

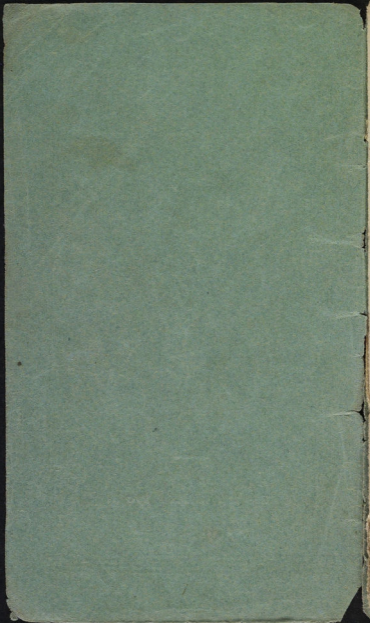
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LESSONS FOR LAURA.



NORTHAMPTON.

J. H. Butler.



James Melvin Colburn

Book

Wentworth N.H.



LESSONS

FOR LAURA.



NORTHAMPTON.

John Metcalf....1840.

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LESSONS FOR LAURA.



THE pretty little Squirrel, that was made you a present of, the other day, you must take great care of, and be sure to feed each day. He loves nuts and will crack them as well as you can, and, with his little paws, pick them out very neatly, and eat them faster than you would suppose. You know they love to be in the woods, where they skip from tree to tree, lively as birds. In some



countries there are many sorts of squirrels; such as the flying squirrel, the ground squirrel, also the red, gray, and black: but, in England, there are only the red and gray, both of which are very pretty, and have fine bushy tails, which turn over their backs, and, when they sit

upon their hind legs, stand over their heads like a feather. If you notice yours, when he eats, you will see how pretty he looks; but you must mind, for he will bite; the little teeth he has are very sharp, or he could not, with so much ease, crack his nuts. Some people put their squirrels in a cage, with bells to it, that keeps turning round, so the poor thing keeps always climbing, but never gets any higher: it is, surely, rather hard to torment a pretty creature so, and I cannot think there can be any pleasure, to sit and observe an object always moving in vain. He is not, in that state, so happy as the poor little dormouse, who goes to sleep and keeps quiet all the winter; they generally find a warm corner, where they get something as soft as cotton to roll themselves in, and there lie, secure

from danger, sleeping for a season, and do not come out again till fine weather. Those who keep them in cages, give them a parcel of fine cotton, that they may make their bed when they like. I believe you saw Miss Mary's dormouse, when it was asleep, in the winter; you also saw Miss Kitty's white mice, which are now dead: you thought them pretty little creatures, and wanted some like them. I did not accord with your wish, as I know they are a great deal of trouble to feed and clean; for all such little beasts, if they are not kept very nice, are not pleasant; they are all best in the woods, where they can enjoy themselves, and be free and happy.



THE other day, my dear Laura, you asked me to tell you about the pretty Lambs you saw frisking in the fields, when you were out for a walk. They looked so quiet and harmless, you wanted me to get you one, to play with at home. But, my dear child, that would not be a kindness to the poor creature, for it would grieve you to have it killed, when it grew too big to be in the house; for little lambs, when they grow up, will be great sheep, and sheep the butchers kill for us to eat, and when dead, it is called mutton, which is a meat you are very fond of, and love dear-

ly when nicely boiled or roasted. And a great many of the young and harmless lambs are killed, and sold at a great price, as it is a very tender and dainty food. It will seem cruel to you, that such pretty creatures as the sheep and lambs are, should be killed for man's use, yet the great and good God designed them for his food. Were they all to live, there would not be grass enough to feed them; so, when they are in a fat and proper state, they are slain: their flesh is eaten, their skin dressed, and made into parchment, for the lawyers to write on, and many other uses. Of the lamb's skin, which is thinner and softer, ladies' gloves are made; and it is often used instead of kid skins, for the upper part of ladies' and children's shoes. The wool of both is carded, spun, and woven into many sorts of useful



clothing; some is wove into broad-cloth, stuffs, blankets, flannels, and a great many things, to clothe and keep the human race warm, who must allow the poor sheep to be one of the most useful of the four-footed tribe. A great number of stockings are also made of worsted, as are carpets; and a great deal of wool is spun very fine, for ladies' works. Your sister, you know, has lately

worked a very elegant footstool for your aunt, also the pretty rug we have for the tea-urn, and the great rug on the drawing-room hearth ; all the fine worsted she used while working them was made from the wool of the poor sheep, dyed to the colors wanted. Sheep are, once in each year, shorn of their wool, by which practice, the owner of a large flock of sheep makes a great deal of money.



