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Other Pets, by Emma Davenport

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LIVE TOYS;
OR
ANECDOTES OF OUR FOUR-LEGGED
AND OTHER PETS.

BY
EMMA DAVENPORT



BLUEBEARD, THE SHETLAND PONY.
Page 85.

LIVE TOYS;
OR
ANECDOTES OF OUR FOUR-LEGGED AND OTHER
PETS.

BY
EMMA DAVENPORT,

AUTHORESS OF
"JAMIE'S QUESTIONS," "WEAK AND WILFUL," ETC.

With Illustrations by Harrison Weir.

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TO
LADY NEPEAN,
THIS
LITTLE VOLUME IS DEDICATED,
AS
CONTAINING TRUE ANECDOTES OF THE VARIOUS ANIMALS
THAT WERE IN THE POSSESSION OF A LITTLE BOY
AND GIRL, IN WHOM SHE HAS ALWAYS
SHEWN A KIND INTEREST.

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LIVE TOYS;

OR



MOPPY, THE WHITE RABBIT.

The first Pet that we ever remember possessing was a large white rabbit. We were then very little children; and, being at the sea-side, we spent the greater part of the day on the shore, or rather on the broad esplanade, that stretched for full half-a-mile round the pretty bay. When we were quite tired of running there, or of picking up stones and weeds on the shingle below the esplanade wall, we were enabled to prolong our stay out of doors by means of the pretty little goat-carriages that were kept in readiness on the esplanade. Some of them were made with two seats; some were drawn by one goat, and some with two. There were reins and regular harness to these little goats, and we were indeed pleased, when our nurse allowed us to drive in one of the double-seated carriages. We took turns to sit in front and drive, and we tried hard to persuade our Mamma to let us have a goat, and a goat-carriage for ourselves. What a nice Pet that would have been! But Mamma said she could not take it about, as we travelled much, and also that a goat would butt at us and knock us down. Therefore we were obliged to be content with patting and coaxing the goats on the walk.

During one of our drives in the goat-carriage, we met with a boy carrying a beautiful white creature with pink eyes; "Look! look! nurse," we cried, "what is that?" "It is a rabbit," she said, "would you like to stroke it?" and she took it out of the boy's hands, and held it close to us; we kissed it and stroked it, and buried our faces in its long white hair, felt its curious long ears, and wondered at the strange colour of its eyes. The boy said that a sailor gave it to him; but that his mother wished him to sell it, as it was troublesome in her small cottage, and they had no yard to keep it in, and he asked nurse if she would buy it from him. We earnestly begged that we might have it; "Do buy it, Mary," we cried; "please buy it." And, after some talking, Mary gave sixpence to the boy for the rabbit, and, my sister giving up her front seat and her reins to me, went home with the pretty creature in her lap.

We called the rabbit Moppy; it was a source of great amusement to us. Mary contrived a bed for it in a large packing-box in an empty garret at the top of the house, and when we wished to play with it, it was brought down to the nursery. We always fed it from our hands. It became extremely tame, and would follow us about the room, and allow us to lift it and carry it in all sorts of strange ways; for we could not manage lifting it by the ears in the proper way. When it began to be tired of us, it used to get under the sofa, and when we dragged it out again it appeared angry and would kick with its hind legs, and make quite a loud knocking on the floor, with what we called its hind elbows. When this commenced, nurse usually carried it off to its box, fearing that it might bite, or else she covered it up in her lap, when it would remain asleep for some time.

Now and then we took it with us when we drove in the little carriage, and it lay so snugly on our knees and kept us so warm. Before we had become at all weary of our plaything, or indifferent to its welfare, we removed to Ireland; and going first to visit grand-mamma, it was thought impossible to take Moppy, so after much consultation, nurse spoke to one of the little boys who kept the goats, and seemed to be a gentle good-natured lad, and with many instructions and requests that he would be most kind and careful to the poor little animal, we kissed and stroked our pet, and, burying our faces in its long white hair for the last time, we made him a present of beautiful soft Moppy.

THE TWO BIRDS, GOLDIE AND BROWNIE.

"Would you like to buy a bird, Sir?" said a poor woman to me one day when we were just setting out for our walk. She held in her hand a small cage with a beautiful goldfinch.

"I have one shilling and sixpence," I said, "will you give it to me for that?"

"I hoped to be able to sell it for half-a-crown," the woman said, "for I am very poor; I am leaving this place and want money for my journey, or I should not part with my bird."

"But I have a shilling," said my sister, "and that added to your money will make half-a-crown, and so we can buy it between us and it will belong to us both."

We gave our money to the poor woman, and she put the cage into my hand. The little bird was quite a beauty, his colours so bright, his plumage so glossy and thick, and his chirp so merry. After displaying him to Mamma, and to every body we met, we carried him to the nursery, and placed him on the broad window-seat; Mamma said she was afraid we should soon get tired of him, and neglect to feed him and to clean his cage. This, we thought, was quite unlikely. However, we promised very faithfully; and we commenced with feeding and petting him so much that he soon became extremely tame, would take seeds and crumbs from our fingers, chirp to us when we came near his cage, and sing without the least sign of fear.

One day we had carried him into the drawing-room; and, on opening the door of the cage to put in some sugar, he darted out. "Oh dear! oh dear! Goldie is out," we exclaimed; "what shall we do? We shall lose him." But Mamma quickly got up, and shut both the windows and begged us to be quiet, and not to frighten him by rushing after him and attempting to seize him. "If you leave him alone," said Mamma, "he will perhaps allow you quietly to take him in your hand when he has flown about as much as he wishes; but he will lose all his tameness if you terrify him." So we sat down to watch the little fellow, he darted about the room for some time, and presently alighted on the table, where the breakfast things remained. First he pecked at the bread, then tried the sugar, peeped into the cups, and seemed highly amused at the different articles which he was now examining for the first time. Then he flew on the top of the picture frames that hung on the wall, then on the curtain rods, and at last perched on Mamma's head, peeped at her hair, and looked as proud and happy as possible. And after he had looked at every thing in the room and well stretched his wings, he quietly returned to his cage, chirping at us, as if to say, "I have seen enough for one day, I'll come out again to-morrow." So afterwards we used to give him a fly every morning, taking care to shut all the windows before his door was opened. We paid so much attention to our bird; that he did not seem to find his life at all dull, but he obtained a companion in an unexpected manner.

Our nursery window was standing open, Goldie was in his cage on the table, and we were playing on the floor; suddenly my sister exclaimed, pointing to the window, "Goldie is out! Goldie is out!" and there indeed, perched on the window-sill, was a little bird, which for a moment we believed to be our own little pet. We gently approached the window. "Oh that is a brown bird," said I, "and look! Goldie is safe in his cage." Nurse now advised us to draw back from the window, for that if not frightened, the little stranger might possibly be attracted by the bird in the cage, and might come inside the window; so we retreated to the opposite side of the room, and watched the little fellow. In he hopped very cautiously, now and then making a little chirrup, and twisting his head in all directions, as if to discover with his sharp black eyes, whether there was anything or anybody likely to hurt him; now he came on a chair-back, and then becoming bolder, ventured on the table. When Goldie saw him, he left his seed box at which he had been very busy, and hopping about his cage in a most excited mannere began to chirrup as loudly as he could, and shaking his tails up and down, he seemed to express his great joy at the sight of the little brown visitor. Nurse quietly passed round the room and shut the window, "Now we have him safe," we cried, dancing about. "Pray be still, my dears," said nurse, "until we get him into the cage." So we again became immoveable, and there was the brown stranger peeping at Goldie through the bars, perhaps wishing to partake of the seed and sugar, and fresh groundsel that Goldie had been enjoying. He was a delicately shaped thin little bird, all his feathers of a pretty dark brown, he did not appear to be much frightened when nurse approached, nor did he leave the table when she opened the door of the cage; but on the contrary, he peeped in, and receiving a very civil chirp of invitation from Goldie, he actually hopped in to our extreme delight.

We ran to display our treasure to Mamma. She was quite amused at our having caught him in so strange a manner, and said that she thought he was a linnet, or some such kind of bird. He was evidently a tame bird that had been much petted. He soon accommodated himself to all Goldie's habits, came regularly to breakfast, and took his fly afterwards, all about the room, resting occasionally on our heads or shoulders. Brownie would now hop on our fingers, when we wished to take him up from the floor; and this we had never been able to teach to Goldie.

The two birds were very good friends, excepting when an unusually nice bit of groundsel or plantain excited a quarrel between them; then they scolded, fluttered, and pecked at each other

in a very savage manner. We had a sliding partition made to the cage, and when they began to dispute, we punished them by sliding in this partition and separating them for a short time. They used to look quite unhappy, moping in their solitude, until we made them happy again, by withdrawing the partition.

These little birds went many journeys with us, even crossed to England, and back again to Ireland, and lived with us for a long time; and I suppose we became rather careless about open windows and doors, knowing that the birds were so very tame, and had no wish to fly away.

We were the following summer in another place. There our rooms were confined and small; so we used to allow the birds to fly about on the staircase every morning, in order to give them a larger range for using their wings.

One bright summer morning, Goldie flew out on the landing; and as he had invariably come back again to his cage, we were not noticing him much, and never perceived that the servant had gone down stairs, leaving open the door at the bottom of the flight, just outside of which door, was an open window. Presently we went to see for him, and it was some moments before we spied him sitting on the ledge of this open window. If we had made no exclamation, and placed the cage on the stairs, most probably he would have returned; but perhaps we startled him by running down the stairs towards him. Out he went so rapidly and yet so gently, in the bright fresh air, as if he would say, "Liberty and sunshine, and freedom of flight in the summer sky, is too delightful to refuse, even for you, my dear little master and mistress." He perched on a high tree and looked at us for a while. In vain we strewed crumbs about the window, and called and whistled. In vain we set his cage on the ledge with his deserted companion in it, hoping that hearing Brownie's chirp would entice him to return. He never came back again, and Brownie occupied the cage for many months; our care of him being greater than ever, since we lost our other favourite.

But Brownie's end was much more tragic. We were going away on a visit for some weeks; and it was decided that Brownie was not to go, but that he should live in the kitchen until we returned. There was a huge cat living in the barracks. We always had been in dread of her, and had tried to make her afraid of entering our door; but whilst we were away, she one day found all the doors open, and peeping into the kitchen, and seeing no protecting servant there, she seized our dear little pet, and soon destroyed him. When we returned home, there was nothing but the empty cage.

POLL PARROT.

We were staying for some months at a seaport town in France, many vessels used to come in from different parts of the world; and I suppose the sailors brought with them all sorts of animals and birds, for the houses looking on the quay where the vessels were moored were almost entirely shops of birds, monkeys, etc., etc. It was most amusing to walk along the quay, and look at all the live creatures that were there exposed for sale. Such a chattering of monkeys of all shapes and sizes, such a twittering and singing from every imaginable species of small birds, such a screaming and chattering from the parrots and macaws, and such fun in peeping into the cages of white mice and ferrets. We often wished very much to buy a monkey; but Mamma did not fancy it, and said they were uncertain ill-tempered beasts, and that we should be constantly bitten if we had one. First, we longed for this bird, then for that squirrel, then for a cage of white mice, and so on; indeed I believe we quite tormented Mamma with requests to walk along the quay of animals, as we called it. At last we set our affections upon a grey parrot, the smoothest and handsomest among the large number exposed for sale. We never heard her say anything, it is true; but we thought that an advantage, as she would not have learnt to swear and talk like the sailors, and we should teach her to say just what we pleased.

The price of the parrot was rather high, because of her size and beauty, and we longed for her many weeks before we were her masters; but at last she was placed in our possession as a new year's gift, and, in addition, a nice cage with a swing, and tin dishes for her food, all the wood work being carefully bound with tin, to secure it from her formidable beak.

Cage and parrot were carried with us on our return to England, and she soon became a great pet. She was not at first very tame; but by much petting, and by leaving the door of her cage constantly open, so that she did not feel herself a prisoner, she gradually became more friendly. The first sign of love to any of us was after my sister's short absence of a few days at a friend's house. When she returned, we were talking together in the hall, and Poll's cage being in an adjoining room, she heard her voice, and recognising it, she came down from her cage, and gave notice of her arrival at my sister's feet by her usual croak; she flapped her wings, and gave every sign of pleasure at seeing her again. She did not, however, extend her amiability to any one but myself, sister, and Mamma; she was still savage to strangers, and would bite fiercely if touched, but if we offered our wrists, she would step soberly on, allow us to scratch her head, stroke her back, push back her feathers to look at her curious little ears, and in return she would lay her beak against our cheeks, and make a clucking noise as if she meant to kiss us. She used to waddle all about the room with her turned-in toes, and climbed up tables and chairs just as she pleased. She would get upon Mamma's knee by scrambling up her dress, holding it tight in her beak. When we were writing or drawing, she enjoyed sitting on the table, though she meddled sadly with our things, biting our pencils in pieces, tearing paper, and so on, and once in particular, she terrified us for her own safety by opening every blade of a sharp penknife, and flourishing it about in her claws as if in triumph. We had some difficulty in getting it from her grasp without cutting ourselves or hurting her. She was a famous talker, called us all by name, whistled and barked when the dog came into the room; called "Puss, puss!" and mewed when the cat showed itself, sang several bits of songs, and asked for fruit and food of different sorts. We never could teach her to sing through a whole tune. I never heard a parrot get beyond a few bars; and I wonder what is the reason that they will learn the commencement of half-a-dozen different songs, but still cannot remember any whole. I do think a parrot's voice and utterance is one of the most extraordinary of things, for it always repeats a word in the peculiar voice of the person who taught it; and, instead of closing its beak or touching the roof of its mouth with its tongue, in order to articulate, it invariably opens its mouth wide when it speaks, and its tongue is never used at all; yet it will pronounce m's, b's, p's, and t's as plainly as any human being. We could always tell who had taught our Poll any word or song, from the similarity of voice that she adopted. Her sleeping-place was for some time on the top of a chair-back in my sister's bedroom. When we were leaving the sitting-room to go upstairs at night, Poll used to waddle down from the cage and come to my sister, who held her wrist down for her to mount, and having been conveyed upstairs and placed on the floor, she mounted of her own accord to her sleeping perch, gave all her feathers a good shake, and settled her head for the night.

Very early in the morning, she used to commence her toilet. Such scratchings and smoothings of her feathers, such picking and cleaning of her feet and legs; and having arranged her dress for the day, she would come down, take a turn or two about the room, and then look at my sister to see if she were awake. If not stirring, Poll used to clamber up on the bed by means of the curtain or counterpane, get quietly on the pillow, and examine her eyes closely. If no wink was perceptible, Poll would gently and cautiously lift up an eyelid, pinching it softly in her beak, then go to the other eye and do the same; then she would wait a little bit, saying, "Hey? hey?" as if to ask whether her mistress was not yet properly roused. Then she would again work away at the eyelids, till my sister could no longer refrain from laughing. She used to feign being asleep every morning, in order to amuse herself with Poll's proceedings.

