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\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GOLDEN MOMENTS \*\*\*



AMONG THE DAISIES.

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**GOLDEN MOMENTS**

**BRIGHT STORIES FOR  
YOUNG FOLKS**

**FULLY ILLUSTRATED**



BOSTON  
DE WOLFE, FISKE AND COMPANY  
361 and 365 Washington Street



## SOPHIE'S ROSES.

Fräulein Hoffman always gave the girls at her school a holiday on the tenth of June. It was her birthday; and though the old lady would not allow her pupils to make her any presents, saying, in her firm manner, "Such things speedily become a tax, my dears," yet she was always pleased that they should decorate the schoolrooms in her honor, and hang a handsome wreath round her father's picture.

So on the evening before the birthday the day-girls would bring baskets of flowers, and the big schoolroom table was brought out into the garden, and there the wreaths and garlands were made amid much chattering and laughing by the happy children.

"There," said Marie Schmidt, with a satisfied smile, as she held up a large wreath for general admiration. "That's finished at last! and I flatter myself that the old gentleman never had so handsome a decoration in his lifetime as I have now made for his picture."

The girls laughed; but gentle Adela Righton, the only English girl at the school, said quietly, "Take care, Marie; Fräulein Hoffman might hear you, and it would hurt her feelings to think that we were laughing at her father."

"I don't want to laugh at any one, you sober old Adela," returned the reckless Marie. "I only think the old gentleman's hooked nose and beady black eyes will look very well under my wreath of lilies and roses."

Adela said no more, for she saw that her words only excited Marie; and fortunately at that moment a diversion was created by a girl coming into the garden with two immense baskets of cabbage-roses and white moss-buds.

"What! more flowers? Why could you not bring them sooner, you tiresome girl?" exclaimed Lotta, who, having finished her garland for the schoolroom window, was more inclined for a romp than for any other flower-wreathing.

"Throw them away! bury them in a hole!" said impetuous Marie, getting up and shaking the petals off her dress. "We've done the wreaths now, Sophie, so your flowers have come too late. I'll tell you what, though: we might fasten a rose to the end of Fanny's pig-tails, and then they would indeed be rose-red."

"No, thank you, Marie: I prefer my pig-tails unadorned," said Fanny good-temperedly, for she was accustomed to jokes on her red hair.

"Throw the flowers on the grass, Sophie! we really can't begin again now!" declared Marie. "I'm going to teach the girls a new game. Now, children, stand in a row. Now hold out your frocks and sing with me." And Marie, leaning against a tree, proceeded to give her orders, and, being somewhat blunt, did not notice the grieved look on Sophie's face as she thought of her wasted flowers.

"Poor roses!" said Adela kindly, noticing Sophie's discomfiture. "They are too sweet to be wasted. May I use them as I like, Sophie?"

"Oh, yes, dear Adela!" said Sophie, brightening. She was a fair, pretty child, with a shady hat tied under her dimpled chin; and seeing Adela stooping to pick up the despised flowers, her spirits rose, and she joined the others in their game under the tree, and danced and sang with the rest.



MARIE TEACHES THEM A NEW GAME.

When Fräulein Hoffman went early the next morning, as was her yearly custom, to deposit a wreath on her father's grave, she found, to her surprise and intense delight, that some one had been before her.

The grave was literally covered with sweet rose-petals, and round the border, in white rose-buds, were the words,—

"Not lost, but gone before."

Her heart was full to overflowing at this kindly act, and at breakfast, in the gayly-decorated room, she made the girls a little speech.

"Dear girls, you are all young, and have still your friends and relations with you. Mine are all now in God's keeping, but it is very sweet to me to believe that they who loved me so well when on earth still think of me in Heaven. You have helped me to realize this by your tender care of my dear father's grave, and in his name and my own I thank you."

There was silence for a minute or two, for the old lady's speech had moved even the giddy Marie. Then Sophie pressed Adela's hand, and whispered gratefully, "My roses went to decorate God's garden; that is best of all."



"GOOD MORNING"

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## MARY'S PIGEONS.

I can't believe there are prettier pigeons than mine anywhere in the world. Every morning and every afternoon I feed them myself, and they are so tame they eat out of my hand, or out of the basin when I hold it for them.

There is some one else who thinks them as pretty as I do, and I'll tell you all about her. It was last year, early in the autumn, that I went out with the pan into the front yard to feed them, and walked down the stone steps, calling the pigeons all the way, while they flew after me. I didn't notice anything in the road, which was just in front of me, until I saw a very big man in a grand livery picking his way across the yard, and then I noticed a carriage had stopped in front of the house, and the lady inside was looking at me and at my pigeons. She beckoned me to come to her; but I was too shy, and ran into the house, to find Mother, who went out to the lady, and I followed just behind her.

And what do you think the lady wanted? To buy my pigeons—my beautiful pigeons! She offered me a dollar, and then two, and then three; but I shook my head every time, and hugged the pigeon that was in my arms. At last she showed me five dollars in gold, and asked if I would let them go for that. But I couldn't—it didn't seem as if any money could pay me for the loss of my pigeons.

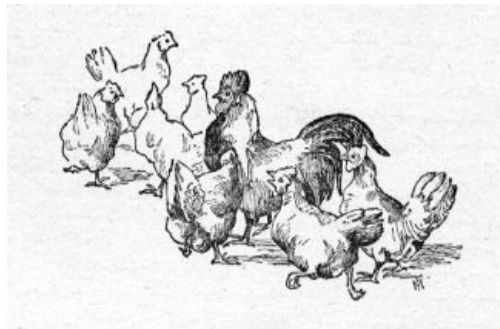
Mother said I must do as I liked about it, for they were my very own, but she said five dollars was a great deal of money, and more than the pigeons were worth; only I didn't think so.

Then the lady said she wouldn't ask me any more, but in case I changed my mind she would give Mother her card. I was sorry I couldn't let her have my birds, but then I dare say she has lots of pretty things, and I have only my pigeons.

Well, Father and William laughed at me for some time about the pigeons; and if I wanted any money for shoes or anything, Father would say, "Dear me! how well Mary's five dollars would have paid for this!" But that was only laughingly, for he would never have taken my money.

This spring my pigeons made a nest, and there were two eggs in it, and after a time two birds, that grew just like the others. I was thinking about the lady one day, and I thought, as I had refused to sell her the old birds, I had better offer to give her the young ones. So next day William carried them over in a basket, and left them at the house.

A few days after, the carriage stopped again before our house, and this time the lady came in and sat in the parlor, and ate a piece of Mother's cake and drank a glass of new milk. But before she went away she gave me a parcel which she said was for my very own, and she hoped I would take as good care of it as I did of my pigeons. And when I looked there was the most beautiful work-case in the world! I used not to like my sewing, but now I do, because I use the work-case and the silver thimble every time!





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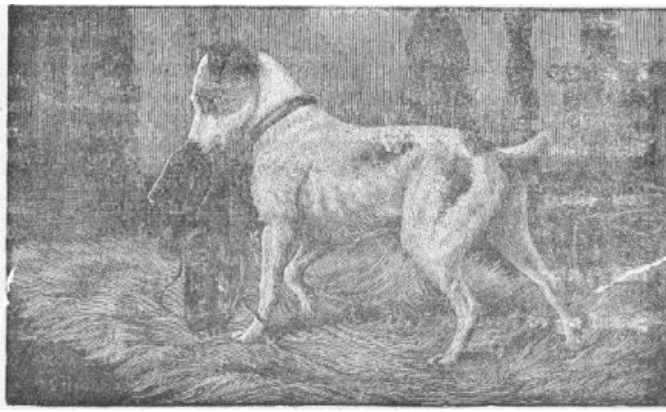
## A CAGE STORY.

Now, Pussy, don't turn away and look sulky. I've only put you in Polly's cage so that you may understand a real true cage story that Uncle Rupert told me last night. He's a soldier, you know, and he wears a red sash, just like mine, only he does not wear it round his waist as little girls do, but across his shoulder.



Well, that's not the story, but this is. Uncle Rupert was in China, where the men wear pig-tails down their back, and it was war time: the English were fighting against the Chinese. He told me why, but I've forgotten, but I know in the end the English won; but they lost a battle first, and Uncle Rupert was taken prisoner. English people are kind to their prisoners, Pussy, but the Chinese are very cruel. Uncle Rupert says he could not tell me the dreadful things that they did to some of the poor English soldiers, but he told me what they did to him, and though it was dreadful it was rather funny too. Listen, Pussy! They made a big cage, only it wasn't nearly big enough, and they shut Uncle up in it, and slung it on a big stick, and carried him about as a show to all the towns and villages. It was very hot, and Uncle was so cramped up in the cage that he could hardly move, and he was very hungry and thirsty, and very, very miserable. The people used to come and stare at him, and tease him by poking nice fruit through the bars, and then snatching it away before he could eat it. Uncle Rupert said he longed to die; but he said one thing,

Pussy, which I must always remember, only I'm afraid you won't understand this. He told me how glad he was that when he was a little boy his mother had taught him a great many texts and hymns. They all came into his mind then, and they comforted him very much, and made him remember that God was near him, even in the cage. So he was patient, and at last he was saved, for some English soldiers marched to the village, and the Chinese ran away and left the cage behind them, and you may be sure the soldiers soon got Uncle Rupert out.



GOOD NIGHT.

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## A THANKOFFERING.

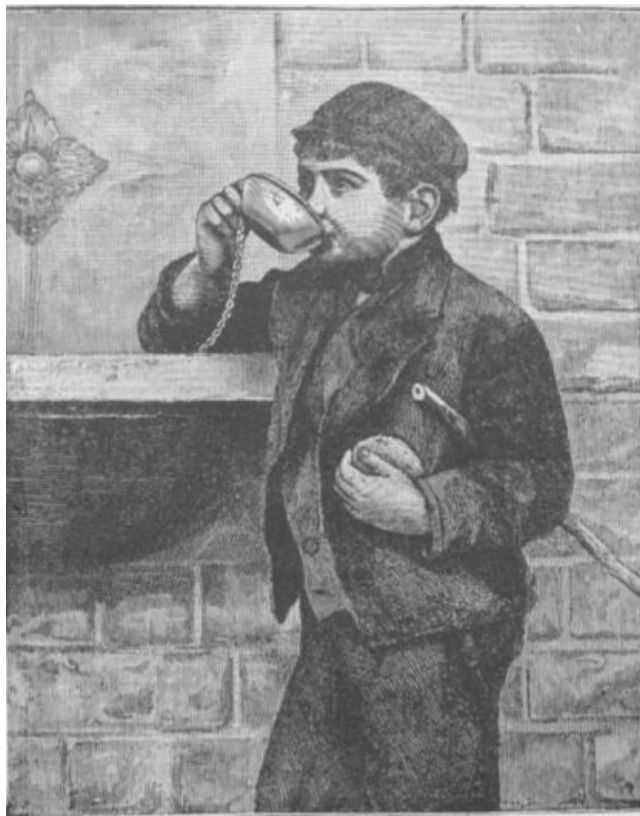
Ada Fortescue was recovering from a long and dangerous illness, and for the last week she had been able to lie on a sofa near the window, and see the people passing through the street as they trudged on their way to the city. Ada was twelve years old; and as she lay on her sofa she had many thoughts, some very serious, but most were happy and grateful.

Ada was Dr. Fortescue's only child, and her mother had been dead for eight years. During her illness Ada had often seen how grave her father looked, but now his thankfulness brought tears into her eyes. It was so nice to be loved so very much, thought Ada.

To-day a very absorbing thought was in her mind, and she looked up and down the street with more than usual interest. That morning her father had told her that he had put aside a sum of money as a thankoffering for her recovery, and she might choose the way in which it should be spent. What should she do? Ada thought of the missionaries far away, of the new church close by, of the hospital, and the orphanage.

At that moment a noise in the street attracted her attention. A man was loudly scolding a little boy, who was crying bitterly. The boy looked pale and tired; and Ada felt very sorry for him, so she opened the window to hear what was the matter. The man had come out of his shop, and was saying angrily, "Do you think I have nothing to do but give glasses of water to every vagabond who goes by? Be off with you, and don't stand there crying and making a crowd collect," for some of those who were passing had paused to find out what was the matter.

Ada rang the bell and sent the maid out to the little boy, who came thankfully for some water, only the water was nearly all milk, and there was a bun and a piece of bread for him besides. What a happy little boy he felt, and what a happy little girl was Ada as she met her father at the door of her room, saying, "I know, I know! a *drinking fountain*, father!"



At first Dr. Fortescue could not understand what she meant, but when she explained he thought it was a very good idea.

Some months later when Ada had a bad cold and was up in her room once more, it amused her to watch her drinking fountain, which was in the opposite wall, and see all the people who drank at it, and she was very glad when one day she recognized the little boy who had first put the idea of a drinking fountain into her head. He had a roll in his hand, and wore a nice tidy suit of clothes; and when Ada sent the maid to inquire after him she heard that he was on the way to see his mother with a quarter's wages in his pocket, for he had got a good place and meant to do all he could to keep it.

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## **ONLY AN OLD COAT.**

### **A TRUE STORY OF A FAITHFUL DOG.**

"Only an old coat! That's what it is surely, but that old coat cost me a good friend, it did. Poor old Tinker was worth more than a dozen coats." So said Eli Watton, as he put the old coat over his shoulders, and settled himself in his donkey-cart with a man by his side who had asked for a lift.

"Who was poor old Tinker?" asked the stranger.

"My dog," answered Eli, "and a better one never followed any man. Poor fellow! though he weren't much to look at. Well, I'll tell you how it was I lost him, poor chap. Every Friday I have to drive into town to fetch the clothes for my wife to wash, and I often had to go in again on a Monday with clean ones. Tinker, poor fellow, used to go with me most times, but I never gave much heed to him. He'd always follow without a word. He was an ugly brute, people used to say—a sort of lurcher, and he never got much petting from any one.



"Well, one day I drove as usual, and I had this old coat over the basket of clothes. When I got to one house I suppose I pitched the old coat out, but I never heeded it; and I never noticed whether Tinker was with me or not. That night we missed Tinker; and my wife couldn't think what I'd done with the old coat, and I couldn't remember anything about it.

"On Monday I had to go to that same house, and there I found my poor old Tinker dead; they'd had him shot. I *was* in a way about it, I can tell you. It was in this way, you see. This old coat was in a doorway, where I suppose I threw it when I was taking down the basket. Old Tinker saw I left it there, and he sat down upon it to keep it safe for me, showing his teeth at anybody who offered to touch it. The servants got frightened; they tried to beat him away, and they tried to coax him away, but he wouldn't stir, and at last they thought he must be mad, and told their mistress. She came and did all she could to coax the dog away, for he was right in the way when they went out or in; but he snarled at them all. He must have been pretty near starved, lying there all Saturday night and Sunday, and I dare say he did get fiercer and fiercer, so at last they got him shot.

"I've never had a dog along with me again. I don't suppose I shall ever get one like Tinker. I always think of him when I take up this old coat;" and Eli gave his donkey a cut with the whip, and I am not sure if there was not something like a tear in his eye as he thought of his lost Tinker. What did it matter that he was an ugly dog? He did his duty to the end of his life, and which of us can do more?

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## AMBITION

I often wonder how Papa  
Can like to go to Town,  
And sit all day with pen in hand,  
And write those figures down;

When he might take a boat and go  
A-sailing on the stream  
And with his rod and line and reel  
Go fishing for the bream.

I think it must be that he likes  
To take the train and ride  
But I would travel round the world  
And see the other side;

Find out where the Equator's drawn  
And what the Poles can be,  
And where the sun goes when he's  
Beyond the shining sea.



## THE GOOD AND BAD FAIRIES.

Two houses stood side by side, as much alike as two twins. Honeysuckle and sweetbrier climbed over the rustic porches, flowers bloomed gayly in the gardens, and the warm sun shone equally on both. In each lived a little girl who had an invisible fairy companion. The children were the same size, the same age, and had the same advantages, with this difference, that the one fairy was good and the other bad.

A ray of sunshine glides through the window into the first house, and shines encouragingly on little Minnie, who is trying to do her lessons.



But the bad fairy has set her pygmies to work. One persuades her that she will do her lessons better if she sits in an easy-chair, another puts a cushion at her back, while a third fans her face so gently that the soft breeze, fragrant with honeysuckle and sweetbrier, soon sends her off to sleep, but not to rest. To her dismay the pygmy sweep comes round the corner, and with his sooty brush sweeps the pages of her new atlas. The coalheavers turn over her inkstand upon it, and the black fluid comes streaming down. Aunt Susan's sharp voice calls out, "Mind your dress, you naughty child."

Minnie puts her hand across it; but the fireman quickly pulls aside the table-cloth, runs his finger down the stream, and her lap is a pool of ink.

"Won't you catch it?" says an old woman, with a delighted chuckle; and the pygmy under the table crawls out, grinning with pleasure.

"We can take the horse to the water, if we cannot make him drink," shouts a newsboy in her ear; and with a great deal of tugging and thumping she feels herself driven closer to her books. But idle hands make an idle brain, and the pages seem only a blank.

"How long wilt thou sleep, lazy one?" cries a grave face in spectacles and lawns. With a sleepy feeling she turns her head away from his stern gaze, only to meet the sterner faces of the judges, who are examining her untidy copy-book.

"Not a single line written this morning. What have you to say in self-defence?"

"Please, sir, the acrobat had my pen balanced on his nose," said Minnie feebly.

"An excuse is worse than a lie," answered one of the judges; "for an excuse is a lie guarded." The book closed with a bang, and the judge marched off to consider the verdict.

At this moment Minnie started up in a fright, to find the dinner-bell ringing, the inkstand upset in her hurry, and no lessons done.

And now she had to go and wash her hands and make herself tidy for dinner. What would mother say when she came to know how little Minnie had done that morning?

A ray of sunshine shone through the window of the second house also, and softly kissed the rosy cheek of little Winnie, as she lay sleeping in her cot.

"Get up," said a small voice in her ear: "it is your turn to arrange the schoolroom to-day."

Winnie jumped out of bed, and was dressed in less than no time; for the good fairy had set her train to wait on her. Her shoes were placed ready to her feet, her strings did not get into knots, and even her hair was not tangled.

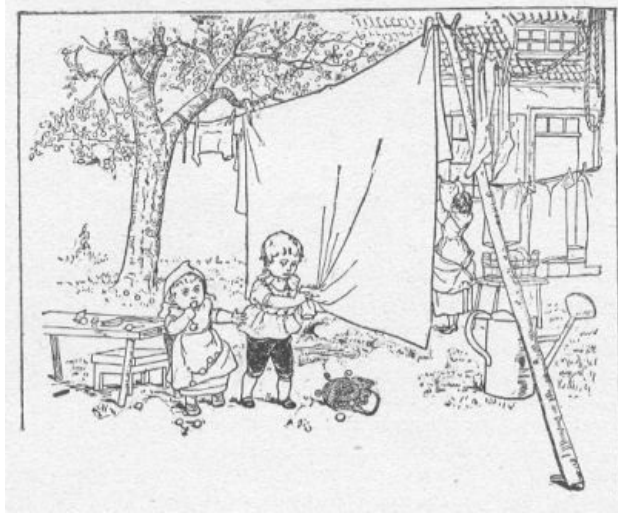


Running down into the schoolroom, and tying on a large apron, she set to work to polish the mahogany cupboard with so good a will that Jack Tar, who stood above it, fairly clapped his hands with glee. Two neat little maids swept the floor, and two little men with their tiny brushes took up the dust. The highest shelf in the book-case was soon mounted by one of the pygmies, whilst two on the next shelf dusted and handed him the books. The carpet-cleaner stretched and nailed down a corner of the drugget which had been kicked up. The coachman, footman, butler, and buttons stood in readiness to carry out the orders of Policeman X. It was a good thing Policeman X was there; for quite a crowd had collected to see the work so briskly going on. The three little pygmies climbed up the rail of a chair to beeswax and polish it. A bookbinder sat cross-legged on one corner, arranging the loose leaves of a book; and a fat cobbler sat balanced on the rail below, singing, "A stitch in time saves nine."

The work was soon done; and when Aunt Susan came into the room she praised little Winnie, and said the white hen had laid her an egg for breakfast.

Now, perhaps, you would like to know the names of the two fairies who attended the little girls. The good fairy was called Work-with-a-will; the bad fairy, No-will-to-work.

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## HELPING MOTHER

It was a lovely summer's day; there was a hot sun with a nice breeze, and Mrs. Jones, who had a heavy wash on her hands, was delighted.

"I shall get all dried off before night," she exclaimed, as she hung out the snowy sheets, and the children's shirts and pinafores, which latter looked rather like doll's clothes as they hung on the line beside father's great stockings.

Tommy and Jeannie, of course, were there too, and very busy, as they had taken it into their heads to plant all the clothes-pegs they could lay hands upon, under the idea that they would soon grow into cabbages!

"Dear! dear!" exclaimed poor Mrs. Jones, when she turned round, having filled the line, and found out what her children had been after. "Did any one ever see such children? I must get them away from the wash somehow. See now, duckies, I'll get you some cherries off the tree, and you'll play pretty on the bench, and let mother get on with her work, won't you?"

"Yes, mother, we'll be ever so good," declared Tommy; and Jeannie, who could not speak plainly, echoed solemnly, "Never good!"

So Mrs. Jones fetched a ladder and gathered some juicy cherries, and for a long time the children played with them happily enough. First of all Tommy kept a jeweller's shop on the old bench, and sold cherry earrings to Jeannie, who tried to fasten the double cherries on to her fat little ears. Then she kept shop, and sold cherry boots to Tommy, and then they got the doll's perambulator and wheeled the cherries to market, and then Tommy said it was time to eat the cherries, and he divided them fairly, and soon ate his share up. But what a mess he did make of his hands and face! they were stained black with cherry juice. "Never mind!" said Tommy calmly, "I'll soon wipe it all off," and catching hold of a sheet which hung on the line near, he first rubbed himself quite clean, and then gave Jeannie's hands a rub, too, on this most convenient towel. Not till he had finished, and the sheet was again flapping in the wind, did thoughtless Tommy reflect on the mischief he had done. But when he saw the purple stains on the clean sheet he began to cry bitterly, and running to his mother, he pulled her round and showed her the cherry-stained sheet.

"Look, mother! look! But I didn't mean to," he sobbed.

"Mothers," says an old writer, "should be all patience," and certainly Mrs. Jones needed patience that morning. She did look vexed at first, as she saw her work undone, but the next minute she was able to say gently, "What a pity, Tommy! You should think a bit, and then you would be able to help me when I'm busy," and that was all. She took the sheet down and put it once more in the wash-tub.

Meanwhile Tommy sat quietly sucking his thumb. He always sucked his thumb when he thought, and just now he had a great deal to think of. Mother had said he might help her! That was quite a new idea to Tommy, and he sucked his thumb harder than ever.

That summer's day marked a turning point in Tommy's life. He then determined—little fellow as he was—to help mother, and it was wonderful how soon the thoughtless little pickle grew into a helpful boy.

"It seems as if he couldn't do enough for me," Mrs. Jones would declare, with honest pride in her tone; "and Jeannie, she copies Tommy, and between them both they'll fetch and carry and run for me till I seem as if I had nothing left for me to do. I'm a lucky woman, that I am!"

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### Little Sister

Sleep, little sister, a sweet, sweet sleep,  
Dear little sister with eyes so blue,  
Daylight is dying  
And shadows are lying,  
Lying where lately the sunbeams grew!

The pretty birds, little one, cease to sing,  
Cosy are they in the mossy nest,  
Birdies like we, dear,  
Weary must be, dear,  
Glad in the gloaming to get to rest!

The flowers are closing their petals fair,  
Closing them up till the dawn of day,  
Then in their beauty,  
Doing their duty,  
All will uncurtain their colours gay!

