



THE WOODFORDS.

Frontispiece

The Children's Hour Series.

THE WOODFORDS:

AN EMIGRANT STORY.

AND OTHER TALES.



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INDEX.

	PAGE
A Beautiful Incident,	64
A Child's Hymn,	154
A Child's Thoughts,	112
A Child's Thoughts of Heaven,	178
A Man Frightened by Himself,	293
A True King,	51
Apostle John, the,	63
Ass, the,	189
Beautiful Death Scene,	272
Bell Bird, the,	200
Blessing of the Children, the,	125
Broken Image, the,	129
Cat, the,	274
Christian Fugitives, the,	58
Father's Prayer, a,	222
First Sight of Italy,	40
Follow Me,	83
Fortunes of the Woodfords, the: an Emigrant Story,	1, 67, 115, 163, 211, 259
Fox, the,	132
Goat, the,	223
Gulf Stream, the,	160

	PAGE
Home of the Wild Deer, the,	299
Horse, the,	97
I Don't Know,	278
I'll try,	62
Iceland Adventure, an,	251
'It keeps it in my Mind,'	135
Life among the Flowers,	32, 84, 136, 179, 245
Little Lights,	273
Little Missionaries,	21
Look Up,	208
Looking up,	79
Monkey, the,	16
Moses in the Bulrushes,	27
Pitch Sticks,	145
Reflections on a Watch,	205
Resignation,	27
Scene at a Year Market, the,	52
Sketches of Italian Scenery—First Sight of Italy,	40
" " Venice,	146
" " The Splugen,	285
Song of the Mountain Fairy,	292
Speak the Truth,	39
Spires, A Forenoon in the City of,	107
Story of the Mice, the,	28, 80, 139, 174
Stories about Quadrupeds—The Monkey,	16
" " The Horse,	97
" " The Fox,	132
" " The Ass,	189
" " The Goat,	223
" " The Cat,	274

Index.

V

	PAGE
Stories from History—William Tell,	192, 226
The Best that I Can,	311
Test of Love, the,	138
Thoughts for Children,	238
To the First Bird of Spring,	38
True Stories about Dogs—No. 1,	155
" " No. 2,	241
Value of a Minute, the,	15
Venice,	146
What the Bud Said,	13
What the Sparrow Chirps,	198
Wild Flowers for Children— <i>Ranunculus ficaria</i> ,	48
" " <i>Cardamine pratensis</i> ,	101
" " <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> ,	141
" " <i>Polygala vulgaris</i> ,	201
" " <i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranæ</i> ,	253
" " <i>Parnassia palustris</i> ,	295
William Tell,	192-226
Wishing for Grandfather's Eyes,	290
Wouskie,	54

POETRY.

A Child's Thoughts,	112
A Child's Thoughts of Heaven,	178
A Father's Prayer,	222
Child's Hymn,	154
Little Lights,	273

	PAGE
Looking Up,	79
Moses in the Bulrushes,	27
Resignation,	27
Song of the Mountain Fairy,	292
The Best That I Can,	311
The Blessing of the Children,	125
Thoughts for Children,	238
To the First Bird of Spring,	38
What the Bud Said,	13
What the Sparrow Chirps,	198

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Woodfords,	<i>Frontispiece.</i> —
	PAGE
The Monkey,	16
The Stackyard Mouse,	28
Milan Cathedral,	45 —
Lesser Celandine,	49
Wouskie,	54
' It was a Fine, Quiet Night in the Tropics,'	66 —
The Mouse in the Kitchen Press,	80
Ichneumon Fly,	84
The Earwig,	92
The Horse,	97
Cuckoo Flower,	103
The City of Spires,	106 —
' The Boat was soon in a suitable Cove,'	115 —
' His Battle-axe whirled round his head,'	128 —
The Fox,	132
Dormouse and the Owl,	139
Bird's-foot Trefoil,	143
Venice,	151 —

Illustrations.

vii

	PAGE
Nell,	155
At Home in New Zealand,	162
A Journey to the Boiling House,	174
The Sad Fate of Dormouse's Brother-in-law,	177
The Ass,	189
Milkwort,	203
A New Zealand Landscape,	210
The Goat,	223
Frog-Bit,	234
The Tryste of the Dogs,	240
An Elm Tree,	244
The Iceberg,	252
The Parting for 'Home,'	258
The Cat,	274
The Lake of Como,	284
A Man Frightened by Himself,	293
Grass of Parnassus,	297
The Home of the Wild Deer,	307







THE FORTUNES OF THE WOODFORDS:
AN EMIGRANT STORY.

BY MRS GEORGE CUPPLES,

AUTHOR OF 'THE LITTLE CAPTAIN,' 'MISS MATTY,' ETC.

WILL my readers allow me to conduct them to the pretty village of P——, near to the great seaport town of Liverpool. The particular spot we intend to visit is The Elms, the old mansion-house of successive generations of the squires of P——, which is now let to Mr Woodford, a wealthy merchant in the city.

We wonder, as we stand at the gate and look up the beautiful avenue, with its old and stately trees, that the present squire was not content to live here like his forefathers, but preferred to build a great hall, with no trees of any height near it, making it look as if it did not belong to that part of the country, and had no business there. No doubt it would be a grand-looking house when the young trees grew to their full size; but it would take years and years before they reached a state of perfection, and the house would never be so beautiful as The Elms.

Walking in at the gate, passing the lodge smothered with clematis and roses, and up the avenue, we come to

The Fortunes of the Woodfords.

the lawn, so green and smooth, that it is like velvet under your feet. Here we find a group of eight children busy at play, and, seated under the spreading branches of a noble walnut-tree, are two ladies. The time is early summer, and the soft west wind is scarcely felt, but fills the air with sweet scents, which mingle with the warbling of birds and the busy hum of insects, while butterflies flit around like fragments of the sunshine.

The two smallest boys are Bernard and Charles Woodford, who along with Herbert and Arthur Mortimer, the Squire's sons, are enjoying a game at cricket. The other four children are girls—Lily, Helen, and Marjory Woodford—and the fourth is Emily Mortimer, who with her two brothers spend much of their spare time in the society of such congenial companions. It is Mrs Woodford and Miss Jones, the governess from the Hall, who are seated under the tree; and when the game is done, and the girls are released from their laborious task of 'fielding,' all the children fling themselves down to rest from their exercise at the ladies' feet; and seated thus, we will join the group also, and listen to their conversation.

'Oh! I do wish we had a tree like this at the Hall,' said Herbert, rubbing his hot face with his handkerchief; 'it's so cooling. I'm sure I wonder papa ever left this place; I like it twenty times better than our house.'

'But if your papa had not built the Hall, you would not have known us,' said little Helen. 'We must then have lived in that horrid crescent in Liverpool; and we all hated it so much.'

'Oh! don't you remember how happy we were when papa came home and told us he had taken this house?' said Lily.

'Yes, indeed,' said Mrs Woodford, laughing; 'we won't forget that day in a hurry. I thought my head would never recover from the screams of delight when papa mentioned the rabbits and poultry that could be kept, and especially the pony.'

'It was such fun to see the girls,' said Charley. 'They packed up their toys every day in a little box mamma gave them, and unpacked it again every night; and such washings they had at their dolls' clothes—they nearly drove nurse crazy.'

'I'm sure, Charley,' said Lily, 'you and Bernard were just as bad, for you had your fish-hooks constantly out repairing them; and if we did torment nurse, you boys nearly made her mad by losing your hooks, and making her fancy they would stick into us.'

'I'm so glad papa did build the Hall, though I don't like it so well as this place,' said Emily. 'It is so nice to have you here. We never heard of the games we play at now; and the nice picnics we have! Mamma used to be so afraid to let us have one, for fear of cold; but she isn't now. Oh! and that reminds me I have a message to deliver. Mamma would like us to have a holiday on Friday; it is Arthur's birthday. Would you, please, Mrs Woodford, allow all the children to join us and have a gipsying to the ruin? Mamma wishes very much you would.'

'It is very kind of your mamma,' said Mrs Woodford, stooping to kiss the pretty, eager face; 'if the boys are very industrious, and all are good, we may say yes.'

'Oh! but do say yes now, dear Mrs Woodford,' said Emily; 'and, please, mamma would like if you and Mr Woodford could come also, as both she and papa mean to be there. Oh! do say yes.'

'Papa go a-gipsying!' said Bernard, laughing. 'Papa never takes a holiday *now*. I almost wish he hadn't so much money, for then he might go with us an excursion, as he used to do sometimes with George and Dick; but that was before he made so much money.'

At this moment a post-chaise was seen coming up the avenue at great speed, and drew up at the front door, when a gentleman got out, and hurried into the house.

'It's papa!' was the general exclamation from the Woodfords.

The Fortunes of the Woodfords.

'He is home long before his time, without waiting for the dog-cart,' said Charley.

Lily, who had been much nearer the house at the time, now came running back, almost out of breath, to say, 'Can papa be ill, mamma? I thought he looked pale, and he almost stumbled when he went up the steps.'

Mrs Woodford rose at once, and hastened towards the house, while Miss Jones bade her pupils prepare to go home.

'Remember to be very good, all of you,' said little Emily; 'we mean to have such a delightful time of it at the ruin; and, only think, mamma says we may kindle a fire, and make tea all by ourselves, if we are very careful. Won't it be fun?'

'And, I say, Bernard, be sure and bring your rods,' said Herbert; 'we shall try to catch some fish for you girls to cook for tea.'

'Do not stay longer now, my dears,' said Miss Jones; 'you will have plenty of time to make arrangements before Friday.'

'But Mrs Woodford did not say yes, exactly,' said Emily; 'and I ought to know, that I may tell mamma.'

'Stay, I'll run in and ask her,' said Charley; and away he ran, but returned in a very few minutes with a grave face to say, his mamma was in the library with his papa. 'Papa must indeed be ill,' he said, his lip quivering, 'or else there's something dreadful the matter, for mamma looked so queer when she opened the door, and she pushed me away almost crossly, and bade me say none of us are to go near the room till she comes.'

A shade of gloom seemed to fall upon the party; still, as they separated, they endeavoured to keep up each others' spirits, by fixing the time for their next meeting, and talking as if they counted on all their projects being carried out.

The Hall children now bade their friends good-bye, and the Woodfords crept quietly into the house, and

waited patiently for their mother's re-appearance. The dinner-hour arrived; but instead of bringing her, Miss Taylor, their governess, took her place, saying, 'their papa was not very well, and had gone to bed, and mamma was sitting beside him till he slept.'

Miss Taylor was not a particular favourite with any of the children, being rather severe and exacting; but seeing how distressed they were about their papa, and how they scarcely took any dinner, she exerted herself to drive away the gloomy looks, talking lightly of papa's illness, and of the probability of his being present at the picnic. She also planned how the lessons could be managed easily, so that, by the time for tea, they seemed as if nothing had occurred to interrupt their happiness.

Mr Woodford had received news of the failure of a great bank in the city, along with other speculations he was then engaged in, so that he found himself utterly ruined, which, for the time, prostrated him completely. Before the day fixed for the picnic, the children were informed of this, and also, that very soon they would have to leave the pleasant Elms, to settle down again in town, perhaps in a smaller and more crowded district than even the despised crescent.

There is a saying that troubles never come single, and it proved true in the experience of the Woodfords. They had scarcely recovered from the first shock, when one morning a telegram was brought for Mrs Woodford. The children, at the time, were playing about the lawn, not quite so merrily as of old, perhaps, but it was not to be expected they could retain the dulness for any lengthened period in their young hearts. Indeed, if the truth were told, they felt rather happy than otherwise, for their two elder brothers, George and Dick, were to return from school immediately, without waiting for the holidays; and Maud, kind, loving Maud, their eldest sister, was coming home also from her school in London. With such a prospect before them, it was impossible to feel otherwise than happy. The sight of the boy from the

telegraph office was nothing unusual at The Elms, for Mr Woodford was constantly receiving such despatches; but when Bernard heard it was for his mamma, he called to Charley, and ran forward to see if he had heard correctly. Yes; there was not the slightest doubt about it, and he hastened up the stair after the servant to his mamma's parlour.

'A telegram for me?' said Mrs Woodford; 'that is strange! It must be a mistake; it is for papa, no doubt.'

'No, mamma, it is for you,' said Bernard, handing her the despatch; 'see, there's the word "Mrs" written quite plainly.'

Mrs Woodford opened the telegram, still doubtful of it being for her; but the next moment she turned so pale that Bernard, thinking she was going to faint, began to scream for help.

'Hush, my boy!' said Mrs Woodford. 'It is indeed for me—it is to tell me my dear father, your grandpapa, is dying, and he wishes to see me. Where is papa, do you know? I must set out at once.'

'But, mamma,' said Lily, who had been sewing beside her mother, 'are we to be left all by ourselves? And what is Maud to do? She is coming to-morrow, you know.'

'Yes, yes!—I know, dear. I am glad to think Maud is coming so soon. You must be good children, and help to amuse the little ones. I may be detained for some days.'

Lily and Bernard would have liked to have asked a few more questions about their grandpapa, but Mrs Woodford hurried away to give directions about the packing. All that the children knew about this grandpapa was, that his name was Eyton; that he lived in a very large house almost as grand as the Hall itself; and that he was the richest gentleman in all that county. The children had often talked together of this relative, wondering why neither their papa nor mamma ever went

The Fortunes of the Woodfords.

to see him, and scarcely ever mentioned his name. Maud, too, who had once been on a visit to the Grove when a little girl, had very little to say, except that she disliked to speak of that time, not on account of her grandpapa, whom she seldom ever saw, he being confined to his room, but her Uncle Henry and his children were so disagreeable that she said no amount of money would ever induce her to go near them again. The children could not help feeling that some mystery existed, but were forced to let the matter rest, whatever it might be.

That same evening, after receiving the telegram, Mrs and Mr Woodford left by the night train, and the next forenoon Maud arrived from school, all the children being at the door to welcome home the 'old mother,' as the boys called her. She was a tall, delicate-looking girl, about seventeen, with fair hair, and blue eyes, and a peculiarly soft, gentle voice, that well expressed her amiable disposition. When she had read the hastily-written note her papa had left for her, and brushed away the tears that filled her eyes at the disappointment at not seeing her mamma, she turned to the children, who had been clinging round her, and said, 'Well, chickens, what are you all drooping your heads for; is it kind to receive your old mother so?'

'Oh, Maud, we are so glad to have you back!' said Lily; 'we have been so dull since mamma left. I do hope she won't stay long.'

'So do I, dear,' said Maud; 'but we must not grudge mamma going to see our grandpapa. Mamma must feel so thankful that he sent for her, even at the last.'

'But why did he never invite her to come before?' said Bernard.

'After tea I may tell you,' replied Maud; 'I know mamma won't mind me telling you bigger ones.' And accordingly, when Helen and Madge were safely under nurse's care, Bernard reminded her of her promise.

'Well, dears,' said Maud, as they drew round her, 'you

know papa was not always rich ; indeed, at one time he was almost poor, but by his own patience and energy he became a rich man at last. Of course, he has become poor once more, but that is his misfortune, not his fault ; he could not help it, poor dear papa. Well, grandpapa Eyton liked him very much, but because he was poor, he would not give his consent to mamma marrying papa, and so they got married without his knowledge, which mamma said was very wrong of her to do ; but she loved papa so dearly, and she thought that, being his only daughter, grandpapa would forgive her ; but he never did. Even after papa became a rich man, he refused to see her, and he would not allow grandmamma to see her either, though she wrote to mamma constantly.'

'Oh, how cruel of him !' said Lily ; 'he must have been a very unkind man to treat mamma so harshly.'

'But you went to see him, Maud,' said Bernard. 'Did he invite you ?'

'No, it was grandmamma ; she hoped the sight of me might make him relent ; but, though he was very kind, any time I was taken into his room, he never mentioned mamma's name. Poor grandmamma ! you know she died suddenly abroad, and so mamma never saw her.'

'I'll tell you what,' said Bernard, 'perhaps grandpapa means to forgive mamma now ; and when he hears of papa's losses, he will give him a lot of money, and we won't need to leave this house, or sell the pony, or the rabbits, or anything. How glad Herbert and Arthur would be if we were to stay.'

'Yes, indeed, it would be nice,' said Maud, with a sigh. 'Well, you boys must just try to work hard at your lessons, so that when you are a little older, you can help papa. He will need us all to help him now.'

We must now leave The Elms, and follow Mrs Woodford to her father's house. When she reached the Grove she found that Mr Eyton was just about dying ; but he knew her quite well, and held out his hand towards her. He was so weak that he could hardly speak, but he tried

to explain to his daughter something about his will. Though his voice had almost failed him, Mrs Woodford understood him to say he had made a new will, in which her name was included ; and when she asked him if this was what he meant, he seemed quite relieved. ' You will find it in '—he was just saying, when he was seized with a violent fit of coughing, and the nurse stepped forward to administer a strong opiate, and he then fell asleep with his daughter's hand clasped firmly in his. Once more he opened his eyes, and raising himself up in the bed, looked long and steadfastly in her face ; then he sunk back and gradually breathed his last.

The funeral had taken place, and after that, Mr Eyton, Mrs Woodford's brother, produced his father's will, but Mr Hosken, the attorney, on examining it, stated that a new will had been drawn up a few months before, properly signed and witnessed, in which old Mr Eyton had left his daughter the half of his possessions. All the drawers in the various cabinets and bureaus were ransacked, but the new will was nowhere to be found, so that the old will, leaving everything to his son, which had been made shortly after his daughter was married, had to stand for the true will and testimony.

The present Mr Eyton was a thorough man of the world, and fearing that some claim might be made upon him by his sister, he treated her with careful but cold politeness, as if she had become estranged from the family. Old Mr Hosken, who had known Mrs Woodford and her brother since they were children, proposed that, as the last will of his old friend could not be found, Mr Eyton should at least give a portion to his sister, considering the recent losses her husband had sustained. The only answer he could draw from Mr Eyton, however, was, that he would consider the matter, and write the result to Mr Woodford.

The father and the mother had been gone from The Elms for ten days, when Maud received a letter from her mamma, stating that they would be at home the next

evening, and requesting that George and Dick's rooms might be in readiness for them, as they would be met on the way, and all would return together.

It was not to be expected that the children could feel any sorrow for the loss of their grandpapa. They had never seen him, scarcely ever heard his name; and had it not been for their mother's sad face, they would have given vent to a loud demonstration of delight at the return not only of their much-loved parents, but of their two lively and good-humoured brothers.

Mr Eyton did not keep them long in suspense as to his intentions. He must have written by the very next post after their departure, for it reached The Elms the evening after, just as they had all gathered round the cheerful fire that had been lighted, as the weather was damp and chilly. Mr Eyton stated briefly that, after due reflection, he did not consider himself bound to do anything for his sister; and it was plain, by her name not being in the will, that his father had intended to mark his displeasure at her disobedience. Accordingly he thought it was a sacred duty to the dead that his last wishes should be carried out. But considering the large family they had, and not wishing to be hard or ungenerous, he would agree to pay their passage out to some colony, where the children could be turned to good account; and also, if this proposal were accepted, he would not object to advance a further sum to assist their engaging in some business suitable to the colonies. Henceforth, however, it was to be understood that no after claim was to be made upon him.

'Oh, how cruel!' said Mrs Woodford, 'to think of him treating his only sister so. Banish me and my children to some savage country! I could not have believed my brother Harry would have been so hard-hearted.'

Mr Woodford was silent for a little. All he said was, after a pause, 'My dear, you have not learned till now how the world can harden the heart, unless it has been taught sympathy by suffering of its own.' Having thought

for a little, he added, 'Pride might lead us to reject such an offer—but duty urges rather to submit. Let us think of the children, my dear.'

'Oh, mamma! don't look at it in that light,' said George. 'So far as we are concerned, it would be first-rate, perfectly jolly; the very thing I should have liked myself.'

'Thank you, Uncle Henry. Let's go to the backwoods of North America,' said Dick. 'We can shoot all sorts of game there, and a savage or two occasionally by way of a change, when we have followed on his trail and caught him.'

'My dear foolish boy,' said Mrs Woodford, shuddering, 'do not speak in that light way.'

'But there's Australia,' said George, who was shrewd for his years. 'Many people are going there. We could have a sheep run; and it pays splendidly in the end.'

'Yes, but after how much toil and risk?' said Mrs Woodford, beginning to think of the project.

Their father had seemingly been considering the whole matter, and he now gave his opinion. 'New Zealand is a much better field for enterprise,' he said, 'in the case of those who have little money, and must begin as we should. I do not hesitate to decide on this, if you and the children resolve to encounter the voyage and the hardships that may follow. Indeed, I am ready to go alone, and have no fear but that soon I should be able to place you in comfort there. I could obtain the necessary aid from other sources. I am thankful to say there are friends still left to me. Mr Eyton would for the present, doubtless, agree to supply the wants of his sister and little ones, when *I*, the great cause of offence, am removed.' Mr Woodford's voice had towards the close almost given way, but he ended with firmness.

'No, no, my dear Richard,' said Mrs Woodford, with strong emotion; 'we go one and all, or *never!* This shall never be!'

The Fortunes of the Woodfords.

There was a chorus of exclamations from the children, from the eldest to the youngest, of 'Yes! yes! None of us will stay behind! We will sail anywhere—will do all sorts of work—rather than be separated from dear papa!'

Mr Woodford was almost unable to restrain his feelings, and he suddenly rose and withdrew to his own room, leaving the children to talk with their mother as they chose. The boys were so happy at the thought of the probable adventures by land and sea, that Mrs Woodford could not long resist joining in their plans. Even the girls were enthusiastic about the new life, Lily declaring it would be just like having a picnic on a large scale; and when Maud spoke of the fun it would be building their own house, and doing all sorts of work, both in-doors and out, the boys fairly screamed with excitement. 'Not that you, "old mother," will be allowed to work,' said George. No; 'mamma and Maud must still be fine ladies. We boys must work for them, and they must just give orders.'

'Indeed, you are very kind, Master George,' said Maud, laughing. 'I mean to be the head of the home department, and look after the cow we shall have, and all the work in-doors. Of course I shall expect you small boys to fetch wood and draw water, and catch game—if there *is* game to be caught in New Zealand, which I am doubtful of, but at any rate there are wild pigs.'

'Oh, such fun!' said Bernard; 'but it's the voyage will be the jolliest part.'

'Yes, once you get over the sea-sickness,' said Dick, which made them all laugh, for it was well known that every time poor Bernard had ever been on the water he had been very sick. It was therefore decided unanimously that their uncle's offer should be accepted, and, as George and Dick said, the sooner they sailed the better.

(To be continued.)

WHAT THE BUD SAID.

I.

I SAW a little baby bud
On grandpa's apple tree,
Which graced the cottage garden,
Close by the swelling sea.
The purple spring with sunny showers
Brought song-birds with their glee ;
And the early flowers in grandpa's bowers
Were sweet as they could be.

II.

I push'd his chair to the gravell'd walk,
And perch'd me on his knee,
And listen'd to his story
Of the bud upon the tree.

III.

All roots and trunks and leaves, my son,
Of every tree and flower,
Convey to us some precious truth
With every passing hour ;
And birds, and blossoms, too, have tongues
And hearts, as well as we ;
And I have learn'd much more from them
Than you can learn from me.
Yon bud looks like a hard green knot,
An uncouth thing to see,
But 'tis a pledge that God will send
Us apples on the tree.
Its little heart is busy now,
Its veins are full of sap,
And little unseen skilful hands
Are taking off its cap.
Those little leaves, and fringes green,
And dainty silken strings

What the Bud said.

That lap the mouth, and on his sides
 Hang so, like living things,
 May well be call'd the buddy's cap ;
 And passing proud is he,
 To hang his tassels round his head
 For all the world to see.

IV.

' And now his pretty face appears—
 A healthy fragrant bloom,
 A mixture sweet of pale and pink,
 And soft as eider down.

V.

' Now come the busy, busy bees,
 A searching after honey,
 And—pop—right at his pretty face,
 Like robbers after money,
 They kiss his blushes quickly up,
 They sip his dew and tears,
 And nothing leave for him—except
 Their buzzing in his ears.

VI.

' And now his blooming face retires,
 A sterner life appears :
 Himself again, though not a bud,
 But grown to riper years.
 A luscious apple greets our eye,
 All streak'd with red and blue,
 And buddy's voice within is heard,
 " See, how I've grown for you ! "

VII.

' *And little boys are buds, my son,*
 That promise woe or joy ;

We make or mar the future man,
 As we bring up the boy.
 And now, my child, this lesson learn
 Of wisdom, love, and truth,
 As buds are *blessed* promises,
 So, too, are *pious* youth.'

Christian Intelligencer.

THE VALUE OF A MINUTE.



SMALL vessel was nearing the steep holmes in the Bristol Channel. The captain stood on the deck, his watch in his hand, his eye fixed on it.

A terrible tempest had driven them onward, and the vessel was a scene of devastation. No one dared to ask, 'Is there hope?' Silent consternation filled every heart—made every face pale. The wind and the tide drove the shattered bark fiercely forward. Every moment they were hurried nearer to the sullen rock which knew no mercy—on which many ill-fated vessels had foundered, all the crew perishing.

Still the captain stood motionless, speechless, his watch in his hand. 'We are lost!' was the conviction of many around him.

Suddenly his eye glanced across the sea—he stood erect; another moment, and he cried, 'Thank God! we are saved—the tide has turned—in one minute more we should have been on the rocks!' He returned his chronometer, by which he had thus measured the race between time and tide, to his pocket; and if they never felt it before, assuredly both he and his crew were on that day powerfully taught the value of a minute.

STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. VII.

THE MONKEY.



THE animal we are to tell you about at present, belongs to the quadrumanus or four-handed race, rather than that of quadrupeds. Come with me into a boundless African forest, away down into some deep glades, and there, ere many minutes elapse, we are sure to see the mischief-loving monkey.

Hark! What noise is that? Why, some one is breaking the boughs of the trees above our heads, and chattering in an unknown tongue.

Look there! leaping, swinging from bough to bough, and gliding hither and thither, with wondrous ease, are the creatures we are in search of. We have got amongst

a large troop of them; and if we look closely to discern what sort of monkey they are, we will find, by their yellowish-green colour, and by the fact of their faces, ears, and paws being jet black, that they are a set of green monkeys, evidently much surprised, and far from pleased at our intruding into their premises, and some of them are knitting their brows and gnashing their teeth at us, and trying to look very fierce, though, generally speaking, they are very playful and lively. Almost all the monkey tribe are gregarious, and large troops are often seen together in the forest—

‘ Where the long drooping boughs between,
Shadow dark and sunlight sheen
Alternate come and go.’

Their food is almost entirely vegetable; they delight in fruits, nuts, and juicy roots; they also devour insects; and where they have it in their power, great is the destruction they cause in fields, or groves (as they are termed) of sugar-canes.

A poet writes thus of them:

‘ From rocky heights
In silent parties they descend by night,
And posting sentinels to warn
When hostile steps approach; with gambols they
Pour o’er the cane grove:
Luckless he to whom that land pertains!’

There are many different kinds of monkey, but all seem more or less to be gifted with extraordinary powers of imitation, which renders them, when in confinement, exceedingly amusing. They are also very inquisitive and cunning.

A story is told of a young red orang, whose master gave him one day the half of an orange, and laid the other half aside on the top shelf of a press. Some time after, the master lay down on a sofa and closed his eyes; seeing this, the orang began to prowl about the room, and his master, who was only feigning sleep, watched him quietly.

Presently the creature stole cautiously up to the sofa, and examined his guardian, to make sure that he slept; then, having satisfied himself that such was the case, he made for the press, and climbing quickly up, finished the remaining half of the orange, and came down and concealed the peel amongst some paper-shavings in the grate! Then, looking once more at his master to see if he still slept, he crept back to his couch, secure that no one had observed his actions!

A monkey, when aboard a ship, is a great source of amusement to the crew.

A gentleman has furnished us with some anecdotes of one kept by a 'middy' on board a ship. He writes thus:

'In the year 1846, when sailing as passenger in the good ship "India," between Bombay and China, I took great interest in a monkey (kept by a midddy), which was both the pleasure and the plague of the whole crew.

'I do believe, of all the mischievous monkeys that ever existed, Jacko, as it was called, was the most so. Never a single day passed without his getting into disgrace.

'Did the sailmaker or chips lay down their tools for an instant, pug, who was always on the look-out, darted on them, and was off to the cross-trees with his prize; and there he would sit grinning at the apprentices who were sent to bring him back; not that he always suffered himself to be caught at once, as he would often spring from rope to rope, when a regular chase would ensue. Often the growls of those he had robbed would gradually change into peals of laughter, amidst which the culprit, thinking all was now right, delivered himself up, and he was made to disgorge, for everything small enough was crammed into his pouch; but at times he contrived to retain some of the plunder, which, when close pushed, he would throw maliciously overboard, for which proceeding he was sure to get a good whipping.

'One day I was watching him, as I could always tell when he was bent on mischief. Presently I saw him peer

round, but as he saw no one, he slipped into the pantry, and soon found a basin full of lump sugar. Now, the basin was very narrow at the mouth; so when his lordship put in both his paws and filled them, he could not get them out without dropping part of the spoil, which he was loth to do; and the steward, who kept him in great order, appearing, he ran off on his hind legs, carrying the basin, and looking so ridiculous as he hopped along, that the captain and I were in fits of laughter at him. In the end, he smashed the basin and cut himself.

‘Another day I saw him, after the dinner-things were laid, slip into the cabin when the steward’s back was turned, and with his hind paws lay hold of the cloth, and then rush along the deck as fast as he could go, dragging plates, glasses, and everything on the table to the floor! and making such a noise that captain, mates, and all came running to see what was wrong. You may be sure Jacko came in for punishment that time.

‘One day the “middy” dressed him up as the *fac-simile* of the chief mate, and put him at the cuddy-door while we were at dinner, and there he sat grinning and looking at us. The captain tried hard to look grave, as there was no mistaking who he was intended to represent; but it was no use. In spite of himself, he had to join us in a hearty fit of laughing, at which the mate was so angry that he jumped up, caught poor Jacko (who this time was not in fault), fastened a large shot round his neck, and pitched him overboard! when a groan went through the vessel from all the crew who were on deck. The ship was going about eight knots, and the chances were a thousand to one against poor pug; but luck befriended him this time, for in his hurry the mate had tied the cord badly, the knot gave way, and Jacko was just in time to lay hold of a rope, which had no business to be dragging from the studding-sail boom, and before we could count six, he was aloft and in his place of refuge, amidst a ringing round of cheers, during which the chief mate disappeared, having gone to his

berth very vexed ; but his anger soon cooled, and ere long he was as rejoiced as the others that poor Jacko had escaped.

‘Now, with all this, I must admit that after the first few days Jacko and I were on very bad terms ; and I confess he had cause to dislike me, for one day he came up chattering when I was cutting a piece of tobacco, and I gave him a piece, which he put into his mouth ; but no sooner had he tasted it, than he flew into a fearful passion, and had I not got hold of a stick, I am sure he would have done me some harm. He never forgave me, and I never dared to go along the deck without something to defend myself, as he was always lying in wait for me.

‘What was Jacko’s ultimate fate, I know not, as I have never heard anything of the vessel, or any one belonging to her since the day I landed at Hong-Kong.’

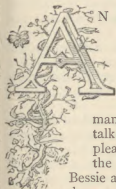
Apes are mentioned in Scripture as imported by Solomon to Jerusalem. ‘Once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks’ (1 Kings x. 22). In Egypt they were held in the greatest respect. Representations of them are found on the ancient sculptures, and their bodies were preserved as mummies. In many parts of India apes are objects of worship, and hospitals have been erected where thousands of them are kept and tended. Temples also, and very fine ones, have been built in honour of them.

Is it not sad to think of so many of our fellow-creatures being in such heathen darkness and delusion ? ‘worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for evermore.’

‘From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error’s chain.
Salvation ! O, salvation !
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Hath learned Messiah’s name.’

M. H.

LITTLE MISSIONARIES.



IN absence of many months, occasioned by the dangerous illness of a much-loved and very loving friend, had come to its close; and again Aunt Kate with her dear nephews and nieces were gathered round the school-room fire—the scene of so many happy gatherings, of so many earnest talks, that every spot seemed filled with pleasant memories. It was the twilight, the 'Children's Hour.' Kate and Helen, Bessie and Edith, Harry and Charles, were all there. Annie and Carrie Seton, too, all grown older and taller, and, as we may hope, wiser and better, than when they had separated for the summer holidays.

It was the latter end of January. Miss Morton had hoped much to have returned home for the New Year, at least, if not for Christmas; but her work in the sick-room was not over, so she waited patiently, without one doubt that her God, to whom she confided all her desires and all her plans, was much wiser than she was, and would send her home at the very time best both for her and those she loved so well. His time had now come; another took her place as nurse-tender, so that she was free.

The very next day saw the happy meeting at Merton Hall, and heard the hearty welcome that greeted her. Absent as she had been at the opening of the year, her thoughts and prayers had been much with the children. Very earnestly she had sought the best joys, the choicest blessings, our Almighty Father could bestow on them.

Those she sought most earnestly for them were these two: that each one who knew and loved the Lord Jesus as the Saviour, might love Him more and more, and day by day grow more like Him; and that each one

who could not yet say of Him, 'He is my Saviour,' might be led to Him by the blessed Spirit for pardon and peace, and be made a new creature—that one and all might seek to win others to Him—might become His Little Missionaries.

Now, though the year was many days old already, and it could not be a New Year's talk on this their first Sunday evening together, she spoke of the desires for them that filled her heart. She told them what she had been seeking for them.

They listened in silence while she told of her first wish ; but more than one pair of bright young eyes grew brighter, and many rosy cheeks glowed, as she spoke of the love of Jesus, and more than one heart whispered fondly to itself, 'I do love Jesus!' 'He is my own Saviour!' But when she went on to the second, there was a general exclamation, 'O Auntie! what do you mean? How can we be missionaries? You do not think we ought to go away to India and Africa, and preach the Gospel to the heathen? The boys must go to school, and we girls must stay at home and learn our lessons. What do you mean?'

'Exactly what I say—that I desire and pray that each of you, boy and girl, the youngest and the oldest, should be one of Christ's missionaries, and so you may be, and so you ought to be ; yet I do not wish any of you to go while children, and preach to the heathen, nor indeed to any one else, for I think that preaching is not the work God gives children to do for Him. What I want is, that every one, as soon as ever he has found what a precious Saviour and Friend the Lord Jesus is, should try, from that day onwards, to win others to come to Him too.

'Suppose any one of you, travelling through a dreary desert, weary and faint, and almost dying of thirst, found there a fountain of clear, fresh water, your first act surely would be to drink yourself, and drink and drink again ; and then, strengthened and refreshed, would you be content to pass on and say nothing of it?'

'O no, indeed! that would be horribly selfish! We would tell every traveller we met the good news, and direct him to the fountain.'

'I am sure you would, dears, and even if some one would not heed your words, nor believe the good news, you would tell him of it again and again.'

'Yes; and I would say—I know I cannot be mistaken, for I was dying of thirst just as you are, and I drank, and now I am strong and fresh again, and I would bring him to the fountain.' 'And,' added another voice, 'I would tell him when he had been revived by the waters, to go and tell of it to others.'

'How fast the news would spread! Soon, I think, every one would know it!'

'Is not that like the Fiery Cross we were reading of last night, in the "Lady of the Lake?" how it was passed on from village to village?' said Annie Seton.

'It is just what the woman of Samaria did,' said Helen. 'When she had drunk of the living waters, and had learned who it was had been talking with her, she went into the city, and told every one the great news. And how many she brought to the fountain! I think I know now what you mean, Auntie!'

'Can Edie tell me of any one else in the Bible who became a missionary as soon as ever he had found the Saviour himself?'

'I can, Auntie. There is Andrew, one of the two disciples who heard John the Baptist tell of Jesus as the Lamb of God, and followed Jesus, and stayed with him all that evening, and the very next day they both went to look for Simon to tell him the wonderful news, but Andrew his brother was the first to find him, and at once he brought him to Jesus.'

'That is a beautiful missionary story, dear; and teaches us to begin with those nearest and dearest to us. Who remembers another?'

'I do, Auntie;' said many voices together; but Charles was allowed to go on and tell of Philip, who,

after Jesus had found him, went to look for his dear friend Nathaniel, and told him of Jesus of Nazareth, the long-expected Messiah; and when he doubted, because Nazareth was such a despised place, he made him come and see for himself, and then his doubts soon vanished.

'Then, dear Auntie, there is the Christmas story of the shepherds, who were the first to hear the good news that night, and who heard the song of the multitude of the angels; they went at once in haste to Bethlehem, and found the Babe, just as the angel had told them; and thus "they made known abroad the saying that was told them concerning this Child."'

'As we begin to think, it seems as if every one who came to Jesus, and found how good and great He was, became at once a missionary. The twelve apostles and the seventy, Jesus first called them to Him to be with Him, and then sent them to teach others.'

'I think,' said Katie, 'one of the very nicest of all the Bible missionary stories, is that of the poor man out of whom our Lord cast the legion of devils, and who wanted to follow Him, but Jesus told him to go home and tell his friends of all that had happened, those very people who had prayed Him to depart out of their coasts. It was so very good of Him; though He himself went away, yet He left some one to tell them of His love and His power.'

'It is, indeed, a most lovely story, and surely what they all did then, we all, in our own place and measure ought to do now; but they teach another very solemn lesson—How shall we induce others to come to Jesus unless we have been with Him ourselves, and can tell by experience how very good and gracious He is. But, dear children, do you think words are to be our only or even our chief way of winning souls?'

'I think not,' said Annie Seton, after a pause, as she remembered how it was her cousin's gentle, patient kindness to her and her sister, on their visit two years ago, that had, by the blessing of God the Holy Ghost, won her

to be Christ's own loving, faithful servant. 'I think not, but rather the seeing God's children to be like Himself—at least in some measure—true, and kind, and patient, and unselfish. I think it is just as if some one in the dark, cold shade, were to see others bright and warm and happy out in the sunshine, it would make one long to be in the light too.'

'That's just it, dear; that's what our Lord means when He says: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."'

'Then we have the sure promise, Auntie, so that we need not be afraid of trying to do this, for when our Lord was going away, and sent His disciples to go and teach all nations, His last words were: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."'

'Now, to finish our long talk, which we may call our Missionary Meeting, I must tell you of a little Indian girl.'

'O thank you! thank you! that is all we want to have it a real Missionary Meeting!' exclaimed several voices together, for a story was their special delight.

'In Travancore, a region of Southern India, that is still ruled by its native prince, slavery in its very worst form continues. In the deed of sale of one of these wretched creatures, it is said to the purchaser: "Killing you may kill, and murdering you may murder."'

'These poor slaves work in the swamps where rice is grown, called paddy fields. Their life is one of direst suffering and hardship—half-starved and beaten by their owners, hated and despised by even the lowest and vilest of their neighbours. But even on this dark region light has dawned; and devoted men have gone there to tell of a Father's love, a Saviour's death, a Holy Spirit's comfort, a rest and home for the weary and heavy-laden. They preached in the villages, in the fields, by the road-side—like their great Master, they preached anywhere and everywhere; and many received the good news of great

joy, and got pardon, and peace, and new hearts, and the blessed hope. But masters and overseers and the unconverted slaves joined in the fiercest persecution of the poor Christians, and death and torture was to many the messenger who came to conduct the weary, suffering child to the presence of his Saviour, to the pleasures that are at His right hand for evermore. But persecution did not, could not, stop the spread of the Gospel. It was too good, too precious, too different from all they ever heard before, to be given up, or hidden. Each one who received it spoke of it to others. Amongst these was a little slave girl, thirteen years old, who was so earnest, so constant, so successful, too, in telling of the beloved Saviour, who came into the world to save sinners by Himself bearing their sins, by dying *instead* of them, that she was known by the name of the Child Apostle. Cruelly did she suffer for her faithfulness, but on and on she went, often winning by her perseverance, those who had been her most cruel enemies. The late Bishop of Madras, on his visitation tour, came to Travancore, and held a confirmation. Amongst others who were presented to him was this child; her face and neck and arms all disfigured and scarred by blows and stones. The good bishop's eyes filled with tears as he looked at her, and he said: "My child, how can you have borne all this?" She just looked up in his face with simple surprise, and said: "Sir, don't you like to suffer for Christ?"

'It was well this dear child did not put off her work for God; for the very next year cholera raged through the district, and she was one of the first whom it sent that she might see Him whom unseen she loved—"might enter into the joy of her Lord."

'God grant that each one of us may meet her there, and be greeted with the same praises, "Well done, faithful servants!"'

K.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES.

BRIEF are the words of Holy Writ,
Which tell the thrilling tale
Of haughty Pharaoh's cruel yoke,
And Israel's bitter wail.

Simple and true those touching words
The sacred record gave,—
How a young mother laid her child
Upon the treacherous wave.

In that frail ark his little form
She placed with fondest care ;
Each slender twig was wove with tears,
And blest with trusting prayer.

Ages have pass'd ; but that sweet tale
Still thrills in childhood's heart ;
And that fond Hebrew mother's faith
Through time shall strength impart.

E. L. CUSHING.

RESIGNATION.

SHE told her grief in such a moving strain,
Had I not known her heart was well-nigh breaking,
I would have ask'd to hear her tale again,
Such sad-sweet pity in my breast awaking.
There was no studied sadness in her air,
Nor many tears her deep-felt anguish killing ;
It needed not such signals to declare
How sharp the conflict heavenly grace was quelling.

F. W. H.

THE STORY OF THE MICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'ARCHIE MASON,' ETC. ETC.

PART I.

THE STACKYARD MOUSE.



'They stood still from terror, pressing their right paws upon their little hearts.'

'THE story, Tiss ! the story !' was shouted by Margaret, Sonny, and Robin, who recognised the rustle of my dress against their half-open bedroom door. I peeped in, and saw three little white figures sitting up all eagerness and expectation, each in its own little white bed.

The Story of the Mice.

'Come to me,' pleaded Margaret.

'No, no! to me!' cried Sonny.

'Lie down beside me, Tiss,' implored my fat Robin. Robin is four years old—the youngest of the trio; in virtue of which advantage, added to his coaxing ways, he generally gets what he wants. With his chubby arms round me, and his dark head on my breast, he prepared to listen to the story.

'I dare say, children, you know the corn-stack that stands nearest the gate. A family of mice live in a comfortable house at the end of a long passage that they have nibbled in that stack.

'Their house is deliciously warm; not a breath of cold air ever gets in, and they sleep on beds made of straw mixed with wool and feathers. Each mouse has its own bed, neatly placed against the wall of the house. They do not need to get up to breakfast; all they have to do is to sit up in bed, and nibble a little of the wall, which is made of good, sweet corn.

'The family consists of a father, mother, and four little ones: Dormouse, Shrewmouse, Coax, and Tiny. Dormouse was given his name because his head is round, and his eyes small and sleepy-looking. He is anything but sleepy in disposition, as you will soon hear. Shrewmouse has a long, pointed nose; her mamma says she should have been born in the fields.

'Every evening the whole party go down the long passage, and sit at their hall door, where Dormouse's uncle and aunt and cousins, who live in another stack, come and join them; and the old people talk quietly while the young ones play about.

'One evening, Mrs Mouse called the children round her, and said, "We are all invited to lunch with the Parlour Mouse to-morrow, and if you are very good, we intend to take you with us. You will taste cheese at her table."

'"Cheese! What is that? Is it as nice as corn?"

'"Oh, far nicer! The Parlour Mouse has such a

larder! She lives in a beautiful place, and keeps very high company. It is the greatest honour to be invited by her. Now, go to bed, for you have a long journey before you to-morrow."

'The little ones kissed their cousins, and scampered down the passage to the nest, where they were soon in bed, dreaming of cheese.'

Sonny. 'Can we see that passage?'

Tiss. 'Oh! yes, if you look well for it.'

Sonny. 'Does James Boyd know where it is?'

Tiss. 'I don't know; you can ask him.'

Robin. 'I hope naughty Pussy doesn't know about it.'

Margaret. 'Now, Tiss, you may go on with the story.'

'They had a long way to go; all up the yard to the kitchen door; then up the kitchen stairs to the parlour, which they thought like climbing a very steep mountain. They knew that two great dangers had to be passed. Pussy was nearly always sleeping in the hayloft, with her white face turned towards the open window; and Chiko, the little black terrier, was likely to be somewhere or other near the yard, if he were not hunting rabbits in the shrubbery.

'Mr and Mrs Mouse told the children to keep very close to them, and do exactly as they saw them do. You may be sure they looked up nervously at the window of the hayloft, but Pussy was fast asleep, with her pink nose resting on her paws. They were almost half-way between the stackyard and the kitchen-door, when they heard a fierce "Bow, wow, wow!" and they stood still from terror, pressing their right paws upon their little hearts, which were beating wildly. The two youngest mice darted off as fast as their legs could carry them.

'Dormouse hid behind his father, and just peeped out to see if Chiko were coming. Their terror did not last long, however, for they heard your Uncle Charlie calling, in front of the house, "Here! Chiko! Chiko!" and Chiko's barks grew fainter and fainter as he followed his master.

The Story of the Mice.

'The mice were received at the parlour door by their hostess, a fat, comfortable old mouse, who had lived and thriven upon crumbs of potato and bread and cheese. Her larder was truly a sight to see, so full of good things!

"I lead a very quiet life, my dears," said she; "there are no traps set here, and no dogs or cats ever come into the parlour to chase me. The children watch me playing on the rug before the fire, and sometimes they leave a very fine crumb at the mouth of my hole."

'Dormouse was so pleased with all he had seen, that he resolved to stay behind his family and explore a little further; so the naughty fellow slipped into the kitchen when the others set out home again, and they never missed him till the little ones were going to bed. There was great grief then: his papa could not sleep, and as for his poor mamma, she sat at the hall door all night, crying, with her pocket-handkerchief at her eyes."

Robin (wonderingly). 'Has mouses pocket-handkerchiefs?'

Tiss. 'Of course, my own child; small ones, about the size of a cherry leaf.'

Margaret (reprovingly). 'Don't be foolish, Tiss, you know they have not.'

Tiss. 'Well, how do they dry their tears?'

Sonny (suggestively). 'With their paws, I suppose. What happened to Dormouse, Tiss?'

Tiss. 'You shall hear his adventures to-morrow night.'

(To be continued.)



LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.



