LAMB CHARLES, EDGEWORTH MARIA, LAMB MARY И ДР.

THE BLUE JAR STORY BOOK

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THE BLUE JAR.
MARIA EDGEWORTH

Rosamond, a little girl about seven years of age, was walking with her mother in the streets of London. As she passed along she looked in at the windows of several shops, and saw a great variety of different sorts of things, of which she did not know the use or even the names. She wished to stop to look at them, but there was a great number of people in the streets, and a great many carts, carriages, and wheelbarrows, and she was afraid to let go her mother's hand.

'Oh, mother, how happy I should be,' she said, as she passed a toy-shop, 'if I had all these pretty things!'

'What, all! Do you wish for them all, Rosamond?'

'Yes, mother, all.'

As she spoke they came to a milliner's shop, the windows of which were decorated with ribands and lace and festoons of

artificial flowers.

'Oh mother, what beautiful roses! Won't you buy some of them?'

'No, my dear.'

'Why?'

'Because I don't want them, my dear.'

They went a little farther, and came to another shop, which caught Rosamond's eye. It was a jeweller's shop, and in it were a great many pretty baubles, ranged in drawers behind glass.

'Mother, will you buy some of these?'

'Which of them, Rosamond?'

'Which? I don't know which; any of them will do, for they are all pretty.'

'Yes, they are all pretty; but of what use would they be to me?'

'Use! Oh, I'm sure you could find some use or other for them if you would only buy them first.'

'But I would rather find out the use first.'

'Well, then, mother, there are buckles; you know that buckles are useful things, very useful things.'

'I have a pair of buckles; I don't want another pair,' said her mother, and walked on. Rosamond was very sorry that her mother wanted nothing. Presently, however, they came to a shop which appeared to her far more beautiful than the rest. It was a chemist's shop, but she did not know that.

'Oh, mother, oh!' cried she, pulling her mother's hand, 'look, look! – blue, green, red, yellow, and purple! Oh, mother, what

beautiful things! Won't you buy some of these?'

Still her mother answered as before: 'Of what use would they be to me, Rosamond?'

'You might put flowers in them, mother, and they would look so pretty on the chimney-piece. I wish I had one of them.'

'You have a flower-pot,' said her mother, 'and that is not a flower-pot.'

'But I could use it for a flower-pot, mother, you know.'

'Perhaps, if you were to see it nearer, if you were to examine it, you might be disappointed.'

'No, indeed, I'm sure I should not; I should like it exceedingly.'

Rosamond kept her head turned to look at the blue vase till she could see it no longer.

'Then, mother,' said she, after a pause, 'perhaps you have no money.'

'Yes, I have.'

'Dear me! if I had money I would buy roses, and boxes, and buckles, and blue flower-pots, and everything.' Rosamond was obliged to pause in the midst of her speech. 'Oh, mother, would you stop a minute for me? I have got a stone in my shoe; it hurts me very much.'

'How comes there to be a stone in your shoe?'

'Because of this great hole, mother; it comes in there. My shoes are quite worn out. I wish you would be so very good as to give me another pair.'

'Nay, Rosamond, but I have not money enough to buy shoes,

and flower-pots, and buckles, and boxes, and everything.'

Rosamond thought that was a great pity. But now her foot, which had been hurt by the stone, began to give her so much pain that she was obliged to hop every other step, and she could think of nothing else. They came to a shoemaker's shop soon afterwards.

'There, there, mother, there are shoes; there are little shoes that would just fit me, and you know shoes would be really of use to me.'

'Yes, so they would, Rosamond. Come in.' She followed her mother into the shop.

Mr. Sole, the shoemaker, had a great many customers, and his shop was full, so they were obliged to wait.

'Well, Rosamond,' said her mother, 'you don't think this shop so pretty as the rest?'

'No, not nearly; it is black and dark, and there are nothing but shoes all round, and, besides, there's a very disagreeable smell.'

