

**ABBOTT
JACOB**

CALEB IN THE
COUNTRY

Jacob Abbott
Caleb in the Country

«Public Domain»

Abbott J.

Caleb in the Country / J. Abbott — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

PREFATORY NOTICE	5
CHAPTER I.	6
CHAPTER II.	12
CHAPTER III.	16
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	18

Jacob Abbott

Caleb in the Country

PREFATORY NOTICE

The object of this little work, and of others of its family, which may perhaps follow, is, like that of the “Rollo Books,” to furnish useful and instructive reading to young children. The aim is not so directly to communicate knowledge, as it is to develop the moral and intellectual powers,—to cultivate habits of discrimination and correct reasoning, and to establish sound principles of moral conduct. The “Rollo Books” embrace principally intellectual and moral discipline; “Caleb,” and the others of its family, will include also *religious* training, according to the evangelical views of Christian truth which the author has been accustomed to entertain, and which he has inculcated in his more serious writings.

J. A.

CHAPTER I. CALEB'S DISCOVERY

Caleb was a bright-looking, blue-eyed boy, with auburn hair and happy countenance. And yet he was rather pale and slender. He had been sick. His father and mother lived in Boston, but now he was spending the summer at Sandy River country, with his grandmother. His father thought that if he could run about a few months in the open air, and play among the rocks and under the trees, he would grow more strong and healthy, and that his cheeks would not look so pale.

His grandmother made him a blue jacket with bright buttons. *She* liked metal buttons, because they would wear longer than covered ones, but *he* liked them because they were more beautiful. "Besides," said he, "I can see my face in them, grandmother."

Little Caleb then went to the window, so as to see his face plainer. He stood with his back to the window, and held the button so that the light from the window could shine directly upon it.

"Why grandmother," said Caleb, "I cannot see now so well as I could before."

"That is because your face is turned away from the light," said she.

"And the button is turned *towards* the light," said Caleb.

"But when you want to see any thing reflected in a glass, you must have the light shine upon the thing you want to see reflected, not upon the glass itself; and I suppose it is so with a bright button."

Then Caleb turned around, so as to have his *face* towards the light; and he found that he could then see it reflected very distinctly. His grandmother went on with her work, and Caleb sat for some time in silence.

The house that Caleb lived in was in a narrow rocky valley. A stream of water ran over a sandy bed, in front of the house, and a rugged mountain towered behind it. Across the stream, too, there was a high, rocky hill, which was in full view from the parlour window. This hill was covered with wild evergreens, which clung to their sides, and to the interstices of the rocks; and mosses, green and brown, in long festoons, hung from their limbs. Here and there crags and precipices peeped out from among the foliage, and a grey old cliff towered above, at the summit.

Caleb turned his button round again towards the window, and of course turned his face *from* the window. The reflection of his face was now dim, as before, but in a moment his eye caught the reflection of the crags and trees across the little valley.

"O, grandmother," said he again, "I can see the rocks in my buttons, and the trees. And there is an old stump," he continued, his voice falling to a low tone, as if he was talking to himself,— "and there is a tree,—and,—why—why, what is that? It is a bear, grandmama,"—calling aloud to her,— "I see a bear upon the mountain."

"Nonsense, Caleb," said the grandmother.

"I do certainly," said Caleb, and he dropped the corner of his jacket, which had the button attached to it, and looked out of the window directly at the mountain.

Presently Caleb turned away from the window, and ran to the door. There was a little green yard in front of the house, with a large, smooth, flat stone for a door-step. Caleb stood on this step, and looked intently at the mountain. In a moment he ran back to his grandmother, and said,

"Grandmother, *do* come and see this black bear."

"Why, child," said she, smiling, "it is nothing but some old black stump or log."

"But it moves, grandmother. It certainly moves."

So his grandmother smiled, and said, "Well, I suppose I must come and see." So she laid down her work, and took off her spectacles, and Caleb took hold of her hand, and trotted along before her to the step of the door. It was a beautiful sunny morning in June.

