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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A BIT OF SUNSHINE ***

A Bit of Sunshine



A BIT OF SUNSHINE.

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A BIT OF SUNSHINE.

[7-8]

"MAM-MA," said Kate, as she stood at the door, which she had o-pened to let puss in, "may I not go out and play? the clouds are all gone and the sun shines bright and warm."



"But the grass must be quite soaked af-ter all the rain," said mam-ma. "I will tell you what to do; run to pa-pa, and ask him if he will not take us to drive."

Pa-pa was just go-ing out, and had his hat in his hand, but he sat down at once to hear what Kate had to say, and prom-ised that he would take them in half an hour, and so Kate ran up-stairs to ask nurse to put her wraps on. By the time the hors-es were at the door she was all read-y, and took her place with great glee.

[9-10]



What a bright af-ter-noon it was; the long rain had made all the grass and leaves look bright and green, and they were rust-ling in the fresh breeze. A-way out at sea the ships were fly-ing be-fore the wind, look-ing like great white birds. Kate's home was at the sea-side, and their drive this af-ter-noon would take them for a time on the beach.

[11-12]

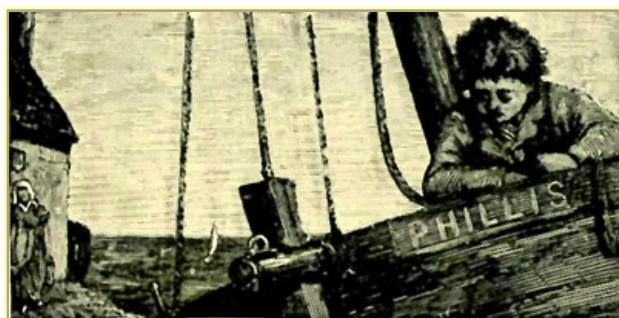


The waves, pa-pa said, would be ve-ry wild, for the wind was just right to make a heav-y surf. Soon they be-gan to come to the fish-ing vil-lage. The hous-es were small, and on the beach close to each was drawn up a fish-ing boat. On one of these a man was hard at work. He was down on his knees in his shirt-sleeves, with some sort of a tool in his hands, and was so in-tent on what he was do-ing that he did not raise his head as they passed.



In the boat it-self was a boy. He was lean-ing o-ver the side and look-ing down at his fa-ther. His hat had blown off, and he looked like such a nice boy that Kate smiled at him as they went by. He laughed back and made her a lit-tle bow, but the hors-es went by so fast that she saw him for a min-ute on-ly.

[13-14]



"What was the name of that boat, pa-pa?" she asked.

"Phil-lis," said pa-pa.

"Why, that's a girl's name," said Kate.



Just at that mo-ment they passed by a small house. The door stood wide o-pen, and in it sat a young girl. She had a pil-low in her lap and was work-ing o-ver it, Kate thought, with a nee-dle. "She is mak-ing lace," said mam-ma. "It is hard work, be-cause one has to sit still bent o-ver. I sup-pose she is glad to have the bright sun-shine to sit in, for no doubt she has been kept in the house by the rain. I won-der if that is her lit-tle broth-er who is lean-ing a-gainst the side of the house whit-ting."

[15-16]



Kate stretched her head out to look, and cried, "Why, he is mak-ing a boat; what a clev-er boy! See, the hull is done, and two masts are in place. What fun it would be to have a boat to sail on our lit-tle pond."

[17-18]

"Our pond is too deep for it to be safe for you to play a-bout it," said pa-pa; "but when you are old-er you shall have a boat with-out fail."



The road now left the vil-lage be-hind and ran a-long the top of some high cliffs. At their feet the sea came in in great waves that were topped with foam, and that broke in a mass of spray. There were two or three per-sons on the beach, and they were walk-ing a-bout and hold-ing up their skirts to keep them from get-ting wet. It looked like such fun that mam-ma asked pa-pa if he would not stop and let her and Kate have a short run on the sands.