ON a bright morning in the middle of July, Uncle Quentin, writing in his study, finds himself invaded by a troop of merry young people; not at all an unwelcome intrusion to him, if we may judge by the pleasant smile with which he greets them. Indeed, the meeting seems to be one of unalloyed pleasure on both sides, for the kind old gentleman loves children, and his own nephews and nieces have always been favourites of his, while they well know what a pleasant day they are sure to have whenever they pay a visit to Elderberry Lodge. What a kissing and shaking of hands there is. Again Uncle has to plead for the protection of his precious spectacles; then Aunt Min coming into the room, has her share of the embraces given on all sides with so much gusto, that Snap, the little rough terrier, hearing an unusual noise, and believing that his master and mistress are being violently assaulted, springs from his mat in the corner, and comes to the rescue by barking with all his might. 'Down, Snap, down; can't you see, you stupid little fellow, that it is Willy and Fred, Ellie and Alf, Robert and Frank, too? no strangers here, Master Snap; but the fact is, some of you have grown so tall during this long, long half at school, that our aged little doggie must be excused if he does not immediately recognise his visitors.'

'He is beginning to know us now, uncle,' said Frank; 'see, he licks my hand. Poor old Snap; you will not treat us as strangers any more, will you? But, uncle,

where is Rover, and how are Juno's pups? We are so longing to see them.'

'All in good time, boys; but now sit down and rest for a while, you have had a long walk, and the sun is very hot.'

'Yes, uncle, it is, very; but we have not had much of a walk, for we came across the mere in a boat, and the breeze on the water was quite pleasant.'

'Ah! that was well. But, you elder boys, have you not something to show me. A little bird has whispered a tale of school prizes that have found their way into our family.'

'Now, uncle, that is too bad of Aunt Min; we meant to have given you a surprise; however, here they are.'

Then the books are produced and duly admired, while the boys receive well-merited praise for having, by diligence and good conduct, earned such handsome rewards. Soon they go to visit the pups—Newfoundland beauties, so handsome and playful that the children are delighted with them; especially so, when uncle promises that they shall have one for their own, to take home that very evening.

After all the old haunts have been visited, and all changes and improvements duly inspected and admired, the children begin to think what they shall do next.

'I tell you what, uncle,' said Ettie (who has grown quite a wise little woman since last year), 'wouldn't it be delightful to sit on the grass under the cedar tree in the garden, while you tell us one of your nice stories about some of the creatures that live among the flowers.'

'A very good idea, Ettie, and I rather think Aunt Min has some notion of the kind, for I fancy I see a white cloth spread out on the grass by the cedar, and a white cloth there means something, I am sure. Shall we go and see?'

'Ah! wait a bit, uncle, please,' said Floss. 'I can see Aunt Min setting something out on the cloth; she wants to surprise us, I know, and it is so nice to be surprised.'

So the children, in expectation of a pleasant surprise, waited until Aunt Min came to summon them, and then they were rewarded for their patience, for, when they followed her to the cedar tree, they beheld a banquet that the goddess of fruits, Pomona herself, might have envied—various kinds of fruit tastefully mingled with flowers and leaves, cakes too, and cowslip wine, and in the centre of all a huge bowl of cream.

‘O Aunt Min, what a charming feast!’ Then, without many more words, but with many smiles, the happy children set to work, and very soon nothing remained but flowers; all the fruit and cakes had vanished quite away.

‘Now, Uncle Quentin, a story, a story.’

‘Ah! you think that as Aunt Min has contributed to your entertainment in one way, I am bound to do so in another. Very well, I am quite willing; and having anticipated your request, I have prepared a little story which we can (if you like) call

LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

CHAPTER I.

‘Yet thou wert once a worm, a thing that crept
On the bare earth, then wrought a tomb and slept.’

ROGERS.

It was in a beautiful garden that a Vanessa first thoroughly enjoyed the delights of the glorious summer sunshine, and as she flitted about from flower to flower, she appeared to be what she really was, one of the happiest creatures in existence. One of the most beautiful, too, as she danced and floated in the air, rejoicing in her richly-painted wings, that enabled her to ride high upon the balmy summer breeze, over beds of roses, mignonette, and countless other flowers. Wherever she went the sunbeams seemed to follow her, smiling so pleasantly that, feeling their admiring glances, intoxicated, moreover, with the sense of exquisite enjoyment, she exclaimed—

'Oh! how happy and how beautiful I am! the very happiest and most beautiful creature in all this garden gay. How I pity those poor degraded beings that, unprovided with wings like mine, are condemned to crawl upon the earth, instead of soaring high in the air;' and Vanessa flirited her gorgeous wings, now closing them tight, now half opening them again, which was her way of expressing the utter contempt she felt for a creature that was crawling upon the spray of mignonette, whereon she was for a moment resting.

'Pray go away,' said she, haughtily; 'a low, creeping thing like you has no right to intrude into my presence.'

'I am sure I am very sorry,' said the creature, humbly; 'I had no intention of offending, but I understood that you are one of our family, so I thought that, having risen in the world yourself, you would kindly allow a poor relation to shelter himself under your wings.'

'Ha, ha!' said Vanessa, 'that is good. Really, for a very humble individual, you display a wondrous amount of assurance. I beg to say most distinctly that you are no relation whatever of mine. I should think you belong to quite a different order of being; anyone that has eyes may see that. Why, you are—let me see—you are *only* a caterpillar, a worm, a reptile; while I—I am a beautiful Vanessa butterfly, known and admired among the human race as the "Painted Lady."* Now, I ask you to judge for yourself what affinity could I possibly have with a mere worm like you?'

'I am sure I beg pardon,' said the caterpillar; 'but

* Butterflies belong to the tenth order of insects, known among naturalists as the *Lepidoptera* or Scaly Winged. The *Lepidoptera* are divided into two great families, the *diurna*, or butterflies, and the *nocturna*, or moths. The former fly by day, and the latter by night. There is also a smaller family, called *Crepuscularia*, in which we find the *Sphinx*, or hawk-moths, which mostly fly in the morning or evening twilight. The 'Painted Lady' butterfly belongs to that subgenus of the *diurna* known as Vanessa, which comprises some of the most beautiful British butterflies, such as the 'Peacock,' 'Red Admiral,' 'Large and Small Tortoise-shell,' etc.

I have been told that at one period of your existence you were just like me, and Instinct continually whispers that some day I shall be just like you. She says there is nothing like patience, that I must attend to my duties now, work on, and be careful what company I keep; and, as an opportunity of rising will come at last, it only remains for me to watch for and take advantage of it.'

'Nonsense,' said the butterfly. 'I don't believe Instinct said anything of the kind; at any rate, I won't have you near me now, so be kind enough to take yourself off;' and Vanessa, seeing that the poor caterpillar was upon the edge of a leaf, dexterously touched him with her suddenly-expanded wings, and jerked him off into the grass below.

'The idea of that low-born creature claiming relationship with me!' she exclaimed. 'His very coat was so shabby, I was quite ashamed to be seen near him.'

'My dear,' said an old Rose-tree, whose branches covered the wall close by, 'I would not be so conceited if I were you. I have lived a great many years in this garden, and having seen many changes in its inhabitants, I must say I have noticed the most wonderful results from very small beginnings. Indeed, I feel astonished when I look at you now, for I can very well remember the time when you were in no better position than your poor despised relation the caterpillar.'

'I don't believe it in the least,' said Vanessa, indignantly. 'You have no right to class me with a wretched worm like that. I, with my personal beauty, my lofty aspirations, and my soaring spirit!—I, with my delicate feelings and refined taste!—I, that can only live on the purest dew and the sweetest nectar! to say that I ever worked for my living, and gnawed leaves for my sustenance, as I saw that vulgar creature doing just now! The very idea is monstrous, and if it were not for my attachment to your lovely daughters, Madam Rose, I should never go near you again; as it is, I shall take some time to forget what you have just said.'

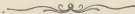
'Ah, mother! said the fairest of the Roses, 'why have you spoken so to Vanessa: you have offended her, I am sure, and driven her away; and she is my dearest, my truest friend. The idea of her having ever gnawed leaves! I assure you she has no teeth, for when she comes nestling her beautiful head among my petals, never hurting or crushing me in the least, I have seen her unfold a wonderful tube,* and through it she sips the sweets that she delights in. She is elegance itself, and it was a shame to say that she could ever have been a low, creeping thing like that.'

* 'I declare,' said the Rose-tree, 'you are very nearly as ridiculous as your friend; but I have lived longer in the world than either of you, and what I have told you of Vanessa is certainly true. I have watched her growth from her earliest existence, and can, if you will listen to me, give you a very circumstantial history of your friend.'

'Very well, mother,' said the Rose, 'I have no objection to hear anything you have to tell; but I must warn you that I shall not find it very easy to believe that Vanessa could ever have been less lovely and elegant than she is now. But go on with your history.'

* On each side of the head of a butterfly are two palpi, clothed with scales or hairs, and between them is fixed the proboscis or tongue, which is a hollow tube formed of many rings, which make it flexible, so that the creature can roll it or unroll it at pleasure. It is formed of three tubes united together, so as to be perfectly airtight. The central one alone is used to suck up the sweet juices that maintain the creature. The proboscis, or suctorial trunk of the moth, contains but one tube. This is one of the distinctive marks between the diurnal and nocturnal *Lepidoptera*.

(To be continued.)



TO THE FIRST BIRD OF SPRING.

I.

PRETTY little song-bird,
 Sitting in the hedge,
 Combing out your feathers with your bill ;
 Oh, don't begin to flutter,
 It isn't nice to splutter ;
 Oh, stay, pretty song-bird, I would not do you ill.

II.

I heard you, little piper,
 Whistling like a fifer,
 As I wander'd through the meadow picking flowers :
 So I thought I'd haste along,
 Stop and ask you for a song,
 And together we would pass away the hours.

III.

O naughty little song-bird,
 Cunning little elf,
 To be combing out your feathers with your bill ;
 Then to hop about uneasy,
 Just because you chanced to see me,
 When you know that I could never do you ill.

IV.

Do you know how much I love you,
 Little songster in the hedge ?
 Do you know what I would give to be your friend ?
 I would give a fairy's portion,
 I would give my heart's devotion,
 And I'd take my pay in warbles to the end.

V.

Does it please you, little picksy ?
 Will you have me for your friend ?
 Whistle, won't you, little chip, that I may know :

Speak the Truth.

Don't keep pecking at your coat,
Just be clearing out your throat,
And oblige me with a song before I go.

VI.

Bless you, pretty song-bird,
Sitting in the hedge;
You shall be my sweetheart from this day;
While the daisy loves the showers,
And the sunshine loves the flowers,
I will love you, little beauty—aye and aye.

VII.

Good-bye, little song-bird,
Sitting in the hedge,
Combing out your feathers with your bill;
May your life be—oh! so long;
And as merry as your song,
And may Providence defend you from all ill.

W. W. HICKS.

SPEAK THE TRUTH.



KNEW a little boy who was indeed a lamb of Christ's flock. He could not bear a lie; and whenever he found any of his companions telling a falsehood, he left their company altogether. There was one boy he was very intimate with. This boy one day began to boast of something which he had done, which boast our little Christian saw at once to be a lie. Upon this he told him that he must never again come to his house, and that he would have nothing more to say to him till he was a better boy.

His mother asked him how he would soon know when he was a better boy? He said he would see some marks which would show him that he was better.

'And what marks will you know it by?'

'I think,' said he, 'the biggest mark will be that he loves God.'—*M'Cheyne.*

SKETCHES OF ITALIAN SCENERY.

FIRST SIGHT OF ITALY.

BY THE REV. J. THOMSON, PAISLEY.



YOUR readers will remember that on Thursday the 6th June 1867 we had reached the *Hospice*, at the summit of the SIMPLON. After suitable rest and refreshment in the hotel, we resumed our journey southward. In our descent, on that side of the Alps, we had a repetition of the magnificent scenery through which we had passed; but now we were going rapidly down hill, and we could not but admire the steadiness and sure-footedness of the horses, and the dexterity and skill of the drivers. They never stopped, but on they rushed, often at full speed, amid frowning crags and steep precipices, which it made one giddy to look at. There was an uninterrupted succession of scenes of grandeur, which, as we approached Italy, became scenes of surpassing loveliness. When we reached the Italian boundary, a poor little boy came forward to the door of the diligence, and politely offered me a bunch of flowers, consisting of a beautiful rose and several flaring poppies; and the little fellow was made very happy with the gift of all our remaining coppers, being *five centimes*, or the munificent sum of a Scotch *barwee*. It was a sweet and fragrant rose, smelling of a southern clime, where the flowers are richer and fairer than those we are accustomed to see in northern lands.

When I look back upon that strange and suggestive journey through these Alpine wilds, the impressions which they made seem to be almost as vivid as ever; and I can conceive of no scenes more fitted to inspire

profound admiration of the wonderful works of God. We had toiled for hours to climb to the summit of the pass ; but we had just to come down again to the plain,—the abode of the ' Man of Sin,' who has so long troubled and polluted the nations of the earth, and who has specially and signally blighted this beautiful land of Italy. But how different is the ascent to heaven ! When we climb that arduous path, we shall never need to come down again from the better land, and there will be no descent, and no Man of Sin to blight its matchless beauty, or quench its undying splendour.

Many imagine that, when they reach the summit of the Alps, they will have a view, almost immediately, of the Italian plains. But, instead of this, we travelled hours and miles at our rapid pace, amid snow-covered mountains and deep gorges. The whole of that region suggested the idea of an immense sea of molten lava, a thousand times heated, causing lofty peaks to bubble up to the clouds, then to be fixed in stone. But when we reached *Domo d'Ossola*, about forty miles from Brieg, there was a sensible change of climate, and an evident improvement in the soil and products. The vines of Italy are old, vigorous, and flourishing stocks ; not like the short and stunted vines of Germany and France, but tall and graceful, supported by long poles or by trees, and spreading their branches, in rich festoons, on trellis-work. In the valley of the Rhone, that morning, we saw whole vineyards which had been blighted by frost a month before, so that the vine leaves were withered and black. But in the afternoon, we saw the Italian vines verdant and flourishing. Then the Indian corn, which was only six inches high on the northern side, was nearly two feet high on the southern. Besides, the walnut-trees of Italy were in full bearing on that 6th of June, and the wheat-crop was almost ripe, while the hay harvest was nearly over. Still, however, it was by no means disagreeably hot during that or any part of our journey.

Our first introduction to an Italian lake was somewhat singular and entertaining. In descending the mountain sides, I had been looking out, wistfully and long, for the Lake MAGGIORE; but fatigued with the long journey, when the shades of night began to gather, I fell fast asleep in the Diligence. How long I remained in this state of unconsciousness, I am unable to say, but when at length I awoke, the rattling sound of the wheels, and even the jingle of the horses' bells, had entirely ceased. Surprised and puzzled, I looked out at the window, and saw before me a vast expanse of water! My perplexity was increased when I found that carriage, horses, and all were actually floating on a raft, and that none of my fellow-travellers were visible. At last, my young companions, who greatly enjoyed my perplexity, came forward and asked *how I liked the sail?* Why we should be sailing at all, and in such a fashion, I could not comprehend; and yet the fact was evident, if one could believe his eyes; and there, too, were the horses standing motionless in front of me. But the mystery was soon cleared up. We were close beside the town, which had been visited a short time before by an earthquake; when many houses were destroyed, and eighteen persons drowned; and when a great part of the public road on the margin of the lake had been swept away; so that a raft, placed on boats, was required to convey vehicles and passengers on the Lago Maggiore, a distance of one or two hundred yards.

We reached *Arona*, on the banks of the lake, late in the evening; the darkness, as we passed along, being rendered only more visible by the numerous *fire-flies* which glittered among the grass. The forenoon of Friday was employed in traversing the lake, which is a magnificent sheet of water, fifty miles long, and about three miles in average breadth. Being studded with numerous islands, and surrounded with steep banks and lofty hills, which are clothed with foliage and verdure, it reminded us forcibly of our own Loch Lomond or

Windermere, though the surroundings of Maggiore are on a much larger and grander scale, and the rich green of the acacias, vines, and walnut-trees indicated a warmer climate. Still the heat was far from oppressive, and it was just like that of a fine summer day at home. After rowing across to the *Isola Anger*, we set off in a steamer to the more distant *Isola Bella*, which well deserves its name. It belongs to the Count Borromeo, whose family is much celebrated in Italian history. One of his ancestors, about two hundred years ago, changed this small barren rocky island into a 'beautiful' garden, rich with the vegetation of the tropics, where the myrtle, the orange, the sugar-cane, and the pomegranate grow luxuriantly. At one end of the island, there is a spacious palace, with ten stone terraces, rising one above another, and replenished with statues and obelisks, the whole exhibiting a 'magic creation of skill and taste.'

Leaving Arona by rail on Friday afternoon, we proceeded through the broad and fertile plain of LOMBARDY, which is fifty miles in breadth, and about two hundred and fifty miles in length. It is nearly a dead level throughout, and being watered by the river *Po* and its numerous tributaries, it is very fertile, well cultivated, and densely peopled. As we advanced to the south, the vegetation was stronger and riper, and several fields of wheat had already yielded to the sickle. Immense tracks of land were covered with Indian corn and rice, the latter being irrigated, and indeed flooded with water from the rivers; while countless *mulberry-trees* grew among the standing corn. As the silkworms feed upon their leaves, and as their first crop had just been stripped off, and their tender branches cut down to supply these voracious creatures, the trees presented a desolate aspect. They are about twelve feet in height, and are planted in rows through the corn-fields, about fifteen feet apart. We passed, on our way, the celebrated battle-field of *Novara*, where Charles-Albert, father of the present king, was defeated by the Austrians. We also crossed the river

Ticino, which, before the late war, was the boundary between Austria and Piedmont; and the crossing of it by the Austrian army led to the war that resulted in the emancipation of Italy from a foreign yoke, and in its present happy unity. Passing through the battle-field of *Magenta*, we saw on some of the houses evident marks of the cannon balls.

At length we reached the ancient city of MILAN. It has existed for about 1400 years; and it contains at present a population of about 250,000. It is inclosed by walls nearly eight miles in circuit, and is entered by eleven gates, most of them massive and beautiful, and associated with interesting traditions of the past. Milan is celebrated for its manufactures of weapons of war and other iron work, and it has evident tokens of superior wealth in its splendid houses, spacious streets, and well-furnished shops.

But the crowning distinction of Milan is its venerable and beautiful *Cathedral*. It was commenced in the year 1380, and it is not even yet quite finished, in some of its adornments. It is built of pure white marble, every stone of it, and its buttresses are singularly beautiful. On these, and on the walls and windows, there are exquisitely-carved statuettes, some of them by the first sculptors, such as Canova. There are no less than 7000 of them; and when the whole is completed, there will be 10,000. We went up to the roof by 158 steps, whence we had a splendid panoramic view of the plain of Lombardy, with its rich waving crops, and of both chains of the Alps, with their snow-clad summits, stretching round in a wide semi-circle. Monte Rosa was seen quite distinctly in the clear atmosphere; and Mont Blanc also would have been seen, but for the clouds which clustered around his hoary head; and even the Jungfrau, in the remote Bernese Alps, was quite visible, at a distance of 280 miles to the north. Then, to the west, the Maritime Alps, near Genoa, were seen with equal distinctness, clothed in a drapery of the richest blue.

But what a contrast between the magnificent view



MILAN CATHEDRAL.

from the top of the cathedral, and what we saw inside of the building! On the top we saw the glorious works of God; but inside we saw the base works of man under the influence of a corrupt religion. The building itself, indeed, with its massive pillars and its beautiful and immense stained windows, crowded with Bible pictures of exquisite design and execution, is truly a noble work of art. We paced it, and found it to be about 600 feet in length. But for what purposes is it used? There, at the altar, was the bishop with his mitre, and a motley host of priests performing mass, and swinging censers filled with smoking incense. About fifty performers were engaged with various ceremonies; and their movements from side to side, and their crossings and genuflections, if they had not been so puerile and ridiculous, might have 'made an angel weep.' Then a powerful organ uttered its voice, and all the performers marched forth from the altar, in a long procession, through the whole building; while four of them, with stentorian voices, shouted or sang what was meant to be a song of praise. It was a saddening sight; and all the more so, when we looked at the crowds of devotees, who are taught to regard this mummerly as religion, because the 'key of knowledge' has been taken away from them, and the Bible is to them a sealed book.

In witnessing such scenes, it is not difficult to understand why there is such a sad contrast between the *material* and the *moral* condition of Italy. It has sunny skies, a delicious climate, a rich soil, and all the elements of *material* comfort and prosperity in the utmost profusion. But the *soul* of Italy is bent down under a load of Popish superstition; and until that load is shaken off, it will never be truly free; for though it has gained civil freedom through the favour of Napoleon, yet it will never take its rightful place among the nations until it has cast off the yoke of antichrist.

'He is the freeman, whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside.'

The truth of His Gospel, received in its purity, and accompanied by the Spirit's power, can alone extricate humanity from the mire of pollution, and set our feet upon a rock. 'If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.' Let those, then, who have obtained this spiritual freedom labour and pray that it may be extended to those who are still in bondage in Popish and Pagan lands; yea, even from 'Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand.'

WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. I.—RANUNCULUS FICARIA.

MAMMA,' said Grace, 'I wish you would tell us something about this flower; I do not even know its name.'

'Yes, please, mamma,' added Robert; 'I should like to learn a little botany; not the difficult parts, for I'm afraid they're very dry, but just as much as would be interesting.'

'Well, my children, I shall try to comply with your wishes, and avoid what Robert calls "the dry parts." What flower did you ask me about, Grace?'

'This pretty golden star, mamma. I used to think it was a buttercup, but I now see the shape is quite different, both of the flower and leaf.'

'Remember, Grace, the floral leaves are called petals, which saves confusion in describing plants. The petals of the flower (commonly called Celandine) are pointed, whereas those of the buttercup are round. The leaves also are extremely dissimilar, and yet both belong to the



LESSER CELANDINE—*Ranunculus Ficaria.*

same class. I mean, the ranunculus tribe, from which the plant properly takes its name, "*Ranunculus Ficaria.*" There is a larger Celandine, not nearly so pretty, which belongs to quite a different class.'

'Mamma, are there any buttercups in blow now?'

'No, Grace; but this pretty, golden star is one of our earliest Spring flowers, and blossoms from March till May. It has been called the Sunny Celandine, because it only expands its petals on bright days, and closes them up from five o'clock in the evening, till nine on the following morning. As you may observe, a large number of blossoms grow from one root.'

'Yes, mamma; and they are surrounded with glossy green leaves, spotted, with a lighter shade, and of such a pretty round form.'

'They are "cordate," or heart-shaped; and their dark, shining colour contrasts beautifully with the golden flowers.'

'Is it a useful plant, mamma?'

'No; though the lover of wild-flowers looks upon it with pleasure, yet, to the farmer it is not a welcome sight, for the taste is so bitter, that all cattle leave it untouched; also, it is said to injure other plants around.'

'Well, I think it a great pity it's not of use, for it is so pretty and gay. I always feel happier when I see a bank covered with those brilliant, golden stars; but, surely, mamma, there's nothing without a use?'

'Certainly not, Grace. God has made all things for some wise and merciful purpose, and His works show forth His glory, and do His will; from the highest constellation in the heavens, to the more lowly stars of earth which adorn the humblest position, all must perform the allotted tasks for which they were formed.'

'But,' asked Robert, 'can we know the purposes for which God made them?'

'Not always, my dear boy, because His ways are so much higher than our ways, that they are often incomprehensible to us. But I think Grace has explained one reason for the creation of the flower we have been examining. She says, the sight of its star-like blossoms gave her pleasure, and made her feel happier. God has beautified this earth in many ways, to increase the enjoy-

ment of His creatures of the human race. And I believe that as we walk the fields or lanes, and feel our hearts gladdened and cheered by the beauty and fragrance of the many clusters of wild flowers which adorn our path, every blossom there is fulfilling the mission for which our heavenly Father sent it into the world.'

'No time is lost which is devoted to the study of God's works. Our Saviour himself taught the lesson of trustfulness from the lilies of the field; and many useful and comforting thoughts may be derived from the careful consideration of other wild flowers. Surely, when God is so kind as to send them on the earth, for the purpose of conferring pleasure and happiness upon man, we ought to follow so great an example, and strive, by every means in our power, to contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of all around. We cannot always find opportunities of doing great things for others, but let us be the flowers of our own home.'

S. T. A. R.

A TRUE KING.



THE late Duke of Hamilton had two sons. The eldest fell into consumption when a boy, which ended in his death. Two ministers went to see him at the family seat, near Glasgow, where he lay. After prayer, the youth took his Bible from under his pillow, and turned up 2 Tim. iv. 7, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness;' and added, 'This, sirs, is all my comfort.' When his death approached, he called his younger brother to his bed, and spoke to him with great affection. He ended with these remarkable words, 'And now, Douglas, in a little time you will be a duke, but I *shall* be a *king*.'

THE SCENE AT A YEAR-MARKET.



UR Bremen Year-Market has been blowing its horns, drinking its beer, singing its songs, crying its wares, and telling its mercantile falsehoods for four or five days. The prevailing articles seem at first sight to be toys, gingerbread, and music. All the streets and alleys are alive with organ-grinders, and one is scarcely out of reach of their jargon either night or day.

The market-place and public square are filled with booths or stalls, chiefly made of boards, but in some cases of canvas. The external angles of the old *Rathhaus* and *Cathedral* are occupied to their utmost capacity. It is difficult to see where another booth could be pocketed. The outskirts of the market are occupied by the dealers in crockery and wooden ware. The stalls on the squares are arranged in streets, where every art of the shrewd tradesman is resorted to in order to effect a speedy and advantageous sale. Some of these streets are appropriated to specialties. There is one section where only cake is sold. Brunswick sends its quota of bakers, who vie with the Nurembergers in massive piles of honey-cake and gingerbread. No one but a German shopkeeper could devise so many styles of cake; there is every imaginable shape, size, colour, flavour, and corresponding price. What a child will not buy an older person will; and so the salesmen are constantly confronted by adult customers, as well as by others who are so small as not to know that their six-grote piece will not buy all the gingerbread in Germany.

As I walked through the market there seemed to be no end to the toys. The booths are much too small to hold even a small portion of the whole stock, so that many of the toys are strung up, twisted ropewise, and hung in variegated festoons from one stall to another, around the lamp-posts, and every object firm enough to

bear the weight. Irregular mounds of toys, standing in every spare foot of space, rise as high as the little folks that crowd about them and feast upon them in bewilderment. The poor fishmongers are pushed into the background, while in close proximity to them are the soap-venders, lamp-oil traders, and other grocers, whom the aristocratic portion of the guild will not allow to occupy the pigmy Broadways and Boulevards. The stationers make a very good appearance; the photographers have galleries in convenient places in active operation, and in the stalls, where collections are offered for sale, you may buy a fair *carte-de-visite* which you have been wishing to get for months.

The Tyrolese and Swiss play an important part at the Bremen Year-Market, as they have some of the best articles. Their stock of carved woodwork is hardly inferior to that in some of the stores of Geneva and Interlachen. Their chamois-skin gloves, with other neatly-got-up Alpine articles, cannot be bought anywhere at better advantage. The men and women having them for sale are gaily dressed in their peculiar cantonal costume. The Italians have drifted all the way up from the Mediterranean to the North Sea with a large assortment of ordinary mosaics, but good corals.

One part of the market is appropriated to puppet-shows, which are the great centres of attraction to the admiring peasantry, who have come in from all the surrounding country to enjoy their annual paradise of cheap amusement. There are shooting-galleries, circuses, zoological collections, pictures, natural curiosities, dwarfs, giants, and magic-lanterns. Much attention is shown the children—a part of the population which is never forgotten in such cases. Amusements for their special enjoyment may be found, such as circular railways and hobby-horses moved by machinery. There is a band of music constantly plying its art in the open air.

Methodist.

WOUSKIE.

BY HETTY BOWMAN, AUTHOR OF 'ELSIE ELLIS,' ETC., ETC.



TWO pert ears, two bright eyes, that look as if they were always asking questions; a shining black nose; four funny little feet, never tired of trotting about; hair iron-grey, shading off, here and there, to a colour rather like that of a withered orange; and an odd little stump of a tail, which very often wags without any apparent reason—that's our Wouskie, the dearest, queerest, wisest little doggie that ever gnawed a bone. He is sitting at my feet now—his head rather on one side—as if

he perfectly understood he was being 'put into a book,' and must be 'proper' till his portrait was drawn. But the stillness does not last long—down! Wouskie, down! pens were not meant for you to play with. Do be quiet for ten minutes, if you can, and curl yourself up on the mat, as you sometimes do, till no one can tell which is head and which is tail; and then, if you will only be good, we will have a ramble together, and you shall scamper and dance to your heart's content.

Wouskie was first seen by my brother in Hull, looking in at a butcher's shop, with very hungry eyes, as if he thought how nice a bone would be! The queerness of the creature attracted my brother's attention, and he made inquiry about him, in the hope that his owner, (if he had one, for he looked rather as if he belonged to nobody in particular) might be induced to part with him. But before the purchase could be effected, Wouskie had disappeared. Had his 'puppy brains' got some idea of what was going forward, and had he taken himself off, no one knew whither, preferring his own wild, wandering life to any submission to the habits of civilised society? It almost seemed so at first; but we soon found that Wouskie had no choice in the matter, for he had been stolen, along with three or four other dogs, and shipped off—you would never guess where! You know the largest and coldest country in Europe, where once the famous ice palace was built, to gratify an empress's whim—a fairy vision of beauty, that rose silently as a dream, and passed away *as* silently, leaving not a trace behind. Well, Wouskie was sent to Russia. I wonder how he liked the voyage; whether he gave a bark for 'Good-bye,' at the dear old English shores, which meant to say, in dog language,

'Absence makes the heart grow fonder.'

No one will ever know, for Wouskie keeps all his thoughts to himself, and never trusts them even to me, the dearest friend he has.

But there were eyes upon Wouskie all this while, which his thievish master little knew of, and the moment the vessel touched the quay at St Petersburg, the police were waiting to send him back to his rightful owner, by whom he was soon transferred to my brother's possession. So Wouskie saw nothing of the strange foreign land, and cannot tell whether or not he would have liked it better than his native England; though I should not much wonder if he sometimes gives himself airs on the subject of his travels among his quiet, stay-at-home neighbours in our country village. Indeed, I sometimes see him looking rather scornfully at our staid, sober Gyp, as if he were thinking—

‘Ah! well, you're a very respectable dog in your way, but you don't know where *I've* been!’ Naughty little Wousk! When you have spent as many years of patient, faithful service as Gyp, it will be time enough for you to look down upon your elders. However, Gyp does not seem to consider his disdain worth notice, and gazes gravely back into the pert little face, as if he were saying to himself, what my grandmother used often to say to me—

‘Young people think old people are silly; but old people *know* that young people are silly!’

However, Wouskie has some good points in his character; and one is, obedience, in which he might be a pattern to some little folks I have known. If he sits beside me at dinner, looking up with pleading eyes that almost seem to speak, and I say to him—

‘Gently, Wouskie, gently; Wouskie mustn't snatch,’ he takes what I give him from my hand as quietly—shall I say as a child? Well, as a good child, I mean; for I have seen tiny fingers snap rather rudely now and then. I hope *yours* never do; for I should be sorry to think that Wouskie could behave better than any one so carefully taught.

One thing more I must tell you. Wouskie is very fond of biscuits—nearly as much so as of bones—and

sometimes we give him one, by way of a treat, when he comes into the dining-room during supper. One evening he had been very much excited, jumping and frisking about in a way not at all proper for a doggie admitted to the privilege of parlour society; but he has not, I am sorry to say, so much respect for persons as he might have, and I fancy he thought we were all assembled on purpose to play with him, and for no other reason whatever! In the midst of his gambols—oh! Wouskie, Wouskie, I'm almost ashamed to write it of you!—he jumped on the table, planting those queer little feet on the white cloth, as unconcernedly as possible, and gazing round on the whole party, with such a saucy, defiant look, that nobody could find gravity enough to scold him. All at once, the bright eyes fell upon some biscuits, and Wouskie walked towards them, picking his way most carefully among the plates and glasses. Of course, we all expected to see the black nose in the dish; but no, would you believe it, he seemed to understand that biscuits in a dish were not meant for him, so he only *looked*, and never attempted to touch. Good little Wouskie! Of course, he got a biscuit as a reward for his honesty, and his raid on the table was forgiven. But I thought—ah! you know quite well what I thought, so perhaps I need not tell you—only, the next time you feel very much inclined to take anything without saying 'May I?' remember Wouskie.

There are several more things I might tell you; but Wouskie thinks the ten minutes are rather long, and I must not tax his good behaviour too much. Quiet, Wouskie, quiet! Do you know what a little cousin of mine once said, when he was asked what patience meant? 'Yes, papa; it means, stop a bit, when I'm in a hurry.'

But I won't keep you waiting longer. You shall go and have a merry game of play. Come, Wouskie!

THE CHRISTIAN FUGITIVES.

'And the Lord shall stand by them and save them.'

‘**T**HERE is no help for us. If we turn back to the village we have passed, we shall be recognised, and the officers of the Prefect will instantly seize and drag us to danger and death. The forest of the Cebenna is dark and gloomy; it is said to be filled with ravenous wild beasts; but our trust is in the Lord: He will not let us be confounded. He can hide us in “the hollow of his hand,” as he did His people of old, when the Egyptians were behind, the Red Sea before, and the mountains on either hand.’

Thus said the leader and guide of the little band of Christians who were fleeing from murderous persecution and death: six souls, all told—three able men, brave and tried, one crippled boy of sixteen, and two young girls. Cruel and unrelenting persecution had been waged against their faith. Fathers, sisters, brothers, and friends were daily passing through terrible ordeals, giving life, hope, everything for the cause of their Master, in the city of Arles, from whence they had escaped barely with their lives, and not knowing where they might lay their heads, with the broad heaven for a covering overhead, and the snow of winter beneath their feet.

The dark winter night was falling upon them, the storm was increasing, and the snow came faster as they entered the dark forest, leaving behind the abodes of men. The strength of the cripple was nearly exhausted, and with difficulty he dragged himself on, with the assistance of his companions, who endeavoured to keep slow and sympathising footsteps with the wearied boy, whose spirit, far more willing than the weak flesh, now

quailed before the dismal night and dark prospect, in which there seemed no ray of light or hope: and, as they went in the dark forest, he exclaimed with bitterness:

'Would that I had glorified my God before His enemies in the city; better far than having my bones picked by the wild beasts of this dreadful forest!'

'Our Father in heaven has not so willed it,' said their leader, kindly, to the heart-sick, weary boy. 'He has rescued us thus far from great dangers. My poor child, still believe that His will alone is for our eternal good, and cling to the promise He has left for His followers: "I am with you always."'

'Yes,' murmured the boy, 'I can believe it, "to the end, to the bitter end."'

Darkness was coming on, and as the party were casting about in their minds for the best and safest way of spending the night, they came unexpectedly upon a clearing in the forest. Several logs of trees that had been felled by woodmen were lying on the ground near an oak of immense size and of great age; few boughs were living, but the trunk was hollow, and contained an entrance large enough to admit one person, though the cavity could have contained a dozen persons with ease. It had been used as a sleeping-place by the woodmen when night had overtaken them engaged in their work. There it had been left standing untouched for centuries, a magnificent monarch of the forest, glorious in old age and decay.

'This is Cæsar's Oak,' said one. 'I have often heard of this famous tree. It is said he slept under it one night on his way to Gaul.'

'Now, God be praised,' said their leader; 'here will we pass the night. This will give us both shelter and protection from the storm. Let us be thankful for this tent prepared for us in the wilderness.'

They crept through the opening, and disposed themselves comfortably for the night, with grateful hearts; and, for further protection, some loose planks that were

lying near the tree were fastened firmly across the entrance. A few snow-flakes drifted through the crevices of the trunk, showing that the storm was raging without; but, comfortably sheltered, their hearts were filled with thankfulness, and they thought little of the cold and storm, and dreary, dark night.

'Listen,' said one, 'I hear a shout. Do you not hear voices?'

They heard distinctly. The sounds came nearer, and they could see the flash of torches. They had been tracked and discovered, and were at the mercy of six soldiers, who surrounded the oak.

'Shall we drag out the vermin?' asked one. 'They have caught themselves in a trap of their own making, it seems.'

'We could not guard them here until morning,' said another.

'No! no! Leave them quiet as they are; they are safe enough for to-night. We will build a fire, and take our comfort, if possible, until daylight; then we can carry our prisoners safe back to Arles.'

They made their preparations for spending the night around the tree. Worn out with the fatigues of the day, and accustomed to rough beds and a hardy, tough, wild life, they slept soundly, despite the storm, leaving one of their number as sentinel; but drowsiness overtook him also, and the souls of the soldiers were lost in slumber, while the hearts of the Christians were anxious and thoughtful. The future loomed before them dark and terrible. The agony of martyrdom, with its untold, untried pangs and horror, filled each breast with forebodings, as they strove to comfort, sustain, and strengthen one another for the terrible ordeal through which all who would not apostatise were called upon to endure. Brave men and timid women, whose hearts might quail and faces become blanched at the mere recital of cruel tortures, through the grace of God, and for the glory of His name, had, in the hour of trial, found courage given them—'grace in the time of need.'

The night was wearing away. There was silence in the heart of the great oak, and silence without, where the guard were sleeping heavily. The cripple raised himself on one arm on the hard couch where he was lying.

'Hark!' he said; 'Hark! They are coming! they are coming!'

They listened, and they heard in the distance a sound as from some solemn, gigantic instrument of music, swelling low and then louder through the grim forest, borne far away, and then caught up by the returning wind, growing loud and louder, and bursting into one terrific crash of ferocious sound, startling the soldiers from peaceful dreams of rest to an awful knowledge of present danger, as the howls of hundreds of wolves rang out upon the dark night, summoning their companions to a banquet of blood.

From their place of security, the Christians looked out upon the scene of bloodshed that had already begun.

'Will you let us in?' shouted a brave, undaunted Roman soldier. 'Will you let us in?'

'Alas! it is impossible,' was the answer. 'We could not now save you, and would perish ourselves in the attempt.' And the hearts of the Christians were filled with sorrow and pity for the men who had been hunting their own lives like the wild beasts that were now fastening upon them.

'Climb to the boughs and save my son—he is young, and my only son,' cried the sentinel; and the young man, mounting upon his father's shoulders, sprang upon the lower branch, and receiving assistance, slid through an aperture above, and stood in the midst of the little band, pale, bleeding, and trembling.

'My everlasting curse upon you,' shouted the father, 'if you betray one of these men!'

These words were the last. Faster, thicker, came the ferocious wolves; thousands came hurrying on; the whole forest seemed alive, and the few faint struggles against an overpowering force, the dying moans and last

agony, were quenched in the yells of the ravenous beasts. The slaughter was soon ended ; and five souls who had never known or believed in the Saviour of men, the Lord of compassion and mercy, were summoned to their last account.

'Praise the Lord for this signal deliverance,' said the Christian guide, 'for He hath been on our side. "Our soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler." Blessed is he that hath the God of Israel for his help.'

Hidden, indeed, as it were, in the hollow of God's hand, through that long dreadful night, daylight brought them safe escape ; and through the instrumentality of the young Roman soldier, who had been saved from the wolves in so wonderful a manner, the band of Christians received free permission to worship as best suited their conscience, unmolested and undisturbed by persecution, until the fury of the war waged against their brethren in the reign of Decius subsided. They had another cause for thankfulness and rejoicing connected with that dark night ; for the young Roman soldier dated his convictions of the True Light from that time, and the convert of the Cebenna forest proved, by his life and example, a worthy and sincere follower of the 'despised Nazarene.'

Methodist.

I'LL TRY.

CONSCIOUS GROWTH is better than angelic flattery. A little boy said to me once, 'I try to be good, and *I know I try!*' So may you always say, 'I try to advance, and *I know I move!*'



THE APOSTLE JOHN.



JOHN, the beloved disciple, was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and the younger brother of James the elder, or greater. His occupation was that of fishing on the Lake of Galilee. His father's family seems to have been in good circumstances, and his mother was one of those devoted women 'who ministered of her substance' to Jesus. He was probably first a disciple of John the Baptist: he afterwards followed Christ as an apostle; was the youngest of the twelve; and, perhaps, partly from this circumstance, as well as on account of the affectionateness of his disposition, was especially cherished and beloved by our Lord. He, with Peter and James, was distinguished by the particular regard of their Master on several occasions. He was present at Jesus' trial and crucifixion, and received the parting bequest of his mother to his filial care. He was banished, according to tradition, in the reign of Domitian, between A.D. 90 and 100, to the island of Patmos, in the Ægean Sea, and there wrote the Book of Revelations. But he afterwards returned under Trajan, and dwelt at Ephesus, where he is said to have died at the advanced age of ninety or a hundred years. As his brother James was the first apostolic martyr, so John was the last survivor of that 'glorious company,' and the only one, it is believed, who died a natural and peaceful death. It is a current story that when he was weighed down by the infirmities of old age, and unable to preach, he was led to the church, and addressed the people with the laconic exhortation, 'My children, love one another.' To those who asked him why he said this, and nothing further, he replied, 'Because it was the command of our Lord.'



A BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT.



WILLIAM IV. expired about midnight, at Windsor Palace. The Archbishop of Canterbury, with other peers and high functionaries of the kingdom, were in attendance. As soon as the 'sceptre had departed' with the last breath of the King, the Archbishop quitted Windsor Castle and made his way with all possible speed to Kensington Palace, the residence at the time of the Princess—already by the law of succession Queen—Victoria. He arrived long before daylight, announced himself, and requested an immediate interview with the Princess. She hastily attired herself, and met the venerable prelate in her ante-room. He informed her of the death of William, and formally announced to her that she was, in law and right, successor to the deceased monarch. 'The sovereignty of the most powerful nation lay at the feet of a girl of eighteen.' She was, *de jure*, Queen of the only realm, in fact or history, 'on which the sun never sets.' She was deeply agitated at 'the formidable words, so fraught with blessing or calamity.' The first words she was able to utter were these: 'I ask your prayers in my behalf.'

They kneeled together, and Victoria inaugurated her reign like the young King of Israel in olden time, by asking from the Highest who ruleth in the kingdoms of men 'an understanding heart to judge so great a people, who could not be numbered nor counted for multitude.'

The sequel of her reign has been worthy of such a beginning. Every throne in Europe has tottered since that day. Most of them have been for a time overturned. That of England was never so firmly seated in the loyalty and love of the people as at this hour. Queen Victoria enjoys personal influence, too—the heart-felt homage paid to her as a Christian woman—incomparably wider and greater than that of any monarch now reigning.



'IT WAS A FINE QUIET NIGHT IN THE TROPICS.'

THE FORTUNES OF THE WOODFORDS:

AN EMIGRANT STORY.

BY MRS GEORGE CUPPLES,

AUTHOR OF 'THE LITTLE CAPTAIN,' 'MISS MATTY,' ETC.

CHAPTER II.



HE next day, the letter accepting Mr Eyton's offer was despatched; and now that it was really settled, Mrs Woodford began to take a more cheerful view of the matter than she had done the night before. It was impossible to resist being amused at the remarks made by the children at the breakfast table, and the sight of her husband's face, now almost free from its expression of care, went further than anything to reconcile her to the great undertaking.

'Herbert and Arthur must know at once,' said Charley; 'I was forgetting them altogether. Oh! how I wish they could go with us.'

'We'll run over and tell them, after lessons are done,' said Bernard; 'we have a half-holiday to-day, you know.'

'Ah! I fear there will be too many half-holidays now,' said Mrs Woodford, with a sigh. But great was the delight of the children, Bernard and Charles especially, when they were told, that after that week Miss Taylor was going to leave the Elms, and afterwards they were only to have a short morning lesson from their sister Maud.

'If that isn't almost as good news as the going to New Zealand,' said Bernard. 'What fun it will be to have Maud for our governess. Will the 'old mother' give us

long columns of spelling to learn if we let our books fall by accident? or a page of history to write if we are but five minutes late?'

'No!' said Maud, 'she will not have time to spare for that; but she will have more severe punishments for any who are naughty. Miss Taylor has been far too lenient with you boys.'

'I'll tell you what to do, Maud,' said Mr Woodford, trying to look very stern; 'if any are disobedient, just turn them out at once, and have nothing more to do with them.'

'No! no!' cried Helen, we will never be naughty so long as the 'old mother' teaches us. It will just be like having a game at keeping school. Besides, Maud knows twice as much as Miss Taylor; at any rate, she never grudges the trouble to make a difficult passage plain.'

But Maud had only been installed as governess two or three days, when large hand-bills, with the names of several ships, and their time of sailing, arrived at the Elms. Mr Woodford had at first made up his mind to go to Auckland, in the earliest settled part of New Zealand; but, on inquiry, he found that good land was to be had more conveniently in the colony of Otago, the most recently colonised portion of the country. The first ship sailing from Liverpool was bound for this new colony; Mr Woodford, therefore, determined to take passages on board of 'The Islay,' which was fixed to sail in two months. What a long time it looked to the children, but how short to Mrs Woodford! All thought of regular lessons with Maud were at once abandoned, as the assistance of every one was required to pack the great cases their father sent from Liverpool; even Helen and little Madge were able to add their tiny amount of help, by carrying the small things from one room to the other, and as for the boys, they were head over ears in business. They rose with the lark every morning, and set off to the village to take lessons from the carpenter and smith, and other tradesmen, who were all very willing to be of ser-

vice to the kind-hearted family at the Elms, who had been so generous to the poor and sick folks in their days of prosperity; while Maud and Lily were equally busy receiving instruction from the housekeeper in the art of cooking and other housewifely occupations.

And now all was nearly in readiness for the long voyage. There were the great deal boxes painted with the ship's name and the family's, which were to be put into the hold; there, too, from parlour to kitchen, and elsewhere, were gathered things to be put in bags for use at sea. The small box containing the children's toys, roped and labelled, was placed beside a large market basket that little Helen and Madge had selected to put their pet kitten in, which no one had the heart to tell them must be left behind. Their favourite doll also was sitting by the basket, with hat and cloak on ready for the journey, a small hand-bag, containing her luggage by her side; quite eager to be off, seemingly, and ready to play with her little companions all the world round. It is not our intention to speak of the parting with the Mortimers and other kind friends; suffice it to say, that much though the children longed to be off, yet, when the last day came, and they realised that the dear old Elms, where they had indeed been so happy, was to be looked upon for the last time, a bitter sense of the change was brought home to their inmost minds, even as to those of their parents. Still they could not, of course, enter into the pain which older people feel at leaving their own country, or almost conceive the swell of emotion which gathers at every stage, till the emigrant is fairly at sea.