Sleep, little sister, a sweet, sweet sleep,  
Dear little sister with eyes so blue,  
Sleep without fear, love,  
Sissie is near, love,  
She will keep watch, and be guard over you!

E. Oxenford.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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### "LITTLE ME."

I cannot tell how she came to be called "Little Me." She was a shy little girl, and almost afraid of her own voice; though to hear her playing with her brothers you would not have fancied that she was shy. And now they were on their way to the country. There was Emma the nurse, and Miss Brown the governess, Little Me, Tommy, aged seven, and Jack, aged ten. There was first a long journey in a cab, with many boxes; then a long journey in a train very full of people.

It seemed to Little Me as if that train had been going on all the day, and the sandwiches and milk which nurse had in a little hamper tasted quite warm; and Little Me's legs ached from dangling from a seat too high for her feet to reach the ground, and at last she fell asleep.

She awoke suddenly with a start to find every one turning out of the train, and she felt cross and inclined to cry, but there was no time.



"LITTLE ME"

At last all three children, Miss Brown, and nurse were safely packed into a carriage which was waiting for them. The luggage came behind in a cart.

Little Me was really tired, so nurse put her to sit on a soft rug at the bottom of the carriage. Here she could just see green trees overhead, and the tops of green hedges, and soft white clouds turning to gold and red, as the sun set behind some hills in the far-off distance.

They reached at last a pretty cottage, with a thatched roof and a white wall quite covered with red roses. There was a little path of round stones leading up to the front door, and all the windows had small diamond panes.

A stout old lady, in a spotless white cap with pink ribbons, met them at the door, and took Little Me in her strong arms and carried her up some narrow stairs into a bedroom with white curtains to the bed and windows, and white walls.

After a good wash Little Me felt quite wide-awake, and very hungry, and was glad to be taken down to tea.

It *was* a delightful tea! There were tiny little loaves for each of the children, home-made cakes with plenty of plums, and strawberries and cream, and ducks' eggs. These the farmer's wife showed Little Me had pretty pale green shells, instead of white or brown like the hens' eggs, and Mrs. White promised to show the children some baby chickens and ducklings the next day.

How Little Me *did* sleep that night, to be sure! She never heard her father and mother and Bob, her elder brother, arrive at all; and it was eight o'clock before she woke the next morning, and found they had all gone out and left Me in kind Mrs. White's care. Mrs. White took her to feed the chickens—such dear little fluffy balls of yellow and white and black down, and Mrs. White let Little Me feed them out of a saucer, and some of them jumped over Me's hand, and were most friendly; and then Mrs. White took her to a pretty pond, and showed her a beautiful duck and nine baby ducks, not so fluffy and small as the chickens, but yet very soft and clean-looking.

Bob was rather too grown up to play much with Little Me, and Tommy always played with Jack, so that Little Me spent much of her time wandering about by herself.

The pond where the duck and ducklings lived had a little waterfall at one end, and then it became a little stream, and ran over pebbles under a bridge, and wandered away into the fields with a border of forget-me-nots.

Little Me was very fond of this stream, and one day Tommy persuaded her to take off her shoes and socks and walk through the stream with him. This was very delightful; but when they were just in the middle of the stream there came in sight some cows, and a boy and man driving them.

Now, if there was one thing Little Me dreaded more than another it was cows; and her ideas of propriety were greatly shocked at the idea of a strange man and boy seeing her bare feet, so she raced back to her shoes and socks, picked them up, and tumbled over a stile as fast as her short, fat little legs could go, and hid behind a hedge, all out of breath.

There poor Little Me crouched till she heard the last slow step of the last cow plash through the stream, where some of them stopped to drink, and the sound of voices died away over the bridge; then in much hurry and alarm she thrust her wet little feet into her damp socks, which

she had in her fright dropped into the water, and the wet feet and socks were hastily put into the shoes, and Little Me again climbed the stile to join her brother, to whom she was ashamed to own that she had been afraid of the cows.

Being a city child, and not a very strong one, Little Me was unused to wet feet, and she caught a bad cold, which ended by her spending many days in bed; but the boys brought her flowers, and Mrs. White made her many little loaves and cakes, and gave her honey and cream, and altogether Me thought being ill at a farmhouse much better than being well in the city.

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## OSCAR AND BRUNO.

When we were living in a very remote part of Northumberland, in an old house that had once been a monastery, we had two large dogs named Oscar and Bruno.

Oscar, who was a Newfoundland with a bit of the retriever in him, had been especially trained to take the water and to secure the game when shot among the deep pools.

Bruno, on the other hand, was a huge mastiff, who was kept to guard the house; gentle and docile to those whom he knew, but woe betide the suspicious-looking stranger who approached the house—his growl was enough to frighten the stoutest-hearted beggar in the world.

My father thought Bruno was getting a little lazy, so proposed to take him down to the river with Oscar. I was to accompany them, and see poor old Bruno have a bath.

The river was not very broad, narrow enough to be spanned by an old wooden bridge, but it was very deep in the centre.

Bruno floundered about, and at last got into the deep centre current, and, to my horror, I saw he was losing strength and sinking. I shouted to father that Bruno was drowning. He called to Oscar, "Save your friend, Oscar!" And the faithful creature seemed to grasp the situation, for he swam out to Bruno, and taking hold of his strong leather collar between his teeth, he lifted his head and shoulders out of the water. I eagerly watched them, for Bruno was very heavy, and it looked as if poor Oscar would not have strength to land his friend.

Father encouraged Oscar, for I saw the fear in his face too; and making one supreme effort, struggling and panting, Oscar brought Bruno into shallow water. In a few minutes Oscar was all right, but poor old Bruno was long before he came to himself. His devotion to Oscar after that was beautiful to see, and they were firmer and truer friends ever afterwards.



Tom was one of those boys who, being fairly quick and clever, think they know everything and can do everything without being taught. Now, however quick and clever a boy or girl may be, this is a great mistake, because it is wiser and safer to profit by the experience of an older person than to learn by one's own experience. But Tom always knew beforehand anything that his father or mother could tell him; and the result was that he often found himself in the wrong, and more than once suffered for his conceit and self-sufficiency.

Tom had lived in London all his life, with only occasional visits to the seaside and a few days in the country at Christmas, when his father and mother usually went on a visit to his uncle's house at Felford. He was therefore much excited when at breakfast one morning, just after the Midsummer holidays had begun, his mother handed a letter across the table to her husband, asking, "What do you think of *that*?"

Tom's quick eyes saw that the writing was his uncle's. He watched, and saw his father and mother both glance at him.

"Well, Tom, I see you have your suspicions about this letter," said his father; "and you are right. It *does* concern you. Your uncle has asked you to go to Felford. Your aunt and the little ones will be away; but your uncle will be at home, and Allan will be there to keep you company. Now, do you think you can be trusted to go alone, and not give your uncle any trouble, or lead Allan into mischief?"

"Why, of course, Father!" Tom answered readily.

"I am sorry to say there is no 'of course' in the matter; but you can try this once, and I hope it may be as you say. But you must remember that your uncle is very strict, and that you will not be allowed"—

"Oh, I know!" said Tom, but his father stopped him.

"If you say that to me again I shall not let you go to your uncle's. If you know so well, you ought to practise what you know, and give less anxiety to your mother and me."

At last the day came. His father saw him off at the station; and, after a journey of two hours, Tom arrived at the Felford station, and found his uncle's wagon had come to meet him, and Allan was in it. The boys had much to say to each other; for they had not met for some months, and were always good friends, Allan being only eight months younger than Tom. Allan had much to tell of their plans for enjoyment while Tom was at Felford, and among other pleasant things, there was to be a village cricket match, in which Allan was to play.



"And you, too, Tom," he said, for he never doubted his cousin's powers. "It won't be a very grand match, you see, but it will be capital fun, and the boys play"—

"Oh, I know!" said Tom.

"All right: that will be capital," said Allan; and Tom, who had never held a bat in his life, found himself engaged to play in the match.

"But I shall find it quite easy," he thought. "I've seen it played, and the boys at school seem to find it simple enough."

His uncle was out riding when Tom reached Felford, having had business to attend to, so the boys at once went out into the garden and inspected the scene of the future cricket match.

Tom looked at it a moment, then visions of Lords came before him, and he said decidedly, "It wants rolling dreadfully!"

"Father said it was too dry to roll," said Allan, in rather a melancholy tone. "You see, if"—

"Oh, I know!" interrupted Tom; "but we might try to roll it ourselves, don't you know. That would be fun, and it would surprise him. Is there a roller anywhere?"

"Yes, the small garden-roller; but Father said"—

"Oh, I know!" said Tom impatiently. "Let us fetch it."

Allan said no more. It was clear that Tom did not intend to listen to anything he had to say.

"Do you know how to use the roller?" asked Allan.

"I should hope so! Any one must know that," said Tom; and away they went to fetch it.

Now, there is a right way and a wrong way to do everything, and a garden-roller should be *pulled* and not *pushed*, but this Tom did not understand; therefore, he set to work with Allan to push the roller through the garden towards the field, while Twinkle, the fox-terrier, followed at their heels.

A garden-roller is an awkward thing to manage if you don't understand it. The iron handle is heavily weighted, and if pressed down and then released it springs up with great force, owing to the weight with which it is balanced.

Tom knew nothing of this; and Allan had never been allowed to touch the roller, so he was as ignorant as Tom. They had paused to draw breath, when Twinkle's bark of delight made Allan exclaim, "There's Father!"

At that moment Tom took his arms off the iron handle on which they had been resting, and the

handle sprang up. There was a cry from Allan, and Tom saw to his horror that one end of the iron bar had struck the boy just above the eye. It was a painful blow, and the bruise began at once to discolor and swell, so that by the time his father came up poor Allan was a piteous object.

It was a most unfortunate beginning to Tom's visit. Of course his uncle was angry, for the garden-roller was quite useless for the purpose of rolling the field, and the ground was so hard and dry that no rolling, even with the heaviest horse-roller, would have done any good. Allan was very sorry for Tom, and took more than a fair share of the blame, saying he ought to have been more careful; but he was rather distressed when he found that he had a black eye, and that it could not be well before the cricket match, when the boys would be sure to chaff him.

This exploit of Tom's and his uncle's anger made the boy more careful; and all went well until the day before the cricket match, when Tom and Allan went out for a private practice in the field.

"You aren't standing right. Your leg's before the wicket," said Allan, as Tom stood ready, bat in hand, to receive the ball.



"Oh, I know! but it's only for practice," said Tom quickly. "Send me the ball."

Allan bowled, Tom hit, the ball spun straight up in the air and came down almost at Tom's feet.

"Hullo!" said Allan, pointing to the stumps; "how did you do that?"

Tom looked round and found he had knocked over the stumps. This slight mistake having been set right, Tom was ready to start again. This time, as the ball spun off his bat, there was a crash, and Allan exclaimed in horror, "Oh, Father's precious orchids!" for the ball had gone through the glass of the small greenhouse, and had overturned and injured several cherished plants.

Poor Tom thought he had had enough of cricket for that day, and went in to make his confession to his uncle. Allan's piteous face did more towards softening his father than Tom's regrets, and he said very little about the matter, though possibly he felt the more.

The next day the cricket match came off. Tom very soon found that in playing it was necessary to have done something more than look on. He knew little or nothing of the rules of the game, and brought disgrace on himself, and on his cousin for having introduced so bad a player into the village eleven. Had there been any one to take his place he would have been turned out in spite of anything Allan could say, but as it was they were obliged to put up with him.

When Tom went in, his first action was to put himself out, amid the hootings of fury and amusement of the rest of the party. Even Allan was getting cross with him.

When the other side went in again, Tom made more effort to follow the game and catch the ball; but he knew nothing of cricket, and was wearing his ordinary walking-boots. The grass was dry and slippery, and Tom was clumsy. He was chasing the ball, and thought he should really succeed in catching it this time, when his foot slipped and he fell heavily on the grass. He had broken his leg!

The boys who had laughed before were now full of sympathy. He was at once taken into the house and the doctor sent for. What poor Tom suffered for the rest of that day and all the night, only those who have broken a leg can tell, and added to his pain was the feeling that he had shown all Allan's friends what a boastful fellow he was.



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### The Swallows' Song.

"Tweet! tweet! tweet!" the swallows say,  
"It is time we flew away  
Far across the pathless sea,  
For it winter soon will be!  
Then will fall the rustling leaves,  
And our nests beneath the eaves  
Will be very damp and chill,  
While the fogs our playgrounds fill."  
"Tweet! tweet! tweet!" the swallows say,  
"It is time we flew away!"

"Tweet! tweet! tweet!" the swallows cry,  
As they circle far on high,  
Gathering thickly overhead  
Now that summer days have fled.  
"See!" they say, "the flow'rets fair  
Now are drooping ev'rywhere,  
And no more the scented breeze  
Roves amid the leafy trees!"  
"Tweet! tweet! tweet!" the swallows say,  
"It is time we flew away!"

"Tweet! tweet! tweet!" Alas! we hear  
All you utter, swallows dear!  
And, if it indeed must be,  
Take your flight across the sea  
But do not your friends forget,  
They who lose you with regret,  
And to us all swiftly wing  
When appear the flowers of Spring!  
"Tweet! tweet! tweet!" the swallows say,  
"We will come again in May!"

E. Oxenford.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## HIS FIRST KNIFE AND FORK.

Stevie could hardly believe his eyes. But it was true, quite true, all the same for that, and he opened his blue eyes wider and wider till mother laughed and kissed them, and lifted him up into his high chair, saying, "Yes, Stevie, they are yours, your very own, and grandpa sent them to you because he remembered your birthday." Such a beautiful, sweet-smelling leather case it was, lined with purple velvet, and inside it a silver fork with a pretty "S" on the handle, and a knife that would really *cut*. His first knife and fork! Oh, how Stevie had longed for them! And now that they had come, his very own, he felt quite a man, almost like father.

"Stevie must learn to handle them nicely, ready to show grandpa when he comes. Not that way, pet! Let the back of the blade look up to the ceiling, like little birdies after they drink, and keep the sharp edge down to the plate, and then little fingers won't be cut."

"All alone by myself, mother? all alone by myself?" cried Stevie eagerly; but mother stood beside him till the pie was cut up, and the pretty knife and fork had been laid aside to be washed and put back in their velvet case.

Stevie learned to handle his knife and fork quite nicely in a few days, but he found it rather hard that he was never allowed to have them to play with. He used them at the table and that was all. The day grandpa came Stevie was all excitement to show him how well he could use his beautiful present. Mother had gone to the station to meet him, and it seemed that the long morning of waiting would never be over. But twelve o'clock came at last, and nurse gave Stevie a biscuit and an apple, and sent him out in the garden so that he should not disturb baby's nap. He ran away down to the fountain and began to play dinner. Then he thought of his dear knife and fork. He knew just where they were, but he had been told never to touch them. He did want them so much, and they *were* his own. The apple would seem just like a real dinner if he only had them. Stevie ran into the dining-room and mounted the chair by the sideboard. For a moment he stopped; for it seemed as if some one said, "Don't touch, Stevie!" quite loud in his ear, but only the clock went "Tick, tack, tick, tack!" There was only the little voice of conscience *inside* Stevie to say "Don't touch;" and he wouldn't listen to that, so he ran away with the pretty case in his hand.





Stevie played dinner, and old gray pussy sat on the fountain basin and looked at him. She played grandpa, at least Stevie said so; but somehow the apple didn't taste so sweet as at first, and he cut his thumb a little, and thought he would put the knife and fork back. Back in their case he did put them, clip went the little silver fastening, Pussy arched her back and swelled her tail, for the dog belonging to the baker had just come through the gate with his master. There was a rush and a tussle, and the baker ran to Stevie; but something had gone splash! into the fountain, and Stevie ran away crying. How everybody did *hunt* for that knife and fork, while Stevie sat very pale and quiet, holding one fat thumb hidden by his hand.

Grandpa sat next to the high-chair. "Cheer up, little man: it will be found."

And mother said, "Never mind, pet; it can't be really *lost*!"

Stevie's thumb hurt him, and he felt so miserable that he couldn't bear his trouble "all alone by himself" any longer, so he sobbed out, "'Tisn't lost! it is in the fountain! Wanted it all by myself!"

Mother took him on her lap till she had made out what had happened. Then she tied up the poor cut thumb while grandpa went down to the fountain and fished up the knife and fork. Stevie ate his dinner with a spoon, for grandpa said he thought the knife and fork had better go away till the poor thumb was well. The pretty case was quite, *quite* spoiled. But Stevie got his knife and fork back; and we noticed that we didn't have to say, "Don't touch, Stevie!" nearly so often to him, and that he was not nearly so eager to have things "all alone."

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### The Wren's Gift.

A little maid was sitting  
Upon the wild-brook's edge.  
A little Wren came flitting,  
And chirruped from the hedge.

Close up to her he hopped,  
With eyes both bright and merry,  
And in her lap he dropped  
A golden shining berry.

"Eat it never fearing,"  
Said the little Wren,  
"It will give you hearing  
Seldom given to men."

It made her tongue to tingle  
When she bit it through,  
And straightway all the dingle  
Seemed full of words she knew.

She understood the words  
The wild brook sang in straying,  
And what the woodland birds  
Among themselves were saying.

But sweeter than all singing  
Of brook or birds above,  
She heard the bluebells ringing  
The chimes the fairies love.

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## **VERA'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.**

It was Christmas Day, and very, very hot; for Christmas in South Africa comes at mid-summer, whilst the winter, or rainy season, occurs there in July and August, which certainly seems a strange arrangement to our ideas. However, whatever the temperature may be, Christmas is ever kept by all English people as nearly as possible in the same way as they were wont to keep it "at Home," for it is thus that all colonists lovingly speak of the land of their birth.

So, though little Vera Everest lived on an African farm, she knew all about Christmas, and did not forget to hang up both her fat, white socks, to find them well filled with presents on Christmas morning; and there were roast turkey and plum-pudding for dinner, just as you had last year.

She was not old enough to ride to the distant village church with her parents, but she amused herself during their absence with singing all the Christmas carols she knew to Sixpence, her Zulu nurse; and by and by she heard the tramp of the horse's feet, and ran to the door.

Instead of the cheerful greeting she expected, Mother hardly noticed her little girl. She held an open letter in her hand, and was crying—yes, crying on Christmas Day!

Mrs. Everest was indeed in sad grief; the mail had just come in, and she had a letter to say that her mother was seriously ill, and longing to see her. A few months ago there would have been no difficulty about the journey; but the Everests had lost a great deal of money lately, and an expensive journey was now quite out of the question, and yet it cut her to the heart not to be able to go to her mother when she was ill, and perhaps dying.

Vera was too young to be told all this, but she was not too young to see that Mother was in trouble.

"I do believe Santa Claus forgot Mammy's stocking," she said to herself: "she has not had a present to-day, and that's why she's crying."



So Vera turned the matter over in her mind, and came to the conclusion that *she* must give Mother a present, as Santa Claus had so shamefully neglected her.

She went to her treasure-box—a tin biscuit-case in which she kept the pretty stones and crystals which she picked up in her walks, and, after thinking a little, she chose a bright, irregular-shaped stone, and, clasping her hands tightly behind her, she went on to the veranda.

Mother was lying back in a cane chair and gazing with sad eyes over the sea.

"I've brought you a Christmas present, Mother," said Vera. "Don't cry any more, but guess what it is."

Mrs. Everest turned round and smiled lovingly at her child. Certainly little Vera made a pleasant picture for a mother's eyes to dwell upon as she stood there roguishly smiling in her cool white frock and blue sash, and a coral necklace on her fat neck, whilst her golden hair shone like a halo round her head.

"Guess, Mother dear," repeated Vera; then, unable to wait, she jumped on Mrs. Everest's lap, and, opening her little pink hands, she displayed the stone. "It's your Christmas present!" she declared.

Mrs. Everest kissed the child, but did not, so thought Vera, take enough notice of her handsome gift.

"It shines, doesn't it, Father?" she said, holding it up for Mr. Everest's inspection as he passed along the veranda.

Mr. Everest stopped, took the stone in his hand, then, turning deadly pale, he walked quickly into the house without saying a word. Vera felt the world was somewhat disappointing to-day; but in a minute or two her father reappeared, and hastily encircling both wife and child with his arm, he said gayly, "There, Sophy! kiss your little daughter, and congratulate her. She has made your fortune, and you can leave for home to-morrow, and engage a state cabin if you like."

"O Henry! what do you mean?" said the bewildered Mrs. Everest.

"Just what I say!" he declared. "Vera's gift to you is a diamond; and if I know anything, it will sell in Capetown for a good round sum. So don't fret any more, little woman, but pack up your traps and take your clever daughter with you, and we will start for Capetown to-night, so as to catch the first steamer for home."

Vera could not now think that her present was not enough appreciated, for Father would not let it out of his hand until he got to the jeweller's at Capetown, and had sold it for a large sum of money.

Vera and her mother sailed the very next day, and Grandma got better from the hour of their arrival. As for Mother, she was now always smiling; for with Grandma well, and no debts to worry her, she felt so happy that she seemed hardly to know how to be grateful enough.

Certainly there could not have been a more opportune present than Vera's Christmas Gift.



## TOMMY TORMENT.

We all called him in private "Tommy Torment;" but his mother called him "My precious darling," and "My sweet, good boy," and spoiled him in a truly dreadful way. Anyhow, he was not a nice boy, and we never saw more of him than we could help.

He did not go to school even, for this seven-year-old boy was thought too delicate, and was taught at home by a governess with sandy curls, who brought books in a needlework bag that we all used to laugh at—I am sure I don't know why; but her teaching could not have amounted to much, for I went into the schoolroom one day, and found Tommy riding defiantly on the rocking-horse, while poor Miss Feechim stood by him with an A B C in one hand and a long pointer in the other, with which she showed him the letters. When he said them correctly, Miss Feechim gave him a sugar-plum out of the bag on her arm, but when he refused to look at them, which he did as often as not, she only said, "Oh, Tommy!" and shook her curls, and never attempted to make him mind her; and then he laughed and called her names, and rocked his horse so violently up and down that his poor mother came rushing up-stairs white with anxiety to know what was the matter.

You can imagine after this we were not overjoyed when we heard from Mother that Lady Mary was so ill her mother had taken possession of her, and that we were to have the pleasure of Tommy Torment's company at the seaside. Mother said she was very sorry, but she could not help it. The doctor said Lady Mary must have complete rest, and no worries; and Lady Mary had said she could not trust her precious treasure to any one else but Mother. So, when we set off on our annual holiday, Tommy was stuck into a corner of the omnibus.



Well, at first, and under Mother's eye, we really did think we had been rather hard on Tommy Torment, he seemed so like other boys; but presently, when the novelty had worn off, and he

had become tired of being good, the real Tommy appeared, and for at least a week we had really what Nurse calls a "regular time of it." There was not a trick he did not know; and the worst of it was that our boys became tricky too, and we really did not know how to bear the rough usage we all received, for we never had a moment's pleasure or peace of our lives; and what with sand in our hair, wet star-fish down our backs, and seeing our dolls shipwrecked in their best clothes off the steepest possible rocks, we never felt secure for a moment, and we actually began to wish ourselves back in the city, when Nurse fortunately rose to the occasion, and, taking the law into her own hands, escorted the whole party up to Mother, which brought matters to a climax; for our boys were so ashamed of their cruelty and ungentlemanly behavior when Mother explained to them what their tricks really meant, that they became their own true selves, and we had the first good play together of the season the next morning on the shore, though Tommy did his best to bother us, and to draw off the boys again by promising to show them quite a new way of managing a shipwreck.

But the boys would not join Tommy, and so he went off alone, and we saw him five minutes after with Yellowboy, the sandy kitten, tied to the mast of his ship, doing his very best to drown the poor little thing, pretending he was rescuing it from the perils of the ocean.