I wished to try having my eyelids opened by Poll in the same manner, and one night took the bird into my own room; but she did not approve of this change of quarters, and instead of going quietly to sleep, made such a croaking and grinding of teeth on her chair-back, that I was glad to carry her back to my sister's room. Indeed, although she was very friendly with me, she did not manifest the same attachment as towards my sister and mother, apparently preferring ladies' society.

While Poll was with us, we went another journey into France, and took the parrot with us in a basket. It was a stormy night when we crossed from Southampton, and Poll in her basket was placed at the foot of my sister's berth, and no further attention was paid her. The cabin was very full of people, and numbers had to lie on the floor, there not being sufficient berths or sofas. In the middle of the night, the inmates of the ladies' cabin were all startled by a scream from an old lady who was stretched on the floor.

"Stewardess! Here! Here! Some dreadful thing is biting me. I have received a shocking bite on the leg. Do search for the creature, whatever it is."

So the stewardess came and looked, and could find nothing.

My sister, who had looked out of her shelf at the old lady's cry, immediately divined what it was, seeing that Poll's basket had rolled off the berth to the floor, and she having gnawed a hole in the basket, had put out her beak and bitten the first thing with which it came in contact.

When the stewardess came to look for the monster, the basket had rolled, with the motion of the ship, to the other side of the cabin, and not finding a sea voyage pleasant, she put forth her beak again.

"Oh! bless me! What can that be?" cried another passenger. "Something bit me. Do find it, stewardess."

Then came another lurch, and away rolled Poll in her basket; and no one suspected a rather shabby old basket of containing anything but perhaps a pair of slippers, or a brush and comb, or some such articles. So poor Poll rolled about in her prison, inflicting bites on several legs and arms, my sister meanwhile in agonies of laughter on her shelf, and not daring to say who was the real offender, lest Poll should be turned out of the cabin.

At last the stewardess said that she supposed it must be rats, and she ran away at the entreaties of the poor victims on the floor to fetch the steward to search for the rats. Whilst she was gone, my sister slipped down from her berth, and took possession of Poll's basket. She had scarcely retreated with it in safety, when the stewardess returned with the steward; and rather an angry altercation ensued, the man insisting that there was not a rat in the ship, and the injured passengers insisting that sharp bites could not be made by nothing at all. However, after a long dispute, he begged them all to move from the floor, and made a regular search.

My sister was all the time in the greatest alarm, lest Poll should think proper to croak or sing "Nix my dolly," or otherwise to make known her presence. As luck would have it, however, Poll was either too sea-sick or too angry to say anything, and the steward announced that no live thing was in the cabin, and that the ladies had been dreaming.

"But bites in a dream, don't bleed," retorted an angry old lady, holding up to view a pocket handkerchief which indeed wore a murderous appearance.

This being unanswerable, the steward could only shrug his shoulders and retreat from the Babel of voices in the ladies' cabin; and soon after, my sister had the pleasure of landing, with Poll undiscovered and safe in her old basket, and we are ignorant whether the old lady ever found out what it was that had bitten her.

During our journey, Poll often caused great amusement, by suddenly shouting or singing as we were jogging along in a diligence or slowly steaming on a river, thereby astonishing and alarming our fellow passengers; nor did she forget, when occasion offered, to make good use of her strong beak.

At one place we were entering a town late at night, and the place being a frontier town, our luggage was all strictly examined by the custom-house officers before we were permitted to enter the gates. All having been passed and paid for, we remounted the diligence; my sister was the last. She had her foot on the step, when one of the men rudely pulled her back, asking why she had not shown her basket. She said there was nothing in it but a bird, but the man declared he must look; and seeing that my sister was unwilling to open it, he imagined there was something valuable and contraband in it, so roughly dragging it out of her hands, he tore open the lid, and thrust in his hand. Poll gave a loud croak, and the man rather quickly withdrew his hand, with a thousand vociferations at the bird and the basket and my sister. I must confess I was delighted to see that Poll had made her beak nearly meet in the surly fellow's finger.

When my sister had regained her basket, and we had left the gate, we lavished much praise on Poll for her discriminating conduct on this occasion. She would not have bitten my hand had I put it into the basket; how did she know that the hand was a stranger's?

When we arrived at our destination in the south of France, Poll enjoyed the novelty as much as any one. Now she revelled in the abundance of oranges and other fruits, eating just the best part, and flinging away the rest with lavish epicurism. And how she basked in the hot sun, and climbed about the cypress and olive trees in the garden, biting the bark and leaves, and almost I think believing that she was again in her wild birth-place, wherever that may have been! She accompanied us in safety on our homeward journey, went to Ireland with us; and whenever we travelled, Poll went too.

At one time she took an erroneous notion into her head, that she could fly; now this was an impossibility, for her wings were very short and small, and her body very large and heavy. Whether this had chanced from her unnatural life in a house, or from early cutting of her wings, I do not know, but she could not support herself in the air, even from the table to the ground. However, she thought she could, and on one occasion she tried to fly, when perched on the top bannister of a large well staircase of four flights. Down she came like a lump of lead on the floor below, and when we ran to pick her up, poor Poll was gasping, lying on her back, with her eyes rolling about in a fearful manner. We thought she would die, but we put some water in her mouth, blew in her face and did what we could to revive her, and gradually she recovered.

But this lesson was lost upon her. A few days after, she tried to fly out of a window on the first floor, and came down in the same heavy way, on the flagged pavement before the door. This time her head was wounded, and bled, and she seemed stupid for some days after; but she recovered and lived long after that. Probably these falls had injured her brain, for at last she began to tumble off her perch, as if giddy, and then her head swelled very much, and she died in a sort of fit.

I have seen other parrots who were better talkers than ours; but I never saw one so tame, and so fond of her own master and mistress, she used to come to meet us like a dog, when we came into the house, after being absent for walks or rides, knew our times for rising and going to bed, called us separately by our names, and really showed much intelligence.

Birds, in general, are, I think rather stupid, and do not understand anything, but what their own instinct tells them; but parrots seem to know the meaning of the words they learn: and if others do not, I am sure that our Poll did.

NEDDY, AND THE RIFLE DONKEY.

Our next pet was a very different creature. One of our aunts had sent us some money as a present; and I and my sister had many consultations as to what we should do with it. At last we hit upon an idea that charmed us both, and we ran to our Mamma. "Oh Mamma, we cried, do you think our money will buy a donkey? We saw the other day, a little boy and girl both riding upon a donkey, it trotted along so nicely with them, and the little boy at the other side of the square has a donkey, and we should like it so very much." Then Mamma said that a donkey would be of no use unless we could also buy a saddle and bridle; and besides that, she must enquire where he could graze, or whether there was any spare stall in which he could live. These things had not occurred to us; but we went to Papa, and begged him to find out where our donkey could live in case we had one.

Now there was a large sort of waste field adjoining the Barrack Square; a few sheep and some old worn-out horses were kept in it, but I believe it was not used for anything else. We sometimes ran and played there, and there was a pond in it, into which we were very fond of flinging large cobble stones. Papa found that he could easily obtain leave for our donkey to graze there, and it was of such extent, that it could find there quite sufficient food; so that difficulty was done away with.

Then we made enquiry about the price of donkeys. We talked one day to the nurse of the little boy and girl who rode together. She did not know what their donkey cost, but told us that she knew a little boy who bought a young donkey, when it was scarcely able to stand, and so small, that he had it in his nursery, where it lay on the rug before the fire, and was quite a playfellow to him.

We thought we should like a tiny donkey to play with in the house; but Mamma persuaded us that it would be much pleasanter to have one that we could ride. Papa heard of a donkey we could buy for one pound, it came to be looked at, and we liked its appearance much; it was in very good condition, its coat thick and smooth, and not rubbed in any place. Our other pound supplied us with a sort of soft padded saddle and bridle; the pommels took off, so that either of us could use the saddle, and happy indeed was the morning, when Neddy was brought to the door for us.

I had the first ride, and, owing to a peculiarity in Neddy's manners, I soon had my first tumble. We proceeded across the square very nicely, and were about to cross a large gutter, along which a good deal of water was rushing. I had no idea that Neddy would not quietly step over it; but he had an aversion to water, and coming close to the gutter, he made a great spring and leapt over it; the sudden jerk tossed me off his back, and Papa catching me by the collar of my dress, just prevented me from going headlong into the water. And we found that Neddy always jumped over a puddle, or any appearance of water; sometimes a damp swampy place in the road, was enough to set him springing. But when we knew that this was his custom, we were prepared for it, and had no more falls; we rode in turns, and sometimes I got on behind my sister, and many nice long rides we had all about the fields and lanes. When we returned home, we took off the saddle and bridle at the door, and gave Neddy a pat; away he scampered through the open gateway into the field, flinging up his heels with pleasure. We could see all over the field and the square from our windows, and soon found it extremely amusing to watch the proceedings of our Neddy and another donkey.

This donkey belonged to a little boy, who also lived in the square; he did not often ride upon it, but it followed him about more in the manner of a large dog. It had learned how to open the latches of the doors, and could go up and down stairs quite well.

Our Mamma went one day to see the little boy's Mamma, and when she opened the door of their house she was much surprised to find the donkey's face close to her's, and she was obliged to give him a good push to get past him. When we heard this, we used to watch for the donkey going in and out, and soon we saw him go into the field and make friends with Neddy. They held their heads near together and seemed to be whispering; then they would trot about a little while, then whisper again. We supposed that the strange donkey was telling Neddy what fun he had in going into the different houses and getting bits to eat from the inhabitants, and instructing him how to bray under such and such windows when cooking was going on. For Neddy soon began to follow his friend about, and to imitate everything that he did. We did not know the name of the other donkey, so we called him the Rifle donkey, because his little master's Papa belonged to a rifle regiment. Neddy was an apt pupil, for soon after the conversations between the two donkeys had begun, we were seated one evening at tea, when we heard an extraordinary clattering upon the staircase, we listened and wondered, as it became louder. The staircase came up to the end of a long passage, which led to our doors, and when the clattering reached the passage I exclaimed, "I do believe it is the donkey coming up stairs."

We rushed to the door, and looked out. Yes, indeed, the Rifle donkey and Neddy were quietly pacing along the passage. We were thoroughly charmed at Neddy's cleverness in mounting two

long flights of stairs, and when we had given them each a piece of bread, and patted and coaxed them, they turned away to go down again, the Rifle donkey leading the way. He managed very well indeed, but Neddy made rather awkward work with his hind legs; however, he managed to reach the bottom without throwing himself down. Next they went under the windows of the adjoining house, and the Rifle donkey began to bray loudly, Neddy copied him in his most sonorous tones, and presently a window was opened and a variety of little bits of food were thrown out, which they ran to pick up. They came every morning to this window, and the officer who lived there always answered their call, by throwing something out to them. When he shut his window, they quietly went away, and about the middle of the day, when luncheons and dinners were going on, they would go to other windows about the square, and bray for food. Neddy always walked behind the other, and did not bray till he began. Sometimes there were clothes laid out to dry by the washer-women on a piece of grass, behind the houses. This supplied great amusement to the donkeys, for as soon as the women went away they would run to the grass, take up the clothes in their mouths, fling them up in the air, tread upon them, tear them, and even used to eat some of the smallest things, such as frills and pocket-handkerchiefs. But this was really too mischievous, as the poor women suffered for their fun.

No one would believe them, when they said that such a missing handkerchief had been eaten by donkeys, or that such a piece of lace or a collar had been bitten and torn by the same tiresome creatures. I well remember some of our shirts coming home half eaten, and our Mamma then advised the washer-women to have a boy, with a good thick stick, to watch the drying ground, and to desire him to belabour them well if they attempted to touch any of the clothes. This advice was followed, so that piece of fun was in future denied to the donkeys. But, I and my sister highly disapproved of this system; we thought that we would much rather have our shirts eaten, or indeed all our clothes torn than allow Neddy to be beaten with a stick, to say nothing of the great amusement it gave us, to see the two queer animals rushing about among the wet things, entangling their feet in them, and sometimes trotting off into the square with a night-cap or a stocking sticking on their noses. However, we still took great interest in their proceedings even without the poor washerwomen's clothes; for being deprived of that game, they began to plague the soldiers at the guard room. It had a sort of colonnade in front, supported by pillars, and the Rifle donkey found that it was very diverting to rush head first at the men who were standing under the colonnade. If they tried to strike him, he used to dodge round a pillar, and then rush at them again from the other side. Often he singled out one man for his attacks, and then Neddy assisted his friend, by biting at the same man from behind, but he was not nearly so active in evading punishment as the Rifle donkey, and received many a buffet and kick during these encounters. Sometimes the soldiers punished them by getting on their backs. This, however, was not to be borne, and cling as tightly as they could, the donkeys never failed to fling them off, when they would return to the charge with renewed vigour.

These games of bo-peep, and so forth, apparently amused the men quite as much as ourselves, and many a half-hour have we sat in our stair-case window-seat, watching the antics of the donkeys and the soldiers. Their play usually ended by the Rifle donkey receiving a harder rap on the nose than he deemed pleasant, then he would fling up his heels, and with a most unearthly yell, gallop off to the field, closely followed by the sympathising Neddy, who imitated in his best fashion both the yell and the fling of his heels.



We were going to leave the barracks, and move to another part of Ireland; and just before we went, the two donkeys got into a terrible scrape. Indeed, it was very well that we did go away; for they were becoming so extremely mischievous and so cunning, that they would soon have become too tiresome; and although we were charmed with every trick they played, almost all the grown-up people thought them a great torment; and the Rifle-donkey had become a great deal more active and monkey-like, since Neddy had followed and copied him. I suppose he felt proud of being able to lead the other wherever he chose.

It was extremely hot weather, and all doors and windows were generally left standing open. Not that it would have made much difference to the Rifle-donkey had they been shut; for there was not a door in the place that he could not open. But very likely they were tempted to this work of destruction by the sight of the open door. Whilst the officers were dining, the two donkeys walked into the ante-room. The table there was covered with newspapers, magazines, and books; and perhaps the donkeys thought that these papers were some of their old friends the clothes, from the drying-green; so they pulled them off the table; tore the newspapers into little bits; munched the backs of some bound books; scattered the magazines about the room; upset an ink-bottle that stood on the table; dabbled their noses in the pond of ink, and having done their best to destroy and spoil everything there, our Neddy, I suppose, was so delighted at the mischief they had done, that he could not refrain from setting up a loud and prolonged bray of pleasure and exultation.

This brought in some of the officers, and there they found the Rifle-donkey trampling a heap of torn papers and books, with the remains of a blotted "Punch" in his mouth, and Neddy was looking on and expressing his admiration.