'The Islay' was a large, fine vessel, of about a thousand tons, taking out about four hundred steerage passengers, who, with those in the cabin and in the intermediate section, when added to the crew, made, in all, more than five hundred souls on board. Amidst the confusion and excitement, which may be imagined at the departure of such a ship, the Woodfords saw the last of their friends, and were almost too bewildered to know of how they left

the river and spread sail down Channel, and at last lost sight of old England. A mist of discomfort and seasickness hung over this period for them, and almost every one else, till they were far from sight of land.

Mr Woodford had taken their passage in the intermediate section, much to the vexation of the boys, who had wished a steerage passage, in order that enough might be saved to let their parents and the girls go into the cabin. But they now felt glad that their father would not agree to it, as they caught glimpses of the discomfort, confusion, and disagreeable crowding of the steerage passengers' compartment on the 'tween-decks.' Their own quarters were in a small deck-house in the middle of the ship, a temporary erection, divided into three parts, of which they had the largest one. It was certainly very much cramped for a whole family, but they had it to themselves, and were together. Their portion was not larger than the inside of a small caravan. Here they slept, took their meals, and, except in good weather, had to spend most of the day within it. At night a division was made by means of a matting designed for the purpose, leaving to Mr Woodford and the boys a space not nearly so large as a compartment of a railway carriage—in which, indeed, they could not have slept at all had it not been for the system of shelves, one over the other. The other divisions of this deck-house were still smaller, and were occupied by two families, the children of which were principally young, so as to require less room. One of these families especially, the Hoopers, was neighbourly and obliging; and, on the whole, they all got on well together.

Living in this large ship with so many people on board, and all its various occupations going on, whether sailors' work or mere passengers' pastime, was like living in a village, with the addition that it was always moving on its way. Now the sails swelled gently in the trade-wind, and now flapped or strained in the more fitful weather that followed; and all the while the tediousness

was broken by the little incidents that came out of so many people living so close together, heightened often by the curiosity everybody could not help feeling about everybody else, with the distinct effect it gave to people's characters. It was singular, too, what an interest the sailors took in the children, especially those in the deck-house, who were most in their sight. But this was still more the case when Helen and Madge Woodford brought out Dolly in full state, recovering from her supposed fit of sea-sickness, and now able to benefit from the fine weather. The rough men never seemed to be able to understand this enjoyment of the little ones; yet they would often turn to take a peep at it, or put their weather-beaten heads together in the distance, as if considering the matter.

Madge, in particular, had been brought before the sailors' attention by a trifling incident, which caused her some distress. Unknown to the whole family, and, indeed, in direct disobedience to her mamma, she had secretly brought her own pet kitten to Liverpool, and then hidden it cleverly in a large basket of things for immediate use on the voyage. The kitten, however, had in some way escaped whenever the basket was opened, and ran off in terror amidst the confusion, no one knew where. She had consequently been in some disgrace with her mamma, as the kitten, when found, would, it was understood, cost no trifling sum for its passage. Madge's distress was much relieved by the sympathy shown by some of the seamen, who took opportunities to assure her that pussey would turn up ere long, and that they would do their best to find her before she got wild.

But an occurrence soon took place which drove everything else out of mind. It was at the beginning of a fine quiet night in the Tropics, when the first watch was set, and everybody else on board had settled to rest. It was very hot, and the hatches of the main-hold were partly open, when, in the silence, one of the steerage

passengers thought he heard stifled groans from the dark space below. This was succeeded by a faint cry, and, on the alarm being given, a boy was found, who had managed in some way to conceal himself, before the ship sailed, among the cargo and stores, where he had also contrived to find food all this while. At the same time he had supplied himself with water by recklessly boring into the casks with a gimlet. The surprise and indignation were great; every one was roused in a moment, while the boy was brought sullenly a prisoner before the captain. He was a very disagreeable-looking boy, with a large head and stunted body, dirty, and, as the saying is, hang-dog looking. Indeed, he evidently belonged to the lowest and poorest rank, if not to a still worse class. But still his face had a wistful expression, and there was keen intelligence in the side-long glance of his eye, which was in itself rather a pleasant blue.

'So, you're a stowaway, sirrah?' said Captain Dewsberry, while the boy only hung his head the more. 'What did you do it for? What's your drift?'

'Cos I wants to hemigrate, your worship,' was the husky reply. 'I wants out to New Zealand.'

'Do you know,' said the captain, frowning, 'I could send you back to prison by the first homeward-bound ship we speak? I shouldn't wonder if it wasn't the first time either! Why didn't you try it honestly, and work your passage?'

'I know'd ye wouldn't take me, sir,' said the boy; 'but I can work now—I ain't afraid, I ain't; not after sweeping the chimbleys that I has, not to say runnin' along tiles promiscus like.'

'You've bored into three water-casks, I hear,' said the captain more severely, but inclining to soften a little. 'Less might have served surely, you young vagabond; we may be short of water yet.'

'Cos it was in the dark, sir,' was the faltered reply, 'an' I got hard put to it after my bottle was dry.'

'What's your name?' inquired Captain Dewsberry.

'What's your age? Have you got any friends?'

'Tim Napper, I'm called, sir,' said the boy, readily.

'I don't know how old I am, and I han't got no friends—leastways, he didn't look like it when he kep' me out to sell matches, and I'd got to steal to make it up, else I was whipped at night.'

'Try him aloft to-morrow, Mr Dale,' said the captain to the second-mate; 'and hark'ee, bo'sun, see him scrubbed the first thing when the decks are washed.'

All the assemblage broke up; the quiet of the night was resumed; and next day Tim Napper appeared, making his trial of ship duty. He turned out a sharp and active boy aloft, though steadily holding to his strange notion to become an emigrant. Still the prejudice of his first discovery clung to him, both amongst crew and passengers. Poor Tim seemed to be excluded from among both, and never to have any proper place either to sleep in or eat. In his case, all the hardness of sea-manners appeared to come out, while the selfishness of ordinary people amidst the annoyance of a voyage fell also upon him. He was thought ugly, cunning, and not to be trusted; at one time he would be seen taking refuge alone in the boats near the pigs; at another, his resort seemed to be up aloft in the round-tops. But the wayward heart of little Madge Woodford first drew to him in pity; then Helen shared the feeling; and their eldest sister Maud no sooner knew of his hard lot, than she fully entered into their concern for him. Maud had been anxious that the children should not fall behind in their lessons, thinking, too, that perhaps there would be little time for school when they landed; so she resolved to keep up their studies as much as possible during the voyage. For this purpose, when the weather permitted, she assembled not only her own sisters and younger brothers, but the other children of the deck-house, to a game of keeping school, and so attractive did she make this lesson-hour, that all the

children wearied for it to come round again. The captain greatly approved of this plan, and would often come to inquire who was the best scholar, and would produce some raisins or a fancy biscuit from his pocket to bestow as a reward; which was indeed a great treat at sea.

At these times, if the boy Tim Napper happened to pass, he would loiter near, seeming to take an odd interest in the proceedings, as if he had never seen such a thing before in his life. He was now trim and clean, looking a great deal better in the cast-off sailor's suit that had been made down to him by the sailmaker. He was clever, too, at sailor's work, and was considered the quickest boy on board; so that the captain and chief mate at least looked favourably upon him, and it might have been thought he was settling to a sea-life. His attention to Maud's little school became at length so marked, that, with the captain's approval, she invited him to become one of her pupils; which he eagerly did, and would at any time have lost his dinner in order to secure his lesson. Poor Tim, indeed, scarcely knew more than the alphabet, which he said he had picked up when helping a bill-poster in Liverpool; but he soon became one of Maud's aptest scholars. After a time she one day asked him if he meant to continue being a sailor.

'No, marm,' said Tim, very respectfully, 'I does not. I likes it well enough, but I'm not one o' themselves, dy'e see—nor never will be. They can't take to me, like; p'raps its owin' to the chimbleys, and matches, and sich like I've had to do with; but anyhow, I doesn't take to them.'

'How is that, Tim?' said Maud. 'You seem quite cut out for it, I think!'

'Why, marm, I wants to be a hemigrant, I do,' said Tim, quietly.

'That's a strange fancy at your age,' Maud said. 'What do you know about the new country we're going to?'

‘Well, I’m told, marm, a cove needn’t neither beg nor steal there, nor even sleep under dry arches and in holes. Then he can look to have a hoss of his own in no time, and he can build a house for hisself, and have sheep and pigs, and no end of things of his own making.’

If Maud could have said anything against this idea, she did not wish to do so.

‘Oh! it’s prime being a hemigrant!’ said Tim, on more than one occasion. ‘I wouldn’t change for anything else.’

It was strange that this fancy of Tim’s should have been like a light in his dark path—the only guide leading him to something better. It was for this he was so anxious to learn reading, and it seemed to increase his sense of the kindness shown him by the young Woodfords. His gratitude was first marked by a service he rendered to little Madge. She had almost given up hopes of seeing her kitten again; but one morning, when Lily opened their cabin door, there stood Tim with his jacket off, which was rolled round something that struggled and jumped in his arms in a most perplexing manner.

‘If you please, miss,’ said Tim, ‘will you tell the little lady that I’ve found her cat—leastways, it’s a black and white kitten, if it ain’t hers; but it’s uncommon wild through living all alone, and huntin’ the rats and the cockroaches.’

‘Where did you get it, you good Tim?’ cried Madge, rushing out. ‘Oh! how it has scratched your poor hands!’

‘Never mind, miss, so long as she’s safe,’ said Tim; ‘but you’ll ’ave to keep her close for a day, or mayhap two.’

The kitten was now, by Mrs Woodford’s permission, placed in an empty basket, till she was tamed down once more, and Tim was dismissed with many thanks from all the children for his cleverness.

But Tim had soon better opportunities of showing that their good offices had not been thrown away. Rough weather and heavily-rolling seas came upon the

ship as they rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and it was seldom that the children, or indeed any of the passengers, could venture along the wet, sloping decks as 'The Islay' rolled and pitched on her course. All schooling was at an end. It was often hopeless to get anything from the steward or the cook, or even to obtain a little water, or get a message conveyed. On such occasions, Tim Napper was always ready, nay anxious, to be employed to serve the Woodfords, though he did not show the same willingness on behalf of others. His feet appeared equal to the oldest sailor's in balancing him; and if by any chance he was sent reeling, he always somehow managed to catch hold of something in time, and to save what he had in charge; whilst his grin of pleasure in succeeding expressed his kindest good-will to the whole family.

Once more the fine weather came, and 'The Islay' steadily advanced through the warmer latitudes of the Indian and Southern Oceans, while the former occupations were renewed to while away the growing impatience of all on board. The influence of Tropical weather brought back the necessity of depending on trifles for amusement, along with the gossiping interest which all took in each other, now rather too closely joined to weariness. Slight bickerings would at times break out, and a disposition to ill-natured scandal would show itself.

The passengers in the cabin were few, all gentlemen, with the exception of two ladies—one, Mrs Rugby and her two little girls; the other, the captain's wife, a pretty young creature, scarcely older than Maud Woodford. It was natural that Mrs Dewsberry should, almost at first sight, have become friends with Maud, and that during the whole voyage they should be found often together. Mrs Rugby was a lady with a rather disagreeable expression of countenance, and a harsh voice; and as her husband had been appointed head of one of the colonial schools, she considered herself much above the other passengers, who were all going out on speculation,

as it were. From the very first she seemed to have rather a dislike to the Woodfords, and resented the invitations they received to the cabin. She tried to rouse the jealousy of the other two ladies in the deck-house, who were not so often favoured; but both of them were kind, homely women, who were quite content with each other's society, and the treatment they received in general. They both declared they were glad when the Woodfords had any attention shown them, for everybody could see that Mrs Woodford was a real lady, though she put on no fine airs, like some, and that a more obliging family was never seen. All that Mrs Rugby could do, therefore, was to keep her two little girls away from the other children, which was by no means an easy matter, as they were constantly finding their way back to the happy little group near the deck-house. Yet, strange to say, Mrs Rugby was never visible during the hour Maud kept her little school, so that Polly and Sophie were never hindered from being of the number. There were some people who said that Mrs Rugby knew quite well what her children were about, and who advised Maud to send them away. To such advice, sweet, gentle Maud would not listen. But now, as they passed the Tropics, and it was reported to the captain that they would really be short of water, Mrs Rugby's ill-nature towards the Woodfords showed itself more plainly than before.

'There might be a scarcity of provisions, too,' she would say; and it would be hard indeed if she and her children were made to suffer when intermediate passengers were feasted and fêted. Every time Mrs Woodford or Maud showed themselves, she would say something positively insulting, so that the former determined to keep away from the cabin altogether. They were then within a comparatively short distance of their destination, though the weather, being intensely hot, made every one feel the scarcity of water the more, and having none to wash with except what was drawn from the sea.

But much though the passengers had to suffer, poor Tim Napper came off the worst of all, and if he was seen near the scuttle-butt, where a man was constantly stationed now, he would be ordered off with harsh and cruel words, because it was always brought up against him that he had a hand in the damage to the casks. The same took place when his allowance was served out to him, as if it was grudged even as a charity. But things instead of improving seemed to get worse; and Tim somehow appeared to be at the bottom of all the trouble. First one child in the steerage fell ill with a fever, then another, till there were no less than a dozen ill. One was for several days considered by the doctor to be in extreme danger, and fathers could be seen to gaze overboard with gloomy eyes at the sea, as if looking forward to the dismal scene of a burial in the wide ocean; or perhaps some would glance back at poor Tim Napper as he passed, seeming to connect him somehow with their fears. While the child's life was in suspense, Tim would over and over again make known to Maud Woodford that he would willingly give up his own life to save the little one, and that he bitterly repented his unlawful entrance into the ship, with its consequences. Maud soothed him, and took pains to show that though a little thing often caused great distress, still he had not been so much in fault as this; but she took the opportunity to speak to him of One who overruled everything, and she taught him for the first time a little simple prayer. It was a quiet Sunday, and the same night the poor boy was seen in a corner of the deck near the round-house, evidently repeating this prayer, to which he earnestly added some words of his own, beseeching that the sick child might not die.

The pleasant breeze came wafting them on their way. Rain fell plentifully from time to time. Happily, too, the ailing infant began to recover, and the others were fast regaining strength, when the cry of 'land' was given from the mast-head. It was only two rocks rising out of

the sea, called the 'Snares,' but next day the hills of New Zealand were plainly visible in the distance, resting on the water like clouds. Hardly any one went to bed that night. They waited to see the sky rockets put off, and the cannons fired, that were to summon the pilot; and though this work was begun at three o'clock in the morning, it was not till three in the afternoon that a little boat was seen, sometimes rising on the top of a wave, the next moment disappearing, but in the end reaching the great ship, with its anxious throng of passengers.

(To be continued.)

LOOKING UP.

THE little lark at early dawn
 Springs upward from the dewy lawn,
 The daisies in the meadows blowing,
 Look upward to the sun on high,
 The tall green trees are ever growing,
 As if they'd run into the sky.

Still upward, upward, everything
 On slender stalk, or soaring wing,
 To us, a gentle lesson giving
 That we should heavenward turn our heart,
 Nor let the purpose of our living
 Be bounded to its earthly part.

Then upward, upward let us turn,
 With eyes that strain, and hearts that yearn;
 Nor ever 'mid the cares and beauty
 Of earthly toil and earthly love
 Forgetful prove of higher duty,
 But serve Him first who reigns above.

Moral Songs.

THE STORY OF THE MICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'ARCHIE MASON,' ETC. ETC.

PART II.

THE MOUSE IN THE KITCHEN PRESS.



'He found them beside the matchboxes.'

'WHEN Dormouse slipped away from his kind family he stood still for a moment behind the kitchen door, plucking up courage to explore, and waiting till his people should be out of hearing. He then went forward cautiously, and reached a large room, where a lady in a

black and white dress and lace cap was standing beside a table weighing sugar.'

Sonny. 'I think that was grandmamma.'

'A little woman was standing near her with a plate in her hand, and a dark boy, in a black velvet suit, was eating plums, with his back to the open press.'

Robin. 'Wasn't that me, Tiss?'

'You shall hear. The dark boy was saying, "Grandmamma, may I order a good pudding for dinner?" as Dormouse crossed the kitchen. Dormouse picked up two raisins that he found on the floor, and thought them the best things he had ever tasted—far better than cheese.'

Robin. 'I dropped those plums for Dormouse. Wasn't I a kind boy, Tiss?'

'Indeed you were. He smelt so many good odours proceeding from the press that he went in, but he stopped short in surprise at the curious rustling and scratching he heard. It came from a pile of matchboxes half rolled up in brown paper.

'As Dormouse looked, he saw a large black beetle creep from under the paper, then another, and another, till he counted seven of them shuffling about the press in all directions.

"Don't run away," he called after them; "I won't hurt you. Tell me what kind of place this is?"

"It would be a very good place," said one of the beetles, looking at him timidly, "if it were not for the mice, who live in that hole yonder. It was only yesterday they carried poor Legs, my husband, down their staircase; and little Feelers, my sister, is gone also. You must excuse me," and she crept under the paper again.

'While she spoke the press door was shut, and Dormouse found himself a prisoner. He did not waste time in lamentations, but went straight to the mouse-hole the beetle had shown him. Truly it was a steep staircase he had to go down, but at the bottom was a snug house, nearly as comfortable as his own home in the stack.

'There were three mice in it, a mother, son, and daughter, who all bid Dormouse welcome. The daughter was a pretty little thing with light-grey fur and bright eyes. Dormouse thought her far prettier than his sisters or cousins.

'He was very happy talking to her till he overheard the son telling his mother that they had nothing for their guest's dinner.

'“Can't you go and kill a calf?” said she.

'“I don't know whether he eats calves or not,” objected her son.

'“Try him—you can only try him.”

'Thereupon the two young mice ran up their staircase, and Dormouse followed them to see what they were going to do. He found them seated, one at each end of the pile of match-boxes, with a fat beetle in their paws. Dormouse watched them dismember the beetles with a secret feeling of disgust, which he was too polite to show; and when they presented him with the hind quarter of a calf, as they called it, he shut his eyes, and swallowed it as fast as he could for fear of hurting their feelings. But he thought the stackyard mice much the best off, with their ample provision of good corn. The grey mouse told him that she sometimes climbed up the side of a crock where lard was kept, and nibbled a hole in its paper cover, and she promised to show him the way.

'Dormouse was awakened next morning by a strong light coming down the staircase, and running up to see where it came from, he found the press-door open. He said hasty “good-byes” to his kind entertainers, and giving one look at the little boy in the velvet suit, rushed frantically along the kitchen floor, and out into the yard.

'“Oh! Grannyma,” cried the dark boy, “such a darling little mouse ran out of the press! It looked up in my face with its black eyes. May I go and see where it went to?”

'By the time he reached the kitchen door, Dormouse

was far down the yard. Mr and Mrs Mouse were so glad to see their son safe at home, that they did not scold him much, but they made him promise not to go out of sight again without leave.

'You shall hear how he kept his promise. Shrewmouse, Coax, and Tiny were never weary of hearing about the mice and the beetles in the press, and Dormouse made fine offers of introducing them to his new friends, without thinking it needful to add, "if papa and mamma allow me."

(To be continued.)

FOLLOW ME.



LITTLE NANCY accompanied her mother one day to field work. The road led across a stream which had only stepping-stones, which lay at short distances one from another; but Nancy was not afraid for her mother bore her in her arms, and stepped lightly over the stones. But on the way back it was different; the mother had a large bundle of hay on her back, which she was taking home for the cows, and she could not even hold her little daughter by the hand, therefore she only said to her, 'Follow me, dear Nancy, and come carefully in my steps.' Although poor little Nancy was very much afraid lest she would fall into the water, yet she followed her mother, and by carefully obeying her injunctions, got safely across the water.

This story, dear children, reminds us of the loving, full invitation given by our Saviour, and which He extends to all little children, when He calls, 'Follow me.'

Kinderfreund.

LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S
STORY,' ETC.

CHAPTER II.



ICHNEUMON FLY.

‘T was the end of last season,’ said the Rose-tree. ‘Most of the summer flowers had withered away; even the “last rose of summer” had “faded and gone;” and I, arrayed in sombre autumn colours, was weeping over the wreck of beauty that I saw around; when, finding the subject too much for my feelings, I turned from the deserted garden, and looking over the wall, tried to amuse myself by stretching my unpruned branches as far as I could into the

field at the other side. In the corner of that field, close under the wall, is a heap of rubbish, which, having been allowed to remain for some time undisturbed, has become covered with nettles and thistles.

'Well, one fine sunny morning, a beautiful butterfly came hovering over the field, resting now and then upon a tall daisy or a blade of grass, but all the while looking about as if seeking something it very much wished to find.

'“ Ah !” thought I, “ that creature is trying to find a suitable spot whereon to lay her eggs ; I have no doubt she will come to me and take advantage of the shelter of my spreading branches.”

'Soon after she came, but merely to look at me and pass me by ; while, flying swiftly across to the thistles, she began to make herself quite at home among their prickly leaves ; and, creeping under one of them, she laid her eggs as neatly as possible, in rows quite close together, just like the most exquisite bead-work.* This duty done, she fluttered rather languidly away, and, soon after falling to the ground, she was picked up by a little boy, who seemed to think her a very great prize.

'“ Uncle Quentin,” said he to a gentleman who was walking slowly down the field, “ just see what a beautiful butterfly I have found.”

'Uncle Quentin took it up in his hand.

'“ Yes, dear, it has been a beauty, though now it is much the worse for the wear. It will not do for a specimen, but when it is quite dead I will take it to pieces, and show you the various parts through the microscope ; then I think you will discover some new wonders that you little expect to see.”

'I believe those inquisitive human creatures did actually take the dead butterfly to pieces, and put each

* The eggs of the various species of butterflies and moths are not only like beads in their form and arrangement, but are in some cases coloured and carved far more beautiful than any beads. They are very interesting objects for the microscope.

part under that thing they call a microscope; for I heard them talk of the beautiful scales arranged like mosaic work on the wings,* and a great deal more beside.

'But to go on with my story. As the eggs escaped human observation, they were not disturbed, until one bright, warm day, when each egg burst open, and a tiny worm-like creature appeared. These creatures are called larvæ; and, young as they were, they seemed to know very well how to provide for themselves, for they immediately set to work upon the leaf whereon they were born, which soon gave proofs of their labour in the shape of several holes. After all, the butterfly was not so silly and improvident as I always supposed her to be, for instead of laying her eggs upon the leaves of garden shrubs or flowers, she selected the vulgar thistle,† for that plant and the mallow supply the food most agreeable to the young of her species.

'It is curious, is it not, that though, while in the larva state each species of butterfly and moth will only feed upon certain trees or plants,‡ in the winged state they will sip the sweets from every flower. But I am wandering from my story.'

'I should think you are,' said the Rose; 'for you have not made it plain to me that those worm-like creatures had any connection with my sweet faithful friend, the beautiful Vanessa.'

* The wing of a butterfly consists of an elastic membrane, very thin and transparent, of most delicate formation, but colourless. The beautiful colouring is formed by minute scales fixed upon it, and overlapping each other like the tiles on the roof of a house, thereby making mosaic of the most exquisite workmanship, so fine, indeed, that one wing may be found to contain more than a million of scales.

† *Vanessa Io*, the beautiful Peacock butterfly, lays her eggs upon the nettle.

‡ Fortunately for us, scarcely any two species of the larvæ (or caterpillars) of *Lepidoptera* will feed upon the same tree or plant. If it were not so wisely arranged, some kinds of vegetables would soon be destroyed by these ravenous creatures.

'My dear,' said the parent Tree, 'pray do not be so impatient. You really are quite infatuated and unlike yourself; but you may believe me when I tell you that, though your friend Vanessa is certainly a beautiful creature, she is not to be trusted; for I do not believe that she could long remain true to anything. While you are in the pride of your beauty and can sustain her with the delicacies she likes best, she will visit you as often as you like; but when you are overtaken by misfortune or old age, she will surely desert you for some younger and fairer flower.'

'Ah! what it is to be prejudiced!' said the Rose, in a tone so cutting that it wounded her parent stem. 'You first cast imputations upon her birth, and now you assail her character. It is really too bad;' and the fair Rose proudly drew up her head, while her soft leaves quivered with indignation.

'Attend to what your parent says,' exclaimed a Sunbeam in a tone of hot displeasure, at the same time bestowing a withering glance upon the rebellious flower. 'If you won't listen to your mother, you *must* listen to me, for I have helped your haughty friend Vanessa to attain her present rank, so of course I am very well informed on the subject.

'I watched those tiny creatures (worms, to all appearance, except that they were provided with feet) grow larger day by day, while the thistle became a great sufferer from their presence; for, working away with their sharp teeth,* leaf after leaf soon became a skeleton. I

* Caterpillars have one large tooth in each jaw, with which they work away as rapidly as we should with a pair of shears, all the while swallowing every morsel as quickly as it is so cut. When thousands are born upon one tree, they soon destroy the foliage. We are informed by Mr Curtis, a learned observer of these creatures, that in the year 1782 the caterpillar of the Brown-tailed Moth (*Parthesia Auriflua*) increased in some parts of England to such an extent, that it destroyed all the foliage of the trees and shrubs, proving such a scourge that prayers for its removal were ordered to be read in the churches; while the poor people were

never saw more voracious creatures. They ate so much that their coats became too tight for them; then, one by one, those same old coats burst open, and each creature walked out quite sprucely clad in a gay new dress that had been growing all the while inside the old one. These caterpillars differed from their relative to whom Vanessa was so rude just now, in this respect, that while its coat is smooth and velvety, theirs bristled with many spines; but in all other particulars they were very much alike.

'After they had changed their coats* several times, some of them came to misfortune; for, wandering from their native thistle, they were seen and devoured by a certain Mr Rook, who was taking a walk in the field. However, one or two, remaining constant to home, escaped destruction; and the very creature which is now the haughty Vanessa was one of them.

'Well, one day I noticed that the caterpillars were becoming rather dull and stupid-looking. They seemed to have lost their appetites, and each, retiring into a corner, remained almost motionless; then, even while I looked at it, one of them seemed to shrink up, and again coming out of its old coat, I could see no new one underneath — only a soft, damp-looking, unprotected body; no feet, † as before, but something folded across that looked like the rudimentary outlines of legs and wings. The longer I looked, the more changes I beheld; for over the soft body came a shelly covering of a

employed to collect the caterpillars at the rate of one shilling per bushel. And it is stated that fourscore bushels of webs were for a while collected daily in some parishes, and burned under the inspection of the authorities. — See 'History of the Brown-tailed Moth,' by D. Curtis. London 1782.

* Caterpillars generally moult four times before entering upon the chrysalis state.

† Caterpillars have six scaly feet corresponding with those of the perfect insect, besides from four to ten membranous feet, of which the two last are situated at the extremity of the body. The membranous feet are mostly terminated by a more or less perfect coronet of little hooks.

greenish hue,* dotted with gold ; and as this shelly substance hardened, all the outlines became sharper, and I could distinctly see the form of a body, a head, and wings. I assure you I was greatly pleased with such a wonderful contrivance for the protection of a helpless creature ; and returning to the spot next morning to see whether anything else had happened, I only noticed, that instead of lying on the leaf as before, it was hanging by a strong but slender filament from it. Well, all through the winter and spring, the chrysalis, sheltered in that sunny corner, remained hanging from the thistle.

'At last came the long bright days of summer, and my father, King Sol, being then in the height of good humour, he sent me to awaken all the creatures that were still asleep. Among them was my friend in the chrysalis. As soon as I saw her, I greeted her with my very warmest glances ; but at first she seemed to take no notice, until Instinct, tapping at her door, told her to come out as quickly as possible, for the Cabbage Moth-flies, the Peacocks, and a number more, had for long been having all the fun to themselves. Thus appealed to, Vanessa opened a hole in her shelly house, and then out she came ; not all at once, but by very slow degrees, as if too weak to make much exertion. I can tell you she presented a very funny, and not at all graceful appearance ; her body looked so large and out of proportion, while at the upper end of it, on either side, was a curious crumpled-up bundle. Of course I could not help smiling at the queer little figure before me, which she perceiving, said, " Smile on, kind Sunbeam, please ; you are helping me to unfold my wings."

'Truly my glances had some magic influence upon the bundles, for they gradually unfolded and expanded until they assumed the appearance of fine richly-painted wings. At first the wings were so soft and limp that

* The chrysalides of most butterflies are either golden, or dotted with gold ; hence the name chrysalis, from a Greek word signifying 'a creature made of gold.'

they were not fit for anything; but as they dried, the network of muscles upon which they were stretched became harder, and the happy creature, glowing with the delicious sensations of a new and untried life, looked round through the countless lenses of her brilliant eyes,* while trembling with excitement, even to the tips of her delicate antennæ. She now and then raised herself a little from the leaf, and at last, feeling quite equal to the occasion, she ventured to leave her resting-place and float upon the buoyant air, rather slowly at first, but gathering more courage after a while, she bravely fled over the garden wall, and over the beds of sweetly-scented flowers, where she appeared gayest of the gay, to be followed by more than one admirer of her own species.

'Now, fair Rose, that is the true history of your beautiful friend "Vanessa, the Painted Lady;" yet you need not despise her for her humble origin. I assure you I do not; I only despise the folly that makes her ashamed to own it.'

While the Sunbeam was giving his sketch of proud Vanessa's early days, the poor despised Caterpillar, crawling among the grass looked up and listened to the story.

'There,' said he, 'I felt it must be so. Isn't it delightful to think that I come of such a good family? If I go on my way patiently, soon a change must come at last, and then I shall rise as high as my proud cousin who has just refused to claim my relationship.'

'My friend,' said the Sunbeam, 'before I go away I must tell you that you will need to be very watchful as well as patient. You have many enemies, and some who may appear to be friends, and admiring friends, too, will, if you do not keep a sharp look out, prove the most dangerous foes after all. The butterfly is proud and vain, but you have your own share of weak vanity too;

* A butterfly's eye has been found to contain no fewer than 17,325 distinct crystalline lenses, each of which possess all the properties of a perfect eye.

so I warn you that if you trust only to your family pretensions, without taking heed to your own ways, you will never succeed in attaining the high position to which you are now looking forward.'

CHAPTER III.

'DEAR me,' said the Caterpillar, 'I suppose it is because the Sunbeam has to go away that he talks so cross and croaking. As if I could not take care of myself! Of course I shall only keep the best society, and as to vanity, one cannot help feeling a little vain sometimes, and that reminds me that I must change my coat.'

So saying, the Caterpillar put off the shabby coat that had attracted the gay butterfly's contemptuous notice, and feeling much more brilliant in his new one, he exclaimed: 'How I wish I could be a butterfly this very moment!'

'I dare say you would,' said a snappish voice close by. 'All you silly creatures long to be something you are not. But why you all wish to be butterflies, puzzles me more than anything.'

'But it is *my* nature,' said the Caterpillar.

'Ah! I dare say,' answered the snappish voice. 'I suppose it is human nature too, for I heard a silly human girl the other day singing a bit of nonsense, beginning, "I'd be a butterfly." Butterfly, indeed!'

'But I *shall* be one some day,' pleaded the Caterpillar.

'You! well, I never heard such assurance in all my life;' and Mrs Earwig* coming close to the Caterpillar, snapped her pincers in his very face.

'Don't!' said he, I hate your sharp ways. I wish you would go away; I feel rather dull, and from what I have

* The *Forficula* (or Earwig) forms a connecting link between the *Coleoptera* (or Beetles) and the Orthopterous insects. Cuvier places it in the *Orthoptera*, or sixth order of insects; but later naturalists have given it an order to itself, known by them as the *Euplexoptera*.

just heard of the habits of our family, I believe I must be going to enter the secluded state that I am required to assume, before I can become a butterfly.'

Snap, snap! went Mrs Earwig's pincers. It was very rude of her, but she was a very homely little body, not troubled with any lofty aspirations or sentimental feelings, but content to plod on in her humble position without caring to rise any higher. Indeed, though she had wings, she seldom used them, except for the protection of her family.

'Pshaw!' said she, 'you think, because I don't go flying in the sunshine* from flower to flower, that I have not the means of doing so. I can tell you, my wings are (in proportion) quite as large as a Butterfly's, and though differing in style, quite as beautiful, too.'



THE 'EARWIG.'

'Your wings!' sneered the Caterpillar, as he surveyed the little, shining, brown form before him; 'your wings! I should really like to know where you keep them, for I must say, I cannot perceive any indication of your being possessed of such ornaments.'

'Ah! you can't; can't you?' replied Mrs Earwig, in shrill, agitated tones; 'and, I suppose, because you can't see them, of course they are not there. Ah! you're a bril-

liant creature, you are, Mr Caterpillar!—a fine specimen of high life, to be sure! As to my wings, I have a great mind not to show them to you; but I see a dangerous-looking stranger coming;' and Mrs Wig, in the greatest alarm, called her young ones to come close to her, then she opened her scaly wing-covers, and from under them appeared a beautiful pair of gauzy wings, which she fluttered anxiously to scare the intruder away. Mr Cater-

* Earwigs are nocturnal in their habits, and often migrate in the evening in considerable flocks.

pillar was so lost in astonishment, that he quite forgot to think of danger for himself.

'Well,' said he, 'that is a wonderful contrivance! You actually had them folded up and hidden away under those scaly plates.'

'Exactly,' said she; 'folded like a fan, transversely, as the human creatures say. Now, look at them, and tell me what they remind you of? Perhaps you won't perceive it, but they are supposed to resemble the form of the human ear; just in outline, you know.'

'Yes, I see; I suppose that is the origin of your name.'

'Well, I fancy it is, for some naturalists suppose the name to have been originally "Ear-wing," on account of this peculiar shape in our wings; but I believe the names of "Earwig" in English, "Perce-oreille" in French, and "Ohrwurm," in German, have originated in a popular delusion, that we love to creep into the ears of sleeping persons, and thence crawl up into the brain.'

'And do you?' asked the Caterpillar.

'How can you ask such a silly question? I am not going to say that, if a person were lying* upon the ground, an Earwig, believing his ear to be like any other dark hole, might not run into it, and being unable to turn round in the narrow passage, it would kick and struggle, and so create a most painful irritation; but as to creeping up into the brain, whoever set that story going must have had very little brain to boast of, for every one knows that there is no open passage from the human ear to the human brain; but there, Mr Caterpillar, do look about you! that stranger is sidling up to you in a very suspicious manner.'

* It is true that Earwigs do occasionally find their way into the human ear. A woman, a little while ago, went into the Infirmary at Sh——, complaining of acute pain in the ear, together with an unaccountable irritation that was almost maddening. Upon examination, it was found that there were two Earwigs in her ear. She was ordered to lay her head, with that ear downwards, upon hot poultices, and after a while the means employed proved successful, and the tormentors came out.

'Oh, nonsense! Mrs Earwig. I am sure I do not mind how near she comes; she is evidently a creature of sufficient taste, and is probably struck with my appearance. I know I look very attractive in this new coat.'

'Oh dear!' said Mrs Earwig, 'how simple some creatures are! I am very certain she is sidling up to you for some purpose of her own. I never saw a more cunning, spiteful-looking thing than she is.'

'How suspicious *you* are,' said the Caterpillar. Then looking up and bowing to the stranger, 'Elegant creature,' said he, 'I am proud to make your acquaintance. Is there anything that I can do for you? If there is, you need only speak to have it done.'

'Oh! thank you very much, Mr Caterpillar; I am sure you are very polite. I was just thinking of asking if you would allow me to rest for a few moments upon your soft velvet coat?'

'With the greatest pleasure. Pray, rest as long as you like; a light figure like yours will be a burthen that I shall scarcely feel.'

'You soft thing,' whispered Mrs Earwig, 'don't let her come near you. If you do, she'll give you cause to repent. I recognise her now, and know her to be one of the most cruelly selfish creatures in existence. Yes, Mrs Ichneumon,* with all your high airs, I know you quite well. You had better go away, and let that poor stupid fellow alone.'

'Dear friend,' said the Ichneumon, as she bent over the Caterpillar, and caressed him with the tips of her delicate antennæ, 'pray do not listen to this vulgar creature's

* The Ichneumon belongs to the ninth order of insects, *called *Hymenoptera*. All of this order possess four membranous naked wings, of which the anterior are always the largest. They have fewer nervures than those of the *Neuroptera*, and are only veined, not net-like. The body of the females is always terminated by a more or less elongated ovipositor, composed of three pieces; the middle piece is the only part that penetrates into the body in which the creature deposits its eggs; its tip is often slit like the point of a pen.

insinuations. You may believe in my disinterested admiration, for how could anything remain proof against your attractions! As for me, I was hovering in the air, in the company of beings who would scorn to notice our fussy neighbour here, when I was struck by the richness of your costume. "That being," said I, "is a pattern of high life in disguise; he is destined to fill an elevated position in winged society, and I feel I should be neglecting my privileges if I delayed to make his acquaintance." That's just what I said to Mr Ichneumon; and then I came down, and tried to attract your attention.'

'I can quite believe what you say, dear madam,' said the Caterpillar; 'but I beg you will excuse my humble friend here; she is really very well meaning, but as her plain manners unfit her for high society, she is rather apt to be spiteful against rank and beauty.'

Snap, snap! went Mrs Earwig's pincers. 'You stupid creature,' she exclaimed, 'if you listen to her flattery, you'll be ruined. Struck with your appearance, indeed! she's just as much struck with mine, but she sees that I am proof against her arts; while you, you soft creature, are just suited for her purposes.'

'There!' said the Caterpillar, 'your words are sharp enough, I am sure, Mrs Earwig, so you need not prick me with your pincers.'

'I? Mr Caterpillar! Can't you see, you stupid fellow, that I am not near you! so, if you are wounded, it is not by me.'

'Oh! there again,' cried the Caterpillar; 'and now, dear Mrs Ichneumon, I am so sorry to disturb you, but you, perhaps, will tell me what it is. I feel as if I had been stabbed in several places.'

'My poor friend, how shocking! perhaps your soft nature makes you fanciful. Ah! there is one of our family, so I must say good-bye. Some day, when you have attained that exalted position of which I heard you talking when I came up, I shall hope to renew our acquaintance.'

'I thank you, Mrs Ichneumon, I shall be most happy to meet you again, and give a butterfly ball in honour of so fine a creature.'

'Dear, dear!' exclaimed Mrs Earwig, 'what nonsense they do talk, to be sure;' then turning to Mrs Ichneumon, 'You'll be dead long before our soft friend has risen in life, ma'am.'

'Ha, ha! I believe I shall, ma'am, and you too; at anyrate, whether by fair means or foul, I have taken good care to provide for my family; the dear creatures will thrive and flourish at our soft friend's expense.' Then away went Mrs Ichneumon, to soar aloft upon her gauzy wings, laughing, after her fashion, at the unconscious innocence of her victim, whose soft skin she had punctured in several places,* leaving in each puncture a treacherous egg of her own.

A few days afterwards, the poor vain caterpillar retired to the seclusion of a shelly house, from whence he never came forth, for the Ichneumon's eggs produced active young larvæ, that preyed upon his body, devouring him bit by bit, while he was too helpless to resist or escape from their ravages.

Such was the untimely end of the poor foolish Caterpillar; and we hope that all these creatures as soft, and vain, and self-reliant, will take warning by his fate, and beware how they despise the well-meant advice of humble friends, and blindly accept the acquaintance of strangers of whom they know nothing.

* The Ichneumon deposits her eggs in the larvæ of other insects. Numbers of caterpillars are (fortunately for mankind) destroyed in this way. The Ichneumon larvæ have no feet, so it is important to them, upon coming from the egg, to have the nourishment they like best within their reach. Those which thus reside, like intestinal worms, in the bodies of other creatures, only devour the fatty parts of the body not absolutely necessary for existence, so the victim lives on until they are ready to assume the pupa state, when they pierce through the outer skin and come out, or else kill it, and undergo their own changes in its body.—See Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom.'

(To be continued.)

STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. VIII.

THE HORSE.



WELL, we shall not have far to go to see that Quadruped,' you say; 'turn which way we like, and the horse is before us, from old Dobbin that farmer Jones yokes to the plough, to the high-bred hunter eager for the chase.'

Very true as regards the horse in its domesticated state; but if we would see it in its favourite haunts, ere its neck has bowed to the yoke of man, we will have to visit the wilds of Arabia, or, braving the

Atlantic billows, make our way to the boundless prairies of South America. There, in herds of thousands we may see them rejoicing in their freedom, scouring the plains, and mocking all man's efforts to enslave them, trying every plan to entice any of their domesticated race they come in contact with to throw off the yoke of the oppressor and join their band.

The horse has been described as the most beautiful and useful of quadrupeds, and numerous are the anecdotes told of their sagacity and affection for their owners. An Arabian loves and treats his horse as one of his household, rearing it as tenderly as if it were a child. When a foal has been weaned, the Arab women say the orphan belongs to them, and from that moment a course of fondling and petting commences; round its neck they hang amulets, and talismen to preserve it from sickness and the evil eye; the children are its play-fellows; it is fed with dates and camel's milk; and in times of famine its master will stint wife and children of food rather than allow his horse to suffer! The Arabs say the horse has as much understanding as a son of Adam, only speech has been denied it.

A friend has told us some anecdotes of a foal in which he took a great interest. It was always treated with the greatest kindness, and when very young it would follow its master about like a kitten, desirous of getting the lump of sugar or the apple which he usually kept for it. Sometimes he would make-believe that he had forgotten the dessert, upon which the foal, getting impatient, would rub its nose over his coat, and even poke its nose into his pockets. At times it became very frisky, jumping up on its master with its front paws, and playing all sorts of pranks around him.

For awhile it always got some good thing to eat in its stall or shed (for its mother had a large square paddock to run in, with a covered shed at one end of it); and in this shed the little foal came soon to know that nice things were to be got.

But life is not all play, even with foals, and the time

arrived when our friend had to begin lessons. Not the alphabet, it is true ; for its duty was not to learn to read, but to learn to leap !

So one day, when it trotted off to the shed hoping to get goodies, it found, to its amazement and disgust, a bar of wood, a short distance from the ground, laid across the entrance, and over which it must contrive to get ere the nice things could be reached. Now this did not suit Chablis' (as its master had named it) idea of things at all. So at first it only smelt the bar, examined it, and trotted off in high huff, no doubt to tell its grievance in foal language to its mother.

A short time passed, and still the bar remained, and Chablis got no goodies. This would never do. So once more the bar was inspected, and, after considering it for awhile with couched ears, little Chablis took the trouble of lifting its legs and stepping over the formidable barrier, and once more partook of the goodies.

Soon after this feat was accomplished, Chablis began to be fed on corn, one rattle of which in the measure made her bound with delight. One day inside the shed stood the master shaking the corn ; up comes Chablis eager for food, when lo ! and behold ! she finds the bar raised much higher. What was to be done ? The corn must be got. So over she went, rapping her legs on the bar and skinning them ; the corn was devoured, and then foolish little Chablis took a fit of the sulks ; she had hurt herself getting over that nasty bar, and she would certainly not cross it again ; she would just stay in the shed and sleep ! And there she remained, half sleeping half sulking for some hours. Then she began to be very hungry, and there was no corn to be had inside the shed, when—rattle ! rattle ! goes the corn-measure, but this time outside the shed, and to get at it that horrid bar must be got over again ! It was really too bad—but pride must have a fall ! Chablis was very hungry. Rattle ! rattle ! goes the corn-measure again—and hop went Chablis—this time clearing the bar without hurting herself.

The bar was gradually raised from time to time, till, unknown to herself, Chablis had become a famous fencer; and thus one portion of her education was completed. But there was more before her. One day her master approached with a curious-looking article in his hand, which, to her great indignation, he put on her back, then fastened something in her mouth, and poor little Chablis found herself saddled and bridled. She was much enraged; but, soothed by the kind though firm words addressed to her, she became pacified, and allowed a boy to jump on and off her back, and ere long submitted to be ridden, first in a riding school, then in the streets, and in course of time became a capital hunter.

Egypt was famous for horses, and we read in Scripture that Solomon carried on a trade for horses with that country.

Horses are, as you all know, largely used in war, and often appear to get as keen in the contest as their riders, becoming excited and eager for the onset.

Most graphically is the war-horse described in Scripture by Job, in the beautiful passage—‘He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains and the shouting.’

In some of the heathen nations where the sun was worshipped, horses were dedicated to it. We read in 2 Kings xxiii. 11, that King Josiah ‘took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the Lord.’

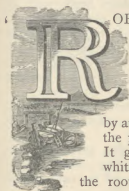
Good reason have we to thank God for having provided us with such a useful servant as the horse; and the best way of showing our gratitude for such a gift is by treating

it kindly, remembering the wise King has said, 'the righteous man regardeth the life of his beast;' and One greater and wiser than he hath declared, 'Blessed are the merciful.'

M. H.

WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

II.—CARDAMINE PRATENSIS.



ROBERT and I have just had a very pleasant walk, mamma,' said Grace, 'and we saw a wild flower, which we wish to ask you about.'

'Have you brought a specimen?'

'No,' replied Robert; 'we intended doing so, but came home

by another path; however, I can describe the plant, for I examined it very closely.

It grows about a foot high, and has whitish lilac blossoms; the leaves near the root are different from those on the stem, and look something like water-cress.

It seems to flourish best in damp places, for we found most of it near the little stream in the meadow. And now, mamma, can you tell what it is?'

'Yes, Robert, you have described it sufficiently well to be easily recognised. *Cardamine pratensis* is the name, but it is commonly called Cuckoo Flower.'

'And why, mamma?'

'Because, Grace, it is one of our earliest summer flowers, and begins to blossom in May, just at the time the cuckoo pays us her annual visit. The pale blossoms of the *Cardamine* and the sweet note of the summer bird combine to herald in the bright warm weather, and remind us that Spring has passed away.'

'Why are some of the flowers white, others lilac?' asked Grace.

'The colour has sometimes been mistaken for white,' replied her mother, 'because it is easily bleached by a few days of sunshine; but, when fresh, it is a delicate lilac.'

'Why is it called *Cardamine*, mamma?' asked Robert.

'From two Greek words signifying "the heart" and "to fortify," because in former times it was supposed to possess very strengthening properties.'

'And does it not?'