I could fill pages were I to go on telling you only of Tommy's tricks; but as that cannot be, I am just going to let you know how we cured him. We simply let him alone. Mother only scolded him, or rather talked to him, once, and that seemed to have no effect on him at all, though Mother's "talkings" usually soften the hardest heart; so finally we all agreed to go our own ways just as if he were not there, Nurse promising to put all our toys and pets out of his reach, and to see that he came to no real harm.

He actually bore a whole week of it before he repented. We used to watch him from the corners of our eyes moping all by himself, and looking at the toes of his boots, or at his ship, which he really could not sail without our help, and felt so sorry for him. We longed to break our resolution; but Mother and Nurse helped us to keep firm, and one Monday morning Tommy came up to me and said, "Why won't you play with me, Hilda?"

"Because you are cruel and ungentlemanly," I said seriously, "and because you are selfish. We tried our best to be pleasant to you, though we never wanted you here, and in return you made the boys horrid to us, and never allowed us five minutes' peace. You spoiled a whole week of our precious holidays, and we can't afford to waste any more time over you. We can do without you perfectly well, and so please go away."

"But I am truly sorry, Hilda," he said, looking down. "I've been 'flecting" (he meant reflecting). "I'd much rather be agreeable and nice, and I won't be selfish if you'd not look away from me and forget me any more. If I'd your mother I'd be good perhaps, but I really think my mother doesn't understand boys." And he sighed deeply, and put his hands into his knickerbocker pockets.

"You'll not forget, and tease us again?" I asked firmly; "and you know I must ask Mother too."

"I'll promise, really," said Tommy, giving me a very grubby little hand; "only please do look at me as you look at Charley, and don't leave me all to myself again. I do get so tired of myself, you can't think."

I could, for once I had been left alone just in the same way; but I didn't tell Tommy this, and only went to Mother, and soon he was playing quite happily with us, and remained such a good boy. Nurse used to look out for spots on his chest every day when she bathed him, for she was quite sure that he must be going to be ill, but he wasn't; and he remained so good we were quite sorry to part with him, for he was really funny, and full of life. But as his mother kept very weak, Tommy was sent to school; and so, when we went back from the seaside, after the holidays were over, we did not meet again for nearly a year.

When we did meet, we hardly knew him again, he was such a jolly little fellow. And when he grew confidential, which he did the third day of the holidays, he said to me very solemnly, "I say, Hilda, if any little boys and girls are as rude and naughty as I used to be once, I know how to cure them. I shall first talk to them nicely, as your mother talked to me, and then I shall let them alone. It cured me, I know. You don't ever call me Tommy Torment now, do you, Hilda?"

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## THE TRICYCLE.

My grandfather does give me nice things! Last birthday he gave me a lovely box of tools, and he gave me the rocking-horse when I was quite little, and the swing trapeze that hangs from the nursery ceiling, and books and toys,—I can't remember them all now. But his last present was best of all: it was a tricycle!

I was nine last birthday, and I couldn't help wondering—though it sounds rather greedy—what grandfather would give me, because I thought it wouldn't be a toy, and he had given me a book at Christmas, for he said I was growing "quite a man."

When the birthday morning came, and I ran down to breakfast, there was nothing at all from

grandfather! I'm afraid I looked very disappointed just at first; but presently we heard a little noise outside, and there was grandfather himself, and a man with him, who was wheeling the dearest little tricycle you ever saw.

It was rather hard work at first, and I soon got tired; but now I can go ten miles with father, and not feel at all tired.

I'll tell you one thing that makes me so glad about my tricycle. I was just going out on it one morning, when mother came running out of the house, looking so pale and frightened that I was quite frightened too.



"Bertie," she said, "tell John to go at once to Dr. Bell's and ask him to come here at once—*at once*, remember. Your father has cut his hand very badly, and we can't stop the bleeding."

"I'll go, mother; let me go on the tricycle," I said.

And she answered, "Do, dear; only make haste!"

I don't think I ever went so fast before; but it was a good road, and that helped me, and I was saying to myself all the time, "Oh, don't let me be too late for the doctor! *Please* let me find him and bring him to father."

And I *did* find the doctor at home. I was out of breath, but I managed to tell him what was the matter, and he was soon ready.

Of course I couldn't keep up with his pony-cart, as father could have done, but I got home not long after, and heard that the doctor was there, and the bleeding had stopped.

Father was very weak for some time, and his hand was not well for several weeks, but the doctor and mother said he would have died if I hadn't been able to fetch the doctor so quickly on my tricycle.

That's why I like my tricycle so much, and think it such a useful thing. If it had been a pony, it would have had to be saddled and bridled; but I always keep it cleaned and oiled, so it was quite ready for use when it was wanted. Mother used to be rather afraid of my riding it at one time, but she doesn't mind it now, because she knows how useful it was the day father cut his hand.



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## On the Threshold

### I.

Bring me my grandson, Agnes,  
Bring me your first-born boy;  
I may not be with you much longer,

And he is my old heart's joy.

II.

Do you think he is old enough yet, girl,  
To remember me after I go?  
If not I must stay awhile longer,  
For he must not forget me, you know.

III.

You who are yet but a child, dear,  
Will see him as tall as the squire  
But I must make ready to leave you,  
For have I not won my desire?

IV.

Old winter waits for the snowdrop  
Before he turns to depart,  
And I have stayed for the coming  
Of this last joy of my heart.

V.

We meet in the same wide doorway,  
And inward to life he trips  
But I to my death creep outwards  
And, passing, we both touch lips.

F. W. H.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## TROT, TODDLES, AND THE TEA-PARTY.

Trot walked slowly up-stairs, repeating the words she had heard,—

"If you want the entertainment to be a success, you must draw up a programme, and carry it out."

She looked very solemn, for she felt the importance of the occasion. On the day following she and Toddles were to give their very first party; and four little girls and four little boys, not to mention the four dolls of the four little girls, were coming to take tea with Trot and Toddles and mother.

Trot had thought about it a great deal, and so had Toddles, wondering what would happen, and what they should do to make the guests enjoy themselves.



"TODDLES STOOD IN FRONT OF HER."

The two children had spent many half-hours talking the matter over, and each time the conversation had ended by Toddles saying,—"Well, never mind; there'll be tea." He had found out from cook that there would be two kinds of jam provided for the tea-party, and he felt quite sure that even if there were fourteen little boys and fourteen little girls expected, they would enjoy themselves thoroughly if they had plenty of jam. But Trot did not agree with him, and declared that the question could not be settled that way.

The speech which Trot had overheard suggested all kinds of plans, and she made her way into the nursery to talk over the party once more with Toddles.

Toddles was in the middle of a grand sea-fight. His tin soldiers were sailing about on books on the sea of the nursery floor, and Toddles was firing first at one ship, and then at another, with a large glass marble. Toddles did not wish to be disturbed.

"Toddles," said Trot, "the tea-party is settled at last. If you want the entertainment to be a success, you must draw up a programme, and carry it out."

"Six down at one shot!" cried Toddles; "and the captain among them, too."



"'HIGHER!' SHOUTED TODDLES."

"'HIGHER!' SHOUTED TODDLES."

"Toddles," said Trot solemnly, "you do want the entertainment to be a success, don't you?"



"TODDLES FELL DOWN."

Bang! bang! "There'll be tea," cried Toddles.

Trot touched him on the shoulder.

"Do come and talk about the party, Toddles," she said. "I have thought of a new game to play at."

Toddles looked up at last; he was beginning to feel interested. Trot's new games always meant fun, though they sometimes ended in a scolding from nurse.

"What is it?" he asked.

"A circus," answered Trot, with a smile.

"No," said Toddles, jumping up from the floor. "Do you really mean it?"

Trot sat down in a chair, and Toddles stood in front of her, and rested his two chubby elbows in her lap.

"We must draw up a programme, and carry it out," said Trot, waving one arm, as she had seen her father do, when he had made the same remark down-stairs.

Toddles stared; he felt very much impressed, though he did not know in the least what Trot meant.

"And the circus will be the programme," continued Trot, drawing a dirty, crumpled piece of paper out of her pocket. "I will write it down on this. They will come at four o'clock."

"Oh, they'll come before that," objected Toddles. "You put 'Tea at 4' on the letters, and they are sure to come in plenty of time for tea. I should, because of the two kinds of jam, you know."

"Never mind," said Trot; "we can't do anything before tea, so the first thing to put down is 4 TEA;" and she wrote the word in big printing letters.

Toddles watched her silently.

"After tea will come the circus," said Trot. "I wonder how you spell circus?"

"But will mother let us have the circus?" said Toddles. "There won't be room in here for all the horses and clowns, and ladies we saw the other day."

Trot laughed. "That isn't the kind of circus I mean," she said; "we're to be the circus!"

Toddles looked more astonished than ever.

"We shall ask the party to sit in a circle," said Trot; "and then we shall do things. Perhaps we may as well settle now what to do."

"We must jump through hoops, of course," said Toddles.

"And walk about with things on our heads," said Trot; "balancing, they call it."

"I do wish we could walk on a rope like the man did the other day," said Toddles.

"We will," said Trot, writing busily.

The spelling was rather a trouble to her; but Toddles quite approved of it, and both children were satisfied with the programme when it was finished, though perhaps any one else might have found difficulty in understanding it. It looked something like this:

"4 TEA AFTER TEA JUMPING THREW HOOPS BALLUNCING TITE ROPES."

"Won't they be surprised?" said Toddles.

"Now we will practise," said Trot. "As we can't have any horses, I will hold the hoop, and you shall jump through it."

"That is much too easy," said Toddles. "Couldn't you stand on a chair, and let me jump off another chair through the hoop?"

Trot looked doubtful—"Nurse doesn't like us to stand on the chairs," she said.



"TROT PUT THE JAR UPON HER HEAD."



"THERE WAS ... A SMASH"

## A Silent Friend

I who live in a house with a roof,  
And the cow who lives out of doors,  
The cow who walks with a cloven hoof  
And I who have shoes like yours,

We two have been friends for many a day



Though we never have shaken hands,  
It is true she has little or nothing to say,  
But I'm certain she understands.

She was browsing the grass by the brink of the brook,  
When I went down the garden to see  
She lifted her head with an earnest look,  
And slowly came over to me.

I stood by the fence which stretches about  
Twixt garden and pasture-land,  
I pulled up a lettuce and held it out,  
And she munched it out of my hand.

Since then we are very good friends indeed,  
But she never has spoken a word:  
But whatever I tell her she seems to give heed,  
I can see by her eyes she has heard.

F. W. Home.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

She fetched her big wooden hoop and held it up.

"Higher!" shouted Toddles, getting ready to make a spring.

Trot raised the hoop and Toddles jumped; then somehow Toddles and the hoop got mixed up together, and Toddles fell down on the ground.

"Oh dear!" said Trot. "I am sorry; we must try again."

Toddles picked himself up, and rubbed his elbows.

"Don't you think it will look stupid to jump through hoops when we can't ride on horses?" he said. "Of course if we had horses it would be easy enough. I think we had better leave that part out."



"LET US TRY  
WALKING THE  
ROPE."

"Perhaps we had," said Trot; and she slowly drew her pencil through "JUMPING THREW HOOPS."

"We can both balance things," said Toddles, "I know;" and he jumped up quickly and ran across the room. "I will lie on my back, and put the footstool on my feet—"

"And throw it up in the air, and catch it," cried Trot. "Like the man with the tub the other day. That will be fine!—What shall I do?"

"Walk about with that pot on your head," suggested Toddles.

"That old thing," said Trot; "that will be very easy."

Toddles lay down on his back, and stuck the footstool on his feet, and Trot put the jar upon her head.

"It is quite easy," said Toddles, "and I am sure the party will like it."

"Quite easy," said Trot.

There was a sound of something falling, a cry, a little scream, and a smash.

"Oh!" cried Toddles.

"E—ee—eh!" cried Trot.

"It came right on my nose," said Toddles. "I believe it's broken."

"I'm sure my toe is," said Trot.

There was no doubt at all about the pot, it was very much broken.

"Hush!" said Trot, "there's nurse!"

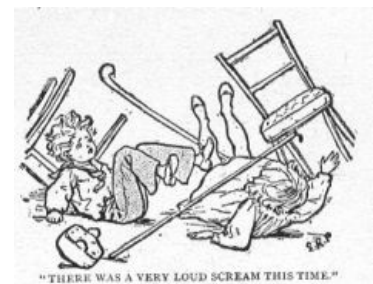
Toddles stopped in the middle of a scream, and the two children crept on their hands and knees to the door, and listened eagerly—but it was a false alarm.

"Let us try walking the rope," said Trot.

"I suppose you will do that," said Toddles, rubbing his nose; "though we haven't any rope."

"Then we must find something else," said Trot cheerfully, determined not to be beaten. "I think a walking-stick would do beautifully to practise on, and we'll get nurse to give us a rope to-morrow."

"It looked very easy the other day," said Toddles, as Trot began to arrange one end of the stick on a chair, and the other on a stool; "but I don't expect it is."



"THERE WAS A VERY LOUD  
SCREAM THIS TIME."

"We'll be more careful this time," said Trot. "You hold the walking-stick so that it sha'n't slip, and I'll hold this long stick so that I sha'n't slip."

"All right," said Toddles, in a tone of voice which meant that he thought it was all wrong.

There was a loud scream this time—a scream that brought nurse up-stairs very quickly, so that she might see what was the matter.

Both the children were on the floor, and sticks, chair, and stool were flying in every direction.

For a minute nurse was doubtful which was Trot, which was Toddles, and which were sticks and chair.

"What are you doing?" said nurse.

But neither of the children answered. Toddles's head felt as if it had suddenly become twice its usual size, and Trot did not feel quite sure where she was, or whether she was standing on her head or her heels.



"TODDLES AND TROT WERE SITTING  
SIDE BY SIDE."

"TODDLES AND TROT  
WERE SITTING SIDE  
BY SIDE."

Nurse picked them up, and kissed them and comforted them, but quite forgot to scold the two miserable little pickles.

They didn't say anything about the circus, and somehow or other Toddles thought he would like to go to bed early; and of course there was no use in Trot staying up by herself, so she went to bed early too.

Next morning the children slept late, and did not seem very eager to get up when they did wake.

"Trot," said Toddles, sighing deeply, "it is the party day. What shall we do about the circus?"

Trot only answered with something between a groan and a growl.

"Children," said mother, coming into the nursery after breakfast, "shall we write to the boys and girls, and tell them to come another day?"

And though you will probably be astonished to hear it, Toddles and Trot nodded their heads and smiled.

"You wouldn't like it not to be a success," said mother.

"Trot," said Toddles, when mother had left the room, "you won't write a programme next time."

"If I do, Toddles," said Trot, "you may carry it out—out of the room, I mean."

But after all there was one part of the programme carried out.

At four o'clock that same afternoon Toddles and Trot were sitting side by side on the nursery floor, looking and feeling very unhappy and miserable.

"If only we hadn't hurt ourselves," said Trot, "we might have been having the party now."

"And the two kinds of jam," said Toddles. "Oh dear! oh dear!"

"Oh dear! oh dear!" said Trot.

The door opened, and nurse came into the room.

"Miss Trot, Master Toddles," said she, "you are to have tea down-stairs with mistress to-day."

Toddles and Trot looked surprised; but they jumped up quickly from the floor, forgetting for the moment all their aches and pains.

"Do you think," whispered Toddles to Trot, as they walked slowly down-stairs, "that there will be two kinds?"

Trot nodded her head. "I hope so," she said.

And there were.

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## BUTTERCUP LAND.

They sailed away in a paper boat,  
Nellie and Flo and Dan did,  
Wondering how they managed to float,

For rather unsafe is a paper boat,  
Better it is to be candid!  
And after a voyage across the seas  
They came to an island of flowers and trees.  
And, wishing to feel rather more at ease,  
They anchored their craft and landed!  
A bright little Fairy cried out from the strand,  
"You're welcome my darlings, to Buttercup Land!"

They gazed around on a lovely scene,  
Nellie and Dan and Flo did,  
Golden the leaves of the trees, not green,  
No wonder they thought it a lovely scene,  
Happiness surely it boded!  
And buttercups grew on each inch of ground,  
No room for a pin could between be found,  
They gathered, and gathered, you may be bound,  
Till pinafores all were loaded!  
The bright little Fairy said, "Isn't it grand  
To rule o'er the kingdom of Buttercup Land?"

"Alas!" they cried, "it is late, so late,  
Home we must all be sailing!"  
Sorrowful they that they could not wait,  
But they were good darlings 'tis right to state,  
Duty was ever prevailing!  
And so they embarked in their paper boat,  
And soon on the sea were again afloat,  
A merry cheer rang from each childish throat,  
Tho' tears down their cheeks were trailing!  
The bright little Fairy cried, waving her hand,  
"Come soon again, darlings, to Buttercup Land!"

At last they came to their native shore,  
Nellie and Flo and Dan did,  
Noticing what they'd not noticed before,  
That beautiful too was their native shore,  
Better it is to be candid!  
Then one to the other remarked, "I say  
I think that the sun must be hot to-day!  
I've been fast asleep, and sailed far away,  
Where I on an Island landed!"  
They laughed for they lay, gather'd flow'rs in each hand,  
Mid buttercups sweet as in Buttercup Land!

E. Oxenford.

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## "TEASING NED."

Such a terrible tease was Ned! Mother's patience lasted longer than any one else's, but even *she* was perhaps not altogether sorry when holidays were over and the boys were safely back at boarding-school. He teased the cats and the dogs and the chickens, teased the servants terribly with his mess and pranks; teased his bigger brother George, and more than all teased his good little sister Lizzie. "Lizababuff," she called herself, which was as near as her wee mouth could get to Elizabeth. George was something of a tease too, if the truth must be owned, only, beside Ned, people didn't notice him so much. Yet tease as they might, by hanging her dolls high out of reach in the walnut-tree, setting her dear black kitty afloat on the pond in a box, or laughing at her when she failed to catch little birds by putting salt on their tails, or any other way, and they had a great many, Lizzie never sulked; she forgave them directly, and wherever the boys played, in garden, orchard, or paddock, Lizzie's little fat face and white sun-bonnet could always be seen close by.

A very favorite place with the children was the paddock gate; here they would often swing for hours or amuse themselves by watching anything that might come along the road. Not much traffic passed that way, to be sure, but knowing every one in the village, they seemed to find enough to interest them.

"Here comes Tom Crippy with two baskets," cried Ned, as they all leaned over the gate one sunny afternoon,—an afternoon on which even Lizzie's sunny temper had almost given way, for both boys were in an especially teasing mood, and had brought tears very near her blue eyes more than once. "Don't they look heavy?" he went on. "My! He's got carrots and ripe apples in one. All ours are as hard as wood."

"Going to take them up to the house, Tom?"

"Not to yours, Master Ned," Tom answered, setting down his baskets and resting on a low wall. "This one is for you; but this one, with the apples, is for Mrs. Veale."

George looked at the baskets. "It is very hot, and you look tired right out," he said. "Suppose you leave Mrs. Veale's basket here while you take ours."

Tom Crippy agreed at once, and gladly made his way up to the house with his lightened load, Ned shouting after him, "I say, Tom, you may as well spare us an apple when you come back!"

"Wouldn't it be fun to hide his basket?" Ned went on; but, having offered to take care of it, both boys dismissed the idea as *mean*.

"Now for the apple," they said, when he returned.

In vain Tom protested, "I never promised it. It isn't mine to give! not even father's! Mrs. Veale has bought and paid for these apples."

George would have let him go after a bit; but Ned was somewhat greedy, and hankered after the apple, as well as after what he called a bit of *fun*.

"Well, it won't be more than a mouthful apiece," said Tom, at last. "Who'll have first bite?" and he took a ripe, red apple from the basket.

"I," cried Ned at once.

"Well!" said Tom, "I should have thought you would have let the little lady!"

He looked at George, who at once blinded Ned's eyes. Widely, eagerly, he opened his mouth, to close his teeth upon—a carrot.

People who tease can rarely stand being teased themselves. Frantic with rage, Ned struck out right and left, then dashing the basket over, trampled and smashed the delicious apples with his feet.

Well, the apples had to be paid for, and the boys had to be punished; even mother couldn't overlook such an afternoon's work as *this*.

The boys' pocket-money would be stopped till the two shillings were made up. Threepence a week each, and a month seemed long to look forward to. Gloomily they leaned over the gate in the evening. Patter, patter, nearer and nearer came little feet. "Lizababuff has opened her money-box, and here is sixpence for George and sixpence for Ned."

How they hugged the sun-bonnet! "Lizzie, you are a brick! But we won't take your money, nor tease you any more!"



## "DAISY."

Far in the Highlands of Scotland, nestling amid their rugged mountains lay a beautiful farm. Here one of our boys lived with the good old farmer for two or three years, to be taught sheep-farming. Every summer he came to see us; and one year, as we were staying at a country house, he brought us a dear little pet lamb, which he had carried on his shoulder for many a mile across the country. It was a poor little orphan, its mother having died; but Willie had brought her up on warm new milk, which the farmer had given him. We at once named her Daisy, she was so white and fluffy, just like a snowball; and twice a day we used to feed her with warm milk out of a bottle. She very quickly got tame, roaming about and following us in our walks. She knew Sunday quite well, and never attempted to go to church with us but once; when we were half way there who should come panting after us but Daisy, so she had to be taken home, and very sulkily lay down beside Hero, the watch-dog, perhaps for a little sympathy. Of course she grew into a very big lamb, and as we had to go back to town for the winter a farmer offered to take Daisy and put her amongst his own flock of sheep. Next summer when we returned the first thing we did was to go and see Daisy. The flock was feeding in a meadow, and as we opened the gate a sheep darted from among them, came straight to us, and bleating out her welcome, trotted home with us. She went back to live with the farmer, and died at a good old age.



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## CHARLIE'S WORD.

"Well, children, I'll let you go and have this picnic by yourselves if you'll give me your word that you'll behave just as you would do if I were with you. Will you promise?"

"Yes, Nurse, we do promise; and we'll keep our word," said Algy Parker, "won't we?" and he turned round to Charlie, Basil, and little Ivy, as if to ask them to confirm his words.

"Yes, we promise," they repeated eagerly, full of delight to think that they might actually picnic by themselves for a whole day.

"Don't leave the Home Fields, mind," said Nurse. "You can't come to much harm there, I should think; and I should be glad of a free day, so as to get the nurseries cleaned out before your mother comes to-morrow; so mind your promise, and take good care of little Miss Ivy."

In a very short time all was ready. Cook had packed a most tempting lunch of ham sandwiches, plum-cake, and gooseberry turnovers, and this was placed in a basket on Algy's mail-cart; and then off he started, and Charlie and Basil, with little Ivy between them, ran after him down the long avenue, laughing and singing as joyfully as young birds.

The Home Fields lay at the bottom of the avenue, and the children were no sooner in them than

Ivy gave a scream of delight. "The roses, Algy! The wild roses are out; oh, do pick me some!"

Ivy always got her own way with her brothers; and Algy obediently stopped, threw off his hat, pulled out his clasp-knife, and gathered a good bunch of the delicate blossoms for the little queen.

Charlie did not care for roses; he was better amused with the duck-pond, and began building a little pier for himself with some stones that lay near, much to the disgust of a pair of respectable old ducks, who considered the pond their private property, and very much resented Charlie's operations.

"Just listen to old Mrs. Quack preaching to me," cried Charlie, smiling to himself as he stood some little way in the pond. As he spoke, however, one of the stones of the pier slipped, and Charlie stumbled right into the water!

What of that?—it is a fine sunny day, and his boots will soon dry again, and he will not be a jot the worse.



