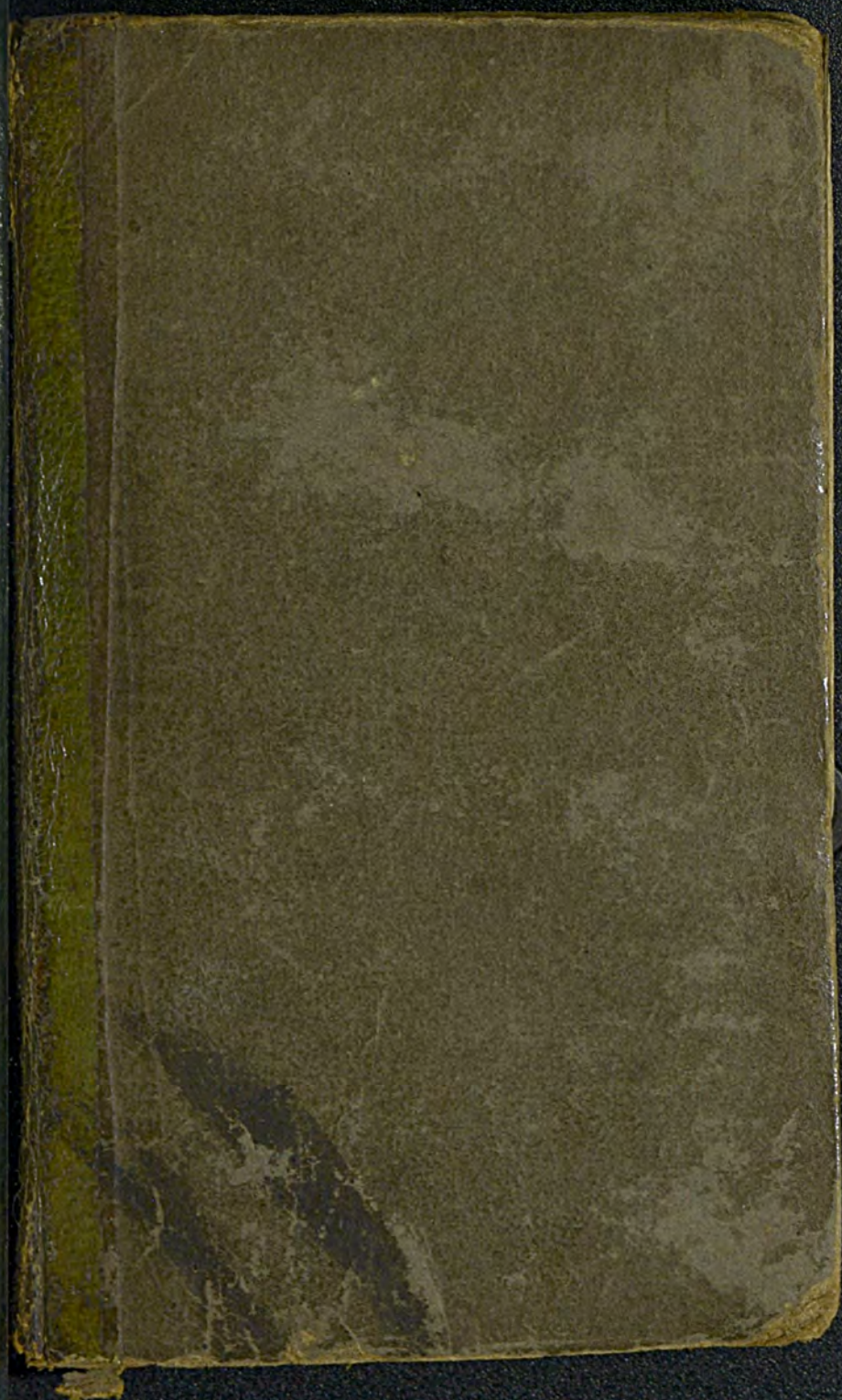
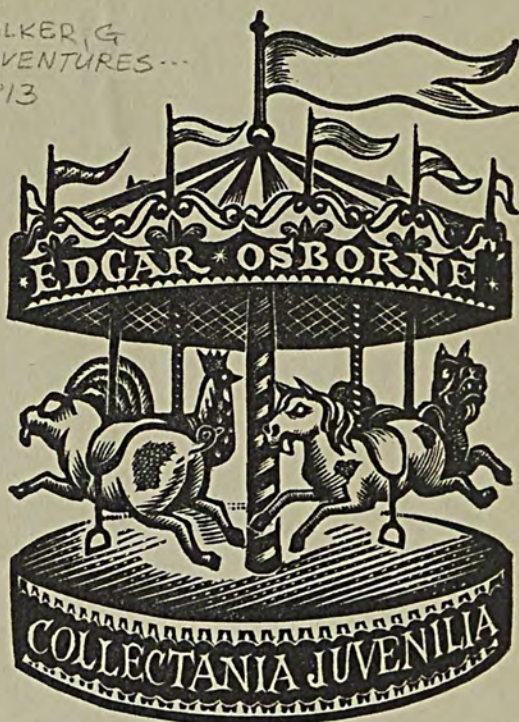