'I do not think so, Robert. Many herbs were in great repute in old times, as cures for various diseases, which are not looked upon with much respect in these modern days; however, the foliage of the plant has been used for salad, but is not as pleasant in flavour as the water-cress, amongst which it often grows on the borders of streams and brooks.'

'What shape are the leaves, mamma?' asked Robert.

'I should like to be able to distinguish them from water-cress.'

'They are pinnate, which means that several leaflets grow opposite each other in pairs on one common stalk.'

'That is exactly the description of the water-cress leaves,' said Grace.

'Yes,' replied her mother, 'they are both pinnate; but the distinction lies in the shape of the leaflets themselves. Those of the water-cress are roundish and cordate, or heart-shaped, whereas those of the *Cardamine*, though roundish also, are toothed, or irregularly notched. The stem leaves, as Robert observed, differ from the others, and are lanceolate, or lance-shaped; that is, oblong, narrow, tapering towards each end, and smooth at the edges.'

'I think I understand all that, mamma,' said Grace; 'but it will be hard to remember the long names for the leaves.'

'Well, try to recollect them, dear, for they will help you in describing the differences in plants; and you will not find them so difficult after a little.'



CUCKOO FLOWER.

Cardamine pratensis.

'You have not told us anything about the blossom yet, mamma. Of what shape is it?'

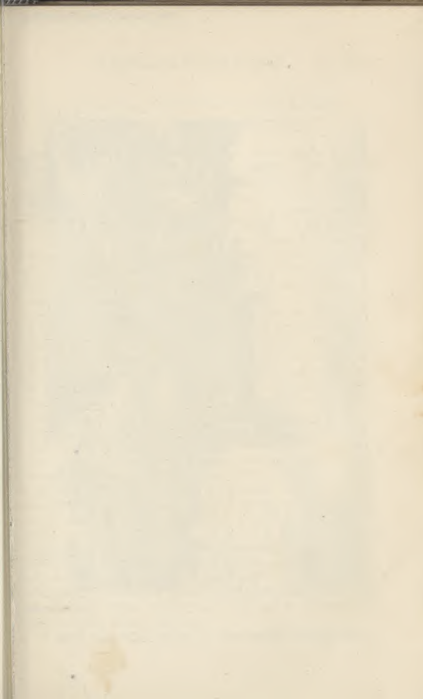
'Cruciform, or cross-shaped, which is the general name for flowers having four petals, such as the blossom of the cabbage. I believe there is a double variety of *Cardamine* sometimes found, but I have never seen it. Having no seed, it spreads by means of the leaflets, which, when they come in contact with the ground, produce new plants. Another peculiarity in this species is, that when the flowers wither, a stalked bud rises from their centres.'

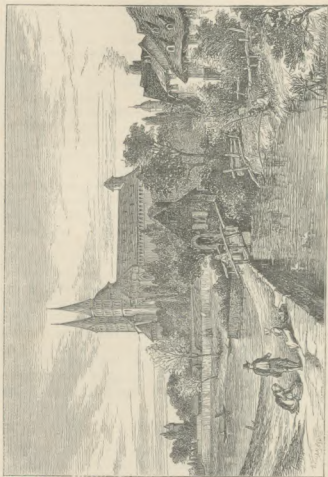
'How very strange!' said Robert.

'Yes; it shows us how beautifully everything in nature is adapted to the purpose for which it was intended; and what infinite wisdom is required to form even one flower of the field, which we so often pass by, without a thought of the wondrous skill and power displayed in its creation. Every tiny blossom has its own peculiar place to fill in this great world, and is perfectly and beautifully fitted to do so, each in its own season. Our Cuckoo plant, being one of the earliest flowers of summer, is the harbinger of a multitude of other and more brilliant blossoms, which follow in its train during the succeeding months. True, it also announces the departure of Spring. But each season has its charms. Our Heavenly Father has regulated all for us—"our times are in His hand." And we may observe that He never withdraws from us any comfort or blessing without replacing it with something far better and more fitted for our real happiness.'

S. T. A. R.







THE CITY OF SPIERS.

A FORENOON IN THE CITY OF SPIRES.

BY THE REV. H. T. HOWAT, LIVERPOOL.



PIRES, spelled in German, Speyer or Speier, is one of the oldest cities in Germany, situated in Rhenish Bavaria, of which it is the capital, on the right bank of the river Rhine sailing from Mainz or Mayence, and with a population of 11,000. Compared with what it was in the Middle Ages, Spires is now very much decayed.

Its population at one period was 27,000. It was also the seat of the Diet, a free city of the Empire, the residence of the German Emperors, and the scene of much imperial magnificence.

Chief among those who have contributed to the decay of Spires, may be mentioned the name of the French King, Louis XIV., by whose orders, in 1689, the city, after being captured, was set on fire, forty-seven streets blazing for three days and three nights, according to the historians of the time. Our neighbours, the French, seem to have had a special animosity against this poor city of Spires, for, not content with what Louis XIV. had done, they stormed it again in 1794, after it had been partially rebuilt, and from 1794 to 1822, the very *Dom*, or Cathedral (Roman Catholic), was turned into a warehouse for the Rhine traffic. The restored Cathedral, however—a very prominent object in the town, rising with its two splendid towers at the top of the broad Maximilian *Strasse* or Street—is one of the finest specimens in Europe of what is known as the Romanesque order or style of architecture; and although, when I was in it last August, I was very much shocked with its idolatry and Romish practices, I could not resist admiring the beautiful fresco paintings, sculptures, and many other works of pure and high art to be seen in every quarter of the building.

I have said that Spires is very much decayed from

what it once was, but it has still many objects of interest. Some of the walks round the town are very beautiful, with their neatly-kept, and apparently very fruitful, orchards, where it was very amusing to see the peasants beating down the apples with great long sticks. Then there is a very fine park behind the Cathedral, stretching down to the river Rhine, full of old trees, and rustic seats, a favourite spot with all the youthful population. It was also a most interesting sight to visit the fruit market, held at the side of the Maximilian *Strasse*, near the Cathedral. The costumes, and especially the head-dresses, of the peasant women were very remarkable,—I am fully justified in adding, really picturesque. And then such a load of grapes, or peaches, or glossy-looking plums, all for a few *kreutzers*, or coppers. I never saw such plums, so large, plump, mouth-filling, shining in the morning sun—let me say it for the benefit of my dear little girls—like real Whitby jet. The fruit market formed itself into a little lane, the baskets in the centre, the peasant women and girls at either side; and as you walked down between the baskets and their owners, they would salute you with: ‘*Erdbeeren?*’ (strawberries): ‘*Kirschen?*’ (cherries); and ‘*Nüsse?*’ (nuts), in a way that, I assure you, was exceedingly difficult to resist.

Of the old Imperial city of Spires, only two relics now remain. The one is the *Allportal*, or old gate or porch, at the bottom of the Maximilian *Strasse*, and the other is a broken wall—all that is now left of the old Imperial Palace of a long line of German Emperors, which, indeed, I had some difficulty in discovering, down a little lane off the same broad street, and in which I now hope to interest my young friends.

‘The fashion of this world passeth away.’ I do not know that I was ever more impressed with the truth of these simple, striking Bible words than on reaching the broken wall I have just mentioned. Here Charlemagne, or as he is universally named in Germany, *Kaiser Carl*, had held his court in the eighth century. Here, for hun-

dreds of years subsequently, the Electors of the Palatinate had given laws to a third part of Europe. Here, twenty-nine Diets of the Empire had met. Here, the Reformers came, in 1529, to attend the Diet, and lay their famous 'Protest' on the table of a furious Council, thus baptising with the name of 'Protestants' all lovers of a purer faith. And what have we now? Not a vestige of the great hall which resounded to the tread of Cavaliers and Crusaders, and the indignant remonstrance of Reforming Fathers. There is nothing but a broken archway, a ruined wall, the top of which forms a hay-loft, and was completely covered over when I saw it by spiders' webs, spun around an empty window. The very tablet that marks the spot is sadly defaced, and shows only a few battered, broken German letters. Of one of the most historic spots on the European Continent, this is all the traveller sees now,—an impressive testimony, which even the youngest of my readers can feel, to the transiency of mere earthly greatness, and a striking proof that the only true glory that has ever been seen on earth, has either been that of Christ, or what belonged to, or was reflected from Him. To render this truth all the more memorable, in the case I have just described, an humble Protestant church stands right opposite to this sad ruin of imperial grandeur. There is but the breadth of a footpath between them. It was impossible to resist the lesson. Charlemagne has passed away, but Christ remains; and every day *His* glory is being added to in trophies of His Cross and Passion—nay, the time is coming, when, over a ransomed world, 'made kings and priests unto God, even our Father,' the great song of victory shall be sung: 'Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.'

But I must tell you something about the Diet. I have mentioned already that it was to this old imperial palace of Charlemagne that the Reformers came in 1529. It was Monday, the 19th of April; and the scene of the meeting was the great *kaiser-saal*, or king's chamber. At the

upper end of the room, and seated in his chair of state and royal robes, was Charles V., Emperor of Germany, and 'King of the Romans.' Beside him were the Archbishop of Mayence, the Bishop of Heidelberg, the Duke of Brunswick, the Pope's Legate, and about twenty different Electors, Margraves, Landgraves, and Princes, representing as many little German kingdoms or principalities. The Reformers who advanced into the royal presence were represented by Luther, Myconius, Melancthon, Spalatin, John Frederick the Magnanimous, Prince Ernest of Brunswick-Luneburg, John Constance, Elector of Saxony, and a host of other brave, devoted men who walked behind them. It ought to be mentioned at this point, that our most gracious sovereign, Queen Victoria, is a lineal descendant of the last-named Reformers, Prince Ernest and John Constance, a circumstance which is invested with double interest when we remember the prominence, to be referred to immediately, assumed at the Diet by Prince John, and the unflinching Protestantism by which, amid all the changes and parties in the Church of England during her reign, our most gracious Sovereign has been hitherto characterised.

With Luther at his back, Prince John unfolded before the German Emperor a formidable scroll. The very essence of the Christian religion, it laid down these two great principles of truth and duty: first, 'The Crown of Christ above the crown of Charles V.,' thereby rejecting the civil power in Divine things, and saying, in effect, 'We must obey God rather than man;' and, secondly, 'The Word of God above the authority of the Pope,' thereby making all human teaching subordinate to the Holy Bible, and saying, in effect, 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak.'

But a short quotation from the document itself will be the best explanation for my young friends: 'Dear Lords, Cousins, Uncles, and Friends,' said Prince John Constance, 'seeing that there is no sure doctrine but such as is conformable to the Word of God; that each

A Forenoon in the City of Spires.

text of the Holy Scriptures ought to be explained by other and clearer texts; and that this Holy Book is, in all things necessary for the Christian, easy of understanding, and calculated to scatter the darkness, we are resolved, with the grace of God, to maintain the pure and exclusive preaching of His Holy Word, such as it is contained in the biblical books of the Old and New Testaments, without adding anything thereto that may be contrary to it, for this Word is the only truth. If you do not yield to our request, we PROTEST, by these presents, before God, our only Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Saviour.'

For conscience and faith, therefore—the liberty to obey the commands of God alone, the liberty to accept as Divine and binding the Word of God alone—that noble band of men stood forth before the world, PROTESTANTS. 'May the Almighty,' said John Frederick the Magnanimous, at the close of the day's proceedings, 'who has given us grace to confess energetically, freely, and fearlessly, preserve us in that Christian firmness until the day of eternity.'

I trust, now, that my young friends will remember how the name of Protestant arose, and will never fail to do honour to the memory of those intrepid men, who, in the great *kaiser-saal* of Spires, and in presence of the representative political and ecclesiastical strength and power of Germany, gave it birth. They will readily understand, also, how all these matters flashed across me as I stood looking up at the broken wall and the spiders' webs beside the Protestant church already mentioned; and should any of them ever visit Spires, I am sure they will not forget to make a pilgrimage to the spot.

It is not necessary for me, in closing this paper, to state the issue of the Diet; those of my young friends who would desire to pursue the subject further and fully, will find it all in D'Aubigne, in a very interesting form, and I have given the reference below.* Suffice it mean-

* D'Aubigne's 'History of the Reformation' (Collins' edition, Glasgow), vol. iv., pp. 65-69.

while to say, that from the 19th of April 1529, the Reformation in Germany dated a new life; that it began to assume a definite bodily and substantial shape; that it found its way into every rank; that it spread into every part of the Empire; and, indeed, as D'Aubigne himself says: 'If it was Luther alone who said "No!" at the Diet of Worms, it was princes and people who said "No!" at the Diet of Spires.'

A CHILD'S THOUGHTS.

AND can it be that I,
 A young and thoughtless child,
 So full of mirth and play—
 So often rude and wild;

That I a soul possess,
 Which must for ever live;
 That Jesus died upon the cross,
 This deathless soul to save?

The Bible tells me this is so—
 A book which cannot lie;
 Then 'tis a fearful thing to live,
 More fearful still to die.

Lord, guide me in the way of life,
 To me let grace be given,
 To cleanse my thoughts from all that's
 wrong,
 And fit my soul for heaven.

Then while I tread the narrow way,
 And fix my hopes above,
 I'll urge poor sinners day by day
 To seek a Saviour's love.

Children's Friend.

INDEX

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'THE BOAT WAS SOON IN A SUITABLE COVE.'

THE FORTUNES OF THE WOODFORDS:

AN EMIGRANT STORY.

BY MRS GEORGE CUPPLES,

AUTHOR OF 'THE LITTLE CAPTAIN,' 'MISS MATTY,' ETC.

CHAPTER III.



THE 'Islay' now received the pilot on board, along with his four native boatmen, of the once-terrible race of savages—*Maories*, as they are now called. These men attracted general interest; they were decently dressed and remarkably intelligent looking, though one had variegated patterns of blue tattooing on every part of his dark skin that was visible, as if continued inside under his clothes; while another had only an imitation of a moustache drawn in the same way, and the rest had similar ornaments according to their fancy. All eyes were soon drawn, however, to the delight of their approach to land, with the novelties of the entrance to the new country, where most were to cast their future lot.

Outside the 'Heads' of Otago, as the entrance to the harbour is called, the aspect was somewhat barren and desolate, but when the ship had fairly got within the land-locked bay, the scene was changed. Few of the emigrants were not in raptures at its appearance, which had an especial charm for the many Scotch people on board—it reminded them so vividly of their own Highland lochs around the opening of the Clyde, only the mountains that rose to view on every side were even grander. The ship was too large, however, to go farther than Port Chalmers, the place of anchorage. Here they had now to wait while the Government officers came and

inspected the vessel. Fortunately all sickness had disappeared so long beforehand, that they were not obliged to go into quarantine. Two small vessels had come down river from the town, to take the passengers and their luggage, in addition to which some of the ship's boats were placed at their service by the captain. One of the latter was preferred by Mr Woodford; a sailor was sent to steer the boat, and several young men from among the steerage-passengers volunteered to go at the same time so as to give them assistance. The boat was thus almost as full as it could well hold, but a further addition was yet made in the person of the boy Tim Napper, who had either been unable to get off before, or still clung on to the Woodfords, the only people who had shown him much kindness.

The distance was nine miles up to Dunedin, and the river by no means easy to navigate, partly from the sand-banks, and still more because the wind and tide are generally contrary to each other. The boat, at all events, soon proved to be the best mode of conveyance, for they soon passed both the schooners, which had successively stuck by the way; they themselves shortly after could not get on against the force of the wind, with the tide failing. Rain was also coming on, so that it was decided to fasten the boat, and shelter under the bank; when an incident took place that was almost as pleasant as it was unexpected.

'Look, papa!' cried Bernard. 'There must be a house up the side of that hill. Don't you see the smoke?'

'It's nothing but a feathery tree,' said George. 'Bernard's eyes are always sharper than every one else's.'

'But Bernard is right this time,' said Dick; 'for, see, there's a man coming down towards us. He can't be a savage, surely, though his dress is queer enough.'

'He's making signs to show us where to land,' said one of the men; and, guided by this friendly stranger, the boat was soon in a suitable cove, where Mrs Woodford

The Fortunes of the Woodfords.

and the children were lifted on shore. The stranger was a settler, a young Englishman named Harkom, and he pressingy invited the whole of the Woodfords up to his house, or shanty, as he called it; while the men in the boat made themselves as comfortable as they could where they were. After scrambling for a few minutes up the wet hill, they reached the house, or rather hut, which at first gave Mr and Mrs Woodford, and even Maud, a rather startling idea of colonial accommodations. It was made of the rudest materials, and consisted only of one room, so small, that when they had all entered, their host could hardly get in after them; however, he was so hospitable and good-humoured, and took it so easy, that they at once liked him, and enjoyed themselves very much. He first made tea at his little stove, putting in a quantity that might have served the whole crew of 'The Islay.' He next brought out bread of his own baking, and as he would have it there was not enough, he next proceeded to mix what he called slap-jack, and fry it, when it turned out to be a kind of pancake. He now collected everything in the shape of a cup or tin that he possessed, and was going to pour out the tea, much to the delight of the children at his manner of doing it, when it suddenly occurred to him that Mrs Woodford should do this; which she readily did with all possible form. Mr Harkom told them that he liked the colony much better than Australia, where he had previously been. Far from objecting to the number of Scotch settlers, in his opinion they were a kindly and worthy race of people; still it had seemed to throw a difficulty in the way of his making acquaintances, so that he looked upon the Woodfords, and his introduction to them, with peculiar interest. He said he now felt quite strange in ladies' society, and had altogether forgotten how to get on with young folks; which made the whole family quite feel for him, though Helen and little Madge did not seem to agree with this notion of his, in spite of their first fears at his great beard, high boots, and cabbage-leaf hat.

The rain being now over, and the wind somewhat fallen, they returned to the boat, their host accompanying them, and giving Mr Woodford many valuable hints on the purchase of good land, some of which, he said, was to be had near him, and now was the time to see about it, as it was Spring. Everybody else felt how odd it was to be hearing of September as Spring. It made the boys recollect that they were at the Antipodes, with the whole globe between them and Old England. The little girls reminded Maud that they were now standing with their feet towards the feet of the people about the dear old Elms; instead of standing upon their heads as they used to suppose. Helen laid most stress upon the fact that it was now night at home, and that everybody there would be asleep—unless, to be sure, dear Adelaide Mortimer might happen to be awake, and think of them. Little Madge puzzled herself about what would happen if a hole were bored right through to the opposite side of the world, so that she could fly back suddenly; and where she would come out exactly, and what the Mortimers would think of it. As they parted from Mr Harkom, he jokingly tried to bribe Madge to stay behind with him, and she, thinking he was serious, was sorry for him, but was obliged to refuse, saying she hoped they would see him some time again. Her mamma expressed the same hope, and so did Mr Woodford; upon which they pursued their way to the town.

High hills rose on every side, many thickly clothed from top to bottom with trees in full foliage, in reality evergreens; some of the nearest being covered with wild flax and strange ferns, or overrun with small brown bush, which gave them the appearance to the Scotch passengers of their own heath-clad hills. Suddenly the inlet terminated as if in another lake, smaller than the first harbour; and here the town of Dunedin appeared, only separated by some sand-hills from the ocean, which again lay beyond. Dunedin was laid out on the plan of regular streets, on a most extensive scale; but meanwhile the single chief

street, consisting of wooden buildings, was the only one that could pretend to the name, the rest having but a few houses in each ; so that, from many points, there seemed to be no connection between them, or they were almost lost sight of, among the remains of 'bush.'

Mr Woodford succeeded in getting his family accommodated at a private house where board was given, though at a very high rate. The expense of this made him the more anxious to obtain land of his own at once ; and on application at the proper office, he was advised to purchase a country section, belonging to a settler about to leave the colony, which he now did, and became in a few days the proprietor.

Mr Woodford was informing his wife that all was ready for their removal, when his attention was drawn by hearing one of the boys desiring Tim Napper to do some piece of work in the porch.

'Has that boy returned?' asked Mr Woodford. 'I thought he had got some employment.'

'Oh no,' replied Mrs Woodford ; 'he has been along with the boys, and made himself very useful about the boxes from the ship ; and he persists in doing all the little odds and ends we require here.'

'We could never have got on without Tim, papa,' said Maud, laughing.

'I think,' continued Mrs Woodford, smiling 'that both he and the children have taken for granted that he is to continue with us.'

Mr Woodford looked doubtful for a moment. 'We must recollect the boy's origin,' he said ; 'not to speak of the manner in which he left Liverpool.'

'But, papa, all his conduct afterwards was good,' pleaded Maud. 'Then he shows attachment, at least to us. Do let him stay, papa !'

'Yes, do, my dear ; on trial at all events,' said Mrs Woodford.

'Well,' agreed Mr Woodford, 'let it be so—indeed, it seems I have no choice left ! It is really questionable

what other employment the boy might get here ; and, so far as we are concerned, it may be a benefit, for I hear that there is not a servant to be had just now. They had been all caught up before I applied. We shall have to wait for the next ship.'

'Oh, I'm so glad!' said Lily; 'it will be such fun doing all the work ourselves! and Tim is so clever!'

The matter was thus decided, and Tim Napper's lot was so far settled. As soon as the boxes and packages were brought up from the ship to the Dunedin jetty, they were placed in a boat procured for the purpose, and meant to be retained, as the nearest way to their new home lay across Pelichit's Bay at the end of the inlet. The boat was large enough to allow of the family being conveyed at the same time; and it was thus they reached Poatipa Hook, as the place had been called by its previous owner. Here a sledge and bullock were in waiting at the landing-place in charge of a native, or Maori, who had been in the habit of often acting as a labourer on the section, and who had agreed to do the same for Mr Woodford. He called himself William Tarakua, and was a tall, rather good-looking man, in ordinary colonial dress, though his complexion was swarthy, with some marks of tattooing.

The house, or 'warrie' as the native called it, was not far off; and he pointed out to the boys a narrow opening in the thick bush, which, he said, was a foot-track to it, and would let them get there in a few minutes.

The boat, with the heavy things, was meanwhile left at the mouth of the creek, up which the full tide would afterwards enable it to be taken very near the house. 'The bush,' which grew thick near the shore, consisted of underwood, so close, and sometimes thorny, as to be almost impenetrable; though here and there it showed the most beautiful tree-ferns, shrubs of curious colours, and flowering plants, while at other places it rose into tall gum-trees, or other timber. These were for the most part duller in their green than English trees; but

The Fortunes of the Woodfords.

they were in full leaf already, if not all ever-green : besides, their peculiarity made up for any sombre shade, and there were glimpses of the brightest-coloured birds fluttering about, although no four-footed animals were seen as yet. The party hurried through, however; glad of the track to guide them, and once or twice getting almost bewildered, till at length the 'clearing' came into view, and they saw their place of abode before them.

At first sight of it, Maud was utterly silent, but Lily exclaimed, in some dismay : ' Oh dear ! can that be it ?— what a thing !'

' Oh, how jolly !' cried Bernard, running forward with Charley ; ' such a funny place ! Why it's just like one of the grottoes at Toxteth Park.'

' Or like a toolhouse,' said Charley, laughing.

' What will mamma think of it ?' whispered Maud, anxiously, as she leant on her father's arm.

Mr Woodford smiled and looked more confident, for he had of course seen it before.

' We must try to make it better at once, then, boys ; before long I trust we shall have something rather more like a real house. We can at least do something to break the surprise to mamma. I bought a tent in town the other day, along with two or three pieces of canvas awning, and had them sent on before ; they are in the hut.'

He and the boys at once proceeded to get these things out, and erect them at the intended points, which was easily done with the help of the stakes which the Maori had prepared beforehand. At one side of the rough little log-hut, or shanty, the tent was now raised and fixed ; in front, over the door, a striped piece of the awning was firmly extended, so as to look something like a verandah. This quite magnified and brightened it up, especially at a little distance. Meanwhile Maud and Lily had been kindling a fire within in the wide chimney, which made the interior look really cheerful, with its rude benches on each side of the hearth. Maud next

found an old broom, and while Lily swept the floor, she filled a kettle that was hanging on a hook over the fire, so that they might have a cup of tea along with the cold meat and bread they were to have for dinner whenever their mamma came.

'I can't think how we are to find room to sleep,' said Lily; 'the house is hardly larger than our cabin in "The Islay."' "

'And didn't we sleep there, Lily?' said Maud. 'Come, we must be cheerful, and make the best of it. In a few days we shall like the place very much, I dare say, and we must try to keep up mamma's spirits. I am afraid both papa and mamma will feel the change for a time.'

Maud was interrupted by Charley shouting that the lazy bullock was turning the corner of 'the clearing,' and in a minute or two more they had drawn up at the door. Mrs Woodford stood for a few minutes surveying the house. 'It is much better than I had thought,' she said.

Maud exchanged glances with her papa.

'I am glad you have such a good impression of it, dear,' said the latter. 'It is a poor place at best, but we shall soon have a very different one.'

When Mrs Woodford moved forward, she could not help noticing how the favourable effect had been produced, and she fully appreciated the thoughtful kindness that had been at work to soften the first view of their rough life. The boys laughed as their two little sisters peeped and peered about, poking into the actual nature of their new residence.

'Oh!' exclaimed little Madge, stopping short as they scampered round with Bernard and Charley; 'Oh, I wish mamma would allow me, just for once, to say "O how jolly!"'

'Well, but you know you mustn't,' said Bernard, authoritatively. 'You're not to use such words; they're only for boys.'

'Yes, I know,' said Madge, with a toss of her sunny hair; 'but there is no other word for what I mean.'

The elder boys, with the help of the Maori, lost no time in getting the smaller boxes dragged from the sledge and placed round the tent for seats. They had a large one carried to the centre for a table, while Maud and the girls, with Tim as leader of the party, were opening boxes and crates to procure the crockery and provisions. With so many willing hands to assist, Maud was able to place quite a complete and almost elegant 'cold collation,' as George called it, on the box-table. There were only two beds, or rather what had served for such, in the house, which were to serve for Mrs Woodford and the girls; and when dinner was over, the first thing the boys did was to go out with the Maori into the bush, where they cut a quantity of the ferns and wire-grass. This was brought in and made into the most delightful elastic beds for the boys and Mr Woodford; and as the spring weather was very mild, the boys assured their mamma they had by far the best of it, and were really to be envied.

Every one by this time was so fatigued as to be glad to retire early to bed; but before doing so, they all met in the tent while Mr Woodford offered up, for the first time in their new home, an expression of gratitude to God, and besought a continuance of His providential care: not only so, still more, that they might be the subjects of His spiritual grace. It was the first opportunity that poor Tim Napper had of joining on such an occasion, yet he seemed to have a conception of the privilege he thus enjoyed; so his troubles and lessons during the voyage had not been thrown away. It was curious, too, that *Maori* William evidently considered he had a right to be present, and knew quite well how to behave, though his manner conveyed more an impression of self-importance than of devout feeling.

Next morning the first thing was to go down and see after the heavy luggage in the boat, which had been brought up the creek with the previous evening's tide, and safely secured. The united strength of the whole

party was scarcely equal to move some of the heaviest boxes from the boat into the sledge; but this difficulty was soon got over by Mr Woodford's contrivance of an *impromptu* crane for hoisting, much to the approval of William especially.

'That is very good job,' he remarked to George Woodford as they went up with the last heavy load. 'The master have got right stuff here,' tapping his forehead.

'Well, yes, William,' said George, carelessly; 'but that's nothing to what papa could do! He has quite an inventive genius.'

The respect of the Maori for Mr Woodford evidently continued to rise. 'Quite right for Englishmen to have comprehension,' continued he, in a rather dignified tone. 'Last settler here not got much comprehension—very nice man—but common fellow!'

Meanwhile the most necessary things were being taken out, while the boxes were stored under cover. The sensation was great as each article of importance was displayed to view, or some stray thing had found its way into the wrong box. Some of them had never been seen before, while others were looked upon for the first time since leaving home.

'Oh! mamma,' said Helen, 'there's the dear little drawing-room stool among those dishes—and—yes! it's the tiger rug, and the lovely china cups.'

'And here's mamma's pretty work-box, and Maud's writing-case,' said Madge, 'and ever so many of the nice drawing-room ornaments.'

'Oh! we've no use for these things at present,' said Dick, 'so I'll just fasten the lid down again. What a bore it is opening the wrong box.'

But the greatest interest was drawn, at least among the male portion of the household, to the unpacking of the numerous tools which Mr Woodford had provided. Dick, Bernard, and Charley, shouted by turns, according to their various preference, at each parcel that was disclosed.

'The workshop will be of great consequence to us,' said Mr Woodford, who was himself fond of carpentering. It will be some time before I can attend to it at all, but you, Bernard, have a turn that way, and Charley can help you.'

'And what shall we make first, papa?' said the two in high glee—'a nice work-table—a cabinet—no, a sofa!'

'You forget that we haven't even a rough table,' was the amused reply, 'nor a chair, nor stool, and even to these I am not sure you are equal.'

'Just let us try, papa,' said Bernard. 'Don't look for one whole day, then we'll show you!'

To these conditions their father cheerfully agreed, and for the present he had many other things to see about; even the improvements on the rude house had to be postponed to preparing ground and sowing seed, besides taking measures to procure the necessary live-stock, and to make the farm profitable in due time.

(To be continued.)

THE BLESSING OF THE CHILDREN.

- 'The Master has come over Jordan,
Said Hannah, the mother, one day;
'And is healing the people, who throng Him,
With a touch of His finger, they say.
'And now I shall go with the children—
Little Rachel, and Matthew, and John;
I shall carry the baby, Esther,
For the Master to look upon.'
The father looked at her kindly;
But shaking his head he smiled:
'Now, who but a doting mother
Would think of a thing so wild?
'If the children were tortured by demons,
Or dying of fever, 'twere well;
Or had they the taint of the leper
Like many in Israel.'

'Nay, do not hinder me, Nathan ;
 I feel such a burden of care :
 If I carry it to the Master,
 Perhaps I shall leave it there.

'If He lay His hand on the children,
 My heart will be lighter, I know ;
 For a blessing for ever and ever
 Will follow them as they go.'

So over the hills of Judah,
 Along by the vine-rows green,
 With Esther asleep on her bosom,
 And Rachel her brothers between ;

'Mong the people who hung on His teaching,
 Or waited His touch and His word ;
 Through the row of proud Pharisees sneering ;
 She press'd to the feet of the Lord.

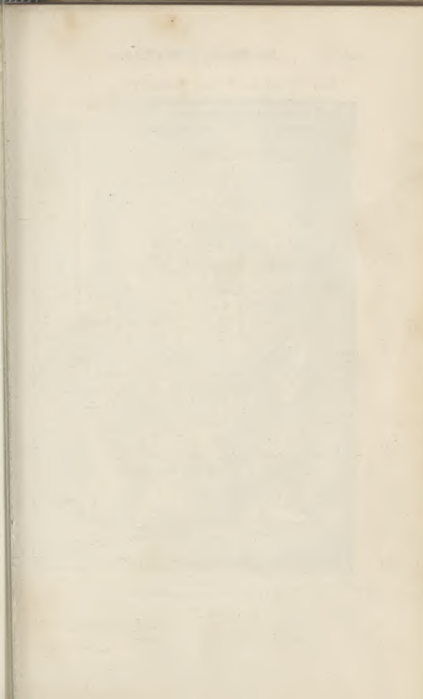
'Now, why shouldst thou hinder the Master,'
 Said Peter, 'with children like these ?
 Seest not that, from morning till evening,
 He teacheth, and healeth disease ?'

Then said Jesus, 'Forbid not the children ;
 Permit them to come unto me :'
 And He took in his arms little Esther,
 And Rachel He set on His knee.

And the heavy heart of the mother
 Was lifted all earth-care above,
 As He laid His hands on the brothers,
 And blest them with tenderest love ;

As He said of the babes in His bosom,
 'Of such are the kingdom of heaven :'
 And strength for all duty and trial
 That hour to her spirit was given.

Presbyterian.





‘ HIS BATTLE-AXE WHIRLED ROUND HIS HEAD.’

THE BROKEN IMAGE.



EARLY nine hundred years ago, there was great confusion and terror one morning in a large town in India. It was a fine town, with prettily-built houses of painted wood or baked clay, and long rows of trees, which threw a cool shadow upon the broad, open street; and in the centre of the city stood a large square building with a high tower, adorned with gold, and tinted with many bright colours. Had you looked into this building, you would have seen a great stone figure with ten or twelve arms, and a frightful face, something like a monkey's, dressed in rich clothes, and with a gold chain round its short, thick neck. This image was one of the great idols, to which the poor Indians, who had never heard of the true God, used to pray and offer presents, and sometimes to kill their own little children, in order to please this false god, who could not even rise from the spot where he was placed. Usually there was no one to be seen near the temple at this time of the morning except a priest in his long robes, or a poor peasant bringing a cake and a cup of milk to set before the idol; but now there seemed to be quite a crowd gathered, all looking very angry and frightened, and all gazing earnestly at a tall grey-haired priest who stood at the door of the temple, and was saying something to which they seemed to listen with great eagerness. What did all this mean?

It meant that a great warrior, whose name was Mahmoud, had come down from the town of Ghuznee, which was perched up among the northern mountains like an eagle's nest, and he had brought with him a great army of men as strong and fierce as himself, who were marching right through the heart of India, conquering all before them. Listen, and you will hear what the priest is saying about this Mahmoud and his soldiers :

'Already, my children, this cruel man has beaten our brothers in the north in many great battles, and has burned their cities and taken their castles, and carried away their sheep and cattle, their silver and gold. But what is worse than all, he has broken and thrown into the fire all the images of their gods; for he says that the gods of India are only wood and stone, and that there is one true God, whom he worships; and that all India must worship Him too!'

Now of course Mahmoud was right in saying that there is but one true God, and that the idols of India were mere blocks of wood and stone, good for nothing; but this the poor people did not know; and when they heard of the burning of temples and the breaking of images, they were very angry, and determined, if ever the enemy got as far as their city, to fight to the last against him; which was just what the cunning priest wanted, for he knew that if the invaders once took the city, *his* temple and *his* idol would fare no better than the rest. And he encouraged the people by telling them that Mahmoud's soldiers would never be able to get so far as *their* town, or that if they did, they would certainly be beaten.

But nevertheless, one morning the sentinel on the watch-tower heard a noise of gongs and trumpets coming up from the north, and saw, far away in the plain, long rows of bright points, which, as they came nearer, were seen to be the crests of helmets, and the points of spears; and in the midst of them was a great flag, which the watchman knew to be the banner of Mahmoud. Then the alarm was given all through the town, and all the men of the city caught up their spears and swords, and ran out to meet the enemy. And then began a terrible battle; and the false priest encouraged his men by telling them that they could not be beaten, for that the idol whom they worshipped would help them. But for all that, Mahmoud's men, who were all strong, big mountaineers, taller and more powerful than the men of

The Broken Image.

the plain, soon began to get the best of it; and they killed a great many of the townspeople, and drove the others back into the city; and so the city was taken. But when the priest saw that his men were beaten, he fled away to the great temple and hid himself; and Mahmoud rode through the midst of the town at the head of his army, a tall, noble-looking man, with a long, flowing beard, mounted on a fine horse, and clothed from head to foot in shining armour; and he came up to the idol-temple and bade them destroy it and the image together.

Then the false priest came creeping out, and begged the king to spare the idol, offering to give him a vast quantity of gold and jewels; and with that he brought forth a large chest, and took out bags of money and handfuls of precious stones, till the eyes of the fierce soldiers who stood around began to glitter with longings, for in all their conquests they had seen nothing like this. But Mahmoud frowned, and answered in a voice like the rising of the storm: 'I am sent to destroy the false gods, not to make money of them. Stand aside, and see how I deal with your idol!'

As he spoke, his mighty battle-axe whirled round his head, once, twice, thrice, and then fell right on the breast of the idol, dashing the hideous image into a thousand pieces, and, lo! out of it rolled heaps of gold and diamonds, worth ten times the sum which the priest had offered him! And thus Mahmoud, like many others, gained far more by doing right than he would ever have got by doing wrong.

D. K.



STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. IX.

THE FOX.



WHO does not know about sly Reynard, with his reddish brown skin, and his bushy brush?

Often may we see him prowling about in search of booty, to obtain which he does not scruple to take birds and hares out of the snares laid for them by poachers, or to steal quietly into a farm-yard and make off with some fluffy little duckling or chicken, and even, when he can manage to do so, with a fine fat hen!

Oh! Mr Fox is an arrant thief—sneaking through the fields he goes, looking so meek and inoffensive that no one

could suspect him of harm ; when, lo ! a partridge's nest is before him, and in a moment Reynard snatches up the mother bird, who, all unconscious of danger, was quietly sitting on her eggs, and either devours her, or carries her off as a tit-bit for the little cubs at home, whom Mrs Fox is occupied in nursing, and to whom both parents are much attached.

A story is told of a female fox, on the approach of the hounds, seizing up her little cub in her mouth, and, though hotly pursued by her enemies, running for miles before them, never relaxing her grip of the little one, till, overcome with fatigue, she dropped it in a farm-yard at the farmer's feet, who took compassion on it, and saved it from its pursuers.

The fox is proverbial for its cunning, and many are the artful dodges it pursues for obtaining its food or preserving its life.

Illustrative both of its affection for its young and its cunning, is the fable of

THE EAGLE AND THE FOX.

The king of birds, in order to appease the hunger of its own little ones, had carried off Dame Reynard's last remaining cub. What could be done ? In vain Reynard entreated. The nest was in a lofty tree, and nearly out of sight. Suddenly she thought of a plan. A gipsy's fire was at hand ; some wisps of hay lay near ; these cunning Reynard wrapped round the tree, and stealing a flaming brand off the fire, threatened to set fire to the hay. Pride had to get a fall—

- ' The eagle now cried bitterly—
Till then he had not spoken—
" Nay, Reynard, do not burn the tree,
Our necks will all be broken."

" Said she, " my cub then bring me here ;"
So, quietly to the ground
The eagle brought the little dear,
And left him safe and sound.'

There are various kinds of foxes. There is the red fox, chiefly found in North America, and the black fox, which frequents different parts of the Continent, where also the silver fox is to be found, for a single skin of which, it is alleged, £20 has been given. There is frequent mention made of foxes in Scripture. You remember how Samson, in order to be revenged on his enemies, the Philistines, caught 300 foxes, and turning them tail to tail, put a burning torch between the two tails, and then let them go into the standing corn, thus burning up the shocks and the standing corn, with the vineyards and the olives. Some people think that by foxes in that passage 'jackals' are meant; but the author of the 'Land and the Book' sees no reason for supposing so, as even yet foxes are found in the plain where Timnath is supposed to have been situated; though now-a-days jackals are certainly more numerous in Palestine than foxes are. Grapes are said to be a favourite luxury of the fox; though, as you know, the fable tells, that if they grow above his reach, after trying long to get them without success, he will console himself by saying:

' Let them take them who will,
I have tried for them nearly this hour;
But they would (I think likely) have made me quite ill,
For they look very nasty and sour.'

Have you ever heard a child tormenting its parents to give it something it coveted, say, on being refused, 'Well, after all, I don't care; I dare say it was very bad.' I have; and instantly thought of the fox and the sour grapes.

But not only is Reynard a lover of grapes, but also, it would seem, of the young shoots of vines, the tender part which contains the blossom and the bud, the destruction of which prevents the plant from bringing forth ripe grapes. It is in reference to this destructive habit that the passage in Solomon's Song alludes: 'Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our

vines have tender grapes' (Song of Solomon ii. 15). And a writer explains the reason of it being said to be LITTLE foxes that do the evil, by the following circumstance :

'The vineyards,' he says, 'are planted on the slopes of hills, separated from each other by low walls, on the top of which you can easily walk from one vineyard to another ; and in these walls are left here and there holes to let the water escape. Now, the *little* foxes creep through these holes, and you would be surprised at the amount of mischief they do, for besides destroying the tender shoots, they often strip off the bark, and, when that is done, the life and sap of the plant are wasted, and it soon dies and withers away.'

Oh! beware, children, of the little foxes that spoil the vines, the little sins that, once indulged in, unrepented of, are sure to lead to greater ones. Remember that—

'Tis our *little* errors
Lead the soul away
From the path of virtue,
Far in sin to stray.'

M. H.

'IT KEEPS IT IN MY MIND.'



CLERGYMAN relates the following :

'Several little girls were in my study, seeking counsel to aid them in becoming Christians. One of them, a dear child, not much more than eleven years old, said :

"I have not been to two or three of the meetings lately."

'Desiring to test her, I answered :

"It does not make us Christians to attend meetings, Lizzie."

"I know that," she replied at once, "*but it keeps it in my mind.*"—*Methodist.*

LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.



It was the evening after the Ichneumon's visit to the Caterpillar, and Mrs Earwig, seeing that her young family were quite strong enough to take care of themselves, thought she might safely leave them for a while, for the air smelt so sweetly of roses, it gave her quite a longing to taste them.

'My dears,' said she, 'you will be quite safe if you run up into that empty poppy-head, while I go out to an evening party in the centre of yonder rose.'

'Mother,' said a Rose, next morning, 'I can't think what is the matter, I feel so poorly; such a pain, just as if something were gnawing away at my vitals. See, my petals are getting quite limp and loose. Ah! what can be the cause?'

'Old age, of course,' replied a pert young Bud; 'you have been looking quite faded this some time; I only wonder you have held out so long.'

'My dear,' said the parent Stem, 'you should not speak so, you hurt your sister's feelings.'

'But it is the truth,' said the Bud, as she gaily expanded her own beautiful leaves.

'So it may be,' added the parent: 'but such truths need not be so harshly expressed; you might, at least, have spoken them softly.'

'Mother,' said the fading Rose, 'when I die, what will become of me?'

'Ah!' sighed the parent Tree, 'like all your fair sisters

that have gone before, you will fall to the ground, and turn to dust.'

'What! and will all my beauty and sweetness be forgotten?'

'Your beauty will certainly fade and perish; but if your sweetness attracts our noble owner's attention, he may choose you for his own.'

'And if he does, what then?'

'Then, my fair daughter, he will send some one to gather you, and take you to his mansion, where, in another form, you will retain your sweetness for ever.'

'Oh! then, I wish he would send,' sighed the Rose; 'but here I see a friend coming to comfort me; I knew my sweet Vanessa would be true to the last.'

Yes, it was Vanessa, on bright wing, drawing near, and coming to the Rose-tree. She hovered for a moment over the dying Rose, and rested upon her crumpled leaves. Alas! no nectar was there for her enjoyment, and the poor faded flower sighed as she saw her gay friend turn hastily away, to fly with rapturous admiration to her younger and fairer sister.

'Ah me!' said she, 'mother was right after all; but though my beauty and freshness are gone, I may still please our master, for he cares more for sweetness than for beauty.'

So the Rose, though withered and sad, banished all rebellious, bitter feelings, and filled the air round her with a fragrance so delicious, that ere she could fall to the ground, she was caught up by a friendly hand, and a gentle voice murmured, 'Oh, how sweet!' as she was placed with other roses in a basket. Just then the Earwig appeared.

'Oh!' said the lady, 'it is you that has caused my roses to fade so soon.'

'What is it?' asked a small voice by her side.

'An Earwig, Willie; see, it has fallen to the ground.'

'Nasty thing!' said Willie, and he stamped on poor Mrs Wig. 'I hate Earwigs! Don't you, mamma?'

'Indeed, Willie, I cannot say that I regard them with much favour, for they destroy all my favourite flowers.'

'They are ugly things, too,' said Willie, 'and nurse says they like to get into people's ears.'


'That is only a vulgar notion, dear; but as Earwigs hate the light, and like to escape from it into any hole they can find, I dare say, if your ear happened to be in their way, they might chance to run into it. But with all our prejudices, we must allow that an Earwig is a curious little creature; the female sits on her eggs like a hen, and after the young ones are hatched, they follow their mother, who takes the greatest care of them until they are old enough to take care of themselves.'

'Which a lot of them are doing just now, mamma. See, I do believe they are going to eat their dead relative!'

It was, indeed, a fact. The young Earwigs, tired of seclusion, had wandered down from the poppy-head, or perhaps Willie, knocking against it, had shaken them all out; and there they were surrounding their dead parent, with very evident intentions of holding a banquet upon her remains.

(To be continued.)

THE TEST OF LOVE.

 'DO love God,' said a little girl to her papa one day, when he had been talking to her about loving God. 'Perhaps you think so.' 'Oh! I do; indeed, I do, papa.' 'Suppose, my child, you should come to me and say, "Dear papa, I do love you," and then go away and disobey me—could I believe you?' 'No, papa.' 'Well, dear, how can I believe that you love God, when I see you every day doing those things which He forbids? You know the Bible says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."'

THE STORY OF THE MICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'ARCHIE MASON,' ETC. ETC.

PART III.

DORMOUSE AND THE OWL.



'The owl dug his sharp talons into his side, and carried him to the branch of a tree.'

'I wish I could tell you that Dormouse was a good obedient mouse ever after; but I grieve to say that I must relate a sad history of his naughtiness. It was the very night after his return home that the whole party, uncle, aunt, and cousins, were playing about, close to the

stack, when they heard a wild scream that they all knew well.

'The young owls were beginning to fly, and one particular owl had taken a fancy to hover round the stack-yard the last few evenings. Our old mice, being prudent people, were very much on their guard, and strictly forbade the young ones to venture farther than a certain distance from the hole. As often as the scream told them their enemy was near, they made a rapid retreat into the stack. One time when his mother called him back, Dormouse was running after a ghost moth, that kept fluttering from place to place, and, instead of going to her, he ran on.

'The owl spied him; he swooped down upon him, and dug his sharp talons into his side.'

Margaret (tremulously). 'It's getting sorrowful, Tiss.'

'He carried him to the branch of a tree, and stood upon him, preparing to eat him up.'

Robin (sobbing). 'The nasty, wicked owl, didn't eat up Dormouse! I'll make Uncle Charlie shoot that owl.'

'The owl opened his strong beak, and bit off ——'

'These children are both crying,' interrupted their Aunt Isabel, who was seated between Margaret and Sonny; 'I think you'll have to bring Dormouse to life again.'

Sonny (in a tone of mingled sorrow and indignation).

'You've told us enough for to-night: it's time to go to sleep.'

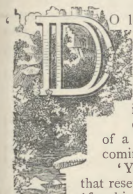
'Just as the owl was opening his cruel beak to snap off Dormouse's head, Uncle Charlie, who had seen him fly to the tree, threw his cap at him, and made him drop the poor little fellow. There he lay all bloody and bruised, when his father and mother came to look for him, and carried him between them to the stack. They licked his wounds with their soft tongues; then they laid him in bed, and covered him up with feathers. By the morning he was so much better that he was able to eat a few grains of corn; but it was many days

before he could walk without limping, and even now the scream of a young owl makes him turn sick and tremble all over.'

