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### A Noble Child.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte—that is John Theophilus Fichte—was the name of the boy we are now going to read about. Perhaps some friend will tell you how to pronounce the word Fichte—all that I can tell you here is that it is a word of two syllables,—that the *e* is sounded much like the *e* in *the*, when you cut the short in common talk (for instance, when you say the sky, or the house, or the man); and that the *ch* is sounded something like *k*, only with a sort of check, or half cough, in the throat.

Fichte lived to be a great philosopher, and, though few people agree with all he said, he wrote some books that everybody loves and thinks good.

When Johann, John, or Hans (it is all the same) was little, his father made him present of a German story-book, called "Siegfried the Horned." This book is a great favourite with young people in Germany, and he was soon head over ears in the adventures of Siegfried. Indeed, he found that the book took off his attention from his lessons, and that he spent too much time over it. He felt that it was doing him harm, so, after many tears, he made up his mind to part with it, in

order to get rid of the temptation to read it when he ought to have been doing his lessons.

There was a river that ran close by the house, and poor Hans could think of no other way of getting rid of this pretty story-book but that of throwing it into this river. His father happened to come behind him just as it was floating down the stream, and was so angry that he beat Hans, who did not know how to explain what he had done. Poor little Hans!

Perhaps you know what fagging is at public schools. It means that the bigger boys are allowed to make servants of the smaller ones, and some big boys are often cruel. Fagging is not near so common now as it used to be in such schools, but there was a great deal of it in the great school to which Fichte was sent when he was about thirteen. In fact he was very cruelly treated, and he was put under a hard, unkind, pupil-teacher. He happened at this time to read "Robinson Crusoe," and he made up his mind to escape from school, for he thought he would be able to find some island in the sea upon which he could live as Robinson Crusoe did.

But Hans was too honourable a boy to sneak away, so he one day told his unkind teacher that he intended to leave the school at the first opportunity. He could easily have gone off secretly, but this he would have thought a mean thing to do. When his teacher and the other lads heard Fichte give notice that he intended to run away, they only burst out laughing, and made game of him. But as he had given fair warning, he thought he was now at liberty to do as he pleased.

He got a map, found out the road to Naumberg, and one night he started off, leaving school and schoolmates behind him. He had heard the clergyman say that we ought not to undertake anything without asking God's blessing upon it, so he knelt down on the grass by the roadside and prayed.

While he was praying it suddenly struck him that his father and mother would miss him, and would be broken-hearted about it. He burst into tears and made up his mind to go back to school at once. He felt sure he should be severely punished, and he was certain that his teacher and the other boys would make game of him without mercy; but this was nothing to the good John, when his conscience told him what he ought to do.

The head master of the school had sent forth scouts to look for him, and was glad enough to see him back.

John then told him the whole story from beginning to end. The head master was a good man, and did not punish the boy at all, but treated him with great kindness, and placed him under a new teacher. After this, young Fichte was much happier.

When he was about one-and-twenty years old he began to write books, but he was very poor for a long time,—very poor indeed, so that he often did not know where his next meal was to come from. In a few years he became a celebrated man, but very few people could make out his love of truth and duty, and he was often in trouble from their unkindness or their envy.

When there came a war between France and Germany, Fichte fought for his country, with other volunteers. His wife went with him to the wars, and nursed the sick soldiers. She caught a fever from them, and died of it. Her husband caught the fever from her, and died also. This was in the year 1814, not long before the battle of Waterloo, when Fichte was fifty-two years old.

### "Featherbright."

Every day we used to feed the tame raven, my brothers Paul and Osborne, my sister Amy and I. He came around one morning, a year ago last spring. We put some crumbs out for the birds at the foot of the steps, and then we all came out to see them feed. It was a chilly day and we were all wrapped up. The birds were not used to us, and as Amy suggested, perhaps seeing us with furs on, made them think that we were some sort of bird-eating animals. Anyway, all of them seemed scared, and off they flew, except this one large, black bird, which father said was a raven.

"I wonder where his mate is," father said. "It isn't often that a raven is seen alone this way. He seems tame, too—probably he has been some one's pet."

Every day after this we looked for the raven, and he hardly ever failed to come. We found that he could say the word "more," and he took great pleasure in repeating it over and over, when he perceived that it amused us. Then Amy undertook to teach him some other words. We boys tried to help her, and by the end of the summer he could say "meat," and "good-by," and "nice time." Sometimes we used to talk of making a cage and keeping him with us, only letting him out every day for exercise; but my father thought that would be cruel, especially as the raven did not seem to need any cage to make him faithful to us.

The next year he came back to us in early April, but one day in August, the raven, which we had named "Featherbright," because his plumage was so glossy, did not come at his usual time to eat and chat. We did not worry much at first, thinking that he had, perhaps, become interested in the pursuit of some sort of wild food

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which he liked better than he liked ours; but as several days went on, and he did not appear, we went out to look for him. He had made himself a nest, or he had taken an old nest, we could not quite make out which, in a tree over-hanging an old salt-house in the midst of an open field. The nest was a ragged affair, not like the nests usually built by ravens, and my father and other naturalists had speculated over it a good deal. They had finally concluded that the raven had lost its mate, and had not much interest left in life, and had settled down in the first place he found. We used to wish that he could talk enough to tell us all about himself, and we used to make up all sorts of stories of his former life, and ask him if they were true. He would look at us out of his small bright eyes, in which we fancied we could see no end of expression—but the poor fellow could never dispute nor confirm our theories.

After that day in August, we never saw our pet again. We always thought that somebody shot him. Perhaps he had formed a taste for apricots or pears, and pecked the fruit of some of our neighbors.

It will seem strange next summer not to have Featherbright come to the

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