So they were ignominiously turned out with kicks and blows; and some of the officers were very angry, and said that both of the donkeys ought to be shot immediately; and the others said that, at any rate, they should be shut up, and not allowed to run at large about the barracks. But, luckily for Neddy, we went away in a day or two, and we never heard how they managed to keep the Rifle-donkey in order. Perhaps he was not so mischievous when he had lost his companion, having then no one to admire his proceedings. We only heard that when his regiment left, some months later, the donkey marched out with them just in front of the band.

As soon as we arrived at our new abode, our first thought was to find a field for Neddy. The fort in which we were to live was quite small; there was a street on one side, and the river close up to the wall on the other; the square, or rather the small space within the wall, was gravelled: no where could we see a blade of grass for our poor donkey, and there appeared to be nothing but brown bog anywhere round. Poor Neddy was put in a stall at the inn for the night; he must have been much surprised at the hay, and the luxurious bed of straw; for a bare field had hitherto been his only resting-place, and green grass the very best thing he had had to eat.

But the stall could not be continued; and as soon as our Papa had leisure, he looked about for a suitable place for Neddy.

There was another small fort about half-a-mile down the river: it consisted of a moat, and a low wall with a few guns. There was one little cottage inside for the gunner in charge; and the whole space inside the wall, consisting of a flat terrace, with sloping banks, and a good space in the middle, was covered with beautiful thick green grass. This was just the place for Neddy; he would not be able to get out, and there was nothing inside that he could hurt; for, of course, the gunner would soon teach him that he was not to poke his nose inside his neat little cottage; and there was plenty of space for him to run about, and fresh moist grass to eat, which I should think he would like better than dry hay in a hot stall. So Papa asked, and obtained leave, to keep our donkey there; and we rode upon him from the inn, and put him in possession of the little fort. He pricked up his ears, and seemed not quite to like the clatter of his hoofs, as he crossed the planks which formed a rude bridge over the moat. We thought nothing of this at the time, but we had to think a great deal of it the next day, when we came to take our ride—in happy ignorance that this would be the very last ride we should ever take on Neddy's back. We kept our saddle and bridle in our kitchen, and had to carry it with us to the fort; so I put it on my head and the bridle round my waist, and my sister drove me, and pretended I was a donkey. So we came very merrily to the fort, and having saddled and bridled Master Neddy, I was mounted, and we proceeded towards the plank bridge. But just at the edge, Neddy stopped short, laid back his ears, tried to turn round, and, in fact, refused to cross. In vain we patted and coaxed, tried to tempt him across with a biscuit, then tied a pocket handkerchief over his eyes, and attempted to cheat him into crossing without his seeing where he stepped.

In no way could we induce him to put his foot upon the plank. The gunner came to our aid; and we all worried ourselves to no purpose. There was no other way out of the fort, and we were ready to cry with vexation. At last, Nurse suggested that it would be best to return home, and ask Papa what we could do; and being at our wit's end, we took her advice and scampered back to the other fort. Papa, having heard our story, sent four of the men with us, telling them they were

to bring Neddy out in the best way they could; but, that, come out, he *must*. When we returned, there stood Neddy, just where we had left him, staring stupidly at the bridge. At first, they wanted to whip him, only leaving open to him the way to the bridge; but we declared he should not be beaten; and the gunner agreed with us, that blows would only make him still more obstinate.

"Well, then," they said, "as he is to come out at all hazards, the only thing we can do is to carry him, one to each leg."

So they began to hoist up poor Neddy, who did not in the least approve of this mode of conveyance. He tried to bite and kick, and twisted himself about in all directions. How we did laugh to be sure! For when two of them had got his fore legs over their shoulders, he made darts at their hair and their faces with his mouth, so that they had to hold his nose with one hand and his leg with the other. Then getting up his hind-legs was worse still; for he jerked and kicked so, as almost to throw down the men; and we quite expected to see the whole four and the donkey roll into the moat together. At last, he was raised entirely on their shoulders, and they ran across the bridge and set him down on the other side.

"Are we to have this piece of fun every morning, Sir?" asked one of the soldiers, as they stood panting and laughing.

"I hope not," I said, "I dare say he will be glad to go in to the grass when we come back from our ride; and if he once crosses it, perhaps he will not be afraid tomorrow."

So we took our ride; Neddy behaved quite as well as usual; his fright did not appear at all to have disturbed his placidity; and in about two hours we again stood before the terrible bridge. The gunner came out to see how we should manage. We took off the saddle and bridle, and invited Neddy to enter. There was the nice fresh grass, and banks to roll upon, and to run up and down, looking very tempting through the gate; and on the other side of the road, there was nothing but heaps of stones and a great brown bog, stretching away as far as we could see, with nothing at all to eat upon it. But for all that, Neddy looked at the bridge; smelt it; and, resolutely turning his back to it, stared dismally at the bog, as if he were thinking,

"I don't see anything that I can eat there."

However, it was evident that although the fear of starvation was before him, he could not make up his mind to cross the ditch; and, in fact, had absolutely determined not to do so.

We were in despair; but feeling sure that it would not do to have him carried in and out every day; we disconsolately led him back to our home, and told our troubles to Papa, who ordered him back to the stall at the inn for the night.

Next day, we tried in all directions to find a field where Neddy could graze; but no such place could be found. So we had a grand consultation as to what must be done for him; and Papa said that he could not keep him in a stall, feeding with hay, for, perhaps, half-a-year or more, as he expected to remain where we were for a long time. So we made up our minds to part with our donkey; and we did not regret it quite so much at this time of year, as winter would soon come on, when, probably, we should not be able to ride much.

We sent Neddy to the nearest town, about ten miles off; and a little boy there became his master. And we kept his saddle and bridle, in hopes of supplying his place some day.

BUNNY, THE WILD RABBIT.

We were now living in England, in a country place—fields and woods and lanes all around. We took great pleasure in all the amusements of country life.

Our Papa had some ferrets, which he used to take out for rat-hunting in the corn stacks with a terrier we had, named Tawney, and other dogs; and now and then he went to a rabbit warren at some little distance. A boy one day brought from this warren a hat full of young rabbits for the ferrets to eat. They were all supposed to be dead; but when Papa was looking at them, he saw that one of the poor little things was alive, so he brought it into the house and gave it to me and my sister, saying that if we thought we could feed it we might keep it.

The poor little thing was so young, that it was a great chance whether we could bring it up; but we had a cook who was very fond of all animals, and she helped us to nurse it. She fed it with milk for a few days, and then it soon began to nibble at bran and vegetables, and in a week or two could eat quite as well as a full-grown rabbit.

The gardener made us a nice little house for it, by nailing some bars across the open side of an old box, and it slept in this by the side of the kitchen fire; but we never fastened it up so that it could not get out, and in the day-time it was seldom in its box, but running about the kitchen, and it soon found its way along the passage into the sitting-room, and then upstairs to the nursery, and into all the bed-rooms. It went up and down stairs quite easily, and seemed perfectly happy running about the house.

It was a very strange thing that our terrier Tawney, of whom I have much to tell afterwards, never thought of touching Bunny, for when out of doors he was most eager after any sort of animal, would run for miles after a rabbit or a hare, went perfectly crazy at the sight of a cat, and was famous for rat-hunting and all such things; but as soon as he entered the house, even if the saucy little Bunny bounded about just before his nose, he would quietly pass by, apparently without an idea that it was a thing to be hunted. In the evenings, when Tawney would lie asleep on the rug, Bunny used to run over him, sometimes nestling itself against his back or legs; then would pat his face with its fore paws, and take all manner of liberties with him, he never so much as growled or snapped at it, and seemed really to like the companionship of the poor little creature.

One very favourite hiding-place of Bunny's was behind the books on the dining-room shelves. These were quite low down to the floor, and if he could find a gap where a book was taken out, he squeezed himself in, and as the shelves were very wide, there was plenty of room for him to run about behind the books. I suppose he liked the darkness, and thought it was something like one of his native burrows, and if he could not remember them, it was his natural propensity to live in narrow dark passages, and therefore he preferred such places to the open daylight. It was very funny to see his little brown face peeping out between the books. Sometimes it happened that a book was replaced whilst Bunny was snugly hidden behind, and then we missed him when we went to put him to bed in his box for the night. First we went to look for him in all the rooms, and about the passages, and if he was not in the bookcase he would always come when we called, so when we saw nothing of the little animal, we went and took a book out of each shelf, and we were sure to see his bright eyes glistening in the dark, and then out came little Bunny with a bound. He did not seem to care for running into the garden or yard, which was odd; but as he grew older his taste for burrowing showed itself strongly.

As he used to follow the cook about everywhere, he had of course been often down to the cellar and larder. These were paved with small round stones, and there was an inner cellar, or rather a sort of receptacle for lumber of all sorts, which was not paved at all; it had a floor of earth. Old hampers and boxes were put away there, sometimes potatoes and carrots, etc., were spread on the floor there, and altogether the place had a very damp, earthy sort of smell, perhaps very like the inside of a rabbit burrow, and one day the cook came to ask Mamma to come and look at the litter Bunny had made in the cellar. We all ran down, and saw that Bunny had scratched up a quantity of earth from between the little stones with which the cellar was paved; in fact the cellar floor looked almost like a flower-bed, all earth. The door into the inner cellar happened to be shut, or most probably he would have commenced his operations where there were no stones to hinder him.

Mamma said that the gardener should press down the earth again between the stones, and tighten any that were loose, and that Bunny must not be allowed at any time to go down into the cellar. But it was very difficult to prevent his doing so. In summer, the meat and the milk were kept down there, as being the coolest place, and the beer barrels were there, and the coals, in different compartments; and to fetch all these different things somebody or other was perpetually opening the door at the top of the stairs. So Bunny frequently found opportunities for slipping in at the open door, and he came every day less and less into the sitting-rooms. One evening he had the cunning to hide himself behind some of the empty hampers in the inner cellar, and when we

called him, and looked about for him in the evening, no Bunny appeared. In vain we took books out of all the shelves, hunted behind the curtains, under the sofas, and in all his usual hiding-places, we were obliged to give it up, and go to bed without finding him.

The next morning, we renewed our search, and seeing no sign of his work in the outer cellar, we determined to have a regular rummage in the inner one. After moving a great many bottles, baskets, boxes, and barrels, we found a great hole. The earth had evidently been just scratched out; for it was quite moist and fresh. The busy little fellow had made a long burrow during the night in the floor of the cellar. When he heard our voices, he came out of his newly-made retreat, and we took him up stairs and gave him some food; for he was quite ravenous after his hard work. Then we consulted with his friend the cook, how to manage about him in future. It would certainly never do to let him go on burrowing under the house; in time we should have all the walls undermined, and the house would come tumbling down upon us, burying us in the ruins. Terrible, indeed, was the catastrophe that we created in our imagination from the small foundation of Bunny's having scratched a hole in the cellar! And now that he had once tried and enjoyed the pleasures of burrowing, we could scarcely expect that he would relinquish it again.

We went to talk about it to Mamma; and we proposed that Bunny should live in the garden.

"But," said Mamma, "I shall have all my nice borders scratched into holes; and the roots of my beautiful rose-trees laid bare; and, in short, the whole flower-garden destroyed, to say nothing of the kitchen-garden, which would, of course, become a mere burrow."

"Well, then, Mamma," we said; "we must make him a much larger house, and keep him in it altogether. We will not let him have his liberty at all; and then it will be impossible for him to do any mischief."

But Mamma said, that although that plan would certainly prevent Bunny from burrowing; she thought that it would not be a very happy life for the poor little animal, who had been accustomed all his life to perfect liberty, and had never been confined to one place.

We could think of no other plan; so begged Mamma to tell us what she thought we had better do.

"Do you remember," said Mamma, "seeing a number of little brown rabbits, running about and darting in and out of their holes, in the wild part of the fir-woods, where we sometimes drive. There is a great deal of fern and grass about there, and nothing at all to prevent the rabbits from burrowing and enjoying their lives without any one to molest them. I advise you to take Bunny there, and to turn him loose in the fir-wood; he will very soon find some companion and make himself a home; and do you not think he will be far happier when leading that life of freedom, than if kept in a wooden house, or even if allowed to burrow in a cellar?"

After some deliberation, we agreed to follow Mamma's advice; and the next day we drove to the fir-wood, taking Bunny with us in a basket.

We drove slowly along the skirts of the wood, looking for a nice place to turn him out. At last, we came to an open space among the fir-trees; the ground was there thickly covered with long grass, ferns, and wild-flowers, and the banks beneath the firs were full of rabbit-holes; we saw many little heads popping in and out.

"This is just the place," we cried. "What a beautiful sweet fresh place to live in; and we got down and went a little way into the grass; then we placed the basket on the ground and opened it. Bunny soon put up his head, snuffed the sunny sweet air, and glanced about him in all directions. No doubt he was filled with wonder at the change from our kitchen or dark cellars, to this lovely wood; with a bright blue sky, instead of a ceiling; waving green trees, instead of white walls; and on the ground, in place of a bare stone floor; inexhaustible delights in the way of food; and soft earth for burrowing. Having admired all this, he jumped out of the basket; first he nibbled a little bit of grass, then ran a little way among the ferns.

"Do let us watch him till he runs into a rabbit hole," we said to Mamma.

And Mamma said she would drive up and down the road that skirted the firs, for about half-an-hour, and we might watch Bunny.

He wandered about for a long time among the grass and plants; and at last we lost sight of him in a thick mass of broom and ferns.

Mamma thought it was useless to search for him; there was no doubt that he would thoroughly appreciate the advantages of the fir-wood. So we gathered a large bunch of wild flowers, jumped into the carriage, and left Bunny in his beautiful new home.

THE JACKDAW.

One morning, my sister was sitting with Mamma at the dining-room window, when they saw me coming down the garden walk, with my head bent down, and something perched on my back.

"Look!" said Mamma, "What has your brother got on his back?"

Up started my sister.

"Oh!" cried she, "It is something alive; it is black: what can it be?"

And she darted out to look at my prize.

It was a fine glossy fully-fledged Jackdaw. The gardener, knowing my love for pets of all kinds, had rescued it from the hands of some boys, who had found a nest of jackdaws, and had presented it to me.

Although it was quite young, it looked like a solemn old man; the crown of its head was becoming very grey; and it put its head on one side, and examined us in such a funny manner, listening with a wise look when we spoke, as if considering what we were saying.

The gardener had cut one of his wings pretty close, and the remaining wing was not very large. We set him down in the garden, and watched him for some time, in order to be certain that he could not fly over the low wall that separated our garden from the road. And we soon saw that he could only flutter a few inches from the ground, and hop in a very awkward sidelong manner; there was no fear of his escaping.