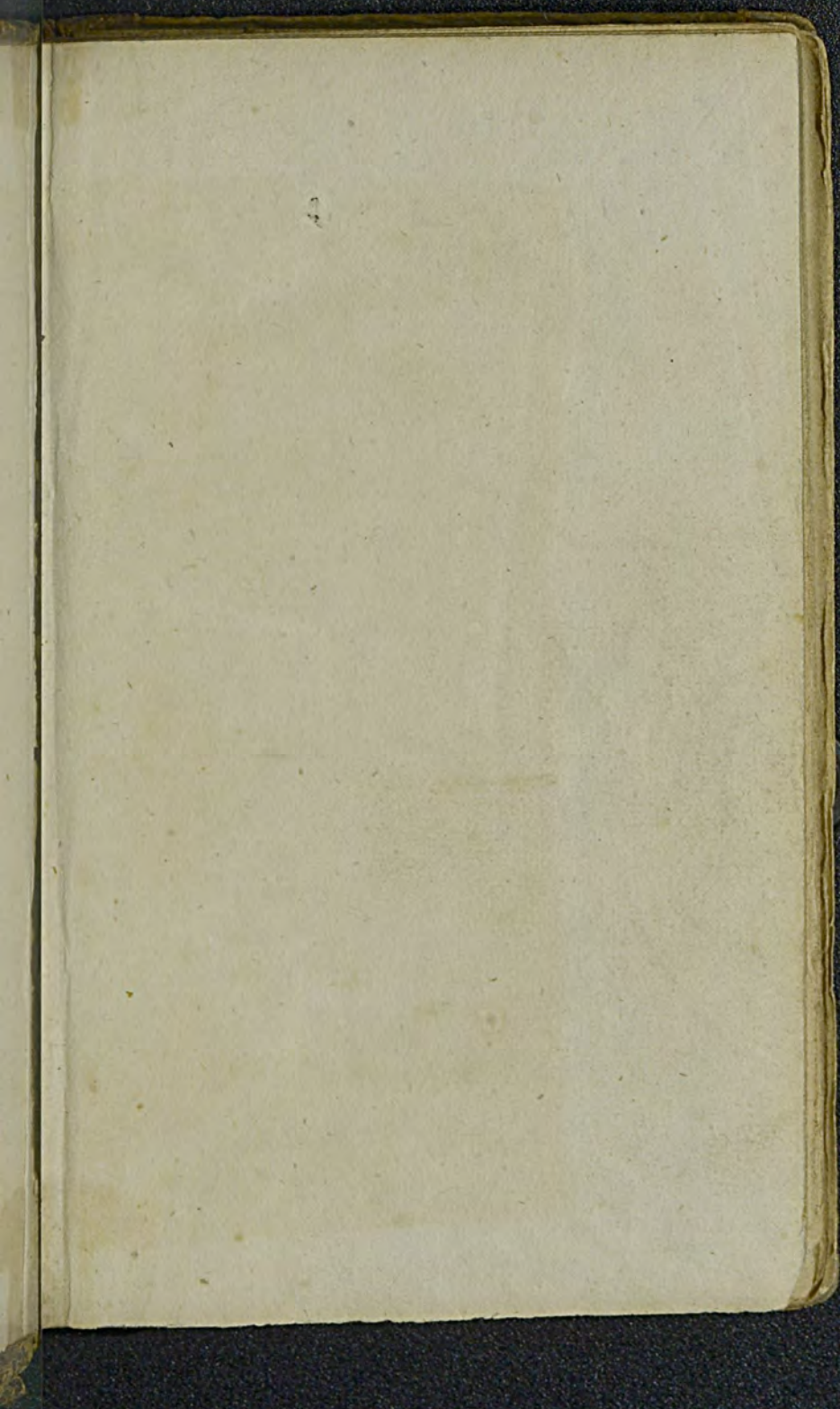


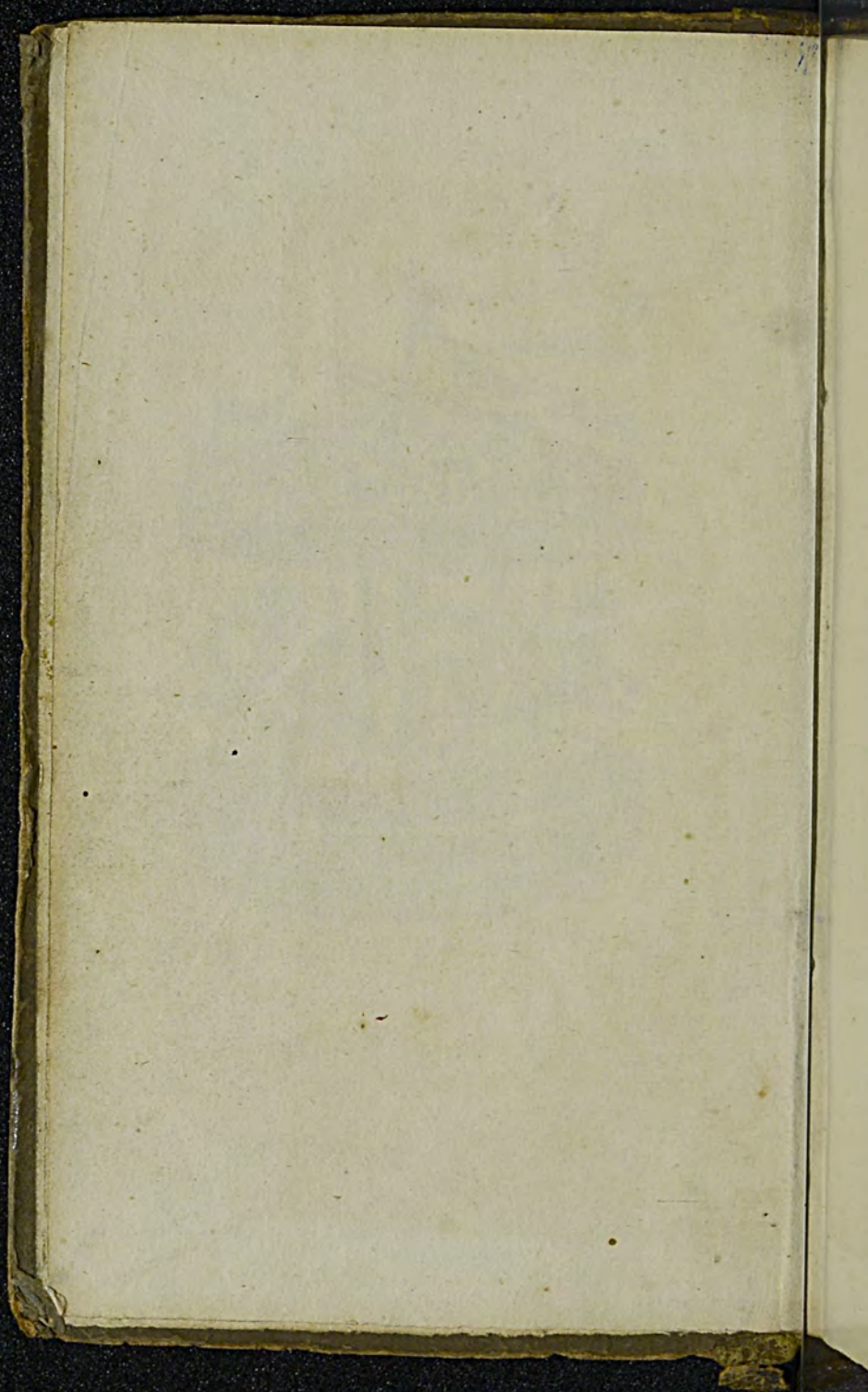
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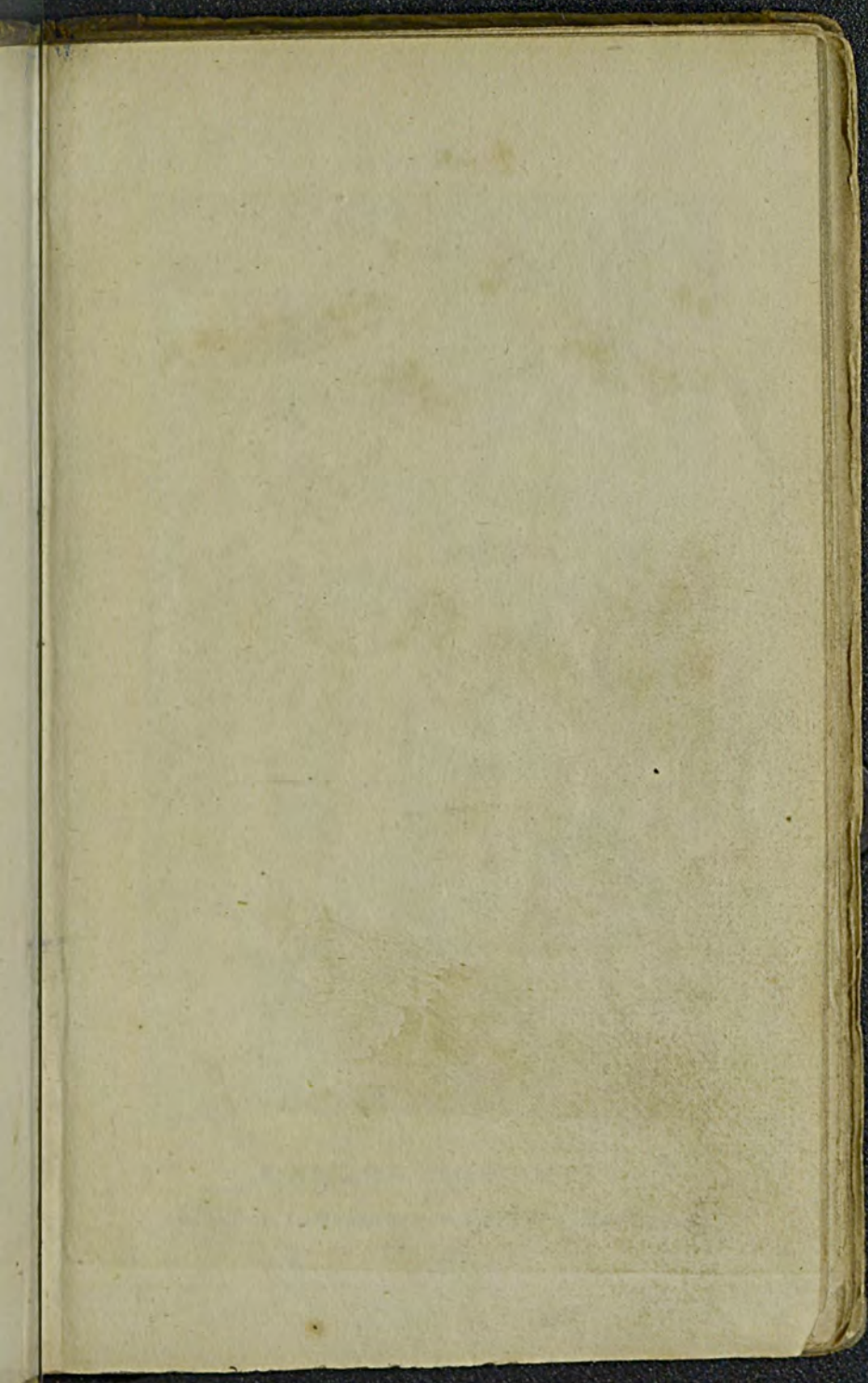


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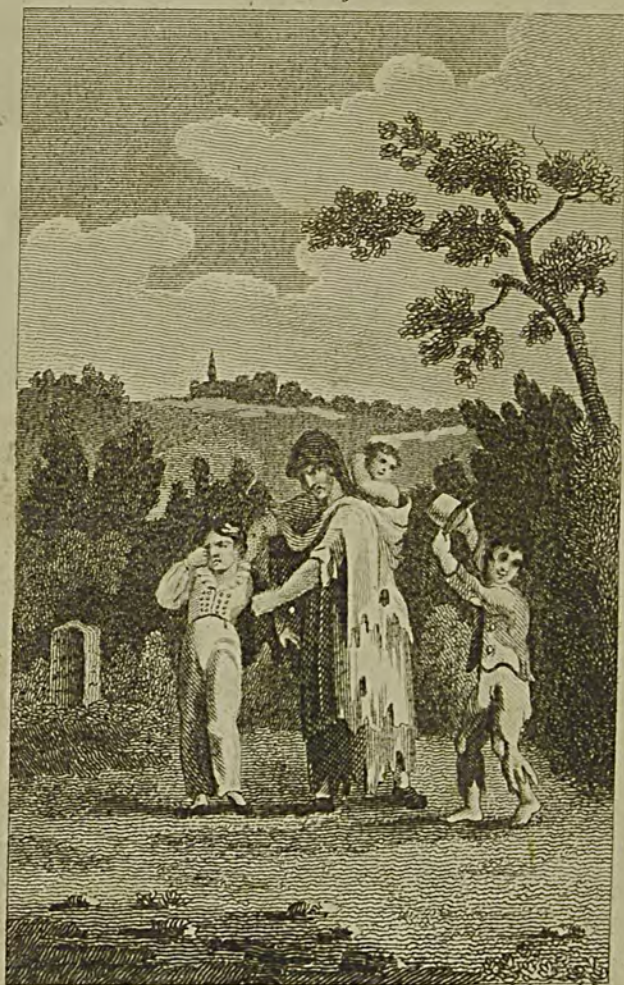
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Frontispiece.



TIMOTHY ROBBED.

PAGE 48.

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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
TIMOTHY THOUGHTLESS:
OR,
THE MISFORTUNES
OF
A LITTLE BOY
WHO RAN AWAY FROM
BOARDING-SCHOOL.
(WITH PLATES.)

BY G. WALKER.

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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
TIMOTHY THOUGHTLESS.

CHAP. I.

Timothy goes to Boarding School.

MR. THOUGHTLESS was a confectioner of very good property in the city of London. By his own industry, and attention to business, he had risen from a very small beginning, and notwithstanding the hardness of the times, he had found means to realize a comfortable fortune, sufficient

to have retired upon, had he not had a son, whom he intended should succeed him in business.

This little boy's name was Timothy, and being an only child, he was too much indulged by his mother, and allowed to eat so many sweet articles out of the shop, that he became very sickly, never eating his food with a proper appetite.

His father was recommended to send him to a country boarding school, which, after much hesitation about the expence, he was at length prevailed upon to do, by the visible and rapid decline of little Tim's health.

Greengrove House in Northamptonshire, about forty miles from London, was the place fixed upon, the situation being extremely

pleasant, as it stood upon a hill, and was surrounded by beautiful prospects, and great variety of pleasant walks, where the boys used on a Sunday and on half-holidays to take their rambles in fine weather.

Timothy was highly pleased with the loud noise made by the boys in the playground, as they stopped at the door, and his regret at taking leave of his parents was lost in the expectation of so many new scenes, and the pleasure he thought he should have in displaying to the young gentlemen the riches contained in his play-box.

His mother was drowned in tears at parting with her dear son, and though his pockets were well lined with shillings and sixpences, she could not forbear putting into his hand another shilling, and making him promise

over and again, to send her a letter every fortnight.

This Mr. Stubbs, the proprietor of the academy, promised to see to ; but having sixty young gentlemen under his care, he very naturally forgot it, and Tim never thought any more about it: so that except before the different quarter days, Mr. and Mrs. Thoughtless never heard how their son went on, unless indeed a friend called to see him.

