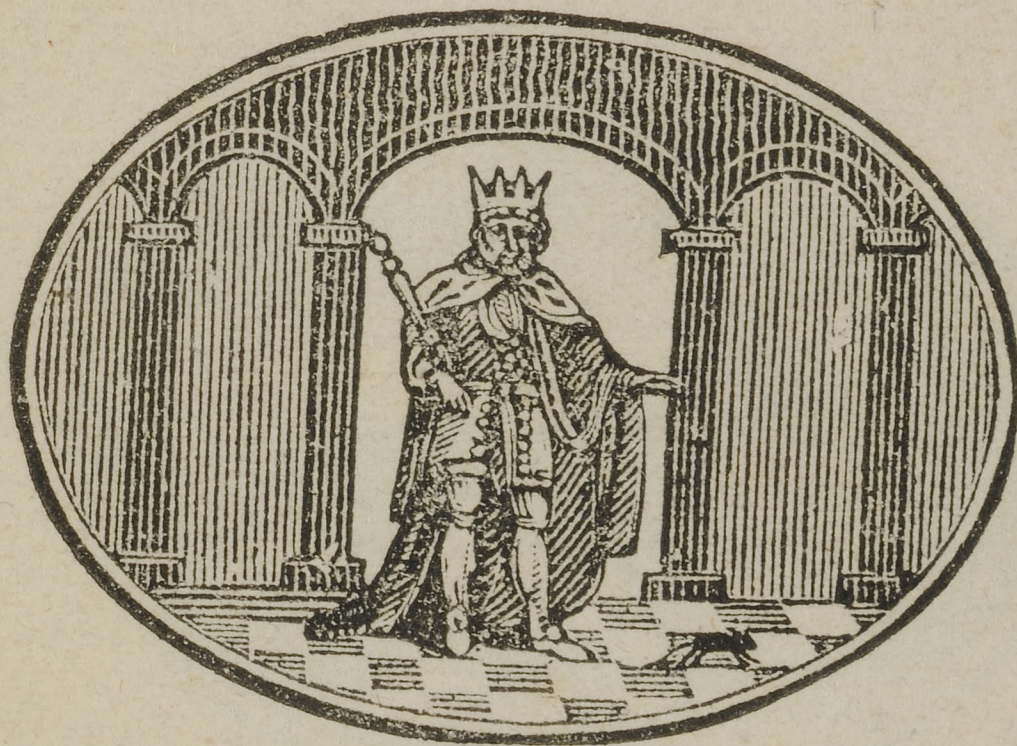


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EXEMPLIFIED IN THE HISTORY OF
WILLIAM AND HARRY.



PROVIDENCE :

H. H. BROWN, PRINTER.

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Cincinnatus was greater though at the plow, than Cæsar on his throne.



MISCHIEF ITS OWN PUNISHMENT.



MR. WILLIAMS and his little son Robert, as they were one fine day walking in the fields together, passed by the side of a garden, in which they saw a beautiful pear tree loaded with fruit. Robert cast a longing eye at it, and complained to his papa that he was very dry. On Mr. Williams' saying, that he was dry also, but they must bear it with patience till they got home, Robert pointed to the pear tree, and begged his papa would let him go and get one;

for, as the hedge was not very thick, he said he could easily get through without being seen by any one.

Robert's father reminded him, that the garden and fruit were private property, and to take any thing from thence without permission, was nothing less than being guilty of a robbery. He allowed, that there might be a possibility of getting into the garden without being seen by the owner of it; but such a wicked action could not be concealed from Him, who sees every action of our lives, and who penetrates even into the very secrets of our hearts, and that is God.

His son shook his head, and said, he was sensible of his error, and would no more think of com-

mitting what might be called a robbery. He recollected, that parson Johnson had told him the same thing before, but he had then forgotten it.

At this instant a man started up from behind the hedge, which had before concealed him from their sight. This was an old man, the owner of the garden, who had heard every thing that had passed between Mr. Williams and his son. "Be thankful to God, my child, (said the old man,) that your father prevented your getting into my garden, with a view to deprive me of that which does not belong to you. You little thought, that at the foot of each tree is placed a trap to catch thieves, which you could not have escaped, and which might have lamed you for the rest

of your life. I am, however, happy to find, that you so readily listened to the first admonition of your father, and shewed such a fear of offending God. As you have behaved in so just and sensible a manner, you shall now, without any danger or trouble, partake of the fruits of my garden." He then went to the finest pear tree, gave it a shake, and brought down near a hatful of fruit, which he immediately gave to Robert.

