# CHAMBERS'S NATIONAL READING-BOOKS: BOOK II

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Chambers's National Reading-Books: Book II by Various

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### **VARIOUS**

# CHAMBERS'S NATIONAL READING-BOOKS: BOOK II



## CHAMBERS'S

NATIONAL

# READING BOOKS

BOOK II.

W. & R. CHAMBERS
LONDON AND EDINBURGH
1873
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### PREFACE.

THE SECOND NATIONAL READING-BOOK is so graduated as to form a fitting sequel to the previous one. Information lessons are more largely introduced. These are on the following subjects: The Months, the Points of the Compass, the Senses, Animals, Vegetables, Minerals, and Metals. Interesting narratives have not, however, been omitted, and the book contains a large selection of poetry suited for children at this stage. Special Spelling lessons are given at the end, and instructions in letter-writing, together with a specimen of a letter.

## CONTENTS.

140 OS S S	
The Months—January	
February	2
The Squirrel (poetry)	ì
Look at both Sides	L
The Duck and the Drake	5
The Months-March	
The Daisy (poetry)	
The March Wind	
The Kitten's Mishap	
The Months-April, May	
Song for Spring (poetry)	2
The May-pole Caroline Southwood Hill. 13	3
The Flax-flower (poetry)	
The Months-June, July	
Summer (poetry)	
The Fail of the Acorn	
The Months—August, September2	
September (poetry)	
The Months-October, November,	
December2	2
The Months (verses) Sara Coleridge 2	
The Brave Boy	
The Fly (poetry)	
Laura Manners's Birthday Mary Lamb	,
North, South, East, and West. 2	
The Love of Flowers (poetry)	
The Raven that had a Dinner-party. Mary Hosoitt	
The Crust of Bread	•
The Water-drop	
The Skylark (poetry)	K
The Little Girl of the Lighthouse	