At first Timothy found every thing strange and different from home, and he who used to lay in bed till eight or nine, thought it hard to be obliged to rise at six, and to have no tea, with a great many other things ; but the example of the boys, and a little time, reconciled him to the same habits, and he soon became familiar with all the ways of

school, and of his new companions. The country air and the exercise in a few weeks restored his appetite, and he who at home could scarce eat a hot roll and butter for his breakfast, could now devour five or six thick pieces of bread and butter.

Timothy was eight years old when he went to Mr. Stubbs, and very forward in his learning, which gave him the advantage in several classes above many who were his seniors.

Mr. and Mrs. Stubbs were extremely kind to the young gentlemen under their care, for Mr. Stubbs used frequently to say: "These boys are all of them dear to their parents, who have placed in us so much trust and confidence as to give into our care and direction those whom they love

as themselves; and what wretches must we be to abuse that confidence. It is from the harshness and ill-treatment boys meet with at some schools, that so many reproaches are cast upon these establishments, and many parents are led to imagine that their children might almost with as much propriety be sent to the parish workhouse."

At Greengrove House the boys never knew what it was to have a scanty meal; they had no peas-soup with about six peas to a pint of water, nor bread and cheese dinners, where the cheese was so rotten and strong that it was all thrown under the table.

They were well fed, warmly clothed, and kept particularly clean: which, next to

good air and exercise, is peculiarly conducive to health.

Amongst many other sports which Mr. Stubbs encouraged, with a view to invigorate the mind as well as the body, was the practice of the manual exercise. This was particularly adapted to wet days, the boys being all trained in a large barn, or under a penthouse, which was built along one side of the play ground.

This exercise inspired the boys with ideas of martial honor, and early initiated them to feel the importance of defending their country, while it inspired a confidence of power so to do. Were this practice generally adopted by all boarding schools, it would furnish a grand body of trained warriors, who would be ready on any emer-

gency to form battalions of volunteers, and no foreign enemy would ever dare to threaten the invasion of our country.

On one side of Mr. Stubbs' academy, was a large piece of waste ground, a little division of which was given to each boy for a garden, and it was a very curious sight to see these young planters all at work, in their respective grounds, which were neatly divided by slips of lath, like Chinese railing.

It was a fine for any boy to trespass on his neighbour's grounds, and some of the senior boys reared very beautiful flowers, of which they made presents to ladies who came on a visit. Thus, the necessary labours of their learning were enlivened by a variety of entertaining pursuits, and the general talents of the boys were superior to a

neighbouring establishment, where much more severity was used, and but little relaxation allowed. At Mr. Stubbs' the mind went willingly to the lesson; but at Stoney House it was all reluctance and force.

Indeed many of Mr. Stubbs' pupils had been taken from Stoney House, for no other reason than this unnecessary severity, it being Mr. Stubbs' opinion, that, except for vice, it was more harm than good to flog the children: for if the mind of a boy is so stubborn as not to learn from emulation, it is not worth cultivation by force: and I believe it is only in a very few seminaries where this exploded severity is now practised.

In this happy community, Timothy

Thoughtless passed two years, so much to the improvement of his health and his learning, that though the expence was very considerable, his father paid it with much satisfaction, and his mother was contented in his absence with knowing that he was doing well, and not a little gratified at the holidays in perceiving his healthful appearance.

CHAP. II.

Harmony of the School interrupted by the arrival of Will Grumble—Mr. Stubbs horsewhips Timothy in mistake—Will Grumble excites him to run away.

ONE would have scarcely expected that the serenity of this establishment could have been interrupted, and the harmony hitherto subsisting among these friends turned into confusion and discord.

Will Grumble, a boy of about thirteen years old, had been turned out of another school for various mischiefs; flogging made no impression on his incorrigible disposition, and his last exploit was deserving of superior punishment. A little boy had undesignedly offended him, on which in a rage

he threw a sharp stone at him, which cut his lip in a frightful manner, disfiguring him for life.

The mind of this boy was discontented, malicious, and quarrelsome; he was never happy but in doing or promoting mischief. His joy was to tell one boy that Master Such-a-one had said different falsities of him, and then he would go to the other with similar lies, till he had produced a quarrel or a boxing match. He would steal into school, when all the rest were at play, and cut out a leaf from a cyphering book, or blot the copy books. He would steal into the gardens when the others were in school, and pull up the flowers or break down the fences. He grumbled and found fault with the whole establishment. The beds were

not proper, the bread was too brown, the meat was not dressed as he liked it; and though few schools could boast of so much variety and goodness of provisions, yet Will was not only discontented himself, but he sought to make others dissatisfied. He insinuated to every boy in turn how hardly they were treated, and whatever crime a boy was chastised for, he laid all the fault on Mr. Stubbs or the ushers, till most of the boys began to think themselves very badly used, and became discontented, careless, and refractory.

This naturally produced greater severity on the part of Mr. Stubbs, which only increased the discontent, particularly as Will Grumble contrived many of his mischiefs so artfully that innocent boys appeared to

be guilty, and were frequently flogged for the crimes of this depraved and hardened boy.

It is not to be supposed Will always escaped with impunity. Many of his pranks were found out; but being a sturdy boy, there was not many who liked to encounter him, and the spirit of honour prevented their telling of him. When the ushers discovered him then he got severely beaten; but he was too hardened in wickedness to mind that, and never rested satisfied till he had revenged himself in some fresh outrage.

Timothy was a good-natured boy, and not being deceitful himself he did not suspect deceit in others. He was always ready to divide his presents, his fruit, and his cake, when sent him from London, with all his companions; and his father being a confec-

tioner he had many curious sweetmeats, which Will perceiving, often pretended a particular friendship for him, that he might get the greatest part; but when any present came to himself, he got into some corner, till he had devoured or concealed the most of it.

Two young gentlemen, who had been severely beaten for some mischief of Will's planning, were taken away by their parents; and Will did not fail to represent the hardship of those who were obliged to stay to be knocked about for nothing at all: by which representation two more boys had been tempted to run away. As their parents lived not many miles off, they went straight home, where they were severely reprimanded by their parents, and sent back

again; when they were well beaten as a terror to others.

This severity, which was perhaps carried a little too far, almost produced a general mutiny. Mr. Stubbs certainly should have expelled such a wicked boy as Will Grumble from his school, as soon as he had discovered his disposition; but a desire to reform him, and make a good boy of him, had prevented his taking that measure, without seeing that he was ruining the whole school by his useless kindness. I do think when a preceptor meets with one of these froward boys, he ought not to keep him; for the vice and mischief he introduces is of far more consequence than the emolument of one scholar. So stubborn and vile a disposition never can be mended; it produces

every sort of mischief in youth, and grows up to outrages and evils of every description, till the party becomes noxious, and a nuisance in society, and ought to be expelled from amongst mankind.

I am sorry to say, Will's deceit had gained the entire confidence of Tim, and he became so much his companion, that he began to be suspected of sharing in his mischiefs; when a circumstance happened, which produced in its consequences all those sorrows I am now writing the history of. The Travels of Sylvester Tramper, which had been sent as a present from an aunt in London, to Master White, had been stolen out of his play-box, and nobody could give any account of it.

Every boy's box was examined without

discovering it. Every one denied knowing any thing about it, with such an air of truth, that Mr. Stubbs began to suspect that, as it was a very entertaining book, some of the servants about the house had taken it to read. They were all called into the parlour and examined, but all denied knowing any thing about it: and there the matter seemed at rest.

About a week after, as Timothy was watching a large snail crawling up the wall of the barn, which was old and full of chinks, he spied the end of a book thrust in between two bricks, and taking it out, found it to be the book Master White had lost. He was holding it in his hand, examining the picture, with the intention of running with his discovery immediately into the

house, when Mr. Stubbs, happening to walk that way, going to the stable, seeing him closely looking at a book, peeped over his shoulder, and saw it was the identical book which had been sought so carefully.

There appeared to his mind not the shadow of a doubt about the criminality of Timothy; and, without making the smallest enquiry, he flew at once into a violent passion; which was extremely reprehensible, for no man in a passion can be said to be in his senses. Mr. Stubbs unfortunately held in his hand a riding-whip, which he laid about the shoulders and arms of poor Tim till he was most severely beaten: and so great was the rage of Mr. Stubbs, at finding a thief in one of his scholars, as he sup-

posed, that it was in vain Tim screamed out his innocence.

It is impossible to take the part of Mr. Stubbs in this affair. We ought never to condemn any body without having heard their story, much less to punish; and there is no doubt, if Timothy had acted like a wise and prudent child, he would have been justified and righted; for no father who pays for his children's education would overlook without remonstrance so flagrant and unjust a severity.

"This is only a part of what you shall receive," said Mr. Stubbs: "to-morrow you shall be flogged in school. I will see if I cannot cure you of thieving: that mean, despicable vice, which will bring shame

upon your relations, and misery and infamy upon yourself."

Nothing could be more true than these sentiments of Mr. Stubbs; but they were applied to the wrong object, as I scarce need say it was Will Grumble who had stolen the book, and hid it in the wall, intending to carry it away at the holidays.

He had seen at a distance the whole transaction, and had he been a boy with a spark of generosity in him, he would have flown to Mr. Stubbs, and taken the fault to himself, sooner than have seen a boy he knew to be innocent so severely punished in mistake. But the malicious wretch enjoyed the misfortune of Timothy, and when Mr. Stubbs left him, he then appeared with pretended condolences, which the unsuspect-

ing Timothy believed to arise from friendship.

Tim's shoulders were extremely sore, and he wept bitterly. They both went together into the barn, where Will said every thing he could think to rouse the mind of Timothy to revenge himself, or to run away.

Tim said he would write to his father, who he was sure would take him away directly.

"You fool," said Will, "suppose you could get the letter to the post-office, will your father come down in time to prevent your being thrashed in the morning? You may do as you please; but I won't stay in such a place. If you take my advice, you will run away this evening, and I'll go with you. I know all the country, and we can

easily get to my aunt's at Northampton, where you may stay till your father can fetch you."

"But we can't get out," said Timothy. "My shoulders are so sore, I am sure I can't walk."

