remember, ” cried Willy ; “ and I said, how many things are made of water ; and now I see there are a great many

more things made of water, Mamma: there are the clouds, and rain, ay, and tea, too; I was forgetting that: but the steam put me in mind of it."

"And can you remember what were the other things made of water?"

"Oh yes, I think so," said Willy: "there is steam, and ice, and snow." Willy then thought a moment, and afterwards said, "Why, Mamma, you said that snow came from the clouds; so snow is a cloud falling as well as rain, is it not?"

"Yes," replied Mamma; "snow is a cloud falling when the weather is so cold that it freezes the rain, and turns it into

snow : and rain is a cloud falling to the ground when the weather is warmer, so that water will not freeze."

" Oh then, Mamma, the weather must be warmer to-day, for you see the clouds come down in rain, and not in snow, as they did yesterday ?"

" That is true, my dear : the weather is warmer to-day ; and all the frozen water, that is, all the snow and ice, is beginning to melt."

" Oh, what a pity," cried Willy : " I shall not be able to play with snowballs any more."

" Perhaps it may freeze again some other day," said Mamma : " besides, there is so much snow

on the ground now, that it will take a long time to melt the whole of it. The warm weather melts it little by little, as the sunbeams melted your snowball by degrees; and I dare say it will be many days before all the ice and snow is thawed."

"Thawed!" repeated Willy: "what does that mean?"

"To thaw means to melt something that is frozen. When the weather is warm enough to melt frozen water, it is called a thaw; and when it is cold enough to freeze water, it is called a frost."

"I like a frost better than a thaw," said Willy, "because of the snowballs, and sliding on the ice."

“ You cannot tell yet, Willy, till you know what you may find to like in a thaw.”

“ Look, Mamma!” said Willy, “ what a number of little holes the drops of rain make in the snow ; it does not look half so pretty, and white, and smooth, as it did when there was a frost.”

“ The rain melts the snow,” said his mother : “ every drop that falls on it melts a little bit of snow ; and that makes all those little holes in it.”

Willy asked Mamma to open the window ; and he was surprised to find how much warmer it felt out of doors than it was the day before. “ Do you remember,” said he, “ when we

opened the window yesterday, what a cold wind came in? — and now there comes in a warm wind.”

“Yesterday it was a frost, Willy, and the weather was cold; and to-day it is a thaw, so the weather is warmer.”

Willy then stretched his right hand as far as he could out of the window. His Mamma asked what he was doing; and he replied that he was trying to catch some drops of rain, to feel if they were warm. After trying for some time, he caught a few drops. “No; they are not warm,” said he: “how, then, can they melt the snow? I know that the warm nursery, and the

warm chimney-piece, and the warm sunbeams, melted my snowball ; but how can these drops of rain, which feel quite cold to my hand, melt the snow ?”

“ The rain feels cold to your hand, because your hand is warmer than the rain ; but it would feel warm to the snow, if snow could feel,” said Mamma, laughing, “ because the snow is colder than the rain.”

Mamma then took a little snow, and put it into Willy’s left hand, and asked him which felt warmest, the snow or the rain.

“ Oh, they are both cold,” said Willy ; “ but the rain is not so cold as the snow.”

“ That is to say, the rain is the warmer of the two,” said his Mamma: “ and, being the warmer, it thaws the snow ; and the warm air which you felt blowing in at the window thaws the snow also.”

“ And if the sun shone, that would thaw the snow too, Mamma ?”

“ Yes,” answered Mamma. She then showed Willy a great number of carts, and of men who were very busy shovelling up the snow, which they put into the carts ; and as soon as one of the carts was full, the driver cried out, “ Gee-ho, Dobbin !” and the horse trotted off with the load of snow.

“ I think those men are very foolish,” said Willy, “ to take so much trouble to carry away the snow : if they would but wait a little, till the warm air, and the rain, and the sunshine had melted it into water, it would run away of itself, as the water runs down the gutters in the street.”

“ I am afraid, Willy,” said his Mamma, “ if the men heard you they would say, ‘ That little boy must be very foolish to think he knows better than grown-up men ; and to fancy that we should do all this hard work if it was not wanted. I think it would be better to ask the reason why we take away the snow.’ ”

“ *Why*, then, Mamma ?” said Willy, colouring at having made so silly a speech.

“ Because, my dear, when all this snow is melted, it will make such a great quantity of water that the gutters will not be large enough to hold it ; so it would overflow all the streets, and run down the areas into the kitchens, and the kitchens would get half full of water. What would the cook say to that, do you think, Willy ?”

“ Perhaps, she would cry out that she was afraid of being drowned, Mamma.”

“ Oh, no ; she would get all her pots and kettles, and fill them with water, to empty the

kitchen. Well, but don't you think it better all those poor men should carry away the snow before it melts?"

"Oh, yes," replied Willy; "only the poor men must be sadly tired, it seems such hard work. I am sure, if I was helping them with my little spade, I should give up before now, I should be so tired."

"But those men are much older and much stronger than you, Willy; so they are not tired so easily as you would be. Then, when you work it is to amuse yourself, and when you are tired you leave off; but these men work to get money: they are paid for the hard work they do."