'That smell is the smell of new leather.'

'Is, it? Oh,' said Rosamond looking round 'there is a pair of little shoes; they'll just fit me, I'm sure.'

'Perhaps they might, but you cannot be sure till you have tried them on, any more than you can be quite sure that you should like the blue vase *exceedingly* till you have examined it more attentively.'

'Why, I don't know about the shoes, certainly, till I have tried; but, mother, I am quite sure that I should like the flower-pot.'

'Well, which would you rather have – that jar or a pair of shoes? I will buy either for you.'

'Dear mother, thank you! but if you could buy both?'

'No, not both.'

'Then the jar, if you please.'

'But I should tell you, that in that case I shall not give you another pair of shoes this month.'

'This month! that's a very long time indeed! You can't think how these hurt me. I believe I'd better have the new shoes. Yet, that blue flower-pot. Oh, indeed, mother, these shoes are not so very very bad! I think I might wear them a little longer, and the month will soon be over. I can make them last till the end of the month, can't I? Don't you think so, mother?'

'Nay, my dear, I want you to think for yourself; you will have time enough to consider the matter whilst I speak to Mr. Sole about my clogs.'

Mr. Sole was by this time at leisure, and whilst her mother was speaking to him Rosamond stood in profound meditation, with one shoe on and the other in her hand.

'Well, my dear, have you decided?'

'Mother! yes, I believe I have. If you please, I should like to have the flower-pot; that is, if you won't think me very silly, mother.'

'Why, as to that, I can't promise you, Rosamond; but, when you have to judge for yourself, you should choose what will make you happy, and then it would not signify who thought you silly.'

'Then, mother, if that's all, I'm sure the flower-pot would make me happy,' said she, putting on her old shoe again; 'so I choose the flower-pot.'

'Very well, you shall have it. Clasp your shoe, and come home.'

Rosamond clasped her shoe and ran after her mother. It was not long before the shoe came down at the heel, and many times she was obliged to stop to take the stones out of it, and she often limped with pain; but still the thoughts of the blue flower-pot prevailed, and she persisted in her choice.

When they came to the shop with the large window Rosamond felt much pleasure upon hearing her mother desire the servant who was with them to buy the blue jar, and bring it home. He had other commissions, so he did not return with them. Rosamond as soon as she got in ran to gather all her own flowers, which she kept in a corner of her mother's garden.

'I am afraid they'll be dead before the flower-pot comes, Rosamond,' said her mother to her, as she came in with the flowers in her lap.

'No, indeed, mother; it will come home very soon, I dare say. I shall be very happy putting them into the blue flower-pot.'

'I hope so, my dear.'

The servant was much longer returning home than Rosamond had expected; but at length he came, and brought with him the long-wished-for jar. The moment it was set down upon the table, Rosamond ran up to it with an exclamation of joy. 'I may have it now, mother?'

'Yes, my dear! it is yours.'

Rosamond poured the flowers from her lap upon the carpet, and seized the blue flower-pot.

'Oh, dear mother,' cried she, as soon as she had taken off the top, 'but there's something dark in it which smells very disagreeably. What is it? I didn't want this black stuff.'

'Nor I, my dear.'

'But what shall I do with it, mother?'

'That I cannot tell.'

'It will be of no use to me, mother.'

'That I cannot help.'

'But I must pour it out, and fill the flower-pot with water.'

'As you please, my dear.'

'Will you lend me a bowl to pour it into, mother?'

'That was more than I promised you, my dear, but I will lend you a bowl.'

The bowl was produced, and Rosamond proceeded to empty the blue vase. But she experienced much surprise and disappointment on finding, when it was entirely empty, that it was no longer a *blue* vase. It was a plain white glass jar, which had appeared to have that beautiful colour merely from the liquor with which it had been filled.

Little Rosamond burst into tears.

'Why should you cry, my dear?' said her mother; 'it will be of as much use to you now as ever for a flower-pot.'