This civil old man could not be prevailed on to accept of anything in return, though Mr. Williams pulled out his purse for that purpose. "I am sufficiently satisfied, Sir, (said he,) in thus obliging your son, and were I to accept of anything, that satisfaction would be lost."

Mr. Williams thanked him very kindly, and having shaken hands over the hedge, they parted, Robert at the same time taking leave of the old man in a very polite manner.

Little Robert, having finished several of the pears, began to find himself at leisure to talk to his papa. "This is a very good old man, (said he,) but would God have punished me, had I taken these pears without his leave?" "He certainly would," replied Mr. Williams, "for he never fails to reward good actions, and chastise those who commit evil. The good old man fully explained to you this matter, in telling you of the traps laid for thieves, into which you must have inevitably fallen, had you entered his garden

in a clandestine manner. God orders everything that passes upon earth, and directs events so as to reward good people for virtuous actions, and to punish the wicked for their crimes. In order to make this more clear to you, I will relate to you an affair which happened when I was a boy, and which I shall never forget. Robert seemed very attentive to his father, and having said he should be very glad to hear his story, Mr. Williams thus proceeded.

“ When I lived with my father, and was much about your age, we had two neighbors, between whose houses ours was situated, and their names were Davis and Johnson. Mr. Davis had a son named William, and Mr. Johnson one also of the name of Harry. Our gardens

were at that time separated only by quickset hedges, so that it was easy to see into each other's grounds.

“ It was too often the practice with William, when he found himself alone in his father's garden, to take pleasure in throwing stones over the hedges, without paying the least regard to the mischief they might do. Mr. Davis had frequently caught him at this dangerous sport, and never failed severely to reprimand him for it, threatening him with severe punishment if he did not desist.

“ This child, unhappily, either knew not, or would not take the trouble to reflect, that we are not to do amiss, even when we are alone, for reasons I have already mentioned to you. His father

being one day gone out, and therefore thinking that nobody could see him or bring him to punishment, he filled his pockets with stones, and then began to fling them about at random.

“ Mr. Johnson happened to be in his garden at the same time, and his son Harry with him. This boy was of much the same disposition as William, thinking there was no crime in committing any mischief, provided he were not discovered. His father had a gun charged, which he brought into the garden, in order to shoot the sparrows that made sad havoc among his cherries and was sitting in the summer-house to watch them.

“ At this instant, a servant came to acquaint him that a strange

gentleman desired to speak with him, and was waiting in the parlour. He therefore put down the gun in the summer-house, and strictly ordered Harry by no means to touch it; but he was no sooner gone, than his naughty son said to himself, that he could see no harm in playing a little with the gun, and therefore took it up, put it on his shoulder, and endeavored to act the part of a soldier.

“ The muzzle of the gun happened to be pointed towards Mr. Davis’s garden, and just as he was in the midst of his military exercises, a stone thrown by William hit him directly in one of his eyes. The fright and pain together made Harry drop the gun, which went off, and in a moment both gardens resounded with the most dismal

shrieks and lamentations. Harry had received a blow on the eye with a stone, and the whole charge had entered William's leg. The sad consequences of which were, the one lost his eye, and the other a leg."

Robert could not help pitying poor William and Harry for their terrible misfortune; and Mr. Williams was not angry with his son for his tenderness. "It is true," said he, "they were much to be pitied, and their parents still more, for having such vicious and disobedient children. Yet it is probable, if God had not early punished these boys, they would have continued their mischievous practices as often as they found themselves alone; but by this misfortune they learned to know, that

God publicly punishes all wickedness done in secret. This had the desired effect, as both ever after left off all kinds of mischief, and became prudent and sedate. Certain it is, that an all-wise Creator never chastises us but with a view to add to our happiness.”

Robert was very much struck with this story, and said he hoped he should never lose either a leg or an eye by such imprudent conduct. This interesting conversation was interrupted by their arrival at their own house, when Robert hastened to find his brothers and sisters, to tell them the adventures of his walk, and the history of William and Harry.



Love and respect good men.



Pity and pray for wicked men.

HYMN.

Though I am young, yet I may die
 Before another day is gone;
 And, in the twinkling of an eye,
 Be call'd to stand before God's throne.

And oh, how can I see his face,
 When I so very often sin?
 Lord, help me henceforth by thy grace,
 That I may now anew begin.

Oh may I ne'er forget to pray
 To God, to change my wicked heart;
 Or be so taken with my play,
 As to neglect the better part.

May I remember, that God's eye
 Can every secret action see;
 And that it would be vain to try,
 From his almighty power to flee.

And when I shall be called away,
 May I be well prepared to go,
 If it should be this very day,
 And quit these trifles here below.



'Tis but a few short years from infancy to manhood.



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