“There,” said Caleb, triumphantly pointing to a spot among the rocks and bushes half-way up the mountain,—“there, what do you call that?”

His grandmother looked a moment intently in silence, and then said,

“I do see something there under the bushes.”

“And isn't it moving?” said Caleb.

“Why, yes,” said she.

“And isn't it black?”

“Yes,” said she.

“Then it is a bear,” said Caleb, half-delighted, and half afraid, “Isn't it, grandmother? I'll go and get the gun.”

There was an old gun behind the high desk, in the back sitting-room; but it had not been loaded for twenty years, and had no back upon it. Still Caleb always supposed that some how or other it would shoot.

“Shall I, grandmother?” said he eagerly,

“No,” said she. “I don't think it is a bear.”

“What then?” said Caleb.

“I think it is Cherry.”

“Cherry!” said Caleb.

“Yes, Cherry,” said she. “Run and see if you can find the boys.”

Cherry was the cow. She had strayed from the pasture the day before, and they could not find her. She was called Cherry from her colour; for although she had looked almost black, as Caleb had seen her in the bushes, she was really a Cherry colour. Caleb saw at once, as soon as his grandmother said that it was Cherry, that she was correct. In fact, he could see her head and horns, as she was holding her head up to eat the leaves from the bushes. However he did not stop to talk about it, but, obeying his grandmother immediately, he ran off after the boys.

He went out to the back door, where the boys had been at play, and shouted out, “*David! David! David! Dwi—ght! Da—vid!*” But there was no reply, except a distant echo of “*David*” and “*Dwight*” from the rocks and mountains.

So Caleb came back, and said that he could not find the boys, and that he supposed that they had gone to school.

“Then we must call Raymond,” said she.

“And may I ring for him, grandmother?” said Caleb.

Grandmother said he might: and so Caleb ran off to the porch at the back door, and took down quite a large bell, which was hanging there. Caleb stood upon the steps of the porch, and grasping the great handle of the bell with both hands, he rang it with all his might. In a minute or two he stopped; and then he heard a faint and distant “*Aye-aye*” coming, from a field. Caleb put the bell back into its place, and then went again to his grandmother.

In a few minutes Raymond came in. He was a thick-set and rather tall young man, broad-shouldered and strong,—slow in his motions, and of a very sober countenance. Caleb heard his heavy step in the entry, though he came slowly and carefully, as if he tried to walk without making a noise.

“Did you want me, Madam Rachel?” said he, holding his hat in his hand.

Caleb's grandmother was generally called Madam Rachel.

“Yes,” said she. “Cherry has got up on the rocks. Caleb spied her there; he will shew you where, and I should like to have you go and drive her down.”

Caleb wanted to go too; but his grandmother said it would not do very well, for he could not keep up with Raymond; and besides, she said that she wanted him. So Caleb went out with Raymond under the great elm before the house, and pointed out the place among the rocks, where he had seen Cherry. She was not there then, at least she was not in sight; but Raymond knew that she could not have gone far from the place, so he walked down over the bridge, and soon disappeared.

While Caleb stood watching Raymond, as he walked off with long strides towards the mountain, his grandmother came to the door and said,

“Come, Caleb.”

Caleb turned and ran to his grandmother. She had in her hand a little red morocco book, and taking Caleb's hand, she went slowly up stairs, he frisking and capering around her all the way. There was a bed in the room, with a white covering, and by the window an easy chair, with a high back, and round well-stuffed arms. Madam Rachel went to the easy chair and sat down and took Caleb in her lap. Caleb looked out upon the long drooping branches of the elm which hung near the window.

Caleb's countenance was pale; and he was slender in form, and delicate in appearance. He had been sick, and even now, he was not quite well. His little taper fingers rested upon the window-sill, while his grandmother opened her little Bible and began to read. Caleb sat still in her lap, with a serious and attentive expression of countenance.

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a pharisee, the other a publican.”

“What is a pharisee and a publican?” asked Caleb.

“You will hear presently. 'And the pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers.’”