"What will you be to-morrow after your flogging?" replied Will. "I know a way to get out. Don't we both sleep in the back parlour; and can't we easily open the window and step out; and can't we go down the garden that they never let us walk in; and can't we easily clamber the low wall at the bottom; and are not we then in the road to Northampton; and shan't we be in there by to-morrow night:—what's twenty miles in this fine weather?"

Poor Tim believed it all to be very easy:

for he was too young, too ignorant, and too thoughtless, to perceive the deceit of his pretended friend; or to know any thing of the dangers that are every where ready to destroy so helpless a being. He forgot also the misery it would be to his father and mother, to hear he had run away from school; and by this action he made every body believe who heard Mr. Stubbs' story that he was the thief: for who could take his part, when he had shewn his guilt by running away?

In an evil hour he listened to the advice of the wicked Will Grumble, who undertook to manage the business. Poor Tim felt as if some grievous weight pressed upon him, and he passed the rest of the day sobbing in a corner. At supper, his heart was

so full he could scarce eat a morsel, though Will kept elbowing him and prompting him to eat as much as he could. More than once he felt inclined to throw himself at Mr. Stubbs' feet, to confess his intended flight, and beg him to hear the whole story; but these movements of his conscience were banished by the sternness and silence of Mr. Stubbs. Thus the time passed away till it was too late, and all the boys retired to bed.

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CHAP. III.

Leave school—Will robs a garden—Thunder-storm—Will killed by the fall of a branch.

WILL GRUMBLE lay on the watch, till he was satisfied all the house was quiet. Then, creeping out of bed, he made poor Tim get up; but it was so gloomy and so still, and sleep had so become the master of Tim's wearied mind, that every thing Will could do would not rouse him, and half dressed he fell asleep on the floor. Will gave him several sly punches, out of spite and madness; but finding it all in vain, he crept back again to his own bed, and left little Thoughtless upon the bare boards, where he lay till near four in the morning;

when the sun shining full in his face, he awoke and found Will ready dressed.

It was a fine warm day in August, and Will assured him it was within half an hour of *all up*, and he would be certain of a good flogging before breakfast. Timothy no longer hesitated. The parlour window was carefully raised. They hastened down the garden, and as chance often assists mischief, they found a short ladder standing against a wall-fruit tree; and in a very few minutes they got over into the lane.

Tim began to cry when he found himself outside the wall; but Will, doubling his fist, threatened to thump him if he muttered a word. Then taking hold of his hand, they ran down the lane as fast as their legs would carry them.

They soon lost sight of the house : and though they slackened their pace, they still went on as fast as they could, till Timothy, beginning to tire, begged Will to rest a little ; but Will, who was thirteen, told him they must first get into another road, for they would be certainly discovered, if they staid in that lane ; as it began now to get near the time of the boys mustering in school.

They struck over the fields at a venture, though Will pretended he knew the right way into the Northampton road ; yet when they had gone on till Tim could scarce move, they found themselves neither of them knew where. Being both hungry and tired, they sat down upon the grass, and soon eat up some gingerbread, biscuit, and apple, which

was all the provision they had made for this journey.

Having finished their repast, they found themselves very thirsty, and leaving the fields, they proceeded along a narrow lane, in hopes of finding some spring of clear water, at which they might drink.

"I wish" said Tim, "we were now at Mr. Stubbs', eating our bread and milk."

"A pretty flogging you would have had" replied Will, "before this."

"Then it would have been over," returned Tim, "and here we are without any money but a few halfpence, and wandering we don't know where."

"O you poor cowardly ninny!" cried Will, "you are not fit for any thing, but to stay at home and cry in a corner—Ah! look

there! There's a large garden, with low palings, and the house such a distance. I'm sure I can get over and have some of them currants, and nobody see."

"O pray don't, pray don't," cried Tim; "you will be imprisoned, if you rob the garden—pray don't go."

"But I will though," said the ungracious boy. "You stand where you are, and if you see any body coming, begin to whistle. I'll soon have my hat full of those currants."

Timothy saw it was in vain to persuade Will from his intention, who in a very few moments clambered to the top of the palings, and looking round him with caution, without seeing any person, he descended into the garden.

He had not been there, however, many minutes, before Tim heard some person calling loudly within the garden for a horse-whip; and in half a minute Will came tumbling over the paling. He fell down, but getting up again, began to run, and Tim quickly followed him.

As soon as they got to a distance, and no one pursuing, Will halted; and then Tim saw that he had met with a serious accident. He had been seen by the gardener, and in his hurry to escape he had torn his hands with some tenter-hooks, which were sprinkled on the top of the palings, and very much bruised himself in the fall, his jacket and stockings having caught upon the hooks in his confusion and hurry.

Will pretended to treat the mischief

slightly, and was angry with Tim for observing how much better it would have been to have taken his advice; and thus, mutually dissatisfied, they went on, till it was high noon, and being now weary and overcome with heat and thirst, they crossed over a gate into a shady field, where they fell asleep, and did not awaken for several hours. They were then aroused by a dreadful storm of thunder, lightning, and rain, which wetted them to the skin in a few minutes. It was one of those sudden storms which are produced by the heat, and which suddenly gather and as quickly disperse.

The lightning flashed as if all the heavens were on fire, and the thunder shook the ground where they stood with its dreadful explosions; the wind bent the branches of

the trees in the hedges, mingling its loud howlings with the thunder; and the rain, rushed down upon them in torrents.

Now these naughty boys began to feel the miserable situation they had got into, for there was neither house nor barn to shelter them.

Poor Tim wept, as he stood shivering with fear and wet.—“Let us say the Lord’s prayer,” said he to Will. “Oh! I wish we were back again at Greengrove House.”

“What would you pray for?” said Will. “Will that dry our clothes, or stop the rain? Come along under this beech tree.”

“Pray don’t go under it, in the lightning,” replied Timothy: “have you not read that it is very dangerous? We are wet through, and had better go on, as we can but be wet.”

“ Who knows best, d’ye think ?” answered Will sulkily : “ You may stay where you are if you like, and be drowned ;—for my part, I shall go under the tree.”

So saying away he ran, followed slowly by Tim, who was afraid to affront him by refusing ; but Will had scarcely reached the beech, when a prodigious limb, torn off by a sudden gust of wind, fell upon him with a frightful crash, dashing out his brains upon the spot ; and thus ended the life of that wicked boy, who, had Providence suffered him to live, would in all probability have grown up in wickedness, till some of his actions would have brought him to the gallows.

Timothy, though little more than ten years of age, turned sick with horror when

he saw the untimely and shocking fate of his companion, and his conscience strongly told him that he had done a very wicked thing in running away from those tutors and governors his parents had appointed over him. The anger of Mr. Stubbs, and the punishment he had dreaded, now appeared as trifles; and the text he had heard at church came across his mind, like a voice amongst the thunder:—*I will arise, and go to my father; and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.*

Timothy resolved now to seek his way back to Mr. Stubbs; but it is not always we have the power to repair a fault, how-

ever sincerely we may desire to do so. He took a last look of the mangled body of Will Grumble, and, notwithstanding the rain, he began to go back (as he thought) the way they came.

At first he was so benumbed with cold and fear, that he crept shivering along, all his cloaths sticking to his skin ; and the wet made his shoulders smart, from the effects of his whipping.

However, cold and hungry, on he went ; and the storm, being only a summer thunder shower, gradually went off, leaving a fine evening, which began to draw towards night. He had passed only a few barns which he had not seen in the morning, but he could see neither farm-house nor cottage, and he began to cry at the thought of

no place to rest all night. Only think what a little boy must feel at being alone all night in a wild country : nobody to protect him, and nothing to eat.

Timothy at last got into a public road ; but it was now so dark every thing began to be obscure, and he frequently thought he could see people at a little distance, but when he called he had no answer ; and on going up to what he supposed some countryman, he found it the stump of a tree, or a bush.

His eyes, in spite of his hunger, began to be weary, and he could scarce draw one leg after the other.

His cloaths were it is true dried upon his back, but how he longed for a little milk, o

even water to drink, or a crust of bread to eat!

He sat down, unable to go on; and crying, fell asleep. He had not slept (or rather dozed) long, before he was roused by the galloping of an horse; and, opening his eyes, he began to call, in hopes the rider might assist him. But how was he disappointed to find the horse without a master, having probably broke away from his pasture.

“ Ah! you bad horse,” said he; “ you had better go back: you are like poor Timothy Thoughtless—did not know when you were well.”

He felt so very cold that he began again to creep along the road, following the

horse, in hopes it might lead him to some stable, where he might get in amongst the straw till the morning.

CHAP. IV.

Tim enters a Farm-Yard, and is attacked by the Dogs—obliged to lay in the Road all Night—is Robbed and Stripped by a Beggar Woman and her Son.

HE had gone about half a mile, when he plainly saw a light from a window, and, cheered with the hopes of being taken in, he began to run as well as he was able.—A blazing fire shot its light round the room, and Tim thought he saw the table spread for supper, and smelt the savoury fumes of the frying-pan, which made his poor stomach yearn with expectation.

The light proceeded from the kitchen-window of a farm-house, enclosed round with paling. To get to the door it was necessary to pass a part of the farm-yard, which opened on to the road by a stile.—Over this stile Tim groped his way in the dark, and, peeping from the top, he could plainly see the inside of a cheerful kitchen, the bright plates reflecting the fire. Oh, how he wished himself sheltered in that abode of comfort!—but he no sooner set foot in the straw-yard, than several dogs began loudly to bark, making towards him with open mouth : one of them seized the skirt of his jacket, which he began to shake. Tim screamed in vain for help, his voice was drowned by the barking of the dogs ; he flew

back to the stile, and gained the top, just as a snarling cur snapped at his leg, and gave him a slight tear, which pained him severely. He left part of the skirt of his jacket behind him, and glad was he to escape from their teeth.

Fright lent him strength; and, never looking behind him, he ran till his legs would no longer support him; he then laid down, overcome with wretchedness and fatigue, upon a little green slope, partly covered by bushes, on the road side.

Here he lay exposed to the cold and the dew, with which his cheeks were wet; and had it been at any other time of the year no doubt he would never again have opened his eyes.

He dreamed of his father and mother.—
The pain of his leg, and the pain in his
shoulders, made him frequently start, and
think he was tumbling down frightful
places.