'But it won't look so pretty on the chimney-piece. I am sure, if

I had known that it was not really blue, I should not have wished to have it so much.'

'But didn't I tell you that you had not examined it, and that perhaps you would be disappointed?'

'And so I am disappointed, indeed. I wish I had believed you at once. Now I had much rather have the shoes, for I shall not be able to walk all this month; even walking home that little way hurt me exceedingly. Mother, I will give you the flower-pot back again, and that blue stuff and all, if you'll only give me the shoes.'

'No, Rosamond; you must abide by your own choice, and now the best thing you can possibly do is to bear your disappointment with good humour.'

'I will bear it as well as I can,' said Rosamond, wiping her eyes; and she began slowly and sorrowfully to fill the vase with flowers.

But Rosamond's disappointment did not end here. Many were the difficulties and distresses into which her imprudent choice brought her before the end of the month. Every day her shoes grew worse and worse, till at last she could neither run, dance, jump, nor walk in them. Whenever Rosamond was called to see anything, she was detained pulling her shoes up at the heels, and was sure to be too late. Whenever her mother was going out to walk, she could not take Rosamond with her, for Rosamond had no soles to her shoes; and at length, on the very last day of the month, it happened that her father proposed to take her, with her brother, to a glasshouse which she had long wished to see. She was very happy; but when she was quite ready, had her hat

and gloves on, and was making haste downstairs to her brother and father, who were waiting for her at the hall-door, the shoe dropped off. She put it on again in a great hurry, but as she was going across the hall her father turned round. 'Why are you walking slipshod? no one must walk slipshod with me. Why, Rosamond,' said he, looking at her shoes with disgust, 'I thought that you were always neat. Go; I cannot take you with me.'

Rosamond coloured and retired. 'Oh, mother,' said she, as she took off her hat, 'how I wish that I had chosen the shoes! They would have been of so much more use to me than that jar. However, I am sure – no, not quite sure, but I hope I shall be wiser another time.'

THE BASKET-WOMAN.
MARIA EDGEWORTH

At the foot of a steep, slippery, white hill, near Dunstable, in Bedfordshire, called Chalk Hill, there is a hut, or rather a hovel, which travellers would scarcely suppose could be inhabited, if they did not see the smoke rising from its peaked roof. An old woman lived in this hovel, many years ago, and with her a little boy and girl, the children of a beggar who died and left these orphans perishing with hunger. They thought themselves very happy when the good old woman first took them into her hut, and bid them warm themselves at her small fire, and gave them a crust of mouldy bread to eat. She had not much to give, but what she had she gave with goodwill. She was very kind to these poor children, and worked hard at her spinning-wheel and at her knitting to support herself and them. She earned money also in another way. She used to follow all the carriages as they went up Chalk Hill, and when the horses stopped to take breath or to rest themselves, she put stones behind the carriage-wheels to prevent them from rolling backwards down the steep, slippery hill.

The little boy and girl loved to stand beside the good-natured old woman's spinning wheel when she was spinning, and to talk to her. At these times she taught them something, which she said she hoped they would remember all their lives. She explained

to them what is meant by telling the truth, and what it is to be honest. She taught them to dislike idleness, and to wish that they could be useful.

One evening, as they were standing beside her, the little boy said to her: 'Grandmother' – for that was the name by which she liked that these children should call her – 'grandmother, how often you are forced to get up from your spinning-wheel, and to follow the chaises and coaches up that steep hill, to put stones underneath the wheels to hinder them from rolling back! The people who are in the carriages give you a halfpenny or a penny for doing so, don't they?'

'Yes, child.'

'But it is very hard work for you to go up and down that hill. You often say that you are tired. And then you know that you cannot spin all that time. Now, if we might go up the hill, and put the stones behind the wheels, you could sit still at your work; and would not the people give us the halfpence? and could not we bring them all to you? Do, pray, dear grandmother, try us for one day – to-morrow will you?'