Luckily, there was a large wicker cage, that had once been used for a thrush, in the coach-house. We fetched this out, cleaned it, and placed Jacky in it on the ground near some shady bushes. We left the door open, that he might hop in and out, and always kept a saucer of food for him in the cage.

He soon became very tame; would hop on our wrists and let us carry him about, and liked sitting on our shoulders, as we went about the garden. Near his cage was a large lilac-bush, and he found that he could hop nearly to the top by means of its branches; and he picked out for himself a nice perch there, in a sort of bower of lilac-leaves and flowers.

Finding this much pleasanter than the cage, he soon deserted that entirely; and at night, and whenever he was not hopping about the garden, or playing with us, he was to be found always on the same twig in the lilac bush.

We used to place his saucer of sopped bread, and his saucer of water at the foot of the bush.

When we passed, he used to shout "Jacky!" and soon began to try other words; and tried to imitate all sorts of sounds and noises.

In the heat of summer, when the bed-room windows were all opened at daylight, we used to hear him practising talking in his bush. He barked like the dogs; utterly failed in his attempt to sing like the canaries; mewed like pussy very well, indeed; and then kept up an indescribable kind of chattering, which we called saying his lessons; for we supposed that he intended it to imitate our repeating of lessons, which he heard every morning through the dining-room window.

Sometimes we heard more noise than he could possibly make alone; and we softly got out of our beds, and peeped through the window to discover what it was about. There must have been six or seven other jackdaws, running round and about his bush, hopping up and down into it; apparently trying how they liked his house, and having all sorts of fun and conversation with our Jacky.

Within a few fields of our garden walls, stood the old ruin of a hall or manor-house; it had once, doubtless, been large and handsome; nothing now remained of it but the outer wall, a few mullioned windows, and some remnants of stone-staircases. The walls being very thick and much broken, afforded excellent holes and corners for jackdaws'-nests; for owls and such things. Indeed, it was from one of these holes in the ruined hall, that Jacky had been taken. And the numerous feathered inhabitants of the "Old Hall," as it was called, having spied our pet, sitting in lonely state in his bower among the lilac leaves, doubtless thought he would be grateful for a little company, and the society of his equals; so kindly used to pay him a visit in the early morning, before children or gardener were likely to interfere.

We were rather afraid that the wild jackdaws might entice away our Jacky, by describing to him their own free life, and the mode of existence in the crumbling walls of their home. But when Mamma made us observe how very awkwardly he hopped about with his cropped wing, and how utterly impossible it was for him to fly across two or three fields, and to the top of the ruin, we were satisfied that his stay in our garden was compulsory; and we agreed that the "Old Hall"

jackdaws might visit him as much as they pleased. But they never once came at any other time than very early in the morning.

I suppose Jacky thought that he had kept these visits a profound secret from us.

As he grew older, he became extremely mischievous. When Mamma was busy in the garden, he used to come down from his tree and follow her about from one border to another, watching earnestly whatever she was doing; and whilst she tied up the plants, or gathered away the dead leaves and flowers, he used to put his head on one side, and seemed to be considering for what purpose this or that was done.

Mamma was planting a quantity of sweet peas, in order to have a second and late crop, after the first had begun to fade. She planted them in circles, twelve peas in each, and a white marker was stuck in the centre of each patch. As it was fine warm weather, Mamma expected that these peas would very soon appear; but in a few days, when she went to look at them, she saw that all the white markers had been pulled up and thrown on one side.

So she called to us, "Children! I am afraid you have meddled with my seed markers; for they have all been taken out, and I stuck them firmly in the ground; some one must have touched them."

We assured Mamma that we were not the delinquents; indeed, we were too fond of all the beautiful flowers to injure them in any way.

When we looked closer, we saw that there was an empty hole in each place where Mamma had planted a pea. They had every one been picked out.

Whilst we were wondering who could have done this, the gardener passed, and Mamma showed him the empty holes, and the markers pulled up; and asked him who he thought likely to have done such a piece of mischief.

"I shouldn't wonder if it war he," said the gardener, pointing to Jacky, who, as usual, was close to Mamma, listening attentively to all we said.

"Jacky, Jacky!" shouted he, making some of his awkward jumps at the same time, and going close to the ring of little holes, he peeped down them, with his head on one side, as if to make sure that he had left nothing at the bottom.

We could not help laughing at the queer old-fashioned manner of the creature; but, at the same time, it was very annoying for Mamma to lose all the pretty and sweet flowers through Jacky's greediness.

She said she would plant some more immediately; and she sent my sister, with Jacky on her wrist, to the front of the house, with orders to stay there till the planting was finished, so that the mischievous bird might not watch the whole process, and would not know where the seeds were planted.

I staid to help Mamma; we planted rings of sweet peas in different places from the old ones; and instead of white markers, which might attract Jacky's notice, we stuck in a great many bramble-sticks, all round every patch, so closely that a much smaller bird than Jacky would have found it difficult to squeeze himself in between the rough prickly twigs. Then we thought that all was safe, and we let Jacky come back to his perch.

The next day he had not touched the brambles; but I suppose he had thought it necessary to do something in the way of gardening; so he had fetched up, from the farthest end of the kitchen garden, a roll of bass, or strips of old matting, that was used for tying plants and flowers to sticks. This he had pulled into little shreds, all about the lawn and the flower-beds, and a great deal of time and trouble he must have spent upon his work. How the gardener did scold! saying, that it would take the whole afternoon to clear away the litter, and that Jacky did more mischief than he was worth; and so on.

But Jacky was a privileged person, and did pretty much as he liked; so it was of no use to complain about him.

It was most amusing to see how he teased the gardener when mowing was going on; he would watch his opportunity, and when no one chanced to be looking, he would run away with a bit of carpet or piece of old flannel, that the gardener used to wipe his scythe; or else he would drag away the hone, or sharpening-stone, and hide it under his lilac-bush.

So gardener, finding him a great nuisance on mowing days, told us that he should certainly mow off Jacky's head or legs some day; for he would come hopping about among the cut grass; and if taken up and landed in his tree, he would immediately come down again, and thrust himself just in the way.

So for the future, we took care on mowing days to shut up Jacky in the nursery, or in the dining-room, where he used with a rueful countenance to watch all proceedings through the window, pecking now and then in a spiteful way at the glass.



THE SPARROW-HAWK AND CAT.
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Whilst Jacky was in our possession, we had a sparrow-hawk for a short time. Papa brought him home one evening in a paper bag; he was a very handsome fellow, with such brilliant eyes, and such a beak! He was perfectly wild, and bit furiously at any hand that approached him; so we covered up his head in a pocket-handkerchief, whilst gardener fastened a small chain round his leg. Then we fixed a short stump in the grass, not far from Jacky's lilac, and fastened the end of the chain to the stump. So he could run and hop about for a yard or two round the stump; we intended to keep him there until he became a little tamer, and hoped that the example of his neighbour would teach him good manners. But instead of taking Jacky as a pattern, the new comer bullied him in a most dreadful way. We might have saved ourselves the trouble of chaining him, for he snapped the chain in two with his strong beak, and came down from his stump quite at liberty to roam about. Strange to say, he did not go away altogether, but walked in at the dining-room window. We were seated at tea, and not knowing that the hawk had liberated himself, we were quite startled at hearing a curious flapping in the corner of the room, but we soon saw the two brilliant eyes, and there sat Mr. Sparrow-hawk, on the top of the book-case. We took him out and confined him to his stump again. There he staid quietly all night; but next day we heard Jacky pitying himself in his bush, and we found him fidgetting about in the top of the lilac, and fearing to come down, because Mr. Sparrow-hawk was walking about at the bottom, and whenever poor Jacky ventured down, he was darted at by the new comer, and hastily scrambled up the bush again. This was done out of pure love of teasing, for the hawk would not condescend to touch Jacky's food, consisting of sopped bread; but yet he would not let the poor old grey-head come down to eat his own breakfast. Jacky was quite crest-fallen, and we procured a stronger chain which held Mr. Sparrow-hawk fast on his stump for several days, during which time Jacky regained his equanimity.

But then the chain was burst again, and this time the hawk took to chasing the cats as well as tormenting Jacky. We had two cats, they were very good friends with Jacky, and used wander about the garden a good deal; quite unconscious of what was in store for them; they commenced playing about Mr. Sparrow-hawk's stump, when down stepped the gentleman and nipped the tail of the nearest cat quite tightly in his sharp beak, poor pussy shrieked and mewed, and we had to go to her rescue. At last we left off chaining the hawk, as we found that he did not try to escape, but sat on his stump or else came into the house; and we often were startled by finding him perched on a table, or on the bannisters, but at the same time he would not become tame, and he so terrified and annoyed poor Jacky, that we soon sent him away; and certainly the cats and Jacky must have rejoiced, when they found the savage owner of the stump had disappeared. The only sign of civilization which Mr. Sparrow-hawk had shown, was one evening, when a gentleman who visited us, happened to be playing the flute in the drawing-room. The hawk never came into the room when any one was there, and had very often heard the piano and singing; but probably the peculiar sound of the flute had something very pleasing to the bird's ear, for although this room was full of people, he came to the open window, hopped in, and gradually approached the flute-player, till he perched himself on the end of the flute. When the music ceased, the hawk, quietly took himself out of the window again, and next day was as wild as ever.

One of Jacky's great pleasures during the summer, was bathing or washing at the sink in the back

kitchen. We always took care that he was provided with a large saucer of water, which stood beneath his lilac bush, but this did not appear to be sufficient. One day when the cook was pumping water out of the sink-pump, Jacky jumped up, and put his head under the stream, shouting and fluttering, with expressions of the greatest delight; and after this he generally came every day into the back kitchen, and called and hopped about until cook came and pumped over him. Such a miserable half drowned creature as he looked, with all his feathers sticking close to his body; then he used to repair to the kitchen and sit before the fire, till he became dry. Sometimes he got upon the fender, and when the fire was large, it made his feathers appear quite to smoke, by so rapidly drawing out the water. Once he was actually singeing, when the cook snatched him up and put him out of the window, and it was strange that he seemed to like the roasting at the fire, quite as well as the cold water.

He soon discovered the time that tea was prepared in the kitchen, and regularly came to the window to ask for tea and bread and butter; so a saucer of tea and a piece of bread and butter were placed on the window-sill for him, as punctually as the cook's own tea was prepared; and Jacky sipped his tea, and ate his bread and butter like any old washerwoman. But whilst sitting at the kitchen window he spied all sorts of things on cook's little work-table that strongly tempted his thieving propensities, and coming cautiously one morning, when the cook was absent, he pretty well cleared the table; very many journeys in and out must it have cost him, for when the poor cook returned to her kitchen, she began exclaiming. "Who has been meddling with my work and all my things?" and she called to me and my sister, and asked if we had hidden her work materials to plague her. "No indeed," we said, "we have not been here this morning at all."

"Well then," said she, "what has become of my thimble, my scissors, and reels of cotton, my work, that I laid upon the table, and there was also an account-book of your Mamma's, and a pen; I don't see one of them!" We hunted about for the missing articles. The kitchen window looked out on a plantation, not far from Jacky's bush. My sister looked out. "Oh!" cried she, "there is one leaf of your account-book on the border." "And I declare," exclaimed cook, who had run to the window, "there is one of my new reels twisted round and round yon rose tree; I do believe it's that mischeevous bird." We were delighted. We both sprang out of the window—"There's your thimble," I shouted, "full of wet mould!" "And here are your scissors," cried my sister, "in Jacky's drinking saucer! And there is your half-made shirt, hanging on the rose bush beneath the window!" Poor cook could not forbear laughing. "Well," said she, "he must have been right-down busy to take off all these things in about five minutes. Gather up my things for me, like good bairns." So we ran about picking up the things; the cotton reels were restored with about half their supply of cotton, as he had twisted them all round about the stems of different plants; the pen was stuck into the earth, and as for the account-book, the leaves were all about the garden, some he had even carried down to the cucumber frame, quite at the other end. But he was such a favourite, that even this sort of trick was allowed to pass unpunished. He furnished us with much amusement; and I am now coming to his sad end.

The wall which separated our garden from the road, was very rough and old, full of holes and crumbling mortar. Once or twice, when sitting at the windows, we had seen a small animal run across the gravel walk; we could not discern whether it was most like a rat or a weasel, and probably it came in through one of the holes in the wall. We did think of Jacky; but knowing that he always roosted at the top of the lilac bush, we supposed that he was quite out of the reach of rat or weasel. One morning quite early, our Papa whose window was open, heard a very strange sort of chattering from poor Jacky, so unlike his usual language, that he got up and looked out of his window. Seeing nothing, and hearing no more, he went to bed again; but when Mamma went as usual to give Jacky his breakfast, no call of pleasure came from the bush, no Jacky was there, and he was no where to be seen.

"Then a weasel has taken him," said Papa, when we told him; "the singular cry he made this morning, was doubtless when the weasel seized him." And when we searched about the garden, there we found on a grass bank, at some distance, the remains of our poor pet. The weasel had bitten him behind the ear, and sucked the blood; his feathers were a good deal ruffled, but no other bite had been made. We blamed ourselves much, for not having safely fastened him in a cage every night in the house. But now we could do nothing but bury the body of poor Jacky.

PRICKER, THE HEDGEHOG.

Shortly after poor Jacky's death, Papa called us into the garden.

"Children!" he said, "Here is something for you in my handkerchief. Guess what it is; but don't touch."

The handkerchief looked as if something very heavy was in it; and we guessed all sorts of things, but in vain.

At last Papa let us feel, and my sister grasped it rather roughly; but withdrew her hand quickly, with five or six sharp pricks.

"Oh! it is a nasty hedgehog," cried she; "look how my fingers are bleeding!"

"Not a *nasty* hedgehog," I said, "but a curious nice creature; where did you get it, Papa?"

"It was given to me this morning for you," he replied; "It will live in the garden; and you must sometimes give it a little milk, and it will do very well; and perhaps become quite tame."

The little creature, when placed on the grass, did not curl itself up and appear affrighted, but looked about him, and ran quickly to and fro. We brought some milk out in a saucer, but he could not manage to get his nose over the side; so we made a little pond of the milk on the grass, and he dipped his black snout into it, and then sucked it up greedily.

This hedgehog soon became very tame; when we took him up in our hands, he did not curl up in afright, but let us look at his feet, and touch and pat his curious little pig's face. He helped himself to what he liked best in the garden; and we never found that he rooted up anything, or did the slightest damage; he liked the milk which we gave him daily; and when we were playing on the grass, he used to run about us, as if he liked our company.

We had been told that we should never be able to keep a hedgehog; that they always climbed over the walls, and escaped to the fields and hedges.

But although we did not in any way confine Pricker, he never attempted to leave us, being apparently quite content with his run of the kitchen garden, flower garden and house; for we sometimes carried him into the kitchen, and up stairs into the nursery, where he would roll himself up into some snug corner, and remain apparently asleep for an hour or more.