“ And what do they want money for, Mamma? They are too big to play with toys ; so I think they would not go to the toy-shop to buy toys.”

“ They want the money for things that men want as well as children ; they buy meat and potatoes for their dinner, and milk and bread for their little children’s breakfast and supper : so they are very glad to work, that they may earn money to buy food for themselves and their children.”

“ Oh, that is the reason they work so hard,” said Willy.

“ Yes,” replied his mother ; “ for the more they work, the more money they get.”

“ And the more dinner they can buy,” said Willy : “ so I don’t wonder that they don’t leave off even if they are a little tired.”

Willy now observed that the icicles, which hung down from the roofs of the houses and the doorways, were all dripping with wet. “ Ah ! the rain and the air is melting them, I suppose,” said he ; “ and, as they melt, the water comes, dribble, dribble, from them : they will be all gone soon, like my snowball.”

THE NAUGHTY BOY.

THE next morning, when Willy got up, he saw the sun shine brightly. "Ah!" thought he, as he was dressing, "the thaw will go on now faster than ever: I am sure those hot sunbeams will melt the snow."

After breakfast, his Papa said to him, "If you would like to go and slide once more on the ice, there is no time to be lost; for the ice must be melting so fast, that, very soon, it will be too thin to slide upon without danger of its breaking."

"Oh, let us go, then, directly," cried Willy; and he ran

to put on his things, and was back again in a minute, crying out, "Papa, I am ready ! make haste !"

But his Mamma stopped him, saying, "I think, my dear, now that it thaws, you will be too hot in that great-coat, especially if you slide on the ice."

"Oh no, Mamma," cried Willy, impatiently ; "I am sure I shall not."

"I believe that I know best," replied his Mother ; "so go and ask Ann to take it off, and put on your warm shawl."

"I don't know where Ann is," said Willy.

"Well, then, go and look for her."

“ Oh dear, it will take up so much time, we shall be too late, and the ice will be melted.”

“ I do not think it will,” replied his Mother, looking a little grave; “ but, whether it is or not, you must be obedient, Willy: so go directly, and do as you are bid.”

Willy was so vexed not to set off immediately, that he felt quite cross and angry. Cross and angry with his Mamma, who loved him so dearly; that was worse than being naughty with Ann. He had very nearly, in his passion, said, “ I’ll not;” but he recollected himself in time, and he stopped just as he was going to say the words: the co-

lour rushed into his cheeks, and the tears swam in his eyes, but he stopped them, and they did not fall. His Mamma took him up on her knees, and gave him a kiss which surprised him very much. "I thought, Mamma, you would be angry with me."

"I was going to be angry when you were going to be naughty, my dear; but I saw how much pains you took to command yourself, and that pleased me more than your beginning to be out of temper displeased me. So now, my love, run and put on your shawl, and go with Papa."

Willy was so glad that his Mamma was pleased, and that

he had got the better of his ill temper, that he felt quite happy.

When they drew near to the pond, they saw there were a great many children sliding upon it.

“ Oh, Papa, we are in time,” cried Willy; “ the ice is not melted : look what a number of boys are sliding upon it.”

His Father observed that there were no skaters. “ I suppose,” said, he, “ that the ice is not strong enough to bear the weight of men ; but that it will still support children, who are not half so heavy as men.”

They went on the pond, and Willy amused himself very much,

sliding. At last a man came and said that the ice began to crack. All the little boys were called to come away; and you heard nothing but voices of the fathers and mothers, calling their children: — “Come away, Sam;” “Come away, John;” “Come away, Tom;” and I don’t know how many more: and they all came away as they were bid, except one little boy, whose name was Dickey, and he said to himself, “There is no need to be in such a hurry. I should like to stay and take one slide more when they are all gone, and I shall show that I am braver than any of them, staying the last.” So though his Father and Mother,

who were both there, called and called again, Dickey would not come away.

“ I wonder his Father does not go and fetch him away,” said Willy, who had come back one of the first.

“ The ice is too thin to bear the weight of a man,” said his Papa ; “ so he would perhaps fall in himself, without doing any good.”

At length every body called after Dickey so loudly, that he began to think he must leave the pond. “ But,” said he, “ I will have one more slide back,” and off he set. Just as he was in the middle of his slide the ice broke, and down he fell into the water

underneath. Nothing was heard but screams from every one around, for they thought poor Dickey would be drowned. His Mother cried as if she would break her heart, but his Father ran as fast as he could go, and fetched a long rope, which he coiled round at one end, and then taking aim very carefully, flung it into the hole in the ice, into which Dickey had fallen. Poor Dickey was almost drowned: the water covered him all over, and got into his mouth, and nose, and eyes, and ears, so that he was nearly choked; and he was just sinking to the bottom, when he saw the end of a rope dangling over his head. He

seized hold of it, and then his Father, who held the other end, pulled him up, just as you would pull a fish out of the water.