The sun arose in its glory, and dried the
dew which had damped his cloaths: its
warm beams caused him to sleep the sound-
er; but he was suddenly awakened by some
one pinching his cheek.

He opened his eyes, and was nearly dy-
ing with fright at seeing a dirty ragged figure
stooping over him: her face was haggard
and withered, and frightfully marked with
small-pox; she was clothed in rags. On
her back was slung a young child, covered
with filth.

Poor Tim started up with a loud cry, as this horrible figure stooped over him.

"Pray don't kill me!" cried Tim, for she clinched her fist in his face.

"What money have you got, you little thief?" cried she; "come, pull it out."

"Only two sixpences and a penny;" replied Tim, "and I have eat nothing since yesterday morning."

"Be feeling his pockets, Teddy," said she, to a ragged boy about the size of Tim, without a hat, shoes, or stockings.

Teddy readily obeyed his mother in this act of highway robbery, snatching off his hat, and capering about with great glee, while poor Tim stood crying at see-

ing his things, one after the other, taken away.

His pocket-handkerchief, his knife, his money, and a dozen of buttons, which the wicked little urchin took without regarding his distress.

"I think, mother," said Teddy, "I should like his shoes."

"Oh, what shall I do? what shall I do?" cried Tim, in a grievous tone of voice; "Oh, that I had never left Mr. Stubbs."

"Give over piping and snivelling," cried the woman, with a dreadful oath, "or I'll be after stripping your carcase, and murdering you.—Come, pull off this green jacket and trowsers, and change cloaths with the lad."

Tim hesitated ; but the wretch gave him several slaps in the face, which made his eyes strike fire, and his head ring ; and, tearing off his cloaths, she made Teddy strip and put them on, leaving Tim to dress at leisure, in the fragments which the other had left.

After she was gone out of sight, poor Tim, with the tears streaming from his eyes, finding there was no help for it, began to dress himself in the vile rags belonging to the beggar boy : they were full of holes, and stunk with dirt. He had no hat to cover his head from the sun or the rain, nor stockings or shoes for his feet ; and he was disgusted and ashamed to see himself so miserable a figure.

He thought of creeping into a thicket, and lying down to die, but he felt so hungry that it overcame the shame of appearing so wretched a figure, and he began to pursue his way, without knowing whither.

He thrust his hands into the greasy pockets, and to his surprise pulled out of one a large piece of bread and butter doubled, and a piece of cheese; and from the other a piece of boiled beef, and a large onion.

This was a treasure indeed to a starving boy: he did not examine whether the bread was clean, or the beef fat, but he devoured the whole, with every crumb he could find in the pockets. His spirits were cheered; he drank at a little clear stream which

crept along the road side, and, kneeling down, repeated all the morning prayers he had been used to say.

His heart felt sensibly lighter—he no longer thought of lying down to die; but he determined to make the best of his way back to Mr. Stubbs.’

CHAP. V.

Joins a Troop of Potters going to Warwick Fair—is deserted by them after the Fair.

HE passed many cottages on the road, and a little village; but he was ashamed to speak to any body in his ragged dress, for fear they should know him; but, alas! poor boy, could he have looked in a glass, he would not have known himself.

His belly was however now full, and he pushed along at a great pace, in hopes every moment of coming to some part of the road he should remember; for he persuaded him-

self he was in the right way, little considering how the roads cross and intersect each other, frequently puzzling even those who have a general knowledge of the geography of the country.

He had walked several hours over the gravelly road, and his feet being uncovered he began to feel tender-footed, and to go very slowly, when he was overtaken by some travelling potters, driving their asses before them.

Seeing Tim in this ragged condition, they began to question him ; but, he suspecting they might ill-treat him like the beggar-woman in the morning, returned such equivocal and shy answers, that they concluded him well learned in the begging trade ; and supposing he had left his companions from

some ill treatment, and might become useful to them, they offered him a ride on one of the asses.

Tim readily accepted this offer, his feet being so sore he could scarce walk. They were going to a fair across the country; and one of the women taking a fancy to Tim, they treated him kindly.

He enquired in the course of the day how far they were from Northampton. They told him they were many miles off, in a different road, and were going to a fair at Warwick.

Tim sighed at this information, and concealing his disappointment, endeavoured to please the people he was with, that they might use him kindly. At night they all lay in a barn, upon some straw, which was

much more comfortable than the road-side ; though not what he had been used to at Mr. Stubbs'. But he was warm and dry, and his belly was full, which made him sleep soundly till daylight, when the troop were again upon the move. There were several children of different ages, nearly as ragged as Tim, though not so dirty ; and though they were very rough and low-bred, yet upon the whole Tim managed to live amongst them, for he submitted to their overbearing ways ; though he felt his pride not a little hurt at being called in derision the *beggar-boy*.

As they went along they made frequent halts, to sell their crockery at cottages and lone houses. Tim, though not very strong, carried a heavy load over the different

fields, and being much better behaved and civiller than the other boys, he was generally more noticed, and sold more things; which so far from being any benefit to him, only gained him their ill-will, and they said all the ill they could of him behind his back, which made the potters determine to shake him off, as they found him, the first opportunity; but as he might assist them at the fair, they said nothing to him of their design.

When they reached Warwick, all was bustle and confusion, and it was with difficulty they got a miserable stable at the lowest alehouse to sleep in; where the asses and the whole group mingled together. Tim, and the rest of the children, assisted in sorting and cleaning the crockery; and when the whole was displayed on the

ground in the fair, they had their stations to watch that nobody stole any thing.

The fair lasted three days, and the noise and novelty filled Tim's head so much that he had no time to think. He naturally looked to the troop of potters as his friends, and so long as he was protected he felt some comfort. But, now the fair was over all the booths were breaking up, and the various vagrant traders preparing to march to some other place.

"Tim," said Tom Blunt, (the head man of the troop) "we took you up on the road because you could scarce limp: you have now been with us some time, and your feet are quite well. If we lived by begging, you would be of some use to us; but, as we live by working, you are too lit-

tle; and so must return to your old trade.
—We have too many children of our own to keep you.”

“Poor child!” said his wife, “he seems to like us; but charity begins at home, and these are hard times.—Don’t cry, child; fill your belly, and here’s twopence to begin with.”

Poor Tim did nothing but sob and sigh. His heart was too full to eat; and when he saw them all leaving him, he cried aloud. Their feelings were too much used to distress to mind him, and they left him standing amongst the litter in the market-place.

CHAP. VI.

Decoyed away by a vagrant Fidler—by whom he is used very cruelly. — Is obliged to beg.

THERE still remained great numbers of people, several of whom out of compassion gave him a halfpenny; but nobody took any further notice of him, till an ill-looking fellow, dressed like a sailor, with an old fiddle in one hand, and a bundle of ballads fastened before him, came up, and taking him by the arm, whispered in his ear he wanted to speak to him.

Tim did not much like the appearance of this ballad-singer: but what could a

poor friendless child, of ten years old, do in a strange place? He followed the sailor out of fear, till they came to a small public-house in a back lane, where they had some bread and cheese and ale.

"I see," said the sailor, whose name was Filch, "I see you are a clever fellow, and know how to deceive the public. I dare say you have got at least sixpence while you stood there."

"I don't know," replied Tim, taking out his money to count it, without any suspicion; but he had no sooner laid it on the table, than Filch swept it all into his hand—and, putting it in his own pocket, told him he would take care of it.

"You shall live with me," said he,

“and a jolly life we will lead. We will travel all over the country.”

“Will you go to Northampton?” said Tim, eagerly.

“That’s the next large town I shall go to,” said Filch, though nothing was farther from his intention. “We will travel together—we shall get a great deal of money from fools in the day-time; and at night we shall spend it like princes.—I think I have seen you before in company with an old Irish woman, that carries a child on her back no doubt she has stolen.—Her name is Judy O’Bother.”

Tim remembered the wretch who had stripped him was called Judy by the boy; and he now, for the first time, his confidence being opened by the ale, told the sailor

how ill he had been treated by that vagrant.

“ Well, Tim,” said Filch, “ only let us come alongside her, my boy, I’ll make little master strip in his turn, never fear. Come finish the ale—that’s a man. Now fling this little bundle over your shoulder, and let’s be jogging. I should not wonder if we overtook this Mother O’Rother: I saw her in the fair.”

Tim’s heart was now light; he had found a protector, they were going as he thought to Northampton, and he was perfectly deceived by the speeches of the sailor, who by these means decoyed him out of the town.

They had not travelled far before Tim began to tire of the bundle; but when he

he complained, Filch gave him several smart lashes with a hazel wand, telling him not to be lazy, and use would soon make it easy.

Tim was obliged to submit, though he now saw how very thoughtless he had been in listening to the speeches of a stranger. He walked on in sullen silence for some miles; when the sailor, observing a village before them, turned aside down a bridle lane, stopping behind some bushes, where he untied a wallet, out of which he took a great number of things, the use of which threw Tim into no little wonder.

Over his short black stubby hair he put a large white wig, which gave him the appearance of old age. A patch over one eye, and the other shaded and shut, made

him appear blind. Several streaks of paint quite disguised his features, giving him at once the appearance of age and sickness. The bundle which Tim had carried was tied with a piece of cord over his shoulders; his fiddle was put in tune, and, limping, he grasped the shoulder of Tim with one hand. Tim also underwent a change: his shoes and stockings were put into the bundle, and a handful of ballads given him.

“Now mind, sirrah,” said Filch, “if you do your part cleverly, you shall have a penny to yourself at night: if you make any blunder, I’ll strip you and tie you to some tree,—where I’ll flog you as long as you can stand. You must whine out to every person we meet—and at

every door—buy a ballad of a poor blind sailor !”

Tim promised to be particular, though he was very much shocked and frightened at the figure made by the sailor, and longed for nothing more than to leave him, which he determined to do the first opportunity.

Soon as they came within an hundred yards of the village, Filch struck up a tune, and began to sing in a most discordant tone. Tim sold a good many ballads, and took more halfpence from the charitable for nothing.

In their passage through the village they took near eighteen-pence, besides pieces of broken meat and bread, and several handfuls of flour, which the sailor put into a pocket

reserved for that purpose. They made no stay in the place after they had got what they could; and after about a mile's further march, the sailor recovered his eyesight again, much to the astonishment of Tim, who little knew the wicked tricks these idle vagrants make use of to cheat the charitable out of their bounty.