“What are all those?” asked Caleb.

“O, different kinds of crimes and sins. The pharisee thanked God that he had not committed any of them.”

“Was he a good man, grandmother?”

“Very likely he had not committed any of these great crimes.”

“Very well, grandmother, go on.”

“Or even as this publican.' A publican, you must know, was a tax-gatherer. He used to collect the taxes from the people. They did not like to pay their taxes, and so they did not like the tax-gatherers, and despised them. And thus the pharisee thanked God that he was not like that publican. 'I fast twice in the week. I pay tithes of all that I possess.'”

“Tithes?” said Caleb.

“Yes, that was money which God had commanded them to pay. They were to pay in proportion to the property they had. But some dishonest men used to conceal some of their property, so as not to have to pay so much; but this pharisee said *he* paid tithes of *all* that he possessed.”

“That was right, grandmother,” said Caleb.

“Yes,” said his grandmother, “that was very well.”

“If he really did it,” continued Caleb doubtfully. “Do you think he did, grandmother?”

“I think it very probable. I presume he was a pretty good man, *outside*.”

“What do you mean by that, grandmother?”

“Why, his heart might have been bad, but he was probably pretty careful about all his *actions*, which could be seen of men. But we will go on.”

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.”

“Which man?” said Caleb.

“The publican.”

“The publican was justified?” said Caleb, “what does *justified* mean?”

“Forgiven and approved. God was pleased with the publican, because he confessed his sins honestly; but he was displeased with the pharisee, because he came boasting of his good deeds.”

Here there was a pause. Caleb sat still and seemed thoughtful. His grandmother did not interrupt him, but waited to hear what he would say.

“Yes; but, grandmother, if the pharisee really was a good man, it wasn't right for him to thank God for it?”

“It reminds me of Thomas's acorns,” said Madam Rachel.

“Thomas's acorns!” said Caleb, “tell me about them, grandmother.”

“Why, Thomas and his brother George were sent to school. They stopped to play by the way, until it was so late that they did not dare to go in. Then they staid playing about the fields till it was time to go home. They felt pretty bad and out of humour, and at last they separated and went home different ways.

“In going home, Thomas found an oak-tree with acorns under it. 'Ah!' said he, 'I will carry mother home some acorns.' He had observed that his mother was pleased whenever he brought her things; and he had an idea of soothing his own feelings of guilt, and securing his mother's favour, by the good deed of carrying her home some acorns. So, when he came into the house, he took off his hat carefully, with the acorns in it, and holding it in both hands, marched up to his mother with a smiling face, and look of great self-satisfaction, and said, 'Here, mother, I have got you some acorns.'”

“And what did his mother say?” asked Caleb.

“She shook her head sorrowfully, and told him to go and put the acorns away. She knew where he had been.

“Then presently George came in. He put away his cap, walked in softly, and put his face down in his mother's lap, and said, with tears and sobs, 'Mother, I have been doing something very wrong.' Now, which of these do you think came to his mother right?”

“Why,—George,” said he, “certainly.”

“Yes, and that was the way the publican came; but the pharisee covered up all his sins, being pleased and satisfied himself, and thinking that God would be pleased and satisfied with his *acorns*.”

Here Madam Rachel paused, and Caleb sat still, thinking of what he had heard.

Madam Rachel then closed her eyes, and, in a low, gentle voice, she spoke a few words of prayer; and then she told Caleb that he must always remember in all his prayers to confess his sins fully and freely, and never cover them up and conceal them, with an idea that his good deeds made him worthy. Then she put Caleb down, and he ran down stairs to play.

He asked his grandmother to let him go over the bridge, so as to be ready to meet Raymond, when he should come back with the cow. She at first advised him not to go, for she was afraid, she said, that he might get lost, or fall into the brook; but Caleb was very desirous to go, and finally she consented. He had a little whip that David had made for him. The handle was made from the branch of a beach-tree, which David cut first to make a cane of, for himself; but he broke his cane, and so he gave Caleb the rest of the stick for a whip-handle. The lash was made of leather. It was cut out of a round piece of thick leather, round and round, as they made leather shoe-strings, and then rolled upon a board. This is a fine way to make lashes and reins for boys.