Willy, who had all this time been sobbing for grief, thinking that poor Dickey must be drowned, was quite rejoiced to see him pulled out, though he looked more dead than alive. His hair and clothes were dripping with wet, his eyes were shut, and he could neither speak nor hear what was said to him.

They then set him upright, and his Mother took off all his wet clothes, and wrapped him up in a warm blanket. Dickey, who all this while seemed as if he was asleep or dead,

began to feel again, and he opened his eyes ; then his Father and Mother were overjoyed, and said, “ He is not dead ; he is come to life again ; and he will get well.” They gave him some warm wine to drink, and he got better, and began to speak. And he said, “ Where am I ? What is the matter ? ”

“ He cannot remember what has happened to him,” said his Father.—“ Why, you have been half drowned at the bottom of the pond, and frightened us all out of our senses ; that you have.”

“ Well, do not scold him now,” said the Mother. “ I am sure he has been punished enough.”

Then Dickey remembered what had happened, and he fell crying, and said, "He had deserved it all; and he would never be so naughty again."

His Mother carried him home in her arms, and put him into a warm bed, and sent for the doctor; and Dickey was obliged to lie in bed a long time, and take medicines to make him well.

"I dare say he will never disobey his Papa and Mamma any more," said Willy, when he had reached home, and had told the sad story to his Mamma.

"I hope not, indeed," replied Mamma; "he has had a severe lesson."

A few days after, they went to

enquire how he was, and they found him a great deal better; but he was very much ashamed of what he had done; and his Mother said he had promised so well for the future, that she really believed he would not be disobedient any more.

“ You see,” said Willy’s Mamma, “ how foolish it was of you, Dickey, to think that you knew better than your Father and Mother; and how much you have suffered for it.”

“ Were you sadly afraid,” said Willy, “ when you were in the water?”

“ Yes, indeed I was,” replied Dickey. “ I thought I should be drowned; for the water got

into my mouth and choked me, and I could not breathe; I don't think I shall ever like to go near a pond again."

"There is no need to be a coward," said Willy's Mamma: "it is foolish to be too bold, as you were when you stayed sliding on the pond by yourself; and it is as foolish to be afraid of a pond, if you are prudent, and do not run into danger."

They then took leave of Dickey and his mother, and returned home.

THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

PART I.

ONE morning Willy was awakened by a noise in the chimney, and looking up he saw that the fireplace was covered over with a cloth. "What is that for, Ann?" said he. Ann told him that one of the sweeps was gone up the chimney to sweep it; that the noise was made by his sweeping and brushing away the soot from the sides of the chimney, and that the cloth was put up against the fireplace to prevent the soot from falling down into the room. Just then they

heard a rattling noise. "There," said Ann, "he has got to the top of the chimney, and he is beating his shovel and brush together to show that he is at the top."

"Oh, how funny it goes, rattle, rattle, rattle! How I should like to see him, Ann!" said Willy, running to peep behind the cloth.

"You cannot see him up the chimney," said Ann, "because it is quite dark; but have a little patience — he will be down in a minute."

Willy thought the minute lasted a long time; but at length the boy reached the bottom of the chimney, and lifting up the

cloth, made his appearance. He had a brush in one hand and a shovel in the other, and was all black from head to foot, except his eyes and his teeth, which looked uncommonly large and white.

Impatient as Willy had been to see him, he could not help drawing back when he appeared.

“Why you are not afraid of me, Master,” said the sweep; “I shall not hurt you, and I shall not dirty you if you do not touch me.”

By degrees Willy became reconciled to the black boy, and he asked him how he contrived to get up to the top of the chimney?

“ Oh, that is easy enough,” replied the boy.

“ Do you think I could get up ?” asked Willy.

“ No,” said the boy, “ because you have not been used to it. When I first began to sweep chimneys, it was very hard work, because I did not know how to climb ; I was but a little boy then, and I was sadly afraid of going up the dark chimney : but I was obliged to go, or my master would have beaten me ; and now I think nothing of it.” He then asked whether there were any more chimneys to sweep, and Ann said, “ No ; I believe not.”

“ You are sorry for that, I

dare say," cried Willy; "for Ann says that you are paid a shilling for every chimney you sweep."

"I am never the better for the money I take," replied the boy; "for I am obliged to give it all to master."

"And does not he give you any thing?" said Willy.

"Nothing but my meat and drink, and little enough of that either."

Just then Willy's breakfast was brought; and while he was eating it, he thought, "I wonder whether the sweep has had his breakfast this morning:" so he went to ask him, and finding he had not, he ran and fetched his basin of bread and milk, and offered

it to the boy. The sweep, who had already swept several chimneys that morning, and was very hungry, took hold of the basin with both his hands, and swallowed a good deal of it. He then returned it to Willy, who would gladly have eaten the rest, but he saw two such black marks on the basin, where the sweep's hands had held it, and such a large one on the rim where he had been drinking, that he did not like to take any more of it; so he told the boy he might drink the rest if he liked it, which the sweep was very glad to do. Just then a servant came in, and told the boy that the drawing-room chimney was

to be swept also. "Oh! I am sorry for that," said Willy.

"I do not mind it now," replied the boy; "I am the more ready to set to work, after so good a breakfast."