When we had had Pricker for some weeks, we received a present of a second hedgehog. He was larger, but never became so tame as our first friend; he did not like to be taken up in our hands, and we never could obtain a good look at his black face and legs, as he rolled up on the slightest touch; and when Pricker was running about on the grass, his shy companion used to remain hidden beneath the leaves and plants.

We had, at this time, a very favourite dog; and at the first coming of the hedgehogs, we were in some fear that Tawney would kill them, for he was a most eager hunter of rats, weasels, rabbits, cats; in short, of anything that would run from him.

But every one assured us that a dog would not kill a hedgehog, on account of his sharp prickles; and the first time that we showed Pricker to Tawney, he made a sort of dart at him, and received, of course, a violent prick on the nose; at this he retreated, barking and licking his lips, and dancing round poor Pricker, with every desire to attack again; but hoping to find a spot unprotected by the formidable spikes.

Pricker, however, having tightly rolled himself up, such a spot was not to be found; and, after a great deal of noise and excitement, Tawney retired, and we never observed him to venture again.

When Pricker was running on the grass, or when we were feeding him with milk, Tawney used to play about without condescending to take the slightest notice of the little animal; in short, he pretended not to see him. So that we felt quite easy about the safety of Pricker and his comrade.

What it was that induced Tawney not only to *see* Pricker, but to attack him again, we do not know, as nobody was witness of the catastrophe.

On going into the garden one brilliant morning, Tawney made his appearance in a very excited state, bounding about our feet with a short delighted bark, that was not usually his morning salutation; and on looking more closely at him, we saw that his nose was bleeding; indeed, his whole head and ears were much ruffled and marked.

We did not at first think of Pricker; but on wiping Tawney's face with a wet towel, we found that he was bleeding from many wounds.

"The hedgehog!" we exclaimed, "He must have killed poor Pricker."

So we commenced a grand hunt through the garden, looking under all the cabbage-plants, and in all the usual haunts.

Behind the cucumber frame we found our hedgehog; but as he curled up the moment we looked at him, we knew that it was not Pricker; and on further search we discovered the mangled remains of the poor animal, whose natural armour had not been sufficient to protect him from so brave and plucky a little dog as our Tawney, who must really have suffered greatly from the deep thrusts into his face and head before he could have inflicted a mortal bite.

Now, we thought, what shall we do with the other; as, doubtless, Tawney, would not allow him to live, having found himself the conqueror in the present instance.

Papa said that a gentleman, one of our neighbours, had been telling him that his kitchen was infested with black beetles; and that he had tried beetle-traps, and all sorts of methods of getting rid of them in vain. Papa had told him that the surest way was to keep a hedgehog in the kitchen, as they devour black-beetles greedily.

"Now," said Papa, "as you cannot keep the little creature in safety here, you had better make a present of it to Mr. D—; and I advise you to carry it to him at once."

Accordingly, we took the hedgehog to our neighbour, and it was duly installed in the kitchen.

In a day or two, we went to enquire whether the beetles were decreasing.

Alas! the poor hedgehog had fallen a victim to his own greediness; for, having eaten too many beetles, he was found dead amidst a heap of the slain.

DRAKE, THE RETRIEVER.

It happened at this time that we passed another winter in Ireland; and missing our garden, and other occupations, my father made us a present of a dog.

Drake was a large handsome retriever of a dark brown colour, with very short curly hair. I believe that sort of dog is called the "Irish Retriever;" they are certainly very common in that country. I remember to have seen many of them; but our Drake, we thought, was handsomer than the generality; his coat was more curly and of a better colour, and he was taller—for they often have rather short legs in proportion to their body. He was a very rough bouncing creature, full of life and activity; many a tumble, and many a hard knock we received in our games with him; he used to bound at us, and putting both paws on our shoulders, roll us over like ninepins.

It was winter when he came to us—a very hard winter, almost constant frost, and now and then heavy falls of snow—we were at that time in a small fort on the bank of the Shannon; and although that is a very broad, deep, and rapid river, it was once, during the winter, quite frozen over for more than a week; and, after that, when the strongest current remained unfrozen, there was still a great deal of ice on the sides, and all among the sedges and rushes that grew among the flat banks.

Drake liked the cold very much, and liked rolling in the snow, and being pelted with snow-balls, which was our chief amusement out of doors during the winter.

In the house we had fine games of hide and seek; we hid a glove or pocket-handkerchief under the sofa-cushion, or in the curtain, or in Mamma's pocket, and telling Drake to find it; he would rush frantically about the room, snuffing in every hole and corner, until he brought to light the hidden article. Then we had races, in and out the bed-rooms and sitting-rooms, up and down the stairs, and round the tables; but these races generally ended by something being thrown down, or, at least, by our clothes being torn in Drake's exultation at catching us.

Whilst the hard frosts lasted, Papa had Drake out with him a great deal.

Wild geese and wild ducks abounded on the river; but they were extremely difficult to shoot; they generally flew in great numbers, and seemed to keep a sentinel, or one to look out; for it was almost impossible to approach them near enough to have them within the reach of a shot.

It was now that Drake's fetching and carrying propensities became most valuable.

Papa had a flat punt constructed; it was a most curious-looking boat, so flat that it scarcely stood out of the water at all; inside was fixed a large duck-gun on a swivel, and then there was just room for Papa, and one man, to lie down at the bottom, with Drake; it was rowed by one paddle at the stern.



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The geese and ducks used to come to feed on the river's banks very early indeed in the morning; and so watchful and shy were they, that even in the flat punt, Papa found that he could not come at all near them unperceived. Off they would all go again, making such a flapping with their great wings, and quacking as they went.

So Papa, having noticed a flat swampy sort of place, some way down the river, set out late at night in the punt; and, reaching this feeding-ground, waited there till the flock came flying over them. They made themselves heard sometime before they arrived; and then Papa, the man, and Drake, all crouched down and remained immovable until the birds were right overhead; and then, bang went the great duck-gun, and down tumbled, at least, half-a-dozen great fat geese.

Now was Drake's time; and but for him no geese would have been brought home, although many might have been shot.

Out of the punt sprang Drake, and soon carried back one or two that had fallen into the open water; then he would carefully get upon the thin ice, between the rushes and the coarse grass, and bring to light any wounded bird that had sought to find a shelter there. Then again into the water where great thick reeds prevented the boat from going; if the birds dived, he dived after them; and, in short, none escaped him; he swam after them, scrambled along the ice after them, rummaged in the weeds all stiff with frozen snow, and having seized one and hurried back to the boat with it, off he would start for another.

But when the flock had once received a shot, they came no more to the same place that night; so no more was to be done, unless a chance bird or two on the way home. Sometimes they flew one or two together; we have seen them from the windows of the fort, fly quite close to the bridge in the daytime; but only great hunger could have driven them to this.

When the party reached home, and the birds were spread out on the floor to be looked at, how pleased Drake was, and how proudly he snuffed from one to the other.

The wild geese were very handsome birds, not so large as common geese, but very plump, and with a beautiful dark brown plumage. They were very good to eat, for they do not live on fish, as some suppose, but eat only the weeds and grass that they find in certain spots along the river's bank. But the ducks were handsomer still, very nearly as large as the geese; less tough when cooked, and having brilliant blue feathers in each wing. Then there was a smaller kind of duck, with green feathers instead of blue, in the wings; this green was like the humming bird's green, as bright as emerald.

Besides these, there were teals, very pretty-looking things with silvery looking feathers on the breast, and a variety of small ducks, and curlews. All pretty, and all good to eat; we had to thank Drake for every one of them, as without his help very few would have been picked up; there was so much thin ice along the river, that would not have borne a greater weight than Drake, so when they fell upon this, they were quite out of man's reach, to say nothing of the difficulty of groping out a wounded bird from a wilderness of long grass and rushes, growing in pretty deep water. Drake highly enjoyed the night expeditions, and when the punt was getting ready, or the gun cleaning, he would jump about and bark, as if to say "I know what is in contemplation."

When the winter was nearly passed, we went back to England, leaving Drake in the fort; being much played with and sometimes teased by the soldiers, he became very rough, and rather inclined to snap and bite. Shortly afterwards he was sent to us in England, and on his arrival we brought him in, to have a game with us in the house. We had a large ball, and were making Drake fetch it, when we rolled it to the end of the room. This went on very well for some time, excepting that Drake did not give the ball up without a growl, which he had never done formerly; and at last, he laid down with it between his fore feet, and I desired him to bring it in vain, so I went to him and took it in my hand, when he flew at me with a growl, and bit my cheek. It was not a very severe bite, but Mamma said she would not keep the best dog in the world after he had bitten one of us, and that Drake must immediately be sent away. Then Papa wrote to a gentleman who knew what a clever dog at finding game Drake was, and he agreed to buy him. So he was sent off without our seeing him again.

TAWNEY, THE TERRIER.

We now come to the very chief of our favourites, our dear dog Tawney. Before he arrived, we only had a setter who lived in his kennel in the yard, and we never petted him much; and once when Papa went away for several months, he took the dog with him, so we were without any guard.

At this time a great many robberies had taken place, and houses had been broken into in the neighbouring town. There appeared to be a gang of house-breakers going about. And when Mamma was writing to our Grandmamma, she said that she quite expected a visit from this gang, some night, as Papa was away, and no man in the house. Grandmamma replied that the best safeguard was a little terrier, sleeping inside the house, and that she would send her one; and in a few days we received a beautiful terrier, close haired and compact, with such brilliant dark eyes and of a yellowish colour, more the colour of a lion than anything else, so we named him "Tawney." A bed was arranged for him in a flat basket, which was placed every evening near the back door, and we soon found what sharp ears he had, and what a good watch-dog he would prove. If Mamma got up after every one had gone to bed, and opened her own door as softly as possible, Tawney heard the lock turn, and barked instantly. He always gave notice when anybody entered the front gate, or came into the yard, and we felt sure that no housebreaker could approach the house *unheard* at least.

Tawney became our constant companion. He took his meals with us, sat under the table during our lessons, walked out with us, joined in all our romps and games; and was really almost as companionable as another child could have been. At hide and seek, running races, leaping over a pole, and blind man's buff, he played as well as any boy, and when we drove in the pony carriage, he amused us excessively. He darted into every door or gate he found open, and in passing through the town he behaved so badly with respect to the cats, that we were obliged to take him into the carriage, until we had quite left the streets. If he saw a poor quiet cat sitting at a door he flew at her; and if the cat took refuge in the house, Tawney followed, barking and yelping, and doing all he could to worry poor puss. Of course this was not at all pleasing to the inmates, and generally Tawney emerged, as quickly as he entered, followed by a flying broom-stick, sometimes by the contents of a pail of dirty water; and often by an angry scolding woman, whom we had to appease as we best could. Then if he saw a little child with a piece of bread, or a mug of milk, he would seize upon the food, knocking down the child by the roughness of his spring; and then we had again to apologise and explain, and regret, and so on; and although all these pranks were done in the joy and delight of his heart, at starting for a good run in the country, that was no comfort to the aggrieved cats and children; and he became so unbearable when in the town, that we used to make a circuit to avoid the streets, or else as I said before, take him inside the carriage.

Then when we reached the lanes and roads, we gave him his liberty, which he thoroughly enjoyed. How he raced before us, how he sprang over the hedges and walls, sometimes disappearing entirely for a field or two, and then suddenly darting out from some wood or garden! Once or twice he returned to the carriage with his nose bloody; we could not discover what he had been worrying. But it must be confessed that he was a fierce little animal, and had no idea of fearing anything.

Sometimes he disappeared altogether when running after the carriage, and more than once staid out all night and even two nights; but always returned safely and in good plight, as if he had not been starved.

We used to wish that he had the power of telling us his adventures on these occasions: where he had slept; what pranks he had played; and in how many scrapes and difficulties he had found himself.

His greatest delight was when Papa took him with us to hunt a stack for rats. Oh! what a wonderful state of excitement was Tawney in; he used to sit staring at a hole in the stack as if his eyes would spring from his head, and shaking in every limb with delightful expectation. Then, when the rat bolted from his concealment, what a sharp spring did the little fellow make; and having dispatched his victim, would peer up to the top of the stack and seem to examine so carefully all up the side, to discover another hole that looked promising. If none offered, he would run off to another stack, and snuffing all round it, search most carefully for signs of rat holes.

One of Tawney's most annoying tricks, was his love of fighting; he scarcely ever met with another dog, without flying at him and provoking him to a severe contest, in which torn ears were his usual reward; but this sort of hurt was perfectly disregarded by him.

On one occasion, we went a journey to the sea-shore, and Tawney was put into a dog-box, with several other dogs.

While the train was in motion the rattle and noise prevented us from hearing them; but at the first station a most tremendous yelping, snarling, and shrieking arose from the dog-box; and, on

opening the door, the whole number of dogs were tearing and biting each other; no doubt, having been invited to the contest by our naughty Tawney. The combatants having been separated by dint of dragging at their tails, legs, and bodies, Tawney, with damaged mouth and ears, though wagging his tail and wriggling about with pleasure, was consigned to a solitary prison for the rest of the journey; and the remaining dogs were left to lick their wounds in peace.

We were anxious to see what Tawney would think of the sea; we had neither river, pond, or lake, near our home in the country, so had never had an opportunity of trying his powers of swimming.

The first day that we went down to the shingle, the sea was very rough; great tops of white foam rolling over on the beach; and we had no idea that the little fellow would venture into the midst of such a very novel-looking element.

However, we flung a stick in. "Fetch it, Tawney! Fetch it!"

And in plunged the bold little animal; the first wave threw him up on the beach again, looking rather astonished; but he did not hesitate to try again. The water being so rough, we did not urge his going in any further, fearing that he might be washed away; but on smooth days, he would swim out a long way, and bring back any floating thing that was thrown in; and he enjoyed his swims as much as any regular water-dog could do.

He had a habit of paying visits by himself, when we were at home; he used regularly to go down the road to a farmer, at some little distance, every morning about eight o'clock, and quietly return, trotting along the footpath at nine, which, doubtless, he knew to be the breakfast hour.

Whilst we were at the sea-side, he used to visit a family with whom we were intimate. Running to their gate, he waited till some one rang, and entered with them; if their business was not in the drawing-room, he again waited till some other person opened the door, and then he settled himself on the hearth-rug for about half an hour; after which, he took leave by wagging his tail, and came home again.

The lodging in which we were, was one on a long terrace, the front looking on the sea, and the back having a long strip of yard opening into a lane. The kitchen being in front, Tawney found that he was not heard when he barked to be let in at the back of the house.

