

**TROPICAL READING
BOOKS; INTENDED FOR
USE IN THE WEST INDIES
AND ELSEWHERE; BOOK II**

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Tropical Reading Books; Intended for Use in the West Indies and Elsewhere; Book II by E. C. Phillips

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E. C. PHILLIPS

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TROPICAL READING BOOKS

*INTENDED FOR USE IN
THE WEST INDIES AND ELSEWHERE.*

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF
THE RIGHT REV. LORD BISHOP OF KINGSTON

BY
E. C. PHILLIPS,

AUTHOR OF "BUNCHEE," ETC.

BOOK II.



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BOOK II.

I. THE OSTRICH.

PART I.

A-fri-ca—a continent, south of Europe.
re-al-ly—in truth.

"Would it not be fun if we could ride on a John-Crow?" little Walter Hardy said one day to his elder brother. "It would be like flying. We should go so fast, and see ever so many things."

"What a funny little boy you are," replied his brother Jack, "to think of such a thing; but there are some birds in Africa, you know, on which children do ride."

"Are there really?" asked Walter. "Then I *could* perhaps catch a John-Crow and get on it?"

"Oh no, you could not. A John-Crow would not be strong enough to carry you. Those birds that carry little boys in Africa are very strong indeed, but they do not fly. They can even carry men."

"Have they not wings?"

"Very small ones."

"What's the good of wings if they cannot fly?"

"It helps them to run all the faster."

"What's the bird's name?"

"Ostrich. And this bird can run as fast as any horse."

Questions :—

On what did little Walter Hardy want to ride ?

What do these birds in Africa ?

What use are their small wings ?

PART II.

De-sert—a deserted or forsaken tract of land.

herbs—nourishing plants, plants with soft stems.

“WHAT is an Ostrich like ?” asked Walter.

“It is seven or eight feet high, has very long legs, two toes, and a long neck.

“Its face is like that of other large birds.

“Its body is covered with feathers, some of which are curly, like those the lady wore yesterday in her hat when she came to see us.”

“How pretty,” said Walter ; “and what does it eat ?”

“Herbs and vegetables.”

“Does it live in a stable ?”

“No, you silly boy, it lives in the desert in Africa. It is only when the natives catch, and tame, the Ostrich that children ride upon its back.”

“But is it like other birds in anything else besides its face ?” asked Walter. “Has it a nest, and does it lay eggs, and sit on them ?”

“It makes a hole in the sand, and there lays its eggs. During the day, when the sun is very hot, the mother Ostrich goes to look for her food, and leaves the eggs for the sun to shine upon.

“When evening, or night, comes, the Ostrich runs back to her sand-nest, and sits on her eggs till the sun is very hot again.”

“Oh, how I wish I had an Ostrich,” said Walter ; “don’t you, Jack ?”

“Yes,” answered his brother ; “but would you like to hear now how the Ostrich is sometimes shot ?”

“Very much,” said Walter.

“A man takes the skin of an Ostrich, and dresses himself in it. He pushes a cane up the skin of the neck, which he can then move up and down as he likes.

“With his make-believe Ostrich head he pretends to peck about on the ground. In this manner he gets in amongst other Ostriches, sees which of them is the best for him to shoot, and as he stands up to shoot the one on which he has fixed, they all take fright, and are off in a moment.”



This picture will show you how fast these birds can run, for not a second ago they were beside the man now aiming at one of them.

Questions :—

Describe an Ostrich ?

What does it eat ?

Where is the nest of an Ostrich ?

How are the eggs hatched ?

II. THE ROSE-APPLE

Ca-pi-tal—first-rate, very good.

dis-co-ver-ed—found out, seen.

scat-ter-s—strews about, sprinkles around.

It was Lucy's birthday, and three of her little friends had come to spend the day with her.

They were having a good game of "Hide and Seek."

Two went to hide, and then the other two children went to look for them.

Kate and Sarah hid behind a rock, and were soon found, but when Lucy took Emily to hide, she chose such a capital hiding-place for herself and her friend, that they were not discovered for a very long time.

And shall I tell you where they went?

Just behind a Rose-apple hedge, that had grown very thick.

Lucy liked to eat the yellowish pink fruit, called Rose-apple, which is so named because it tastes like the Rose, and smells like Rose-water; but, like some of you, she did not know how high the Rose-apple tree could grow, nor anything about it, and she never thought of asking. But as it is well to know something of the plants and trees which surround us, whilst Lucy is hiding behind the Rose-apple hedge, I will tell you what I know of the Rose-apple tree.

It is a native of the East Indies, from whence it was brought to the West.

It will grow in almost any soil, and grows very quickly. It so scatters its own seeds, that wherever a tree is to be found, the land near it will be covered with young plants.

The tree, when allowed to extend to its full height, is sometimes thirty feet high.

The seeds for Lucy's hedge, and for all our Rose-