Caleb took his whip for company, and sauntered along over the bridge. When he had crossed the bridge, he walked along the bank of the stream, watching the grass-hoppers and butterflies, and now and then cutting off the head of a weed with the lash of his whip.

The banks of the brook were in some places high, and the water deep; in other places, there was a sort of beach, sloping down to the water's edge; and here, the water was generally shallow, to a considerable distance from the shore. Caleb was allowed to come down to the water at these shallow places; but he had often been told that he must not go near the steep places, because there was danger that he would fall in.

Now, boys are not very naturally inclined to obey their parents. They have to be taught with great pains and care. They must be punished for disobedience, in some way or other, a good many times. But neglected children, that is, those that are left to themselves, are almost always very disobedient and unsubmitive. Caleb, now, was not a neglected child. He had been taught to submit and obey, when he was very young, and his grandmother could trust him now.

Besides, Caleb, had still less disposition now to disobey his grandmother than usual, for he had been sick, and was still pale and feeble; and this state of health often makes children quiet, gentle, and submissive.

So Caleb walked slowly along, carefully avoiding all the high banks, but sometimes going down to the water, where the shore was sloping and safe. At length, at one of these little landing places he stopped longer than usual. He called it the cotton landing. David and Dwight gave it that name, because they always found, wedged in, in a corner between a log and the shore, a pile of cotton, as they called it. It was, in reality, light, white froth, which always lay there; and even if they pushed it all away with a stick, they would find a new supply the next day. Caleb stood upon the shore, and with the lash of his whip, cut into the pile of "cotton." The pile broke up into large masses, and moved slowly and lightly away into the stream. One small tuft of it floated towards the shore, and Caleb reached it with his whip-handle, and took a part of it in, saying, "Now I will see what it is made of."

On closely examining it, he found to his surprise, that it was composed of an infinite number of very small bubbles, piled one upon another, like the little stones in a heap of gravel. It was white and beautiful, and in some of the biggest bubbles, Caleb could see all the colours of the rainbow. He wondered where this foam could come from, and he determined to carry some of it home to his grandmother. So he stripped off a flat piece of birch bark from a neighbouring tree, and took up a little of the froth upon it, and placed it very carefully upon a rock on the bank, where it would remain safely, he thought, till he was ready to go home.

Just above where he stood was a little waterfall in the brook. The current was stopped by some stones and logs, and the water tumbled over the obstruction, forming quite a little cataract, which sparkled in the sun.

Caleb threw sticks and pieces of bark into the water, above the fall, and watched them as they sailed on, faster and faster, and then pitched down the descent. Then he would go and *whip* them into his landing, and thus he could take them out, and sail them down again. After amusing himself some time in this manner, he began to wonder why Raymond did not come, and he concluded to take his foam, and go along. He went to the rock and took up his birch bark; but, to his surprise, the foam had disappeared. He was wondering what had become of it, when he heard across the road, and at a little distance above him, a scrambling in the bushes, on the side of the mountain. At first, he was afraid; but in a moment more, he caught a glimpse of the cow coming out of the bushes, and supposing that Raymond was behind, he threw down his birch bark, and began to gallop off to meet him, lashing the ground with his whip.

At the same time, the cow, somewhat worried by being driven pretty fast down the rocks, came running out into the road, and when she saw Caleb coming towards her, and with such antics, began to cut capers too. She came on, in a kind of half-frolicsome, half-angry canter, shaking her horns; and Caleb, before he got very near her, began to be somewhat frightened. At first he stopped, looking at her with alarm. Then he began to fall back to the side of the road, towards the brook. At this instant Raymond appeared coming out of the bushes, and, seeing Caleb, called out to him to stand still.

