

**SUNNY DAYS; OR,  
A MONTH AT THE  
GREAT STOWE**

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Sunny Days; Or, a Month at the Great Stowe by Henry Courteney Selous

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**HENRY COURTENAY SELOUS**

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THE STEPPING-STONES.—PAGE 35.

# SUNNY DAYS

OR

A MONTH AT THE GREAT STOWE

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'OUR WHITE VIOLET,'  
'GERTY AND MAY,' ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY WALTER CRANE



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## CHAPTER I.

### A MYSTERY.

**W**E were all sitting at breakfast one morning. Such a cosy party: I don't think there was ever one cosier. Our dear darling papa and mamma: there isn't *such* a papa and mamma in the whole world, we know; then Aunt Gommie, whom we all love; and Minnie, and Bessie, and Tita, and Sydney; and myself (that is, Laura), of course, or I couldn't be telling the story, you know.

Aunt Gommie says that the saying 'you know' in between everything is a dreadful trick of mine, and I do try to remember not to do it sometimes; but when I am excited, you know, I

forget all about little proper things, and it will come out in spite of me. Well, I was telling about this very morning. Such a lovely, bright, hot day it was in July—too hot for us, in our stuffy town-house, a great deal. There was a glare on the houses opposite that nearly scorched our eyes; and there wasn't a cool room in the house anywhere, and hadn't been for days, such an awfully hot summer as it was! Aunt Gommie doesn't like me to say 'awfully,' but Syd is always saying it, and it seems as if I could not help it, when I want to say that anything is very extra, you know.

Well, this bright July morning we were all sitting at breakfast, groaning at the heat, and saying that we should not be able to go out till the evening, for, as Syd said, we were going to have another 'roaring hot' day, when we all suddenly stopped our talk at hearing the question papa put to Aunt Gommie.

'What became of you all yesterday afternoon?' he asked. You cannot believe how curious we children were to hear Aunt Gommie's answer.

We had all missed her in the strangest way,