

THE  
CHILDREN  
IN  
THE WOOD.



Poor children! how they must have cried,  
When in that horrid wood—  
How keen their sufferings too, have been,  
To die for want of food!

## PREFACE.

The printer wishes to say to little children, that he is not sure that the sad "History of the Children in the Wood," is true; nor is he prepared to assert that it is not. It is as likely to be true, as otherwise, at least some part of it; for we read in history of many deeds as cruel as the murdering of these poor innocent babes. The printer hopes, that, when any little girls or boys shall read this little book, they will remember that they, too, may do very bad acts, if they are not very watchful to mind their parents' advice, and pray to their Heavenly Father for strength to overcome temptation.

This little book may very early teach children to see how bad sin is, and what it leads to, namely, punishment in this life and in that which is to come, unless we sincerely repent, and pray to God for forgiveness.

# THE CHILDREN

## IN THE WOOD.

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A gentleman and Lady of Norfolk, (Eng.) had two children, WILLIAM and ELIZA. When the youngest was but five years old, the parents were both seized with a severe illness at the same time. The father now sent for his brother, and entrusted him with the care of his dear children, leaving £600 a year to his son, and £300 a year to his daughter, to be paid on the day of her marriage; but if they died, the



whole was to go to the uncle. The parents strictly charged him to bring them up with care, which he faithfully promised to do, assuring them he would be a parent to them. Scarcely had he finished his declaration, when they both expired together.

The uncle committed them



to the grave, and took the children home to his house, where he at first behaved kindly to them. But, alas! every tender impression soon wore off his mind, and he resolved to make away with them, which he effected in the following manner:

Walking by the side of a thick wood one morning, he overheard two ruffians dis-



coursing of a murder and robbery they had committed. He asked them if they would go and drink with him : they consented, and went with him to an ale-house, where he addressed them as follows :

“ I know (by what I overheard of your discourse in the wood) you are very honest fellows, and would do any thing rather than starve ;

I would willingly employ you to your advantage.”  
 “With all my heart,” replied one of them :—“ what is it ?” Finding them ready to do any thing, he promised to reward them with a hundred pounds, if they would murder two children. They immediately consented.

As his wife was very fond of the children, and could hardly bear them out of her sight, it was agreed (in order to prevent her suspicions; that the ruffians were to be dressed like wagoners. He told his wife he had received a letter from a relation in London, requesting that he might have the children; and



saying that they should be educated with some cousins ; she at length yielded.

The men thus dressed, came for the children, received the reward, and set off on their journey. The little ones prattled innocently on the road—talked of their play things, and what pleasure they should have with their cousins in London.

They went on till they reached a great wood, when one of the ruffians was touched with their innocence, and was desirous not to kill them, but to leave them in the wood, and get off with the money. The other would not consent to the proposal, but insisted that they should be killed. After a great many words they drew their sharp swords, and began fighting. The villain who wished to murder these innocent babes, was run through the body, and killed on the spot. The other buried him in a pit, and went away, leaving the children behind; telling them he was



only going to get them some food. They sat down on the grass to wait for his return, where they passed away some hours in telling little stories and tales to one another. As night approached, they began to grow pensive and melancholy, and to cry bitterly both with cold and hunger. At length they cried themselves to sleep.



In the morning they wandered up and down the wood, and endeavored to find their way out, but all in vain. In their wandering about, they fed upon black-berries, dew-berries, and whatever other wild fruit they could find: in this shocking manner they subsisted three days. Sometimes they made little nose-gays of wild flowers, and €

ther times sung little innocent songs. Having eat all the berries they could find, they grew faint and laid themselves down on a green bank, and with grief and hunger died in each other's arms: their bodies where afterwards found covered with leaves.

Thus perished these two pretty children, through the treachery of an unnatural uncle.

END OF THE CHILEREN IN THE WOOD