"Stand still, Caleb, till she goes by: she will not hurt you." But Caleb could not control his fears. His little heart beat quick, and his pale cheek grew paler. He could not control his fears, though he knew very well that what Raymond said must be true. He kept retreating backwards nearer and nearer to the brook, as the cow came on, whipping the air, towards her to keep her off. He was now at some little distance above the cotton landing, and opposite to a part of the bank where the water was deep. Raymond perceived his danger, and as he was now on the very brink, he shouted out suddenly,

"Caleb! Caleb! take care!"

But the sudden call only frightened poor Caleb still more; and before the "Take care" was uttered, his foot slipped, and he slid back into the water, and sank into it until he entirely disappeared.

Raymond rushed to the place, and in an instant was in the water by his side, and pulling Caleb out, he carried him gasping to the shore. He wiped his face with his handkerchief, and tried to cheer and encourage him.

“Never, mind, Caleb,” said he; “it won't hurt you. It is a warm sunny morning.” Caleb cried a few minutes, but, finally, became pretty nearly calm, and Raymond led him along towards home, sobbing as he went, “O dear me!—what *will* my grandmother say?”

CHAPTER II. TROUBLE

As Caleb walked along by the side of Raymond, and came upon the bridge, he was seen both by his grandmother, who happened to be standing at the door, and also at the same instant, by the two boys, Dwight and David, who were just then coming home from school. Dwight, seeing Caleb walking along so sadly, his clothes and hair thoroughly drenched, set up a shout, and ran towards him over the bridge. David was of a more quiet and sober turn, and he followed more slowly, but with a face full of surprise and curiosity.

Madam Rachel, too, perceived that her little grandson had been in the brook, and she said, "Can it be possible that he has disobeyed?" Then, again, the next thought was, "Well, if he has, he has been punished for it pretty severely, and so I will treat him kindly."

David and Dwight came eagerly up, with exclamations, and questions without number. This made poor Caleb feel worse and worse—he wanted to get home as soon as possible, and he could not tell the boys all the story there; and presently Raymond, finding that he could not get by them very well, took him up in his arms, and carried him towards the house, David and Dwight following behind. Caleb expected that his grandmother would think him very much to blame, and so, as he came near enough to speak to her, he raised his head from Raymond's shoulder, and began to say,

"I am very sorry, grandmother; but I could not help it. I certainly could not help it."

But he saw at once, by his grandmother's pleasant-looking face, that she was not going to find any fault with him.

"You have not hurt yourself, Caleb, I hope," said she, as Raymond put him down.

"No," said he, "but I feel rather cold."

His grandmother said she would soon warm him, and she led him into a little bedroom, where he was accustomed to sleep, and undressed him, talking good-humouredly with him all the while, so as to relieve his fears, and make him feel more happy. She wiped him dry with soft flannel, and gave him some clean, dry clothes, and made him very comfortable again. She did not ask him how he happened to fall in the water, for she knew it would trouble him to talk about it. So she amused him by talking about other things, and at last let him out again into the parlour.

The wetting did Caleb no injury; but the fright and the suddenness of the plunge gave him a shock, which, in his feeble state of health, he was ill able to bear. A good stout boy, with red cheeks and plump limbs, would not have regarded it at all, but would have been off to play again just as soon as his clothes were changed. But poor Caleb sat down in his little rocking chair by the side of his grandmother, and began to rock back and forth, as if he was rocking away the memory of his troubles, while his grandmother went on with her work.

Presently he stopped to listen to the voices of Dwight and David, who were out before the house.

"Grandmother," said he, "is that the boys?"

"Yes," said she, "I believe it is."

Then Caleb went on rocking, and the voices died away.

Presently, they came nearer again. The boys seemed to be passing down in front of the house, with a wheelbarrow, towards the water.

"Grandmother," said Caleb, stopping again, "what do you suppose the boys are doing?"

"I don't know," said she, "should not you like to go and see? You can play with them half an hour before dinner, if you please."

Caleb did not answer, but began to rock again. He did not seem inclined to go.

