

**CHAMBERS'S  
NATIONAL READING-  
BOOKS: BOOK II**

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**VARIOUS**

**CHAMBERS'S  
NATIONAL READING-  
BOOKS: BOOK II**



*CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE*

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CHAMBERS'S  
NATIONAL  
READING BOOKS

BOOK II.

W. & R. CHAMBERS  
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

1873

3987. f. 126<sup>b</sup>.



## PREFACE.

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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.

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THE  
SECOND NATIONAL READING-BOOK.

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THE MONTHS—JANUARY.

Jan'u-ar-y, cov'ered, herd's-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. The yellow crocus and the purple crocus, the primrose, and the white snowdrop, lift up their pretty heads. The 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 rocks 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 !