But the servant did not approve of coming up the steep kitchen stairs to let in Mr. Tawney, when the back door was level with the kitchen, and only a step for her; and, in some way, Tawney comprehended this; for he used to come to the front of the house; and the area of the kitchen-window being close to the front door, he was sure that his bark was heard. Then he raced round the end of the terrace, and through the lane, to the back door; and by the time cook had gone to open it, there was Mr. Tawney ready to enter.

There being no fear of housebreakers or thieves here, the dog was allowed to sleep in Mamma's bed-room; we provided him with a box and some folds of carpeting at the bottom, and made him, we thought, a soft comfortable bed.

But Tawney much preferred sheets and blankets, and, my sister sleeping in a little bed in the corner of Mamma's room, he used to wait till she was fast asleep, and then slip himself on to the bed so quietly as not to wake her; and, getting down to the foot of the bed, would remain there till morning.

But Mamma said he must stay in his box; and forbad my sister to allow him to get on the bed.

As, however, he never tried to do so until she was asleep, she could not prevent it. So Mamma listened, and when she heard Tawney very softly leave his box and go to the bed, she got up and whipped him, and put him back in his box, ordering him to stay there.

Several nights this took place; till Tawney had the cunning to wait till Mamma also was asleep, when he crept into the warm resting-place, and staid there in peace till the morning.

When daylight appeared, he returned to his own bed, in order to avoid the morning whipping, which he knew would come, were he discovered in the forbidden place.

When we were returning home, we were to make some visits in London; so, thinking it best not to take Tawney, we entrusted him to a man who was going to our own town, with many charges as to feeding and watching him.

And when we had left London and arrived at home, there was poor Tawney safe and well, and extravagantly delighted to see us.

When we enquired about his behaviour on the road, of the man who had brought him, he told us that he had been in a terrible fright at the London station, thinking that he had lost Tawney entirely.

He had to cross London from one station to another; and there was an hour or two to spare before the starting of the train from the second station; so, wishing to leave the station for that time, and fearing to risk Tawney in the street, he tied him up, as he thought, safely in a shed

belonging to the station. He was also taking with him some luggage belonging to us, among which was a large round packing-case, that usually stood in Mamma's room; these were shut up in a store-house at the other end of the station.

At the appointed hour our friend returned to the station, and went to claim the dog; but no Tawney was in the shed, only the end of the broken rope which had fastened him. In great anxiety he ran about enquiring of all he met. No one knew anything of the dog, no one had seen him pass out of the station; and after fruitless search in all the waiting and refreshment rooms, and in short through the whole station; he was reluctantly obliged to go for the luggage in order to pursue his journey, when, on opening the door of the store-house, what was his joy on beholding the missing Tawney, seated on the top of the round packing case, that he well knew to belong to his mistress. How he found out that the luggage was in the store-house, and how he got in, we could not of course discover; and it only confirmed us in our opinion of Tawney's intense wisdom. We and Tawney enjoyed ourselves much for some weeks, taking long walks, long drives, and hunting rats in all the neighbours' stacks. We had some fine games in our own field, and a great deal of basking in the sun, as it was a beautiful summer, with constant sunshine.

I mentioned, that Tawney used to enrage the people in the cottages by trying to worry their cats. On one of these occasions, when he had made a dreadful confusion at the door of a cottage containing children, upsetting a tub of soap-suds, dirtying the clean sanded floor, and frightening an old woman nearly out of her wits, by his reckless endeavour to seize on the cat; a man had come angrily out of the cottage, and coming close up to the carriage, declared with a clenched fist, and a furious countenance, that if Tawney ever approached his door again, he would kill him. Papa, who happened to be with us, said that if he would give Tawney a good beating, it would punish the dog without punishing us; and as he was a great favourite, he begged that he would not think of killing him. Then we drove on, leaving the man standing sulkily in the road.

Whether Tawney had gone alone to this cottage for the purpose of worrying the cat, or whether the man had taken his revenge for the first offence, or whether he had done any thing in the matter, we shall never know; but we could not help suspecting him when the following sad affair happened.

It was a very sultry day, too much so to run or to do anything but lie on the grass, which we did during the whole morning. Papa sat reading on a bench placed in the shady side of the house, and we were on the grass beside him; Tawney lay roasting in the sun, and, now and then, panting with heat, came to us in the shade, or even went into the dining-room window and flung himself down under the table; some steps led into the garden from the window, and as the window-sill was not level with the dining-room floor, but raised about two feet above it, we had a stool or sort of step inside the window, as well as outside; Tawney generally sprang through, without troubling himself about the steps.

Soon after Tawney had entered the house, apparently for the purpose of cooling himself, we heard a tumble, then another, and I got up to see what he was doing. "Why Papa," I cried, "what can be the matter with Tawney, he is trying to jump out of the window and cannot reach the sill, and falls back again." Papa came to see, and again the dog made an ineffectual spring at the low window-sill. Papa lifted him out into the garden, saying he supposed he had half blinded himself with lying so long in the hot sunshine. But we continued to watch him, and presently we saw his limbs twitching in a sort of fit, and he ran wildly about us. Papa called to the gardener, and they took him into the stable, forbidding us to approach him, as they feared he was going mad; they dashed water over him as he lay exhausted on the straw in the stable; but soon the fits became more and more violent, and our poor dog in a few hours was dead.

A man that examined him by Papa's desire, said there was no doubt that he had been poisoned by strychnine. He might have picked up something so poisoned while running in the roads, or it might have been purposely done by the angry man to whom I alluded. We never found out the manner in which it had been administered, and could only regret most heartily the loss of our dear playfellow. We had not another dog for a very long time, and never shall love one so well as Tawney.

PUFFER, THE PIGEON.

What pretty things are pigeons, how happy and nice they look sitting on the house-top, and walking up and down the sloping roof with their pretty pink feet and slender legs; and then how they flutter up into the air, making circles round the house, and now and then darting off on a straight flight across the fields. Soon after we came to live at our country house, my sister had a present of a pair of fantail pigeons, quite white. They were beauties, not the slightest speck of any colour was on their feathers; and when they walked about with their tails spread out in a fan, and their necks pulled up so proudly, we thought them the prettiest creatures we had ever seen. Our Papa allowed us to have a nice place made for them in the roof of the stables, with some holes for them to go in at, and a board before the holes for them to alight on; inside there were some niches for nests, and as the fantails were quite young, we soon ventured to put them in there. At first we spread a net over their holes, so that they could only walk about on the board outside; and when we thought they knew the look of the place well, we let them have their entire liberty, and they never left us.

Next we obtained a pair of tumblers, these were small dumpy little birds, of a burnished sort of copper colour, and such queer short little bills; when they were flying, they turned head over heels in the air, without in the least interrupting their flight. Then we had some capuchins, they were very curious-looking creatures, white and pale reddish brown, with a sort of a frill sticking up round their necks, and the back of their heads. We called them our Queen Elizabeths, for their ruffs were much more like her's than like a monk's hood, from which resemblance they are named. Besides these, we had several common pigeons, some pretty bluish and white. We fed them regularly in the yard, and when they saw us run out of the house, with our wooden bowl full of grain, they came fluttering down and took it out of our hands, and strutted about close to us so tamely and nicely; and then they would whirl up again in the air.

We lived quite close to a railway station, and at one time of the autumn, a great number of sacks of grain were brought there for carriage to distant parts of the country; for the corn fields were very numerous about us. In the process of unloading these sacks from the carts, and again packing them on the railway trucks, a quantity of corn was spilt about, and our pigeons were not slow to find this out; we noticed they were constantly flying over into the station-yards; and sometimes when we went to feed them in the morning, they did not come for our breakfast at all, having already made a great meal at the station. There was an old pigeon-house in the roof of the luggage store, which formed part of the station buildings; and our ungrateful pigeons actually went and built some of their nests in this pigeon house in preference to our own. At least, they laid their eggs there; as for building a nest they never did, they trod an untidy sort of hollow in the straw and wool we placed for them, and there laid their eggs.

We often wondered why it was they did not build beautiful compact and smooth nests like the little hedge birds. That was the only thing about the pigeons that we did not like—their dirty untidy nests, and the frightful ugliness of the newly-hatched pigeons. The first nest they had, was made by the white fantails, and we had anxiously watched for the hatching, expecting that we should have two beautiful little soft white downy pigeons, something like young chickens, or, still better, young goslings. And how disappointed we were when we saw the little frights, with their bare great heads and lumps of eyes, and their ugly red-skinned bodies, stuck full of bluish quills. After that we did not much trouble ourselves about the young pigeons, until they came out with some feathers, and tried to fly; but for all that, it was very provoking to see them go off to another house.

Our favourite of all, was a large handsome pouter or cropper. He was of a kind of dove colour, mixed with green and bluish feathers, and when he stood upright, and swelled out his breast, he was quite beautiful. He became tamer than any one of the pigeons; he would come to the window when we were breakfasting, and take crumbs of bread from our fingers, he would perch on our shoulders when we called to him in the yard, and liked to strut about at the back door, and to come into the kitchen and to peck about beneath the table; we called him Puffer. But he too was very fond of going to the station, and sitting on the store-house roof; and at last, really half our pigeons had their nests in the station house instead of in ours. We went and fetched them out, nests and eggs altogether, several times; and then we persuaded the station men to block up the door of the old pigeon-house, which prevented them from laying their eggs there, but they still greedily preferred that yard to our own. Then came the harvest time. There were many fields of corn within sight of our house, and we perceived that our naughty pigeons took to flying out to these fields, instead of going so much to the station. How beautiful they looked with Puffer at their head, darting along in the sunshine, till they were almost out of sight; and in about an hour they would come back again, spreading themselves all over the house-top, and lying down to bask in the sun, and to rest after their long flight, and the good meal they had made in the corn-fields. Puffer would always come down to us, however tired, and let us stroke him and kiss his glossy head and neck.

One day after they had all flown far out all over the fields, we heard a shot at a distance; we were not noticing it much, beyond saying to each other, "There is some one shooting;" but the gardener who was with us observed, "I wish it may not be some one firing at your pigeons. The farmers can't bear their coming after the grain; I am sorry they have taken to flying away to them corn-fields." This alarmed us, and we watched eagerly for the return of the pigeons. "Here they come," I exclaimed, and presently they were all settling as usual about the house top, Puffer in the midst quite safe. "Count them, Sir," said the gardener. So we set to work to number the fantails, tumblers, Queen Elizabeths, and dear old Puffer; all right, but surely there were not so many of the common pigeons; no, two were missing! "They've been shot then, sure as fate," said the gardener, "we shall lose them all I fear." Next morning we gave them a double breakfast, hoping that not feeling hungry, they would not again go to the fields; but off they went as usual about mid-day, and very anxiously we watched for their returning flight; we could always see Puffer a long way off, he was so much larger than the others, and we longed for the time when all the corn would be reaped and carried away, out of the reach of our favourites.

One by one our pigeons diminished; we begged the gardener to speak to the farmers about, and ask them not to shoot our pigeons; but he said that it must be very annoying to the farmers to see a tribe of birds devouring the produce of their hard labour and anxiety; and that he did not wonder at their endeavouring to destroy the thieves. He said that if he spoke about it, the farmer would say, "Shut up your birds, and if they don't meddle with us, we shan't meddle with them." Then we consulted whether we could cage our pigeons; but they had always had their liberty, and we were sure that they would not thrive if shut up. So we must take our chance, and the naughty things persisted in flying over the fields to the distant corn. One day, no Puffer returned to us; and in despair we gave away all our remaining pigeons.

DR. BATTIUS—THE BAT.

I now come to rather a singular pet. Every one—or rather every child—has a dog, or a cat, or rabbits, or thrushes; little birds in cages are dreadfully common, and so are parrots; so are jackdaws; and, as for ponies and donkeys, what country-house is without them.

But I think that many people have not had a tame bat. It is not generally a tempting-looking creature; and I should never have thought of taking any trouble to procure one with the intention of petting it.

Our bat put itself into my possession by coming or falling down the chimney of my bed-room.

The room was dark; and I heard a scratching and fluttering in the chimney for some time. Then I heard the flapping of wings about the room; and thought that a robin or a martin had perhaps fallen into the chimney and had been unable to make its way again to the top.

I got up, and was seeking a match to light my candle, when the little creature came against me, and I caught it with both hands spread over it.

I felt directly that it was not a bird; there is something so peculiarly soft and strange in the feel of a bat; and I was nearly throwing it down with a sort of disgust.

Second thoughts, which are generally best, came in time to prevent my hurting the poor little creature; and I lighted the candle, and took a good look at my prize.

It was about the size of a small mouse; it kept its wings closely folded, and I placed it in a drawer, and shut it up till morning, when I and my sister had a long inspection of my prize.

I do not know of what variety it was; for there are, I believe, a great many different kinds. He had not long ears; his eyes were very small indeed, though bright.

We had never handled a bat before, and were not soon weary of examining his curious blackish wings; the little hooks, where his fore-feet, apparently, should have been; his strangely-deformed hind feet; and his mouse-like body and fur.

We wrapped him up and shut him in a basket, and during the day, I caught a handful of flies, of all sizes, and put them into the basket.

When it grew dusk, we opened the basket, and he soon came out and fluttered about the room for a time; we found that he had eaten all the flies, but not the wings of the larger ones.

When he had been at liberty for some time, we easily caught him again, and shut him up; and when he became a little more used to me, I left him out all night, being careful to close the opening into the chimney; and he used to have the range of mine and the adjoining room during the night.

We tried him with a variety of food. I had fancied that bats ate leaves and fruit; but he never touched anything of that kind. He would eat meat, preferring raw to cooked; and would drink milk, sucking it up, more than lapping.

He evidently did not like the light; but sometimes would make flights about the room when candles were burning; and, occasionally, I took him about in my jacket pocket in the day-time. If I took him out to show him to any one in the broad day-light, he never unfolded his wings to fly, but remained quietly in my hand with his wings folded.

We had been reading a book in which one of the characters, a strange old man, was named Dr. Battius; so we called our bat after him; and I do think the little creature learnt to know me. He never fluttered or tried to get away from me; and would always let me take hold of him without manifesting any fear.

He went several long journeys in my pocket; once I had him with me in a lodging by the sea-side, and amused myself much with him. He would sit on the table in the evening, lap his milk at my supper-time, and would vary his exercise by crawling or progressing along the floor, darting about the room, or hanging himself up to something by his hooks, and letting his body swing about.

He cleaned himself carefully, used to rub his nose against the soft part of his wing, or rather his black skin, for it was not much like a wing, and would scratch and clean his body with his hind feet.

People used to say, "How can you keep such a repulsive sort of animal?"

But, in fact he was not a dirty creature; he spent as much time rubbing and scraping himself, as any cat would do; and he ate nothing dirty, raw beef and flies being his chief food, with a very little milk.