Tim, as they moved along, ventured to ask for the penny Filch had promised him.

"Aye, aye," says he, "I see you are a sharp lad, and I'll keep it for you: you will never want money in my service, as you will have every thing given you."

Tim durst not repeat his demand. They stopped at every lone house along the road, and Tim ventured to enquire why he now begged with his eyes open.

“Why, you simpleton,” replied the sailor, “in towns we must seem very humble, and get charity from pity; but in lone houses we force it by fear. A great sturdy fellow standing at the door of a bye house, where mostly there is only women at home, is never turned away empty; and the gruffer he speaks the more he gets. I warrant now you think me a sailor, because of this dress; but I never was even within sight of the sea. This is, however, the best begging dress in the kingdom: nobody refuses to give to a poor disabled sailor. Oh, you have a deal to learn, before you know your trade yet, Tim.—We frequently break the limbs of children we pick up, for cripples are sure of charity.” Tim turned pale, but said nothing.

At night, after much entreaty, they were suffered to lay in a barn by a farmer, where Tim went almost supperless to bed, for Filch took care to cram himself well, and gave him only a few hard crusts.

“You are too jolly, your countenance is too plump and ruddy,” said he, jokingly, “for a beggar, I must keep you on short commons till you look pale and thin, and then you will get a penny where you only now get a halfpenny.”

Tim did not at all admire this doctrine, wishing himself clear of his companion, or rather master, for Filch in the course of the day always accompanied his orders with a slap on the face.

CHAP. VII.

Filch steals a duck.—Poor Tim's temptation—refuses to steal—narrowly escapes being murdered by the Sailor.

IN the morning, Tim was roused by daylight, and having put on his rags he felt very hungry, expecting they should certainly breakfast before they started.

"I should like one of those crusts you gave me last night," said he, as he buttoned the old jacket.

"You vile glutton," cried out Filch, "you fall asleep with a crust in your mouth, and you want another before your eyes are half open. Fasting will do you good; it

will make you sharp—beggars must never eat their breakfast till they have gained it; beside if you must eat before you wake, in this manner, don't make such a furious supper as you did last night, but save part for the morning."

"I am sure I had not half enough," said Tim, ready to cry, if he had dared; "you eat all the meat yourself."

"No muttering and grumbling, rascal," cried Filch, giving him a sound box on the ears; "I warrant you want roast chicken and ale every night for your supper; come, look sharp—we shall have the farmer up before us."

Whilst he said this, he was prying into every corner of the barn, as if in search for

something, and finding a bill-hook he took it up.

“Here, Tim,” said he, “carry this: it is better than nothing.”

“Do you want me to be a thief too?” replied Tim, blushing, “I will do no such thing; if you like to be hanged yourself you may.”

Filch uttered a horrid oath, vowing to make him learn to steal as well as beg; but fearing the farmer might be already up, he began to move off, bidding Tim follow without speaking another word, or he would knock his brains out.

The morning was only breaking, the air was sharp, but refreshing. A little pond stood on one side the house, in the high

road, in which some ducks were paddling about. A fine drake stood pluming his wings, and Filch, stealing behind him, with one blow of the bill-hook struck off his head; then, putting the body into a bag, he began to march at a rapid rate, keeping Tim on the trot, who looked behind every moment till they were out of sight of the farm-house, expecting they should be overtaken and punished. He could not but reflect on the base ingratitude of this miscreant, and he wished he could leave him, but he durst not utter a word of complaint.

After a long walk of some miles, they reached a low hedge ale-house, where they halted; and, as Filch had picked the duck

as he went along, he here had it roasted for breakfast.

“Now, Tim,” said he, “you see what it is to earn a breakfast; now you shall fill your belly on something better than a crust, and another time I warrant you will not be so scrupulous.”

This was a terrible temptation to Tim. —He was half-famished with hunger: the duck smelled very good, and he thought if he did eat a bit he did not steal it himself. But then, thought he, I know it is stolen, and I will not eat it.

Filch, who sat at the table eating as fast as his jaws could move, wondered to see Tim eating up his bread without touching the duck.

"What are you about?" cried he, "don't you like duck."

"I can't eat it," said Tim.

"You want sauce and green peas, I warrant.—Well, if you won't eat it, I shall; but mind, you have nothing else this day till supper."

Tim eat as much bread as he could in silence, for he had learnt that reply only produced a blow; and Filch, having made up with several pints of ale for his last night's fast, they once more sallied on to the road.

About noon they reached another village, into which they entered in similar disguise as on the day preceding: Tim without shoes or stockings, leading a poor blind fiddler, with a handful of ballads.

One good woman, at whose door they stopped, left her parlour to get him a slice of bread and butter. Filch, who stood at the door, sily opened one eye, and whispered to Tim to give him a silver tea-spoon which lay on the table.

"I a'nt a thief," said Tim bluntly, "and I won't steal for any body."

"Good lad," muttered the sailor, "take the bread the charitable lady gives you; oh! ten thousand blessings on your ladyship."

Filch saw the good woman returning, and by these words silenced Tim, and prevented what he had said being observed; but they had no sooner got quite clear from the village and out of hearing, than he began to beat the poor child without mercy.

"I'll teach you, rascal," said he, "to do as I bid you, let it be what it will, or I'll break every bone in your body."

"But I won't steal," replied Tim resolutely. "I had better be beat than be hanged; give me my shoes and stockings, I don't want to go with you, and I won't go any farther."

"You dare to rebel do you, urchin," cried Filch in a rage, throwing aside his bundle and lameness together, that he might run after Tim, who ran towards the village; but overtaking him, he fastened his hands in his hair and dragged him to the ground, where he probably would have murdered him, had not two men, alarmed by his screams, come to the spot.

Seeing them approach, the miscreant

began to adjust his appearance and gather up his things.

"Are you not ashamed, you vagabond," said one of the men, "to ill-treat a poor little child in that manner?"

"It's my own son," cried Filch, "and he deserves to be chastised for his disobedience."

"I am not his son," replied Tim, eagerly, "he is a cheat, and no more blind than you are."

"That we will see," said the men. "You must come back into the town, and let us see the contents of your bundle."

At this the sailor threw aside all disguise, and drawing from his coat pocket a large pistol, he bid them defiance, swearing he would shoot the first that attempted to

touch him ; and vowing to murder Tim if he caught him, he pursued his way along the road at a round rate.

The two men, who were tradesmen belonging to the last village, stood for some time before they recovered from their surprise. They did not admire the appearance of poor Tim, whom they had probably preserved from being murdered ; but wretched as his appearance was, they could not leave him on the road, exposed to the vengeance of his enraged master, who would probably return, if they left him.

They put several questions to Tim, who answered them with truth ; but his story appeared so improbable, that they did not believe a word he said ; and after much

debate, they concluded by taking him to the parish poor-house, till the overseers should determine how to dispose of him.

CHAP. VIII.

*Tim's story not believed by the Overseers—
sent to be a Chimney-sweep.—What took
place at Mr. Stubbs's.—Distress of
Tim's father and mother.—The Beggar-
Woman discovered, and sent to jail.*

HERE was a new scene of wretchedness and filth. He was obliged to live amongst the lowest of human beings, and his fare was coarse and scanty. The overseers took him to task in a tone so severe, that he was confused, and had scarce courage to reply. He told them, however, that the

name of the boarding school from which he had run away was Greengrove-House.

“Very well,” said one of these great men, who was a baker, “I know Greengrove-House; and so, sirrah, we shall soon find whether you speak the truth, and if you have attempted to deceive us, you had better have been an hundred miles off.—We’ll soon shift you out of our parish.”

“Indeed, indeed, sir,” cried Tim, “it is true, and—”

“Silence, sirrah! get along back to your room,” said the baker. “Don’t teach the other boys any wicked tricks, and they will shew you how to pick cotton.”

This was Tim’s employ for some days, when the sagacious baker, who knowing one Greengrove-House, never dreamt there

might be another in a different county, received a letter from an establishment of that name near Worcester, saying, no boy of any such name had ever been a member of the school, nor had any boy ran away for some years.

Enraged at this flagrant detection of Tim's falsehood, the overseers held a consultation what should be done with him, that he might not become a burden to their parish, and at the same time punish him for his deceit, when one of them observed, that he would just suit *Sam Sturdy* the sweep, who had been applying for a lad about that size.

Very few words were required to settle the matter, where only one party had any voice. Sam was sent to the same day, and

Tim was given into his hands, being told not to murmur or be refractory, for he was kindly treated in not being whipped through the parish, and sent to sea for his impositions.

In vain Timothy begged upon his knees that he might not be made a chimney-sweeper: the overseers thought they had detected him in one lie, and they would not believe another word he said; which ought to be a caution how children lose their character for truth, though, in this instance, Tim was certainly not in fault.

Sam Sturdy, though rough, was by no means a savage, and taking Tim by the hand, he told him, that if he behaved well and was obedient he would always have his belly full, and as to the sooty cloathes

and a black face, it was quite as good as the grease and filth of a beggar-boy.

Tim was thus compelled to become a chimney-sweeper; and three or four other little orphans from the parish, who were apprentices to Sturdy, were ordered to instruct him how to climb at the gable-end of the hut where they dwelt.

The room where they slept was a large hay-loft, in part lighted by the perforations in the thatch and an unglazed window, which in winter was closed with straw. Their bed was a species of mattress stuffed with chopped straw, an old blanket, and a horse-cloth.

Tim wept and fretted whenever he could steal into a corner; but his companions, who had never known what kindness was,

took a pleasure in jeering him. His story, which he told them, only excited their laughter, and procured him the name of the gentleman sweep, and he was so closely watched, that he had not the smallest opportunity to run away: indeed, bad as his fortune was, he had already suffered too much from running away seriously to attemptit.

In this situation we must now leave him, to see what passed at Mr. Stubbs's, when it was found that Thoughtless and Grumble had run away.

When the boys' names were called over by the monitors, these two were missing. Nobody had seen them in the morning, but their route was quickly traced. The ushers searched every bush down the lane, but

they were no where to be found. Letters were then sent to their different friends. All the boys were questioned, but of course knew nothing of the matter. Now, however, when they no longer felt the fear of Will's fist, all his tricks that were known came out, and Charles Timid declared that he had seen Will reading Trumper's Travels in a corner; but that he durst not mention it before, on account of Will's threatening to thrash him if he told.