WHEN we were walking the other morning, you seemed to very much admire the handsome Peacock, who was spreading his gaudy tail to the sun: he looked very handsome, but



you must not, my dear child be taken with outside beauty, for the peacock is not of half the value of a common chicken, and were you to hear him scream, you would wonder so pretty a bird could make such an ugly noise. The ducks, the geese,

and the chickens, are all much better to eat than that fine bird, which walks about the yard so proudly; sometimes the Pea-chicks are killed when young; but they are not so white and sweet as a chicken; the common farm-yard poultry, though not so handsome to look at, is far more useful, as we are often very thankful for a new laid egg at breakfast. Little boys and girls would often go without puddings for their



dinners if the hens did not kindly lay plenty of eggs. I do not know a

sight that pleases me more, than a yard full of fine poultry: the hens and the chickens, seem so busy,



scratching about for little grubs and insects, which they are very fond of; the ducks with the young ducklings,



are not happy unless they have a pond near, where they may swim about, and dive in the water, for the insects they like best. It is very pretty to watch them, and see how merry they seem, and hear what a quacking they make, if they happen to find any fly, or weed that pleases them: the geese mostly ramble out



on a forest, if there is one near, but come home with their goslings at night to the yard, where they know they shall get a good supper of corn, and be safe in a house for the night. Thus, my dear child, you find, all birds and beasts soon know where they are taken good care of and fed,

and, though many are killed, to supply the hunger of man, yet those who escape, are well fed, and kept warm, that they may hatch and rear their young broods.



WHEN we were talking, the other day, my dear, about the pretty lambs and birds, you asked me where the fishes lived, and wanted to know



how they walked, as you could not see any legs they had got. Which is very true, for they do not walk; when they move about, it is called swimming, and the little fins you observe on each side of a fish, assist them in getting forward through the water. Some fish live in ponds, some in rivers, others in lakes, but the greatest number of fish is in the sea; all which you may read of, when you are able to tell all the large words you will meet with; then you

will read with surprise and wonder, of the great whale, how men go a great distance in ships to catch them, and what a deal of labor and trouble it is, to take and kill them; but the oil their fat yields, well repays the people who are at the expense of sending men and ships so far, though



it makes them very happy, when they return, safe home, with a good cargo. There are a very great number of fish in the sea, fit to eat, the taking of which employs a large number of people, who go out in

boats, and many thousands of men support themselves, their wives, and children, by their labor in fishing: very often they are in their boats on the water all night. Those people who live by fishing, mostly have their huts and cottages near the seaside, where, when the wind and weather will not let them venture out to sea, they spend their time in mending their nets, to be ready when they can go again. You will be greatly pleased when you can read the account of all the fishes, birds, and beasts, that are in your sister's book. You shall read it as soon as you can, if you are good, and mind your spelling; therefore, be careful and attend, call your letters right, and you will soon be able to read in books, that will both amuse and instruct you.

You know there are twelve months in a year, in all which months you will find some good things are to be had ; you will like the Summer and Autumn best, because in them are



most fruits, also peas and beans, in plenty ; but you will find many good things to be had, both in Spring and Winter. I believe you love apples and walnuts, both of which will keep the year round, and I have seen you look much pleased at the sight of a dish of nice hot roasted chesnuts, at

Christmas, when your brothers were at home from school, and you had all your cousins to play with you; if



you go on, and improve in reading, you will find that all the months of the year produce something or other, that is good for the support of mortal man; so wisely has the God of heaven made the earth bring forth food for man and beast, nothing by his great hand was made in vain. Man, the creature for whom he provides so amply, is not half grateful enough for his goodness and mercy. Too often the blessings given, are looked



slightly on, because daily and common ; but let your little heart learn, that you cannot be too thankful for the good things you have ; for neither meat, clothes, nor bed to rest on, could you have, without God's mercy to your parents, in showing them the honest and upright way of getting money, wherewith to buy you food, and what is needful for your health and comfort. Always think of this, my dear, and you will be

afraid to offend him by naughty conduct, such as telling falsehoods, which are lies; taking any thing that is not yours, which is stealing; or by wilfully hurting any person, beast, bird, or insect; for none, who possess good and feeling hearts, will injure any thing God has made.