Yes, quite true; but Nurse strictly forbade wet boots, and Charlie well knew that had she been there he would at once be sent back to the house to change them, and might think himself lucky if he escaped being put to bed as a punishment. Such things had happened before now in the Parker nursery; and Charlie recollected also there was no mother at home to-day to beg him off, as she often had done. But for all that Charlie's mind was made up; he had given his word to behave as if Nurse were by, and so he must go home.

"Perhaps she'll put you to bed," sobbed little Ivy.

"I can't help it," said Charlie sorrowfully. "I must keep my word."

So the poor boy trudged manfully back to the house to find his worst fears realized. Nurse was very busy and consequently cross; and on hearing Charlie's tale and seeing his boots, she sent him off to bed. "He'd be dry enough there," she averred.

Charlie knew there was no help for it, Nurse would be obeyed; so slowly and sorrowfully he began undressing, the large tears rolling down his cheeks, when the door opened and Mother stood there! She had come back sooner than was expected; and before Charlie quite realized all that was happening, Nurse had buttoned on his dry boots, and Mother and he were walking quickly towards the Home Fields. How the children did scream with delight when they found that Mother herself was going to picnic with them.

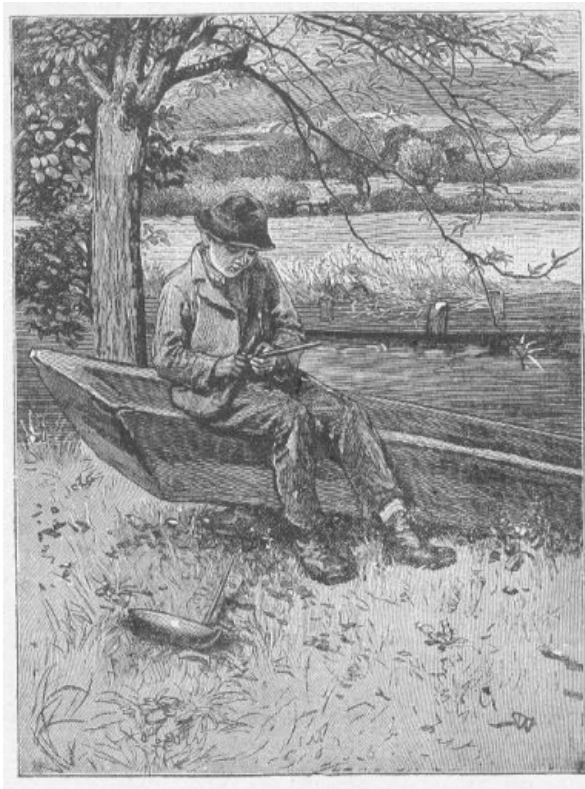
"You must thank Charlie that I am here," said Mother. "If he had not kept his promise to Nurse I should not have known where to find you;" and Mother looked fondly at her honest little boy.

"You see, I was obliged to," said Charlie simply: "I had given my word."

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## INDUSTRIOUS JACK.

Jack, the lock-keeper's son, does not idle away his time after his day's work is done. He is very fond of boat-making; and although he has only some rough pieces of wood and an old pocket-knife, he is quite clever in constructing tiny vessels. Perhaps, some day, he may become a master boat-builder. Perseverance and the wise employment of spare moments will work wonders.



## A VISIT TO NURSE.

It was indeed a treat for the four little Deverils when they received an invitation from old Nurse to spend the day at her cottage. She had lately married a gardener, and having no children of her own, she knew no greater pleasure than to entertain the little charges she had once nursed so faithfully. She always invited the children when the gooseberries were ripe, and each child had a special bush reserved for it by name; indeed, Nurse would have considered it "robbing the innocent" had any one else gathered so much as one berry off those bushes.

When they were tired of gooseberries, there was the swing under the apple-tree, and such a tea before they went home! The more buttered toast the children ate the better pleased was Nurse; and she brought plateful after plateful to the table, till even Sydney's appetite was appeased, and he felt the time had come for a little conversation.

"I'm going to be a sailor when I grow up, Nurse," he observed, "and I'll take you a-sail in my ship. Gerry says he'll be a schoolmaster; he wants to cane the boys, you know. Cyril has decided to be an omnibus conductor, and Baby," he concluded, pointing his finger at the only girl in the family, with a half-loving, half-contemptuous glance, "what *do* you think Baby says she'll do?"

Baby was just about to take a substantial bite out of her round of toast; but at Sydney's words she stopped halfway and said promptly, "Baby's going to take care of the poor soldiers."

Gerry, at the other end of the table, put down his mug with a satisfied gasp, and then burst out laughing, whilst Cyril raised his head and said solemnly, "The soldiers might shoot you, Baby."

Baby went on unconcernedly with her tea; and Sydney said loftily, "It's all nonsense, of course! She'll know better by and by. Children can't take care of soldiers, can they, Nurse?"

"Bless her heart!" said Nurse, as she softly stroked the fair little head, and placed a fresh plate of toast on the table.

"But can they, now?" persisted Sydney.



Nurse paused, then said slowly, "I did hear a story from an old soldier, and he certainly said it was a child who saved his life. It was in the Crimean War, and there had been a great battle, and he lay on the field, after all was over, with no one but the wounded and dead near him. He was very cold, and suffering fearfully from thirst, as people always do after gun-shot wounds, and he thought he would die there alone and uncared-for, when, in the moonlight, he saw a little drummer-boy picking his way amongst all the dead and dying, and gathering all the old gun-stocks that were lying about. When the lad had got enough, he set to work to make a fire, and then he boiled some water, and made tea, and brought some round to all the wounded men he could find. That hot tea was the saving of a good many lives, the soldier said; and the little lad was so cheery that the poor men plucked up heart, and felt that God had not forgotten them, as before they had been almost tempted to think."

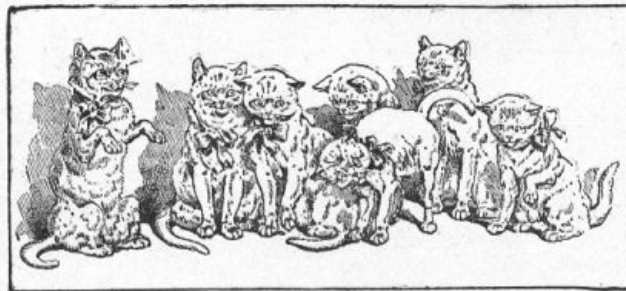
"That was a brave boy," said Sydney. "But still, you know, Nurse, Baby couldn't do that."

"Deary, no!" exclaimed Nurse. "But, you see, Master Sydney, if people are bent upon helping others, they'll find out ways for themselves, for there's plenty in need of help. I know a rough lad now who does his best to keep straight and please 'his lady,' as he calls his Sunday teacher. She writes to him sometimes, and he's as proud of those letters as if they came from the Queen."

"Yes, you might write letters, Baby," Sydney graciously allowed.

"And you can pray for the soldiers, dearie," said Nurse. "There's no knowing the good you may do them by that."

But the carriage now came for the children, and the visit to Nurse was over.





## A VISIT TO THE RABBITS.

Little Ann was eating her breakfast in the nursery, so she did not know anything about the new rabbits. She had not been well, so nurse did not wake her, but let her sleep on till Rose and Lucy had gone into the garden.

She dipped a piece of toast into the milk in her cup, then she looked up and said, "Where Rosy and Lucy, nurse?"

And nurse said, "They have gone to see the rabbits."

"Me go too," said Ann, pushing away her cup.

But nurse said, "Not yet," for Ann was not well enough "to go out of doors."

Now, whilst nurse and Ann were talking, Rose and Lucy had gone as fast as they could to see some new rabbits their father had bought. They had talked to the gardener about them, and had said,—

"We will bring something for them to eat, and they like milk to drink; they don't drink water, do they?"

"Oh, yes, they do, miss; it is quite a mistake to suppose they don't drink water. It is very cruel to keep them without it; I always put a good saucer of water in the pen, and they can drink it or not as they like."

Then John went away to his work, and Rose and Lucy felt they could scarcely wait till the next day to see the rabbits.

The next morning Rose and Lucy went off quite early after breakfast.

They had taken their baskets with some crusts of bread and some parsley, for they thought they should like to feed them.

They found John waiting for them, and he opened the door of the hutch.

"Are not they beauties, miss?" he said.

"Oh, the loves!" said Rose; "may I have one of them to nurse, John? I would not hurt it; I would be very gentle with it."

"Well," said John, "I don't like rabbits being handled too much, but you may hold one of them just for a minute or two till I come back."

And he lifted out one of the rabbits and placed it on Rose's lap.

She stroked it gently, and the rabbit did not seem afraid, but nibbled at a piece of parsley that she held for it. When she had nursed it for a short time, Lucy said that she also must have a turn.

After that John returned, and put the rabbit back into the hutch, where the little girls placed crusts for them to eat.

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## JIMMIE'S NIGHTMARE.

Jimmie and Daisy, and Baby Dot were all staying for their holidays at pleasant Sandown, in the Isle of Wight, and a fine time they were having. The mornings were spent in building castles and digging wells on the broad, yellow sands, and, when not *too* hot, the afternoons frequently passed in like manner; while in the cool sun-setting time after tea, their father always took them for a nice walk over the cliffs to Shanklin, or along the country lanes to Yaverland, or away to some lovely inland meadow where they could pick big white marguerites and golden buttercups as many as their hands could hold.

One morning Daisy was busily looking for nice pieces of seaweed and pretty little stones to ornament a grotto she and Jimmie had built, when she heard him calling, "Daisy! Daisy! *You* don't know what *I've* got!"

Of course she ran to look, and found Jimmie on his knees, watching with great interest the movements of a tiny crab, who seemed to have come out for a walk without his mother, and lost his way.

"Poor little thing!" said tender-hearted Daisy. "It doesn't like the hot sun. Let's put it in some cool, shady place, where the sea will come up to it."

"I'm going to take it home with me," answered Jimmie.

"What for? You haven't got a 'quarium."

"To play with, of course."

"Oh, Jimmie, it won't like that!" cried Daisy, in real anxiety. "It wants to be in the water. You

don't know how to feed it, or anything, and it'll die!"

"No, it won't. You're silly—you're only a girl, and you're *frightened* of it. *I* know!" said Jimmie scornfully.

"I'm not afraid of it one bit!" Daisy protested. "I'd pick it up with my fingers. But I'm sure it must be frightened of you. Oh, Jimmie, *do* let me put it in the sea again, there's a dear, good boy!"

Jimmie, however, lest he should lose his prize, caught it up in a twinkling, and stuffed it in his pocket. "You go there!" he said. "And if you nip, I'll pay you!"

Daisy's distress was evident, and tears were gathering in her blue eyes; for she knew that everything which has life has feeling too, and she could not bear to have even a baby crab made uncomfortable. But Jimmie, I am sorry to say, was not so tender over her, nor enough of a man to give up his own way in a little thing to make his sister happy. So, in spite of her entreaties, poor wee crabbie was condemned to durance vile in the hot and stifling pocket of Jimmie's knickerbockers, and Daisy had a sorry spot in her heart for the rest of the morning.

When the children went indoors they found that their favorite uncle had arrived from London, and was proposing an early dinner, and a trip to Carisbrooke. In the pleasant excitement which this caused, everything else was forgotten. Even when Jimmie's suit was changed, he never gave one thought to the captive crab.

Their excursion to the old castle proved delightful. Jimmie, who had only got as far as Richard II. in his history-book, and was not very fond of learning, became quite eager to get on fast, and come to the place where it told about King Charles and his imprisonment, and how he tried to get out of the tiny window shown them by the guide. Somebody remarked that "Liberty is sweet," and Jimmie remembered writing the very same in his copy-book; but it did not occur to him to consider that it is just as sweet in its way, to a little, sea-loving crablet as to a king.

It must have been the unusual state of excitement in which Jimmie went to bed that night that caused the events of the day to become oddly mixed up in a horrible dream. He thought *he* was a prisoner, not in a castle, but in the sand grotto which he and Daisy had been making in the morning, and that his jailor was a giant crab! A tiny hole in the side of the grotto, about two inches square, was his only way of escape, and unless he could manage to squeeze himself through that, he would be crushed to death by a pair of great claws as thick as a man's body. Nearer and nearer they came, harder and harder he struggled, and gurgled and gasped. No wonder that at last his cries aroused his mother in the next room, and that she came running to see what was the matter!



"Oh, that awful crab! Save me, save me! Oh—oh—oh!" yelled Jimmie, only half awake. And then to his increased horror he found that his dream was at least partly real, and that his own escaped prisoner was crawling briskly over his pillow in the evident hope of finding the ocean somewhere down on the other side. Having the creature come upon him like that when he least expected it, and immediately after such a dream, Jimmie fairly screamed with fright, and wouldn't lie down in bed again until Daisy, who had been awakened by the commotion from a lovely dream about the dear Carisbrooke donkey who works at the well, came and fetched the wandering crustacean away, and put it among a lot of damp seaweed in her tin pail, where it seemed very glad to stay.

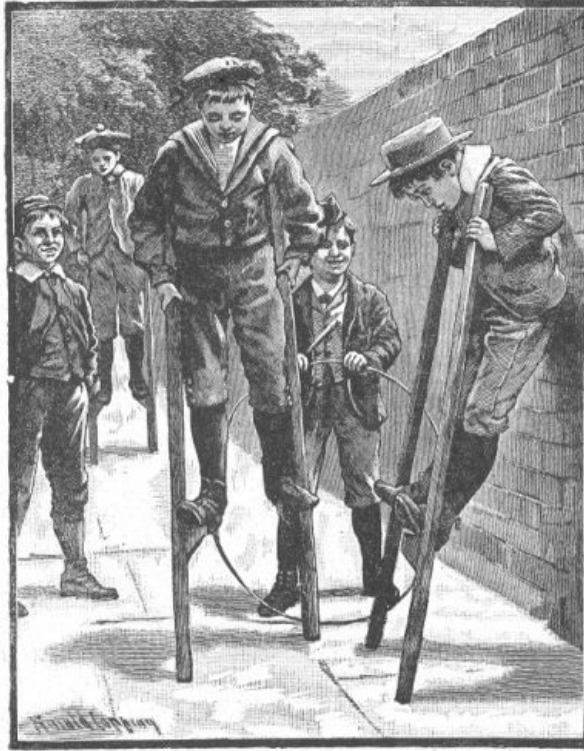
First thing in the morning, before breakfast, Jimmie carried the poor little creature down to the

shore, and left it at the edge of the waves. Moreover, he could not help thinking it very sweet of Daisy that she never once said, "Served you right," and he privately made up his mind that another time if she very much wanted him not to do a thing, he wouldn't do it.

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## ON STILTS.

Who are these giants walking in the street? Only Hal and his friends, Tom Miller and James Little. They have made stilts from pieces of wood they bought at the lumber-yard. Hal and James can walk very well on their new toys, but Tom is not so successful. He must lean against the wall, and the other boys laugh at him.



### A Song of the Wandering Wind.

Listen, Children! That's the breeze  
Speaking to you as he flees.

"I have no home; I rove I roam  
Hark! I'm passing through the trees"

"O'er the world from end to end,  
Light of wing, my way I wend.

Where'er I pass, the trees, the grass  
Bow their heads, and corn doth bend"

"Yet by land, or on the foam,  
I am still without a home;

I hear through all the imperious call  
'Wander, wander, rove and roam.'"

There he goes! His long sigh dies  
In the boughs as on he flies,

To rove, to roam, without a home,  
Underneath the starry skies.

F. W. Home.

# JUDGE JACKO AND THE CATS.

In the same barn dwelt two cats. One night they found the door of the neighboring pantry open and both walked in. They feasted on roast chicken and cream, but were not satisfied, and so they agreed to carry away a large piece of cheese. Their plan was executed, and they dragged the cheese to the barn. Next morning a dispute arose between them concerning the dividing of it. Each claimed it, and their voices awoke the cook, who, to her horror, found that she had been robbed during the night, and she declared that she would kill every cat in the neighborhood. Thus the innocent are often condemned because, in name or employment, they are associated with the bad. One is known by the company he keeps; hence, the society of the bad should be shunned.

The cats' quarrel in the barn was long and loud. Each one tried to argue his case in his own interest, and they thus drawled out their arguments.

"Know you the law?" said one, with a prolonged and emphatic howl at the word "law."

"I know the law!" howled the other, and then cried, "Neow, give me mine."

"'Tis mine!" howled the first.

"You lie!" drawled the other, and then asked in the same tone loud and emphatic:—

"Who made the law?" and the first replied in a prolonged undertone.

"Who broke the law?" he then asked, to which they both sharply replied, and clinched in a rough fight, screaming, "You an' I, you an' I! Spit! spit! Meow! meow!" and there was a roll and tumble, and scratch, and a howl, and the air was filled with dust and flying fur.

When their fight was over both were scratched and bruised and sore, and blood oozed from their wounded ears. Each felt ashamed of himself, and stole away and hid in the hay-mow, and spent the forenoon smoothing out his ruffled fur and dressing his aching wounds.

The next day they met again and decided to leave their case to Judge Jacko, a venerable monkey, who lived in the adjoining shed. Judge Jacko was an African by birth, but in early life he was stolen by a wicked sailor from the land of palms and cocoanuts and sold into slavery to a travelling showman, with whom he wandered over many countries and learned the manners and customs of the people. He was a careful observer of all he saw done, and hence he acquired a great amount of information. Those who would learn rapidly should be careful observers of all that goes on around them; knowledge obtained by observation is generally of more value than that obtained from books.

When Jacko had become advanced in years he was fortunate enough to have a permanent home with his master, who had also retired from the travelling show business. In his quiet home he had a chance to meditate on what he had learned, and he became so wise that everybody called him Judge Jacko.

When the cats presented their case, he put on his wig and spectacles as emblems of his judgship, and procured the pantry scales in which to weigh the cheese. They sat quietly down before him and anxiously awaited his decision.

He broke the cheese in two parts and placed a lump in each end of the scale.

"This lump outweighs the other," said he, "justice must be done. I will bite off enough to make them equal," and so he took the lump out and nibbled at it a long time, and when he put it in the scale the opposite end was the heavier; and he took out that lump and bit off a large piece to make it equal to the other. Thus he continued to eat, first one and then the other, till the cats saw but little would be left for them, and they cried: "Hold, hold! Give us our shares and we will be satisfied."



"If you are satisfied, justice is not," replied Judge Jacko. "I must make this division equal," and he kept on nibbling at the cheese.

"Give us what is left!" cried one of the cats, jumping up quickly, and earnestly looking the judge in the face.

"What is left belongs to me," replied the judge. "I must be paid for my services in this difficult case."

He then devoured the last piece, and said:—

"Justice is satisfied, and the court is dismissed."

The hungry cats went back to the barn wiser than when they came.

They had learned that ill-gotten gains are unprofitable, and that they should never employ the dishonest to adjust their difficulties. They also learned another lesson:—

"The scales of the law are seldom poised till little or nothing remains in either."



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## PICTURES IN THE FIRE

Have you noticed, little children,  
When the fire is burning low,  
As the embers flash and darken,  
How the pictures come and go?  
Strange the shapes, and strange the fancies,  
As beyond the bars you gaze,  
Bringing back some olden mem'ries,  
Thoughts of half-forgotten days!

There's the Church across the meadows,  
Shadow'd by the spreading yew;  
There's the quaintly-carven pulpit,  
And the olden oaken pew.  
Changed the scene, and on the ocean

Sails a ship amid the spray;  
'Tis the one you watch'd departing,  
When some lov'd-one went away!

Yes! and there are faces plenty,  
Faces dear, both old and young  
And they cause you to remember  
Words their lips oft said or sung.  
Fancy even brings the voices,  
Tho' they may be far away;  
Only pictures, only fancies,  
Yes! but very sweet are they!

Little Children, let me tell you  
Tis yourselves who shape the scene!  
In your minds a memory lingers,  
And it peeps the bars between!  
If you doubt me, choose a subject,  
Any one you may desire,  
And you will, by dint of looking,  
Find its picture in the fire!

E. Oxenford.

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## **HASTY CHARLIE.**

Charlie never could wait. It was no use telling him "more haste less speed," "slow and sure," or anything of that kind. You might as well talk to the winds. He scrambled up in the morning, scurried over the parts of his toilet that he was trusted to do for himself, hurried over his breakfast, rushed through his lessons, with many mistakes of course, and by his hasty, impatient behavior worried his quiet, gentle little sister Ethel nearly out of her wits, and almost drove patient Miss Smith, the governess, to despair. He burnt his mouth with hot food, because he couldn't wait for it to cool; fell down-stairs, racing down, times out of number; his toys were always getting broken because he couldn't stop to put them away; his canary flew away because he, fuming with impatience about something, neglected to fasten the cage door one day; and indeed space would fail to tell of all the troubles he brought upon himself by his perpetual, heedless haste.

There were some exceptions to this general state of things. He didn't hurry to begin his lessons, —nor to go to bed. Here he would wait as long as you liked to let him. One thing he was obliged to wait for, sorely against his will, and that was to grow up. It did take such a long time, and oh, the things he meant to do when once he was a man! Father hoped he would alter a great deal before that time came, for, as he told him, a hasty, impatient man makes other people unhappy and cannot be happy himself.

Charlie meant to have a balloon when he grew up, and a sweet-stuff shop, an elephant, a garden full of apples and plums, a tall black horse, and a donkey.

"You needn't wait so long for the donkey," Father said one day. "I have seen a boy with two nice donkeys in Pine-tree Walk; when you and Ethel have been good children at your lessons, Miss Smith shall let you ride them, and when you can ride nicely I will buy you each a donkey of your own."

Lessons certainly went better after this, and the rides were much enjoyed on every fine day, though timid little Ethel was always just a wee bit afraid at first starting. Miss Smith always safely mounted Ethel first.



"Wait a minute, Charlie!" she said one day, when he was pulling and tugging impatiently at Neddie's bridle, "we'll have you up directly."

But Charlie couldn't wait: he dragged the donkey into the road and scrambled upon its back.

"Charlie! Charlie! you mustn't start without us. Wait a minute!"

"I can ride by my own self now," he said; and jerking the bridle, off he went clattering down the road, the donkey-boy after him.

To mount a donkey is one thing, to manage him another, especially if you don't know how. On galloped Neddie, and after having knocked down a little girl and upset a barrow of fruit, he pitched Charlie over his head, and having thus got rid of his rider began to enjoy himself on the grass. Poor Charlie! He had such a bruised face that he was obliged to stay at home for days.

Miss Smith couldn't take him out like that. It hurt him very much, but it hurt him more when Father said that such a silly, impatient boy was not fit to be trusted to ride, and that he must wait a whole year before he could be allowed to mount a donkey again. "For your own sake, Charlie, and for other people's."

The little girl he had knocked down was more frightened than hurt; but Charlie was very sorry, for he was not at all an ill-natured boy; and when he was at home by himself, while Ethel went for her donkey-rides, he had plenty of time to think things over, and made a good use of it. At first he found it very hard to be patient, but after a little while he found it becoming much easier to wait, and every time he tried it became easier still.

Next summer, when Father gave him and Ethel the promised donkeys, he said, "I am proud to trust you now, Charlie, and hope that you will have some happy times with your Neddie."

And very happy times they had.

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## JOHNNIE'S DICTATION.

"There now, dear, run away, and make haste, or you'll be late to school, and that will never do."

Little Johnnie Strong obediently gathered his books together, and with an effort to keep back the tears that were filling his eyes, held up his face for a last kiss.

"Good-by, then, mother dear, and I'll try to be brave and remember what you've been saying. I'll just do the very best I can, and perhaps I shall be able to manage it after all."

"That's my brave little man, now; good-by, dearie." And Johnnie was gone.