So the hors-es were brought to a halt, and they got down and made their way through a break in the cliffs to the beach. Then, af-ter they had walked a while, they sat down on a great mass of rock and watched the waves as they rolled and broke at their feet. Kate was much in-ter-est-ed in a piece of board that the waves were tossing a-bout. She played that it was a ship, and real-ly felt quite bad-ly when it was dashed a-gainst the rocks. How long they would have stayed there I do not know, but they heard pa-pa shout-ing that he was tired of wait-ing. And so they made haste to climb up to where he was and take their seats. Then he spoke to the hors-es and on they went. They had not gone far when they found them-selves in a green lane. Com-ing to-ward them were a lit-tle girl and boy. They were on their way home from school, as the bag in the girl's hand showed, for it had books in it. As they drew up by the fence to let our par-ty pass, Kate said:

[21-22]

[23-24]

"Their mam-ma lets them walk out though the grass is wet; but I would much rath-er ride this way than walk at a-ny time, or play ei-ther, and so would they, I know."



"I am a-fraid the rain is not all o-ver yet," said pa-pa. "That black cloud a-head will give us a wet-ting, I fear. I will drive fast-er."

[25-26]

Soon the drops be-gan to fall, but their car-riage had a top, and they had with them rugs, so that they were not hurt at all. Kate, as she peeped out, saw that all were not

so safe. A girl and a boy were crouched close un-der a bush by the road-side.



"They will not get ve-ry wet," said mam-ma, "for the cloud is near-ly passed by, and the sun shines once more."

"Are we not near home?" she said to pa-pa, "it is get-ting late, I think. There goes a girl with her pail to drive the cows to the yard to be milked. Kate must have her sup-per when we get back, and her bed-time is sev-en o'clock, you know."

[27-28]



"It is on-ly five now," said pa-pa; "we can have a good hour more, and Kate won't mind, I fan-cy, if she is a lit-tle late for once."

"No, in-deed," said Kate; "I think a-ny way I am get-ting much too big to go to bed at sev-en."

"There is a lit-tle girl," said mam-ma, as she looked in at the door of a house that they were pass-ing, "that thinks bed-time is not far off."

[29-30]

"She's on-ly a ba-by," said Kate with great in-dig-na-tion, "and I am quite a large lit-tle wo-man."



Pa-pa and mam-ma both laughed at Kate's tone. She did not like to be laughed at at all, and so, to change the sub-ject, as they went by a house, called out, "Why, what are that boy and girl do-ing at that hogs-head?"

"Fish-ing," said pa-pa so-ber-ly.

"In a hogs-head!" said Kate. "Who ev-er caught fish in such a place? No, they must be sail-ing chips. Yes," she went on, as she stretched her short neck up as far as she could, "that is what they are do-ing; I can see the chips."



Just then pa-pa called out, "What in the world is this coming down the road? Whoa! my boys, steady," he said to his horses as they began to prick up their ears. The next minute they saw what it was. A dog came toward them at full speed, howling with fright, while close at his heels was a cat wild with rage. Her ears were laid back, and she meant to catch and scratch the dog if she could. But he was too fleet for her, and as they looked they saw puss give up the chase and climb up on a fence.

[33-34]



"Well," said pa-pa, "I think that dog has had a lesson. He will not trouble that cat again, I am sure. I wonder what he did to make her so angry. Perhaps he teased her kittens."

"There," said Kate, a few minutes later, "there is a dog that is not going to be driven by a cat. Just look, mamma, he wants to get some of that baby's supper." Mam-ma looked up, and on the porch of a house saw just what you see in this picture—a fat small boy with a slice of bread and butter, while a dog almost as big as the boy looked on waiting for a bite.

[35-36]



Just at the side gate of the house stood an old cart half full of hay. It had not been used for some time, and a pair of birds had made their nest in it and had two or three young birds, which they were just feed-ing with a worm.

