

There is a lonely cottage on the side of a common, not far from Boothby, a little village in the west of Cumberland, inhabited chiefly by fishermen. This cottage has something about it sufficiently picturesque to attract the notice of the few travellers who happen to pass that way. A wide spreading sycamore at one gable, and an immense bushy box-wood tree at the other, or rather at the front corner, together with the neat little garden before it, combine in forming the coup d'œil of as pretty a little picture of rustic simplicity as could well be imagined. The picture was more perfect still, than I have described it, or so at least it seemed to me on the only visit I ever paid to that locality some forty years ago. It was in the evening as I've already said, I remember it as well as if it had been yesterday. The gold and purple of a gorgeous sunset were reflected with intense brightness upon the white walls of the cottage, from the placid sea. A cow with distended udder, stood lowing at the little wicket gate leading into the garden, and a ruddy faced girl, just ripening into womanhood and the very picture of health with no small pretensions to beauty, coming to milk her, and at the same time affectionately apostrophising her with endearing epithets, evidently as intelligible to old Bossey herself as familiar 'household words.' I had hardly returned the respectful and blushing salutation of the tidy milkmaid, ere I came upon the extensive works of two ragged little urchins who had been making mills all day, in a ridge of sand hard by.

CHAPTER III.

PLAYING AT MAKING MILLS.

There were two brothers at the scule,
And when they got awa—
It's will ye play at the stane-chuckie,
Or will ye play at the ba'.

OLD BALLAD.

'READER!' I am addressing myself now, to a different and more intelligent part of the community, than that to which I before referred. "Did you ever play at making mills?" "No?" than you're to be pitied, as the happiest days, though few and far between, as such days always are, and always have been, and will ever be, throughout this chequered scene of life, have been employed by me, or flown away with hasty and unheeded wing into the forgotten past, or been idly wasted, if the reader will, "in making mills."

This is so important, this playing at "making mills," that I must give a description of it, any or every thing indeed is of great importance that

affords even a single day's gratification in our boyhood's years.

These "mills" then, are formed in this wise, A ridge, or precipice, some four or five feet deep, formed, no matter how, whether by man or by the sea, the two principal agents in such formations, is requisite as the site of such mills. A hole at the top and near the edge, the size ad libitum, the depth the same, provided it exceeds not half that of the fall, is first dug, tapering to a point at the bottom, an inverted cone in short, like the upper half of an hour glass, the mill is nothing else indeed but an hour glass on a large scale, for this hole is filled with dry sand which gradually runs out through a small aperture, made laterally, inclining a little upwards from the face of the 'fall,' to the bottom of the hole, this we called the hopper.

The boys' wind and water mills belong to a later period in life, and are so nearly allied to *real* mills, besides being associated, the latter at least, with wet feet and punishments, that I have no wish to advert to them.

One of these little boys, the oldest, and the head man at these said mills, undertook, on my offering him a few ha'pence, to shew me the way to Frank Johnstone's house in Millam—the adjoining parish a few miles distant.

He was a smart intelligent little fellow, and proposed to take me across the sands by a nearer cut. I started with him at once, but ere we got half way the tide came in, rippling up to our very feet before we were aware of it.

I saw at once that we could neither go backwards nor forwards, but must retreat before it at a right angle with our path, some three or four miles to the very head of the inlet or bay up which the tide was flowing. And we had hard work to keep out of its way, even for the first mile or two we were frequently ankle deep in water, and before we had accomplished the next mile, the enemy was gaining upon us rapidly and would soon have overwhelmed us, had not a boat come to our rescue.

David Millway, the proprietor of the cottage I have mentioned.—I must here remind the reader, that I am speaking of a period forty years ago, when a poor man *could* be the proprietor of a cottage, and a patch of ground sufficient for a garden. The case I know is sadly altered now. Times became harder for the poor cottager and he was obliged to apply to the parish for relief, but this he could not obtain so long as he was in possession of any real estate, however small. He was therefore obliged to sell his little inheritance, and live upon the proceeds of the sale until they were expended, which was not long, when, as a