Very often Mrs. Strong and Johnnie had little talks at breakfast-time about his troubles, and he used to say it helped him through the day to remember his mother's loving words. The conversation with which this story began was the end of one of these talks. It was getting near examination time, and Johnnie had been trying very hard to catch up with the other boys in his

spelling and writing. Sums he could manage now pretty well, and he read very fairly; but it seemed to him he should *never* be able to spell properly. "Thousands of words," he would say, despairingly, "and no two spelt alike." However, he went off to school very bravely, and his determination to do the best he could was a wonderful help.

He got on very well that morning until the time came for "dictation," and then poor Johnnie's troubles began. He knew there were boys in his class very little better at spelling than he, who copied from their neighbors whenever a word was given out that they could not spell; but Johnnie was above doing that. It was cheating and deceiving, and he would rather every word of his exercise were wrong than be a cheat. But that morning he was sorely tempted. He thought there had never been such a hard piece of dictation; and when Jimmy Lane, who sat next to him, tried to help him by whispering the letters of one very hard word, it required some courage to ask him to stop.

At the end of the lesson the boys had to pass their books up to the teacher for inspection, and Johnnie's worst fears were realized when his book came back with ever so many words marked in blue pencil.

While the teacher was finishing marking the exercises, the master's bell sounded, and the boys were dismissed for a few minutes' run in the playground; but Johnnie was obliged to stay behind to learn to spell correctly the words he had blundered over. Poor Johnnie! It was very hard for him to have to stay there, trying to fix in his mind the fact that "Receive" is spelt with the E before the I, and "Believe" with the I before the E, while every other boy of the school was outside, enjoying the games in which he delighted as much as any of them.

Not quite every other boy though. There was one other prisoner besides himself—Will Maynard, and he had to stay behind because he couldn't always remember to *pay back* when he *borrowed*! Not that he was by any means dishonest—it was only when he had a subtraction sum to do that he got into this difficulty!

Johnnie and he were not chums, but, somehow, when they had the whole school to themselves they couldn't sit on forms ten yards apart—it seemed so very unsociable and unfriendly. So Will brought his slate over to Johnnie, and they were soon busily discussing the difficulties of sums and spelling.

Although Will was a good deal the older, he was not nearly so clever at sums as Johnnie, and, moreover, he was not too proud to accept the help that Johnnie rather timidly offered. They soon settled the difference between the various rows of obstinate figures, and Will laid down his slate with a sigh of relief and a grateful "Thank you, Johnnie. Now," he continued, "let's have a go at your spelling."

By this time they began to feel quite warm friends—for it is wonderful how quickly a little mutual help creates feelings of friendship. Together they went over the mis-spelt words, and, with Will to help and encourage, Johnnie soon felt quite sure that the spelling of the particular words of that morning's exercise would never trouble him again.



They had scarcely finished their work when the big school-bell sounded, and the boys all came trooping in. Will had to go back to his place, but he left a very light-hearted little boy behind him, for Johnnie and he had vowed life-long friendship, and sums and spelling seemed to have lost all their terrors for both of them.



When Johnnie arrived home from school he could talk of nothing but Will Maynard, and Will, for his part, voted Johnnie "a jolly little chap." Many a time after that day did they help each other, and when it was reported after the examination that they had both passed, each declared he must have failed without the other's help.

They are firm friends still, and are likely to remain so; and whenever a difficulty occurs, in school or out, they always tackle it together; for, as Johnnie says, "A difficulty shared is only half a difficulty."



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### T'is not Fine Feathers that make Fine Birds

She was a lady with pins in her hair  
On a funny old Japanese fan.  
He was a proud bit of Chinese ware  
In the shape of a Mandarin man.

She sighed, when she saw him appear on the shelf,  
For she thought of her shabby old frock.  
She said "Oh! I know he will scorn an old fan,  
As he comes of a very proud stock."

The Mandarin sneered as he took a front place,  
But his pride had a fall when he found,  
That the fan was dispatched to a very grand show,  
For her beauty and age were renowned!

So we'll leave him alone on his shelf while he thinks,  
With a large diminution of pride,  
"It is not the feathers that make the fine bird,  
But the worth of the bird that's inside!"

Horatia Browne.

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## ELSIE'S FAULT.

Elsie Hayden would have been a charming little maiden but for her besetting fault—talebearing. She was always running in to tell her mother or governess the faults of the others. All day long it was, "Mamma, Rex took some currants," "Mamma, Minnie blotted her copy this morning," "Mamma, the boys have been quarrelling," or some other complaint concerning her companions. Before long Elsie was to go to school, and her mother knew what troubles lay before her if she persisted in looking out for moles in the eyes of others, and forgetting all about the beams in her own. She got Elsie to work a text in silks, "Speak not evil one of *another*," and she told the child that if we feel it is our duty to complain of somebody else, we should be very careful to speak only the *truth*, and in *love*.

One day Elsie came to her mother in great distress.

"Mamma," she sobbed, "they won't play with me; the others have all sent me to Coventry. They whisper 'tell-tale-tit' when I go near them; please make them play with me, mamma. It is so horrid to be left all alone."

"But Elsie," said Mrs. Hayden, "you have brought this trouble on yourself. When you play with the others you seem always on the lookout to find fault with them; how can you suppose they will enjoy a game with a little tale-bearer? Miss Clifford and nurse and I have kept an account of the tales you have carried to us, complaining of the others, and our lists added together make 352 complaints in one week!"

"Oh, mamma—I *haven't* been a tale-bearer 352 times in a week!"



"It is so indeed, my poor little Elsie. I am sadly afraid you will grow up a scandal-monger, one of those people who go from house to house spreading tales and making mischief. You must try hard, my darling, to cure this fault; remember your *own* failings, and let the faults of your playmates alone. Poor little Minnie came crying this morning to confess to me she had called you by an unkind name which I had forbidden; but she found you already complaining about her, and trying to get her punished. It was not kind or sisterly, Elsie! Let *love* rule that little tongue, and be silent when those impatient complaints come into your mind."

"I will try, mamma—I will indeed. Will you keep another list for *next* week, and see if I am any better?"

Mrs. Hayden promised to do so, and the result showed that Elsie had been a tale-bearer ten times only during the week. The child tried very hard to cure herself of fault-finding, and she was soon "out of Coventry," and as time went on nobody on seeing her sang the rhyme about "tell-tale-tit."



When icicles hang by the wall,  
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail  
And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
And milk comes frozen home in pail,  
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,  
Then nightly sings the staring owl  
To-who;  
Tu-whit, to-who, a merry note,  
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

"Shakespeare"

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## THE STOLEN CHERRIES.

Long ago I read a story of some boys who stole some cherries, and, try what they might, the cherry stones were always turning up and reminding them of their wickedness. It was a good thing for their consciences that they could not forget what they had done; it is a dreadful thing to do evil and then care nothing about it.



Do you know what is the best thing that can happen to you if you do wrong? To get found out. To conceal a sin is worse than you may suppose; confess to God and man, and pray for forgiveness. We get vexed with the little birds sometimes when they spoil our fruit; what do you think of Dick Raynor and Willie Abbot who robbed a poor widow's orchard, and took away the cherries that she would have sold to pay her rent? Day by day the little thieves had a feast in that orchard, and nobody guessed who stole the cherries; but there was One Who saw and knew all about the matter. The rent was not paid, and the widow was turned out of her cottage; Dick and Willie grew to be rich men by and by, and they could have paid her rent over and over again, but it was too late then—the aged woman had passed away.

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## MY SWEETHEART'S ILL TO-DAY.

My sweetheart's ill to-day,  
Her mates around her linger;  
She cannot go and play,  
A pin has pricked her finger!

A little ache, my dear,  
But not a scrap of sorrow;  
At worst, perhaps, a tear,  
And all forgot to-morrow.

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## MAUD'S NEW SKIPPING-ROPE.

"Books, books, books! I think you will turn into a book yourself some day, Phil."

"Wait till I have finished this chapter, Maud, and then I will go out with you."

"That is always what you say," said Maud: "just a chapter, just a page, and the time goes."

Philip turned over another page.



"Only two more, Maud. Do go. I shall read faster if you do not talk to me. And then I will come,

And you shall see with your eyes of blue  
What a nice surprise I have got for you."

Maud went away slowly, and when she had reached the door she turned to say,—

"Be quick, Philip."

And then she went and put on her garden hat and went into the garden, down the walk between the currant bushes to a piece of waste ground grown over with short grass, that she called her playground, for here she could run about, and jump, and skip, and hop, and try to walk upon stilts, and do all sorts of things; and the gardener did not find fault, as he did if she skipped in the garden walks, and knocked off a flower here and there.

"I wonder what the surprise is," said Maud, as she sat down on a bench to wait for Philip.

Before long she saw him coming along, holding his arms behind him. It was plain he had got something he did not want her to see.

As he came nearer to her, he called out—

"Three guesses, Maud. What have I got in my hand?"

"Oh, I don't know. Is it a parcel?"

"Yes, it is a brown paper parcel; but what is in it? That is one guess. Now guess again."

"Is it a wax doll with curly hair?"

"No, not quite so large as that."

"Not so large? then is it a small thing? I have lost my thimble, and I've broken my china cup, so perhaps you have brought me one. Stop, stop; I have not had my third guess yet. Let me see: I gave my skipping-rope to Sally Brown. Oh, Phil, is it a skipping-rope?"

Philip laughed.

"Yes," said he, "it is a skipping-rope with fine painted handles. It is the prettiest I could find in the shop."

And Philip opened the parcel.

"Oh, what a beauty!" said Maud; "it is far prettier than mine was. And what nice rope! Oh, Phil, how good of you!"

"Well, now let me see if you can skip with it," said Philip, giving it into her hands. And Maud began to skip.



"It is splendid," said she; "it almost skips of itself. I never skipped with such a skipping-rope before. It is the thing I wanted most, Philip. How came you to think of it?"

"Why," said Philip, "that was not very hard. You gave your rope to little Sally because she was a poor little girl, and her mother could not buy one for her. So I thought it was the best present I could give you, and the best surprise, and I took a walk into Linton to the toy-shop there, and though I saw all sorts of toys, I only asked for skipping-ropes, and I bought the prettiest that the shop-keeper had to sell. I am glad you like it."

"Yes, I like it very much. I could skip all day with it."

"Well, don't do that, for I want to have a hopping-race with you, and then we will try the new jump. Where is it?"

"It is just at the end of the playground, over hurdles. They are not very high, and I think I can jump over them. I know you can, and now that you are here I will try."

And Maud put her skipping-rope into the brown paper, and laid it on the bench.

"We will hop down to the hurdles, and then we will have a grand jumping-match," said Philip.





*"There's no compassion like a penny."*

"There's no compassion like a penny."

## AN EVENTFUL JOURNEY.

Patty was fifteen when she left home for the first time to pay a visit to her Aunt Martha in London. Patty's home was in the country (for her father was a farmer), so she was very eager to see all the wonders of London. Her father drove her into the market-town very early on the morning of her departure, and as it was a very busy day with him, he was obliged to leave her in the coach office all by herself, as the London coach was not expected to start for half an hour. Patty kissed her father with tears in her eyes, and he blessed her; and telling her to be a good girl and "not learn silly town ways," he strode off, whip in hand, towards the market-place, leaving Patty alone with her possessions.

They were not many—a leathern trunk that held all her wardrobe, a basket of flowers that hid a dozen of the largest and freshest eggs from her mother's poultry-yard, and last—to Patty's extreme annoyance—a doll that her mother had insisted on making and sending to little Betsy, Aunt Martha's youngest child. Patty herself had not long passed the age for loving dolls, and was, therefore, all the more sensitive on the subject; so when the coach came thundering into the yard, and she was called to take her place by a man who addressed her as "Little Missy," she was ready to shed tears of vexation. Patty had to remember her mother's words, to "take great care of the doll, as it had been a lot of trouble to make," otherwise she might have been tempted to leave it behind, or let it drop out of the coach window.



Windsor was passed after a time, then Staines, and as the twilight came on the coach was going at a good pace, with the last rays of sunset to the left behind it, and the dark stretch of Hounslow Heath, with its dismal gallows, in front. Suddenly the coach stopped, and was surrounded by three men on horseback, armed with pistols, their faces hidden behind black crape masks. The ladies screamed, the men turned pale and trembled, the guard made a faint show of resistance, but was at once overpowered; the driver looked on with apparent indifference while the coach was ransacked.

Patty had nothing worth taking—neither watch, jewels, nor money; but when asked by one of the men what she had, she held out the doll, almost hoping that he might take it, but he only laughed loudly. In a short time the coach was allowed to proceed on its way, Patty being the only traveller who had not been robbed.

Very glad was Patty to see her uncle's kind face when the coach stopped in London at the end of its journey, and great was the excitement when it became known that they had been attacked by the way. When Patty told the story of the highwaymen to her aunt, and how she had offered

them her doll, Aunt Martha gave a cry of horror.

"La, child; you were nearer the truth than you knew!" she said; and taking a pair of scissors, she cut the stitches that held together the rag body of the doll, and there fell out some golden guineas on the table, that the farmer had sent to his sister to pay for his Patty while she was in London.

Patty enjoyed her visit to London, and came home again quite safely, as did the doll, which Patty asked if she might keep in remembrance of that eventful journey.

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## BIRTHDAYS.

Laura had a birthday last week, and asked some children to have tea with her, and we went, but I don't think any of us enjoyed it one bit. Etty and I went, and our governess, Miss Ashton, went too; and we were very glad of that, for we like Miss Ashton, and she takes care of us, because Etta isn't very strong. Laura has no brothers or sisters, poor thing! so she doesn't know how to behave; and Miss Ashton tells us we ought to be sorry for her, and so we are, only she needn't be *quite* so disagreeable.



Laura was very grandly dressed. She had a new cream muslin hat on, and a frock with puffs and things on the sleeves, and all worked about in that pretty pattern Etty likes so much. Then she had on a pale-green sash, and thin bronze shoes, and white silk socks. You never saw anything so silly! We went with Miss Ashton and Miss Morris—that's Laura's governess—into a field and played games; but Laura was so disagreeable, she kept on saying, "But it's *my* birthday!" if any one else suggested a game, and she wouldn't think of anything nice herself.

At last Miss Morris suggested *Oranges and Lemons*, and Laura thought she'd like that; so we began to play, Miss Ashton and Miss Morris holding hands for the arch. But Laura didn't like me to hold her by her frock, and when I held her sash it came undone, and she was angry, and said I hit her with a little twig I had in my hand, but that wasn't true. So, as she was cross, we all sat down till it was tea-time, and after that we went away. Etty and I *were* glad to be home again.

I was telling mother all about it when we came home; for *my* birthday was yesterday, and *I* was to have a party too, and I didn't want Laura at my birthday party. Mother looked grave, and told me she wished Laura to be invited; and then I said—you see, I didn't think what I was saying—"But it's *my* birthday, mother!" Then I saw Etty looking at me, and felt so ashamed, because it was just like Laura, of whom I had been complaining. Mother wasn't angry: she only said she hoped I would set Laura a better example, and let her see that people should not be selfish, even on their birthdays.

Well, my party was yesterday. Etty and I *did* work hard, and we had lots of games, and took it in turns to choose them; but I forgot all about setting Laura a good example until everybody said good-by, and told us how much they had enjoyed it. Laura threw her arms round my neck when she said good-by. She didn't say anything else until she got outside the door, then she put in her head to tell us, "Next time you come to tea, Georgy, you and Etty shall choose *all* the games!"



## A MOTHER'S PROPHECY.

"Well, children, have you been good at school?" inquired their mother, as Lina and Marie ran gleefully up the path.

"Oh, so good!" promptly answered Marie, clapping her fat little hands as if to applaud her own virtue. "We danced in a ring till Dolly was so giddy I had to sit down."

"Poor Dolly!" said Mrs. Wolf.

"Oh! she'll be better soon," said Marie cheerfully. "She's lying back because she's faint—at least, she says so; but I do believe the real reason is she likes it better than being at the bottom of the bag."

"Very likely she does," said Mrs. Wolf, smiling at Marie's speech, for the little four-year-old girl quite believed her doll felt things as she did. Then turning to Lina, "And what have you done, my darling?"

Lina was seven years old, and could read and write nicely, and was in a higher form in the school than Marie, whose school-work was, very properly, mostly play.

"We did a new sort of lesson to-day, mother," said Lina. "See!" and she handed a book to her mother, who stooped down to be on a level with the little scholar.

"Open it at page forty-six, please, mother."

"Yes; here it is, but it is only a picture of a rabbit," said Mrs. Wolf.

"That is right," said Lina: "we all looked at that picture, and then we had to shut the book and write what we could about The Rabbit. And the little girl next me put, 'The rabbit moves his nose when he eats;' and that was all she wrote. We did so laugh when she had to read it out."

"A very short essay, certainly," said Mrs. Wolf, laughing also; "still, it is strictly true, and that is something. But what did my little Lina write?"

"I'll show you, mother," said Lina; and, with a deep blush on her face, she drew her slate carefully out of her bag. "The mistress was pleased with it, and told me I might show it to you."

Lina's slate had on it a really spirited little sketch of two rabbits, and Mrs. Wolf was both surprised and delighted.

"Did you do this, Lina?" she asked, as she drew the little artist to her.





"I couldn't think of anything to write," said Lina shyly; "I never can; so I drew the rabbits instead."

"My darling," said her mother earnestly, "if you work hard you might one day be a great artist—I feel sure of it."

Mrs. Wolf's words came true in after years. Lina is now a well-known painter, and honors not a few have fallen to her share.

But that day in the garden, when mother first prophesied that she would be an artist, is still the day that Lina loves most to recall. "It was mother's praise that made an artist of me," she always declares.



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## The Captain by F. Wyville Home.

### I.

I should like to be the captain of a great big ship,  
And to take her out a sailing for a long sea trip.  
I would visit all the islands of the hot south seas,  
And the white and shining regions where the ice-bergs freeze.

### II.

I would have a little cabin fitted up quite smart,  
With a swinging berth, a spyglass, and a deep sea chart,  
And beads to please the savages in isles far hence,  
And a parrot who can whistle tunes and talk good sense.

### III.

When a storm of wind arises, and the great waves swell,  
We will scud along the billows like a blown foam-bell,  
When 'tis glassy calm beneath a sky without one fleck,  
I'll play a game of skittles on the calm smooth deck.

### IV.

And if the crew should mutiny on some dark night,  
With my left I'd seize a cutlass and a pistol in my right,  
And I'd show them that their Captain has a right bold heart,  
And I'd make each man an officer that took my part.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## THE DOLL THAT TAUGHT A LESSON.

"Good-by, Annie dear; mind and take good care of Dorrie."

"Yes, mamma."

Ah! Annie, how easy it is to make a promise! A hearty kiss sealed it; then Mrs. Roby drove away in her carriage, and so our story begins.

Mamma gone out to spend the day, Annie left at home to take care of Dorrie, while nurse was cleaning the nurseries. Annie was six, Ralph, her brother, seven, Dorrie four, and the "funniest little puppet in all England," so Ralph said.

"Annie, I *do* *fink* Mab could walk almost by herself with these boots on," said Dorrie, she and Annie back in the dining-room, Dorrie busy with a family of three dolls, Annie deep in a new story-book.

The wee mamma had just contrived to put a pair of new boots, of Annie's manufacturing, on the by no means elegant feet of shock-headed Mab. Next came the suggestion from silver-tongued Dorrie, as Annie was silent—

"I *fink* Mab and Alice ought to go for a walk. Baby is just gone to sleep;" and the mite was laid carefully among the sofa cushions.

"Very well." Down went the book; with that promise just spoken, Annie could not well do other

than go this walk with her little sister, yet in a listless, half-hearted way.

"You take the one hand, I the other;" so prattled Dorrie. "Oh! see her feet!" and certainly Miss Mab did trip it out right nimbly down to the gate. How Dorrie laughed, watching her.

Just outside the gate they met Ralph.

"What are you laughing at, old lady?" he asked.

"Because Mab can almost walk by herself," she told him.

"Then she'll be running away one of these days," said the boy.

"Oh! she wouldn't—she wouldn't run away from me, because I love her so;" and Dorrie stooped and gave her a sounding kiss.

"You just wait and see," was Ralph's answer; then he went on, and the sisters pursued their walk.

Back again, then dinner for the children, a long sleep for the dollies, and next, the golden afternoon to be lived through and enjoyed.

"Annie!" cried Dorrie, coming down from the nursery, and peering in at the dining-room, where Annie was now reading with a will, deep in the wildest tragedy of the story, where a dog, a gypsy, and a certain Sophia were playing their parts in real story-book fashion. "Annie!" so silvery-tongued Dorrie spoke her name again.

"Well, what?" was the unladylike answer from Annie.

"I *fin*k the dollies want to go out in their mail-cart."

"Well, take them."

"But I want you to come."

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"Because I can't; run away."

"Must I go alone?" asked Dorrie sadly.

"Yes, of course you must." And she went.

Shock-headed Mab, Alice, and Daisy in the jaunting mail-cart, Dorrie drawing it, playing pony and careful mamma all in one; out at the gate, along the road to the copse; a river came running and babbling along by the road, as one neared the copse. Inside the copse the doves were cooing, squirrels leaping, the cuckoo crying, as the mite went along. What would send her back? Not her baby conscience, for Annie had told her to go all by herself—big, big Annie, ever so big.

At home, the afternoon wore away, tea-time came; nurse ran down from the nursery to the dining-room to fetch her two little charges. Only Annie was there, who started up from her book, like a girl awaking from sleep.

"Why, Miss Annie, I thought Dorrie was here!" cried nurse, in surprise.

"No, she—she"—Annie's conscience gave her such a prick.

"She what?" inquired nurse sharply.

"She took the dolls out in the mail-cart, and"—how Annie bowed her head as conscience whispered of that promise to her mamma broken; and her poor troubled heart also whispered, "What if something sad was going to happen?"

Well, they sought the child here, there, and everywhere, little dreaming what had happened, what was happening still. At last Ralph started off, by the way of the copse, to look for her. Annie hurried in another direction, and nurse in yet another.

Rover went with Ralph—good Rover, who could fetch, carry, and find so much. Oh, dear! what a seeking and searching love makes, when even one wee maiden is lost! Ay, lost—not a trace of her could Ralph and Rover find, till they came to the babbling river, and there, on the bank, lay a posy of lilies-of-the-valley, and a knot of ribbon from Dorrie's shoulder; the river babbled out the rest of the story. Poor Ralph! how he cried now!

"Dorrie! Dorrie!" he cried, peering down into the shining river, as if fearful of seeing a sun-bonnet and a gleaming of golden hair in its depths. But no; he saw nothing, only the minnows, the water-spiders, and the pebbles.

"Lost! Rover, find!" said he to the dog, showing him Dorrie's shoulder-knot and the flowers.

Rover seemed to understand, for he sniffed at the ground, and then bounded into the river, diving down, and no doubt frightening the fishes as much as he did Ralph. Presently he came out, bringing—ah! what? Mab, dripping, water-bedabbled—a pitiful object indeed. The boy took her in his hand, too alarmed to laugh, though fright and fun almost choked him; then the dog bounded and led the way into the copse, where the doves still cooed, the squirrels leaped, and the cuckoo cried, as if no small maiden was lost, perhaps never to be found again alive. The thought made Ralph shiver.



The river flowed through one corner of the copse; he could see it shining where the sunbeams fell through the tree branches. But Rover did not go that way: he dived away among the trees and undergrowth.

"Dorrie! Dorrie!" cried the little brother.

"Wow-wow-wow!" barked Rover, but at first no response.

Presently, "Wow-wow-wow!" barked Rover again; it was a joyful bark, and Ralph ran to him. There lay poor tired Dorrie fast asleep, the two remaining dolls in the mail-cart smiling and staring at her. But Rover woke her with a pat, Ralph hugged her with such a fond hug; then they started homeward, Ralph taking the mail-cart, with poor wet Mab mounted in disgrace behind, Dorrie clinging to his other hand. They reached home in time to go in with mamma, returned from her visit.