(To be continued.)

WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. III.—LOTUS CORNICULATUS.



DO look, mamma, at that pretty little plant growing at our feet. It forms quite a carpet of green, yellow, and scarlet.'

'Oh! yes,' added Grace, 'that is my favourite flower. I call it the golden pea; and the bunches of red buds remind me of the claws of a bird. See! here are some, just coming out; are they not very like?'

'You are not the first who has seen that resemblance, Grace,' replied her mother, 'for this plant is commonly called "Bird's-foot Trefoil," and is indeed one of the prettiest ornaments to our fields and road-sides during most of the summer months. It is very abundant in this country, and flourishes in almost every part of Europe, especially in the south; and the pods of one species, which is much larger than our native plant, are used as an article of diet amongst the poorer inhabitants of Candia.'

'Is the seed of this common kind of any use, mamma?'

'Only as food for birds, Grace; but it is often sown in fields, along with white clover, to improve the pasturage. Farmers consider the leaves and blossoms form a very nutritious herbage for cattle.'

'What is the long name for Bird's-foot Trefoil?' asked Robert.

‘Lotus Corniculatus.’

‘Oh! mamma, that is a very hard word,’ exclaimed Grace.

‘I wonder why it is called Lotus,’ said Robert; ‘for I’m sure it’s not in the least like the Lily of the Nile.’

‘Certainly not,’ replied his mother; ‘but you must know there were three kinds of plants to which the Egyptians gave the name of Lotus,—a tree, a water lily, and a small herb, and to the latter of these your little favourite belongs. Ancient Grecian authors frequently mention the lotus, and we cannot tell to which they allude; but undoubtedly many varieties of the Bird’s-foot Trefoil spread themselves abundantly over the sunny plains of the Greek isles.’

‘Is it not curious, mamma, that this plant should have a yellow blossom and scarlet buds?’

‘No, Grace, for the outside of the petals is scarlet; and when the flower opens, of course you cannot see the back, so that only an occasional streak of red appears amongst the golden blossoms before they have quite expanded.’

‘I see there are four or five pea-shaped flowers, mamma, growing close together at the top of each stem.’

‘Yes, Robert, they are called heads; each little scarlet claw expands into several perfectly formed pea-shaped blossoms, that produce pods, in which the seed is contained. All pod-bearing plants belong to the Leguminous order, such as peas, beans, and a great number of trees and shrubs. The largest specimen of this tribe is the Locust tree, the pods of which I am sure you have seen.’

‘Oh! yes, mamma, and they are very sweet and nice to eat.’

‘I have just been tearing this blossom to pieces,’ said Grace, ‘and find all the petals are differently shaped.’

‘Yes, dear, there are always five petals in the Corolla (or coloured part of the blossom) of Papilionaceous flowers.’

'Oh! that is a very long name, mamma!

'Yes, but you will easily remember it, for it is taken from the French word Papillon.'



BIRD'S-FOOT TREFOIL.

Lotus Corniculatus.

'That means that it is like a butterfly. No, I shan't forget, I'm sure.'

'Now, I shall tell you about the five petals. One is called the Standard, then there are two wings, and a keel, which is divided.'

'Oh! don't tell us more, please let us find them out for ourselves,' exclaimed Robert. 'I am sure this one large petal, which stands upright, is the Standard.'

'And I,' said Grace, 'am equally certain that these two at the sides are the wings, although they are not very like those of a butterfly. But where is the keel?'

'I have it,' said Robert; 'here it is, hidden between the wings, and really not unlike the shape of a boat's keel.'

'You are both right, children, and have found out the parts very well.'

'There is something hidden within the keel, mamma; what is it?'

'The Pistil, Grace, which consists of three parts; but I think that is too puzzling for you at present. Just try to remember that the Pistil occupies the centre of every flower.'

'You have not told us anything about the green leaves yet, mamma. What shape do you call them?'

'The leaflets are oval, and three in number, from which the plant takes the name of Trefoil. It is said to be procumbent, because the stems run close to the ground.'

'I wish it did not grow so low,' observed Grace, 'for I have often tried to gather the golden blossoms and beautiful scarlet buds; but the stalks are too short to mix with any other flowers in a bouquet, and I am sure to lose them on the way home. It is a great pity they are not taller, and show themselves more, for many, not half so pretty or so sweet, hold their heads very high.'

'What does that remind you of, Grace?'

'That God loves humility. Is that the lesson it teaches us?'

'Yes, dear. This little flower spreads its leaves and

blossoms beneath our feet, so that it might easily be passed over unobserved, whilst others, not half so beautiful, fragrant, or useful, occupy more prominent positions. Yet all the time the humble plant is adorning the earth, enriching the pasture on which it grows, and producing provision for the birds that gladden us with their songs. It also scents the air with a delicious perfume; so that the most careless passer-by must perceive the fragrance, even though he may not be aware from whence it arises.'

'Just such should be the life of a Christian, unobtrusive, yet useful, and shedding a sweet and pleasant influence over all who come within his atmosphere. Such was the life of Christ, when on earth our great Example. And every child, as well as grown person, may strive to follow in His footsteps, humbly and prayerfully.'

S. T. A. R.

PITCH STICKS!



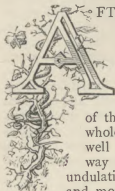
'H, dear, how it sticks!' cried Willie, who, while passing through a street where men were laying a new pavement, formed of asphalt, ran against one of the workmen who was carrying a kettle of the boiling pitch, some of which made great black patches on his clothes.

Pitch is not the only thing that sticks. There are bad habits—oh! how they stick; and the little every-day sins that you do not think anything of; and bad companions—oh! how these stick! Far better, children, that you be covered with pitch from head to foot, than consent to go with bad company, or learn bad habits, or read bad books, or say bad things. Remember that there are many other things as black as pitch.—*The Banner.*

SKETCHES OF ITALIAN SCENERY.

VENICE.

BY THE REV. J. THOMSON, PAISLEY.



AFTER spending a quiet Sabbath in Milan, where we heard two excellent sermons from an English clergyman, we set off on Monday forenoon, the 9th June 1867, for Venice, a distance of 176 miles to the east. On our left, the magnificent range of the Alps was visible along nearly the whole route, 'lending enchantment,' as well as majesty, to the view. The railway runs through a vast plain, with few undulations; and the soil is evidently richer and more fruitful than any we had yet seen. The fields were clothed with rich crops of corn, nearly ripe for the sickle; while the mulberry-trees and festooned vines gave variety and beauty to the landscape. In passing through these wide and fertile plains, we cease to wonder that Austria struggled so hard to retain her splendid prize, and that Italy strove so strenuously to wrest it from her hands. We passed through the cities of Peschiera, Vicenza, Verona, Padua, and many others; and saw, in the famous 'Quadrilateral,' the numerous fortifications erected by the northern invader to secure possession of his spoil. We also had a view of *Solferino*, where the great battle was fought in 1859, between 200,000 French and Italians on the one side, and a similar number of Austrians on the other, when the latter were signally defeated, and finally expelled from Lombardy.

After a seven hours' journey, and passing at length through a flat country, full of lagoons and flooded with sea water, we were whirled along a bridge two miles in length, with more than 200 arches, and reached Venice,

the 'Queen of the Sea.' There was no omnibus or cab to convey us to a hotel; fortunately none were required, for there were numerous gondolas; and having hired one of them, our whole party, now consisting of six persons, was conveyed in canals between the houses for more than a mile, until we were safely landed at the *Hotel d'Europa*. Three friends had shared our carriage in the railway from Milan; and various discussions on Popery, which we had held with a young and accomplished priest, had drawn us into acquaintance, and procured for us this welcome acquisition to our society.

Till very recently, Venetia was a province of the Austrian empire, embracing a large tract of land, situated between the Tyrol and the Adriatic Sea, and containing a population of about two millions and a half. Here was the celebrated republic of Venice, which was founded in the fifth century by the refugees who fled for safety, from the ravages of the terrible Attila, to the marshes and islands of the sea-shore. During the Middle Ages, it became the first maritime and commercial power in the world, carried on an extensive and profitable trade with the East, and acquired numerous foreign possessions. The chief magistrate was called the 'Doge' (from *Dux* or *Duke*); and though at first he was elected by the people, yet afterwards he became the mere tool of a small and profligate oligarchy, who ruled with a rod of iron. With the loss of its freedom, as well as from other causes, the State fell into deep decay, and lost its former prestige and power, until at length its independence was crushed by the first Napoleon.

At present, the city of Venice is about seven miles in circumference, and contains a population of about 120,000. This, as has been truly said, is perhaps 'the only city in the world, which does not disappoint expectation.' It is built, not on the land, but literally in the sea, on seventy-two small islands. It is graphically described in the words of the poet Rogers:

‘The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
 Ebbing and flowing; and the salt sea-weed
 Clings to the marble of her palaces.
 No track of men, no footsteps to and fro
 Lead to her gates. The path lies o’er the sea
 Invincible; and from the land we went
 As to a floating city—steering in,
 And gliding up her streets as in a dream.’

‘No natural land is visible, owing to the close clustering of the buildings.’ There are streets, no doubt, for foot-passengers; but they are chiefly very narrow and tortuous. The locomotion is carried on in gondolas on the canals, as is seen in the picture; and over these canals it is said there are about 360 bridges.

After depositing our baggage in the hotel, we all sallied forth to the Grand Piazza, which is paved with marble. It was a fête day; all the Venetians seemed to be astir, and the ladies were dressed like princesses. It was a gay and brilliant scene, as the crowds promenaded in the spacious square, under a cloudless sky, with the moon ‘walking in beauty.’ One evening, we went in a gondola by moonlight along the Grand Canal, of which a portion is seen in the picture. It is lined with rows of magnificent palaces, once the abodes of wealth and splendour; but now they have a decayed aspect, and are shorn of their former glory. But by moonlight, this was not so visible, and the whole scene was as striking, as it was novel and strange. It was the time of the full moon, which shone forth with rare brilliancy in an unclouded sky. The air was still and balmy; and the continual turning and winding of the watery ways gave a variety of view, which could not fail to awaken interest and admiration. No light glanced from any window, and no human being was seen, as the night advanced; and the profound silence was often almost startling. There was no sign of human life at midnight in the numerous dwellings which we passed; and it was like a deserted city, which had been suddenly transported from fairyland. ‘The most impressive scenery in Venice,’ says Mr Laing, ‘is in

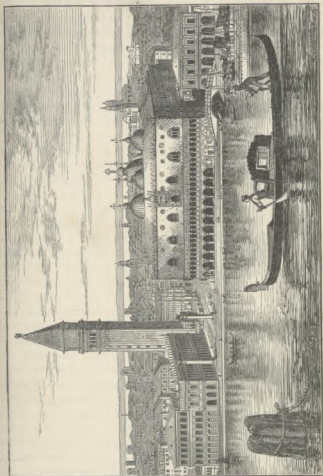
passing by night in a gondola through the silent, narrow canals, where you plunge into the shadows, black as midnight, of buildings rising from the water on each side; and all is pitchy darkness, except a small space of sky overhead, or a light (though they are few and far between) glimmering in an upper window; and you emerge suddenly, by a turn of the canal, into a brilliant flood of moonlight, glittering and dancing on waters and buildings, as far as the eye can reach.' It may be stated that during our visit, the heat had not been excessive, the thermometer having never risen above 80° in the shade, while the evenings were remarkably cool and pleasant.

On another day, we were rowed in a gondola along the Grand Canal, which runs in a serpentine form through the whole city. It is of considerable breadth, about 200 feet; and it is lined on each side by the splendid palaces already referred to; and across it, is the celebrated Rialto Bridge, built entirely of marble, and consisting of a single arch. We landed on the steps of one of the palaces, and were conducted through all its apartments. It had belonged to a duke, and such magnificence in furniture, pictures, plate, tapestry, etc., is rarely seen. All the belongings were for sale, with the prices marked upon them; and these seemed exorbitant. For example, a single bed-cover, of the richest lace, was offered to us at £200! But what a lesson was furnished, of the transitoriness of earthly glory, in these deserted halls, and that forsaken finery, now offered to the highest bidder. Like the flower of the grass, it had passed away, and its haughty owner was glad to convert his carefully gathered heaps of gaudy garniture into the means of subsistence. The very hotel in which we lodged had once been a palace too; and its marble staircases, its winding corridors, its spacious rooms, and its richly decorated walls seemed to have legibly written upon them all the inscription, 'Ichabod, the glory is departed.'

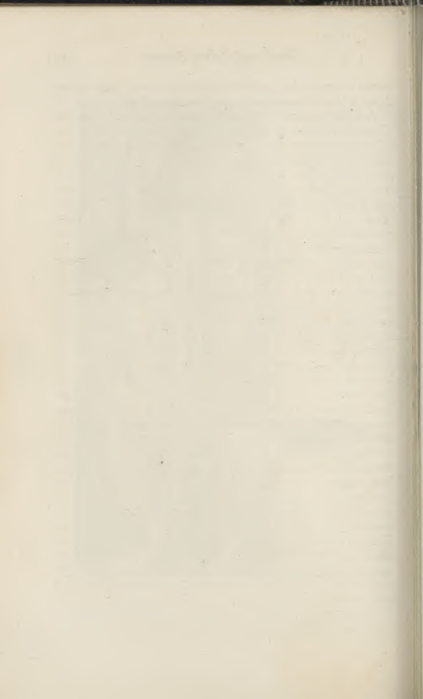
Leaving these scenes of tawdry and perishing grandeur,

we directed our gondoliers to convey us seaward, across the bay, to the island of *Leda*. Walking across the narrow island, we soon found ourselves on the shores of the Adriatic Sea. The waves were rolling in upon the beach in stately majesty; and various ships were swept along by the breeze; and all around, especially to the north and south, numerous low islands, covered with houses, seemed to be literally floating on the waters. It was a splendid view; and its interest was enhanced by the associations, classical and Scriptural, connected with that famous sea, in which the old Romans were wont to cruise, and in which the apostle Paul was tossed for many days, and then shipwrecked at Malta.

It was still more interesting to us to find that the doctrine, which Paul preached, was now preached in Venice. We had the pleasure of meeting there with a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, which had sent him to preach the Gospel to the summer visitors, and to aid the work of evangelisation among the Italians. The account which he gave us, of his labours and prospects, was most gratifying. The Italian evangelisation also, commenced only a year before, had made great progress; and it was conducted by a Waldensian minister, with great efficiency and acceptance. His place of worship was crowded every Sabbath with an audience of at least 400 Italians; of whom 300 were applying for admission to the Lord's table. More recent accounts inform us, that the work has continued to make great progress, and that a very large congregation has now been formed, of those rescued from the toils of Antichrist, and brought to the knowledge of the truth. We were present at one of the meetings. The large hall was crowded to the door; and the able exposition of Scripture was listened to with breathless attention and unflagging interest. It was a most suggestive and striking scene in a city so wholly given to idolatry, and it bodes well for the future of Italy. The Gospel alone can emancipate her from the fetters of superstition, and



VENICE.



elevate her to her rightful position among the nations. May it 'have free course, and be glorified!'

Among the most interesting objects in Venice are the Cathedral, and the Tower of St Mark, at the eastern end of the Grand Piazza. The Cathedral, whose domes only are seen in the picture, is a singular combination of the Gothic and Oriental styles of architecture. The marble and porphyry pillars in front, which were brought long ago from great distances, are very striking and beautiful. The bell-tower of St Mark, seen conspicuously in the picture, is 340 feet in height, and is of a square form, 42 feet on each side. The ascent within is not by a stair, but by an inclined plane, winding round and round, and so broad and easy to climb, that one could ride to the top of the tower on horseback. We of course ascended, and were favoured with an extensive and magnificent view on all sides. The whole city seemed to be floating in the sea; and all around there were numerous small islands, with villages and churches crowded upon them, as if they had just sailed thither from distant ports, and were still cruising about. To the east, we saw the heavy roll of the Adriatic; and to the north-east, the mountains of the Tyrol in the direction of Trieste. It looked like enchantment, or a scene from the 'Arabian Nights;' all was so new and strange, and so different from what can be seen elsewhere.

We next visited the Doge's palace—that spacious edifice, close by the shore, which is seen to the right of the Tower. Here was the seat of the Government down to the sixteenth century. The first Doge was appointed A.D. 809, and he was followed by seventy-one successors down to 1797. Their portraits are to be seen in the Great Hall, except that of the last. Close adjoining the ducal palace, to the right, is the State prison, and the two are connected by a bridge across a narrow canal. Over this bridge, criminals condemned to die were led to the prison. As the poet says:

'I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs,
A palace and a prison on each hand.'

Child's Hymn.

Let us hope and pray that the sighs of the prisoner will soon cease everywhere ; and that through the power of Gospel truth, the melody of joy and health will be heard, not only in Venice and Italy, but throughout the whole earth.

C H I L D ' S H Y M N .

JESUS died our souls to save ;
 For us He bled,
 Suffer'd pain, sank to the grave,
 Lay with the dead.
 Now He lives, and reigns above,
 Sends on us the Heavenly Dove ;
 All His heart is full of love—
 Praise ! praise His name !

All who come to Him He saves—
 Casts none away ;
 Pardons sin and gives us grace—
 Hears when we pray.
 I'm a sinner, that I know ;
 Jesus died, He loved me so.
 Quickly, then, to Him I'll go ;
 Lord, make me Thine.

Oh ! receive a little child !
 Forgive my sin ;
 Make me humble, gentle, mild—
 Pure within.
 Soon Thou'lt come in glory bright ;
 May I joy to see the sight,
 Ever dwell with Thee in light,
 In heaven above.

Presbyterian.

TRUE STORIES ABOUT DOGS.

NO. I.



COME and sit down by me, and I will tell you about some dogs that I knew. I dare say you all know the proverb: 'Love me, love my dog.' Well, I fancy, if the dog could speak, as you and I can, he would say: 'Love me, and I'll love you.' I have seen people afraid of dogs, and I am sorry for them; and I have seen people of whom dogs are afraid, and I don't care to have much to do with them.

I was sent to the country when a very little girl, to a pretty farm-house which stood in a valley, with an orchard full of apple trees; a pretty garden where grew the sweetest double violets, and the largest cabbage-roses I ever saw, and a green and purple vine growing over the

sides of the house; the stables, and cow-house, and barns, and cart-sheds stretching away in a sweet confusion, ending in a stackyard, whose very hedge-rows were filled with apple-trees, and where I have sat with my little sister and my cousins on a half-filled waggon, among the sweet smell of the wheat, and gathered large juicy apples from the stackyard trees.

Well, the back-door of this farm-house opened on a small yard, and at the end of this yard, and beside the gate, stood what was called the 'horse block,' a square block of brick-work, with steps to the top of it, but hollowed out inside into a dog's kennel. I think I see you now, Nell, my dear old companion and name-sake. Come out as you used to do when you heard me run out of the door. Come out, dear old dog! and let the little ones see you, your glossy white silky coat, with its bright sand-coloured spots, your long wavy tail, like the ostrich feather in a lady's hat, so fine and graceful, and your beautiful, soft, earnest, true eyes, which looked so beseechingly into mine when you wanted to get 'off chain' for a scamper.

My first acquaintance with 'Nell' began when, somewhat tired and sleepy, I was lifted out by my dear kind cousin Nat, and led into the kitchen to see my aunt and cousins. Nell had bounced to the end of her chain to welcome my uncle home, and seeing, doubtless, with dog sagacity, that I was a little stranger, gave me her welcome by licking my face with her soft, warm tongue, a courtesy which I repaid by patting her soft, smooth head and sides. Next day, I volunteered to take out Nell's dinner, which was a large pudding boiled in a cloth, and composed of bran, barley-meal, and salt. I am almost afraid to confess it, but I have a faint remembrance, having been 'naughty' and 'truanting,' of one day even tasting that same Nell's pudding, and thinking it not so bad, while Nell seemed quite proud to share it with me.

Our acquaintance begun with a 'feast,' did not end in a 'fray,' but it brought me into a scrape, for, as Nell

and I grew better friends, she made me understand that she would very much like to take her 'walks abroad' in my company, for poor Nell's movements were much cramped by being kept on chain. One bright sunny morning, my lessons were over, and I went out to feed the chickens. They were near neighbours of Nell's, and so I began to pat and talk with her, and, as I did so, I played with the buckle of her collar. The intelligent creature began to wag her tail and jump on my shoulders, then, running to the end of her chain, she looked back so pitifully, as much as to say, 'Do let me have a run, please do!' In another minute the buckle was loosed, and Nell was free. Her first demonstration of gratitude was a doubtful one; with one bound she sprang towards me, and putting both her forepaws on my shoulders, sent me down like a nine-pin; and while I was rising as quickly as I could, she took the opportunity of licking my face nicely. The next moment she was bounding off at full speed out at the gate, across the little bridge which made a dry path over the horse-pond, and, clearing the stile, was into the home-meadow chasing the cows. Alas! she roused from her form, beside the old elm tree, a hare, which had been often seen in that spot, and had become quite tame. In vain did I call 'Nell!' 'Nell!' she was deaf to all my entreaties, and, rushing round and round after the poor hare, seemed to glory in her freedom from the chain and kennel. Three times had she made the circuit of the meadow, when suddenly her tail fell, her chase came to a sudden stop, and, crouching on her stomach, she slunk to my side. She had heard my Cousin Henry's footstep, and knew she would get a good whipping for her frolic; nor did she once leave my side again after I had begged off her punishment, by representing my share in setting her free, but, pacing demurely at my heels, seemed anxious to redeem her character.

As sure as there is shade and sunshine in nature, so are there some shady sides even in a pet dog's life.

Nell being, as I suppose, rather lonely, used to cast sheep's eyes at a large, rough shepherd's dog, who was chained at the end of a cart-shed, and who was reported to be a very doubtful character with regard to game. It chanced that the two were both off chain at the same time, and Nell made her appearance late in the evening with a strongly-subdued and guilty look; while the next morning there was a great inquiry about a black hen with a tuft on her head, which had not been seen for a day or two. Every time the dogs got loose, some more of the hens were not to be seen. At last the little 'egg boy,' being an interested party in the matter, set himself to watch the pair. His account of the matter was this. As soon as old 'Boy' was joined by 'Nell,' they proceeded to a small yard which was full of faggots, and where the hens went to lay. They watched an unlucky hen on her nest, and, seizing her by the neck, one of them threw her over his back, and down fell the hen dead on the ground. The next thing was to hide the body; so, scratching a deep hole in the soft earth, they buried the dead bird till they could safely venture on eating it. Need I say that after these awful revelations, poor Nell was condemned to bide her time for freedom, till some one fully qualified could watch her movements.

There was another dog, who, though more strictly a *house dog*, still did not share my affections in so hearty a manner as did the gentle setter. His name was 'Prince,' and he was a great, overgrown, snappish animal of the spaniel breed, white and chocolate colour. He had a most remarkable instinct for beggars. I believe had one of the tribe approached in silk and satin, 'Prince's' sagacity would not have been at fault for a minute. I well remember when a sturdy tramp, presuming on my dear aunt's diminutive stature, and the fact that no one was visible but myself and little cousin, began to grow very saucy and impudent in his demands, 'Prince,' who had been displaying his white teeth with most suspicious growls from behind my aunt's petticoats, suddenly

sprang forward, and, seizing the intruder by the leg of his trousers, dragged at him till he was fairly outside the yard-gate, never ceasing to growl till the man, cowed and muttering, had vanished up the lane.

There was one visitor, however, who, though I fancy not far above a tramp in point of moral worth, and certainly rivalling the 'scare-crows' in their tattered-demalion clothing, was always received very amiably by Master Prince. This worthy was known as 'Ratty Bob,' and was the 'varmint killer' of the district, making periodical visitations, attended by three or four monstrously-ugly dogs; a long poke containing his ferrets, or more commonly, two polecats, and a large iron cage full of rats, conspicuous among which was a huge piebald one, which rejoiced in the name of 'Sir Jacob,' having been captured on the estate of 'Sir Jacob Ashby, Bart.,' as Bob would explain when making 'Sir Jacob' go through his performances of sitting up on his hind legs, and climbing up the top of his cage after the bits of bread he gave him. Prince never showed the smallest inclination to dispute Bob's right to a smoke by the fire in the back-house or outer kitchen; and, though he did not allow one of the ill-looking stranger dogs to come into the house, he suffered them to remain unmolested at the door.

Prince and I showed one feeling in common to a high degree, and that was disgust at the sight of the greedy, red-eyed, blood-thirsty little ferrets, and still more obnoxious and sinister-looking polecats, which Bob used to let slip from their sack, and, uttering a peculiar whistle, the snake-like fetid animals would dart out from their prison, and run up and down their master's back and arms, till he ordered them back to the sack again. I and Prince would stand and watch this performance with earnest eyes; but my blood ran in chills all the while, and my heart beat with a sort of nervous excitement, while Prince stood with lips apart and white teeth glistening, looking a strange mixture of disgust and fear, and longing to 'do for' the loathsome creatures.

Towards the close of his life, Prince became very crusty in his temper, and so fat that he was a sort of Daniel Lambert among dogs ; and at last his life becoming a burden to him, a kindly bullet put an end to his cares and troubles. And as I left that happy farm-house and went back to the dull routine of town life and proprieties, there ends, for the present, the remembrances of the canine favourites of my childhood.

THE GULF STREAM.



HERE is a river in the ocean ; in the severest droughts it never fails, and in the mightiest floods it never overflows. Its banks and its bottom are of cold water, whilst its current is of warm. The Gulf of Mexico is its fountain, and its mouth is in the Arctic seas. It is the Gulf Stream. There is in the world no other so majestic flow of water. Its current is more rapid than the Mississippi or the Amazon, and its volume more than a thousand times greater. Its waters, even far out from the Carolina coast, are of an indigo blue. They are so distinctly marked, that the line of junction with the common sea-water may be traced by the eye. Often one-half of the vessel may be perceived floating in the Gulf Stream water while the other half is in the common water of the sea, so sharp is the line and the want of affinity between these waters ; and such, too, the reluctance (so to speak) on the part of those of the Gulf Stream to mingle with the common water of the sea. In addition to this there is another peculiar fact : the fishermen on the coast of Norway are supplied with wood from the Tropics by the Gulf Stream. Think of the Arctic fishermen burning upon their hearths the palms of Hayti, the mahogany of Honduras, and the precious woods of the Amazon and the Orinoco !





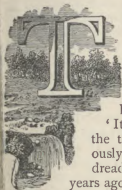
AT HOME IN NEW ZEALAND.

THE FORTUNES OF THE WOODFORDS:
AN EMIGRANT STORY.

BY MRS GEORGE CUPPLES,

AUTHOR OF 'THE LITTLE CAPTAIN,' 'MISS MATTY,' ETC.

CHAPTER IV.



HE weather had been very favourable on their first taking possession of the property, but two days' incessant rain showed Mr Woodford that the climate was by no means so settled as he had been led to believe.

'It will never do for you to sleep in the tent, papa,' said Mrs Woodford anxiously; 'you may have a return of that dreadful rheumatic fever you had a few years ago. Something must really be done.'

'That's all very true, my dear,' said Mr Woodford; 'but we must get in the seeds, else we shall have but a poor harvest.'

'But couldn't we do something, papa?' said Bernard; 'the hut here seems to be made so simply, that I am sure Charley and I could build an improved addition ourselves, if you would only draw out a plan.'

'I have been thinking, papa,' said Maud, 'that if you and William could drive in the posts, Bernard and Charley and we girls could finish it off. Now, don't laugh, Dick. Just let us try, papa. I am sure we shall work wonders, if you only will let us have Tim to help.'

The Maori approved of Maud's proposal, and said that the boys were brave workers, and he was of opinion that the intended addition should be made on the plan of fern-tree warries.

'We cannot work in the field till the ground is drier,'

said George. 'Hadn't we better cut some posts and drive them in at once?'

Accordingly, George and Dick set to work to cut down a quantity of fern-trees, and some young trees for posts, which were laid in the waggon, and driven over by Tim to the spot Mr Woodford had selected at one end of the hut. He himself then proceeded to drive in the frame-posts, with the assistance of William and the two younger boys. These posts were placed at regular intervals; three rails were nailed lengthways across the outside, and the same thing was done on the inside; after which the stems of the fern-trees were pushed down upright between the two lines of rail, so close together as to make a compact wall, with the additional advantage of its rough, hairy-looking bark, which helped to fill up a few chinks.

'Oh, such a funny looking wall,' said little Madge. 'It's just as if it had been made with bears' legs.'

'How do you know that, Madge?' said Charley, laughing. 'I don't believe you ever saw a bear, or its legs either.'

'Oh, Charley, how can you say so! Didn't mamma take us to see the Zoological Gardens at home?'

'I forgot that,' said Charley. 'That was the time, Madgie, when you saw the splendid "*girafte*," wasn't it?'

'Come, come, Charley!' said Mrs Woodford, 'Madge was only a very little girl then; but she can pronounce the name quite well now. I should like to know, however, the name of the boy who lost his new cap while teasing a small monkey?'

Charley hung his head and scampered off after Tim and the waggon, for the subject of the cap was rather a painful one to him.

'You won't leave us girls much to do, papa!' said Maud, laughing. 'We must really be allowed to do something!'

'And don't you do a great deal, dear?' said Mr Woodford. 'Could we work so well if we had to cook

our own food, and look after the house? There will be plenty of work for you all, pasting the paper, and tacking on the calico inside the walls when we get the roof on.'

'I'll tell you what the girls could do, papa,' said Bernard. 'They could collect some stones into heaps down on the beach; then Charley and Tim and I could carry them up.'

'What do we want the stones for?' said Lily.

'For the chimney, to be sure,' replied Bernard. 'It is built outside with stones and mud. Didn't you see Mr Harkom's? But, papa, what are we to do for a few bricks? Mr Harkom said, you remember, that there ought to be three rows built inside.'

'I must send William with the boat across to the town,' said Mr Woodford; 'there are a few other things we require besides.'

'Oh, do let me go too, papa!' said Bernard; and Charley was also anxious to be of the party; so it was settled that the two boys, with William and Tim, should set out early the next morning, as the tide would then be in their favour. This was accordingly done, and the same afternoon they returned with the bricks in the bottom of the boat, along with the various small purchases for Mrs Woodford. The girls had been all the day at the beach collecting the stones into heaps, and were awaiting the arrival of the boat. When it drew near, Lily's sharp eyes noticed they had a small boat, or skiff, in tow; but it was only after the sail had been lowered, and they were very close to the shore, that they discovered there were now five persons in the boat, instead of four. This addition to the number proved to be Mr Harkom, who had met the boys in town, and thus heard of their settlement at the 'Hook,' with the various work now in progress there. As he had a boat of his own with him, he now came across with the boys to see if he could be of any service, either to help or advise.

'I assure you, Miss Maud,' he said, as they walked up from the boat together, 'that it is not an easy matter

building a chimney ; but I flatter myself I am rather an adept in that line.'

'Then,' said Maud, laughing, 'we ought certainly to be much obliged to you for coming to show us how it should be done.'

'The chimney, in fact,' continued Mr Harkom, 'may be said to be the backbone of a New Zealand house. I have seen many a one that had been built by professed bricklayers blown down by the first gale of wind ; but mine never give way, because they are done on right colonial principles.'

'Then I only hope ours will be of that kind,' said Maud, 'as it would not be agreeable to find one's chimney falling down so easily.'

Both Mr and Mrs Woodford gave Mr Harkom a hearty welcome ; indeed, it was curious how much pleasure every one felt at seeing him again, as if he had been an old friend instead of a chance acquaintance seen for an hour or two. It was not only owing to the instinctive wish for companionship in a strange new scene, but they already began to be influenced by the hearty colonial feeling, which inclines to make a friend of every neighbour, and thinks but little of the class-divisions of society in the old country.

The next morning the weather was very favourable for Mr Woodford proceeding with the cultivation of his ground ; and seeing how anxious he was, Mr Harkom bade him keep his mind quite easy, for he would superintend the finishing-off of the house, his own seed being already all in. It was not till the forenoon that the stones were required for the chimney, and all the morning Bernard had been amissing ; but every one knew they must not inquire too closely into his whereabouts, as there was some secret work a-foot. Miss Lily said she was certain she heard a saw working in the bush, and her idea was Bernard must be busily at work upon the sofa he was always talking about ; but Mrs Woodford laughed, and said they would all know in good time.

When the whole family were assembled at dinner, Bernard appeared, and after a whispered conversation with Maud, she slipped away with him, and presently they returned, carrying a most ingenious if rude hand-barrow. Bernard had got a small empty box from his mamma, to which he had fixed a pole at each side like a sedan-chair.

'What in the name of wonder is this for,' cried George, laughing.

'Why, sir,' said Maud, 'it's to carry up the stones we have been collecting at the beach. I could not have believed Bernard was half so clever. Just feel how light it is.'

'We'll have to call him "Chips" now,' said Dick; 'he has earned the title of carpenter, sure enough.'

'Certainly it does you credit, my boy,' said Mr Woodford. 'It will be much easier to carry the stones by the footpath, and will save our wheelbarrow on that rough beach.'

Tim Napper now showed that he had not climbed and swept chimneys for nothing, and though he had never done more than repair one at home, he now wielded the trowel as if he had been a bricklayer all his life. This essential part of the new structure having been completed, the main difficulty was over, and the rest was soon accomplished by active hands and willing minds.

The outside once done, the interior had to be plastered with mud and sand, made tougher by fibrous stuff from the fern-tree bark. When this was dry, all the paper that had been used in packing was brought into the service, and pasted firmly on the calico that was tacked round the walls. Along with a comfortable sitting-room, this new portion had a nice bedroom for Mr and Mrs Woodford; and, for the purpose of making it handsome, Helen and little Madge had privately employed themselves in cutting out a number of pictures from all sorts of illustrated papers and stray magazines, which they now pasted all round the room, according to a plan of their

own, before anybody could interfere. The effect somewhat surprised their papa at his first entrance, and he seemed for a moment to look forward with dismay to seeing so much of the woodcuts from the *Illustrated London News*, mingled with comic scenes from *Punch*, and plates of the fashions from ladies' journals. But the delight of the children was so great, and their confidence in his admiration was so undoubting, that he could not find in his heart to do otherwise than praise it.

'See, papa,' said little Madge, flourishing her paste-brush, 'here's Mr Punch and Toby at the foot of the bed. I thought you would like to see him when you wakened; he is such a funny little man.'

'And look at this, papa,' cried Helen. 'I've put this picture, called "The Morning Bath," over the basin-stand. I like to look at that boy with the drops of water all over his face, so much. Don't you, papa?'

They were interrupted by hearing an exclamation, or rather a cry of surprise outside, from George and Dick, who had just returned home from the 'clearing,' as the fields were called; and Mr Woodford hurried out at once to see what it could be.

We must explain that the new room was now ready to be occupied, and it had been arranged that, that evening, the piano they had brought out with them was to be taken from its case, and placed in its appointed corner. Mr Harkom was to leave the next morning early, but had postponed his departure till this should be done. Mr Woodford had been called away by the children from helping Mr Harkom and William to get out the screws, and he now thought the cry he had heard was in connection with it. On reaching the door, however, there he saw Tim and the two younger boys bearing between them a rude sort of press, which they styled a chiffonier, constructed out of an old packing-case, and which Maud had covered neatly with dark-brown chintz. This they placed at the end of the room, and hurried off, leaving the others to admire it at their leisure. In a few minutes

they returned carrying an ottoman, which they loudly declared was the handiwork of Maud alone.

'It is nothing to be proud of,' said Maud, 'I had the box, and it was easy to tack on the chintz, and lay the cushion on the top.'

'Oh! it will do famously till we get Bernard's sofa,' said Dick, laughing; 'but, for my part, I can't bear an ottoman—they seem only suited to stiff-backed old maids; though, Miss Maud, you do deserve credit for it.'

'Ah! but wait till you see the last piece of work Mr Harkom and the boys have been busy with to-day. You won't complain of *it* making your back stiff, Mr Dick, I am very sure.'

Bernard now brought in and set by the side of the fireplace, what looked like a small easy chair; and on the chintz cover being pulled off, this proved to be a barrel, cut down into the form of a chair, and stuffed all round. When Mrs Woodford was seated in it, she pronounced it the most comfortable chair she had ever sat in, and would never desire a better.

'Really, boys,' she said, looking round the room, 'what with the white muslin curtains at the window, and the few old familiar pictures on the walls, and all these nice pieces of furniture, it is beginning to feel quite home-like. If we only had a table now, we should be complete.'

'That can easily be supplied,' said Mr Harkom, who beckoned to George to follow him out.

Meanwhile Mr Woodford, with the assistance of the others, got the piano removed from its case; and while they were bringing it in, Mr Harkom and George drove four posts into the earthen floor, on which they nailed the lid of one of the largest cases, which made a very serviceable table.

'Necessity *is* truly the mother of invention,' said Mrs Woodford, laughing. 'I never thought a table could be produced so easily.'

'Ah! Mrs Woodford,' replied Mr Harkom, 'we get to

do without the polish in the colonies; and, as the old saying has it, we take what we have, and so never want.'

The piano was now ready to be opened, and a box being set up on end as a stool, Maud was conducted over to it, with some show of ceremony, to play the first tune.

'What shall I play?' said Maud. 'One can't help feeling quite nervous at the very idea of touching the keys again, after so much work and so many changes. What if it should be out of tune?'

The boys called some for one tune, some for another, and Mr Harkom, who stood near her, suggested one also, which Maud at once began to play. It was about the Maid of Llangollen—all about sweet 'Jenny Jones,' and while Maud played the air sweetly and feelingly, Mr Harkom, at their request, sang a verse or two. Tune after tune followed, till Maud, at her papa's request, began to sing one of his old favourites. Unfortunately she had chosen the too trying one of 'Home, sweet home,' which proved far too much for Mrs Woodford, as her eyes suddenly filled with tears, and a sob burst from her irrepressibly; Maud's voice, too, gave way, and Lily began to cry outright, and everybody else was on the point of being carried away by the same emotion, except the younger boys, who were indignant.

'This will never do,' said Mr Woodford, controlling himself after an effort. 'Let us have something cheerful.'

'Miss Maud,' cried Mr Harkom, 'if you can play "Sally in our Alley" I'll sing it, though it's twenty years since I've heard the air.'

Thus the occasion was turned into cheerfulness once more; the rest of the evening passed very pleasantly, while they talked of their plans and occupations till a late hour, as Mr Harkom was going off next morning too early for good-byes.

When he was fairly gone, every one could not help feeling very dull: even Tim looked melancholy, and, as if to get rid of the feeling, he flung off his jacket, picked up his hatchet, and ran off to the bush.

Little Madge shed tears quite openly, and though Maud reminded her that the pair of chickens he was to send her could not come unless he went away to look after them, she said she would rather not have them, if Mr Harkom would but stay with them always.

'I shall see him at church,' said Lily. 'Papa has promised to take me on Sunday—that is to say, if it does not rain like these two last Sundays.'

'I wish the road was not so far round by land,' said Mrs Woodford; 'and so rough; I dislike the boat.'

'Oh, mamma,' replied Lily, 'it is such a short way across, and our boat is such a nice, great strong one.'

'All very true,' was the answer; 'but I never did like boats all my life, and prefer to travel by land. Still more does it make me anxious when left behind.'

'Well, my dear,' said Mr Woodford, 'we shall know more about the road by and by. Perhaps the distance has been exaggerated. I must go to town soon about some cows Mr Harkom was speaking of, that are for sale; and some of us may have to return by the road.'

The children were delighted at the thought of having a cow; and the younger boys amused themselves with teasing Maud about taking her dairy produce to market.

'I'll tell you what it is,' said Maud, 'I shan't have a thing to sell, if you boys don't be active and turn that little broken-down shed at the back of the warrie into a dairy. Papa bought a nice churn, you know, with a wheel for making the butter; but I must have a cool shelf to place my milk-dishes on.'

'Oh! yes, I know,' said Bernard; 'we can get the few bricks left over from the chimney, and we are going to make you a new dairy. Tim is busy cutting down the trees to build the place. But he has got such a grand idea in his head besides; only it's a secret at present.'

'Let's tell the "old mother,"' said Charley. 'You won't repeat it, mind. Tim wants to have a house of his own, and he is going to make a small hut to hold himself. It

won't be larger than a pig-house ; but quite large enough for him. I suppose it will make him feel as if he were a "hemigrant" in real earnest.'

'And does he mean to cook his own food, and eat it by himself,' said Maud, laughing.

'Well, I can't exactly say,' replied Charley ; 'but I rather think he does ; only I don't suppose mamma will allow him, as it might affront William to be left by himself.'

Having got over the chief work of sowing and planting, though much was still to do, Mr Woodford went over to Dunedin to procure the necessary live-stock. He took Bernard and Maori William with him, while the others returned with the boat, after landing them at the town jetty. There was already a rough waggon-track round the head of the bay from town, and by this Mr Woodford brought back his present purchases, including a serviceable riding-horse, which was of use on the way. There were two good cows, one of them giving plenty of milk ; also a pair of goats. There were two coops full of poultry, and some young pigs. Mr Woodford had also succeeded in obtaining a number of sheep to be added to the small flock he had bought with the property, and which were out on the run under the charge of their shepherd ; but these were to be brought round from another direction. Bernard had so much to tell when he came home, of the strange life in town, that he made them quite lively. The English mail had just come in that forenoon, and he gave a humorous description of the people swarming like bees round the post-office, waiting to get their letters. As illustrative of the life in Dunedin at the time, he repeated a story he had heard ; how some runaway sailors had been confined in the jail, or, as it was called, 'in chokey.' The old jailer treated them so kindly, it seemed, that they looked upon him as a father ; and one day when there happened to be some races in town, he gave his prisoners permission to go out and enjoy the sight, trusting simply to their

word of honour. They found themselves so comfortable with him, that when their term of imprisonment had expired, they continued as boarders!

'But, stranger than all,' said Bernard, 'I saw an old chief in town called Tyro, who has eaten white people long ago; and he says he won't die happy till he eats another white man. He had come to town to get his own and his wife's portrait taken.'

'How I should like to see him!' said Charley.

'Well, perhaps you may, because he knows William.'

'Oh! dreadful,' exclaimed Mrs Woodford, 'William must be told not to encourage him to come here, or any of the wild natives.'

'They are quite harmless,' Mr Woodford said; 'but, by the way, you will be glad to hear that before long we shall have a tolerable road, so that you can go into Dunedin independently of the boat, as then it will be possible to drive.'

'Indeed, that is good news,' replied Mrs Woodford; 'for the boat is the worst evil of the place. I always dread some disaster from it.'

'I have another piece of news to relate,' said Mr Woodford, 'that will please you all, I am sure. I met Mr Harkom, and he told me he had just sold his section and purchased another on our side of the bay, with only a hill or two between us.'

They were all so delighted at the thought of having Mr Harkom for a neighbour, that it almost drove out of mind the interesting subject of the animals; though Madge was not quite satisfied when she heard that the actual distance between the two stations was fifteen miles, so that she could not walk to his house, as she did to the Mortimers' at home. She became reconciled, however, when her papa explained that Mr Harkom would think it no distance at all, and would doubtless ride over very often during the summer.

(To be continued.)

THE STORY OF THE MICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'ARCHIE MASON,' ETC. ETC.

PART IV.

A JOURNEY TO THE BOILING-HOUSE.



'Dormouse caught the straw in his teeth, and was dragged to dry land.'

Margaret. 'You must not tell any sorrowful stories to-night.'

'You know Dormouse got quite well again,' hinted Sonny.

'Yes, he was well enough to go on another expedition

with his family. A number of mice live in all kinds of odd nooks and crannies behind the troughs and barrels in the boiling-house, and some of them are on visiting terms with the stackyard mice. One day Mr and Mrs Mouse and Dormouse went to see these friends of theirs. William Bradley had just prepared a hot mash for the cows, and filled a trough with it up to the very brim. Dormouse, I grieve to say, had not profited as he should have done by his dearly-bought experience, for no sooner did he find himself in a new place, than he left his papa and mamma and went in search of adventures.

'He climbed up the trough to see where the savoury steam came from, and as the mess of turnips and bran looked very like solid ground, he attempted to run across it.

'Alas, poor Dormouse! He found it would not bear his weight, and he began to sink deeper and deeper.

'First his paws went in; then he sank up to his body, and at length there was nothing but his head and the ridge of his back to be seen. He squeaked loudly, for the hot mash scalded him dreadfully.'

Margaret (admonishingly). 'Tiss! the story's getting sorrowful!'

'His cries brought his father to his assistance. He climbed up the trough with a long, thick straw in his mouth, and sitting on the edge, held it out to Dormouse, who caught it in his teeth, and was dragged to dry land. But his troubles were not yet over; he was so badly scalded that his fur came off, and the only ease he had for some days was while wading about in a shallow pool close to the stackyard.

'It was a fortnight afterwards that he and his papa took a long, long journey to the garden. Mrs Mouse was suffering from a severe attack of asthma, and some bees had been recommended her as a cure. Dormouse would have liked to stay near the horse-pond, where he saw the ducks and geese swimming and diving, and where a great hawthorn bough, like a mass of snow,

hung over the mossy stones and ferns at the water's edge. Altogether, he thought it a very pretty place.

'There were three beehives in the garden. Our two mice climbed up the stand of the first very boldly, and waited till the bees came out at the door of their hive one by one, when they snapped them up.

'Mr Mouse told Dormouse he might eat a few bees before he began to catch for his mother; but the greedy little fellow liked them so well, he did not know when he had enough, and by the time he had swallowed twenty, he was taken very ill with a bad pain, and had to lie on the grass at a short distance from the hive, till his father was ready to go home with him. It was a melancholy journey back. The old mouse could not help him on, for he had the bees to carry, and Dormouse heartily regretted his greediness many times before he reached the stack.

'One morning the mice were wakened by feeling the cold air blowing in upon them, and all sat up in bed in a state of the greatest suspense and alarm. Their suspense did not last long.

'The roof of their house was carried off on the prongs of a great fork, which had nearly maimed Dormouse for life, and a horrible noise almost deafened them at the same moment.

'The stack was being taken down! The mice rushed in frantic terror in all directions. Dormouse fled towards the gate. As he paused there to draw breath, he looked back at the ruins of his happy home, and what was his grief to see his kind father snapped up by Chiko; and Pussy with her paw upon another of his family, he could not make out which!