'Yes,' said the old woman, 'I will try what you can do; but I must go up the hill along with you for the first two or three times, for fear you should get yourselves hurt.'

So the next day the little boy and girl went with their grandmother, as they used to call her, up the steep hill, and she showed the boy how to prevent the wheels from rolling back by putting stones behind them, and she said: 'This is called scotching

the wheels,' and she took off the boy's hat and gave it to the little girl to hold up to the carriage-windows ready for the halfpence.

When she thought that the children knew how to manage by themselves she left them and returned to her spinning-wheel. A great many carriages happened to go by this day, and the little girl received a great many halfpence. She carried them all in her brother's hat to her grandmother in the evening, and the old woman smiled and thanked the children. She said that they had been useful to her, and that her spinning had gone on finely, because she had been able to sit still at her wheel all day.

'But, Paul, my boy,' said she, 'what is the matter with your hand?'

'Only a pinch – only one pinch that I got as I was putting a stone behind a wheel of a chaise. It does not hurt me much, grandmother, and I've thought of a good thing for to-morrow. I shall never be hurt again if you will only be so good as to give me the old handle of the broken crutch, grandmother, and the block of wood that lies in the chimney-corner, and that is of no use. I'll make it of some use, if I may have it.'

'Take it, then, dear,' said the old woman, 'and you'll find the handle of the broken crutch under my bed.'

Paul went to work immediately, and fastened one end of the pole into the block of wood, so as to make something like a dry-rubbing brush.

'Look, grandmother – look at my *scotcher*! I call this thing my *scotcher*,' said Paul, 'because I shall always scotch the wheels

with it. I shall never pinch my fingers again; my hands, you see, will be safe at the end of this long stick. And, Sister Anne, you need not be at the trouble of carrying any more stones after me up the hill; we shall never want stones any more. My scotcher will do without anything else, I hope. I wish it was morning, and that a carriage would come, that I might run up the hill and try my scotcher.'

'And I wish that as many chaises may go by to-morrow as there did to-day, and that we may bring you as many halfpence, too, grandmother,' said the little girl.

'So do I, my dear Anne,' said the old woman, 'for I mean that you and your brother shall have all the money that you get to-morrow. You may buy some ginger bread for yourselves, or some of those ripe plums that you saw at the fruit-stall the other day, which is just going into Dunstable. I told you then that I could not afford to buy such things for you, but now that you can earn halfpence for yourselves, children, it is fair you should taste a ripe plum and bit of gingerbread for once and a way in your lives.'

'We'll bring some of the gingerbread home to her, shan't we, brother?' whispered little Anne.

The morning came, but no carriages were heard though Paul and his sister had risen at five o'clock that they might be sure to be ready for early travellers. Paul kept his scotcher poised upon his shoulder, and watched eagerly at his station at the bottom of the hill. He did not wait long before a carriage came. He followed it up the hill, and the instant the postillion called to him and bade

him stop the wheels, he put his scotcher behind them, and found that it answered the purpose perfectly well.

Many carriages went by this day, and Paul and Anne received a great many halfpence from the travellers.

When it grew dusk in the evening Anne said to her brother: 'I don't think any more carriages will come by to-day. Let us count the halfpence, and carry them home now to grandmother.'

'No, not yet,' answered Paul; 'let them alone – let them lie still in the hole where I have put them. I dare say more carriages will come by before it is quite dark, and then we shall have more halfpence.'

Paul had taken the halfpence out of his hat, and he had put them into a hole in the high bank by the roadside, and Anne said she would not meddle with them, and that she would wait till her brother liked to count them; and Paul said: 'If you will stay and watch here, I will go and gather some blackberries for you in the hedge in yonder field. Stand you hereabouts, half-way up the hill, and the moment you see any carriage coming along the road run as fast as you can and call me.'