Mr. Stubbs at this intelligence could not but condemn his own passion, which had lead to such fatal consequences, and he saw a flagrant instance of the bad effects of too much severity; which, so far from correcting error, only leads to a hardened and vicious opposition. He saw also that

this deviation from his original lenity was the grand cause of that insubordination which prevailed, and which had lost him so many scholars; for parents who send their children to boarding-schools, will not suffer them to be harshly treated like parish orphans, the more especially as it is the country air which is the great inducement; education being to be had under their own eye, equally good and infinitely cheaper.

The body of Will Grumble was not found till the second day, and so very shocking an accident made Mr. Stubbs fear that Tim had also met with some melancholy disaster, as no trace of him could be discovered; which would go nigh to break up his whole establishment.

When the letter containing the flight of

Timothy reached Mr. and Mrs. Thoughtless, their distress was extreme. Mrs. Thoughtless fell down in a swoon, and after repeated fits of fainting was put to bed, crying out every moment that her son was drowned, she was sure Tim was drowned.

Mr. Thoughtless was like a madman, distracted between his cares for his wife, and his fears for Timothy, and several worthy neighbours who came to assist and console them, threw all the blame upon the boarding-school, wondering that any body with only one son could send him away to nobody knows who, to meet with nobody knows what.

These kind of reflections are always sure to be given gratis when any accident happens; but Mr. Thoughtless could not blame him-

self, when he had done every thing he thought for the best. Instead of uselessly repining, he sent advertisements to the different London newspapers ; but as nobody had seen Tim in his proper dress, but the Irish beggar, and as the London papers seldom reached the obscure village where Tim was, there was no certainty in this means ; and Mr. Thoughtless determined to go down to Mr. Stubbs', and begin his search from the spot.

Mrs. Thoughtless, who the day after the news was a little recovered, though far from well, would not be left behind ; and, leaving the business to the care of the shopman, a post-chaise was hired, and they set out to trace the wanderer, who at

that point of time was in company with the potters going to Warwick fair.

At Dunstable they stopped to dine, and while dinner was getting ready, Mrs. Thoughtless, who could not rest a moment easy in one place, would walk up and down the town, faintly hoping she might see her son.

“ Oh ! the blessings on your honour, and your honour’s lady,” said a whining voice, behind them, “ pity two fatherless babes, and bestow a halfpenny on the widow of a soldier.”

At this irresistible appeal in broad Irish, Mr. and Mrs. Thoughtless turned round, and were for a moment ready to sink into the earth at the sight of Judy O’Bother,

her child, and her son Teddy, dressed in the very cloaths they had stolen from Tim, though now much soiled. Mrs. Thoughtless knew the dress in a moment, particularly by the make of the buttons, and shrieking out, "Oh! they have murdered my child!" was near fainting on the ground.

The conscience of the old hag flew into her heels, and seizing Teddy by the hand, she began to run.

"Stop the thief! Stop the murderer!" cried Mr. Thoughtless, supporting his wife with one arm, and stamping on the ground with rage.

The town was instantly in alarm: the old wretch was taken. The cloaths were sworn to; and poor Tim's knife and pocket-hand-

chief, and hat, were all such strong evidences, that the Magistrate before whom she was examined sent her under the care of two constables to the county jail, to take her trial for murder.

Indeed her own story confirmed her guilt; for she protested she had found the cloaths, but could not tell where, and Teddy contradicted this, by owning they had stripped a little boy on the road, whom his mother beat.

Mrs. Thoughtless was so overcome with the certainty of her son's fate that she was taken too ill to go farther; and except to find the body, there seemed no use for continuing the search.

It was some weeks that Mrs. Thoughtless remained in a very serious illness at

Dunstable, Mr. Thoughtless going now and then to town; but what was his extreme joy, when the Shopman put into his hands a sooty half-sheet of paper, sealed as a letter, with a bit of cobbler's wax, and which had arrived by that morning's post. It was directed in Tim's hand, though wretchedly written: he tore it open, and read,

“ Dear Father and Mother,

“ I have been a very naughty boy, in
“ running away from Mr. Stubbs', but if
“ you will but forgive me and fetch me back,
“ I will be a good boy as long as I live,
“ if I can. I am at the village of —— fif-
“ teen miles from Warwick, and Sam
“ Sturdy, my master, knows nothing of
“ my writing, or he would perhaps beat

“ me. So pray, dear father and mother,
“ do send for me away, before they bind
“ me ’prentice.

“ TIMOTHY THOUGHTLESS.”

Mr. Thoughtless could not understand any thing about what was meant by Sam Sturdy and the apprenticeship, poor Tim being ashamed to say he was a chimney-sweeper. To find his son alive was all Mr. Thoughtless cared about, and he set out within half an hour to break the news to his wife, and discover Tim.

CHAP. IX.

Honesty of Tim, and avarice of an Old Lady.—Is restored to his parents—and Conclusion.

WE left Tim learning to ascend chimnies, and as there was no help for it but good sound beatings and short allowance if he refused, he was soon master of the art, and being the youngest and least able, he was, for that reason, obliged to stagger under a load of sooty sacks and utensils, from one village to another, where they were employed.

On one of these occasions he saw the

words *Post-office*, written upon the window of an inn, and he instantly remembered how very easy it was to send a letter by that means to any part of the kingdom, wondering he had never thought of it before.

All his thoughts were now employed how to get the materials for writing. He was laughed at, by the old woman who kept the chandler's shop in the village, for begging half a sheet of writing paper.

"A sweep, indeed, want writing paper!" said she, "fine writing it would be; but I suppose you want to try your old trade of begging."

"No, ma'am," replied Tim modestly, but not daring to repeat his request.

Some days after he was sent for to

sweep the chimney of an old lady, whose disposition was famed for covetousness. Tim thought that if he could but see her, if she really was a lady, she would give him half a sheet of paper when he had done.

Every little cross accident seemed to thwart him. The lady was unwell, and had not left her room.

Tim finished his job, and took home the soot. All the other boys were gone with their master to sweep the chimnies of a gentleman's house, before it was painted, and Tim emptied his sack to the general heap, in order to be ready for the next call. —As he was doing this, a small china tea-cup, and a little bundle, rolled from amongst the soot; he took them both up.

The bundle was a small cotton bag, tied up tight, and on opening it he found it full of guineas and half-guineas, all bright and new. This was a treasure, indeed; but Tim remembered it did not belong to him, he knew also the right owner, and, without even counting the money, he tied it up again, and taking the tea-cup, trudged away back to the old lady's house.

She was an old maiden lady, reputed to be very rich, but never known to give any thing away. This money she had put into a tea-cup, and placed on a ledge in the chimney, for fear of thieves; and when she heard the sweep had been, she was almost distracted.

Ill as she was, she flew half-dressed to examine the chimney. The money was

gone ; and she knew not whether to take a constable, or to go by herself to Sam Sturdy's, who she doubted not, would deny any knowledge of the treasure.

Just as she opened the door, Tim was reaching his hand to the knocker.

She half screamed at the sight of him, " You little black wretch," cried she, " where is my money ? Tell me, was it you that stole it ?"

" I did not steal it," replied Tim, blushing with indignation through the sable tint. " It was hid in the soot ; and there it is."

She snatched it out of his hand, demanding if he had taken any out of it.

" No," replied Tim ; " if I had taken any, I would have taken the whole."

" Aye, well. Good boy, good boy,"

cried she in a shrill voice but better humour, "there is a penny for yourself."

"I won't take it," said Tim. "If you will give me a sheet of writing paper, you may keep your money."

"Writing paper!" exclaimed the old lady. "I will go and see; but what can a sweep-boy want with writing-paper?"

Away she went, and returned with half a sheet, a little soiled. "I have none but this," said she. "Will this do?"

"Yes," replied Tim, taking it carefully, "it must do."

Away he hurried with his treasure. A crow's feather, cut into something like a point with a knife he borrowed of one of his companions, served as a pen; but he had no means to get any ink. There was

no time to be lost—for Sam Sturdy, finding him sensible and tractable, had applied to the overseers to bind him apprentice—a little soot and water served for ink, and he begged a small bit of wax from a cobbler.

The letter was written in a corner, and he carried it in his sooty jacket, folded and pinned withinside, that his master might not find it, when he felt their pockets, which he often did, after they had been at any large house, where he suspected they might have a few halfpence given them.

At last Tim found an opportunity to slip his letter into the office, and at night he did not fail to pray heartily that it might go safe. He looked out every day with anxiety for his father's arrival, fearing that

his sooty letter might have been thrown away, as of no use, by the post-man.

On the fourth day, however, as he was returning loaded with his soot-bag, broom, and shovel (under which he could scarce stand) from the next village, where he had been since four o'clock in the morning, and it was now eight, he came up the village, hungry and weary, when he saw his father and mother, coming along the street, casting their eyes at every name for Sam Sturdy, little thinking that their poor child, covered with his sooty disguise, was then before them.