Soon after he heard a *splash*, as of stones thrown into the water. Caleb started up and said, "Grandmother, what *can* they be doing?"

“I don't know,” said she, “if you want to know very much, you must go and see.”

Caleb rose slowly, put his rocking chair back into its place, and went to the door. He looked down towards the bank of the brook before the house, and saw Dwight and David there. They had a wheelbarrow close to the edge of the water, with a few stones in it, some as big as Caleb's head. Each of the boys had a stone in his hand, which he was just throwing into the brook. Caleb had a great desire to go down and see what they were doing; but he felt weak and tired, and so, after looking on a moment, he said to himself, “I had rather sit down here.” So he sat down upon the step of the door, and looked on.

After the boys had thrown one or two large stones into the water, they took hold of the wheelbarrow, and, then, tipping it up, the whole load slid down into the water, close to the shore. The boys then came back, wheeling the great wheelbarrow up into the road.

They went after another load of stones, and Caleb's curiosity was so far awakened, that he rose slowly, and walked down towards the place. In a few minutes, the boys came back with their load; David wheeling, and Dwight walking along by his side, and pushing as well as he could, to help. As soon as he saw Caleb, he began to call out,

“O Caleb, you were afraid of a cow!”

Caleb looked sad and unhappy. David said,

“I would not laugh at him, Dwight. Caleb, we are building a mole.”

“A mole!” said Caleb. “What is that?”

“Why, it is a kind of wharf, built out far into the water, to make a harbour for our shipping. We learned about it in our geography.”

“Yes,” said Dwight, coming up, eagerly, to Caleb, “you see the current carries all our vessels down the stream, you know, Caleb, and we are going to build out a long mole, out into the middle of the brook, and that will stop our vessels; and then we are going to make it pretty wide, so that we can walk out upon it, and the end of it will do for a wharf.”

“Yes, it will be a sort of harbour for 'em,” said David.

Caleb looked quite pleased at this plan and wanted the boys to let him help; and Dwight said he might go and help them get their next load of stones.

But Caleb did not help much, although he really tried to help. He kept getting into the other boys' way. At last Dwight got out of patience, and said,

“Caleb, you don't help us the least mite. I wish you would go away.”

But Caleb wanted to help; and Dwight tried to make him go away. Presently, he began to laugh at him for being afraid of a cow.

“I suppose I could frighten you by *moo-ing* at you, Caleb.”

Caleb did not answer, but walked along by the side of the wheelbarrow. David was wheeling it; for they had now got it loaded, and were going back to the shore of the brook, Caleb on one side, and Dwight upon the other. Dwight saw that Caleb hung his head, and looked confused.

“*Moo! moo!*” said Dwight.

Caleb walked along silent as before.

“*Moo! moo!*” said Dwight, running round to Caleb's side of the wheelbarrow, and *moo-ing* close into his ear.

Caleb let go of the wheelbarrow, turned around, burst into tears, and walked slowly and sorrowfully away towards the house.

“There, now,” said David, “you have made him cry. What do you want to trouble him so for?”

Dwight looked after Caleb, and seeing that he was going to the house, he was afraid that he would tell his grandmother. So he ran after him, and began to call to him to stop; but, before he had gone many steps, he saw his grandmother standing at the door of the house, and calling to them all to come.

Caleb had nearly stopped crying when he came up to his grandmother. She did not say any thing to him about the cause of his trouble, but asked him if he was willing to go down cellar with Mary Anna, and help her choose a plateful of apples for dinner. His eye brightened at this proposal, and Mary Anna, who was sitting at the window, reading, rose, laid down her book, took hold of his hand with a smile, and led him away.

Madam Rachel then went to her seat in her great arm-chair, and David and Dwight came and stood by her side.

"I am sorry, Dwight, that you wanted to trouble Caleb."

"But, mother," said Dwight, "I only *moo-ed* at him a little."

"And what did you do it for?"

"O, only for fun, mother."

"Did you suppose it gave him pain?"

"Why,—I don't know."

"Did you suppose it gave him pleasure?"