Anne waited a long time, or what she thought a long time, and she saw no carriage and she trailed her brother's scotcher up and down till she was tired. Then she stood still and looked again, and she saw no carriage, so she went sorrowfully into the field and to the hedge where her brother was gathering blackberries, and she said:

'Paul, I'm sadly tired —*sadly tired!*' said she, 'and my eyes

are quite strained with looking for chaises. No more chaises will come to-night, and your scotcher is lying there, of no use, upon the ground. Have not I waited long enough for to-day, Paul?'

'Oh no,' said Paul. 'Here are some blackberries for you; you had better wait a little bit longer. Perhaps a carriage might go by whilst you are standing here talking to me.'

Anne, who was of a very obliging temper, and who liked to do what she was asked to do, went back to the place where the scotcher lay, and scarcely had she reached the spot when she heard the noise of a carriage. She ran to call her brother, and, to their great joy, they now saw four chaises coming towards them. Paul, as soon as they went up the hill, followed with his scotcher. First he scotched the wheels of one carriage, then of another; and Anne was so much delighted with observing how well the scotcher stopped the wheels, and how much better it was than stones, that she forgot to go and hold her brother's hat to the travellers for halfpence, till she was roused by the voice of a little rosy girl who was looking out of the window of one of the chaises. 'Come close to the chaise-door,' said the little girl; 'here are some halfpence for you.'

Anne held the hat, and she afterwards went on to the other carriages. Money was thrown to her from each of them, and when they had all gotten safely to the top of the hill, she and her brother sat down upon a large stone by the roadside to count their treasure. First they began by counting what was in the hat – 'One, two, three, four halfpence.'

'But, oh, brother, look at this!' exclaimed Anne; 'this is not the same as the other halfpence.'

'No, indeed, it is not,' cried Paul; 'it is no halfpenny. It is a guinea – a bright golden guinea!'

'Is it?' said Anne, who had never seen a guinea in her life before, and who did not know its value, 'and will it do as well as a halfpenny to buy gingerbread? I'll run to the fruit-stall and ask the woman, shall I?'

'No, no,' said Paul, 'you need not ask any woman, or anybody but me. I can tell you all about it as well as anybody in the whole world.'

'The whole world! Oh, Paul, you forgot. Not so well as my grandmother.'

'Why, not so well as my grandmother, perhaps; but, Anne, I can tell you that you must not talk yourself, Anne, but you must listen to me quietly, or else you won't understand what I am going to tell you; for I can assure you that I don't think I quite understood it myself, Anne, the first time my grandmother told it to me, though I stood stock-still listening my best.'

Prepared by this speech to hear something very difficult to be understood, Anne looked very grave, and her brother explained to her that with a guinea she might buy two hundred and fifty-two times as many plums as she could get for a penny.

'Why, Paul, you know the fruit-woman said she would give us a dozen plums for a penny. Now, for this little guinea would she give us two hundred and fifty-two dozen?'

'If she has so many, and if we like to have so many, to be sure she will,' said Paul; 'but I think we should not like to have two hundred and fifty-two dozen of plums; we could not eat such a number.'

'But we could give some of them to my grandmother,' said Anne.

'But still there would be too many for her, and for us, too,' said Paul, 'and when we had eaten the plums there would be an end to all the pleasure. But now I'll tell you what I am thinking of, Anne, that we might buy something for my grandmother that would be very useful to her indeed with the guinea – something that would last a great while.'

'What, brother? What sort of thing?'

'Something that she said she wanted very much last winter, when she was so ill with the rheumatism – something that she said yesterday, when you were making her bed, she wished she might be able to buy before next winter.'

'I know, I know what you mean!' said Anne – 'a blanket. Oh, yes, Paul, that will be much better than plums; do let us buy a blanket for her. How glad she will be to see it! I will make her bed with the new blanket, and then bring her to look at it. But, Paul, how shall we buy a blanket? Where are blankets to be got?'

'Leave that to me; I'll manage that. I know where blankets can be got; I saw one hanging out of a shop the day I went last to Dunstable.'