"I left my dollies to go into the copse to pick some flowers, and when I came back Mab had run away; then I went into the copse to find her, and couldn't; then I cried and went to sleep, and Rover found me." This was Dorrie's story of herself.

"I will never, never, never break a promise again, mamma!" said penitent Annie.

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## **ROSIE'S DISAPPOINTMENT.**

It *was* a disappointment! Mother looked gravely at the clouds, Nurse shook her head, and Father said it would never do for Rosie, who was not strong, to go to a picnic if the weather was doubtful.

And it was more than doubtful; for a sharp shower made the grass and the trees and the flowers look all the more beautiful to the poor child, who was longing for a day in the woods.

"Mother, I believe it will clear up later," she said, looking at the sky.

"I couldn't let you go, Rosie, for the grass would be wet."

"But I could sit on a rug."

"You couldn't walk on a rug, and the grass and underwood will be damp. I am very sorry, Rosie, and it is a great disappointment; but, indeed, it can't be helped." And Mrs. Seymour stooped to kiss her little girl.

At that moment a servant came to say that Miss Peters was in the drawing-room.

Miss Peters was a very rich lady, who lived all alone in a beautiful house about two miles away, and she had come to lend Mrs. Seymour some books, and ask her if she would go for a drive with her on the following day. Mrs. Seymour said she would be quite ready at the appointed time; and when they spoke of the weather she told her friend what a disappointment the rain had been to poor Rosie.

"Won't you let me take her home, Mrs. Seymour?" said Miss Peters. "I have the carriage here, and we could wrap her up in rugs; and I will bring her home this afternoon myself. Let me have her; I shall enjoy it; and there will be an end to your difficulties."

Mrs. Seymour was very glad, but wondered if Rosie would like it, as she was rather shy; but the little girl saw that it was the only arrangement by which her brothers could have all their fun, so she went with Miss Peters. She was a very grave little visitor, but Miss Peters was so kind that Rosie could not be shy for long; and then there was so much, so *very* much, to see! The house was like a museum, the conservatory a fairyland, and the garden a paradise of loveliness.



The showers all passed away, and Rosie could run about on the terraces, where there were so many flowers that Miss Peters told her she might pick what she liked, and Rosie made a very pretty bunch to take home, which pleased her; and pleasanter still was Miss Peters's kiss as she said, looking at the modest little nosegay, "I am glad to see that you are not greedy, Rosie."

"Oh, that would be horrid when you are so kind!" said Rosie.

But what Rosie enjoyed most of all was that Miss Peters came out with her, and, calling Jacob, the old gardener, she went down to the lake and told him to get the boat ready, and then they went for a delightful row on the clear water. Rosie *was* happy then; she did not want Miss Peters to talk to her, and was very glad that the lady had brought a book, though she did not read much of it, for she was steering.

The only time Rosie did speak was when the great swan went gliding by, and, lifting his wings, began to hiss at the boat in a rather alarming manner. Then Rosie did touch Miss Peters's arm, asking, "Will he hurt us?"

"No, dear; but we will not go very near that bank, as he has a nest there, and might be angry if he thought we were going to disturb the hen, who is sitting." And Miss Peters steered away from that end of the lake.

Altogether Rosie passed a very happy day, and Miss Peters was so pleased with her that when, after they had had tea together in the delightful room that opened into the conservatory, she brought the child home, she kissed her, saying, "Remember, Rosie, you must come and see me again. I hope you have not been *very* unhappy at not being at the picnic!"

Rosie laughed and shook her head.

"I don't think I have been sorry at all," she said; "I have been very happy all the time, and I forgot about being disappointed."



## A PICNIC OF SEVEN.

We are the Smiths, and there are four of us, and next door to us live the Browns, and there are three of them, so we are seven, and we are great friends. We liked being seven better than

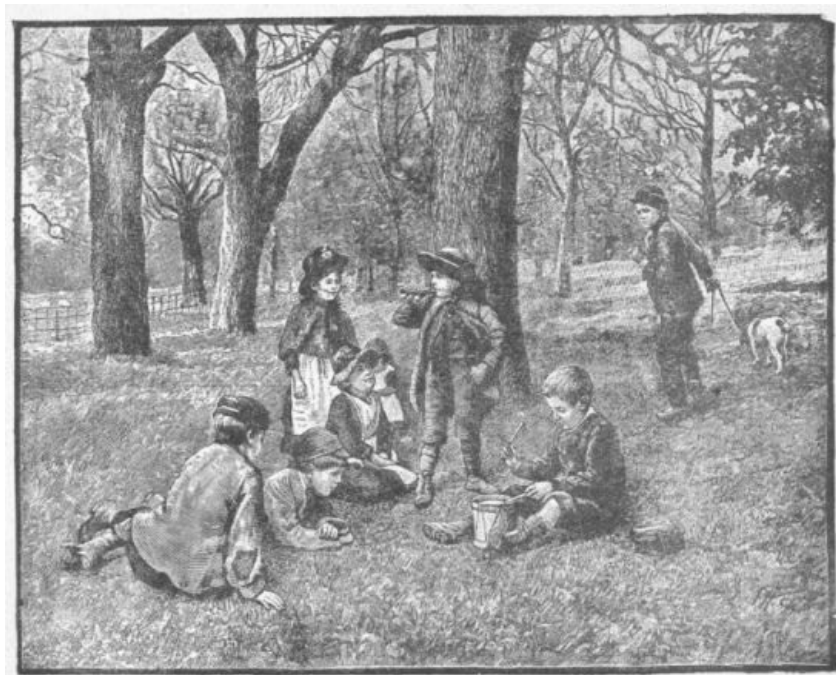
being eight, because it's like the poem; and I think that was why we never would let Jim Batson join our party. He and his dog Pincher were always wanting to make friends with us; but we told him there were enough of us without him, and then he would go away, but only to come back another day and try again.

When the spring weather came this year we made a delightful plan with the Browns that on Saturday we would go into the park, which was a mile off, and have games under the trees. When Saturday came it was a lovely day; so soon after breakfast we started out, all seven of us, with our dinners in our pockets. Willie Brown had the drum, and I had the trumpet, and a fine noise we made, almost frightening our little Sissy, who had to come because Mother was busy, and Bessie was minding Sissy, and we couldn't have any fun without Bessie. Charlie put on an old ragged coat, because Mother says he destroys everything; but Arthur and Patty Brown looked very nice, and we made Patty the queen, and we were her band playing to her.

Then all at once Jim Batson came out from among the trees with his dog (who was held by a string because of the game), and when we saw them we all shouted at Jim to go away. Bessie *did* ask me if it didn't seem unkind; but we wouldn't listen to her and sent him away, telling him not to sneak about near us. So he went off without a word.

We weren't very happy after that, for Arthur turned cross, and wouldn't speak to any one; but the worst of all was when Willie dropped one of the drumsticks into the river as we were crossing the plank. The river is very deep in parts, and none of us could swim, so we could only follow the stick as it floated along, and hope that it might catch in some weeds in a shallow part. But as we ran by the river we came on Jim and Pincher. Jim was sitting by the bank with his face hidden in his hands, and Pincher was just kissing him as hard as he could. Jim jumped up and began to move away when he saw us, but stopped to ask what was the matter when he saw Willie's face. As soon as he knew what it was, he took the string off Pincher's neck, and throwing a stone at the stick called, "Hie, Pincher! fetch it out!"

We *did* feel uncomfortable as we saw Pincher bring the drumstick to shore quite safely, but Bessie helped us out splendidly. She held out her hand to Jim, and said, "Thank you so much; we're all very sorry for being so unkind. Please don't make us *more* sorry by going away now."



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## ELSIE'S PARTY.

Yes, it was a very nice party! There were cakes, and games, and sweets, and crackers—crackers with caps in them! And little Elsie enjoyed it all, and felt very grand in her embroidered muslin frock, with a yellow paper cap out of one of the said crackers perched on the top of her curly brown head. If only Alfie had been there to enjoy it all with her!

Alfie was her twin brother, and they always did everything together. But to-day poor Alfie must

stop at home: he is ill, very ill, with "inflammation of the *tongue*," Elsie says, but the doctor calls it "lungs." Anyway, there is nothing the matter with Elsie's tongue; it wags fast enough, and she tells everybody about Alfie, and how ill he is. "But he is better to-day, and I shall bring him my 'tracker.'"

Elsie goes home quite laden with "trackers" and toys for Alfie, and is far more pleased with these than with anything for herself.

But when she gets home a disappointment awaits her. Alfie is asleep, fast asleep, and must on no account be disturbed, for sleep is his best medicine.

"But I want so to give him these things," and Elsie clasps tightly her armful of treasures.

"You shall give them him to-morrow," Mother promises, and Elsie has to be content.

When to-morrow dawns, Elsie can hardly wait to be dressed, so anxious is she to go to Alfie and present the soldier doll and the rest of the things.

Nurse is so slow this morning, Elsie really cannot wait; and whilst Nurse turns to the drawer to pull out her clean frock, Elsie toddles quickly out of the nursery, and runs to Alfie's room. She can hardly reach the door, but manages somehow to stand on tip-toe and turn the handle.

"There, Alfie! See!" she cries gayly, as she runs up to his cot. "All these are for you!"

Alfie is better, and quite able to enjoy his presents, which are spread out on his white quilt, and Elsie stands by, quite satisfied with his pleasure.

"What have *you* got?" he asks at last, as, somewhat tired, he leans back on his pillows.

"Nothing," says Elsie promptly, "'cause I have the fun of giving, you know."

A simple answer, but one in which a great truth is hidden.

Are there not, in these hard times, some children who might learn the "fun," or rather the blessing, of giving?



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## Eastern Travel.

On we file in a winding Caravan,  
Caravan made of children and chairs.  
Bold Arabs are we,  
Adventurers free,  
The chairs are our Camels: dried figs are our wares.

Over the hot desert sands we are travelling,  
Travelling on to Cairo gates.  
Rugs gathered in lumps  
Give our Camels their humps,  
And our supper is made of a few dried dates.

Springly must we drink of the waterskin,  
Waterskin made of a nursery jug.  
For the water must last  
Till the desert is past  
We must measure it out in the doll's little mug.

Here's the Simoom, with the blast of a hurricane,  
Hurricane whirling the sand in drifts.  
We must lie down beside  
Our Camels, and hide  
Till the storm blows past, and the darkness lifts.

Look! Yonder afar are Cairo's Minarets,  
Minarets glittering gold in the sun.  
A few leagues more  
And our travels are o'er,

And the journey of Camel and rider is done.

F. W. Home.

[LINK TO FIRST ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

[LINK TO SECOND ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## **TEDDIE, THE HELPER.**

"I'll give you two sovereigns for the five. It's a good price, but I mean it."

"I've told you I can't part with them," was Teddie Braham's reply to this offer of his schoolfellow, Gerald Keith, to buy his pet rabbits. "What, sell little Stripe, and Pickles, and old Brownie, and Spot, and Longears! I should be very badly off before I should do such a thing."

"Perhaps you think I haven't got the money. See for yourself," and Gerald displayed three glittering sovereigns.

"Are they all yours?" Teddie asked in amazement.

"Yes. It was my birthday yesterday; mother and father each gave me one, and Uncle Dick the other. You've only to say the word and two of them are yours. You have such a lot of pets, you won't miss your rabbits."

But Teddie was not to be tempted. He shook his head, smiling a little scornfully. Almost instantly, however, the smile changed into a look of alarm. One of the coins slipped from its owner's hand, rolled along the pathway, and before either of the boys could stop it, fell down the grating of a drain. For a moment Gerald, too, looked pale; then he broke into a laugh.

"It can't be helped," he said, "and there's plenty more where that came from. The worst of it is, mother told me not to carry the money about with me; but she'll give me another sovereign quick enough if I ask her. My father, you know, is one of the richest men about here."

He said it boastingly, and Teddy, having left his schoolfellow where the road branched off to their respective homes, went on his way, on that sunshiny June afternoon, thinking, rather seriously, how pleasant it must be to be as rich as Gerald. True, he had a great deal to make him happy; but, though comfortably off, his parents were not rich, and Teddie's mind dwelt longingly on the pony, the beautiful little tricycle, and handsome gold watch, of which Gerald was the proud possessor.

On reaching home, Teddie went straight to the drawing-room to find his mother. But a visitor was with her, and he had to wait before he could ask her to put on her hat and go out in the garden with him. He took up a book and sat down quietly. In a few minutes, however, his attention was caught by the conversation between the two ladies.

Mrs. Taylor, the visitor, told a sad story of a working-man, who, in consequence of an accident, had been unable to earn a penny for several weeks. His wife was also in bad health, and she and her seven young children were in great distress. Mrs. Taylor was trying to collect some money to relieve the poor woman till her husband was again able to work, and she asked Mrs. Braham for a subscription. To Teddy's surprise, she answered,—

"I am sorry that I cannot help you in the matter."

"But the smallest sum will be acceptable," said Mrs. Taylor; "five shillings, or even half-a-crown."

"I cannot even give you half-a-crown," and Teddy's quick ears heard his mother's voice falter as she said the words.

"Then," said Mrs. Taylor coldly, "I suppose it is no good to ask you to give your usual yearly donation towards the summer treat for the Sunday-school children?"

"It pains me to refuse you, but I must."

An uncomfortable silence followed. Mrs. Taylor rose to go, but Mrs. Braham motioned her to resume her seat.

"This must seem so strange to you," she said, "that I feel I must explain. My husband has had a sudden and very serious loss. He is now a comparatively poor man, and it would not be right for me to give, as I have hitherto been pleased and thankful to do."

Teddy could not bear to see tears in his mother's eyes. He went and stood by her side while Mrs. Taylor expressed her sympathy, and also her sorrow at having wounded Mrs. Braham's feelings. But Mrs. Braham said, with a smile, that no apology was needed; and then, having seen her visitor to the hall-door, she returned to the drawing-room, and took Teddie on her knee. He was eleven years old, but that was still his favorite seat. Very gently she put back the hair from his forehead and kissed him, and then suddenly she bent her head and burst into a fit of weeping. Wise Teddie only pressed his arms more closely round her neck, and said nothing till the tears

began to stop. Then he whispered,—

"Won't you tell me all about it, mother?"

"Dear, this is the first real trouble you have known," she answered, "and I am so sorry that your young, happy life should be clouded. If we could keep the knowledge from you we would, but that is impossible."

Then she told him how his father had become surety for a friend, and explained that this meant a promise to pay a certain sum of money in place of the friend, if that friend should find himself unable to pay it. Mr. Braham had made a promise to pay a large amount on this condition, and it had fallen on him to fulfil his word.

"Is father *quite* poor now?" Teddie asked; "as poor as the people who live in the cottages in the lane?"

"No, dear; but we shall have to be very careful. I shall send Mary away and keep only one servant. In order to remain in the house we must let some of our rooms, and this year, at any rate, there will be no holiday for us at the seaside."

"I don't mind it for myself, mother," said Teddie lovingly, "I only mind it for you."

"But, darling, do you think you know what it means?" she asked. "No presents, no treats, very few pleasures of any kind. Can you meet all this patiently and bravely? If you do you will carry out Christ's command: 'Bear ye one another's burdens,' for you will be helping your father and me to bear *our* burden."

"I will try;" and though when Teddie raised his head from its resting-place his eyes were wet, his face still wore a look of brave resolve.



It was a promise which he at once began to carry out in deed. It would be hard to part with his rabbits, hard to go to Gerald and say he would accept his offer after the somewhat scornful way in which he had before refused it. But he did not know *how* much the sacrifice would cost until he opened the hutch, and out came the little animals for their evening meal. He took Stripe in his arms, and Brownie put her front paws on his knee, as if jealous of the caresses Stripe was getting. He felt he could not let them go. But the feeling only lasted a few minutes, and he hadn't a single regret when next day he placed two sovereigns in his mother's hand.

She could only kiss him and thank him. Not on any account would she have told him that had she known his intention she should not have allowed him to carry it out.

I am glad to say that in a few years Mr. Braham fully regained the money he had lost. But in better circumstances Teddie did not cease those loving acts of kindness and unselfishness which he tried so hard to practise for his mother and father's sake in their time of difficulty, and he still finds ways and means in which to obey that "law" of Christ: "Bear ye one another's burdens."





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## OUR BOAT.

Ferdy and I quarrel sometimes, but not always. We don't like quarrelling, and yet somehow we can't help it; and Ferdy *will* want everything his own way because he is the elder, and that isn't fair. I ought to have my way sometimes, I think.



Mother gave us a boat not long ago—a beautiful boat, with a sail and a dingy and everything complete, and it was to be between us. So we took off our shoes and stockings and went down by the quay to sail our boat. It sailed as nicely as any boat could, and we were so pleased with it, but in spite of that we began to quarrel. You see, Ferdy wanted to call the boat the "Amy," after Amy Stevens, a little girl we have met on the beach this summer. Ferdy thinks her as pretty as a fairy, but I don't, though she's very jolly sometimes, and can play at anything. Well, Ferdy *would* have the boat called "Amy," and I wanted it to be "Isabel," after mother, because she gave us the boat, and we love her better than any one else in the world. And then we quarrelled. I suppose we made a noise—quarrelling people generally do—for suddenly we found that Amy was watching and listening, and then Ferdy turned very red and did not say anything for some minutes.

"Look here, Alf," he said at last; "I'll give you my share of the boat, and then you shall call it what you like."

"Oh, no!" I said, "you must have half—and so you shall, for if you give me your share I'll give you mine."

So we settled it very nicely in that way, and called the boat "Isabel Amy;" and all the afternoon Amy Stevens played that she was the captain and we were the sailors.

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## "BLIND TOMMY."

What a funny name for a dog! But I will tell you how he happened to get it. Blind Charlie was his master, and he was the happiest old man I ever knew.

Charlie used to sit reading the blind people's Bible, beside a sheltering wall, at the Royal Academy in Edinburgh, Blind Tommy, with his little pitcher in his mouth, begging for pennies. I got to know them so well that, every time I passed, Charlie allowed the dog to put his pitcher

down, while I fed him with a biscuit or bun. I made him a nice warm coat, too, for the cold days.

One day I missed them both, and I went at once to Charlie's lodgings. Here I found that on his way home one dark night, Charlie had been knocked down by a carriage, and had his leg broken. He had been carried home, and the neighbors had been very kind and had got him a doctor. "But, oh, ma'am," he said, "there's no nurse like Tommy! He sits close beside me, and seems to know everything I want. If I am thirsty, I say, 'Tommy, some water,' and off he goes with his little pitcher to the bucket, fills it, and carries it so carefully back to me."



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## THE GHOST IN THE GARDEN.

Harry Peters had to cross the common one evening in the dark, and, though his father had sent him to post a letter, he could not get on, for he saw a ghost, as he fancied, in the garden near the lane, and his hair stood almost on end. There it was, rising white and spectral before him with outstretched, slowly moving arms. Harry uttered a piercing shriek, for the boys at school had told him some dreadful ghost stories, and he quite expected to be carried off by those ghostly beckoning arms. His father was very vexed that he had lost the post, and would not believe he had seen a ghost.



"There are no such things," he said; "light the lantern and we'll drive your ghost away. Some silly boy has been frightening you."

Harry's big brother declared he would pay the boy out for shamming ghosthood, and so the three went together, followed by the dog, barking loudly.

And what do you think Harry's ghost turned out to be? The white shirt belonging to the cobbler, which his wife had hung up to dry in their back garden.

Harry has left off believing in ghosts now; and if ever he sees one again, he intends to go right up to it, and find out all about it, instead of running away.



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## Artless Anglers

### I.

Three little trots made up their minds  
That they would fishing go,  
For there were fish within the brook,  
Their brothers told them so.  
Some pins and thread and withes they took,  
Likewise a lump of dough.

### II.

The eldest of these little trots  
Was seven if a day,  
And deem'd herself a trusty guide  
Because she knew the way  
That led down to the waterside,  
Where fish for catching lay!

### III.

Each quickly into proper shape  
Bent up the fatal pin,  
And tied it carefully with thread  
Upon a withy thin.  
Then little Bell the eldest said:  
"We're ready to begin!"

### IV.

They cast their lines into the brook,  
And watch'd with careful eyes  
In case some finny feeder might  
Be taken by surprise,  
And tempted be to have a bite,  
Not being otherwise!

### V.

For hours they sat, but sport had none,  
Yet ceas'd not watch to keep;  
Then little Bell remark'd I think  
They must be all asleep!  
Their hopes at last began to sink,  
The eldest wish'd to weep!

VI.

Still on they sat most patiently,  
Scarce murm'ring at their fate,  
When all at once cried little Bell,  
"Stupidity I hate!  
I see the reason very well,  
We quite forgot the bait!"

VII.

Too true! the dough lay there untouch'd  
Among the grass and mould;  
And now 'twas time they home should go,  
As chimes distinctly told;  
Moreover rain came on, and so  
They only caught a cold!

E. Oxenford.

[LINK TO FIRST ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

[LINK TO SECOND ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## **A WALK IN COLOMBO.**

Colombo, as most of my readers will remember, is in Ceylon, that beautiful island lying to the south of India.

You would think the people very funny, seeing them for the first time. The man in the picture, who is walking with the little English girl, is a Hindu, and probably you have often seen pictures like him. Nearly all the servants and laborers in Colombo are Hindus from Madras, but the natives of the island are called Cingalese, and are very different in every way.

The men wear their hair in a big knob at the back like a woman, and on the top of that is fastened a comb, shaped like a half-circle, with the ends pointed to the face. The whole costume is a mixture of native and English fashions. The usual hat is a little round felt one, such as you may see any day on boys at home, and which you have perhaps yourself. The next garment is also what you might expect to see on a man; that is, a cloth coat, or rather shooting-jacket; but after that comes a long flowing skirt, which you certainly would not see on any man or boy at home. The Cingalese men bestow a good deal of attention on this skirt. Poorer people have it made in white or blue calico, but others use very handsome India stuffs, which must have cost a lot of money.

The heat in Colombo is very great, and the roads are very dusty. No wonder the people often feel hot and tired, and are very glad to lie down and take a little sleep when they can. They also cool themselves by standing in some pools near the town. The cattle do the same, and you can just see the heads of the buffaloes and of the men above the level of the water. They stand that way for an hour or two, perfectly still; but the little children who go in keep jumping about and splashing each other.



You may see in this picture the fruit shops in the native quarter of the town, and bunches of bananas or plantains hanging up. Other shops sell grain, which the people chiefly live upon. It is nothing unusual to see the grain merchant lying fast asleep on the top of his store of rice or other grain. Outside many houses stands a wooden bedstead, and the old people lie there asleep a great part of the day. The Cingalese are said to be very kind to old people, which is a very good trait in their character. I wish they were a little kinder to their animals, but they never seem to think that poor bullocks have any feeling at all. The carts in Colombo are drawn by bullocks, and they have a very hard time of it. The rope used as reins is passed through a hole bored through their nostrils, and a heavy beam of wood rests on their backs. Worse still, they are branded all over, not only with the owner's initials, but with all sorts of fanciful ornamental figures; the cruel people who do this never caring what the unfortunate animals suffer while it is being done. The houses are often painted outside with animals and birds in the brightest colors; and some of these wall pictures are so absurd that strangers always stop to look and laugh at them.



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## A Donkey Ride

"Ho! 'Hamed! *dear* 'Hamed, you *will* let me ride Prince Albert Victor, won't you?"

The speaker was a little, brown, black-eyed boy, with dark tangled locks under his old red fez, and clad in a dirty white cotton garment, who was coaxing a tall Egyptian lad in a very irresistible way. Children coax much the same all the world over, to get their way, be they white or black or brown. In this case little Hassan got his. And what was it he wanted?

'Hamed, an Egyptian donkey-boy, was leaving home early in the morning as usual, leaving his dim, dirty quarters in the native part of Cairo for the European part of the city. And with him, as usual, was going Prince Albert Victor.