#### CONTENTS.

Boxie. Jennet Humphreys. 40 A Swinging Song (verses). Mary Howitt. 46 Merry are the Bells (verses). 47 The Sensea. Robert Chambers. 48 The Old Gate. American Reading-book. 50 The Wood-mouse (poetry). Mary Howitt. 53 Master Squeak. Jennet Humphreys. 55 The Fairies (poetry). W. Allingham. 60 On Animals. 62 Birds' Nests (verses). M. S. C. 66 The Robin's Story. A. J. Corlett. 68 The Dormouse (poetry). Mary Howitt. 73 On Vegetables. 75 A Child's Wish in June (poetry). School-room Lyrics. 77 Young Buff-tail. Jennet Humphreys. 78 Harvest field Flowers. 84 Weeds. S. D. Black. 85 The Loss of the Royal George (poetry). W. Cowper. 88 A Sea-dirge (poetry). Shakspeare. 89 The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and the Birds. Looking-glass for the Mind 90 The Boy at the Canal Dike. American Reading-book. 93 The Unjust Suspicion. 29 The Miller of the Dee (poetry). Roscoe. 97 On Minerals and Metals. Adapted from Mrs Trimmer. 100 Little Anomis, or the Search for the Princess Sea-hair's Comb. A. J. Cupples. 102 We are Seven (poetry). Wordsnorth. 107 The Pet Lamb (poetry). 30 The Children in the Wood. Old Ballad. 111 Letter writing. 117 Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script). 119 Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use. 121	2000	PAGE
Merry are the Bells (verses)         47           The Senses         Robert Chambers         48           The Old Gate         American Reading-book         50           The Wood-mouse (poetry)         Mary Howitt         53           Master Squeak         Jennet Humphreys         55           The Fairies (poetry)         W. Allingham         60           On Animals         62           Birds' Nests (verses)         M. S. C.         66           The Robin's Story         A. J. Corlett         68           The Dormouse (poetry)         Mary Howitt         73           On Vegetables         75           A Child's Wish in June (poetry)         School-room Lyrics         77           Young Buff-tail         Jennet Humphreys         78           Harvest-field Flowers         84           Weeds         S. D. Black         85           The Loas of the Royal George (poetry)         W. Cowper         88           A Sea-dirge (poetry)         Shakspeare         89           The Boy at the Canal Dike         American Reading-book         93           The Unjust Suspicion         *         96           The Miller of the Dee (poetry)         C. Mackay         96           T	Boxie	Jennet Humphreys40
The Senses		
The Old Gate	Merry are the Bells (verses)	
The Wood-mouse (poetry)         Mary Howitt         53           Master Squeak         Jennet Humphreys         55           The Fairies (poetry)         W. Allingham         60           On Animals         62           Birds' Nests (verses)         M. S. C.         66           The Robin's Story         A. J. Corlett         68           The Dormouse (poetry)         Mary Howitt         73           On Vegetables         75           A Child's Wish in June (poetry)         School-room Lyrics         77           Young Buff-tail         Jennet Humphreys         78           Harvest field Flowers         84           Weeds         S. D. Black         85           The Loss of the Royal George (poetry)         W. Cowper         88           A Sea-dirge (poetry)         Shakspeare         89           The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and         the Birds         Looking-glass for the Mind         90           The Boy at the Canal Dike         American Reading-book         93           The Unjust Suspicion         95         95           The Miller of the Dee (poetry)         C. Mackay         96           The Butterfly's Ball (poetry)         Roscoe         97           On Minerals and Metals<	The Sensea	Robert Chambers 48
Master Squeak         Jennet Humphreys         55           The Fairies (poetry)         W. Allingham         60           On Animals         62           Birds' Nests (verses)         M. S. C.         66           The Robin's Story         A. J. Corlett         68           The Dormouse (poetry)         Mary Howitt         73           On Vegetables         75           A Child's Wish in June (poetry)         School-room Lyrics         77           Young Buff-tail         Jennet Humphreys         78           Harvest field Flowers         84           Weeds         S. D. Black         85           The Loss of the Royal George (poetry)         W. Cowper         88           A Sea-dirge (poetry)         Shakspeare         89           The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and         the Birds         Looking-glass for the Mind         90           The Boy at the Canal Dike         American Reading-book         93           The Unjust Suspicion         93         95           The Miller of the Doe (poetry)         C. Mackay         96           The Butterfly's Ball (poetry)         Roscoe         97           On Minerals and Metals         Adapted from Mrs Trimmer         100           The Prince		
The Fairies (poetry)	The Wood-mouse (poetry)	Mary Howitt 53
On Animals         62           Birds' Nests (verses)         M. S. C.         66           The Robin's Story         A. J. Corlett.         68           The Dormouse (poetry)         Mary Howitt         73           On Vegetables         75           A Child's Wish in June (poetry)         School-room Lyrics         77           Young Buff-tail         Jennet Humphreys         78           Harvest field Flowers         84           Weeds         S. D. Black         85           The Loss of the Royal George (poetry)         W. Cowper         88           A Sea-dirge (poetry)         Shakspeare         89           The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and         the Birds         Looking-glass for the Mind 90           The Boy at the Canal Dike         American Reading-book         93           The Unjust Suspicion         *         96           The Miller of the Dee (poetry)         C. Mackay         96           The Butterfly's Ball (poetry)         Roscoe         97           On Minerals and Metals         Adapted from Mrs Trimmer         100           Little Anomia, or the Search for         the Princess Sea-hair's Comb         A. J. Cupples         102           We are Seven (poetry)         *         109	Master Squeak	Jennet Humphreys 55