'He could not help them by waiting there, so he journeyed up the yard to take refuge with his friends in the kitchen.

'The press was open. He darted in, but stopped suddenly at the sight which met him near the entrance of the hole. A mouse was caught in a trap—its hind legs stretched out stiff and rigid. The old beetle who

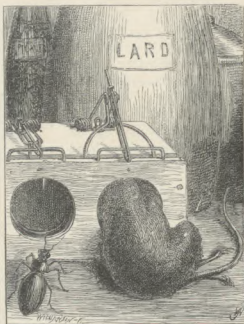
The Story of the Mice.

had spoken to Dormouse once before, was standing at one end of the trap, laughing at her helpless enemy.

"Ha, ha! he won't kill any more beetles," said she, pointing at him with one of her long, slender legs.

Dormouse found the little grey mouse alone in her hole. Her mother and brother were both dead, and she felt very desolate. He told her his misfortunes, and they agreed to take care of one another. Dormouse is very happy with the grey mouse for his wife. The last thing I heard of him was that he and two of his little children were seen scampering across the press.

Robin. 'I won't let Grannyma ever set another trap in the press!'



The sad fate of Dormouse's brother-in-law.

A CHILD'S THOUGHTS OF HEAVEN.

' MAMMA, you've told me oft of heaven,
That world so bright and fair,
Where all our sins shall be forgiven—
Tell me, do flowers grow there ?

' Shall I see there the pretty flowers
That here I love so well ?
Sweeter and lovelier far than ours !
Mamma, dear, can you tell ?

' For if there are, why then, you know,
I'll gather those most sweet,
And to my Saviour I will go,
And cast them at His feet.

' And then perhaps He'll smile on me,
And take me in His arm,
And lay His precious hand on me,
To shield me from all harm.

' Perhaps He'll bless me, as you say
He did the children here,
And I'll be happy all the day—
So happy ! mother, dear.'

' She smiled, and laid her dimpled cheek
Upon her mother's breast ;
And listen'd while she spoke to her
Of regions of the blest.

COUSIN MAUDE.

LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.

CHAPTER V.

BUSY LIFE AND IDLE LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

' Look now abroad, all creatures see,
How they are fill'd with life and glee,
The little bees among the flowers
Have labour'd since the morning hours.'



IT was in the same garden where the proud Vanessa, the weak-minded Caterpillar, and the fussy Mrs Earwig, had lived and died. The sun was shining brightly over the flowers, the birds were singing merrily in the trees overhead, when a silly young Blackbird, who had slipped under the net that was supposed to protect a standard cherry-tree from all feathered poachers of his kind, was surprised at hearing a loud humming voice in the air close above him, and still more astonished was he when, looking up through the meshes of his voluntary prison, he saw the top branch of the cherry quite covered with creatures performing the most wonderful gymnastic exercises, disposing themselves in a most singular manner, by clinging to each other with their feet, having their heads up, until, as hundreds and thousands * of the acrobats clung together, in this way they formed a solid mass of life hanging from the tree something in the shape of a cone, with its point downwards.

' Dear me,' said the Blackbird, 'that is a very extraordinary thing; I only wish I was on the other side of

* A common swarm consists of from 12,000 to 20,000 bees.

this tiresome net, for those creatures are, I know, very good to eat; but here I am caught in a trap, so all I can do is to stay still, and watch their movements.'

'Yes,' said the Fairy of the Flowers (who had just come from adorning a white Rose with moss), 'if you do, your time will be very well spent, for I can tell you that living cone contains some of the most wonderful creatures in existence. Very hard-working creatures, too, so valuable* to the human species, that if they are perceived by the people in yonder house, they will not long remain in their present position. The fact is, they are a band of emigrants, most of them females of the working class, led by a queen. There are a few gentlemen, too, of the party; but I am sorry to say they are very good-for-nothing fellows, not actually vicious, but mere idle gourmands, who contribute neither time nor labour for the public weal, but are yet content to be supported at the public expense.'

'Indeed!' said the Blackbird, 'that is very bad; but how do you know so much of their politics?'

'Oh! I know all about them; we Fairies are here, there, and everywhere. These emigrants come from a populous city at the far end of the garden. Such a busy place as it is; there the hum of active life is never silent from morning till night.'

'These are what the human creatures call "a manufacturing people?" I suppose,' asked the Blackbird.

* Not only the honey, but the wax manufactured by the bees, is valuable as an article of commerce. Along the banks of the Nile, the Zambesi, and other parts of Africa, bees-wax is a staple article of trade with the natives. In the States of South America it is a valuable article of exportation; and the isle of Cuba alone exports every year wax to the value of two hundred thousand pounds in money. In various parts of the East and Africa, honey is (even more than in England) esteemed as an article of food. The Israelites, and other inhabitants of Palestine, have at all ages used it at their meals with butter and milk. At the present day, honeycomb, cut in slices, with bowls of milk and cream, and boiled rice, is served up to strangers by the Arabs.

'Yes, they are manufacturers, confectioners, and architects, all in one; they are very scientific, too, and show a surprising knowledge of geometry.*

'How extraordinary! I know the creatures quite well by sight, and I always thought they were only made to be eaten by us birds; but are you sure that they have come from the noisy town you speak of?'

'Sure! Of course, I am. I was at a dancing party last night 'mong the heather on yonder mountain, when, being quite weary, I was coming home in the morning twilight, and my Dragon-fly steed not arriving in time, I called to a creature that happened to be passing, and asked him to give me a ride. At first, when I spoke to him, he uttered a shrill cry, that frightened me nearly out of my life, but he really meant no harm, for, resting on a leaf, he told me to mount upon his back, and hold on by a curious instrument that he unfolded from his head. Well, away he went with the greatest swiftness, darting through the air in a zig-zag fashion until we reached this garden.

"Will you let me down near the lilies," said I, "for I want to go to sleep in one of their bells."

"Very well, Fairy," replied the steed; "but first, pray, tell me, are you fond of honey?"

'Then, before I could answer, he went on:

"For I am, and I am going to feast upon it now."

"You have been making some, I suppose."

"Making honey! No, not I; catch me taking all that trouble; sweet Fairy, I know a trick worth two of that."

* In many Eastern lands, the bee is called 'Deburat,' or 'she that speaketh from the lessons she teaches us, by industry, forethought, and wisdom,' — the wisdom she shows in the shape as well as the substance of her cells. A learned human mathematician was once required to show how a piece of wax could be formed into cells of the same size and shape, so as to give the greatest strength, and the most room, and use the smallest quantity of the material. After trying the question by the strictest rules of geometry, he proved that the bees had acted as if they were acquainted with all the principles of science, and so secured every advantage in the arrangement of their cells.

“Then you have no right to eat it.”

“No right!” laughed he. “Ah! Fairy, might often makes right in this world of ours. You see, I am rather formidable looking, so, on the strength of my appearance, I go to the door of a honey manufactory, and directly I show my ample proportions, unfold my long trunk, utter my shrill cry, and flap my wings, the poor little workers, though really much better armed than I am, fly out of my way, and though I may hear murmurs of disapprobation loudly expressed on every side, I am allowed to feast away at my leisure. Here we are at one of these places now, will you come in, and have some honey?”

“No, thank you,” said I, “I should be very sorry to be seen in your company, for, by your own account, you are little better than a burglar: but before I go, I should like to know your name.”

“That you may remember your ride with a burglar? Eh, Fairy! Well, I bear no malice, for, gourmand and burglar though I be, I am not an ill-natured fellow after all; and if you care to remember my name, pray, think of me kindly as *Acherontia Etropus*, or the Death's-head Sphinx Moth.”

“Death's-head Sphinx! What a fearful name! I don't wonder the honey-makers are afraid of you.”

“Ha! ha! it does sound rather awful; but I have been so christened by the human creatures, who fancy those markings on my back resemble a death's-head, or skull and cross-bones. Would you believe it? Some of *them* are afraid of me too. If you look you will see some white dust on my wings, and, I assure you, that in some places,* if I were to fly into the town, where human creatures are sitting, they would rush out in the greatest terror, thinking I might shake some of that powder into their eyes, and so cause them to become blind. Nor is

* The naturalist St Pierre tells us that the white powder or dust on the wings of this large moth, makes it an object of dread to the people of the Isle of France.

that all, but in other places,* when many of us appear together, the country people, hearing our wailing cry, are seized with a panic, for they believe that we are the fore-runners of many human woes, such as famine, pestilence, and death. They call us 'Wandering Death-birds,' and 'Death's-head Phantoms;' and when they see one of us, his beautiful eyes twinkling like stars in the twilight, instead of admiring, they fly from him in terror, as an evil spirit come to bring war, or hunger, or death to man and beast. The fact is, you see, we have puzzled humanity not a little, for all their learned men have failed in discovering † how we make the cry that frightened you just now; and as the ignorant cannot obtain any satisfactory reply when they ask how we do it, and as it is contrary to the rules of our scaly-winged order that any of us should make such sounds, they settle in their minds that it is against nature, and, consequently, that we are more than natural. But here we are at the gate of the honey manufactory; the sentinels are proverbially fierce to all intruders, so, as you won't come in, just stay a moment outside, and see how I make good my entrance."

'I did so, and really it was quite wonderful to see the terror inspired by the great thief's appearance.‡ The workers at the gate ran in to give the alarm. Then there was such a rushing about and confusion, while the huge, greedy creature, with the utmost indifference, feasted upon the fruits of their hard labour, now and then looking up

* Réaumur tells us these facts as popular superstitions in Germany and Poland.

† Réaumur supposes it to be caused by rubbing the palpi against each other; and Larey to be owing to the rapid escape of the air from two central cavities.—See Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom.'

‡ The Death's-head Hawk Moth is not always allowed to feast with impunity, for Hüber, the blind naturalist, who spent his life in the study of bees (assisted by a faithful servant), on one occasion having put one into a box wherein a colony of humble bees had made their nest, the moth was immediately attacked and stung so badly that it died soon after. When he tried the experiment with hive bees, the moth was allowed to feast with impunity; for though the bees showed great indignation at this intrusion, they seemed to be afraid to interfere with him.

to chuckle and hum, his bright eyes glistening, as if they meant to say, 'Be quiet, little dears; I won't hurt any of you; but you see I have quite a weakness for honey.'

'But you will think I have strayed a long way off from the history of our band of emigrants?'

'Indeed you have,' said the Blackbird; 'but I suppose you are going to say that they belonged to the manufactory which was so ruthlessly invaded by your burglar friend.'

'I wish you wouldn't call him my friend,' said the Fairy; 'I do not make friends of thieves.'

'Ah! Fairy,' twittered the Blackbird, 'you meant *that* for a hit against me.'

'Indeed I did not, I assure you. Your case is quite different. Mr Sphinx, too idle or too ignorant to make honey for himself, is mean enough to feast upon the labours of others. Now, the human creatures do *not* make the cherries, for love of which you have put yourself in durance vile. The great Maker of all made the fruit for you as well as for them; and if you would only take your share in moderation, I think they could not be so unfair as to prevent you.'

'Yet,' sighed the Blackbird, 'I heard one of them call us "impudent feathered thieves." Too bad, was it not? considering, too, all the good that we do for them by clearing their trees of the grubs and other insects that would, if allowed to remain, altogether destroy the fruit. But go on with your story.'

'Well, when I broke off, I was watching the consternation produced in the honey manufactory by the appearance of the great Sphinx Moth, and, tired of looking at him gorging himself with sweets, I was going away, when I heard a most unusual commotion in another honey city that stood close by; and seeing one of the workers* coming to the door, I asked her what

* 'A honey city,' or in plainer terms, a hive of bees, generally consists of about 15,000 to 20,000 neuters or workers, 600 to 1000 drones or males, and generally a single female or queen. Various curious experiments have proved that the workers are females, and

was the matter? You must know that in the honey-factories all the labourers are females, which strikes me as being a very curious arrangement. She whom I addressed was a very plain-looking, rather cross little thing, and when I spoke she tossed up her head, and looked most contemptuously at me. "I have no time for gossip," said she; "if you want to ask questions, you had better speak to that gentleman there, who has nothing to do but to answer them." The gentleman she referred to was a certain Mr Drone ("lazy, yawning drone," as he is called by the human poets), who was lounging about, apparently enjoying the sweets of life without any thought save for his own bodily ease and self-gratification. He was, nevertheless, a civil, good-natured fellow; and when I asked him the cause of such a hubbub within the city walls, he said: "We have a pretty to-do in here to-day; indeed, I fear we are upon the brink of another revolution. You must know our queen had several daughters that have been kept in the

may be transformed into queen or mother bees, if, whilst larvæ, and during the first three days of their existence, they receive a peculiar nourishment, such as is alone given to the larvæ of the future queens. They must also be put into a large cell similar to the royal cell of the queen larvæ. Hüber distinguishes two kinds of worker bees; the first he calls 'wax workers,' which are charged with gathering food and materials for making the combs; the others, or 'nurse bees,' are smaller and weaker, and employed solely in taking care of and feeding the young, and attending to the internal economy of the hive. Réaumur calculates that a queen bee deposits 12,000 eggs in the course of twenty days in the Spring. The first deposited are the eggs of workers, which hatch at the end of four or five days. Seven days after the larvæ are hatched, they change to pupæ, when their cells are closed with a convex lid by the workers, whereupon the larvæ line the interior with a layer of silk, and spin a cocoon. In twelve more days they become bees, and come out of the cells. The workers then clean out the cells to be ready for the reception of another egg. It is, however, different with the royal cells, which are destroyed, and new ones constructed when required. The eggs containing the males are deposited two months later, and those of the females or queens soon after the latter.—See Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom;' 'Dr Bevan on the Honey Bee,' etc.

royal cells, fed upon royal jelly, and tended with the greatest care. I am sorry to say that these young creatures are so very violent in their tempers that at times they are really quite dangerous. So we are obliged to keep them in solitary confinement, each cell having a strong waxen door, which is kept closely sealed, with just a little hole open through which its inmate may be fed." "Poor things, said I, they surely cannot enjoy such close confinement." "No, they do not; at least I often hear them uttering low, complaining cries, but it is quite necessary to keep them so; for if they were let out, they would either kill each other, or kill the reigning queen. Hitherto, they have all been very quiet and submissive, but this morning one of them came out of her cell, and the first thing she did was to try and break into those of her sisters. If she had succeeded, she would certainly have destroyed them all; but fortunately the workers, perceiving her intentions, bit at her, and pulled, and worried her, following her about from one cell to the other, until she was quite uneasy; now, as she finds there is no rest for her in our city, and as she wishes to reign over a nation of her own, a band of followers have rallied round her, and they are about to emigrate together. Here they are, I declare!" Just as he spoke, the young queen rushed out at the door, and her followers swarming after her in hundreds and thousands, and coming so quickly too, the poor fat, lazy drone could not get out of their way in time, so he was trampled to death, or otherwise killed, in the general confusion that ensued. Directly the emigrants left their home, they fled in a straight line to this tree, and the queen alighting on that top branch, the others followed her example; and that is what I had to tell you of their history.'

'Very curious, too,' said the Blackbird; 'really, it seems quite a shame to eat such very interesting creatures; but I think it was rather too bad of them to trample the poor idle drone to death. Are you quite sure he was dead?'

'Yes; for I peeped in after order was restored, and

there I saw the workers in the act of making him a coffin, or rather a tomb.'

'Ah! that was respectable at anyrate, though they could scarcely do less, considering he was the father of a great many of them. But how did they get him into it? they could not lift him, could they?'

'They did not try, but leaving him just where he died, they built walls of wax all round and over him, carefully sealing up the corners with a gummy cement called propolis,* which they collect from the leaf-buds of the pine, birch, alder, and other trees.'

'What clever little creatures they must be, to be sure; all except those poor idle drones; but I wonder the working portion of the community are content to support those useless beings at the public expense.'

'Nor are they, but, being harmless and inoffensive, they allow them to remain until the end of the collecting season; but then, when they would be likely to make inroads into the sweets stored up for the winter, they attack and sting them to death, or else drive them out of the city, to die of hunger and starvation. Now, I am quite tired of talking, so I must away to yonder bank, where I have a mossy couch upon which I can recline, and amuse myself by studying what appears to me to be "busy life and idle life among the flowers." Good-bye, Master Blackbird; I hope that, like the young queen bee, you will soon make your way out of your prison.'

The Fairy of the Flowers flew away, and the young bird under the net tried to solace himself in his captivity by picking at the ripest cherries, now and then peeping up with his pretty bright eye to see if the swarm of emigrants was still 'en masse' pendent from the tree. While so employed, he was startled by quite a commotion in the garden below—a rushing of feet, and a

* The term 'propolis,' is derived from a Greek word signifying 'before the city,' bees having been observed to make use of this cement in strengthening the outworks of their city.—'Dr Bevan on the Honey Bee.'

clamour of human voices shouting as loudly as they could.

'Oh! dear,' sighed the guilty young Blackbird, 'they have spied me under the net, and that terrible woman with the great red arms is going to attack and kill me with the tin thing she has in her hand.' It was the bird's guilty conscience that made him afraid, for cook had no idea that a thief was under the net. Her attention was directed to the top of the tree, from whence the swarm had just risen, and, knocking a large door-key against the tin pan, she produced a ringing noise that was quite enough to frighten any young bird into fits. Presently the master of the house appeared. 'Mrs Tibbs,' said he, 'pray do not make such a noise; tanging* the bees will never induce them to settle.'

Cook looked as if she should like to argue that point with her more scientific master, but she very wisely abstained, and allowing him to do things in his own way, the swarm was quickly, though quietly secured, and safely located in a nice new hive which was placed in the aviary close to a great bed of roses and mignonette; and there we shall leave the young queen and her band of emigrants to found a new colony of their own, while we wander through the garden, and so make acquaintance with some of the other creatures that lead either a social or a solitary life, and have their homes among the flowers.

* This custom of 'tanging' or ringing the bees was formerly adopted in all rural districts of England, when a villager, perceiving a swarm of bees near his house, wished to induce them to settle. It used to be practised by the ancient Greeks more than two thousand years ago; but modern bee-keepers, who have any knowledge, wholly discountenance it. Bees never swarm in wet weather or before rain; they always foresee rain, and bee-keepers, seeing their bees hurrying home from their labours abroad in the noon-day, and crowding into the hive, always know from such proceedings on the part of the busy tribe, that rain is very shortly to be expected.—See 'Dr Bevan on Honey Bees.'

(To be continued.)

STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. X.

THE ASS.



THE stupid ass! the stubborn ass! the sluggish ass! are all terms often used in speaking of the quadruped we are in search of at present, and perhaps in its domesticated state they may in many cases be truly applied; but when they are, we may be pretty sure that it is the cruelty and oppression of man that have rendered them so. In order to see the ass to advantage, we must search for it in its wild state, and enjoying the delights of liberty. Far away in the plains of Tartary or Persia we may yet come on herds of them 'snuffing up the wind at pleasure,' fleet of foot; large, handsome animals, most unlike the slow-paced, stupid-looking

creatures to which cruel domestication has reduced them.

In Eastern countries the ass is much more in general use than with us, and in many instances it is preferred instead of the horse. In Spain they are in constant use, and are of a very fine race.

It is difficult to say why the poor ass should have been so long singled out as a fit subject for cruel boys to torment; for, sad to say, as long back as nearly three thousand years ago, it was an acknowledged fact, that the ass was persecuted and cruelly treated by the young. We find in the eleventh book of the 'Iliad' the lines :

' The sluggish ass, with heavy strength endued,
In some wide field by troops of boys pursued,
The shivering sticks assail his sides in vain,
He crops the waving corn, and spoils the plain.'

There is frequent mention of the ass in Scripture. It was on asses that Joseph's brethren went down to Egypt to get corn, and to the present day they are largely used as beasts of burden in Palestine. It was on an ass that the Shunammite woman rode to Carmel to tell Elisha that her child was dead. Abraham, Jacob, and Job were rich in asses. Moses inculcated kindness to the ass in the command: 'If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, thou shalt surely help with him.' Such an injunction, alas! shows that then, as now, the poor ass was cruelly treated, for the author of the 'Land and the Book' says, that it is when half-starved and over-laden that the poor creatures fall under their burdens, and then they require two persons at least, one on either side, to lift them up, and enable them to regain their footing.' 'And even now,' he states, 'he has seen such bitter enemies as the Maronites and Druses, ready to help together the poor ass lying under its burden, just as if they were the best friends in the world. And may we not believe that the kind, compassionate Jesus selected the ass to ride on, just because He knew it was generally

maltreated, and to teach mankind to treat it with greater gentleness for His sake.

Perhaps some of my young readers will be indignant at the notion of an ass teaching them any useful lessons; yet I believe we may find that it can.

Is patience under suffering a virtue? then, surely, we may learn a lesson from this quadruped. I have seen the ass beaten and tormented by boys who should have known better, and I have wondered that it did not turn on them and retaliate; but no, sadly, it may be stubbornly, it went on its way, poor dumb, suffering creature. The fable of the 'ass and its owner' is no fiction, save that none, save Balaam's ass, ever expressed its grievances in words. For long had the poor ass been known on the roads; heavy loads it had to bear, and scanty food to eat. Every day it grew weaker, but its cruel master only dealt it harder blows to make it mend its tottering pace. The wares it carried were glass, delf, and china. One day the panniers were laden more than usually high with basins, decanters, jugs, and plates. The ass stumbled on a stone and fell, and crash went saucers, cruets, bowls, etc., which lay in atoms on the ground. Blow after blow fell on the prostrate animal, who, after reproaching his master for his cruelty, died, leaving him the lesson, that, by his cruelty

' His greedy hopes of gain were cross'd,
And what his kindness might have kept,
His avarice had justly lost.'

Do any of my readers need a lesson taught them to beware of greed, and be content with simple fare, then let them learn from the poor ass. A bit of grass and a few thistles and nettles for food, and a drink of clear water, and the ass has dined to its heart's content. Some of you may have read the fable in which an ass is represented as led to market by a farmer, to bring back a store of provisions for a harvest merry-making :

' A cold round of beef and a quarter of lamb,
A large pigeon-pie and a great piece of ham,'

formed a part of the load which the ass had to carry. Some thistles by the way-side and a drink of water was its dinner, and, whilst eating it, it moralised thus :

' The man on three courses accustom'd to dine,
With abundance of wine, red and white,
Perhaps may have feelings less happy than mine,
Who on thistles can dine with delight.'

The ass, when kindly treated, is a long-lived animal, and some have been known to attain the age of ninety years. By nature, when young and unbroken, it is as lively and playful as a kitten.

As a last lesson to be learned from our ill-used friend, let us remember that, in speaking of the sin of ingratitude on the part of His people, the Lord himself has contrasted their conduct with that of the ass, saying, ' I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib : but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.' But see, the herds of wild asses have vanished out of sight, and we must retrace our steps, having, we hope, learned some wisdom even from a poor despised ass.

M. H.

STORIES FROM HISTORY.

WILLIAM TELL.



THE success of the great struggle for liberty in Switzerland in the early part of the fourteenth century was mainly owing to the heroic self-devotion of one man. I need hardly say that man was William Tell, for his name since then has been a household word. Besides, his deeds have given a higher and deeper interest to one of the world's best-known and most lovely spots. Who has sailed down that glorious lake, under the shadow of those snow-crowned mountains, and, as he

passed the little chapel built on the site of one of the scenes of that struggle, has not felt his eye brighten and his heart beat quicker as he recalls the strife of right with might?

Yet, well-known as is his name, we may perhaps be able to tell our young readers more of him and of his family than they have heard before; and as I know that a visit to Switzerland is to some of them amongst the very fairest pleasures of memory, and to a still larger number, amongst the brightest pleasures of hope, they will surely welcome all that can add to its deep and varied interest.

In the very heart of the ancient Helvetia, so celebrated for the valour of her sons, lie the three cantons of Schwitz, Uri, and Unterwald. Shut in from the rest of the world by almost inaccessible mountains, their small and poor but free and contented population lived in happy simplicity, and in close union with each other, supplying their wants by their industry, contented with the most frugal fare, and capable of great endurance. They were nominally subject to the Emperor of Austria; but the paternal rule of the good Rudolph was no heavy yoke. He died, however, and all was changed. His successor, Albert, was a very different man. He had all those hard, selfish, grasping qualities which so often make an absolute ruler a tyrant; and he sent as his lieutenant to the cantons a governor, who made the heavy yoke of bondage heavier and still more galling. Absolute and unquestioning submission to the will of the tyrant was the only law. No man dare longer call anything his own. The cottage he or his fathers had built, the fields that from time immemorial they had tilled, might at any moment be plundered or seized; their very children were not safe even in the bosom of their once happy homes: there was no appeal, no protection.

Gessler, the Austrian governor, took up his abode in Altorf. There his exactions, his violence, his cruelty

exasperated the peasants almost beyond endurance. But what could they do but endure in silence—a few unarmed peasants against the tyrant, in a strong fortress, with the powers of the empire at his back?

Among those peasants was William Tell, who, with his beloved wife, the good and gentle Edmea, and their only son Gemmi, a youth of fifteen, lived in the humble but happy cottage home, which, together with intense love of his country and indomitable courage, he inherited from his aged father.

Their thrift and industry supported them in the cultivation of the few acres which were also his, while the sports of the chase added to their comforts; and its adventures made Tell and his son quick in expedient, enduring of hardship, light of foot, and most expert in the use of the bow and arrow, the great weapons of those days, when gunpowder and rifles were not yet in use.

Tell was the most renowned archer of the cantons. Often at games he had to stand aside till the very last to give others any chance of winning the prize. The most difficult feats he never failed to perform. A dove, with fettered wings, was placed on a high pole; with one arrow he struck the blue ribbon that confined her wings, severed it, and freed her; and with another he brought her from her rapid flight dead or wounded to the ground. That steady and unerring aim, that strong arm, were yet to do good service to him and to his country.

The sorrows and troubles of his country pressed heavily on his mind, and seemed to crush all enjoyment out of his life. He formed the resolute purpose of freeing his country or dying for her; and no matter how dark, and dreary, and hopeless the future seemed, he never faltered in his purpose, nor gave up his hope; for he knew that hope could only be attained by patiently waiting the fitting opportunity.

He had two friends with whom he took counsel—men as resolute and ardent as himself—Verner of Schwitz, and Melctal of Uri. To the latter he was doubly linked;

for from infancy, Melctal's only daughter, the sweet Claire, was the destined bride of Tell's only son, the brave and generous Gemmi. Claire had early lost her mother, and Edmea's love and care had almost supplied her place. Together the children roamed the mountain and valley, and sailed on the lake. Together they learned from their parents lessons of virtue and wisdom, the fear of God and love for their country—one happy family, till Gessler came and spoiled it all.

It seemed likely that things must go on in sullen quiet for some time longer, while the confederates secretly collected arms and won adherents to their cause. One hundred and fifty men in Schwitz were ready at Verner's summons to rise and risk all for their country. In Uri one hundred brave men were bound in the same way to Melctal; while in Unterwald, two hundred had taken a solemn oath to join Tell when he should give the signal. The signal was to be a blazing beacon on the high crag just over Tell's cottage, so high that it was visible from the three cantons. When this signal was seen, each was at once to take his arms and proceed by by-paths and the dark mountain passes to the place of muster.

An apparent accident hastened the outbreak. Gemmi and Claire, who knew every inch of the difficult country around the lake, had been sent by Tell on a secret mission to some of the little band of scattered patriots, while he himself went on a similar errand in another direction. They were overtaken by a tremendous snow-storm. They took shelter under a beetling crag till its fury was almost spent; but as soon as possible they hurried on, lest their dear mother should be alarmed for their safety. While yet far from home, they were overtaken by a hunter who had lost his way, and who asked if they could guide him to Altorf. They promised to do so, little dreaming who their friend was. As they walked along, he inquired of the youth who were his parents and where he lived.

'My father is a peasant,' he replied, 'and lives among the mountains.'

'What lessons does that father teach you?' he asked, after a time, wishing to know something of the sentiments of the people.

'Three things principally,' said the boy, firmly—'To fear God, to love one another, and to be ready to die to free our country.'

'Free your country!' repeated the stranger, fiercely. 'Free her from whom?'

'From the tyrant,' said Gemmi.

No more was said till they reached the gates of Altorf, which opened at once as the hunter gave the hated name of Gessler—a name which fell on the ears of the children like a death-knell. It was Gessler the tyrant they had saved, to whom they had spoken so freely and so imprudently.

On entering, his first words were: 'Take those children and keep them in the dungeon, and find out who they are;' for they had resolutely refused to give their father's name, as soon as their fears were roused.

Half frantic with rage, the tyrant slept more uneasily that night than did his prisoners in their dungeon. He brooded over their words, 'die for their country.' Was this, then, the feeling even of the children, after all he had done to crush them? In the wakefulness of that stormy night he devised a plan for discovering and thus getting rid of all who dared refuse obedience to his will. He could not wait till morning dawned to give his orders. In the dead of night his most trusted minister was summoned to his chamber.

'To-morrow,' said the angry governor, 'as soon as the sun rises, let a spear be planted in the public square; on the top of the spear place this cap, which I generally wear; let my guard surround the square, and compel every passer-by to bow respectfully before that emblem of my power.'

There was another and far different home also un-

visited by sleep that night—that where Edmea watched in vain during its long hours for the return of the children. Her husband on his return next morning half calmed her fears, although he more than half shared them. The friends to whom they had been sent had doubtless foreseen the storm, and kept them for the night: a few hours more, and they would reach their home, or if they were still delayed, it was because the paths would still be inaccessible from the snow.

‘You have committed them to the care of our Father in heaven,’ he added. ‘He will preserve them.’

It was most important that Tell should communicate the result of his last night’s expedition to his confederates in Altorf, so thither at an early hour he wended his way. The first thing he saw on entering the fortress was the spear crowned with Gessler’s well-known embroidered cap; soldiers marching as sentries around; and as he looked and wondered, he saw each citizen, as he approached the spot, bend lowly before the cap, often compelled by the guards, at the point of their lances, to bow yet more lowly, even almost to the ground. Surprise, indignation, and contempt kept him chained to the spot: it seemed to him as if he dreamed. But he was soon observed—the one man standing while all others bowed in fear.

‘Have you not heard the Governor’s orders?’ said the officer of the guard, approaching him. ‘Prostrate yourself at once before this representative of authority.’

‘I had not heard the insane command,’ replied Tell, ‘nor will I now obey it. I will never bend my knee but to the God of heaven.’

Scarcely had he said the words, when the angry soldiers, by command of their officer, seized and disarmed him, and dragged him into the Palace. Calm and dignified stood the undaunted peasant in the presence of the tyrant. Not one word did he speak while the excited officer told of his flagrant disobedience, his unparalleled contempt of the Governor.

'Who and what are you?' thundered Gessler, 'that you thus dare to disobey me.'

'I am William Tell,' replied the prisoner, 'a peasant; but one ready to die for his country, and who will die for her now on the scaffold rather than live a slave.'

'Die for his country!' Surely Gessler had heard these words before. A bright thought struck him as he mused on them for a moment.

'Yes, the boy said so too, and said his father taught it him; no doubt this is his father;' and with a laugh of triumph he whispered that the children should be brought before him.

Threatened and beaten, the children had resolutely refused to give their parents' names, lest their imprudent words should involve them in danger.

Meanwhile Gessler spoke to Tell; asked if he was the famous archer, whose arrows never missed their aim? and the skilful steersman, whose boat had outlived the fiercest storm?

'The same,' answered Tell; 'but I glory more in the thought of giving my life for my country—that country, from whose soil now goes up to heaven the sighing of the captive, the tear of the widow and orphan, whom God himself will avenge on the tyrant.'

K.

(To be continued.)

WHAT THE SPARROW CHIRPS.

I AM only a little sparrow,
A bird of low degree;
My life is of little value;
But the Lord doth care for me.

He gave me a coat of feathers,
It is very plain, I know;

What the Sparrow Chirps.

With never a speck of crimson,
For it was not made for show ;

But it keeps me warm in winter,
And it shields me from the rain ;
Were it 'broider'd with gold or purple,
Perhaps it would make me vain.

By and by, when the spring time cometh,
I will build me a little nest,
With many a chirp of pleasure,
In the spot I like the best.

And He will give me wisdom
To build it of leaves most brown ;
Warm and soft it must be for my birdies,
And so I will line it with down.

I have no barn or storehouse,
I neither sow nor reap ;
God gives me a sparrow's portion,
But never a seed to keep.

If my meal is sometimes scanty,
Close picking makes it sweet ;
I have always enough to feed me,
And ' life is more than meat.'

I know there are many sparrows ;
All over the world we're found :
But our Heavenly Father knoweth
When one of us falls to the ground.

Though small, we are never forgotten ;
Though weak, we are never afraid ;
For we know that the dear Lord keepeth
The life of the creatures He made.

Bell Bird.

I fly through the thickest forests,
 I light on many a spray ;
 I have no chart or compass,
 But I never lose my way.

And I fold my wings at twilight,
 Wherever I happen to be ;
 For the Father is always watching,
 And no harm will come to me.

I am only a little sparrow,
 A bird of low degree ;
 But I know that the Father loves me :
 Have you less faith than me ?

Missionary Echo.

 BELL BIRD.


NE meets in the forests of Guiana a bird much celebrated with the Spaniards, called *campanero*, or bell bird. Its voice is loud and clear as the sound of a bell. It may be heard at the distance of a league. No song, no sound, can occasion the astonishment produced by the tinkling of the *campanero*.

He sings morning and evening like most other birds ; at mid-day he sings also. A stroke of the bell is heard ; a pause of a minute ensues. Second tinkling ; and a pause of the same duration is repeated. Finally, a third ringing, followed by a silence of six or eight minutes. 'Actæon,' says an enthusiastic traveller, 'would halt in the heat of the chase ; Orpheus would let fall his lute to listen—so novel, sweet, and romantic is the silver tinkling of the snow-white *campanero*.'

This bird is about the size of a jay. From its head arises a conical tube of about three inches long, of a brilliant black, spotted with small white feathers, which communicates with the palate, and which, when inflated with air, resembles an ear of corn.

WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. IV.—POLYGALA VULGARIS.



O, Grace, try to climb to the top of this hill,' said Robert; 'it looks so smooth, and green.'

'Yes, it is very pretty,' replied his sister; 'but I'm tired already, and should like to rest for a little.'

But oh! Robert, what is this beautiful blue flower? See, the ground is quite covered with it!

'It is, indeed, a pretty little plant,' exclaimed Robert; 'let us gather a bunch to show mamma. I wonder if she knows what it is?'

'I think it is a butterfly-shaped flower,' said Grace, 'for it has got wings. I should not be surprised if it were a kind of pea.'

'Oh! you are a great botanist,' said her brother, laughing; 'who ever heard of a bright blue pea, with tiny green leaves, shaped like a myrtle?'

'Well,' replied Grace, in an offended tone, 'perhaps I'm not quite so silly as you think. Wait till you hear what mamma says.'

'We shan't have our patience long tried,' replied Robert, 'for here she comes.'

And both children immediately turned and ran down the hill to meet their mother. Grace eagerly held out a bunch of the plant they had discovered, asking, 'Do you know the name of this flower, mamma?'

'Yes, dear, it is Polygala, or "Milkwort." When I saw you stoop to gather something on that chalky hill, I guessed what it was.'

'Oh, how clever!'

'Not at all, Robert, for I know this plant abounds on such places, and is very ornamental amongst the green

grass, where its crested blossoms form bright patches of blue, white, and lilac.'

'Are there three kinds, then?'

'No; there is only one British species, but it varies in colour. I think the blue the prettiest, as well as the most common of all.'

'Does this plant grow in other countries?' asked Robert.

'Yes, there are many foreign varieties, some of which you may see in green-houses; but the most remarkable is the American Rattlesnake Root (*Polygala Senega*), which possesses wonderful virtues.'

'What are they, mamma?'

'The juice of the root is said to be an antidote to the poison of the rattlesnake. Our little plant also contains valuable medicinal qualities. It is sometimes called Hedge Hyssop, on account of its astringent properties; and a white, creamy liquid flows from the root when wounded, from which it derives the name of *Polygala* (or much milk).'

'I suppose, mamma, though it belongs to the same species as the American plant, it would be of no use against the bite of a rattlesnake?'

'No, Robert, and it is not necessary that it should, as we have no such venomous reptiles in this country. God has beautifully arranged everything in this world, so that wherever the poison is, there, near at hand, the antidote is sure to be found.'

'That reminds me of the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness, mamma.'

'Yes, Grace, and it reminds me of something higher and better, of which the Brazen Serpent was a type.'

'You mean Jesus Christ?'

'Yes, dear; His blood is the true antidote to sin, and when applied by faith, the poison within us ceases to be deadly. Think of that when you hear of the Rattlesnake Root. Now, to return to our own little plant. The leaves, as you may observe, are narrow, and lanceolate, or lance-

shaped, the stem from four to eight inches long, the flowers growing in an upright spike.'

'Mamma,' said Grace, 'will you please settle a dispute



MILKWORT.—*Polygala Vulgaris.*

which Robert and I have had. Are not the blossoms pea-shaped?'

'I am not surprised at your asking the question,' replied her mother, 'for many inexperienced botanists have mistaken Polygala for a papilionaceous flower, on account of the wings; but, in reality, it is not the corolla, but the Calyx, which is butterfly-shaped.'

'What is the Calyx, mamma? You never told us about that. We know that the corolla is the blossom itself, and is composed of petals.'

'Yes, the corolla is the envelope of coloured and delicate leaves, which surround the inner or central parts of the flower, and takes its name from a crown. In the case of the Polygala, it is very appropriately named, as the petals are crowned with a beautiful little crested appendage.'

'Now, please tell us about the Calyx.'

'It is the name given to that part of the flower which enfolds the bud before it is completely blown, and generally surrounds the blossom afterwards. In fact, it is the outer covering of all, and is usually green; its leaves are termed Sepals. The word Calyx means cup, and it is so called because the Sepals are often united at the base, so as to form a cup in which the flower rests. Polygala has a most remarkable Calyx, being divided into five unequal sepals; three of them small and green, the other two coloured like the corolla and equal to it in length. The flower would be small and insignificant were it not for the beautiful coloured sepals which you, Grace, mistook for wings.'

'I understand what the Calyx is now, mamma, for I have often observed the little green cup you mention, out of which flowers seem to grow; but it is very strange those bright blue wings should belong only to the outer covering.'

'They do not remain always coloured, Robert; for when the corolla drops off these two large sepals turn green, and fold themselves tightly over the cells which contain the seed.'

'Oh, mamma! how useful those wings are.'

' Yes, dear, they protect the young bud, and add grace and beauty to the fully-expanded blossom. They cling closely around its declining bloom, and when at length it withers away, continue their good offices to the seed until ripe, when it no longer needs their guardianship.'

' How nicely it is all arranged, mamma !'


' What does it remind you of, Grace ?'

' A friend who is constant through every change of circumstances.'

' There is one Friend, dear, who "sticketh closer than a brother ;" who envelopes us with His mercy, and covers us with "the wings of His love ;" who sends us the graces and beauties of His Holy Spirit to adorn our lives ; who is our "refuge and strength in the time of trouble ;" our stay and protection in old age ; our "guide and guardian even unto death." And as seed, when cast into the ground, springs up in renewed freshness and vigour, so will He raise us up to life everlasting ; and having been our shield here, will 'also become "our exceeding great reward."'

S. T. A. R.

REFLECTONS ON A WATCH.

 **W**HAT a wonderful and interesting piece of mechanism is a watch ; and what an acceptable present ! Who cannot remember the pleasure experienced on receiving a first watch ? though, perhaps, the pleasure is still greater when the money has been saved up to buy it, and the joyful day at last arrives to go and make the purchase ; at least of this I am sure, that greater care is then taken of it, for the possessor knows its value, for what is gained with difficulty and self-denial is sure to be valued.

Watches are supposed to have been invented in the

Reflections on a Watch.

seventeenth century, but by whom is uncertain. Many attribute the invention to Huygens, a Dutchman. They were formerly called Nüremberg eggs, that city having been noted for their manufacture. In the first ages of the world, time was not reckoned as it now is, it being determined only by the revolution of the earth on its axis causing a day; and its orbit round the sun making a year, as we see in the first chapter of Genesis, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.' Dividing the day and night each into four watches seems to have been the first artificial division of time, and these watches or vigils were used both by Jews and Romans. The earliest mention of an 'hour' is in Daniel iii. 6, 'Whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same *hour* be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace;' and as the Jews were then in captivity at Babylon, it appears that this measurement was of Babylonian origin, that nation having long been famous for chronology and astronomy.

There are many lessons we may learn by meditating on a watch; and the rapid flight of time, I think, we may reckon as the first. In the Bible the life of men is 'compared to a shadow, 'Man fleeth as a shadow and continueth not,' Job xiv. 2; to a shuttle, 'My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,' Job vii. 6; to a vapour, 'What is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away,' James iv. 14; to a handbreadth, Ps. xxxix. 5; and to a great many other things denoting swiftness.

The careful use of time is the next lesson we should learn—'Redeeming the time,' Eph. v. 16; 'There is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven,' Eccles. iii. 1; and surely a watch is of the greatest use in assisting us in the disposing of the short time given us.

Something may, I think, be learned by considering how carefully the mainspring of a watch must be guarded.

It is like the heart of man ; for as the watch will not go as long as there is anything the matter with it, so man can do nothing right while the heart is wrong. 'Keep thy heart with all diligence ; for out of it are the issues of life,' Prov. iv. 23. 'Let your heart, therefore, be perfect with the Lord our God,' 1 Kings viii. 61.

If the spring be broken, who can mend it but a watchmaker ? So none can purify the heart but He that made it ; man's efforts are all vain without God, but He has promised—'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh,' Ezek. xxxvi. 26. So David prays 'Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me,' Ps. li. 10 ; and we know his prayer was answered, for we read, Solomon's 'heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the *heart of David* his father,' 1 Kings xi. 4.

A watch easily goes wrong, and frequently requires cleaning, and such is the case with our hearts. Happily we have the remedy pointed out to us in the Bible—'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,' 1 John i. 7.

A watch seems to represent the Bible in several points ; it is a guide for time, as the Bible is both for time and eternity. A watch is of no use unless the key be daily applied to wind it up, and the Bible is useless, unless the Holy Spirit be applied with power to warm us into life. A watch profits us not unless we consult it and regulate our actions by it ; neither does the Bible, for God's complaint against the Jews was, 'They hear my words, but they *do* them not,' Ezek. xxxiii. 23. How many exhortations do we find to do the will of God !—'Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to *do* all that is written in the book of the law,' Joshua xxxiii. 6 ; 'Whosoever shall *do* the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother,' Matt. xii. 50 ; 'Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being

not a forgetful hearer but a *doer* of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deed,' James i. 25.

Thus, my dear young friends, I have thrown out a few hints respecting what a watch may teach, but there are a great many left for you to consider yourselves. There are the materials of which it is made ; if of gold, it may remind you of the New Jerusalem whose streets are of pure gold ; of the love of gold, which proves fatal to so many, as we see by Achan (see Joshua vii.) ; of what David valued so much more than precious metals, 'The law of Thy mouth is dearer unto me than thousands of gold and silver;' or if the watch be made of silver, it may lead to the consideration of the purifying of that metal, so-often referred to in the Bible, and which was not considered perfect until the maker's likeness was reflected in it, for he then knew that all the dross was taken away. 'I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined,' Zech. xiii. 9. The very name of 'watch' may remind us of the warning words of our Saviour so often repeated, 'Watch and pray.' What I say unto you I say unto all, watch.' Most frequently they were words of exhortation to be ready when Christ should come, and call us to himself, that where He is there we may be also.

E. H.

LOOK UP.



LOOK UP!' thundered the captain of a vessel, as his boy grew giddy while gazing from the topmast. 'Look up!' The boy looked up, and returned in safety. Young man, look up, and you will succeed. Never look down and despair. Leave dangers uncared for, and push on. If you falter, you lose.

Look up! Do right, and trust in God.





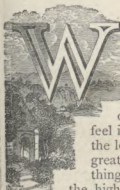
A NEW ZEALAND LANDSCAPE.

THE FORTUNES OF THE WOODFORDS:
AN EMIGRANT STORY.

BY MRS GEORGE CUPPLES,

AUTHOR OF 'THE LITTLE CAPTAIN,' 'MISS MATTY,' ETC.

CHAPTER V.



WE must ask our readers to suppose some months to have passed over our friends the Woodfords, so that when next we visit them they are beginning to look upon themselves as established colonists, and to get over the first difficulties which settlers feel in a country like New Zealand. Not the least of these difficulties had been the great expense of living, as long as everything required to be got from the town; the high cost of provisions, and the extravagant charges for every article of consumption. The colony of Otago, after being considered the most backward of the settlements, about this time rose in general estimation, and made rapid strides. Every month large vessels arrived from 'home,' crowded with emigrants, and loaded with goods; while at the same time, as if anticipating the fresh attractions that were soon to distinguish the region, the throng was swelled by a constant influx of more experienced settlers from other parts. Prices rose daily, and for a time every item of housekeeping was a matter of careful consideration at Poatipa Hook. But they were now beginning to find the tables turned as their first harvest came to be gathered in, and their own produce could be brought into use, not only for themselves, but for the market of Dunedin. The butter made by Maud and Lily was in great demand even at the high price of two-and-sixpence a pound, and

the eggs were bought up above the usual market price.

One or two families came to settle beside the Woodfords, who were very neighbourly and agreeable. After the daily labours were over, they would occasionally indulge in a little social intercourse, when the younger members danced and sang, and the elder folks talked over past days in the 'old country.' Sometimes, too, they would have a whole holiday, and would join together to have a picnic up the river, or to the top of Mount Flagstaff, a distance of about six miles from Dunedin. There, when they had overcome the difficulty of climbing the steep mountain, which was not accomplished without much merriment and laughter at the various slips and falls some of the party made, they considered themselves amply repaid by the glorious view from the summit. Not only did they see the city of Dunedin, now growing large and populous, but the various streams, rivers, and lakes, with the great Taieri plain spread out like a panorama before them. There, too, was the blue Pacific Ocean, and the remarkable-looking hills called the Pig Ranges, undulating into all sorts of strange shapes and hollows, while beyond them is nothing but mountain and mountain again.

At these times Mr Harkom was certain to be present; indeed, he came so often to the Hook that he used to declare he had better build himself a warrie, like Tim Napper's, and settle down altogether.