"Why, no," said Dwight, looking down.

"And did not you know that it gave him pain? Now, tell me, honestly."

"Why, yes, mother, I knew it plagued him a little; but then I only did it for fun."

"I know it," said Madam Rachel; "and that is the very thing that makes me so sorry for it."

"Why, mother?" said Dwight in a tone of surprise.

"Because if you had given Caleb four times as much pain for any other reason, I should not have thought half so much of it, as to have you trouble him for *fun*. If it had been to do him any good, or to do any body else any good, or from mistake, or mere thoughtlessness, I should not have thought so much of it; but to do it for *fun*!"

Here Madam Rachel stopped, as if she did not know what to say.

"I rather think, mother, it was only *thoughtlessness*," said David, by way of excusing Dwight.

"No; because he knew that it gave Caleb pain, and it was, in fact, for the very purpose of giving him pain, that Dwight did it. If he had been saying *moo* accidentally, without thinking of troubling Caleb, that would have been thoughtlessness; but it was not so. And what makes me most unhappy about this," continued Madam Rachel, putting her hand gently on Dwight's head, "is that my dear Dwight has a heart capable under some circumstances, of taking pleasure in the sufferings of a helpless little child."

David and Dwight were both silent, though they saw clearly that what their mother said was true.

"And yet, perhaps, you think it is a very little thing after all," she continued, "just *moo-ing* at Caleb a little. The pain it gave him was soon over. Just sending him down cellar to get apples, made him forget it in a moment; so that you see it is not the mischief that is done, in this case, but the *spirit of mind* in you, that it shews. It is a little thing, I know; but then it is a little symptom of a very bad disease. It is very hard to cure."

"Well, mother," said Dwight, looking up, and speaking very positively, "I am *determined* not to trouble Caleb any more."

"Yes, but I am afraid your *determinations* won't reach the difficulty. As long as the spirit of mind remains, so that you are *capable* of taking pleasure in the sufferings of another, your determinations not to *indulge* the bad spirit, will not do much good. You will forget them all, when the temptation comes. Don't you remember how often I have talked with you about this, and how often you have promised not to do it, before?"

"Why, yes, mother," said Dwight, despondingly.

"So, you see determinations will not do much good. As long as your heart is malicious, the malice will come out in spite of all your determinations."

Just at this moment Caleb came in, bringing his plate of apples, with an air of great importance and satisfaction. He had nearly forgotten his troubles. Soon after this, dinner was brought in, and Madam Rachel said no more to the boys about malice. After dinner, they went out again to play.

CHAPTER III. BUILDING THE MOLE

Caleb sat down upon the step of the door, eating a piece of bread, while Dwight and David returned to their work of building the mole. They got the wheelbarrow, and loaded it with stones.

Caleb sat a few minutes more at the door, and then he went into the house, and got his little rocking chair, and brought it out under the elm, and sat down there, looking towards the boys, who were at work near the water. At last, David spied him sitting there, and said,

“There is Caleb, sitting under the great tree.”

Dwight looked around, and then, throwing down the stone that he had in his hands, he said,

“I mean to go and get him to come here.”

So he ran towards him, and said,

“Come, Caleb, come down here, and help us make our mole.”

“No,” said Caleb, shaking his head, and, turning away a little; “I don't want to go.”

“O, do come, Caleb,” said Dwight; “I won't trouble you any more.”

“No,” said Caleb: “I am tired, and I had rather stay here in my little chair.”

“But I will carry your chair down to the brook; and there is a beautiful place there to sit and see us tumble in the stones.”

So Caleb got up, and Dwight took his chair, and they walked together down to the shore of the brook. Dwight found a little spot so smooth and level, that the rocking-chair would stand very even upon it, though it would not rock very well, for the ground was not hard, like a floor. Caleb rested his elbow upon the arm of his chair, and his pale cheek in his little slender hand, and watched the stones, as, one after another, they fell into the brook.

The brook at this place, was very wide and shallow, and the current was not very rapid, so that they got along pretty fast; and thus the mole advanced steadily out into the stream.

