

**THE CLASS AND STANDARD
SERIES OF READING
BOOK, BOOK IV,
SECOND PART, PP. 105- 200**

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The Class and Standard Series of Reading Book, Book IV, Second Part, pp. 105- 200 by Charles Bilton

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CHARLES BILTON

**THE CLASS AND STANDARD
SERIES OF READING
BOOK, BOOK IV,
SECOND PART, PP. 105- 200**

THE CLASS AND STANDARD SERIES
OF
READING BOOKS

ADAPTED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE REVISED CODE.

BY
CHARLES BILTON, B.A.

BOOK IV.
(STANDARD IV.)

SECOND PART

SPECIAL LESSONS FOR GIRLS.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1870.

STANDARD IV.

Requirements of the Revised Code.

Reading.--A short paragraph from a more advanced reading-book used in the school.

Writing.--A sentence slowly dictated once, by a few words at a time, from the same book, but not from the paragraph read.

Aithmetic.--A sum in compound rules (money).

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CONTENTS.

PART SECOND.

	PAGE		PAGE
The Little Dove (<i>Children's Prize</i>)	105	<i>The Harebell and the Pansy</i>	156
The Clean Apron (<i>Chatterbox</i>)	109	Obedience (<i>Sarah Bilton</i>)	158
Grace Darling (<i>Sarah Bilton</i>)	110	<i>O Come ye into the Summer Woods</i> (<i>Mary Howitt</i>)	160
<i>The Milkmaid</i>	114	The Box of Buttons (<i>British Juvenile</i>)	161
Pointing Jeanie (<i>Children's Prize</i>)	115	<i>The Snow Storm</i>	165
The Fir-Tree (<i>Trans. Ed. from Hans Andersen</i>)	117	The Butterfly and the Bee (<i>Child's Companion</i>)	105
<i>Why should not I be Merry?</i> (<i>Mary Russell Milford</i>)	127	On Presence of Mind (<i>Evenings at Home</i>)	168
Vain Wishes (<i>Old Humphrey's Every Day Tales</i>)	123	<i>Alice Fell; or, Poverty</i> (<i>Wordsworth</i>)	173
The Meddlesome Girl (<i>Sarah Bilton</i>)	130	On Dress (<i>Sarah Bilton</i>)	175
<i>Meddlesome Mally</i>	132	The Best Scholar in the Class (<i>Child's Companion</i>)	177
'You Can if you Try' (<i>Children's Prize</i>)	134	<i>A Child's First Impression of a Star</i> (<i>N. P. Willis</i>)	179
My Robin Redbreast (<i>Grace Greenwood</i>)	136	Order and Disorder (<i>Evenings at Home</i>)	180
<i>The Humming-Bird</i> (<i>Mary Howitt</i>)	143	Indoor Games (<i>Editor</i>)	184
The Water-drop	145	<i>Lucy Gray</i> (<i>Wordsworth</i>)	187
How to make a Fire (<i>Sarah Bilton</i>)	146	Counsel for Young Girls (<i>Servants' Magazine</i>)	180
<i>A Fire</i>	147	On Kindness to Animals	191
A Little Girl's Visit to Fairyland (<i>British Juvenile</i>)	147	<i>The Song of the Bee</i> (<i>Goswold</i>)	194
<i>Away with needless sorrow</i>	151	On Grumbling (<i>Sarah Bilton</i>)	195
<i>How glad shall I be when the Cuckoo is Singing</i> (<i>Eliza Cook</i>)	159	The Household Friend (<i>Old Humphrey's Sketch Book</i>)	196
Be Tidy (<i>Old Humphrey's Skips/Fruit</i>)	174		

PART SECOND.
SPECIAL LESSONS FOR GIRLS.



THE LITTLE DOVE.

MANY hundred years ago there lived in the old castle of Falkenburg a brave knight named Theobald and his amiable wife Ottilia. The knight was as kind-hearted as he was brave, and was the defender of all that were oppressed, asking for no reward but the pleasure of doing good to his fellow-creatures. The Lady Ottilia, too, spent most of her time in works of kindness, visiting

Girls

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the sick in their cottages in the neighbouring valley, while the deserving poor found help and kindness at the castle.