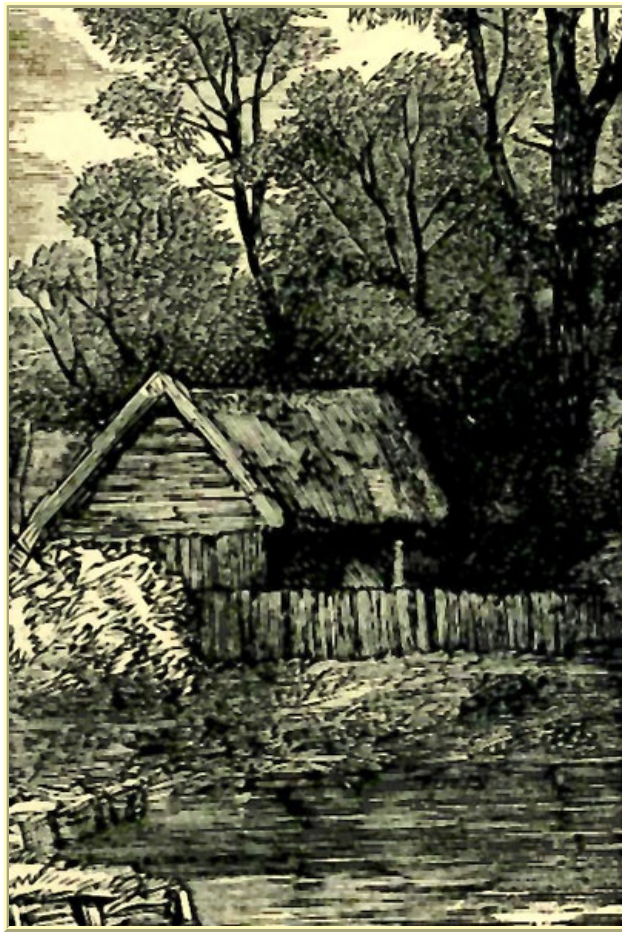
[37-38]



"Oh, how sweet!" cried Kate, "Pa-pa, dear, do stop a min-ute." So pa-pa drew in his hors-es, and they watched them for a lit-tle while. The birds did not seem to mind them at all.

"There are no bad boys here-a-bout," said pa-pa, "that is ve-ry cer-tain."

"I am quite sure," said mam-ma, "that it must be time for us to be home. The sun is near-ly set-ting."



"Yes," said pa-pa, "it is ten min-utes of six. I will take a new way home, and we can be there in a ve-ry short time." So he turned off in-to a lane close at hand. The hors-es seemed to know that their work was near-ly done, and went on so brisk-ly that just as the hall clock struck six they stopped in front of the door.



Nurse was wait-ing on the pi-az-za to meet them, and she jumped Kate out of the car-riage and took her right up to the nur-se-ry, where in a ve-ry short time her tea was all read-y. How hun-gry she was; it seemed to her that bread and milk nev-er tast-ed so good be-fore, and she had her bowl filled three times. At last she pushed back her chair and said she had had e-nough. Then she be-gan to tell to nurse all she had seen—the boys, and the dogs, and all the pleas-ant sights; and all the time that nurse was get-ting her read-y for bed, her small tongue wagged with-out stop-ping. "I am get-ting now to be such a big lit-tle wo-man," she said to nurse, "that I don't think I shall go to bed a-ny more till eight; I on-ly just lay a-wake for an hour when I go at sev-en." But that night when mam-ma came up, at five min-utes past sev-en, to kiss her good-night, she found her lit-tle girl so fast a-sleep that she did not know at all that she had come. "Ha, ha!" laughed mam-ma softly, "I think we will not change the hour for Kate to go to bed just yet."

[41-42]

[43-44]



The next day was bright and fair, and Kate was glad to get out once more. She found that the rain, which had seemed so use-less to her, had been of great ser-vice. Her flow-ers were all look-ing fresh and green, and ev-ery bud was nod-ding its head in the sun-light.

[45-46]

Transcriber's Note:

- The number 49 on the last page of the original book should be page 46.
- Hyphens to indicate syllabication have been retained.

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