Willy went to see how the boy got up the drawing-room chimney; and he found that he rested his back against one side of the chimney, and his knees against the opposite side, and then working with his elbows and knees, he contrived to get up. Ann then took Willy out into the street, and told him to look up to the top of one of the chimneys, and by-and-by they saw the sweep's black head popping up from the top of the chimney,

and afterwards his two arms; then they heard his shovel and brush go clatter, clatter, clatter, as they had done before. When they returned into the house, Willy found his Papa and Mamma at breakfast; and when he told them that he had given the sweep half his breakfast, his Mamma poured him out a cup of weak tea, and gave him some toast to eat with it. He then asked her what the soot came from, which the sweep found in the chimney.

“It comes from smoke, my dear,” said his Mamma. “Do you remember what smoke is made of?”

“Oh yes, Mamma,” replied

Willy ; “ I remember I fancied that it was made of water, like steam, and then you told me it was made of little tiny pieces of coal which flew off from the coals in the grate while the fire is burning.”

“ Well, then,” said his Mamma, “ some of this smoke comes out at the top of the chimney, as you may see if you look at the top of the chimneys of that house yonder ; but some of the tiny bits of coal of which smoke is made stick against the sides of the chimney, and this is called soot, and more and more sticks to the sides of the chimney every day, till at last the chimney gets so dirty, that if the soot

were not swept away it would take fire."

"The sweep could not get up while the fire was burning, Mamma, could he?"

"Oh no, my dear; it is bad enough as it is. I cannot bear to see those poor boys go up the chimneys, for fear of some accident."

Whilst they were talking about it, they heard a noise, and the footman came running in to tell them that the sweep had fallen down the chimney, and hurt himself very much.

"Oh, the poor sweep!" cried Willy; and he ran, with his Papa and Mamma, into the dining-room. There they found the

boy lying on the floor; his foot had slipped whilst he was coming down the chimney, so that instead of crawling down by degrees, he fell plump all at once, and had hurt himself so much by the fall, that he was crying with pain, and could not bear to be moved. They sent for the doctor, who felt him all over, and said that he had broken the bone of one of his legs, and that it must be set.

“What is that, Mamma?” asked Willy.

“It is,” replied she, “bringing the two pieces of the bone that is broken close together, and binding them round very tight, so that they cannot separate;

then they will grow together again, and the boy will be well."

Willy seemed quite pleased; for he thought the boy would be well as soon as the doctor had set the leg; and he was very sorry when he found that he must lie in bed many weeks before the broken bone would grow together again.

"May he not lie in bed here, Mamma," said Willy, "and then I can play with him to amuse him?"

But his Mamma told him she would send him to a great house called an hospital, which was built on purpose for poor people who were ill; and that there were doctors and nurses to take

care of them, and that his Father and Mother would go and see him there.

“How sorry his Father and Mother will be,” said Willy; “and then he says they are so poor.”

“I will take care of them,” said his Mamma, “and I will take you with me to see them.”

Papa then came, and told them that the doctor had set the poor sweep’s leg, and that he had behaved very well; for though it gave him great pain, he had borne it manfully.

“Oh! I must go and bid him good-by, poor boy,” said Willy; and he went with his Mamma.

The boy was placed on a flat thing like a small bed, called a litter, and Willy went and wished him good-by, and told him he hoped he would get well soon. The boy thanked him ; then two men took up the litter, and carried him away, just as a sedan chair is carried.

THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

PART II.

THE next day Willy's Mamma took him with her to go and see the father and mother of the chimney-sweeper; they were very poor people, and lived in a small cottage, with very little furniture. The poor mother cried sadly, and Willy's Mamma tried all she could to comfort her, and gave her some money to buy breakfasts and dinners. Willy was so sorry for the poor sweep and his mother that he too began to cry. "Think if you can do any thing for the boy, my dear," said

his Mamma, "that will be better than crying."

"No I cannot," sobbed Willy; "I cannot give him some of my breakfast now he is gone to the hospital."

"He will have as much breakfast and dinner too there as will be good for him; but could not you send him something to amuse him?"

"Oh yes," cried Willy, brightening up at the idea of amusing the poor sweep; "I will send him my cart and horse that Grandmamma gave me. No, that will not do," added he, after thinking a moment; "for as he must lie in bed quite still all day, he cannot draw it about."

“ Can your son read ? ” said Willy’s Mamma to the poor woman ; “ for we could send him some pretty story book, which he could read lying in his bed.”

“ Ah ! I wish he could,” said the woman ; “ but I have never been able to send my children to school.”

“ What a pity ! ” said Willy ; “ story books would have amused him so much ; but, Mamma, suppose I send him my book of coloured prints ; only I hope he will not make such dirty marks upon it as he did on my basin of milk.”

“ Never fear, master,” said the woman ; “ he was well washed before he was put to bed at the

hospital, and his hands are as clean as yours are now."

"Then, Mamma, I think he might play at cup and ball in bed, that would not make him move his leg."