The house at Poatipa Hook was still rough in its outward appearance, with all the features of an off-hand colonial dwelling, in the shanty or log-hut style; but it had been rendered more commodious by several additions as the necessity arose, and was found to suit all the present requirements. The situation was pleasant, though Mr Woodford talked decidedly of erecting a new house, at their first leisure, on the higher ground, which commanded a fine view of the bay. Meanwhile it was not likely that the said leisure time would soon arrive;

and here they were conveniently placed, if not with an eye to the picturesque, which was a consideration that had given the original settler but little care. Bush was behind them, and on either hand, and it stretched along to the adjoining creek, which was thus hidden; the fields of the clearing opened out on both sides, to which it was their future business to add more ground, as the rough soil could be brought into cultivation. Out-houses of logs and wattle were put up about the back, forming a snug, homely inclosure, being more thoroughly supplied from time to time with the suitable live stock for turning the farm to account, and taking advantage of the profitable market in town. There were already two or three excellent cows, and consequently a regular dairy was fitted up, over which Maud took charge, assisted by a rather rough, but willing, Irish maid-servant, who had been engaged from the last ship. The younger girls had care of the poultry, to which no little attention was given, as fowls of all kinds sold high in Dunedin, and eggs were at famine prices. Even little Madge, in partnership with Charley, had their stock to take care off, in the shape of rabbits and pigeons, and a goat with two kids, which multiplied fast, from the few they had got as pets at the beginning. A better idea cannot be given of their life at this time than by describing a day's occupation at the Hook.

First, Maud was up soon after dawn, and, most invariably to commence with, she had to rouse Bidy the maid, among whose merits early rising could not be included. Bidy slept deeply, but at all events there was no difficulty in knowing her exact whereabouts, for she snored outrageously. After she had been shaken up, the smouldering log in the hearth was stirred, the fire made, and preparation set agoing for breakfast. They then went out, milked the cows, and sent them by Tim to their pasture; next they arranged the dairy for the day, and returned in-doors, bringing with them a supply of the delightful new milk. Bidy now made

cakes, while Maud turned up her sleeves and mixed a sufficient quantity of flour for slap-jacks, as well as for the day's loaves in the oven, at both of which she had become quite skilful. By this time her younger sisters were up. Mrs Woodford soon followed; and when the hungry party of workers came in from their hour's occupation before breakfast, all were ready for a hearty meal. This over, they separated to their respective labours in thorough earnest.

'Come, now,' said Maud, 'we must hurry with the clearing away, and get out immediately to hunt for those duck-nests. I am sure they must be down in the long grass by the creek.'

'Yes,' said Lily; 'and then we must set the turkey. Wasn't it nice that Tim managed to get the eggs for her so cleverly?'

'I do hope they will all come out,' said Madge. 'What a nice lot of turkeys we will then have, and what a lot of money we will make by our eggs.'

'How strange that the best season for eggs is Christmas!' said Helen; 'and how surprised the people at home would be to see us having strawberries, and new potatoes, and green peas on Christmas Day!'

'But we have our plum-pudding too,' said Lily. 'I was so glad mamma decided to have it all the same, though it doesn't look so nice coming in by daylight, and without the blue flame too.'

'Come, now, no more talking,' said Maud; 'we must hurry, and leave the tidying-up of the rooms to Bidy. Are you forgetting we are to go out to the run this afternoon to see the sheep folded for the shearing to-morrow?'

'Poor sheep,' said Madge, 'I am very sorry for them. Only think how strange they must feel without their fleeces.'

'I think they must be very glad to get rid of them,' said Helen, 'especially in hot weather; and, besides, if the wool turns out well, and papa makes money by them, we shall soon be able to go home again.'

'Oh, Helen!' said Lily, 'you are always thinking

about going home. I like this place ever so much better. It's such a dear, jolly place. Far better than the stiff old country; and I am sure we are all happy here. And papa never looks worn out and tired as he did in Liverpool.'

The dishes having been put away, and Bidly and the dinner set a-going, the four girls now proceeded to go in search of the missing nests, and after a hot hour's work Helen was fortunate in finding one; and Maud, a few minutes after, another, so that they returned home with a prize, as there was a larger quantity of eggs than they expected. Making the cream ready for Bidly to churn, and seeing to the contents of the cheese-press, which Maud was very anxious should turn out a success, took up the rest of the time till dinner was ready. The boys were not to return till night, but Mr Woodford came back to escort them to the hill-pasture; and Mrs Woodford being persuaded to go also, the bullock-dray was got out; and, when she and the three girls were comfortably seated, the little party set out, with Tim for driver, while Maud rode behind on her pony, along with her papa. The weather was really delightful, so pure was the atmosphere, though the heat was great, while the smell of the tree-ferns and gums filled the air, and the grass was full of wild flowers quite different from those in England, not to speak of the sounds from various birds, the plumage of which was far gayer than anything seen in the old country—from the green paroquets to the blue-mountain parrots, the bronze-winged pigeons, and, occasionally, a white cockatoo.

When they had got into the thicker part of the bush, they were startled by hearing a strange cry, as if from some one in distress; but Mr Woodford explained that it came from the 'More-Pork' bird; and on listening again they heard it quite distinctly crying, 'More Pork!'—'More Pork!'

'How odd,' said Maud, laughing. 'What does it put you in mind of, Lily?'

'Oh! Helen and Aunt Julia, to be sure,' replied Lily, laughing also. 'Don't you remember, mamma, when Helen was very little, how she horrified aunt by the quantity of pork she ate; and when she coaxingly tried to get her to wait for the nice rice pudding, Helen kept saying, "No, mo' pork! mo' pork, please!"'

There were equally curious cries to be heard, however, in the bush, which helped to save Helen's blushes, the most remarkable of which was the laughing jackass, a bird that seemed to imitate people's mirth so wonderfully. But the ground now opened out into bare hill sides, with grey hollows winding through them up to the slopes of pasture, where sheep were to be seen in the distance. Maud and her papa rode on before to look for the boys, and found them beside the fold in the bottom of the valley, waiting for the shepherd and his dog to gather the flock downwards. A lively scene it was till this had been done, affording the party no little amusement, in addition to the pleasure of the excursion among the hills. It was evening by the time they returned. This ended the day's labours, making everybody heartily ready for supper—the most social and leisurely meal of all.

The season passed rapidly in the various cares of the sheep-shearing, the hay-making, the cutting of the corn, and the gathering in of every crop. Then roots had to be secured, and fire-wood stacked, before the cold rainy weather, which went by the name of winter. This was the more social time, even beyond the outskirts of Dunedin; and the neighbourhood of the Hook was becoming, happily for them, a favourite township, where several substantial settlers, both old and new, had taken out sections, as the phrase was. Within a space of three or four miles, several of these were to be found living in rough, but hearty comfort. Towards one point, two or three inhabitants were within easy reach of each other; and the establishment of a saw-mill there, added to the discovery of various useful minerals on the ground, promised before long to increase the population. At no

part could it be entitled to the rank of a village, but the whole place went by the name of Poatipa; and it was pretty certain that before many years a flourishing little town would be seen in the locality. The bullock tracks were already improved into tolerably decent roads, so long as the weather remained good. Mr Woodford's property was likely to rise in value, and in the meanwhile they derived great benefit in a neighbourly point of view. One or two of the neighbours were on very intimate terms, among these being the Campbells, who had come out in the same ship—the good old 'Islay.' The Campbells' place was, unfortunately, about five miles distant; but when the longer nights came, the intercourse between the two houses was frequent, sometimes even in spite of miry roads, late moonlight, and the danger from water-holes by the way.

They were returning from this place one evening, after having spent some very pleasant and merry hours along with young Campbell, who was to stay at the Hook all night, when George suddenly bade them be silent, for he fancied he heard a strange noise. They stood still for a few minutes, and then it became obvious that there was not only a peculiar crackling noise in the distance, but also a strong smell of burning.

'There's something on fire,' said George. 'I hope it isn't the Dicksons' place, for it comes from that direction, I feel sure.'

'We had better hasten home with the girls, and rouse papa and the others,' said George, 'and then we can go back to see if any help is required.'

'Oh! do let me go with you, George,' said Maud, clinging to his arm. I may be of some use to dear Jane, and the rest of them; but George would not listen to her, and they hastened on as fast as they could. By the time they reached the Hook, dense clouds of smoke were plainly seen curling slowly up from the west, while now and then a long tongue of flame writhed and twisted upwards through the smoke. Mr Woodford now joined the party

outside the house, and with William and Tim set out at once to see where the fire really was. In a very short time they returned, trying to appear as composed as possible, but by their manner Mrs Woodford descried in a minute that something dreadful had taken place.

'Oh! what is the matter, papa dear?' she cried; 'George, Dick, what has happened?'

'It is the bush some miles beyond the Dicksons that has caught fire,' replied Mr Woodford, 'but it is a great distance off as yet; only it will be necessary to collect as many valuable things as possible, and convey them with you and the children across the bay to a place of safety.'

'Mrs Woodford begged to be allowed to remain to the last; but seeing her husband was determined, she got into the boat with Lily and the two children, and was rowed over the water to a friend's house, who kindly gave them shelter. Maud remained behind, with her mamma's permission, for she feared the boys would be doing something rash, and that Maud's presence would be a check to them.'

'Ochone! ochone!' said Biddy, 'sure it's a terrible country this. We can't get leave to live in peace and quiet at all, at all. If them cows, now, are hurt, Miss Maud, or anything happens to the two calves I've taken such pains with, shure my heart will break.'

'I hope the fire will burn itself out before long,' said Maud, who could scarcely speak, she was so excited. 'We must ask God to help us, you know, Biddy; and He will, if it is His pleasure, or if it is right.'

'I've lost my beads,' said Biddy, sobbing; 'and the paters get all one a-top of the other. Ochone! What would the old father say to it?'

On it came faster and faster, till the whole bush for miles round seemed to be one vast mass of flame and smoke. The settlers were driven back and back; forced to leave their dwellings a prey to the devouring element; and, in some instances, barely having time to save their cattle. The Hook was the last house for some miles,

and it had been so well cleared that hopes were entertained that at anyrate it might be saved; and all night they laboured, putting wet blankets over the buildings, for the heat was so intense that it was feared some stray sparks might lodge on it. The wind had been in the west for some hours, but towards daybreak it began to show signs of changing; and, to the Woodfords' intense relief, the fire slowly turned in another direction, and that to a point leading down to the water, where the brush-wood was scant.

No great harm had been done to Mr Woodford's section; but the Campbells were found, with others, to have suffered some loss of stock; and the poor Dicksons had been regularly burned out. All help was given to them, and they were accommodated by various neighbours, the Woodfords included. Happily, no damage to life or limb had taken place, and soon the only mark of the night's ravage was to be seen in the unsightly effect upon the adjoining bush and wood, where the leaves had been shrivelled up, or even the trees stood all charred and blackened beyond the power of spring to restore them.

It was not long before an occurrence took place, causing even more serious excitement at the Hook. One week a good deal of farm produce had been got ready for market, and the boat was still used for its conveyance to Dunedin, though the change of the season was begun, when rough weather might be looked for. The wind was regular, however, and as the Maori was experienced, while Tim had become a skilful boatman, the short route by water was decided upon by Mr Woodford, who had occasion to go into town that day. Under his supervision Mrs Woodford could not decidedly object to the boys going too, though it was with much reluctance that she was drawn into letting Maud and Lily accompany them. The tide was favourable, and the morning fine, for the season, and the party set out in high spirits. Some hours afterwards, rain began to fall, and the water looked murky, so that all day Mrs Wood-

ford was in anxiety, looking out every now and then to watch what turn the weather might take. By the afternoon her fears seemed to her to be fully justified; the wind rose and came in puffs, and so concerned did she become, that she took the children with her and went down to the edge of the creek to look for the boat on its way back.

The farm stuff had been disposed of, and various articles purchased and placed in the boat, which, though not such a heavy load as they had taken, yet left little room, requiring care as to how the party sat, or moved about. Mr Woodford had noticed, with some annoyance, that William, on his coming down from town with the last package of goods, appeared unusually silent and even moody, and it was evident that in some way he had been drinking. This was a thing most dangerous for any native to indulge in, and William had seemed to be on his guard against it hitherto; but on the present occasion it became plainer and plainer he had broken through his rule. At the first reproof he grew sulky, and wished to return to Dunedin; but being forced to proceed in the boat, he did his work carelessly, and at last, when the boat was in the act of tacking, he neglected to let go an important rope in time, the effect of which was, that the wind forced the boat over, the sail knocking about, and the packages shifting down, till they were in imminent danger of being swamped by the surge. At this critical moment Lily, who had started up, lost hold of Maud's hand, and was precipitated headlong into the water. A shriek from Maud, and a yell from Tim Napper drew the eye of the distracted father to the sight of Tim vainly snatching with the boat-hook for the child's rescue. But the Maori, who had for the moment seemed to become himself again, and who had a particular favour for Lily, sprang overboard at the instant, dived after her as she sank, and reappeared in a moment, holding her safe above water till he caught the boat-hook, and raised her on board, scrambling in himself afterwards. The boat had by that

time righted herself, and they shot along by the help of the tide and wind towards the creek. Lily meanwhile was brought back to consciousness by care given her, with the help of restoratives, which were fortunately at hand.

Mrs Woodford from the shore had seen the apparent danger of the boat, but, fortunately, not the peril to Lily. Her excitement was already enough, and she could not control her feelings, as the boat came safely in to the landing-place. She almost fainted when she saw Lily's drenched figure and pale face; but no time was lost in getting her home, when the ordinary remedies soon restored her perfectly.

'I was convinced some disaster would come of that boat,' said Mrs Woodford; 'you shall never, never go by it again.'

'Oh! mamma, it was quite safe,' said Richard; 'I could have let go the sheet myself. It was all that tiresome William's doing; and it was only because he wasn't sober, mamma. It never could have happened otherwise.'

'I have always been suspicious of William,' said Mrs Woodford. 'We can never trust him again. I do hope you will get rid of him directly, papa.'

'Well, no, my dear,' replied Mr Woodford. 'William is a good servant, and this, we may say, is his first offence. We must not be too hasty about dismissing him.'

The only ill effect left from this incident was, that William continued to be sullen and moody, and looked as if he was still under the influence of drink, so that at last every one was certain he must be getting a further supply privately. The only way that this could be done, was by an idle native of the wandering class who used to be seen in the neighbourhood; besides which, there was the old chief Tiro, who would sometimes camp out on that side of the bay, generally followed by his dingy wife and her gipsy-looking companions, young and old. The conduct of William became, at this time, even mad-like; and as he

would not go away they were at length compelled to put him under restraint for a little, and afterwards to watch that he got no more spirits from any quarter. He then returned to his former sober habits, and no complaint could be made against his behaviour, except that there was a change in the pleasantness of his manner, and that he was not so cordial and hearty as formerly.

(To be continued.)

A FATHER'S PRAYER.

O THOU, who from eternity dost know
 A father's love, hear now a father's prayer,
 And grant to this my child, Thy gift, to share
 (For His name's sake through whom all blessings flow)
 A portion of the love thou dost bestow
 On Thy dear children. Through this life of care
 Guide thou and guard her : from each subtle snare
 Of sin preserve her, from the empty show
 Of wealth and pleasure. Grant that she may grow
 In faith and patience, as her years increase,
 Nor from her Saviour's service ever cease
 Till Thou dost bring her to those mansions blest
 Where Thy redeem'd and chosen sweetly rest
 For ever safe from sin, or want, or woe.

F. W. H.

STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. XI.

THE GOAT.



THE quadruped we are to tell you about at present is to be found in almost every part of the globe. Away up in high mountains, springing from rock to rock, standing fearlessly on the brink of frightful precipices, we are sure to find the goat—its hairy covering and long beard giving it a strange, weird-like aspect as it frisks about, and seems to challenge us to catch it if we can.

The goat is a wonderfully strong animal for its size, and those who would hunt it in its wild state require to have nimble feet and steady heads.

There are a great many varieties of this quadruped.

The hair of those found in Cashmere and Thibet is like long fine wool; and from it the beautiful Cashmere shawls are made, which are so fine that three people constant at work can only complete one quarter of an inch of them in a day. The Angora breed have dazzling white, woolly hair, thick and glossy. Their horns are black, and their ears long and broad. At the Cape of Good Hope a large species is found with hair of a bright blue colour, and long, thick beards.

Goats are gifted with very acute sense of sight and smell. They can find a secure footing on the very narrowest ledges of rocks; and it has been alleged that two chancing to meet where neither can turn nor pass each other, one of them will lie down, and let the other pass over its back.

Very different from that, however, was the conduct of the two goats in the fable, who met midway on a narrow plank which spanned a foaming mountain stream, on which occasion it must be owned

‘That Miss Nan and Master Billy
Both behaved extremely silly;’

for instead of yielding, as they knew one of them must do, they began to push at each other with their horns, each declaring they were the greatest, and would not yield,

‘Till, anxious to maintain their rank,
They struggled, and fell off the plank.
Their pride now proved an empty dream,
For both were swallowed by the stream.’

In many countries the goat is domesticated, and kept for the sake of its milk, which is considered remarkably nutritive. In our own land many of our cottagers keep goats, which supply their families with milk, and are cherished by them as much as the camel is by the Arabs.

There is, as you know, very frequent mention made of goats in Scripture. Job speaks of the ‘wild goats of the rocks.’ In Jacob’s present to Esau there were 200

she-goats and 20 he-goats. And the caves of Engedi, or Ain Jedy, where David found refuge from the cruel persecutions of Saul, meant literally the 'Fountain of the Goats;' and amongst these wild ravines goats are still to be seen. The milk of the goats is largely used in Palestine, and from their skins a particular kind of bottle is made, in which the butter used in that country (and which is generally about the consistency of oil) is kept. The author of the 'Land and the Book' writes of the pretty black and spotted goats, with large liquid eyes and long pendent ears, that are to be seen pasturing with the sheep on the green ranges on the mountain heights, and who are fed along with them by the shepherds on the tender leaves and young twigs of the great oak trees, in the woods along the eastern sides of Lebanon.

No doubt it was of such a flock of sheep and goats that our Saviour thought when He spoke the words: 'When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall he sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.'

In Old Testament days, goats were largely used in sacrifice. And, on the great day of atonement, two kids of goats were brought by the high priest to the door of the tabernacle. One was chosen by lot to be put to death, to make atonement for the sins of the people; whilst on the head of the other (the scape goat), the high priest laid his hands, and confessed over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, putting them on the head of the goat. And afterwards a fit man led it away into the wilderness, bearing upon it the iniquities of the people, into a land not inhabited, and the goat was let go into the wilderness. All these ceremonies prefiguring the work which Jesus was to do for us; shedding His blood for the remission of sin, and casting away the ini-

quities of all who trust in His sin-cleansing blood into the wilderness, where they will no more rise up against them to condemn them. Often, I dare say, have my young readers sung the words:

“ I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God ;
He bears them all and frees us,
From the accursed load.”

But now we must leave the goats frisking on the rocky heights, or peering at us over the edge of the steep precipices, and retrace our steps homewards.

M. H.

STORIES FROM HISTORY.

WILLIAM TELL.

PART II.



ES, there could indeed be no doubt he is the father—those are his children! The start of surprise, the flush of joy, so soon changed into anxious sorrow, told it plainer than words could do. But what a meeting! In presence of the tyrant; in prospect of a violent death for one, at least, if not for all.

Gessler's triumph knew no bounds as he looked on, enjoying the anguish of that father's heart. For a moment he looked on without speaking, till, having matured his plan, he said:

‘Listen! Tyrant though you call me, and have taught your children to call me, I can show mercy. I shall spare both your life and theirs, but on this condition: You shall have an opportunity of showing your boasted skill as an archer. You shall shoot at an apple placed on your son's head.’

‘Rather death—a thousand times death!’ exclaimed

Tell, 'than run the risk of myself piercing my son's heart. Soldiers! I am ready—lead me to the scaffold.'

But no; his agony only strengthened the tyrant's determination. The alternative might not be; both heads must fall if he refused the offered condition.

'Accept them, father!—fear not,' were Gemmi's words. 'You never missed your aim. I fear not. God will help you; He will direct your arrow.'

It was a scene that would have melted any but the hardest hearts. Alas! it only amused Gessler; and if any of his guards felt pity they dared not show it.

A few moment's pause, and then, pale and resolute, his eye flashing with indignation, he said, 'I will obey! Lead me to the spot.'

While the preparations were being made, his son stood beside him speaking words of loving encouragement. The distance was measured in the public square, where the cap was still aloft on the spear. On three sides it was guarded by a triple line of Austrian soldiers; on an elevated chair sat Gessler to watch the proceedings. The news had spread quickly; the citizens all hastened to view the strange spectacle, and many a silent prayer went up from that crowd for the father in his hour of trial.

Tell placed the boy in position, his face turned from him; though the child said, 'I had rather watch you, father.' But Tell dared not look at that face, as he aimed the arrow that might prove the messenger of death to his beloved one. Then the arrows were brought, that he might, as he demanded, select one himself—one only were the orders; but as again and again he looked them over and tried one and another on his bow, he managed to elude every watching eye, and conceal a second under his cloak.

More than once he lifted his bow and let it fall again—then, with one earnest cry to God to guide his hand and protect his child, he let the arrow fly. It pierced the apple! His child was safe! Even the tyrant's

presence could not suppress the wild, loud shout of the assembled crowd, as father and son embraced. After such an ordeal, even the soldiers joined in it for a moment. Gessler alone was unmoved; and as he gloomily watched the victims who had thus escaped him, he saw the second arrow. Instantly he called out, 'Why is this? My orders were one arrow; you desired to take two—what was it for?'

'To pierce your heart had I killed my son,' fearlessly answered Tell.

The excitement of the moment drew these imprudent words from him. No sooner were they uttered, than, at the command of Gessler, he was seized, loaded with chains, and dragged to the dungeon whence the children had been just liberated.

A low, dull murmur of discontent, like the subdued and sullen roar of wind and water that precedes a tempest, was heard on all sides; every face looked dark and lowering as the governor quickly withdrew to the castle, giving orders that the guards should be doubled, and the citizens immediately dispersed.

Gemmi in vain sought permission to share his father's captivity; he was rudely driven away. On the outskirts of the town he met the terrified Claire, and together they hastened to carry the dreadful news to Edmea. Who can paint the dismay and consternation of that once happy home? The husband and father in chains—the country's hope apparently lost with him. But there was short time for tears. Without delay the confederates must know that now or never the blow must be struck. Gemmi instantly repaired to the cave of Grutti, where Melctal was in hiding. Edmea remembered how her husband had confided to her that the signal for the rising of the cantons was to be a blazing beacon on their mountain side. She and Claire had neither time nor strength to collect and carry and pile the needed materials for that beacon; but nothing is too difficult for love to plan and self-devotion to execute, and it cost

her not one pang as she and Claire filled the cottage with combustibles, and, setting it on fire, watched the flames consume the loved home of so many happy years. It was a glorious beacon. Melctal, Verner, and Furst saw it from afar, and, as they saw, sprang to arms, for they knew the hour was come. Far and wide the signal was observed, and each confederate took his lance or bow, and set out bravely for the struggle where freedom should reward success, and death must follow on defeat. Odds were fearfully against them, but they were strong in a righteous cause—strong, too, with the strength of despair.

But how had things been going at Altorf during the hours thus spent by the patriots?

Gessler had rightly judged that the patience and endurance of the people had been taxed to the very utmost. He knew, too, something of the courage and strength of the men who fight for all that man holds dear, and he trembled. Sarnem, his most trusted and devoted general, was summoned to his council. He confirmed the fears of his master. No doubt a rising and conflict were imminent.

‘This is my plan,’ said Gessler. ‘There is danger of our being separated from our reinforcements, which are at Lucerne. You shall fill my place here, invested with full power to take all the measures you shall deem necessary. Have a boat got ready without delay, large enough to carry fifty of my guards. Let them be picked men. This very night I shall embark with them, and proceed to Lucerne, when I shall shortly return and appear before these walls, at the head of such a force as these vile peasants shall in vain resist. Let them rise, it will be their last effort, so dire shall be my revenge. Let the prisoner Tell, strongly fettered and doubly guarded, be placed in the boat. He shall have a lodging where no possibility of rescue shall cheer him, and his end shall deter others from resisting my will. As soon as all is ready, and it is sufficiently dark, let me be called; meanwhile, I shall snatch an hour’s sleep.’

In the darkness of that night Gessler and his prisoner and his fifty guards secretly embarked and stole away from Altorf. The night was most favourable, calm and dark, though intensely cold. With muffled oars they quickly left the town behind them, and steered for Brunnen, in order to cross the strait that leads into the Upper Lake. As Tell, by the faint light of stars, saw the dim outlines of the well-known and beloved scenes, where all his life had been passed, he was indeed troubled. Many a cry for help went up that night to the Father in heaven from the helpless captive, for his family, his friends, and his country. He, too, saw, and with wonder, the blazing beacon—who had kindled it? Gessler saw it, but little knew its portent. As the night wore on the weather changed; fitful gusts of wind; heavy snow showers grew wilder and thicker; the fierce storm roared, the waves raged, the rowers lost all power, all presence of mind; they knew not where they were; the boat refused to obey the rudder; immediate death threatened them. The boatmen held a moment's consultation, when one of them said boldly, 'There is one man, and one man only, who could save us, and he is here; but he is in chains. Free him, promise him life and liberty; refuse, and we are all dead men.' Gessler's guilty conscience made death no pleasant prospect; besides, would not the guards themselves free him in spite of his orders, if he refused? So permission was given. The chains were quickly knocked off. Tell again was free—he took the tiller; steered the boat with his wonted skill and success; it obeyed his every touch. They were saved!

Favoured by the darkness he now turned the boat's head, and steered back for the lake they had just left, safely through the straits. The wind was in their favour, and on and on they went, every stroke of the oars bringing them nearer Altorf.

The day at length dawned, and the guards began to recognise some of the familiar objects of the Lower Lake. Gessler's own suspicions were now excited.

'Where are we?' he demanded. Tell made no answer; but, quick as thought, he steered for a rock close to the shore, and sprang to it from the boat. As he sprang he seized the bow and arrows of one of the guard.

Active as the chamois he had so often hunted on those same rocks, he leaped from crag to crag. 'Land! Surround him! Seize the traitor alive or dead!' almost screamed the governor. They did land; Gessler himself one of the foremost. Tell saw him, waited a moment, then raised his bow, let fly his arrow with as steady and well-directed an aim as when he hit the apple on his son's head. But this time he aimed it at the tyrant's heart, and he fell dead.

Tell no sooner beheld from his rock the death of Gessler than he disappeared. He took the mountain paths that led to Altorf, and soon came on the tracks of the confederates, who had followed Verner from Schwitz to the rendezvous. Following those footsteps, it was not long before he came in sight of the assembled army—Verner, Melctal and Furst, each at the head of a brave but little band. In the midst were Edmea and Claire inciting the brave men to deeds of daring and valour. There too was Gemmi, telling of his father's imprisonment, pointing to the fortress in whose dungeon he believed him to be still confined. Great was the amazement, greater still the joy as Tell himself stood among them. Again and again the rocks and mountains re-echoed their glad shout of welcome; but who can describe their exultation as he told them of the death of the tyrant? Victory seemed already gained. Surely the God of battles was on their side. Tell again spoke. 'We are avenged,' he said, 'but we are not free. Let us proceed at once to Altorf and take its defenders by surprise.'

At once they marched forward, but Sarnem was prepared for them, and a most determined defence was made. Melted lead, stones, and missiles of every sort were hurled down on the assailants. At one time all seemed lost, their ranks were so fearfully thinned. Then

Tell called Melctal to him, commanded him to take his band round to the eastern gate of the fortress, and so distract the garrison. He did so, and found the gate but weakly defended ; it was soon burst open ; the assailants poured in, and their shouts of triumph told Sarnem plainly of the entrance of the foe—told it, too, to Tell and Verner. They redoubled their efforts, and won an entrance, too, though it was at a terrible cost of the lives of their brave men. Soon the standard of Uri floated where the Austrian flag had so long waved. Sarnem, with the greater number of his officers, fell in the assault. The rest of the garrison surrendered. The castle was pulled down by the fury of the populace, so great was their hatred of the men who had thus ruled with such cruelty and injustice. The three cantons were now free. They offered the supreme government to Tell ; he gratefully but resolutely refused the honour.

His advice was that they should invite the other cantons to join them, and that together they should form a republic, in which he would serve as a simple citizen. A crown of oak leaves was the only token of grateful veneration that he and Verner and Melctal would accept from their country.

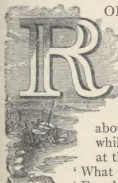
The long struggle that followed, the battles that were fought, the victories that were won before united Switzerland achieved the freedom she has ever since preserved, belong rather to history than to our simple story of William Tell.

K.



WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. V.—HYDROCHARIS MORSUS-RANÆ.



ROBERT,' said his sister, 'I saw a picture the other day of a very pretty flower, with a curious name, and I am anxious to know something more about it.'

'Where did you see it, Grace?'

'In a shop, when I was in town with papa. There was a large book about wild flowers on the counter, and whilst waiting I amused myself looking at the illustrations.'

'What is it called?'

'Frog-bit; but it has also a very long name which I could not pronounce.'

'I never heard of such a plant. It cannot grow in this country, or we should know it.'

'That does not follow,' observed Grace, 'for mamma says there are many, even common wild flowers, which we have never seen.'

'Let us go in and ask her about it. I think she is at leisure now.'

'What is Frog-bit, mamma? Grace saw a picture of it in a botanical work, the day she was at the bookseller's with papa. Please tell us the long name which she could not pronounce.'

'Hydrocharis Morsus-Ranæ.'

'Certainly, it was no wonder she could not remember that. What does it mean, mamma?'

'"Hydrocharis" is taken from two Greek words, signifying "water" and "elegance;" and it is so called because it is a very elegant water plant. "Morsus-Ranæ," simply means "Frog-bit."'

'That is such an extraordinary name, mamma.'

'It refers to the element in which the plant flourishes, because it is the same in which the croaking reptile delights. In some countries it is called 'lesser water-lily,' on account of the shape of its floating leaves, which bear some resemblance to those of that flower.'

'Does it grow in other countries?'

'Yes; but there is only one British species which adorns many of our English ponds, and, though un-



FROG-BIT.—*Hydrocharis Morsus-Ranae.*

known on the picturesque lakes of Scotland, it is not uncommon on the still waters of the Irish landscape. Like most aquatic (or water) plants it grows in large patches, and the substantial green leaves, which are

glossy, and sometimes tinted with red, form a beautiful contrast to the delicate white blossoms.'

'What shape are the flowers, mamma?'

'They have three sepals, and the same number of petals, which are thin, and crumpled, resembling those of the poppy.'

'Did you say three, mamma?'

'Yes; this division of the corolla is rare amongst plants of the wood and field, but less uncommon in floating aquatics.'

'What is the colour?'

'White, Grace, tinged with a faint pink, and, at a distance, the blossoms have the appearance of mother-of-pearl.'

'I don't understand how plants can grow in water,' remarked Robert, 'where do the roots go?'

'They penetrate far down, into the soil at the bottom of the pond, while their stems lie horizontally along the surface of the water, and spread to a great length. The joints are furnished with hanging buds, having long stalks. These buds consist of two scales, between which the unformed leaves of the future plant lie enfolded.'

'And where do the flowers come from, mamma?'

'Several spring from one sheath, a kind of case, which bursts open lengthways, so as to allow the young flowers to escape at the right time.'

'How very curious, mamma. Now, will you tell us if this pretty plant is of any use?'

'No, Grace, it is merely ornamental—one of those plants which were created to please the eye, and thus afford an innocent and healthful source of enjoyment to mankind. I think that, as flowers embellish the rough earth, so does the contemplation of them refine and beautify the mind.'

'Mamma, is there anything more about Frog-bit which we would consider interesting?'

'Yes, it belongs to a class of plants called *Endogens* (or inward growers), which means, that they increase in

the centre of the stem by the addition of new matter within. All flower-bearing plants are divided into two great classes, namely, Exogens and Endogens.'

'What are Exogens?'

'Plants, or trees, whose stems increase in thickness by additional outer layers.'

'Yes, that is easily understood, for we can watch them increasing; but how can we judge of the inward growers?'

'Well, dear, there are many outward signs by which we may recognise Endogens. Even when they are mere seedlings there is a difference, for only one cotyledon (as the first seed leaf is termed) appears above ground, therefore they are called monocotyledonous, or single-leaved; whereas the seed of Exogens is invariably divided, and produces two young leaves, so that they are named dicotyledonous.'

'Is there any way of knowing them when they are old?' asked Robert.

'Yes; this class usually have sheaths, such as I described, when speaking of Frog-bit; and, in almost all cases, the leaves are lined, or ribbed, from the base to the point, as in lilies, or grasses. In Exogenous plants the veins run from one parallel line in the centre of the leaf to the edges, and form a kind of net-work. You may observe this in the rose, where the formation can be clearly seen.'

'Yes, and still better in skeleton leaves, which I have often found under trees.'

'Endogens remind me,' said Grace, 'of people who have God's spirit working in their hearts. Did you ever think of that, mamma?'

'I did, dear, and it is a very pretty illustration, which we can carry out in many respects; for if God's Holy Spirit be in our hearts we will grow in grace; and though the process may be slow, and not very evident to others, yet it is sure and steady. We cannot see the internal growth of Endogens, neither can we look into the hearts of our fellow-creatures, yet the hidden progress of both

is watched over by God. There are also outward manifestations in us as well as in plants, by which it may be discerned whether there is real vitality within.'

'What are the signs, mamma—not the same as in plants, surely?'

'Yes, in many respects Endogens being monocotyledons, when they first receive life, have but one leaf, which shoots upward; so the Christian has (or ought to have) but one aim, even in all things to look heavenward.'

'What more resemblances can we find?'

'When the plant is grown, and sends forth leaves, those of Endogens have one peculiar characteristic.'

'Stop,' exclaimed Robert, 'I know; the lines, or ribs, run straight along from end to end.'

'Yes, instead of the complicated network of which other leaves are composed; so, the child of God has his course distinctly placed before him, and is not involved in the meshes and perplexities to which the unbelieving and worldly are subject, but goes on "running the race that is set before him," straight to the mark.'

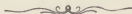
'And what do you understand by the sheath, mamma?'

'That is the most evident of all, Robert, and very pretty and comforting.'

'Yes, I think I know. It means God's care over His own people.'

'Yes, dear. The tender young buds are enveloped and guarded by the sheath until strong enough to come out and "fight the battle of life" for themselves. So are Christ's "little flock" more especially under His care. Does it not remind you of that beautiful verse, "He shall gather the lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom?"'

S. T. A. R.



THOUGHTS FOR CHILDREN.

SUPPOSE this night, while I'm asleep,
 The angel Death should call me home ;
 Am I prepared to meet my God,
 And hear my Judge pronounce my doom ?

Suppose to-morrow's dawning light
 Should find me in eternity—
 Without forgiveness for my sins,
 Oh ! what would then become of me ?

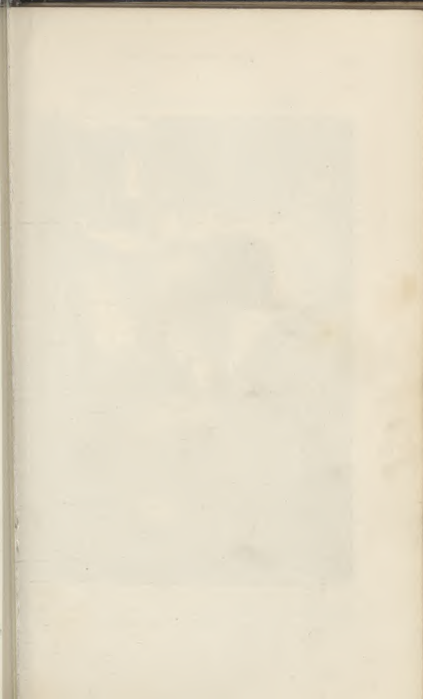
Could I meet Jesus face to face,
 And claim a seat at His right hand,
 When having spent my life in sin,
 And set at naught each just command ?

How could I part from friends so dear,
 Whom, while on earth I loved so well,
 And see them go to heaven, their home,
 While I go trembling down to hell ?

Alas ! alas ! my poor lost soul,
 Shut out from heaven, and doom'd to hell,
 Must hear that awful curse—' Depart ;'
 And in eternal torments dwell.

Lord Jesus, cleanse me from my sin—
 Oh ! come and dwell within my breast,
 Speak peace to my poor troubled soul,
 And grant my weary spirit rest.

Forgive my vile ingratitude ;
 I will no longer spurn Thy love ;
 Dear Saviour, wash me in Thy blood,
 And fit me for Thy home above.





THE 'TAVSTE' OF THE DOGS.

TRUE STORIES ABOUT DOGS.

NO. II.



MIKEY' was the first of my dogs in respect of possession after I married. She was the fattest and funniest of puppies; and came, one cold snowy morning, in a round covered basket, ten miles by the mail-gig. She was then carefully brought into my presence by 'Sandy,' the Scotch boy, who pronounced 'Mikey' not to be at all the thing for a name, the possessor of it ought to have been masculine, not feminine. However, Mikey's name stuck to her, and she was odd enough to merit an odd name.

Her mother was a pure Chinese dog, and looked so like a fox, that, one day, while paying a visit at her owner's, I sat alone in considerable discomfort for nearly a quarter of an hour, thinking that the sharp nose and sharper eyes that glared at me from under the table were really those of a veritable Reynard. Mikey grew up very like her mother; sharp nose, sharp claws, still sharper eyes, and a bushy tail, made her look very much like a fox.

She was very fond of anything sweet, and loaf-sugar was quite a weakness of hers. One day, while I was sitting writing in the dining-room, with the door open, I heard a strange noise, or rather succession of noises, at my back,—first a scratching, then a noise of something falling down, and then a subdued *crunching*. What could it be? One look round enlightened me. The tea-caddy stood on the floor under the side-board, and the sugar-basin contained in it had been over-filled, so that the lid would not quite close. Poor Mikey! the sight of the tempting morsels had proved too much for her honesty; and so, first gently pushing in one paw and then the other, followed by her sharp nose, she managed to draw out lump after lump of the tempting sweets, till

her guilty conscience made her drop the largest and sweetest lump of all, as she heard me say in an awful voice, 'Oh, Mikey, you *thief!*' Down went the sugar, down went the bushy tail, and with a look of the most abject penitence, she crawled up to my feet. I did not whip her, but laid my hand on her head, and repeating, 'Oh! Mikey, you *thief! go!*' she slunk out of the room. Never after that day would Mikey even trust herself to *look* at the tea-caddy, and if we pointed at it to her, she would wink her eyes and turn her head another way, as if she wished to banish the subject from her thoughts and our memories.

My poor favourite came to an untimely end, for having transgressed in some way, when I was from home and could not take her part, she was condemned to be shot.

Mikey's successor was brought to me all the way from Strathdon in Aberdeenshire, a district famous for a fine breed of shepherd dogs; and the way I became possessed of him was on this wise. I had expressed my wish for a real collie dog, in the hearing of an honest cottar, belonging to our parish; and one morning, being out in the garden, I saw a stout lassie coming up to the house with a large basket on her arm. On entering the kitchen, I was greeted with 'Here, mistress, my faither sent ye a "fulpie" (little whelp) a' the road fra' Strathdon.' While delivering her message, she untied the cover of her basket, and out rolled a black and tan puppy, as broad as he was long.

He was christened 'Collie,' and soon grew both in size and in favour with all in the house, especially with myself and 'old Joseph,' the minister's man, who divided his affections pretty fairly between Collie and one of my little girls. One morning, when Joseph was at his breakfast, and Collie and little Nellie were both standing beside him, I came in to give him a message, when Nellie began her old trick of pulling the poor dog's tail. Growl after growl of warning produced no effect, for the offender was *very* young; when, in an instant, after a

harder pluck than usual, the dog turned, and, before any one could interfere, he had seized the whole of her arm in his mouth. My first feeling was to pull open the dog's mouth, but old Joseph cried out, 'Na, na, mistress ! lat him be ! lat him be !'

It was a trying moment. The child's screams made me very nervous, and there stood the dog, with his large jaws holding the little fat arm as in a vice, and the long white glistening teeth showing on each side. 'Dinna move, mistress,' said the old man again ; 'Collie kens what he's doin' : he'll no' hurt her.' And old Joe was right ; Collie held fast the little arm that had been his tormentor, but when Nellie, finding that she was not hurt, became quieter, Collie gave her one very expressive look from his large brown eyes, slowly opened his jaws, and released the arm without one scratch on it. He had given her a lesson, which she never forgot, to respect his feelings with regard to his tail.

Some while after this, Collie began to be very independent in his habits, and would at times journey out on his own errands without saying where he was going. Our neighbour the parish clergyman had a large Newfoundland dog called 'Albert,' and a little Blenheim spaniel, 'Carlo ;' but, though I was acquainted with both their master and themselves, I did not suspect that the dogs were acquainted too. I soon, however, found out my mistake ; for one day an old man, who owned a croft not far off us, came up in a towering passion, demanding to see my husband, and, as he was out, he insisted on seeing me. He came with a serious charge against my collie and the minister's dogs for worrying the sheep, and demanded that my dog should be instantly shot. Though I refused to comply with this request, I referred him to Albert's master, and agreed to do as he bid in the matter. Then came out what had occasioned Collie's frequent disappearances. How they had managed is only known in 'Dogdom,' but this is a truth, that Albert and Collie held a *tryste* or meeting at the foot of

the tree you see in the picture, and then proceeded in company to hunt for rabbits or anything else that fell in their way; but being both large dogs, they could not manage to follow the rabbits into their burrows, and so



they called Carlo to their aid, whom, in spite of being very fat and somewhat lazy, they induced to help them in unearthing the rabbits. Had they only been content with rabbits, all would have been well, but, alas, like

many others, they yielded to temptation, and so got into trouble.

They were both convicted of chasing the sheep, and the foolish dogs—who, like some little folks I have seen, did not *use*, but *abuse* their liberty—suffered the penalty of wrong-doers, being condemned, in consequence, to be kept on chain during their owners' pleasure. Carlo, as he was charitably supposed to have acted under compulsion, was, after a severe reprimand, generously forgiven.

E. M.

LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

'Learn each small people's genius, policies,
The ants' republic, and the realm of bees;
How those in common all their wealth bestow,
And anarchy without confusion know.'

POPE'S 'Essay on Man.'



LET us peep into a corner of the mossy bank whereon the Fairy of the Flowers is supposed to recline, and there we shall see a solitary little creature, looking so tired that it is quite plain she has come from a distance. But she is far too busy a being to give way to feelings of fatigue, and being also an emigrant, she bustles about, as if trying to judge how far the soil upon which she has alighted may be made available as a home for the new colony which is to claim her as its foundress. Ah! Miss Formica,* to look at your neat, double-waisted figure, no one

* *Formica* (or the ant) belongs to the first family of aculeated *Hymenoptera*. The *Hymenoptera*, or ninth order of insects, have

would fancy that you could be such a strong-minded, strong-bodied little body as you really are—a perfect Amazon in fact; of so very sour a temper, that if the ladies of your acquaintance happen to vex you, they had better keep out of your way, or they will be likely to suffer from the effects of your acidity.* Now you are apparently in very good humour, trotting about with your six little legs, peering inquisitively with your sharp little eyes, and touching every object of which you have any doubt with the tips of your elbowed antennæ. Now I look at your face, I do not call it pretty; your jaws are far too short for beauty, while your spoon-shaped under lips give a very curious, and not a very pleasing, expression to your countenance. However, you are very intelligent looking, there is no denying that; and intelligence, after all, is better and more valuable than poor, fading beauty can be.

‘Ah! dear,’ said Miss Formica, ‘how charming this is; it is so delightful to be one’s own mistress, after all the trouble, too, that I have had to get away from the clutches of our strict guardians. I fancy I have managed more cleverly than my poor sisters, for I know that some of them have been caught, their wings clipped, and so kept prisoners for ever.’

‘And what are you going to do now?’ asked a voice.

‘Why, dear Instinct, don’t you know? It was you who put thoughts of emigration into my head, by whispering how nice it would be to fly off to a distance, and

generally four membranous naked wings, but among the ants only the males and females are winged. When the females are ready to become mothers they quit the neighbourhood (if not prevented by the workers or neuters) strip off their wings, and become the foundresses of distant colonies.—See Cuvier’s ‘Animal Kingdom.’

* The females and workers are provided each with a sting, or with glands in their body, which secrete a peculiar acid called Formic Acid. This acid being ejected with great force, is used by the ants as a weapon of defence, both in their encounters with other tribes of their own species, and any enemies by which they may be attacked.—See Cuvier, Kirby and Spence, etc.

there found a colony of my own ; but now I have come here, though the feeling of freedom is very pleasant, still, having been accustomed to the comforts and society of a large, well-regulated family, I must say I feel rather lonely and queer, and scarcely know how to begin to set up an establishment for myself.'

'Ah! you are young and inexperienced,' said Instinct ; 'but I have selected a partner for you, and he promised to be here directly. His name is Mr Ant, which, by the way, is merely an English version of your own, and when you are his wife and the mother of a family, you had better drop the name of Formica, and be known simply as Mrs Ant. You will have to drop something else, too, before you enter upon your new duties.'

Formica looked inquiringly.

'I allude to your wings, my dear,' continued Instinct. 'Nature, never meaning them to be a permanent adornment, has fastened them on in such a way that you will have no difficulty at all in taking them off.'

'But I like them,' pleaded Formica, as she surveyed her figure in a dew-drop. 'They look so light and becoming, I shall seem quite stout and commonplace without them.'

'But now that you are going to be a matron,' said Instinct, 'you must not think quite so much about your appearance. Of course, you must always be neat in your person, but you will have to be useful as well as ornamental ; and in your new life, which will chiefly be passed under ground, you would find such airy finery as wings quite out of keeping, and very much in your way. If Nature had meant you to continue to wear them, she would have provided you with wing-covers like those of the Beetles and Earwigs. Now here is Mr Ant. You will slip them off, my dear, won't you? There, with your feet ; just so ! Ah ! Mr Ant, how do you do? I see you are not alone. How very thoughtful of you to bring some servants to assist and wait on your young wife !'

'Take care, dear Instinct,' whispered Mr Ant; 'don't let them hear you calling them servants. They are "workers," to be sure; but in our republic we call them "neuters." I found them wandering about in search of employment, and they, rightly guessing that I was seeking for a partner, with a view to founding a colony of our own, they joined me at yonder stone; and as they have no wings, I walked with them all the way to this place, and not being accustomed to much pedestrian exercise, I confess I feel rather tired. But, Instinct, what a charming wife you have found for me—so active and neat-looking. I am sure she will make a good housekeeper.'