Birds' Nests (verses)	The Fairies (poetry)	W. Allingham 60
The Robin's Story A. J. Carlett. 68 The Dormouse (poetry). Mary Howitt 73 On Vegetables. 75 A Child's Wish in June (poetry). School-room Lyrics. 77 Young Buff-tail. Jennet Humphreys 78 Harvest-field Flowers. 84 Weeds. S. D. Black 85 The Loss of the Royal George (poetry). W. Cowper 88 A Sea-dirge (poetry) Shakspeare 89 The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and the Birds. Looking-glass for the Mind 90 The Boy at the Canal Dike. American Reading-book 93 The Unjust Suspicion 89 The Miller of the Dee (poetry) C. Mackay 96 The Butterfly's Ball (poetry) Roscoe 97 On Minerals and Metals Adapted from Mrs Trimmer 100 Little Anomia, or the Search for the Princess Sea-hair's Comb. A. J. Cupples 102 We are Seven (poetry). Wordsworth 107 The Pet Lamb (poetry). Wordsworth 107 The Children in the Wood. Old Ballad 111 Letter-writing 117 Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script) 119 Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use. 121		
The Dormouse (poetry)		
On Vegetables	The Robin's Story	A. J. Corlett 68
A Child's Wish in June (poetry)	The Dormouse (poetry)	Mary Howitt 73
A Child's Wish in June (poetry)	On Vegetables	75
Young Buff-tail. Jennet Humphreys. 78  Harvest-field Flowers. 84  Weeds. S. D. Black. 85  The Loss of the Royal George (poetry). W. Cowper. 88  A Sea-dirge (poetry). Shakspeare. 89  The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and the Birds. Looking-glass for the Mind 90  The Boy at the Canal Dike. American Reading-book. 93  The Unjust Suspicion. 95  The Miller of the Dee (poetry). C. Mackay. 96  The Butterfly's Ball (poetry). Roscoe. 97  On Minerals and Metals. Adapted from Mrs Trimmer. 100  Little Anomis, or the Search for the Princess Sea-hair's Comb. A. J. Cupples. 102  We are Seven (poetry). Wordsworth. 107  The Pet Lamb (poetry). 91  The Children in the Wood. Old Ballad. 111  Letter-writing. 117  Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script). 119  Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use. 121	A Child's Wish in June (poetry)	School-room Lyrics 77
Weeds S. D. Black 85 The Loss of the Royal George (poetry). W. Cowper 88 A Sea-dirge (poetry) Shakspeare 89 The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and the Birds Looking-glass for the Mind 90 The Boy at the Canal Dike American Reading-book 93 The Unjust Suspicion 95 The Miller of the Dec (poetry) C. Mackay 96 The Butterfly's Ball (poetry) Roscoe 97 On Minerals and Metals Adapted from Mrs Trimmer 100 Little Anomis, or the Search for the Princess Sea-hair's Comb. A. J. Cupples 102 We are Seven (poetry) Wordsworth 107 The Pet Lamb (poetry) 90 The Children in the Wood Old Ballad 111 Letter-writing 117 Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script) 119 Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use 121	Young Buff-tail.	Jennet Humphreys 78
The Loss of the Royal George (poetry). W. Cowper	Harvest-field Flowers	84
The Loss of the Royal George (poetry). W. Cowper	Weeds	S. D. Black 85
A Sea-dirge (poetry) Shakspeare 89  The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and the Birds Looking-glass for the Mind 90  The Boy at the Canal Dike American Reading-book 93  The Unjust Suspicion 95  The Miller of the Dee (poetry) C. Mackay 96  The Butterfly's Ball (poetry) Roscoe 97  On Minerals and Metals Adapted from Mrs Trimmer 100  Little Anomia, or the Search for the Princess Sea-hair's Comb. A. J. Cupples 102  We are Seven (poetry) Wordsworth 107  The Pet Lamb (poetry) 109  The Children in the Wood Old Ballad 111  Letter-writing 117  Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script) 119  Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use 121	The Loss of the Royal George (poetry	). W. Cowper 88
The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and the Birds	A Sea-dirge (poetry)	Shakspeare 89
the Birds	The Sheep, the Thorn-bushes, and	
The Boy at the Canal Dike	the Birds	Looking-glass for the Mind 90
The Unjust Suspicion         *         95           The Miller of the Dec (poetry)         C. Mackay         96           The Butterfly's Ball (poetry)         Roscoe         97           On Minerals and Metals         Adapted from Mrs Trimmer         100           Little Anomia, or the Search for         the Princess Sea-hair's Comb         A. J. Cupples         102           We are Seven (poetry)         Wordsworth         107           The Pet Lamb (poetry)         *         109           The Children in the Wood         Old Ballad         111           Letter-writing         117           Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script)         119           Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use         121	The Boy at the Canal Dike	American Reading-book 93
The Miller of the Dec (poetry)	The Unjust Suspicion	* . 95
The Butterfly's Ball (poetry)	The Miller of the Dee (poetry)	C. Mackay 96
On Minerals and Metals		
Little Anomia, or the Search for the Princess Sea-hair's Comb.         A. J. Cupples         102           We are Seven (poetry)         Wordsworth         107           The Pet Lamb (poetry)         109           The Children in the Wood         Old Ballad         111           Letter-writing         117           Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script)         119           Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use         121		
the Princess Sea-hair's Comb. A. J. Cupples 102  We are Seven (poetry) Wordsworth 107  The Pet Lamb (poetry) 109  The Children in the Wood 111  Letter-writing 117  Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script) 119  Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use 121		
We are Seven (poetry)		
The Pet Lamb (poetry)		
Letter-writing		
Letter-writing	The Children in the Wood	Old Ballad 111
Letter from a Boy in the Country to a Boy in Town (script)119 Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use		
Spelling—the more difficult words of two Syllables in common use	Letter from a Boy in the Country to	a Boy in Town (serint) 119
common use		
Words apt to be mis-spelled		