So it was agreed that Willy should send his book of prints, and his cup and ball, to the hospital; but his Mamma regretted very much that the boy had not learnt to read; "for," said she "he will soon be tired of playing with the cup and ball, and of the prints too, when he has looked them over three or four times; whilst, if he could read, he would never have been tired, for when he had read one story two or three times, he might

read another, and there is no end to the amusement it would give him."

"What a pity not to know how to read!" said Willy to himself. "I will make haste and learn."

Just then the sweep's father came home. He had been to see his son at the hospital; and said that he was as comfortable there as he could be, and very well taken care of: and he and his wife both thanked Willy's Mamma for being so good to their son, and for giving them money. "And we must thank young master, too," said the woman to her husband, "because he is so sorry for our poor boy, and he is

going to send him some pretty pictures to amuse him."

Willy's Papa went sometimes to the hospital to enquire after the boy, and found he was getting better and better.

"But he has been getting better so long, Papa," said Willy, "that he ought to be quite well now, I think. When will he be quite well?"

"He is very well in health now," said his Papa; "but if he were to walk upon his broken leg before the two pieces were grown together quite strong, it might very likely break again: you must have a little patience, Willy."

A few days afterwards, Papa

came home, bringing with him a little boy, clean and nicely dressed. Willy thought he had never seen him before, and wondered who it could be.

“ You do not know me, master, now I have a clean skin and a set of new clothes, thanks to that good gentleman,” said the boy, pointing to Willy’s Papa.

“ What, are you the sweep,” cried Willy, “ and quite well ? How glad I am ! but how could I know you ? you do not look like the same boy, all black and dirty as you were.”

“ He will not be black and dirty any more,” cried Willy’s Papa. “ He is to go down to our country house, to help the gardener to

weed, and the farming man to drive the cows ; I have settled it all with his father and mother."

" Then I shall see you when we go into the country," said Willy ; " and I will help you to weed in the garden, and to drive the cows to be milked. I like driving the cows of all things ; and then Ann takes a basin, and gives me some milk warm from the cow ; and I shall give you some. You will not grime my basin with your dirty fingers now. Then," continued Willy, " how glad you will be to sweep no more chimneys. You said you did not like sweeping chimneys."

" No, that I don't," answered

the boy ; “ and since I have had such a sad fall, I should hate it worse than ever. But if I had stayed with master, he would have beaten me till I went up.”

“ I have promised him,” said Willy’s father, “ that if he is a good boy, and works well, I shall give him some money to send to his mother.”

“ Oh, how I wish it were summer,” cried Willy, “ that we might go into the country, and see you work in the garden, and help you too. You will like Mark, the gardener ; he is very good natured, and lets me work where I like ; only I do not know how ; but next summer you will teach me.”

“That I would willingly,” cried the boy, (whom we must no longer call sweep, but by his name, which was Johnny Barton,) “but I must first learn myself; for sweeping chimneys and working in a garden are very different things.”

“That they are indeed,” said Willy, laughing: “I am sure you will like the garden best; such pretty flowers and such nice fruit; but you must not gather any without Mark’s leave, or else he will be angry.”

“He will, I am sure, obey Mark in every thing,” said Papa; “so now bid him good-by, for he is going off by the waggon.”

Willy shook him heartily by

the hand: "I think you don't walk quite well yet," said he.

"No," replied Johnny; "I limp a little yet; but my leg will soon be strong."

"Mind not to break it again," said Willy; and he went with him to the door of the house, where the waggon was waiting: he climbed up very gently, for fear of hurting his leg; and then the driver called out, "Gee ho, Dobbin,"—and off they drove.

"Who will sweep the chimneys, now Johnny Barton is gone?" said Willy.

"I shall never allow a chimney of this house to be swept by a boy again," replied his Father;

“ it is too dangerous for the poor fellows.”

“ But Mamma says the chimney will take fire if it is not swept when it is very dirty.”

“ That is true, my dear. But chimneys can be as well swept by brooms as by boys.”

“ But must not a boy hold the broom, Papa? a broom cannot sweep by itself.”

“ A sweep holds it; but he does not go up the chimney. This is how it is managed: the broom, which is made to fit the chimney, is put up from the bottom, where the grate is.”

“ Has the great broom a handle long enough to go up to

the top of the chimney?" enquired Willy.

"Not when it is first put up," replied his Father; "but the man who holds it has a great many pieces of broom handles, which can be fastened to each other; so, when he has pushed the broom up the chimney as far as it will go, he joins on another piece; and then the handle being longer, he can push it up further; he then adds another piece, and so on, till the broom reaches the top."

"What a long handle that must be!" exclaimed Willy.

"That depends on the height of the chimney," said his Father. "If the chimney is very high,

the broom must be very long. The dining-room chimney requires a longer broom than the bed-chambers; because the bed-chambers, being up two pair of stairs, are much nearer the top of the chimney; therefore the sweep will not have to join on so many pieces of handle."

"Then the kitchen chimney," said Willy, "which is quite down stairs at the bottom of the house, must have the longest handle, for the broom to reach up to the top."