Poor Tim could not command himself; his heart beat, the tears gushed from his eyes,—down fell the soot-bag and brooms, and rushing forward, he threw his arms round

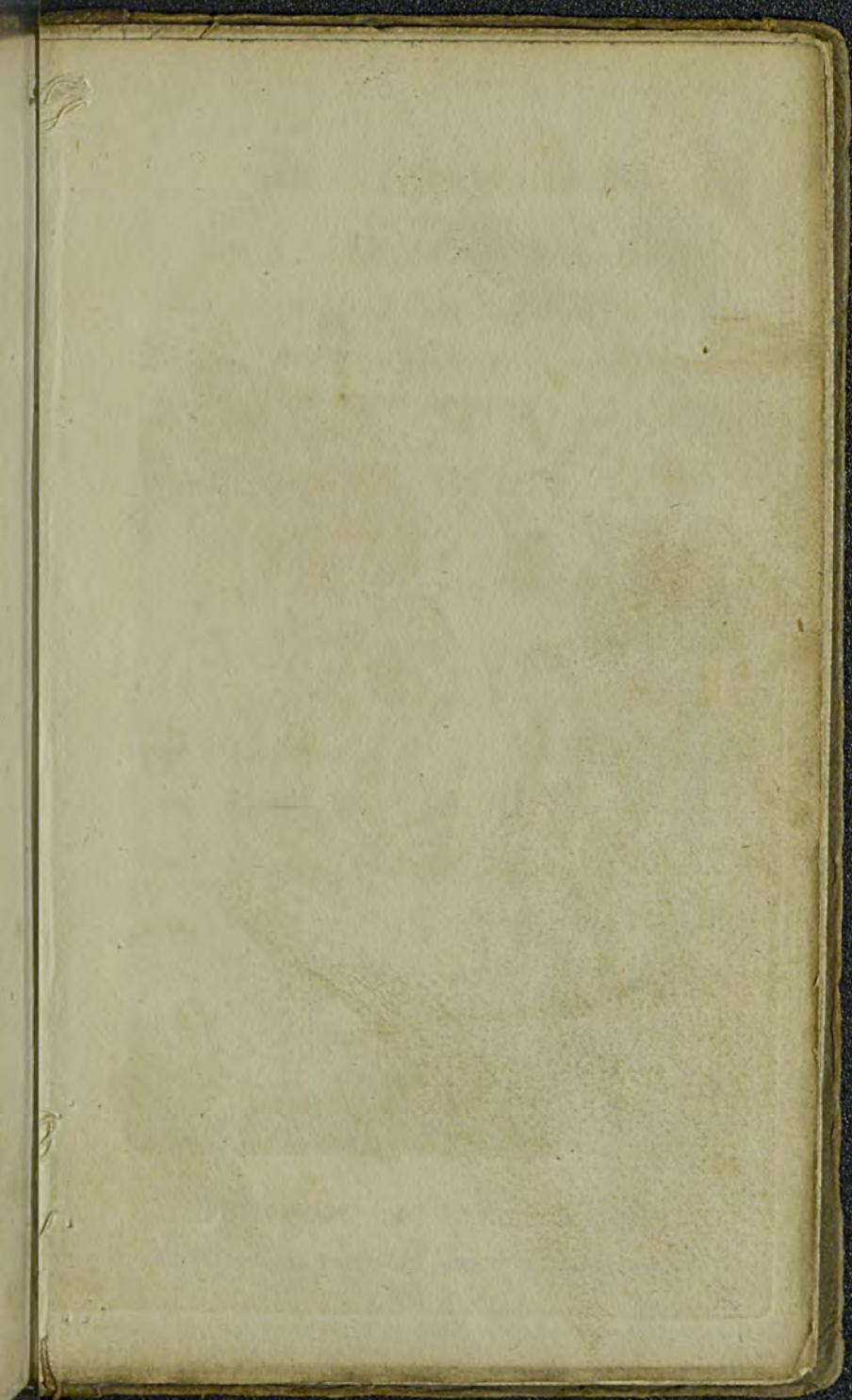
the neck of Mrs. Thoughtless. "O mother! my mother!" cried he, sobbing aloud.

"My child, my child! have I found my son?" cried she, when her surprise and fright allowed her to know that it really was Timothy. What a scene was this to pass in the open street; but joy as well as sorrow little regards time or place.

Mrs. Thoughtless's dress was entirely spoiled with the soot, and excited the laughter of all who saw it, and knew not the occasion.

They hurried to the inn, and it was quickly in every mouth that the gentleman sweep had found his parents.

Tim was soon cleaned and dressed like himself. Mr. Thoughtless made Sam Sturdy a small present, to satisfy him for



To face page 104.



E.T. Parris del.

Archer sculp.

O MOTHER! MY MOTHER!

London. Published by G. Walker, 106, 6th Portland St. Jan^y 15th 1813.

the loss of his servant, and Tim's comrades were all treated with a suit of new and warm clothes for Sundays.

The overseers excused themselves for their harshness, but Mr. Thoughtless took very little notice of their apologies. The two men who had saved his son from the brutality of the sailor, received a handsome present.

Timothy, after dinner, recounted to his parents all his sorrows and his sufferings, confessing his error in the violent step he had taken, which had so nearly been fatal to him : and had he not been recovered by his parents, he would have been compelled to be a chimney sweeper, and the miseries of his whole life would have arisen from his rash act.

“ I hope,” said Mr. Thoughtless, “ this will be a warning to you as long as you live, and to all who shall hear of it. You have suffered much, and you might have suffered more. Had you not been protected by Providence, you would doubtless never have lived through what you have undergone. How often have we seen those boys, who from some little grievance, or even harshness, run away from school, and meet with most dreadful accidents. When they grow up, that same spirit has led them to run away from their parents, or guardians, and ruined their fortunes during the whole course of their lives. One of the greatest comforts of human life is the support and assistance we derive from our friends ; but if we voluntarily abandon them, we become vagabonds

on the face of the earth, and never can hope to prosper. Had you waited under the injustice of Mr. Stubbs, your innocence would shortly have appeared, and your character would have been redeemed. Mr. Stubbs is conscious that he judged of you too hastily, and will receive you back with kindness."

"I am sure" answered Timothy, "that till Will Grumble came to our school, we were well treated by Mr. Stubbs, and were extremely happy; but, after he came, I do not know why, Mr. Stubbs seemed to change, and we were not half so well treated; but still I have no objection to go back to him, if you will speak to him to forgive my running away."

"I will engage that he will do so,"

replied Mr. Thoughtless. " But now, Timothy, as I know what I at present say to you will from circumstances be always remembered by you, I shall make an observation on your declaration, that you found yourselves worse treated after Will Grumble came amongst you. Till then you were comfortable ; but when this evil-disposed boy found fault with a number of things which had never before been thought hardships, then you adopt his opinions, and become discontented.—So you will find it in real life. You will find discontented people, who will not let others alone, but strive all in their power to disaffect them towards their country and their government, till they become incapable of enjoying real blessings, from a sense of imaginary wants.

Let what you have suffered, from listening in childhood to the insinuations of your school-fellow, guard you in youth from the evil suggestions of those dissatisfied spirits, and then you will become a man worthy to live in civil society."

Having now no further business to settle in this village, they departed in a post-chaise, intending to go direct to Northampton, which town Tim wished much to see, it having been so great an object in his mind.

As they entered the town of Daventry, their progress was interrupted by a great crowd; and, stopping to let them pass, they perceived a man in the midst of the mob, in a little market cart, tied hand

and foot, with several constables to guard him.

“ I declare it is Filch,” cried Tim. “ I dare say he has committed some terrible robbery.”

On enquiry, this conjecture proved true, he being in custody for sheep-stealing, and was now on his way to the county jail, where he would no doubt meet the reward of his crimes.

Poor Tim begged his father and mother not to change horses in the town, but drive away as fast as possible.

“ And why so, my dear ?” said his mother ; “ he cannot know you now ; and if he did, you need not fear his hurting you.”

“ No, no,” answered Tim, “ that’s not what I fear. I am thinking if any body should see me, and know I was once in his company, they might take me up too.”

“ That would have been the case, certainly,” replied Mr. Thoughtless, “ if you had been in his company when he was taken. It makes me shudder to think what a very providential escape you have had from the consequences of joining company with such a vile character. Oh! what dangers you thoughtlessly ran into;—how near were you to be murdered: and had you escaped that, and not have been delivered from him as you were, you would at this moment possibly have been his companion in that cart, and his companion

in a loathsome jail, and most probably sent for life to serve on board a man of war; for no honest family would have taken you, even to be a chimney-sweep."

Tim began to cry at this frightful picture, and his mother taking him in her arms, consoled him with caresses, observing that the wickedness of Filch had brought him to punishment, and that the old woman who had robbed him would most certainly be transported; from which he would see that the wicked seldom escaped triumphant in their vice.

With some persuasion Tim consented to pass the remainder of the day at Daventry, and the next morning they set out for Northampton, where they arrived about noon.

Mr. Thoughtless proposed visiting Will Grumble's aunt; but Mrs. Thoughtless very earnestly opposed it. "Why" said she, "should we wish for any acquaintance with a family, one unfortunate part of which has caused us so much sorrow? We should, by our visit, revive the grief of this old lady, who certainly was highly blameable in her conduct towards her nephew, for she supplied all his extravagancies with profusion; and when at her own house, she gave him so much of his own way, that he became mischievous and ungovernable."

This conversation passed as they went along a lane to the east of the market-place, which very shortly brought them to

a small church-yard, peculiarly neat in its appearance.

They entered, but their steps were quickly arrested by the sight of a new grave, at the head of which was placed a little stone, on which was simply engraved, "WILLIAM GRUMBLE, AGED 13."

"Alas ! unfortunate boy," said Mr. Thoughtless, "no praise could be placed over his untimely grave, for he merited none."

"Oh, my child !" cried Mrs. Thoughtless, clasping the hand of Tim, and bursting into tears, "how little a moment was there between you and him ! Oh, thanks be to the Almighty, who protected you ; or at this

hour I should perhaps here have stood over your grave."

Tim was so affected he wept aloud; and after a serious interval of silence, they left the place.

They had designed to spend a few days at Northampton by way of holiday, and to write to Mr. Stubbs, but this circumstance changed their intention; and setting out after breakfast the next day, a very few hours brought them to the door of Greengrove-House.

Mr. Stubbs was greatly astonished at the return of Timothy, whose adventures he was yet ignorant of, and taking him by the hand he led him into the parlour.

"My young friend," said he, "I am sincerely glad to see you. I acknowledge

I was deceived by appearances, and was too hasty in judging you, and on your part you gave way to blind fear and rash resentment. I hope it will be a lesson to us both, for the better government of our tempers; and be assured I shall, from this hour, never mention again the transaction. I hope also on your part, all resentment is banished, and that you return to my care with perfect cordiality."

Timothy did not know how to reply to the kindness of Mr. Stubbs; but his father spoke for him, and having sent him away to his former companions, he repeated to Mr. Stubbs the singular adventures and sufferings he had met with, and that he was satisfied he would prove henceforth an ornament to the school.

Tim's companions were all eager to hear his adventures, asking a hundred questions in a breath; one and all assuring him, that they were now very well treated, and lived as they used before Will Grumble came amongst them.

Mr. and Mrs. Thoughtless parted from their son the following day, pleased to leave him in high spirits, and satisfied that in future they should find him deserving all their care.

Timothy, on his part, strove to excel in his learning, out of gratitude to the kindness of his friends; and was, before he left it, the head scholar in Mr. Stubbs's establishment.

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