The only child of these excellent people, a little girl of about eight years old, followed in the footsteps of her parents, and knew no greater pleasure than giving happiness to others. The whole family was everywhere loved and honoured, and the blessing of God seemed to rest upon them, prospering all their worldly concerns, for they belonged to one of the wealthiest noble families in the land.

One fine bright summer's day, Lady Otilia and Agnes went, after dinner, into the garden, which was situated on the slope of the mountain; a little door in the wall of the castle court led to it by a flight of stone steps. They stood for a while beside a fountain in the middle of the garden, watching the water as it sparkled in the sun and fell in a thousand drops, reflecting all the colours of the rainbow. Then they sat down in a shady vine-arbour of trellis-work, and worked busily at a dress they were making for a poor orphan child. Everything was still and peaceful; the silence was only broken by the cheerful song of the linnet and the pleasant splashing of the water.

Suddenly something white fluttered into the arbour, pursued by a bird of prey, which hovered for an instant with outstretched wings over the entrance, but flew quickly away, scared by the sight of those within. Agnes was for a moment too frightened to look round; but her mother said, laughing, 'Do not be afraid; it is nothing but a little bird, which has taken refuge from a kite. See, it is a snow-white dove, and, in its fear, it has hidden itself behind you.' She took it up, looked

at Agnes, and said, 'Shall we have it cooked in the evening?'

'Cooked!' cried Agnes, horrified, stretching out her hands for the dove, as if to save it from the threatened death: 'surely, dear mother, you are not in earnest! The poor bird has come here for safety; we must not kill it. Oh, see how pretty it is! It is as white as snow, and its little feet are red, like coral. See how its heart is beating. It looks with its innocent eyes, as if it were begging us not to kill it. No, you dear little thing, nobody shall hurt you. You came here for safety, and you shall be taken care of.'

'You are right, my dear child,' said the mother, kindly. 'You have guessed my meaning; I only wished to try you. Take the bird to your room and feed it. We must never turn away the unfortunate who come to us for help; and even animals have a claim upon our kindness.'

The mother ordered a pretty cage, with a red roof and green lattice-work to be made. Agnes placed it in a corner of her room, and the little bird soon became quite tame, and learned to eat out of her hand.

Early in the morning, while Agnes was still asleep, the little bird would fly upon her pillow, and give her no peace till she got up and fed it. Agnes complained to her mother, and said, 'I know what I will do to prevent the troublesome bird from disturbing me in my sleep. I will fasten the cage at night, so that he cannot get out in the morning.'

'No,' said her mother, 'you had better learn from the bird to get up earlier. Early rising is good both for the health and spirits; and should you not be ashamed of

being more idle than a dove?' Thus Agnes became accustomed to early rising.

One day Agnes was sitting near the open window at needlework, while the dove was picking up some crumbs at her feet. Suddenly it flew out of the window and settled on the nearest roof. Agnes uttered a loud cry; her mother came, and asked her what was the matter.

'Oh! my little dove!' said Agnes, in tears, pointing to the roof where the bird was sitting.

'Call it back,' said her mother.

Agnes did so, and immediately the dove flew down, and settled upon her outstretched hand. Agnes was delighted at the bird's obedience, and her mother said, 'I hope you will always be as obedient to me as the dove is to you; it will give me more pleasure than even you have felt. Will you promise me this?' Agnes promised, and kept her word; and from that time it would have been difficult to find a more obedient child.

One day Agnes had been watering her flowers in the garden, and sat down by her mother on the green bank near the fountain. The dove, which was now so tame that Agnes let it fly about, came to the fountain to drink.

'Look, mother,' said Agnes, 'how cautiously it steps from one mossy stone to another, and how carefully it avoids the mud. How very clean it is; you never see the slightest speck upon its white feathers.'

'And how careless Agnes is!' said her mother, pointing to the child's white frock, which she had soiled in filling her water-can. Agnes coloured; and from that time no spot was ever seen to remain long on her white dress.

One day Agnes went a little journey with her mother,