"Yes," said his Father; "and when all the pieces of handle are joined together, the sweep begins to pull the broom downwards, and as it descends it

brushes against the sides of the chimney, and sweeps down all the soot. So the chimney-sweepers who use this sort of broom or brush need never go up a chimney, and there is no danger of any accident happening to them."

"Then they are not all black," said Willy, "as Johnny Barton was."

"They are very dirty, at least," replied his Father; "for the soot falls upon them a good deal whilst they are pulling down the broom."

THE NEGRO.

“WHEN will it be summer, Mamma?” said Willy, as he was looking out of the window watching the clouds; “I want so sadly to go and see Johnny work with Mark.”

His Mother told him it would not be summer yet for a long time; but that some day when the weather was very fine they might, perhaps, drive down to their country house. This pleased Willy very much, and he began to be impatient that the snow should all be melted,

and that the rain should be over, and the sun shine, to make it a fine day.

“ It is not very long ago, Willy, when you were sorry that the snow should melt, and that winter should be over.”

“ But then, Mamma, I did not know the chimney-sweeper would go and work with Mark.”

“ And perhaps,” replied his Mother, “ when summer comes, you may find other things to like besides Johnny Barton.”

“ Oh, Mamma! look at that great chimney-sweeper standing up behind the coach there, dressed in such fine clothes, and not at all dirty, except his hands and his face. I wonder how he

can get up a chimney, he is so big."

His Mamma laughed, and said, "He is not a chimney-sweeper, my dear."

"Oh, but he must be, Mamma, for his face is blacker than Johnny Barton's was, and his hands too."

"That is true; but he is not a sweep for all that. The colour of his skin is black, just as the colour of your skin is white."

"But the colour of every body's skin is white, Mamma."

"Of every one who lives in this country, my dear; but there are some countries, a great way off, where the colour of every body's skin is black, like that man's."

“How I should like to go to that place, Mamma: how funny it would be to see men all black.”

“I have never been there myself, and I do not think you ever will, it is so far off.”

“But could not we go there in a carriage, Mamma?”

“No,” said Mamma; “not even in a carriage.”

A sudden thought struck Willy, and he exclaimed, “I dare say it is one of the places the sun goes to when we are asleep; is it not, Mamma?”

“Yes, my dear; there are a great many places to which the sun goes to make daylight when it is night here, and the country that man came from is one of

them. The people who live in that country are called Negroes."

"And if that Negro was to drink out of my basin of bread and milk, would not his mouth dirty it, nor his hands either?"

"Not in the least; his hands and face are as clean as yours, though they look so black. Every thing that is black is not dirty. Do you think Grandmamma's black silk gown is dirty?"

"Oh, no," said Willy; "that it is not. Nor the black inkstand, unless I drop some of the ink upon it."

"Well," said his Mamma, "if you are very desirous of seeing some more Negroes, though

I cannot take you to their country, I can show you some of them here."

Then she rang the bell, and ordered the carriage; and as soon as it was ready, John opened the door, and let down the step, and Willy and his Mamma both got into the carriage. The coachman then whipped his horses, and they began to trot. They went a long way, and at last they stopped at a large house. John opened the door, and they got out.

"What house is this, Mamma?" asked Willy; "is it where the black men live?"

"It is a school, my dear," said his Mamma, "where boys and

girls go to learn to read and write; and among the boys there are some Negroes."

They then went into a large room, the largest Willy had ever seen. It was filled with rows of benches, and on the benches sat a number of boys, some big, some little, and they were all learning lessons. Some were learning to read, others to write, and others to spell; and they made such a noise, all repeating their lessons, that Willy could not hear a word. All at once the master of the school rang a bell; and at that instant every one was silent. The room was as quiet as if there was nobody in it.

“ See, Willy,” said Mamma, “ how obedient they are ; they know that when the bell rings they are to be quiet.”

She then went and spoke to the master, and asked him to show her the Negro boys that were in the school. The master took them to a form, where there were four black boys ; and they talked to Willy, and shook hands with him, and showed him that their hands were not dirty, though their colour was black.

“ And how did you come from your country, such a great way off ?” asked Willy.

“ We came in a ship,” said one of the boys ; “ and we were a great many days coming.”

“ And what did you come for such a long way ? ”

“ We came to learn to read and write, and a great many other things. We have no schools in our country. ”

“ And do the little boys there do nothing but play about all day ? ”

“ Yes, ” returned the black boy ; “ but then when they grow up to be men, they have learnt nothing ; so they can do nothing well. They do not know how to build houses, nor to make clothes, nor to cook dinners half so well as you do here. ”

“ Then, I dare say, you like this country best ? ” said Willy.

“ No, I do not, ” said the

boy : “ because it is so cold. In our country we have never any ice or snow ; it never freezes ; and here I am almost frozen to death.”

“ But you cannot make snow-balls, and you cannot slide upon the ice,” said Willy. “ I should not like your country.”

“ Oh but you would, for it is always summer with us ; and we have plenty of nice fruit and pretty flowers. Then we bathe and swim about in the water when we are too hot ; and we climb high trees ; and it is much more pleasant than this cold country. But I like to learn here, and then when I go back I shall teach the other black people.”