“Well, Caleb,” said Dwight, as he stopped, after they had tossed out all the stones from the wheelbarrow, “and how do you like our mole?”

“O, not very well,” said Caleb.

“Why not?” said Dwight, surprised.

“It is so stony.”

“Stony?” said Dwight.

“Yes,” said Caleb, “I don't think *I* could walk on it very well.”

“O,” said Dwight, “we are going to make the top very smooth, when we get it done.”

“How?” said Caleb.

“Why, we are going to haul gravel on it, and smooth it all down.”

“Why can't we do it now?” said David, “as we go along: and then we can wheel our wheelbarrow out upon it, and tip our stones in at the end.”

“Agreed,” said Dwight; and they accordingly leveled the stones off on the top, and put small stones in at all the interstices, that is, the little spaces between the large stones, so as to prevent the gravel from running down through. Then they went and got a load of gravel out of a bank pretty near, and spread it down over the top, and it made a good, smooth road; only, it was not trodden down hard at first, and so it was not very easy wheeling over it.

They found one difficulty, however, and that was that the gravel rolled over each side of the mole, and went into the water. To prevent this, they arranged the largest stones on each side, in a row, for the edge, and then filled in with gravel up to the edge, and thus they gradually advanced towards the middle of the stream, finishing the mole completely as they went on. Caleb then said he liked it very much, and wanted to walk on it. So the boys let him. He went out to the end, and

stood there a minute, and then said that he wished he had his whip there, to whip in a stick which was sailing down a little way off.

“Where is your whip?” said David.

“I suppose it is hanging up on its nail,” said Caleb, “I mean to go and get it.”

So Caleb walked off the mole, and went slowly up towards the house, singing by the way, while David and Dwight went after another load of gravel. While they were putting down this load, and spreading it on, Caleb came back, looking disappointed and sorrowful, and saying that he could not find his whip.

“Where did you put it when you had it last?” asked David.

“I put it on the nail,” said Caleb, “I always put it on the nail.”

“O, no, Caleb,” said Dwight; “you must have left it about somewhere.”

“No,” said Caleb, shaking his head with a positive air, “I am *sure* I put it on my nail.”

“When did you have it last?”

“Why,—let me see,” said Caleb, thinking. “I had it yesterday, playing horses on the wood-pile: and then I had it this morning,—I believe,—when I went up the brook to meet Raymond.”

“Then you left it up there, I know,” said Dwight.

“No,” said Caleb, “I am sure I put it on my nail.”

“You did not have it, Caleb,” said David, mildly, “when we met you on the bridge.”

“Didn't I?” said Caleb, standing still and trying to think.

“No,” replied Dwight, decidedly.

“I wish you would go up there with me, and help me find it.”

“Why, we want to finish our mole,” said David.

“I'll go,” said Dwight, “while you, David, get another load of gravel. Come, Caleb,” said he, “go and shew me where it was.”

So Dwight and Caleb walked on. They went down to the bridge, crossed the stream upon it, then turned up, on the opposite bank, and walked on until they came to the cotton landing. Caleb then pointed to the place where he had fallen in; and they looked all about there, upon the bank, and in the water, but in vain. No whip was to be found.

Before they returned, they stopped a moment at the cotton landing, and Caleb shewed Dwight that the cotton was all made of little bubbles. They got some of it to the shore and examined it, and then, just as they were going away. Dwight exclaimed, suddenly,

“There is your whip, now, Caleb.”

Caleb looked round, and saw that Dwight was pointing towards the little fall or rather great ripple of water, and there, just in the fall, was the whip-handle floating, and kept from drifting away by the lash, which had got caught in the rocks. There the handle lay, or rather hung, bobbing up and down, and struggling as if it was trying to get free.

After various attempts to liberate it, by throwing sticks and stones at it, Dwight took off his shoes, turned up his pantaloons to his knees, and waded in to the place, and after carefully extricating the whip, brought it safely to the shore.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.