Prince Albert Victor was only a donkey, a very nice, strong, well-fed Egyptian donkey, but nothing more, in spite of his grand name. But all the Cairo donkeys which stand about the streets for hire have very grand names given to them by their owners to attract the European tourists. For instance, some boy will call his donkey by an American name—such as Washington, or Yankee-doodle—that the American travellers may fancy him. Another, with a view to a Frenchman or an Englishman, will christen his animal President Carnot or Lord Salisbury. 'Hamed had called his Prince Albert Victor; for he found a royal name very popular, not only with English travellers, but with the red-coated British soldiers who pervade the streets of Cairo.

Now, little Hassan wanted, as usual, to ride Albert Victor down from his home to his habitual waiting-place in front of one of the big hotels. It was such a delight to him to thrust his bare brown feet into the stirrup-leathers (his legs were too short to reach the stirrups), and, clutching Albert Victor's bridle, and sitting very erect, to fancy himself very grand indeed as they slowly passed down the dim alleys of their native town.

It was a glorious day, such a blue sky, such a bright sun, so different from winter in our dull, foggy England, that little Elfreda felt very happy as she looked out of the hotel window on such new and strange sights.

"It seems like stories out of the Bible, mother," she cried, gazing at the Eastern dresses, the queer-looking figures, the donkeys, and the camels. For Elfreda and her mother had only lately come to Cairo for the winter, for the mother's health, and everything was still wonderful to her.

"Where shall we go to-day?" she added. "To the mosques, or through the bazaars, or out a long way into the country by the river? Quick, mother; let me call some donkey-boys, and let's be off."

"There's that little tiny boy just ridden up, he who comes every morning with the big one! I *must* have his donkey again!"

And Elfreda clapped her hands, and cried, "'Hamed!"

There were fifty 'Hameds, donkey-boys (it is a very common name). But though several came up, they all knew that it was our friend who was called.

"See," said little Hassan (he had jumped off Albert Victor and stood behind him), "there is the same 'zit'" (English lady) "clapping again, she who hired you yesterday and the day before; and with her the little 'zit' with the long hair. Hurry, 'Hamed! I'm sure she means you!"

Hassan was right. In a few minutes Elfreda was mounted on Albert Victor, and was patting his gray neck and long ears.

"He's *such* a nice donkey, mother; heaps nicer than the dull, tired donkeys I ride when we go to the seaside! He's got some go about him! Why, he can canter almost as nicely as my pony at home, and 'Hamed has to run to keep up with him! I should just like to take him back to England for a pet!"

"I wonder what little Hassan would say," remarked her mother. "He would miss his daily ride on Albert Victor, and I don't think he would be very happy in England in that costume. The village boys would jeer at him!"

"Well, perhaps the pony *is* the best to ride at home, and Albert Victor here," considered Elfreda; "for certainly it *is* very crowded and noisy for any one not used to it," she added.

For they were now in the native town, on their way to the shops, there to bargain for Oriental curiosities. It was a ceaseless delight to Elfreda. She bought slippers for her uncle, a fan for her little sister at home, and queer pots to decorate the schoolroom. Elfreda would have lingered longer, but it was now time to return to lunch at the hotel.



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## THE ECHO BOY.

A little girl once went home to her mother and said, "Mother, while sister and I were out in the garden, there was some boy mocking us. I was calling out 'Ho!' and the boy said, 'Ho!' So I said to him, 'Who are you?' and he answered, 'Who are you?' I said, 'Why don't you show yourself?' He said, 'Show yourself!' And I ran into the woods, but I could not find him; and I came back and said, 'If you don't come out I will throw a stone at you!' And he said, 'I will throw a stone at you!'"

So her mother said, "Ah! Nellie, if you had said, 'I love you,' he would have said, 'I love you.' If you had said, 'Your voice is sweet,' he would have said, 'Your voice is sweet.' Whatever you said to him, he would have said back to you. When you grow and get to be a woman, whatever you say to others, they will, by and by, say back to you." And her mother took her to that old text in the Scripture, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."



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## BE JUST BEFORE YOU ARE GENEROUS.

"Come, Kathie! It is time to go home!"

It was Mother who called: she had been sitting for the last hour under the shade of the old pier, whilst little Kathie ran hither and thither on the beach, sometimes paddling a little, sometimes building sand castles.

"Come, Kathie!" Mother called again; "it is late; come here and I will put on your shoes and socks."

Still Kathie did not move, but sat staring at the sea, but with a look in her eyes which told plainly enough that her thoughts were far away. She was as a rule a good, obedient child, but to-day she seemed almost as if she was afraid to come. Mother got up from her seat, and went towards the little one.

"Did you not hear me, Kathie?" she began; then in an altered voice, "But, my child, where is your hat? Put it on at once, the sun is so hot."

Kathie hung her head, then the tears gathered in her eyes, and at last rolled quickly down her cheeks. "I haven't got a hat," she sobbed. "I gave it away. Are you vexed, Mother?"

Mother was puzzled. She sat down by Kathie and took her on her lap. "Don't cry," she said gently, "but tell me to whom you gave it."

"It was to a poor woman," said Kathie; "she asked me for it for her little girl, and so I took it off and gave it to her, but afterwards—"

"Afterwards you remembered that you should have asked Mother first," said Mother gravely.

"Yes," said Kathie. "But, Mother, the woman was poor; we ought to give to the poor, ought we not?"

"Yes, Kathie, but we must only give that which is our very own. Now, the hat was not yours to give away; I bought it for you, to shade you from the hot sun."

"Oh, Mother!" interrupted Kathie, "then I can *never* give to the poor, for little children have nothing of their own." Kathie's lip trembled, and she was very near crying at this thought.

"I will tell you what is your own to give," said Mother consolingly, "that is your time. All children have a great deal of time to do as they like in, and I can show you how you can use that time for the poor."





"Oh, mother! how? I can't sew nearly well enough to make anything for them."

"No, I don't mean sewing. I will give you an old pillow-case, and you must fill it with very little bits of torn, not cut, paper, and when it is full I will cover it for you with a case of pretty print, and then it will make a soft pillow for old Mrs. Timms, or any one else you like to give it to. It will take both time and patience to tear the paper; and when it is finished it will be your own work, and you may give it away."

"Yes, I see," said Kathie. "That will be my own work. I shall like that."

"As you grow older you will have money and other things which you can give away, but even then you will find that your best gifts will be those you have spent time and love over; those two things are the possession of the poorest of us, and yet they are worth more than gold and silver. Now, Kathie, we must go and buy you a new hat, for you cannot walk home in this heat without one; and another time when you give away anything you must remember to be just before you are generous."

Kathie thought Mother very kind not to be vexed about the hat; but Mother remembered what a little girl Kathie was, and she hardly expected her to be able to refuse, when a bold, sturdy woman asked for the hat off her head.

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## TRAVELLERS' TALES

They say there is a country where the snow never falls,  
And sliding is a game they never knew:  
They never saw a lake  
Paved with ice that wouldn't break.  
I would rather stay in England,  
wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the sun never sets.  
But goes on shining all night through.  
And you needn't go to bed,  
For there's always light overhead.  
That's a country I should like,  
wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where they all talk French.  
I can't imagine what they ever do!  
For who for all their chatter,  
Can understand such patter?  
I should answer "speak in English"  
wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the clergymen are black  
And the language sounds like "choke-a-cockatoo."  
And the niggers sit in rows  
With hardly any clothes  
I should like to go and look,  
wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the women cannot walk,  
And everything is made of bam-boo  
And the people's eyes are wee,  
They live on rice and tea.  
I should like to go and see them,  
wouldn't you?

They say there is a country where the elephants are wild,  
And never even heard of our Zoo.  
And through the woods they roam  
Like gentlemen at home.  
I should like to go and peep,  
wouldn't you?

F. W. HOME

[LINK TO FIRST ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

[LINK TO SECOND ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## THE PRIZE OF HONOR.

"I wonder if I could trust you children to go out alone this morning," said Mrs. Ferrars. "I don't want to deprive nurse of her holiday, and I must see Cousin Lily: she is not so well to-day."

"Oh! yes, mother," cried Dolly and Ralph together. "May we go on the ice?"

"Well, it is just because I said you might, that I feel a little anxious," said Mrs. Ferrars, stroking Dolly's fair hair. "My Dolly sometimes forgets mother's wishes for her own; still, as it is the last day at home, I feel inclined to trust you."

"Of course, mother," said Ralph confidently, "I'll take care of Dolly; all the boys will be there, and heaps of people we know."

"You won't skate beyond the point?" said mother; "never mind if the others do or not; remember you are both on your honor."

Full of delight, the children bounded off, skates in hand, and soon arrived at the gay scene by the frozen lake. The ice was already crowded with skaters, big and little, and Ralph and Dolly espied two or three of their friends as busy as themselves fastening on skates.

The band played, the sun shone, and merry voices and laughter echoed through the frosty air.

"Let's have races!" cried Frank, one of Ralph's schoolfellows. "You take your sister, I'll take mine."

They all four flew across the ice, backwards and forwards again and again, Frank and his sister winning at every turn.

"Now change partners," said Frank, pairing off with Dolly, "perhaps that will be fairer."

"I'm rather tired of going over the same road," said Dolly presently, as she and Frank stood resting, while the other two ran a short race by themselves. "It looks so lovely out there. A broad sheet of ice without any one on it, and all the trees at the foot of the terrace bending over the lake. See, Frank, icicles are hanging from every twig; wouldn't you like to go close to them?"



Ring Happy Bells Across the Snow

"Perhaps it isn't safe," replied Frank. "No one seems to venture so far; I shouldn't wonder if the ice were thin."

"But our weight would be nothing on such a great space," urged Dolly. "I don't mean far off, only just beyond the point."

Mother's words came back to her, but mother did not know. She was not there to see how beautiful it all was, and of course Dolly did not mean to run into danger.

They began skating near the point. Again Dolly turned towards the terrace.

"Oh, Frank! I must," she said. "I see a long icicle like a sword with a hilt; it's on a low branch—you can reach it for me." She sped away, and Frank followed. In a moment they were side by side, and close to the coveted icicle. As Frank raised himself to grasp it, he saw a thin stream of

water welling up from beneath the ice on to the bank. He seized Dolly's hand. "Back, back!" he cried wildly. "The ice is giving, we shall go in." Away they fled. The ice creaked, but their weight was light, and once more the point was gained in safety.

"Dolly," said Ralph, hurrying up to his sister, "have you forgotten what mother said?"

"No," replied Dolly, trying to laugh, though really ready to cry after the fright she had undergone; "but mother isn't here to see the icicles. I wanted one for her, and—"

"We are on our honor," said Ralph, "and I trusted you too, when you went off with Frank."

Dolly's tears began to fall. "I won't tell tales of you," said Ralph. "Perhaps I am partly to blame, I ought not to have left you. Come and skate with me, now."

"I don't want to. I'll go home," said Dolly.

Mother did not come back to lunch. She sent round a note to say she was staying with Lily; and by and by when she returned, her heart was so full of sorrow for the suffering child that she forgot to ask about the morning's pleasure. If Dolly was silent, mother thought it was from sympathy with herself.

The next day school began. All thoughts of skating were banished; there was a prize to be fought for, and Dolly had set her heart on winning it.

Somehow the spirit that had hitherto animated her now failed. The world seemed all out of tune. Again and again she was on the point of confessing her wrong-doing, as mother bent above her for a good-night kiss. But weeks passed, and still the words remained unspoken. Ralph never mentioned the ice; yet Dolly fancied he had loved her less since that morning.

"You musn't be too anxious about the prize, Dolly, darling," said her mother, noticing the tired face, "or I am afraid you will fall ill from worry. I am quite glad to think the breaking-up party is to-morrow. Mind, dear, I shall not be disappointed if you fail. I can trust my child, and I know she has done her best."

Dolly flushed crimson. Her mother trusted her, and imagined she knew every thought of her childish heart. How little mother knew the misery Dolly was enduring!

All was excitement at the school. The prize-giving only took place once a year, and many and great were the hopes and fears on that eventful day. Some girls were of opinion that Dolly would carry off the coveted prize, others that she had lost ground of late, and failed utterly. Dolly, quite aware of her shortcomings, was yet vaguely longing for success. Her rival in the class was older and cleverer than herself, but without the perseverance that characterized Dolly, therefore Dolly hoped on until the prize-giving began.

Everything passed as in a dream, until Dolly's class was mentioned, when Miss Danvers, the head mistress, in a short speech declared that the prize had been won, after a severe struggle, by Lucy Trevor. At the same time she was giving a special prize, because of the good conduct and perfect uprightness and truth of the unsuccessful competitor. This prize she awarded to Dolly Ferrars. She held up a beautiful Bible, bound in white vellum.

"This is the prize of honor," she said.

Dolly's heart stood still. She had forgotten her disappointment about the class prize in an overwhelming sense of shame.

"Go up, Dolly," said mother proudly.

"I can't," said Dolly. "I—I—"

"Go on, darling," said mother, gently pushing her. And Dolly went.

In silence she accepted the Bible, and laid it on her mother's knee.

"I am so tired," she said.

"We will go now," whispered mother. "The excitement has been too much for you."

They slipped quietly away and returned home.

"Mother!" cried Dolly, as they were alone. "Oh, mother dear, I can't take that prize, I don't deserve it. I have failed in truth and honor. I am so miserable!"

Mrs. Ferrars, bewildered at Dolly's words, soothed her while she poured out the story of her conduct on the ice.

"And I have no right to the prize," she said. "What shall I do?"

"We will return it to Miss Danvers," said mother, gently; "at least for a time." She looked very pale and sad. "But, darling," she added, as she folded Dolly in her arms, "if you are really sorry and have through repentance learned to conquer in the fight between right and wrong, you are still a winner of the true prize of honor!"

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## The WAVES.

A pert little wave by the sea-shore one day,  
Came dashing along in its impudent way;

A wee little maiden was straying too near.  
Said the wavelet—I'll catch you my child, never fear,  
"I will carry you home to a bed in the sea,  
"I will rock you as snug as on Mother's own knee."  
But the child answered merrily, Mother is near,  
"So dash away, splash away, I do not fear  
"Dash away, splash away, back to the sea,  
"Mother is keeping her watch over me."

A cruel wave rolled o'er the night clouded sea,  
And the sailors were fearful as e're they could be,  
The vessel lay tossing, the north wind blew drear,  
Said the wave, "I will rock you to sleep, never fear,"  
But a brave tar looked up, with a light in his eye,  
And a swift prayer was sent thro the threatening sky  
To his heart came the answer, in voice, sweet and clear,  
"Ye shall weather the tempest true heart, never fear."  
Splash away, dash away, danger is past,  
The vessel is anchored, in harbour at last.

M. I. H.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

## A LABOR OF LOVE.

"Oh, Claude, do look at that poor woman! Doesn't she look ill! I don't believe she can drag that great pail of salt water up the beach. There, she's let it drop! all the water is spilt, and she is leaning against the boat. I must go and see if I can help her."



So spoke kind-hearted little Elsie, but Claude pulled her back.

"Don't, Elsie! The woman will be all right directly, and we don't know anything about her."

"But she's in trouble," urged Elsie. "See how she trembles, and you know, Claude, what we heard on Sunday at the catechising."

Claude could not but remember, for it was only yesterday that the clergyman had told his little hearers to try and sympathize with any one in trouble. "Let them realize by your sympathy that you remember that we are all one great family—all one in Christ."

So he let go of Elsie's hand, and she went up to the half-fainting woman and asked her if she wanted anything.

"No, thank you," said the woman, looking gratefully at her little bare-legged questioner (Elsie was in her shore dress—or rather undress—and with tucked-up petticoats and huge sun-bonnet was supposed to be secure from any evil effects of either water or sun). "I shall be better presently," she continued; "it's only my side; it hurts me so when I fetch the salt water. It's for the little invalid boy at the Red House there. I'm his nurse, and the doctor has ordered a salt-water bath for him every day, and it hurts me to drag the water up this steep beach; only I don't want any one there to know it, as they might send me away as not strong enough, and I must earn money, for I've a sick mother at home."

"Oh, I know we can help you in that," cried Elsie. "You sit still, and let me carry your empty pail to the top of the beach; it's only a step from there to the Red House, and then we'll bring our little pails full of water and soon fill yours."

The nurse would have remonstrated, but Elsie had run off with the pail, and she really felt too ill to follow her.

The tide was low that morning, and the salt water lay beyond a good stretch of sand, so that Elsie had no light work before her; and after the sands, there was the steep beach to climb, and somehow when she was at the top her bucket seemed to have but little water in it. However, she toiled bravely to and fro, and Claude, who would not help at first, was touched by her industry. Of course, he would not own to such feelings, and indeed was too proud, saying to Elsie that she was spilling half her water! "Here, *I'll* show you how to carry a bucket!" And after that he worked with her, and with Claude's big bucket the pail was soon filled. By this time the nurse was better, and able to carry the pail across the road into the Red House.

"I'll never forget your kindness as long as I live," she gratefully declared. "I might have been your own sister by the way you've behaved to me."

"How funny of her to say that," whispered Elsie to her brother; "it seems as though she must have been at the catechising too. Perhaps she knows we ought to try to be all one in Christ."

And Claude, boy-like, only nodded his assent.

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## CHESTNUTS.

Ben was visiting his cousin Hugh in the country, and they had been having a glorious time getting chestnuts. They started early in the morning, taking their dinners with them that they might have all day in the woods. There had been a sharp frost the night before, and the boys had a merry time as the wind rattled the brown chestnuts down on their heads. Bags and pockets were soon full to overflowing, and after eating their lunch by the brook they started for home.

"Now for a feast of roast chestnuts," said Ben, as they sat down by the fireplace, after the good warm supper which Hugh's mother had ready for them. "I will roast them and you can pull off the shells when they are done."

What fun it was to see the nuts jump around in the shovel Ben was using for a roaster, till their brown shells burst open with the heat!

"We will roast a whole bagful," said Hugh, "then there will be some for sister Lucy."

To be sure, Hugh burnt his fingers, and Ben dropped some chestnuts into the fire, but they only laughed the merrier. Lucy joined them after she had finished helping her mother with the work, and together they ate the chestnuts and played games till bedtime came, when they all agreed it had been one of the happiest days of their lives.



## A SPARROW STORY.

I and my little sisters are very fond of the sparrows who come to our garden to eat the crumbs that we throw out for them. We find our cat also likes them, but in a different way. We have been able to rescue several little ones from it, but have never been able to rear them, as they have generally died two or three days after. However, a little while ago we saved one poor little bird from pussy, and placed it in a cage and fed it, as it was too young to look after itself. The cage was placed in my bedroom, with the window open, and we suppose the chirrup of the little prisoner was heard by its parents, and we were pleased to see one of them fly into the room and carry it food. As they seemed so anxious, and we thought they knew better than we how to feed it, we placed the little thing on the window sill, watching near it to prevent it meeting with any accident, as it was too young to fly more than a few yards by itself. It had scarcely been there a few seconds before its mother flew down to it and chattered, as we thought scolding it, but we suppose she was only giving it directions, for the young one laid hold of the mother's tail with its little beak, and, with that assistance, was able to fly away.

We watched until it was out of sight, and were very glad to think that the parents had recovered their little one, about which they had shown such anxiety.

### The Showman's Dog.

"Poor little chap!" the showman said,  
"Your day at last is done,  
No more you'll fly at Punch's head,  
Or cause the Clown to run,  
Poor little chap! you're weak, too weak  
To join the Peepshow fun!"

"Out of the road I picked you up,  
'Tis years and years ago,  
Your leg was badly injured, pup,

Run over as you know,  
I bound the limb, and took you home,  
And soon you join'd the Show."

"Many a mile we've tramped, old dog,  
And many a place we've seen,  
And you where'er our feet might jog,  
Have faithful ever been.  
And rarely a rough or angry word  
Has come our lives between."

"Toby I wish that you could speak,  
One word in answer say,  
No! e'en to bark you are too weak,  
Or you would still obey.  
I know not what the show will do  
When you have passed away!"

Lovingly then poor Toby crept  
Towards his master's side  
And licked his hand—the Showman wept!  
For less things men have cried!  
And there full grateful to the last  
His old companion died.

E. Oxenford.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## TIDYING.

The children had played all through the long afternoon, and the room was turned topsy-turvy. Toys were strewn all over the floor; furniture was pulled out of place; and the legs of the chairs were entangled with a long kite-tail that they had begun to make.

Presently Raymond said with a start, "Didn't you hear mother say, 'Put the room tidy'?"

"No," answered Ralph; "nobody spoke; it was only because you saw what a state the room was in that you thought you heard her; and it *is* very untidy; we had better put it straight."

"Yes, let us put it straight," said Raymond, "for I know I did hear mother tell us to."

So the two set to work and sorted the toys, and put them away in the cupboard; then they began to try to disentangle the twine of the kite-tail that was twisted round the chairs.

"Oh, dear! this is tiresome!" cried Raymond, as he bent his sunny head over the task.

"It does hurt my fingers!" said Ralph, knitting his dark brows.

Presently Raymond looked up with a beaming face.

"I know mother is looking at us all the time," he said; "I can feel she is smiling!"

Ralph looked round the room. "She is not here," he answered, "it is only the sunlight through the window."

"I know I can't see her," said Raymond again, "but I can feel she is smiling."

Then they were silent, and went on with their work.

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"It is bedtime, little boys," said mother, coming in.

"But we have not finished," they cried together.

"Mother and nurse will do the rest," said mother. "You've both done very well."

"Mother, weren't you watching us all the time?" asked Raymond eagerly.

"Yes," she answered, smiling; "I was in the garden, and could see through the window my two little sons; Raymond was quick to obey when he heard my voice, and Ralph did what he knew I should wish, though he did not know I was able to see him."

And Mother put her arms round the children, and the sunny head and the dark head nestled softly on her bosom, and the eyelids drooped, for the day had been long and the sun had gone down.

"But I wish I had known you were there," murmured Ralph.



"NURSERY TENNIS."



## CHARLIE THE CHATTERBOX.

"Do be quiet, Charlie!" "Leave off talking!" "Silence, sir!" These words were addressed to Charlie in vain, whether at home or school. He talked at meals, at class, in church; his little tongue was always at work, and yet it never seemed weary. Even if his mother had a headache, Charlie rattled on; if his father wanted to read or write quietly he had to go apart from Charlie, for there was no peace in the presence of the chatterbox. Of course he was a dunce, for how could he chatter and learn as well? And you may be sure he made plenty of mischief, for tongues that are always on the move do not keep to the exact truth sometimes when repeating what the ears have heard.

One day Grandfather said, "I really must teach that little tongue a lesson. If you can be silent for half an hour, Charlie, I will give you half-a-dollar." "Half-a-dollar! I'll earn it, grandfather." Charlie watched the clock and thought of tops and balls and kites and sweets and apples, and all the wonderful things half-a-dollar would buy; he had to keep silence till the clock had struck twelve, and just as the hand approached the hour he grew so excited with his success that he cried out, "There, I've done it! Please give me the money, grandfather." But Charlie never got that half-dollar, and I do not think such a chatterbox *deserved* it. You have two ears and one tongue, children; listen quietly, pay attention, but do not always make your voice to be heard, else other people may *grow just a little tired of the sound*.





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## SILVIO AND FRANCESCO.

On the side of one of the vine-clad hills of Italy dwelt a poor man with a large family. Though he was a hard-working man, he could only earn enough to poorly support his children, and to give them an education was beyond his power. He was an intelligent man, and though he had grown up without even learning to read, he wanted his children to have the advantages of schools and books, and he decided to seek for them a home in America. He saved all the money he could from his meagre earnings to pay the expense of the voyage. It was a hard struggle, and there were many days of stern self-denial and stringent economy ere the required amount could be obtained. When one has an earnest purpose, and bends his energies to accomplish it, he is quite sure of success. It was thus with this Italian family. Both father and mother were united in carrying out one fixed purpose,—to give their four children the advantages of a land of free schools,—and though their struggles were hard, yet they were working for their loved ones, and love lightens heavy burdens. There always comes pleasure from what is done for the benefit of others.