“ Can you learn to build houses and make clothes, and all that,” said Willy, “ at this school ? ”

“ No,” replied the boy ; “ but when we have finished learning to read and to write here, I am to go to another place to learn how to build a house.”

“ And I,” said another of the boys, “ am to go and learn to make shoes.”

“ And I,” said a third boy, “ am to go and learn how to make carts and ploughs.”

“ And I,” said the last, “ am to learn to work in the fields.”

“ What a deal you will all know,” said Willy ; “ and how glad the black men will be to

see you come back again to teach them.”

Whilst Willy was thus chatting away, his Mother was talking to the master, who told her that the negro boys were as good, and learnt as well as any of the white boys. The master then clapped his hands, and all the boys stood up; and after that they came from their seats, and marched all round the room, two and two together, just like soldiers. Then they all went to read; but they had no books: their lessons were printed on large pieces of pasteboard, which were hung up against the wall; and they stood in groups of six or eight boys, to read from

these pasteboards. But what amused Willy most was to see the boys learn to count. They had a great number of small red balls strung upon a wire; and the wires were fastened against the wall; and every time they counted *one* they moved one of the red balls, till they came to ten, and then they moved a yellow ball, which was strung upon another wire; and every one of the yellow balls reckoned for ten. Willy's Mamma promised to buy him a set of these balls, to teach him to count. "But remember," said she, "they are not to roll about and play with, for you cannot take them off the wire."

“ I think it is play to push them backwards and forwards on the string,” said Willy.

As they were going away, Willy observed a boy, who sat on a high bench, quite alone, with a very odd sort of cap on his head; and he was crying.

“ What is the matter with that little boy ? ” whispered Willy to his Mamma.

“ He has been naughty, my dear, and to-day he is not allowed to learn his lessons with the other boys. He wears that cap to show that he has been naughty.”

“ I dare say, then, he is ashamed to wear it, and cries for that. Perhaps he cries because he is sorry to have been naughty.

And will he stay there when the other boys go home?" said Willy, looking pitifully at the crying boy.

"We will ask the master," replied his Mamma.

She then enquired what he had done wrong.

"He has been disobedient," said the master: "he would laugh and talk when I rang the bell to order silence."

"Are you sorry for your fault?" said Willy's Mamma to the boy. "If you are, I will ask the master to forgive you."

"Yes," said the boy, sobbing: "I'll not do so any more."

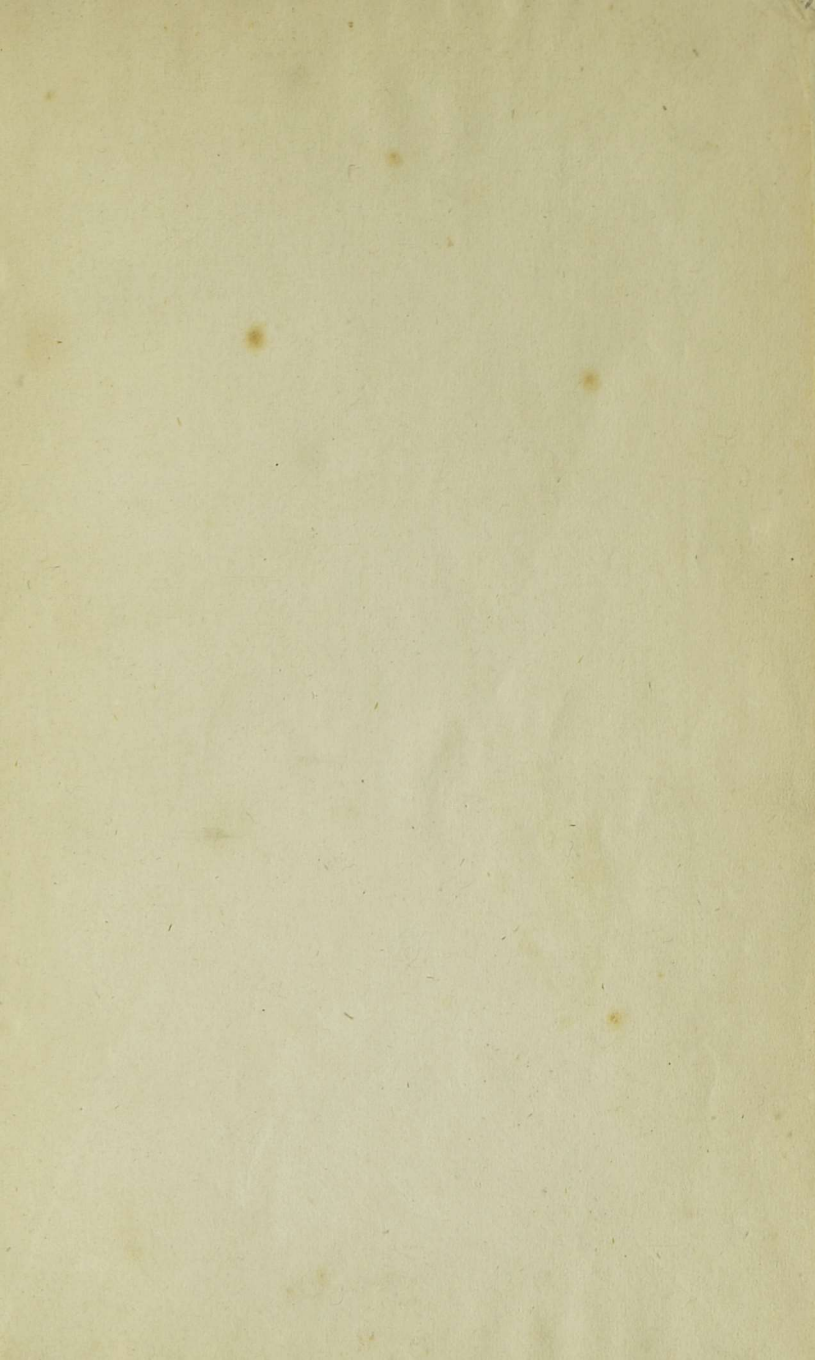
"Mind you keep your promise," said the master; and he