'You have seen a great many things at Dunstable, brother.'

'Yes, a great many; but I never saw anything there or anywhere else that I wished for half so much as I did for the blanket for my grandmother. Do you remember how she used to shiver with the cold last winter? I'll buy the blanket to-morrow. I'm going to Dunstable with her spinning.'

'And you'll bring the blanket to me, and I shall make the bed very neatly. That will be all right – all happy!' said Anne, clapping her hands.

'But stay! Hush! don't clap your hands so, Anne. It will not be all happy, I'm afraid,' said Paul, and his countenance changed, and he looked very grave. 'It will not be all right, I'm afraid, for there's one thing we have neither of us thought of, but that we ought to think about. We cannot buy the blanket, I'm afraid.'

'Why – Paul, why?'

'Because I don't think this guinea is honestly ours.'

'Nay, brother, but I'm sure it is honestly ours. It was given to us, and grandmother said all that was given to us to-day was to be our own.'

'But who gave it to you, Anne?'

'Some of the people in those chaises, Paul. I don't know which of them, but I dare say it was the little rosy girl.'

'No,' said Paul, 'for when she called you to the chaise door she said, "Here's some halfpence for you." Now, if she gave you the guinea, she must have given it to you by mistake.'

'Well, but perhaps some of the people in the other chaises gave it to me, and did not give it to me by mistake, Paul. There was a

gentleman reading in one of the chaises, and a lady, who looked very good-naturedly at me, and then the gentleman put down his book, and put his head out of the window and looked at your scotcher, brother, and he asked me if that was your own making; and when I said yes, and that I was your sister, he smiled at me, and put his hand into his waistcoat pocket, and threw a handful of halfpence into the hat, and I dare say he gave us the guinea along with them because he liked your scotcher so much.'

'Why,' said Paul, 'that might be, to be sure, but I wish I was quite certain of it.'

'Then, as we are not quite certain, had not we best go and ask my grandmother what she thinks about it?'

Paul thought this was excellent advice, and he was not a silly boy who did not like to follow good advice. He went with his sister directly to his grandmother, showed her the guinea and told her how they came by it.

'My dear honest children,' said she, 'I am very glad you told me all this. I am very glad that you did not buy either the plums or the blanket with this guinea. I'm sure it is not honestly ours. Those who threw it you gave it you by mistake, I warrant, and what I would have you do is to go to Dunstable, and try if you can at either of the inns find out the person who gave it to you. It is now so late in the evening that perhaps the travellers will sleep at Dunstable instead of going on the next stage; and it is likely that whosoever gave you a guinea instead of a halfpenny has found out their mistake by this time. All you can do is to go and inquire

for the gentleman who was reading in the chaise.'

'Oh!' interrupted Paul, 'I know a good way of finding him out. I remember it was a dark-green chaise with red wheels, and I remember I read the innkeeper's name upon the chaise, "John Nelson." (I am much obliged to you for teaching me to read, grandmother.) You told me yesterday, grandmother, that the names written upon chaises are the innkeepers to whom they belong. I read the name of the innkeeper upon that chaise. It was John Nelson. So Anne and I will go to both the inns in Dunstable, and try to find out this chaise – John Nelson's. Come, Anne, let us set out before it gets quite dark.'

Anne and her brother passed with great courage the tempting stall that was covered with gingerbread and ripe plums, and pursued their way steadily through the streets of Dunstable; but Paul, when he came to the shop where he had seen the blanket, stopped for a moment, and said: 'It is a great pity, Anne, that the guinea is not ours. However, we are doing what is honest, and that is a comfort. Here, we must go through this gateway into the inn-yard; we are come to the Dun Cow.'

'Cow!' said Anne, 'I see no cow.'

'Look up, and you'll see the cow over your head,' said Paul – 'the sign, the picture. Come, never mind looking at it now; I want to find out the green chaise that has John Nelson's name upon it.'