We had heard and read that bats have some extraordinary way of seeing in the total darkness, or else that their touch is so delicate, that they can feel when approaching any wall or hard thing; and it was so with Dr. Battius, excepting on one occasion—the night when I first caught him; then he struck against my chest; so that I secured him easily, by clasping both hands over him.

But I never after saw him strike against anything; he used to fly about my room at night, and I never heard the least tap against any object; he even would come inside my bed curtains, and fly to and fro; but I could not detect the slightest sound of touching them.

The black skin that formed his wings was so wonderfully soft to the touch, that perhaps he felt with that, when the wings were spread out.

I cannot imagine that his crushed-up little eyes could see in the dark; they appeared scarcely good enough to see at all in any light.

This poor little creature lived in my care for many months.

I went to visit some friends who were not fond of any animal in the house; and I knew that this dusky little creature would inspire disgust, if not terror, among some of the party. So, unwillingly, I left him at home.

But my sister being away too, the servant, perhaps gave him too much food, or he missed his exercise about the room. One morning he was found dead in his drawer.

I have no idea whether bats are long-lived animals; or whether they would, for any time, flourish in solitude. Had I kept the poor little doctor with me, I might have found out more about him.

THE CHOUGH.

I think I may here describe a bird, which, although he was not our property, was watched with much interest by us, and which we never met with but once.

It was a Chough.

It belonged to an officer who was living in the same barracks; and we first saw it perched on the window-sill of his kitchen.

"Is that a crow?" asked my sister, pointing to it, as we stopped to examine it.

"That cannot be a crow," I answered; "its legs are yellow, as well as its beak; and it is more slender, and a more bluish sort of black."

When we approached and offered to touch it; it did not draw back or appear shy, but allowed us to stroke its back and look at it quite closely.

It was a very handsome bird; its plumage beautifully glossy; its claws hooked and black; and its tongue very long. It was pecking at a plate of food that was near it; but did not appear very hungry.

Presently, the officer's servant came to the window, and we enquired what it was.

"A Cornish Chough," was the answer.

We had never seen one before; indeed, knew nothing about that sort of bird. We had, indeed, heard its name in an old song or glee, called the "Chough and Crow;" or that begins with those words.

So we asked Mamma about it when we went in, and she showed us an account of it, in which we found that it is not at all common everywhere, like a crow; but that it only lives in the cliffs of Cornwall, Devonshire, and Wales; and has sometimes, but rarely, been seen about Beachy Head, and in no other part of Europe, excepting the Alps. So that it is really a very uncommon bird.

The same account said that they could be taught to speak like a jackdaw.

But we never heard this one say anything, or make any noise, except a sort of call or croak, with which he answered the servant who attended to him.

We always stopped to stroke and pat him when we went out to walk; and he was a great pet with the soldiers, and went about some years with the regiment.

He showed his intelligence and quickness in a very curious way.

During the time that the regiment was quartered in Scotland he was lost; he had either wandered out of the barrack-gate, and had failed to find his way back again; or he had been picked up and carried away by some thief. He was, however, never seen or heard of for many months, and was given up as lost.

The regiment then removed to Edinburgh; and two or three soldiers went to visit a sort of zoological garden in the outskirts. There were a great number of cages, among other things; and the attention of the men was attracted to one of these cages by the violent fluttering and exertion made by the inhabitant to get out.

On coming closer to the cage, they perceived that the prisoner was the old Cornish Chough; and they asked the keeper if it was lately that they had confined it, since it seemed so uneasy.

The man said that it had been in that cage for a long time, and never had been otherwise than perfectly quiet and satisfied.

They wished to take it away, saying they knew the bird's former master; but the owner refused to part with it, and the soldiers passed on.

On their way back, the keeper was still standing watching the bird; who, as soon as the soldiers came again in sight, fluttered and dashed itself violently against the bars.

The man said that losing sight of them, it became quiet, and sat dolefully on its perch; but the moment it again saw them, it exerted all its strength to reach them.

There is no doubt that the poor bird recognised the red-coats, among which it had formerly lived, and wished to go to his old friends.

The soldiers told the officer how they had discovered his old pet; and he purchased it from the keeper of the garden.

The poor Chough manifested great pleasure at being again in the barrack kitchen, and followed the fortunes of the regiment until his master's death, when we lost sight of the yellow-billed yellow-legged Cornish Chough.

THE KITTENS—BLACKY AND SNOWDROP.

"Guess what we have, Mamma! Guess!" cried I and my sister, as we ran into the dining-room, with something wrapped up in each of our pinafores. So Mamma felt, and found that we had something alive; then she guessed guinea-pigs, then rabbits; at last we rolled out on the carpet two little kittens.

They were such soft, pretty little things; one was black and the other white. I chose the black one, and my sister had the white. They lived chiefly in the nursery, and were soon very familiar, and quite at home.

My black one, however, was pleased to be much fonder of my sister than of me; it particularly insisted on sleeping on my sister's bed; and we sometimes changed beds to see if it would follow her. Blacky would jump on the bed, come and look at my face, waving his tail about in the air, and seeing that it was his own master, he would bound off the bed and go and look in the other, and being satisfied that my sister was there, he would curl himself up at her back. In consequence of some illness in the nursery, my sister was sent to another room, and Blacky not finding her in the nursery, went and looked into all the bed-rooms until he found her. Snowdrop, as we called the white cat, used to sleep in a large wardrobe, rolled up upon some of the clothes. They were both very fond of getting into cupboards and drawers, and often startled us, and others, by springing out, when drawers and closet-doors were opened in different rooms; we were obliged to forbid them the drawing-room, because they would get on the chimney-piece, and on the top of a book-case where there was a good deal of china, and we thought they would certainly throw down and break it all in their rough games.

At the time we had these cats, we had also the jackdaw and hawk; and Blacky and Snowdrop often went to have a game with Jacky, who liked them; they used to run after him round his bush, and amuse themselves with whisking their tails about, and seeing him peck at them. But when they tried the same game with the hawk, they found a very different creature to deal with; for the savage bird darted at the playful little creatures, and very nearly bit off Blacky's tail; and afterwards, if he saw them in the garden, although they did not offer to approach his stump, he would slyly steal among the shrubs and bushes, till he got near enough to them to make a dart at their tails, and many a savage bite he gave them.

We did not keep these cats long. Blacky disappeared entirely; whether some one stole him for the luck of having a black cat, or what became of the poor little fellow we did not know. Snowdrop was fond of running on the top of the garden-walls, and of hunting little birds about the roads; and it seems strange that so active an animal as a cat should allow itself to be run over, but Snowdrop, in hunting a bird across the railway, which ran on the other side of our garden wall, was actually killed by the train.

BLUEBEARD, THE SHETLAND PONY.

Our donkey, Neddy, was never replaced; but instead of him we had a far better pet, a beautiful little Shetland pony! We had left Ireland, and went to live in England; we had a nice garden, a paddock and some fields, and a stable; and when we saw all this, we ran to Papa and begged that we might now have another donkey, as there was plenty of room for him. But Papa said we might now very well ride a pony, and that he would look out for a nice one. Shortly after this he went to a large horse-fair at Doncaster, and almost before he could have arrived there, we began to look out and watch for his return with the pony.

We made all kinds of guesses about the size and the colour that the pony would be, and wrote out a long list of names suitable for a Shetland. I wished that it might be black, and my sister wished for a cream colour; but I believe that no such thing exists as a cream-coloured Shetland. And after all our expectation, Papa came home so late, that we did not see him that night.

We besieged his door next morning, shouting, "Did you find a pony? Have you bought the pony?" Yes, a pony had come, but we were not to look at him until Papa came down; and after breakfast, Papa sent for it to the dining-room window. Oh! what a nice little roly-poly of rough hair it was. It was very small, and its funny little face peeped out from the shaggy bunch of hair over its eyes, in such a sly way. Its mane was a complete bush, and its tail just swept along the ground. And all over its body the coat was so thick and soft, and so long, that the legs looked quite short and dumpy. Altogether, it was the most darling little fellow any one could imagine; its colour was dark-brown, and its mane and tail nearly black.

Papa promised to get a nice saddle and bridle for it, as we declared that Neddy's old pad was so shabby, that it would be a shame to put it on this little beauty. But, meantime, we were well satisfied to use it, and commenced our rides forthwith; scarcely a day passed without our making a long excursion. Sometimes Mamma walked with us, and sometimes only nurse; we used to trot along the road for some distance, and then canter back again to Mamma, so that we had a long ride, whilst she only took a moderate walk; and we soon had explored every lane and bye-road near our new home.

After much debate about the pony's name, we had fixed on two or three, and finding that we could not agree on the important subject, we wrote out the names on slips of paper, and drew lots. "Bluebeard" was the name that we drew the oftenest, so that was decided; and as he really had a very long beard, we thought it very appropriate.

Although Bluebeard was a decided beauty, it must be confessed that he had a great number of tricks, and was not the best-behaved pony in the world. When we were out riding, if we met any carts on the road, or in passing through the streets, Mamma or nurse used to lead him by the bridle; this *we* used to consider a great affront to our horsemanship, and Bluebeard, doubtless, thought it an affront to himself, for he could not bear to be led; he shook his head, and tried to get the bridle out of their hand, and failing to do so, he revenged himself by biting and tearing Mamma's shawl or dress; and our poor nurse had scarcely a gown left that was not in rents and holes from Bluebeard's teeth; she said it took her half her time to mend her clothes, for she never went out with us and returned with her clothes whole. This amused us very much; but Mamma thought she should have liked Bluebeard better if he had been less playful.

With good living, and the care that was lavished on him in our stable, he soon became fatter, and very frisky, so full of wild spirits and play, that we could not quite manage him. So Mamma had a very small basket-work carriage made, just to fit Bluebeard; it was painted dark-blue, and was very pretty; it had two seats, so just carried us, and Mamma and nurse.

Now we drove out one day, and rode the next; the carriage was so low, that we could jump in and out as Bluebeard trotted along; and we liked to run, holding on by the back, to see whether we could run as fast as Bluebeard at his fastest trot; and when we jumped out, he used to turn his head round and look for us, and sometimes made a full stop till we got in again. Mamma thought that the heavier work of drawing the carriage with four people in it, would prevent Bluebeard from becoming too frisky and unmanageable, as, certainly, it was far greater labour for him than a quiet trot with only myself or sister on his back; but I believe that the more work he had, the more corn he ate, for he scampered along with the carriage as if it were nothing at all, and grew more and more skittish. It was very amusing to watch for donkeys as we drove along the roads, for he could not bear to meet one; if he spied the long ears at a little distance, he used to fling up his head, stand still for an instant, and then turn sharply round, and rush away in the opposite direction to the offending object; this he did whether we were riding or in the carriage. It signified but little when we rode; for all that happened was our tumbling off, when he twitched himself round; and as he met Mamma and nurse a little way back on the road, he was always stopped.

But in the carriage it was a very awkward trick, and we should often have been upset, had not the front wheels turned completely under the body of the carriage, so Bluebeard could twist

round, and put his head quite inside without upsetting us.

Once or twice, when going up a hill, a donkey suddenly put up his head from behind the hedge. Round flew Bluebeard with such a jerk, as nearly to throw us out of the carriage, and having whisked us round, he tore down the hill at a furious rate. All that could be done on such occasions, was for one of us to jump out and hold his head before he had time to turn round; and, therefore, we always kept a sharp look out for donkeys on the road. This dread of Bluebeard's was the more strange, as he was extremely friendly with a poor half-starved donkey that was sometimes put into the same field with him. He used to rub his head against it, talk to it, (that is, hold their noses near together), and seemed quite to like its company. But any other donkey inspired him with downright terror. Another bad trick when in the carriage, was kicking, which he often did, sometimes throwing his heels so high that he got them over the shaft, and then we had the fun of unharnessing him completely, in order to put him in again.

It sometimes took a very long time to catch him, though the field was very small; he would come close to the groom, and when he put out his hand to catch him, he would give his head a toss and gallop off round the field; now and then, when weary of his fruitless attempts at catching him, the groom would set the field-gate wide open, and Bluebeard would dart through it, along the lane, and up the hill to our house. But it was rather a risk doing so, as it was quite a chance whether he would go home, or in any other direction.

When he was fairly in the stable, and cleaning and harnessing had commenced, he by no means ceased from his playful tricks: he would roll in the straw with his legs kicking up; then he would bounce about in all directions, to prevent the bridle from being put on; and shake his head till all his shaggy mane fell over his eyes.

All this was meant for play and fun; but the groom often was reprimanded for unpunctuality, in not bringing the carriage to the door for half-an-hour or more after the time when it was ordered. Certainly, if Bluebeard would not be caught, and then would not be harnessed, it was not the groom's fault. However, he began to be very sharp and cross with the pony; and once pulling him roughly up from sprawling on his back, instead of standing still to be combed, Bluebeard dashed his head at him and gave him a bad bite on the chest.

When Mamma came out to put a plaister on the bite, she was very angry, and said that if Bluebeard bit in his play, she could not allow us to keep him; and she desired that he should not have half so much corn.

But I do believe the groom paid no attention to this order, and gave him just as much as before; for the wicked little pony never became one bit quieter, and we often had to beg hard that sentence of dismissal should not be pronounced.

Whenever Papa had time to take us riding with him, or could spare his horse for the groom, we had a nice ride, Bluebeard having a long rein which Papa or the groom held, we found that he went a great deal better than when Mamma walked with us; indeed, he had then no time to play tricks, for it was as much as he could do to keep up with the great horse, whose walk matched with our gentle trotting; his trot to our cantering; and when the horse cantered, Bluebeard was put to his full speed.

We enjoyed these rides immensely; but, unluckily, they were few and far between, as the horse could be spared very seldom; therefore, we still continued our plan of Mamma walking, and we riding by turns; and it was a great excitement to us, watching for Bluebeard's tricks, for we were much afraid of his being sent away as too tiresome; and we tried in all ways to prevent and to conceal his delinquencies.

I very frequently went over his head, for he liked to go precisely the way he chose; and if we came to a turning in the road, and I pulled the bridle in one direction, Bluebeard was certain to insist on going the other. Then he tugged, and I tugged; but his neck was so strong, and his mouth so hard, that I seldom could succeed in making him go my way; and unless some one came to my assistance, the dispute generally ended by Bluebeard putting his head between his legs, and pitching me over his head.

My sister suggested that the best way to manage him would be always to urge him to go the way we did not wish, and he, being certain to differ from us, would take, as his own choice, the road that we really intended.

This was the same plan as that suggested for refractory pigs, who will never go forwards; viz., to pull them backwards, when they will at once make a bolt in the desired direction.

But I objected, that it was a shabby way of proceeding to manage him by deceit, and I preferred being flung over his head in open contest; and the plan was given up as too cowardly; and as my rolls were generally in the soft sandy lanes or on the grass by the road side, I never was in the least hurt.