#### THE

### SECOND NATIONAL READING-BOOK.

#### THE MONTHS-JANUARY.

Jan'u ar-y, cov'ered, herds'man, hun'gry, win'dows, gen'tle-man, haw'thorn, weath'er.

JANUARY is the first month of the year. It is then very cold. The ground is often covered with snow. The pond is frozen over, and the cows may be seen standing in a crowd round it, lowing every now and then, and looking for the herdsman to come and break the ice to let them drink. Out in the field, the hungry sheep are bleating among the frozen turnips. There are no leaves on the trees. The robin-redbreast is perched on the hawthorn spray. There he sits and sings, and sometimes he comes to our windows for crumbs. The snails are fast asleep in their houses, with the doorways shut up, to keep out the cold. The worms are all deep down in the earth, away from the frost and the cold, and the mole—the little gentleman in the velvet coat-is down there too, for he has no great choice of food in such weather. The boys are sliding on the lake, and some of them are skating. It is fine fun for them. They laugh at the cold, for it makes their feet and fingers glow with heat.

#### THE MONTHS-FEBRUARY.

Feb'ru-ar-y, cro'cus, squir'rel, but'ter-flies, ap-pear', o'pen-ing.

FEBRUARY is very cold too, but the days are longer. The rain now comes and thaws the frozen lake. yellow crocus and the purple crocus, the primrose, and the white enowdrop, lift up their pretty heads. squirrel wakes out of his winter sleep, and begins to feed on the nuts he has hoarded. He may be seen, balanced by his hind-legs and bushy tail, washing his face on some bare bough near his nest; but at the first sound of the voices of the boys, who come to hunt him, he is off, and springs from tree to tree with the quickness of a bird. Butterflies, that have been hiding all the winter, again appear, and begin to lay their eggs on the opening buds. The farmer now ploughs his fields, and the black rooks follow close after the plough, to pick up the worms it turns up with the earth, and by and by they begin to build their nests. What a noise they make up in the tall trees-caw-caw-caw !





#### THE SQUIRREL

The pretty red squirrel lives up in a tree, A little blithe creature as ever can be; He dwells in the boughs where the stock-dove broods, Far in the shades of the green summer woods; His food is the young juicy cones of the pine, And the milky beech-nut is his bread and his wine. In the joy of his nature he frisks with a bound To the topmost twigs, and then down to the ground; Then up again, like a winged thing, And from tree to tree with a vaulting spring; Then he sits up aloft, and looks waggish and queer, As if he would say: 'Ay, follow me here!' And then he grows pettish, and stamps his foot; And then independently cracks his nut; And thus he lives the long summer thorough, Without a care or a thought of sorrow.

But small as he is, he knows he may want,
In the bleak winter weather, when food is scant;
So he finds a hole in an old tree's core,
And there makes his nest, and lays up his store.
Then when cold winter comes, and the trees are bare,
When the white snow is falling, and keen is the air,
He heeds it not, as he sits by himself,
In his warm little nest, with his nuts on his shelf.
Oh, wise little squirrel! no wonder that he,
In the green summer woods is as blithe as can be!