Paul pushed forward through a crowded passage till he got into the inn-yard. There was a great noise and bustle. The ostlers were carrying in luggage; the postillions were rubbing down the

horses, or rolling the chaises into the coach-house.

'What now? What business have you here, pray?' said a waiter, who almost ran over Paul as he was crossing the yard in a great hurry to get some empty bottles from the bottle-rack. 'You've no business here, crowding up the yard. Walk off, young gentleman, if you please.'

'Pray give me leave, sir,' said Paul, 'to stay a few minutes to look amongst these chaises for one dark-green chaise with red wheels that has Mr. John Nelson's name written upon it.'

'What's that he says about a dark-green chaise?' said one of the postillions.

'What should such a one as he is know about chaises?' interrupted the hasty waiter, and he was going to turn Paul out of the yard; but the ostler caught hold of his arm, and said: 'Maybe the child *has* some business here; let's know what he has to say for himself.'

The waiter was at this instant luckily obliged to leave them to attend the bell, and Paul told his business to the ostler, who as soon as he saw the guinea and heard the story shook Paul by the hand, and said: 'Stand steady, my honest lad. I'll find the chaise for you, if it is to be found here; but John Nelson's chaises almost always drive to the Black Bull.'

After some difficulty the green chaise with John Nelson's name upon it, and the postillion who drove that chaise, were found, and the postillion told Paul that he was just going into the parlour to the gentleman he had driven to be paid, and that he

would carry the guinea with him.

'No,' said Paul; 'we should like to give it back ourselves.'

'Yes,' said the ostler, 'that they have a right to do.'

The postillion made no reply, but looked vexed, and went on towards the house, desiring the children would wait in the passage till his return. In the passage there was standing a decent, clean, good-natured looking woman with two huge straw baskets on each side of her. One of the baskets stood a little in the way of the entrance. A man who was pushing his way in, and carried in his hand a string of dead larks hung to a pole, impatient at being stopped, kicked down the straw basket, and all its contents were thrown out. Bright straw hats, and boxes, and slippers, were all thrown in disorder upon the dirty ground.

'Oh, they will be trampled upon! They will all be spoiled!' exclaimed the woman to whom they belonged.

'We'll help you to pick them up, if you will let us,' cried Paul and Anne, and they immediately ran to her assistance.

When the things were all safe in the basket again the children expressed a desire to know how such beautiful things could be made of straw, but the woman had not time to answer before the postillion came out of the parlour, and with him a gentleman's servant, who came to Paul, and clapping him upon the back, said:

'So, my little chap, I gave you a guinea for a halfpenny, I hear, and I understand you've brought it back again; that's right, give me hold of it.'

'No, brother,' said Anne, 'this is not the gentleman that was

reading.'

'Pooh, child! I came in Mr. Nelson's green chaise. Here's the postillion can tell you so. I and my master came in that chaise. I and my master that was reading, as you say, and it was he that threw the money out to you. He is going to bed; he is tired, and can't see you himself. He desires that you'll give me the guinea.'

Paul was too honest himself to suspect that this man was telling him a falsehood, and he now readily produced his bright guinea, and delivered it into the servant's hands.

'Here's a sixpence apiece for you, children,' said he, 'and good-night to you.' He pushed them towards the door, but the basket-woman whispered to them as they went out: 'Wait in the street till I come to you.'

'Pray, Mrs. Landlady,' cried this gentleman's servant, addressing himself to the landlady, who just then came out of a room where some company at supper – 'pray, Mrs. Landlady, please to let me have roasted larks for my supper. You are famous for larks at Dunstable, and I make it a rule to taste the best of everything wherever I go; and, waiter, let me have a bottle of claret. Do you hear?'

'Larks and claret for his supper,' said the basket-woman to herself as she looked at him from head to foot. The postillion was still waiting, as if to speak to him, and she observed them afterwards whispering and laughing together. '*No bad hit*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.