My sister, too, had several tumbles which made us laugh very much.

We came once to a place where three lanes met, and Mamma called out to my sister, who was

riding some way in front, to turn to the right; so she pulled the rein, and, as a matter of course, Bluebeard shook his mane, tossed his head about, and intimated that he intended to turn down the opposite lane to the left. Then my sister pulled and pulled, whipping Bluebeard at the same time; but his coat was so immensely thick, that he really did not feel a switch the least in the world, especially from a little arm like my sister's. So he did not stir, but kept twisting his head along the left-hand lane.

"He will kick in a minute," I said; and Mamma ran quickly to take hold of his bridle.

When naughty little Bluebeard felt her touch the rein, he made a bolt down the lane so suddenly, that he dragged Mamma down on the ground, and flinging up his heels at the same time, sent my sister flying, and she came down upon Mamma; so there they were rolling over each other in the dusty lane.

Bluebeard scampered a short way down the lane and then came back to us, whisking his tail, as if to say, "You might as well have come my way at once, without causing all this fuss."

And whilst we were employed in shaking the dust off Mamma's and sister's clothes, he stood looking at us in a triumphant kind of manner.

But after all, he did not have his own way; for when my sister was mounted again, Mamma took the bridle and led him down the lane to the right and all the way home; and he was not in favour with Mamma for some time after.

When the winter came on, his coat grew so thick and heavy, and his mane and tail so bushy and long, that he really looked like a great bundle of hair rolling along the road; for his legs scarcely showed as high as his knee. As for his eyes, it was a mystery how he saw at all; for they were not visible, except when we pulled back the hair to look at them: there never was such a curious rolypoly-looking little creature.

When the cold of the winter was passing away, it was agreed that Bluebeard had better be clipped, his coat being really much too heavy; no sheep's fleece could have weighed more.

So we had the pleasure of seeing the little fellow carefully shorn of his thick dress; his long bushy tail was left at our particular request, and also plenty of mane; we liked that, because we found it a great help to clutch a handful of mane, when he tried to kick us off; but his eyes were left free to look out, and very saucy they looked.

We were astonished to find how small he looked, and how thin and elegant his stumpy little legs appeared, we thought they scarcely seemed strong enough to bear our weight; and in the carriage he would appear a perfect shrimp.

Then his colour was entirely altered. Instead of dark brown, he was now a pale sort of grey; indeed, we could scarcely believe that the same pony was before us.

He did not look so droll and round, but much prettier; and we felt quite proud of him the next time we rode out with Papa.

When he was next put into the pony-carriage, he almost appeared too small for it; and one bad effect of clipping him was, that he evidently felt so light and unshackled, that he could not restrain his wish to prance and jump; he now perpetually was kicking his legs over the shafts; and so, two or three times during a drive, we unharnessed him before we could replace him where he ought to be—between the shafts; instead of having his fore legs inside, and his hind legs outside.

Mamma said that this was dangerous, and that she feared Bluebeard might either break his own legs by this trick, or would upset the carriage and break ours. And we began to fear that Bluebeard would some day bring on his own dismissal.

One day, Mamma rode Bluebeard herself; and in spite of the greater weight, which he must have found very different from that of such small children as my sister and myself, Bluebeard kicked so much, and behaved altogether in such an improper manner, that Mamma declared he was no longer a safe pony for such young children, and said she should expect to see us brought home with fractured skulls or broken limbs, if we were allowed to ride him.

All our beggings and prayings had no effect. Bluebeard was sold to a man in the neighbouring town.

When this man said that he wanted the pony for a little boy to ride, Mamma said that he was too ill-broken and too unmanageable for any child, and that she did not wish to sell him for that purpose.

But he said that he intended to tie the boy tightly on to the saddle, and should make a groom walk with him with a long rein; and then should have no fear about the boy's safety. And he bought him, notwithstanding Mamma's warning.

We were so sorry to see the poor little fellow led away; our only consolation was, that in a year or

two we should become too big for Bluebeard; and then, at any rate, we must have parted with him.

Now and then we saw the little boy riding him; and the groom that was with him showed us that he was strapped on to the saddle by a strap across each thigh, and also a strap below each knee; so that it was really impossible that he should fall off.

Mamma said it was not at all safe for a child to be fastened in that way; for if Bluebeard should take into his head to roll on his back, he would most probably kill the child. But as she had warned the father, and had told him of all the pony's bad tricks, it was no longer her affair to say anything about him, or to meddle with his arrangements.

It was a long time before Papa met with a pony to suit us better. The next one was to be so large, that he would last us for many years; he must be frisky enough to be pleasant and amusing, and yet must have no bad tricks; no kicking and running away; and, above all, he must be very pretty indeed, with long tail and mane.

All these qualities were not so easy to find combined; and before I talk about the next pony, I will mention some of our other pets.

So good bye to dear little naughty Bluebeard.

JOE, THE GERMAN DOG.

Being for some months in a German town, we proposed, before returning to England, that we should procure one of the strange-looking little German terriers, with long backs and short legs; and we made inquiries as to where we could obtain one of the real German breed. We found that there are several different races of these dogs; they have all the long back, and short bandy legs; but one kind is very large, with pointed nose and long tail; another kind is small, with excessively soft hair, small head and magnificent large eyes; another kind is small, rather wiry in the hair, and unusually long and pointed in the nose.

After seeing several, we at last had one offered to us that we liked, and bought; he was of the last-described species; his body long and narrow, his legs very short and crooked, and his feet enormous, big enough for a dog of three times the size; his tail was long, and dangled down in an ungainly sort of way; his head was small, and his nose much elongated and pointed; his eyes small and sparkling, and his ears rather soft and long. Altogether, he was the queerest-looking little animal you would wish to see. We named him Joe, and commenced his education by showing him, that he was not to consider our baby sister a species of rat, and to worry her accordingly, and by teaching him to sleep on a rug in the corner of one of the bed-rooms. He was a very sociable merry little fellow, liked scampering after us through the range of rooms, all on one floor or flat, and enjoyed running along the roads and in the park with us; but he was terribly chilly; he could not bear sleeping on his mat, always wanting to be on the bed, or at least muffled up in a flannel gown; and in the day, he was happiest when he was allowed to creep under the stove and lie there, really almost undergoing baking. I never saw an animal bear so much heat with satisfaction to himself.

He destroyed half the things in the house before he got over his puppy-days; but every one liked him, and he generally escaped punishment. He was sharp enough to know his way home, in a very few days after we bought him. We had him out in the park and missed him, a long way from home; seeing no sign of him, we concluded that some one had picked him up, and gave him up for lost, having no idea that the little young creature would know its way home; and we were quite surprised when we reached our own door, to find Joe sitting there waiting; he had come along the crooked walks of the park, through the streets, and up our long flight of stairs, and our opinion of his sagacity rose in proportion.

Shortly after we had bought Joe, we travelled to England, and determined to try whether we could manage to take him in the carriage with us, instead of letting the poor little fellow be shut up in a dog-box on the train, with, perhaps, a dozen other savage dogs. So Papa carried him under his cloak; Joe was very good at the station, and kept himself perfectly quiet, until we were all seated in the railway-carriage. We were beginning to think that we had him safe for that day's journey; and as soon as we had shewn our tickets, could let him run about the carriage.

The ticket-taker came to the door, had looked all round, and Papa was showing his ticket, when, at the last minute, Joe began to plunge and push about under the cloak. Papa held him fast, but the stupid little animal set up a yelp, just as the man was leaving the carriage. He immediately asked if we had a dog, and poor Joe was hauled out by his neck, and Papa had to run in great haste to see him placed in a dog-box. And for the next three or four hours, Joe howled incessantly.

When we halted in the middle of the day, we managed better; Mamma took him under her shawl, and got into the carriage some time before the officials came peeping about, and he lay quiet in her lap, and no one meddled with him; so the afternoon of his first day of travel was not so miserable as the commencement. Altogether, Joe was a good deal of trouble on the journey; there was always a fuss about gaining permission to have him in the carriage, and we did not know what to do with him at the inns, for fear he should go down stairs and be lost. At last we reached England, and for a time lived in London.

At first we were much afraid that Joe would be darting out of the front door, and would be stolen immediately. But he soon got used to the confinement, only having a yard behind the house to run in, and he made himself extremely happy. The house in which we were staying possessed two dogs, a cat, a variety of birds, and in the yard lived a cock with several hens.

Joe and the cat used to have famous games together, rolling each other over and over, then racing round the kitchen, over the tables and chairs. When pussy was tired, she sat upon a chair and slapped Joe's face, whenever she could reach him, as he ran barking round the chair. One of the dogs was very old and fat, and did not at all approve of the new comer's vivacious ways, but growled at Joe fiercely when he tried to entice him to play. The other dog was also too fat to be very active; and when Joe found that no fun was to be had with them, he merely danced round them now and then, to have the pleasure of making them angry, and seeing them show their teeth; and then he left them to their slumbers, and scampered off to the cat, who was more suited to his age and manners.

Out in the yard he had much amusement with the fowls; at first sight he had been rather frightened at them, but soon took pleasure in seeing them flutter about and run away from him. The cock, however, did not run away, but faced Master Joe, and crowed at him, and ran at him in the most valiant manner; and when Joe was too pertinacious in barking at him and teasing him, the cock actually sprang upon his back and pecked him, until Joe crouched down on the ground fairly beaten. In return, however, Joe nearly caused a death-warrant to be pronounced against the cock and all the hens, by teaching them to eat eggs.

One morning, the hens were observed to be in a great state of excitement, pecking greedily at something on the ground, which, on examination, proved to be a new-laid egg, broken and devoured by the unnatural hens. The next day another and another was found in the same way; in fact, as soon as the eggs were laid, they were brought out of the hen-house and broken. So it was agreed, that the hens having once contracted this bad habit, could never be cured, and had better all be killed. But before this determination had been put in practice, Mamma chanced to look out of the window early, just after Joe had been sent out for his morning walk, and spied the naughty creature coming out of the hen-house with an egg in his mouth. Presently all the hens and the cock ran out after him, calling, "Stop thief!" or, rather, implying those words by their cackling and noise; and they pursued Joe round and round the yard, until they came up with him all in a body, and the egg being dropped in the scuffle, was of course broken; and then the hens fell upon it and ate it up.

This it seems took place every morning. Joe fetched eggs out of the nests; and the hens, after pretending to be very angry, ended by joining in the robbery.

The next time Joe was seen with an egg in his mouth, one of the servants went out and called to him, when he placed it on the ground so gently, that it was not even cracked; and if we could manage to catch him before the hens rushed upon him, we always obtained the egg safe enough; for he did not break it or eat it himself, only put it into the hen's heads to do so; and, probably, his only object was to make the whole family of hens run after him, which he seemed much to enjoy.

So the sentence of death against the cock and hens was not pronounced, as it seemed the whole fault lay with Joe; and whenever we could catch him approaching the hen-house he received a good whipping.

He had, however, that sort of temper which cares not the least for whipping or scolding; he never was at all abashed or cowed; but made a most dreadful yelling whilst the whipping was inflicted, and the moment he was released he would dance about perfectly happy, and immediately go and repeat the fault—he was quite incorrigible.

We managed to prevent, in a great measure, his stealing eggs, by not letting him out so early; and when he went into the yard people were going in and out, that could watch him.

So, to make amends for the loss of his morning's fun, he used to push aside the window curtain and blind, as soon as it was light, and stand on his hind legs at the window, watching the cock and hens; now and then signifying his approval of their proceedings by a short bark.

He slept in an arm-chair, covered up with an old dressing gown. On one occasion this was removed, and we thought Joe would do just as well without it; but with his great love of warmth, he absolutely refused to sleep without a warm covering. He was much perturbed, and ran squeaking about the room, till after keeping us awake half the night, we were obliged to get up, and supply him with something soft to envelope him in the arm-chair.

When Joe was tired of playing with the cat, the dogs, and the fowls, he used to go to the top of the house into our baby-sister's nursery. He was very fond of her; but usually timed his visits so as to come in for her dinner or supper, of which he always had a share.

She used to put her tin of milk on the floor and sit beside it: first Joey took a lap or two, then baby had a sip; and so they emptied the mug together: and at her dinner, Joe used to eat the pudding at one side of the plate, whilst baby worked away at the other.

Then they took a roll on the floor together, and whatever rough pull or pinch was bestowed on Joe, he never snapped or hurt the little girl; indeed, would let her do anything she liked with him.

He was very long before he gave up his puppy fashion of tearing and biting everything. If a book or a piece of work fell on the ground, Joey's sharp teeth soon brought them into a deplorable condition. If he could get hold of a bonnet, he soon dragged off ribbon, flowers, lace, and whatever it possessed; and poor little baby's toys, balls, and dolls were never presentable after they had been five minutes in the house.

Then he wickedly pulled to pieces the mat at the bottom of the stairs, for which he was well whipped; in short, the mischief he did was terrible.

His encounters with the cock did not prove sufficient exercise for the hardy little fellow; and he began to get so fat, that we determined to send him into the country, to some place where he would have a great deal of running about out of doors.

We were sorry to part with him for the time we should be in London; but we did not wish to see him become too fat to waddle.

So Papa took him with him when he went into the country to visit some friends. He placed him with a man who was to teach him rat-hunting; and Joe showed that he had an excellent nose, and promised to be a first-rate ratter.

But when Papa had returned to London, we heard that poor Joe had made his appearance again at the house of the friend whither Papa had first taken him. He was looking sadly thin and wretched, and ran into the bed-room Papa had used, and searched for him in all directions.

The poor little fellow remained there until Papa made another arrangement for him, as evidently he had been ill-used by the rat-catcher.

He next was sent to a gamekeeper's, who lived in a nice park, where there was a beautiful rabbit-warren, plenty of stacks for ratting, a stream to swim in, and fields and farms to range about.

There we hoped he would be very happy; and as poor little Joe is still alive, I have not to relate his end at present, and hope that he will still afford us much amusement.

Now I think I have described the greater part of the animals, birds, and creatures of all kinds that belonged to me and my sister. How much pleasure we derived from them! And what a mixture of pity and contempt we always felt for children who feared or disliked animals!

There was a family of little children near us once, when we had our dear dog Tawney; how they used to scream and run whenever they saw him! even though he was taking no notice of them in particular. Then they would take up stones and throw them at him, really intending to hurt him; for their intense fear of the dog rendered them quite cruel; and when he found that they tried to hurt him, and shouted at him, he used to bark in return, which of course terrified them more.

Then some of our friends had quite a horror of our hedgehog, and our bat, and wondered how we could kiss Neddy's nose, and Bluebeard's. I am sure their soft nice coats were quite as pleasant to kiss, as many people's faces.

I only wish that all little children would love animals, and find as much amusement as we did in the care of our Live Toys.

THE END.

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