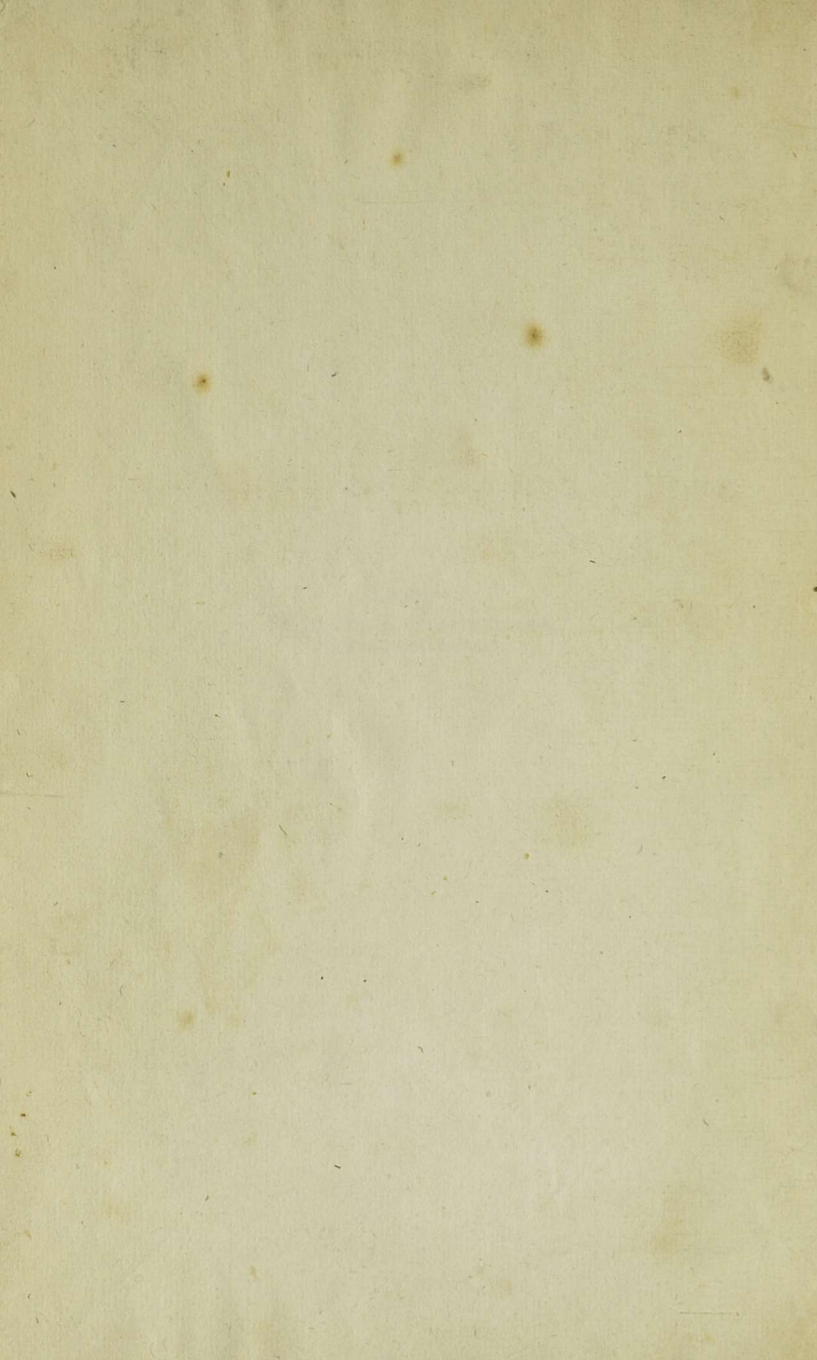
took off the cap of disgrace, and sent the boy to his class, bidding him first thank the lady who had got him pardoned. The boy wiped his eyes with the sleeve of his coat, scraped his foot to make a bow, and said, “Thank you, Ma’am.” He then went to join his companions, who were very glad to see him come back again ; and so was Willy : but just then John came and told them the carriage was ready ; and they drove home.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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