When all was ready they embarked from Genoa one evening, as the sunset sent a radiant glow over mountain and valley.

Silvio and Francesco were the youngest of the four children. The two eldest boys, like their parents, were sad at leaving their youthful companions, and sat in the stern of the ship and watched the receding hills till the rosy light faded, and darkness shut out from view their native land forever.

Silvio was nine years old, and Francesco two years younger. They did not realize the journey which was before them, nor did they regret at leaving. They were charmed with the novelty of the scenes around them. They watched the sailors in their duties about the ship, and listened to the captain's stern orders. The harbor was gay with the lights of the many crafts, large and small, which were gliding about over the placid surface of the gulf. So quiet were the waters that one would never dream that they could ever be ruffled, or cause the voyager discomfort. As their ship glided out of the placid Gulf of Genoa into the Mediterranean Sea all on board were anticipating a quick and prosperous voyage, and a safe landing on the bright shores of America.



Alas, how uncertain is the future! A terrific storm arose when within a few days' sail of the American coast. The masts and rudder were carried away by the wind, and the hulk then drifted at the mercy of the waves. The captain and several of the crew were washed overboard in the first encounter with the gale, and the lifeboat, which many of the passengers took when it was believed the ship was sinking, was swamped, and all in it lost. A few others remained on the hulk, and stayed on deck in hopes to signal some passing vessel which had outridden the storm. One by one these were swept overboard, or died from exposure. Silvio and Francesco were so small that they were not allowed on deck. When the storm commenced they were sleeping in the forecabin, in the berth of a kind old sailor who had given them the use of it. His dog was their sleeping companion by night and playfellow by day. These three were secured below during the storm, and were forgotten during the excitement and distress on board. The parents of the boys

were swept overboard on the first night of the storm, and their brothers were lost in the lifeboat, and their old sailor friend died from exposure and over-exertion on the second day of the storm. Thus they were bereft of both kindred and friend, and, though they were unconscious of their situation, they were drifting upon the ocean on a wave-tossed bark, with no living companion but the sailor's dog.

Three days thus they drifted on the merciless ocean, wondering why they were left alone in the fore-castle; and when they called for help all the reply was the dashing of the waves against the shattered ship.

Fortunately, a large steamer which had withstood the storm saw the shattered hulk drifting upon the waves, and sent men on board to rescue any who might be found alive. All had been swept away, and desolation reigned on deck. To their surprise, on opening the fore-castle they found the two boys and the sailor's dog.

These helpless and homeless ones they took to the ship. Sad indeed were they when they began to realize that their parents and brothers were lost. They had no kindred or friends, and knew not a word of the language of the Americans who were upon the steamer. They shed many sad tears when the feelings of their loneliness settled upon them, and they wished themselves in their own country, where a language was spoken which they could understand.

There is always sunshine behind the clouds, and their shadows were dispelled by a kind gentleman upon the steamer, who said he would care for them and give them a home.

He commenced to teach them to speak English while on the voyage, and amused them with various sports and games. Silvio, being the eldest, learned quicker than his little brother, but as soon as he had learned he taught Francesco.

When the steamer landed the kind gentleman sent them to board for a while with a family from their own country who could speak both English and Italian, where they soon learned to talk in both languages.

Silvio was a good object-teacher, and gave his little brother lessons.

He would introduce some game or sport as a means of communicating instruction. It was pleasing to see them together. They would sit by the fire in the Italian's cottage, with the old sailor's dog, which the gentleman who had befriended the children said should not be taken from them, and Silvio would teach his brother.

They learned to play "cratch cradle," and when they did this the names of every thing used were learned. When one is learning a new language it is word by word; so in this game they learned to count, and to name the words, such as hand, finger, string, cross, and others that suggested themselves in the course of the game. Some children call this game "cat's cradle," but it should be "cratch cradle." A cratch is a cross-legged crib from which cattle are fed. It is also the shape of a cradle, or child's sleeping-crib, and, as the strings take this shape upon the fingers, the game has received that name.

These boys learned very rapidly, and the gentleman who had befriended them soon took them from the Italian's cottage, and sent them to the best schools in America. Both became distinguished scholars. Silvio is now a celebrated artist, and Francesco a musician whose vocal and instrumental acquirements have charmed the largest audiences, and received the highest praise of the world. Both have visited their native country, and have pursued their studies among their own countrymen, but they have never heard of any of their own kindred. The gentleman who befriended them still lives to see the good results of his kind deed, and they, in return, look upon him with feelings of love and gratitude.





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## THE LITTLE MILKMAID.

"Please, Grandmother, I can milk Daisy."

"There, child! Nonsense!" said the old woman crossly. "Daisy would kick thee and thy pail over in no time. We should lose our milk, and happen have thee to nurse as well."

"But Daisy likes me, Granny," pleaded the would-be milkmaid. "I never throw stones at her or pull her tail; she would not kick me. I know how to milk, don't I, Grandfather?"

"Eh, bless her, so she do!" returned a feeble voice from the bed in the corner of the kitchen. "It's a brave little lass, that it is! I'd sooner trust her than Tom, for all he's three years older."

Grandmother gave a reluctant consent, and forth went the little milkmaid, her bucket on her arm, and her dog Gypsy jumping about and inviting her to have a race with him. Play was a very good thing, and Susie dearly loved a romp, but this morning she shook her head, and told Gypsy he must wait until her task was safely over. She was very proud of Grandfather's confidence in her, and made up her mind to deserve it.

Susie looked like a part of the bright May morning as she tripped gayly down the pathway to the brook, brushing the dew off the grass and flowers with her bare little white feet, and singing a gay "good-morning" to the birds fluttering in and out of the bushes.

A kind little girl was Susie, loving all the living creatures about her moorland home, and loved by them. The birds knew better than to come within reach of Tom, but they hardly paused in their busy nest-building as Susie passed by; only singing a little more gayly than before, which was their way of welcoming her, so Susie said.

Grandfather's cottage was built on the top of a steep field. At the bottom a bubbling, noisy little brook went tumbling and bustling merrily over the stones, filling the sweet, warm air with a cheery song of its own. A plank served as a bridge across the stream; and as Susie walked steadily over it she noticed a fat, motherly old duck nestling down amongst the ferns and dock-leaves on the bank. Mother Duck uttered a startled and indignant "Quack, quack," as Gypsy jumped over her head and dashed headlong into the cool, bright water.

"Ah, Mrs. Duck," cried Susie merrily, "I see now where your eggs go! I shall pay you a visit presently; I can't stop now, because I am going a-milking."

The old duck looked after her with quite an air of understanding all about it, and gravely watched her run on towards the field where Daisy the cow stood waiting at the gate. Tom had forgotten all about milking-time, but Mistress Daisy had good reasons of her own for liking punctuality in such matters. So she poked her long white nose through the bars of the gate, and greeted Susie with a long, doleful complaint of the sad way in which she had been neglected that morning.

Perhaps it was Daisy's reproachful "Moo" which first made the little maid conscious that she had

forgotten the milking-stool, but she now decided to do without it. The good old cow's temper must not be tried by any further delay, so down she knelt in the cool, dewy grass, and, carefully fixing the pail, began her task.

She found it not so easy as she expected, for milking requires practice, and some strength of fingers, and Susie had little of either. But Daisy was very good, and so the sweet, frothy milk rose higher and higher in the little pail, until at length the task was done. Daisy showed she thought so by suddenly beginning to walk away. The pail had a narrow escape then, but Susie got it safely out of the way, and began her homeward walk. Very steadily she carried the pail to the brook. There a surprise awaited her; while she had been milking some one had pulled away the plank, and thrown it down on the opposite bank. Wet feet are no hardship to little girls who wear no shoes and stockings. Susie soon tucked up her dress, and walked carefully through the bubbling stream, taking good heed of the stones at the bottom. She got across safely, and began to climb the steep, narrow path leading to the cottage. On either side the grass was long, sometimes almost meeting across the path. All in a moment her foot caught in some hidden trap, and down she fell! Alas for the poor little milkmaid! Her pail was upset, and the milk—the precious milk—ran hither and thither amongst the primroses and daisies, and finally trickled down into the brook.

"This comes of sending babies a-milking," said Grandmother, who had seen the disaster from the cottage door. "Come in," she added crossly, as the distressed little maid came slowly up the path. "Thou'rt a bad, careless lass, and shall have no breakfast. Catch me sending thee a-milking again."

"Wait a bit, Grandmother," said the old man, in his feeble, quavering voice. "Did not I hear Tom say that he'd teach the little one to meddle with his job? You must go down the path and see for yourself if it is not one of his tricks. Something must have tripped the child up."

Grandmother could not refuse to go down the path, but she went unwillingly. Tom was her favorite, and she did not wish to find him out in the wrong. But when she came to the milk-dyed spot, and found the long grass tied together across the path, she could no longer deny that the child in fault was not little Susie. As she slowly wended her way back to the cottage, she felt not only angry with naughty, idle Tom, but grieved at her own lack of justice to the willing little milkmaid.

Tom's unkind and revengeful conduct did not this time go unpunished; but his grandmother's over-indulgence had sadly spoiled his character, and although she strove hard to remedy the evil, it is doubtful if he will ever learn to be as obedient and unselfish as his good little sister Susie.



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## MR. BOBOLINK.

"I wish I could catch a bobolink," said Samuel.

"Let us try to-morrow and see if we cannot catch one in a box trap," said his brother Robert.

"That will be real fun," said little Maggie. And so the three children talked the matter over, and made plans for the morrow.

"You must help me in the morning," said their father. "Samuel must drop the corn in the hills for the hired man to cover, Robert will drop the beans, and Maggie must put in the pumpkin-seed. We shall have it all done by ten o'clock, and then you can play the rest of the day. If a flock of bobolinks comes along you may be able to catch one, though they are very shy, and do not stop long in any one place."

The next morning the sun rose radiantly in the eastern sky, and climbed up among the golden clouds, and all the early birds joined in a glad song of welcome. The robin chanted from the lofty branches of the elm; the bluebird, with plumage brighter than the bluest sky, glided in and out among the apple-trees, and enlivened the scene by its occasional joyous song; the red linnet whistled and chattered in the shrubbery, and the sparrow chirped in the hedge. All around seemed full of life and joy.

The bobolink swung from the highest branches, and poured out his ecstatic feelings in thrilling song.

The children went to the fields amid all this morning music, and tried to translate the song of each bird into English.

The robin chanted, "Kill him! cure him! Kill him! cure him! Give him physic!"

Who he wanted treated in this manner they could not tell, but that seemed to be the language of his song.

The voice of the linnet or bluebird could not be interpreted easily, but the bobolink spoke very plainly, and seemed personal in his remarks, which were evidently intended for the eldest boy; for he said over and over again, "Samuel! Samuel!—Samuel, planting, planting. Samuel! Samuel! planting for bobolink! bobolink!"



This chattering and singing were kept up all the forenoon, and the children resolved that when their play-time came in the afternoon they would set some traps and try to secure one of these saucy songsters, who had been talking so much to Samuel during the forenoon.

Soon as dinner was over the three hurried off to the sheep pasture, where, among the maple-trees, a large flock of bobolinks were evidently resting a day or two on their journey towards Canada, that they might feast on the scattered grains of an old wheat-field near by. The children took a few handfuls of wheat, which they scattered upon the ground; and, as Maggie could sew better than the boys, she strung some grains of wheat on a small thread. This was tied to a slender prop which held up the cover of the trap, which was made by putting four blocks together in the shape of a box. In it was a handful of wheat. When all was ready the children hid behind some shrubbery and watched and waited the result. They whispered to each other, and laid plans concerning what could be done with the bird after he was caught.

Samuel said, "Sell him. I read of bobolinks being sold at bird-stores in the city for two or three dollars each. We could get money enough to buy snap-crackers and fireworks for next Fourth of July."

"Oh! I wouldn't do that," said Robert.

"Nor I," said little Maggie. "I should rather go without any money for Fourth of July. Let's keep

him, and put him in Dicky's old cage, and teach him to sing."

"Perhaps you are counting your game before 'tis caught," said Robert. "There are no birds near your trap yet."

Just then a large flock had discovered the scattered grain, and flew down near the trap. Each one of the children watched in breathless silence. Several birds entered the box, and chattered and feasted, but the cover did not fall, and the time the children were waiting in silence seemed very long. At length an old, strong bird caught up a grain attached to the string, and gave it a violent jerk. Out came the little prop, and down went the heavy cover, and a jolly old singer was entrapped. He screamed and fluttered, and his frightened companions flew away over the distant meadow.

The children ran to the trap, delighted with the capture they had made, and each one got down on his knees and peeped into the trap. Sure enough, there was Mr. Bobolink. He had on his black dress-coat and white waistcoat and breeches, and a pretty yellow necktie. They all thought him very handsome, and they laid plans for having him put into a nice brass cage at the front of the house, where they could every day hear his cheerful song. They were all delighted with their prize, and thoughts of much enjoyment went through their minds.

"Take him out carefully," said Robert, as Samuel knelt down to open the box.

"Don't hurt him," said Maggie; and Samuel raised the cover to put in his hand.

There was a flutter and a scream, and Mr. Bobolink flew away, and soared high into the air, and soon joined his travelling companions on their way to Canada.

The children were much disappointed, and when they told their father he laughed heartily, and repeated the old proverb:—

"A bird in the hand is worth two in the air."

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## Midsummer Morning

In my garden hear the lark  
Carol aloft;  
Hear the dove her matins sing  
In answer soft.  
The night has fled away;  
Good morrow! lovely day.

Dawn has touched with fairy finger  
All things near,  
Left a dewdrop on each blossom  
Like a tear  
Sing! merry thrush, on high  
To the breaking summer sky.

Cobwebs, quiver in the sunlight  
Sparkling bright,  
Daisies ope their starry petals  
To the light.  
So with a rosy dawn  
Comes up this summer morn!

Horatia Browne.

[LINK TO ILLUSTRATED PAGE](#)

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## HOW TODDIE WAS FOUND.

Old Jones, the sexton, toiled slowly up to the Rectory one winter morning. He had a sad tale to tell, and the ground was heavy with snow, and poor old Jones's heart was full of a great sorrow.

The Rectory lay cosily among the sheltering trees, and gleamed warm and cheerful beneath the gloomy skies. Mr. Chillingworth, the Rector, was a good man, and greatly beloved by the people in the parish of Redhall.

Old Jones, as I have said, was the sexton; and he tried his best, with very small success, to keep all the village boys in awe of him. He always went, with them, by the name of "old red Johnnie," for he wore a red woollen comforter through winter's cold and summer's heat.

He had a champion in one boy, however, called Toddie Banks; for you see poor Toddie was an orphan, and old Jones had been very kind to him when he was just a wee toddling laddie, had taken him to his own home, and treated him like a son, for the old man had neither kith nor kin, wife nor child, so Toddie was all of them put together to him.

And now Toddie had been missing for a whole day and night, and Jones had no doubt he had fallen over a precipice, or been lost in some deep snowdrift, for, you must know, Toddie was a bit of a naturalist, and used to take long walks in search of any curiosities he might find.

The poor old man had never been in his bed the whole of the previous night, but had been searching everywhere, helped by some kindly neighbors.

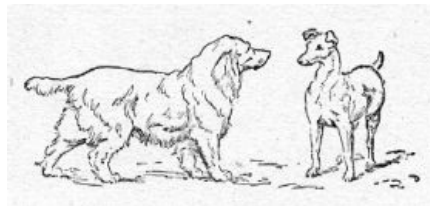
When Mr. Chillingworth understood the whole story, he at once volunteered to go in search of Toddie, accompanied by his splendid Newfoundland dog, Neptune.

"Cheer up, Jones," he said in his kindly way. "Neptune and I will do our best, with the blessing of God, to find your darling. Go home now, and have everything prepared, in case we find him overcome in the snow."



Neptune was perfectly aware that he and his master were to find Toddie, so he bounded on gayly before Mr. Chillingworth. They had not proceeded many yards before Neptune suddenly stopped, and, listening intently, galloped furiously in the direction of a stream that in summer time was a favorite haunt of Toddie's. On reaching the water he stood still, and, uttering a long, sorrowful howl, remained, evidently waiting for his master.

Mr. Chillingworth hastened up; and there was Toddie, lying to all appearance quite dead. In scrambling up the river bank he had been apparently overcome by the deadly cold and sleep from which few ever waken to life again. He had a bunch of scarlet berries in his hand, and it was pathetic to see the cold stiff fingers still clutching their treasure. Being so near the Rectory, Mr. Chillingworth just lifted the lad and bore him rapidly to his house. What was his joy, after half an hour's untiring effort to revive him, to see Toddie slowly open his eyes, and, by the time old Jones and his neighbors reached the Rectory, Toddie was able to sit up and relate his experiences. It was as the Rector thought; in reaching after the berries he fell, and remembered nothing afterwards. Poor old Jones and Toddie were heroes ever after that, and I am glad to say the village boys ceased to call him "old red Johnnie."



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## THE HORSE

SUGGESTED BY A LITTLE GIRL OF FOUR.

Oh a strange and curious thing is a horse,  
Believe or not, as you choose.  
For he takes it quite as a matter of course  
That he goes to bed in his shoes.

And his shoes, which are iron and not soft leather,  
Are nailed to his feet with pegs  
And he falls asleep without minding the weather,  
As he stands upright on his legs

And his hair doesn't grow in the proper place  
But out of his neck instead  
And his ears are not at the side of his face,  
But stand on the top of his head.



## THE TINKER'S VAN.

"Ronald! Ronald! our van has come! John saw it go past the gate whilst we were in school."

"Has it!" exclaimed Fred Norton, no less excited at the news than his brother; "then let's go down at once and have a look at it."

Off ran the two little fellows, and were soon in the village; and there, sure enough, drawn up in a side street, was the van of a travelling tinker. The old horse had been taken out of the shafts and was standing patiently on one side, while the tinker's wife, with her baby in her arms, walked slowly up and down, casting from time to time an anxious look up the street.

Her sunburnt face beamed with a hearty smile as the two boys rushed up to her.

"Here you are, young gentlemen!" she said, with evident delight; "I was looking out for you. I thought you'd see us go by; but my old man, he says, 'Susan, what are you thinking of? Those young gentlemen have forgotten you by this time, for it's six months more or less since we last passed by here.'"

"We haven't forgotten you," said little Ronald indignantly. "How could I forget when you were so kind to me? I could not have got home that day I sprained my foot, and then your van came up, and you jumped out and carried me in, and bathed my foot, and brought me home. Why—why—" stammered the little fellow in his eagerness, "I should be a *pig* if I forgot you."

"Step inside, sirs," said the woman, quite confused by Ronald's gratitude; "I want you to see how beautiful the clock looks that your mamma gave me. It goes just splendid; my old man *is* proud of it; it never loses a minute, and yet it gets many a jolt."

The children needed no second invitation. The van was a paradise to them, and they ran up the steps and looked at everything, and everything seemed charming. They longed to possess such a treasure, and thought the tinker and his wife must be the happiest of mortals.

"I should like to live here always," said Fred, as he and Ronald stood at the door of the van and looked out at the scene around them. "It's so jolly free," continued the boy, "so far better than always being in one house; and the cat there, and the cocks and hens, and old Dobbin—I'd much rather look at things like that than at the maps and pictures on our schoolroom walls."

"Ah! but you don't know all, sir," said the woman, shaking her head. "I was born in a van, and have always lived in one, but I don't want my little laddie here to lead the life," and she danced the crowing baby in her arms as she spoke. "I hope, by and by, we shall have a little cottage of our own and settle down, and my boy can go to school and learn to read his Bible, which is more than his mother can do, for I never had a day's schooling in my life."

"Can't you read?" said little Ronald in astonishment. "I'll come every day that you stay here and teach you. I'll begin to-night!" and before another word could be said he had darted out of the van and was up the street and out of sight, returning in a very few minutes with a large picture-book, out of which he himself had learned to read.

Ronald was a wise little fellow to have brought a picture-book; for such a work of art had never been seen by the woman before, and if reading was only looking at pictures like that she felt she might manage it after all.

She was by no means a stupid scholar, and Ronald was so earnest a little teacher that the progress made was really astonishing. The tinker found a good many jobs in the village, and stayed nearly a fortnight, and by that time Susan could spell little words very nicely, and no longer read a-s-s, donkey, as, misled by the picture, she had done at the beginning of the lessons.

Ronald's mother gave the woman a large print Bible with a great many pictures in it; and when next year the tinker's van again visited the village, Susan was delighted to be able to exhibit her progress, and slowly and reverently she read the parable of the Lost Sheep.

"I read that to my old man most nights," she said; "his father was a shepherd, and he knows all about sheep. Oh, Master Ronald!" said the woman, suddenly changing her tone, "I do bless you for putting it into my head to learn to read."

Certainly Ronald was a happy boy that day.



TEMPTATION.



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## A LITTLE MAN.

Bobby was not quite six years old, but he thought himself quite a man, and a very strong man too. He was a sturdy little fellow, and as he never caught cold, his mother allowed him to run about without shoes and stockings when the weather was warm and dry.

Bobby's mother was always a little afraid of his being hurt. She had only two children—Lucy, who was twelve, and Bobby—and she was sometimes very anxious lest Bobby should come to some harm when he would work among the men. She also forbade him the use of knives and all sharp instruments. This was a real grief to Bobby, as the men knew it, and would sometimes tease him, and it was then so difficult to pretend to himself that his knife wasn't in his pocket, as he could have done for his own satisfaction.

One day in the spring, when the laurel hedge was being cut, one of the men offered to lend Bobby a knife, and, without a thought of his mother's wishes, Bobby took it, and began cutting in a great hurry. Alas! after a few boughs had come off, Bobby tried to cut a thicker one, which he had to hold down with his left hand, so that when the knife slipped he cut his third finger rather badly. He ran at once to Lucy with the knife in his hand, and then dropped it on the ground close to his bare toes. In his thoughtlessness he might have cut his foot also if Mother had not come out and picked up the knife. She was more sorry than angry at Bobby's disobedience, but the boy was more careful to obey his mother after that, and among the

presents on his next birthday there was a capital knife from Mother, but given on condition that at first it should only be used when his father was present, and could show him what ought to be done with it. Bobby is a very happy boy now, because no one can tease him, as he has that precious knife of his very own.



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## Bed Time

### I.

I've been so happy all the day,  
And now its hours are over,  
Down by the meadows I have played,  
And all amongst the clover.  
And now tis time to go to rest,  
Within my bed so cosy.  
And soundly sleep the long night thro;  
Until the sun gleams rosy

### II.

Good night, dear little silver stars,  
Come to my window peeping,  
And shed your pretty light above,  
And watch whilst I am sleeping.  
Good night, Good night you pretty flowers,  
I love you all so dearly,  
Now close your eyes, and gently sleep,  
Until the moon shines clearly.

### III.

I've said my prayers at Mother's knee,  
To ask the Shepherd's keeping,  
He has so many little lambs,  
To tend whilst they are sleeping  
Yet surely I may go to rest,  
Without a fear or sorrow,  
I know that he will watch o'er all,  
Till sunlight gleams to-morrow.

M. I. Hurrell.



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ORIGINAL BACK COVER

Transcriber's Notes

1. Nonstandard punctuation and spelling variants in poetry blocks retained.
2. Full-page illustrated poetry or images that interrupted a story have been relocated to the inter-story break.
3. The poem "Winter" in this book is reproduced here as printed and differs from the original.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK GOLDEN MOMENTS \*\*\*

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