'I am glad that you are content,' said Instinct. 'And now that I have brought you together, I must go away for a while, for so many young creatures are waiting for my advice, that really I require to be in many directions at the same time. Now, remember you are emigrants, and emigrants must not be idle; so lose no time in clearing some land, and collecting materials wherewith to erect a suitable dwelling for your family. I have taught your servants (or neuters, as you call them), and you will find them very efficient, both as hard workers now, and faithful nurses hereafter. Adieu! I am never very far away if at any time you should need my advice.'

Young Mr Ant, who was a good deal smaller, and altogether more delicately formed than his partner, was not at all inclined to fatigue himself with any hard work; so, while Mrs Ant bustled about, assisting the workers in building, and bringing them materials, he took life very gently, and at last, as a great effort on his part, volunteered to try to procure some Ant cattle, to be kept for the benefit of the colony. With this laudable intent, he fled off to a neighbouring tree, and there managed to secure a young Ant-Cow. But I suppose his constitution was too fragile to endure the fatigue of such a journey, for it is our painful duty to relate that Mrs Ant had scarcely laid her eggs in the vaulted

chambers prepared for their reception, ere she found herself a widow ; for her partner, on his return from his foraging expedition, fell helplessly to the ground ; then (in Ant language) ejaculating the words, 'Aphis !' 'rose-tree ! sweet milk !' he folded his wings, closed his antennæ, stretched out his legs—and died. The workers, crowding round him, made a mourning for their chief, and then quickly buried him out of sight.

Mrs Ant did not long survive her spouse ; but their children, though orphans, were not neglected ; indeed, the working members of the colony (which in the Ant republics, as in the honey cities, are all females) took better care of them than any parents could have done, and it was quite touching to see those faithful nurses carefully tending their helpless charge, feeding them with the best Ant food, and the sweetest Aphis milk ;* for, acting upon the words of their dying president, they built a long gallery from their colony to the rose-bush, and thence procured a number of Aphis Cows and their young, bringing the latter away with them, and keeping them safe in underground cells, so that even in wet weather they might have a constant supply of sweet nourishment for the dear young creatures committed to their care. Nor were these faithful attendants merely satisfied with feeding their charge. They attended to their health in other respects, taking them for change out into

* It is known that the Ants are very fond of the sweet liquid which comes from the bodies of the Aphides or Plant-lice. Four or five species collect the Aphides, and save their eggs, which they keep at the bottom of their nests, especially in bad seasons. Others construct galleries of earth from their nests along the stems of branches of trees, as far as the twigs are peopled with Plant-lice. The Aphides belong to the second family of *Homopterous Hemiptera*. *Hemiptera*, or the seventh order of insects, have (among the winged individuals), two wings and two wing-covers. They have no mandibles nor maxillæ, or instruments for biting, but are furnished with a tubular tongue or sucker, so formed that it can pierce the vessels of plants and animals, and then suck the juices from them. The Aphides live only upon trees and plants, which they pierce with their proboscis, and, as they thus drain them of their nourishing

the air and sunshine, and removing them back again at the approach of night or bad weather. After a while the tiny, worm-like creatures coiled themselves up in little white silken bags, and quietly went off to sleep. Then the nurses, knowing that they had entered upon the still more helpless pupa state, instead of neglecting their unconscious charge, only redoubled their care. But, alas! poor nurses, when their young wards awoke from their sleep to find themselves in a state of maturity, some of them, instead of thanking their kind guardians, struggled and fought with the most frantic violence to escape altogether from their authority. These rebellious creatures were young ladies of rank, who, having attained their majority, probably thought it rather inconsistent that the very attendants who, on their first appearance from their cells, had assisted them in unfolding their gossamer wings, should afterwards take the strongest measures to check all soaring aspirations. Indeed, when any of them showed an inclination for flight, she found herself ruthlessly pinioned by her matter-of-fact guardians, who, resorting to personal violence, held her down, and even stripped off her wings, as a certain means of forcing her attachment to the parent colony; for the anti-emigration laws, though sometimes eluded by a few clever individuals, are enforced with the greatest strictness in all the Formican republics.

sap, are very destructive. Some of them have long horns at the end of their bodies, from which small drops of honey-like liquid continually exude. Of this liquid (known to us as honey-dew) the Ants are very fond; and naturalists of authority state, that the Ants have been seen (as it were) milking the Aphides, and eagerly consuming the sweet juices so imparted by them.—*See* Cuvier, Bennet, Trembley, Rennie, etc. In ancient times, when plants covered with honey-dew were seen to wither away, naturalists began to wonder what might be the nature of this sweet clammy poison. The learned Pliny spoke of it as the 'sweat of the heavens' and 'saliva of the stars;' but modern observers have by close study discovered that the Aphis first extracts the sweet juice with the sap from the plant, and 'then throws it back from its body in a state of the greatest purity.'

(To be continued.)

AN ICELAND ADVENTURE.



IT was the beginning of January in Iceland. The old wooden clock hanging on the wall had just struck two in the afternoon, and yet it was as dark as midnight. The old pastor's family were gathered around their warm fire, and one after another of his friendly neighbours stepped in to make a few hours' call. Three lamps, filled with whale-oil, were on the table, and you may be sure that the odour from them was not the pleasantest imaginable.

Among the young parishioners of the old pastor who called that evening, there was a bold sailor named Floko. He was a young man, not over twenty-five years of age, and yet he had a number of times made the difficult journey to Spitzbergen and to the coast of Greenland, though he had generally been in the company of his father, old Gundebrand, who had been in the habit of carrying on the whale-fishery on a small scale. The conversation in the old pastor's family turned on different subjects that evening. But it was observed that Floko, who was usually very cheerful and lively, was unusually sad. It occurred to the old pastor, at a certain time in the evening, to ask Floko what was the cause of his unusual silence.

'It is just one year ago to-day since my father went off to Greenland on a new fishing expedition,' said Floko. 'He was to be back in four months' time, but he has neither returned, nor have any of us heard from him, and I have reason to fear that he is lost. He went in company with the little colony which left here at the same time, and we have heard of disasters having befallen some members of the colony. My father was too old to go, and would not listen to my persuasion to stay at home. I fear I shall never see him again.'

Of course these remarks of Floko cast a gloom upon the company, but it is not probable that he would have made them at that time if the old pastor had not asked him the cause of his trouble. The old clock struck eight, and the company separated, each one to his own home. It was very cold out of doors, as you can well imagine, and every time the door was opened it chilled the room in a moment.

The summer following this little gathering at the old pastor's there was a sudden alarm on the coast just where he lived. The cry was: 'The icebergs with the bears!'



THE ICEBERG.

Almost every summer, when the ice up about the North Pole breaks up, there are multitudes of polar bears which have become almost starved from having so little to eat during the long, cold winter. Of course they live on the ice a great deal, and, as soon as the ice is broken up, many of them are carried off with it; and as they are so very hungry, some of them would about

as lief float along the ocean as to stay in Greenland and starve. Sometimes these icebergs, or rather great ice-cakes, float to Iceland; and, if any bears happen to be on them at that time, a great excitement takes place as soon as they are seen, for the bears no sooner reach land than they play havoc with everything they can find. At the time that I am now speaking of there was a large cake of ice floating toward the Iceland shore, and it was plain to everybody that there was something on top of it that moved. It was only one object, and yet, as the report went from one to another that the bears were coming, the number greatly increased; so the number of bears was supposed to be from seventy-five to a hundred.

The villagers gathered together their harpoons and muskets, and all kinds of iron instruments they could find, and came down towards the shore to meet the bears, for they knew that, if the bears ran wild, many persons would be killed by them.

The people stood on the shore in anxious expectation, yet no one could see more than one object. The nearer the great ice-cake floated towards the shore the clearer that object became; and, behold, instead of a bear, it was a man! When it struck the shore the man rose up, and threw the bear-skins off that were round him, and said—though he was too cold to speak almost anything—‘The happiest hour in my life!’

Floko was one of the company who had gone down to meet the bears, and what was his surprise to see that the man was none other than his own father, old Gundebrand. It is not possible to imagine the great surprise of the villagers, and the hearty reception that the old man met with. The people actually took off their own furs and heavy coats and threw them around him, and bore him in their arms to the nearest dwelling.

Poor old Gundebrand wept like a child, so glad was he to get home once more. It was several weeks before he fully recovered from the dangerous voyage he had

made ; for he had come on that great cake of ice all the way from Greenland to Iceland. There was the greatest excitement in the village, and, indeed, all over Iceland, at his return, and particularly after he related his marvellous adventures. The old pastor appointed a special meeting in the little chapel, when prayer was to be offered that Gundebrand had returned, and the old man was to state his experiences publicly.

The hour arrived for service. Everybody came from far and near, and, after hearty thanks were returned by the congregation for the remarkable preservation of Gundebrand, the old man was invited to begin his remarks. I will not attempt to tell you all that he said. Many people would have doubted the words of some persons, but they could not doubt his word, for he had never been known to tell a falsehood. He told how he, together with the little colony, reached the coast of Greenland in safety. The winter came on much sooner than usual, and their boats were caught in the ice. 'One thing after another seemed to be against us,' said he. 'During the time when our boats were frozen in, and we occupied little huts along the shore, a most violent storm arose and tore away our tents and little houses, and destroyed the whole village where we were. Some people were killed, and those that were left were well-nigh frozen to death, because all our heavy furs were taken off by the blast, and we never saw them again ; and, together with our furs, our provisions were also taken. We scarcely had anything left, and, indeed, the whole village was threatened with starvation.

'I do not know how we passed through that winter. It is impossible for me to describe its terrors. We sometimes had a little whale-meat, which was very old, and, before our troubles came on, was not considered fit to eat. Many of the colony have died, but some are still living. I confess that I would have preferred at any time to die instead of live, so great was my suffering. One day, as the pleasant weather came on again, I went

out to see my little boat that had been frozen in through the winter, and while examining it to see if it was in good condition, behold, two polar bears made their appearance, and started after me on the ice. Fortunately, I had my musket with me, but one musket was hardly enough for two bears. You know the little dog that used to follow me always? Well, that little dog was with me at the time, and he fell a victim to the starving bears. It seemed to me that death was right before me; and I suppose that, if I had not been used to running on the ice very well, or if the bears had not seen something else that attracted their attention, I would have been devoured by them. But a kind Providence preserved me, though I ran far out on the ice to get clear of them.

'Now, as I was away out beyond my boat, I heard the ice cracking, and then I felt my great danger. If it cracked where I was, I knew that I would have to go down into the cold water; and then, if it broke up and separated, it would prevent me getting to my boat or getting ashore. To add to my great trouble, the ice broke near where I was, and the great cake on which I stood separated from the rest and floated off. Then I knew that it was impossible for me to reach the land again. What to do I did not know. I had no provisions with me, no boat, no friend, and not even my little dog. I prayed to the Lord that, if it was His will, I might be yet rescued; but it seemed to me really impossible. Yet I knew that with the Lord all things are possible. I was glad to find out that there were some very thick places in the cake of ice on which I was then floating, for there were mounds here and there, or rather little hills, which indicated depth; and of course I kept near to, or on, one of the highest of these, fearing the ice might break again. By and by hunger came on, as you can well imagine, but even in this respect the Lord took care of me. I found a great many fishes frozen into the ice, and I also found birds here and there that

had fallen dead by the cold winter, and had lain there ever since. On these I have lived through my perilous voyage; and, if it had not been for the pleasant sun that I have had during the time, I would certainly have frozen to death.'

The account which old Gundebrand now concluded excited the sympathy of the people who listened to him, so that they all wept with him, and said that they had never heard of an experience like that. I will tell you one or two words that the old pastor said when he rose to speak after old Gundebrand had finished :

'Some people may call this chance, and others may call it the perseverance of our old friend Gundebrand, but I call it the preserving care of our heavenly Father, who knoweth as well how to preserve amid the dangers of a polar winter as to make the sun shine warm in the tropic regions. I trust that all of you will take this experience home to yourselves, and remember that, just as an old whale-fisher was cared for by God, and his life preserved, and himself returned here to his friends, so are you all the daily objects of God's care; and the preservation of your lives through a single day or a single hour is just as much an evidence of the goodness and care of Him who numbers the hairs of our heads, as our aged friend Gundebrand, who speaks to us to-day as one raised from the dead.'

Methodist.





THE PARTING FOR HOME.

THE FORTUNES OF THE WOODFORDS.

AN EMIGRANT STORY.

BY MRS GEORGE CUPPLES,

AUTHOR OF 'THE LITTLE CAPTAIN,' 'MISS MATTY,' ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

MAUD,' said Lily one morning, after they had all seated themselves in the parlour to sew, 'you might as well be at a boarding-school, for we scarcely get a walk with you of an evening.'

'I think,' said Helen, 'I shall get to dislike Mr Harkom. There is hardly a night this week—indeed this fortnight—that he hasn't taken you away, Maud, from us; and it is very unkind, when he knows how little we see you during the day. It is nothing but work, work, now, and no Maud to speak and walk with after the work is over. I don't want to dislike him, really, but I know I shall, if he does it any longer.'

'Not if he were to be your brother, Helen,' said Mrs Woodford, smiling at the little group; but at these words Maud suddenly snatched up her work, and was running out of the room when Mrs Woodford said, 'stay, my darling, we had better tell the children (they must know sometime), and perhaps they will not grudge you your pleasant evening walk.'

'Very well, mamma,' said Maud, blushing, 'but I must leave you to do it—I've the butter to see to;' and Maud fairly ran off this time.

The children now heard for the first time that Maud was to be married to Mr Harkom at the end of the year;

and though they were, at first, in some consternation at the idea of parting with her so soon, yet they began to be interested, and rather to delight in the notion of having a married sister with a house all to herself, where they could be invited to spend a few days, and have little tea parties besides.

'Oh! it will be such fun to go to tea at Mr Harkom's!' said Madge. 'He won't have any difficulty about pouring out the tea when Maud is there; but will he make slap-jacks and damper for us, as he says he does, and as he did for us before?'

'I should think not,' said Lily indignantly; 'of course Maud would never allow him to do work like that. It was only because he was a bachelor that he did it when we first saw him.'

'Maud can ride over often to see us, can't she, mamma,' said Helen. 'You know Mr Harkom has got another horse, and he promised to bring it over for us to try, when he had broken it in a little more. Oh! now I think of it, he must be going to give it to Maud's very own self. For he said last week, "I'm sure you will like the bay mare; there is not a handsomer in the colony, and she was just picked out for you." I wondered what he meant at the time, but *now* I understand.'

'Come, now,' said Mrs Woodford, 'you had better run after Maud, and tell her you won't dislike Mr Harkom any more. We must have a long afternoon at our sewing; and I am sure you will work all the better, if I tell you, the things we are making are for Maud's house.'

'Oh! how nice, how very jolly!' cried Madge, getting up and skipping round the room; 'how delightful to help Maud with her outfit! And shall we have a party at the wedding?—and can we get a bridescake here?—a real sugar one you know?—and shall we wear white dresses?—and go to church down to Dunedin?—and be Maud's bridesmaids?'

'Stop, stop,' cried Mrs Woodford, laughing, 'it would take a week and more to answer your questions. Be off

with you now ; we shall have plenty of time to talk of the gay doings in prospect while we are working.'

The labour of helping Maud was indeed a labour of love ; and, during the long afternoon, the needles flew out and in, as if they were sewing for dear life ; while the tongues prattled ceaselessly.—speculating and chatting about the marriage—who was to be invited, and how they were to be dressed, etc., etc. ; and they had not nearly exhausted the subject when Mr Woodford and the boys came home for the day. It was impossible to keep the little girls from repeating the delightful news to their brothers, though they imparted it at first as a secret ; and even Tim Napper and William had it whispered into their ears, 'that Maud was going to be married to Mr Harkom, and after that she would not live at the Hook any more.' They seemed to be rather glad than otherwise, to Tim Napper's great indignation, who declared that 'if Miss Maud was not to stay at the Hook any more, he wished he had never thought of being a hemigrant, that he didn't ; and he knew he'd not be able to get along without her.' He went about so listlessly for some days, that Mrs Woodford could not help noticing his melancholy countenance, and said, 'Come, Tim, what is the matter with you ; are you ill, or getting home-sick after all ?'

'No marm,' said Tim, respectfully, 'I had never a home worth the speaking on till I came here ; but what I says is, I can't get along away from Miss Maud, and if she is going to leave the Hook, I'll have to hemigrate to another part.'

'Well, Tim,' said Mrs Woodford, 'it's a good many months till that day comes, though it will pass swiftly away ; and who knows but Miss Maud will let you go with her to her new home ? You have been a good lad, Tim, and faithful to us all, and especially helpful to my dear Maud. If you wish to serve her still, neither Mr Woodford nor I will say anything against it.'

'I'd serve any one of the family, marm, most willing,'

replied Tim, drawing his arm across his eyes, 'and I'll be sorry to leave the Hook, but Miss Maud has been very kind to me, and has always shown me my duty, not to speak of the teaching me to read and write, and I'm not safe away from her, no ways; and Mr Harkom has been kind, too, and he'll mayhap not object to give me a little bit of waste ground on his section, to build a warrie nigh hand his house.'

Biddy, too, seemed inclined to give notice to leave also, for, as she said, 'how was she to turn out the butter, if Miss Maud was not there to help?' But when Maud had promised to come down occasionally on the butter days, Biddy settled down, saying, with a sigh, 'Well, it's a blessed thing I'm not thinking o' getting married yet; for shure, now, what would become of the poor mistress, if Miss Maud and I were to get married together.'

Ever after, when things did not go well with her, this was her great threat, 'that she'd have to leave, for she had a notion of getting married, and being mistress of herself.' And no amount of jokes and laughter at her, on the part of the boys, made her cease from making this deliberate statement.

Meanwhile, the small camp of Maories still continued on the Woodfords' section, and though they were tolerably quiet, and pursued their occupation of weaving baskets, to hold the potatoes and fish they sold in Dunedin, Mrs Woodford was always a little nervous about them, especially as the old chief Tyro, who had spoken of eating human flesh, was amongst them. William began to frequent their camp oftener than before, and would look as if he had been drinking overnight, so that Mr Woodford was a little uneasy about him.

One evening, a few of the neighbours came over to take tea at the Hook, and as it was a fine moonlight night, the elder boys proposed to escort them a part of the way home. Jane Dickson was on a visit to Maud, and they both agreed to go also. Mr Harkom had been expected, but had never made his appearance; and, as

Jane said, 'as he was not there to make any objection, Maud might consider her own pleasure. He is such a careful fellow,' said Jane, laughing, 'he'd be sure to object; for he has never trusted us since we lost ourselves on that memorable occasion; but with George and Dick to escort us we need fear neither man, woman, nor child.'

The little party accordingly set out in great spirits, laughing and joking with each other, as young folks do after spending a few merry hours together. The path they had chosen led close to the Maori camp. When they passed it, they noticed there were some women sitting round the fire, and the old chief was standing with his pipe in his mouth, giving his orders to the women in a loud voice, but these were quite incoherent to the party for the screaming and yelling of a great pig that was being driven to its place of security for the night. On coming closer still, they observed William sitting on one of the potato baskets, and when he saw George looking steadily at him, he tried to skulk off behind the patch of flax at his side.

'Come, come, William! no hiding! You were told not to go out to-night by the master.'

William muttered something about wishing to see his friends, but it was quite evident by his husky voice he had been drinking. Seeing this, and knowing what the man really was when so affected, it would have been wiser had George let him alone, and walked on with his friends; but George was rash and hasty in temper, and had never thoroughly trusted William from the beginning. He therefore said in a peremptory way—'Just you go home now, and let us have no more of your skulking. You've been drinking again, that's plain; and my father shall be told of it!'

They then passed on, leaving William apparently put down, as he stood with lowered head; but one of the gentlemen of the party said: 'I wish you had not spoken so hastily, George. It does no good to rouse half-

drunken men, any more than sleeping dogs—especially half-tamed savages. Besides, you ought to have remembered we had ladies with us.'

George pooh-poohed the idea of there being any occasion for caution; but both Maud and Jane Dickson said they would not go further, and expressed a wish to return by a different path. The opening to the other road was so far away, that they were compelled to keep by the one they had come, and as the girls seemed to be really nervous, both George and Dick good-naturedly walked as quietly as they could, promising that they would slip past the Maories like very cowards if such was the wish of the ladies.

The Maories were now making a great noise, and when our little party came in sight, they observed one of them, who was unmistakably William, dancing a sort of war-dance round the fire, and yelling, while he flourished a large stick over his head.

'He's getting quite mad,' said Dick, in a whisper. 'Come, girls, we must hasten on to warn my father, and get Tim in from his warrie, to help to bind him when he returns.'

At that moment, William must have caught sight of them in the waning moonlight, and giving a wild yell as only a savage throat can utter, he darted across the piece of clearing, as if intending to cut off their further progress.

'Run, girls!' cried George; 'we'll have to make a stand against the fellow!' and seeing it was the only thing they could do, they ran as fast as they could. Maud was very soon quite out of breath, and she with difficulty got Jane persuaded to run on regardless of her, to secure assistance for the two lads.

Jane being fleet of foot, and stronger than Maud, was not long of reaching the Hook, where she found Mr Woodford standing at the door, and Mr Harkom just dismounting from his horse. In a very few words, Jane made known what had happened, and when she had

promised to try to keep Mrs Woodford from being too much alarmed, Mr Harkom dashed off on horseback, leaving Mr Woodford and Tim to follow as fast as they could.

In the agitation of the moment, Jane had forgotten to mention that Maud was on her way back, and Mr Harkom thought she was with her brothers. When he came up to the Maori camp, he found William already bound hand and foot, as his condition had not enabled him to make any violent resistance. George and Dick, who had succeeded so far, were now engaged in a hand-to-hand fight with two natives, while the old chief and some of the women were looking quietly on, taking no part with either side, either stupefied by drink, or determined not to get themselves into trouble with the white-faces. At the same time, it was apparent that, in case of triumph to their own friends, they might be quite ready to take advantage of this, however barbarous and cruel.

With Mr Harkom's assistance the two men were now beaten off, and then he hastily put the question, 'Where is Maud?'

Maud had gone away with Jane, her brothers said, and would no doubt be home long ere this; but nevertheless they hastened on, leaving William lying bound where he was. Mr Woodford now appeared, but he had not met Maud on his way; and hearing this, Mr Harkom dashed his spurs into his horse and rode off at a tremendous pace back to the Hook. Maud had not returned, and Jane then told where and how she had left her. A great dread now took possession of Mr Harkom's mind—what if she had fainted, and in his hot haste he had ridden his horse over her? He tried to remember if his horse had stumbled over anything; but his brain reeled when he attempted to think, and his voice was so husky he could scarcely ask Jane for a lantern. Without replying to her question, of 'what was it he feared?' he was away once more, but at a quieter pace.

They searched for two hours, but no Maud was visible;

and though they made the woods resound with their cries, no sound was heard in reply; for even the birds had forsaken that part of the bush ever since the fire. Tim, who had been peering all round, now suddenly cried out he had found a scarf that had been dropped, and that Miss Maud must have taken the wrong turning, and wandered down to the beach. As this was very likely, they followed Tim, who professed to know this footpath, as it was not the one they usually frequented. Another cause of fear presented itself when they came to the beach. The tide was now full in, and if Maud had come this way two hours ago, she would no doubt walk along the beach thinking to reach their own path. No one liked to suggest the possibility—what if she had been overtaken by the tide? This part of the coast having high rocky banks, and the tide coming close in, there was no alternative but to return home and get the boat out, and go round by the river, if Maud was not safely housed already.

Not a word was spoken till they came within sight of the warrie, when George gave a loud shout, and looking in the direction where he pointed, there they saw the figure of a man trying to set fire to some wood at the end of the house. Mr Harkom drew out a small pocket pistol from his breast, and levelling it at him, fired. It was William that rose suddenly to his feet, and with a howl of pain sprang over the garden fence and was lost sight of in a moment.

When they tried to open the door, they heard Bidly saying, 'And is it yourself, master? Sure now, and we've had a time of it with that black varmint; ye'll just have a moment's patience now, for I've put everything that was handy against the door to keep the ugly crater out.'

There was a sound as of falling tin pots and pans, and then some heavy articles were drawn away, and the door opened. Mrs Woodford was discovered to be in a dead faint, with the children crying round her, and Jane Dick-

son bathing her face and hands, while she tried to cheer the children as well as she could. Every one glanced hastily round, but no Maud was there. Mr Woodford and Dick were now compelled to stay at home to protect the house, in case William should return, perhaps assisted by his native friends.

The boat was not long of being got out, and was pulled into the river without a word being uttered by any of the anxious men. They had not rowed far, however, from the mouth of the creek, when Mr Harkom fancied his shout was answered; and on repeating it again they distinctly heard a faint cry, which proved to come from Maud. She was discovered to be safely ensconced in a little nook up the steep bank where she had climbed out of reach of the rising tide. Mr Harkom was not long of bringing her safely down, and in a few minutes more they were all at home.

Tyro and his friends removed their camp the next day. Whether William was fatally wounded, or only slightly hurt, could not be discovered, as he did not appear at the Hook again, to the great relief of the female portion of the family.

Mr Harkom had felt so much distress at what had happened to Maud, and was so anxious lest some further evil should come out of it, that he pressed for an immediate marriage, and managed to overcome every objection. It was therefore finally settled, that the event was to take place in a month's time. There was much stir and bustle at the Hook in consequence; but every one of the neighbours lent a willing hand, and Mrs Woodford was made to promise that she would give herself no concern about the marriage breakfast, as it would be seen to by all the inhabitants of the creek.

Maud's marriage morning was as bright as a morning could well be; and the novelty of the marriage party having to go to church by boat, added to the mirth and amusement. After the ceremony was over, Maud and Mr Harkom drove round by the road in a buggy hired

for the occasion, while the rest of the party returned by water in time to receive the bride. There they found their plain wooden house turned into the gayest of marquees. The neighbours seemed to have vied with each other in sending the largest amount of eatables to the marriage feast, for the numbers of roast chickens, and the quantities of pastry of all kinds, was something wonderful to behold. The flowers, too, that had been sent from far and near, would have filled every dish and basket in the house, and served beautifully for decorating the walls, both outside and in. The little Woodfords, like all children, enjoyed this marriage beyond everything; but when the breakfast was over, and Maud had retired to her room to put on her riding-habit, the little girls began to feel that a marriage was not quite 'so jolly' as one had fancied. Maud, the good, kind daughter and sister, was going away, and could never be to them what she had been before, though her new home was scarcely fifteen miles from them. It was a great relief to every one to have Jane Dickson with them to remind them, that for their mamma's and Maud's sake they ought not to cry, nor even look melancholy. But tears did fall, even from Jane's eyes, though they were mixed with laughter from all, when Madge said:

'Oh! I am *so* glad I'm not Mr Harkom, for he must feel like a great big, naughty thief, to steal our Maud away.'

The horses were reported to be in waiting at the door, held by Tim Napper, who looked radiant in a suit of new clothes, with a bright scarlet flower in his button-hole and in his cap. He seemed to be more than happy, provokingly so, as Biddy thought; but then he was to stay with Miss Maud, which made all the difference. The good-bye was hurried over, as good-byes at marriages generally are, and with an extra long embrace from her mother, Maud was lifted to the saddle by her brother George, who laughingly claimed the privilege, and with the hearty cheers of the party she rode away.

The inmates of the Hook very soon began to realise how much they would feel Maud's absence, and as Lily said, after a week had passed, it was the longest she ever remembered. A few days after, Mr Woodford had occasion to go to Dunedin, and as the little girls seemed so thoroughly miserable, Mr Woodford told them to go a part of the way to meet him on his return. They had not gone very far, however, when Mr Woodford came riding up, and they saw at once by his manner that something had happened. They naturally fancied that it must be in connection with Maud; but their papa hastened to explain he had received letters from England which had excited him a little, but they would hear the news presently.

It turned out, that, only a few months ago, the will made by Mrs Woodford's father had been found, and the lawyer wrote to tell him that she had in reality been left an equal share of the property with her brother, and would be put in possession on her return. He urged upon Mr Woodford the necessity of coming home at once, as many papers would require to be signed, and the great distance was against a speedy settlement.

'Go home, my dear, impossible!' said Mrs Woodford. 'Think of leaving Maud alone?'

'We don't want the money, papa,' said Charley; 'we're quite happy here; we never were so jolly at home, though we had some famous days with the Mortimers, I'll own.'

'If it is only the delay, papa,' said George, 'could it not be arranged by letters? It would be a pity to go home now when we have got used to this kind of life, and like it.'

Mr Woodford said there was no alternative, it was necessary that they should go—at least, their mamma and he must; but if the elder boys would prefer to remain and take charge of the farm and stock during their absence, he had no objections to offer.

'Indeed,' said Mr Woodford, 'it would be hardly fair

to run away from the colony that has served us so well in our days of adversity. Dunedin has been good to us, and it is my duty to stand by her now, though, I must own, I should like to see my native land once more, before settling down here for good and all.'

It was finally settled that Mr and Mrs Woodford, with the two younger boys, along with Helen and Madge, should go home by the first ship sailing, and, after getting the business arranged, return to Dunedin. The money that had been left to them would enable them to have many comforts that had been denied before, and the idea of building the new house on the site long marked out for it, brought up a variety of pleasant anticipations. Mr Woodford would much rather that his eldest sons had followed out their interrupted course at college, but he knew that the life of freedom they had enjoyed of late had quite unfitted them for any other pursuit. It was arranged also that Lily should remain and keep house for her brothers. It would not be so lonely for them, or for Maud either, and the boys would not be left to the entire mercy of a servant, for Biddy, at any moment, might bring her threat into execution, and get married really.

Before the ship was ready for sailing, rumours of gold being discovered in the colony began to spread, and the very week before they left, the rumour had passed into a certainty, and hundreds of men had left their regular employments to try their fortunes at the gold field. Mr Harkom had been attacked with 'the gold fever' before, and could speak from experience of the extraordinary fascination there was about it, as well as of its hardships; and at his and their father's earnest request, George and Dick solemnly promised that they would not leave the farm for any temptation of excitement or novelty which might arise.

Though they had got accustomed to think of it as a mere passage, it was with sorrowful hearts that the whole family stood on the jetty waiting for the steamer that was

to take the voyagers to the ship outside the bar. The elder portion could not but contrast the present time with that other parting, when they were about to set out for a strange land, and had to trust to their own energies for their maintenance. They had now no fear of the future; the money left to them would place them far above the need of doing any manual labour themselves. The money had come, it was true, when they had got to learn to do without it, and had only brought trouble and separation; yet all of them felt that the separation was not to be long protracted, and that the late pleasant independent life would be resumed with increased zest, and under still more favourable circumstances, if God spared them.

There is no need to dwell upon the parting itself, nor follow the father and mother on their voyage back to 'the home country.' We can understand how bitter the trial was, even though they were strengthened by the sense of duty to their children. We would rather, if time and space permitted, have followed the fortunes of those left behind. An opportunity may be afforded at some future time to speak more minutely of Maud's joys and sorrows; of how she, by her industry and careful management, prospered in her new home; and how, by her gentleness and goodness, she became endeared to many friends and neighbours. We would like to visit Lily at the Hook, where she makes a brave young housewife, with Biddy as her right hand, who is faithful to her young mistress in spite of the numerous offers she receives from fortunate diggers, which might turn the head of a wiser than Biddy.

The Hook, with its various surroundings and stock, makes progress, and prospers under the careful stewardship of George and Dick, as well as if the eye of its master was superintending. And lastly, there is Tim Napper: whose liking for Maud, and love of being an emigrant, was not strong enough to keep down the thirst for the bright gold-dust—poor Tim!—would not his ad-

ventures and various ups and downs fill a book itself? Suffice it to say, that wherever he went, the lessons he had been taught by Maud, and the good he had gained from intercourse with the Woodfords, made him keep honest, intelligent, and well-behaved, and, in the end, he had many reasons to be thankful that his love for emigration had prompted him to become a stowaway on board the old 'Islay.'


BEAUTIFUL DEATH SCENE.



WHEN one of Martin Luther's children lay on her deathbed, the great man approached her, and said to her, 'My dear little daughter, my beloved Margaret, you would willingly remain with your earthly parents; but, if God calls you, you will go with your Heavenly Father.' 'Yes, dear father, it is as God pleases.' 'Dear little girl!' he exclaimed, 'O how I love you! The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' He then took the Bible, and read to her the passage: 'Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.' He then said, 'My daughter, enter thou into thy resting-place in peace.' She turned her eyes toward him, and said, with touching simplicity, 'Yes, father!'



LITTLE LIGHTS.



THE Lord Jesus has something for Christian children to do. What is it? To *shine*—to shine with the light of truth, with the light of purity, with the light of kindness, with the light of a loving and lowly spirit.

Jesus bids us shine
With a pure, clear light,
Like a little candle
Burning in the night.
In the world is darkness,
So we must shine—
You in your small corner,
And I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine,
First of all, for Him ;
Well He sees and knows it,
If our light is dim.
He looks down from heaven
To see us shine—
You in your small corner,
And I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine ;
Yes, for all around.
Oh, what depths of darkness
In the world are found !
There's sin, there's want, and sorrow ;
So we must shine—
You in your small corner,
And I in mine.

STORIES ABOUT QUADRUPEDS.

'Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee.'—JOB XII. 7.

NO. XII.

THE CAT.



WELL, we need not go any distance in order to see the cat; for in almost all our houses, either 'up stairs, or down stairs, or in my lady's chamber,' pussy is to be found—now basking in the sunshine, with half-closed eyes, or curled up in the winter days on the hearth-rug, purring with satisfaction.

But then that is pussy in its domesticated state.

Should we be desirous of seeing it in its native haunts, we must search for it in some of the most mountainous parts of Scotland, in the woods in the north of England, or in various parts of Ireland. When wild, the cat has been termed the 'British tiger.' It has much longer fur than the tame one, and is altogether larger and stronger. The wild cat prowls about chiefly at night in search of its prey, which is mostly birds, mice, rabbits, and young hares.

I must confess pussy is no favourite of mine; but it is generally liked, and, I dare say, many of my young readers have pet cats, whose kittens, I hope, they do not torment, as I have seen some young folks do. There are great varieties of cats; one curious kind in the north of Russia being red, with a pointed muzzle, and very long tail, whilst the Cape of Good Hope variety is blue; and the Persian cats, so often seen in our own country, have long slate-coloured fur; and, strangest of all, is the breed of cats in Cornwall and the Isle of Man without tails. It is said that white cats, with blue eyes, are always deaf, but I cannot vouch for the truth of the assertion. Pussy's hair is glossy and smooth, and she prides herself on her cleanly appearance, licking dust or dirt off her long whiskers, or her velvet paws. A friend of mine had a beautiful, very large, jet black cat, with pure white whiskers, white paws, and a patch of white on the breast, looking exactly like the front of a shirt. Pussy is certainly very useful in keeping our houses free from rats and vermin. The cat is noted for its slyness; its very name is derived from the Latin word 'catus,' which signifies a sly, crafty creature.

Many stories could be told illustrative of this trait in its character, though some ardent cat lovers say it is only crafty when ill used. Still, I would advise you not to leave the cupboard door open, into which you have put a pie or some other dainty, and then leave the room under the belief that pussy did not see you as she was lying fast asleep on the rug. Puss can sleep *with one*

eye open. The mice in the fable knew *that*, and also, that when it suits her, she can feign death, so that even when they saw her suspended from a hook, with heels up and head down, the wise mouse doubted the reality of her death, and counselled the other mice thus :

‘Ye prudent mice,
Be wise, and pay attention,
Quit not this shelf—do take advice,
This death *is all* invention.

‘Pray, do not venture down below—
To art I am no stranger ;
And whether she be dead or no,
We’re *safest out of danger.*’

As a rule, cats are not possessed of the wisdom and faithfulness of dogs ; yet there are cases in which they have been known to display both qualifications. A story is told of a handsome Angora cat, which lived in Paris, observing that whenever a certain bell rung the cook left the kitchen ; after which observation, it acquired the power of ringing the bell, and then, during the cook’s absence, made off with some unprotected delicacies. The trick was repeated from time to time, for several weeks ; but at last puss was suspected, watched, caught, and punished. A friend states as a fact, that a cat, the property of a lady residing in Edinburgh, is in the habit of ringing a bell early in the morning, in order to wake up the servants. Tortoise-shell cats are said to be the most affectionate of the whole race. One of these, called ‘Tabbie,’ was so fond of its young master that she would follow him long distances across the country, often climbing up the trees they passed in search of birds’ nests. The same cat, when deprived of her own kittens, nursed and brought up some of her master’s numerous pets, such as rabbits, squirrels, ferrets, etc. ; when they were brought to her she at once took them up in her mouth, and ever afterwards treated them as she would have done her own

offspring. Another tortoise-shell cat, belonging to a gentleman in London, knew his ring at the bell, and whenever she heard it, ran to welcome him.

Cats and dogs, though sworn enemies, often become fast friends when living in the same house, and may sometimes be seen comfortably curled up on the same rug, although, generally, the dog seems to regard pussy as very inferior to himself, and only condescends to patronise her. A young lad had a favourite cat, which he was in the habit of carrying about curled up on one of his arms, whilst on the other there sat a red and green polly. The two were great friends, and neither sought to molest the other. The pupil of the cat's eye has the power of expanding in the dark, and contracting in the light; and, I dare say, many of my readers have seen the electrical sparks which come out of pussy's hair when rubbed in the dark. Cats have a great knack of getting into wrong places, and are often found sound asleep in boxes, or beds, where they have no right to be—like the cat of which the poet Cowper wrote, who, finding a drawer open, lined with the softest linen, stepped in:

'And with delight beyond expression,
Surveyed the scene, and took possession.'

After a while,

'Puss left the cares of life behind,
And slept as she would sleep her last,
When in came, housewifely inclined,
The chambermaid, and shut it fast.'

Puss only awoke in the middle of the night to find out her mistake in supposing that the drawer was designed for her use. Great was her master's wonderment, when in the night he heard an inexplicable scratching:

'His noble heart went pit-a-pat,
And to himself he said, "What's that!"
At length he heard a voice which well he knew,
A long and melancholy mew;'

and having opened the drawer, when forth skipped the cat.

Cats are not mentioned in Scripture ; but in Egypt they must have been well known, as their figures are sculptured on monuments of the Pharaohs.

There are many more anecdotes could be written of cats, showing both the good and bad sides of their characters. But time presses, and so, hoping that none of the young folks who read the 'Children's Hour' will ever merit the appellation of being as sly as a puss, we will leave the cat to catch mice and scare the rats, only trusting they will not touch 'Dickey' in his gilded cage, even though

'It's strong temptation to a cat,
Who *much* prefers it to a rat.'

M. H.

I DON'T KNOW.

6



ABEL, dear,' said Mrs Lewis to her little niece who was visiting her ; 'Mabel, dear, would you like to go into the library with me and look at some engravings ?'

'I don't know,' said Mabel, listlessly.

Mrs Lewis resumed her sewing. About a quarter of an hour afterwards, seeing that Mabel was still unemployed and restless, she asked her if she would like to go and meet her cousin Esther, who was probably on her way from school ; to which she replied, as before, 'I don't know.'

Mrs Lewis laid down her work and called Mabel to her.

'Now, Mabel,' she said, putting her arm around her, and speaking earnestly, 'Now, Mabel, it cannot be that you "don't know" your own thoughts and feelings and wishes, or the reason for things, or what has happened, as often as you say so. This habit of expression, my

dear, is not only indolent, but untruthful and unkind. Now, stop and think. Are you sure you do not know whether you would like to see the engravings or not?'

Mabel thought, and then replied: 'I *do* know that I *do not want to see them again*. Uncie showed me all the engravings yesterday.'

'Well, what about going to meet Esther?'

'I do not want to go, because she always has some of her school-girls with her, and they all are strangers to me.'

'Now you have spoken directly, clearly, truthfully; and your answers, being straightforward, have pleased me, and you therefore have been kind to me, who, indeed, in asking them, sought only your own pleasure. And, as I am now sure that you do not wish to see the engravings nor seek Esther, I will give you permission to examine [that nest of boxes you so wanted to handle yesterday. Do you wish to have them?'

'I do.'

'Well, you may; but do, my dear, try to overcome the habit of saying "I don't know," which, although you may be inclined to call a small fault, has that power over the character that small insects have over plants—of taking from their strength and beauty.'

Agatha Ernest.

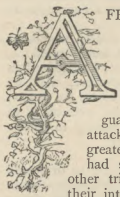


LIFE AMONG THE FLOWERS.

BY MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE,

AUTHOR OF 'DOWN AMONG THE WATERWEEDS,' 'THE SUNBEAM'S STORY,' ETC.

CHAPTER VII.



FEW days after a contest had taken place between the young lady Ants and their nurses, in which a few of the former had escaped, while many were reduced to a state of submission, the sentinels or scouts, whose business consisted chiefly in guarding the colony from all sudden attacks of enemies, came running, in the greatest excitement, to announce that they had seen a dark-looking stranger of another tribe prowling about, and inspecting their intrenchments in a manner that, to say the least, was highly suspicious. Of course, this news created some alarm in the republic. A council of war was convened; but as the members differed, nothing final was agreed upon, so things were allowed to go on as before. By and by the excitement passed away, until one hot summer day, when the peace of the colony was again disturbed by the very unwelcome appearance of an army marching in a direct line for the citadel of the Red Skins, while the scouts recognised in the Captain* of the invaders the same dark stranger whom they had seen prowling about some little time before. Very soon

* M. Cuvier says: Different nests have exhibited to me neuter individuals (few in number) having much larger heads than the ordinary neuters. M. Lacordaire assures me that the individuals of this kind are the defenders of the society, and appear to perform the duty of captains in their excursions.—See Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom.'

the peaceful colonists had reason to know the cause of this unwarrantable invasion; and as you may wish to hear all about it, I shall try and relate the history of this sanguinary affair, even as the Fairy of the Flowers told it to me.

You must first understand that the dark-complexioned Captain belonged to a hostile tribe of Ant Amazons, known among the human race as the Pismires, or 'Ants of the woods and hills.' Pismires* being black, might be supposed to hold strong anti-slavery opinions; but, unfortunately, this is not the case, for they not only patronise the slave-trade, but they are some of the most extensive slave-owners† in the world, while their deeds of rapine and cruelty are enough to draw tears from the gentle muse as she records these pages of Formican history.

Upon the occasion of which we are telling, the invaders, coming suddenly upon a peaceful colony, engaged in all the avocations of quiet domestic life, may have promised themselves a very easy victory; but though the Red Skins, taken by surprise, were at first thrown into a state of confusion, they soon marshalled their forces, and going boldly out to meet the enemy, made a desperate fight for their lives, and the liberties of their children. But, alas! for them, they were in the end obliged to yield to their more powerful conquerors, and amidst the general carnage that ensued, the latter, rushing into the

* The most warlike of the Ant tribes is (according to Hüber) the Wood Ant (*Formica fusca*), our largest British species.

† The wars among the Ant tribes were in early ages made a subject of observation by naturalists. An Ant-battle, fought during the pontificate of Eugenius IV., was observed and recorded by Æneas Sylvius, who was afterwards Pope himself, as Pius II. But though it was known centuries ago that Ants made war, it remained for Hüber's close observation to discover their constant practice of making slaves—which accounts for the fact that two different species are often to be found living in the same nest. The Amazon Ants that make war are neuters, and they seize by violence the neuters of another tribe.—See 'Episodes of Insect Life.'

vaulted chambers of the palace, bore off the unconscious Ant infants, to be carried away* by them to their own republic, and there brought up as slaves.

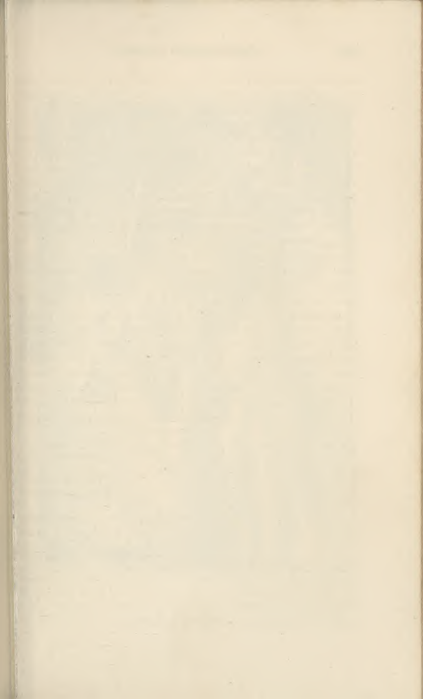
However, it is only fair to add, that inasmuch as the Arab masters among the human species are said to be very kind and gentle to their slaves, so the pigmy Red Skins have no cause to complain of the treatment received by them from their captors, who feed and tend them with the same amount of care that they bestow upon the young of their own tribe; in fact, they give them everything conducive to the comfort of Ant life—always excepting their precious liberty.

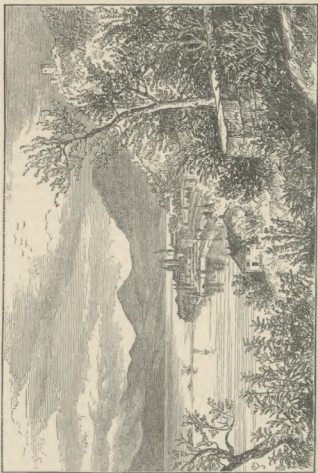
As for the conquerors, we are not to suppose that they achieved a bloodless victory. Many of them were slain; many others quite cut to pieces by their fierce opponents; † a few perished under the heavy discharge of that Ant-artillery, known as Formic Acid; while some, though sound in life and limb, carried away fearful mementos of the fight, by finding themselves unwillingly adorned, not, indeed, with the scalp, but with the ghastly head of a desperate foe, whose grim eyes, fierce even in death, and double-locked jaws, ‡ that in death, as in life, refuse to loose their hold, cling with cruel tenacity to the living body, ay, and will so cling to it so long as that body has life!

* The larvæ or pupæ thus stolen are then taken to the nest, tended with the greatest care by other neuter slave Ants of the same species, which have been previously stolen in a similar manner, and which also take charge of the young of the Amazon conquerors.—See Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom.'

† These creatures will fight to the last in defence of their young. 'A worker Ant, severed in two, has been observed with its upper half to carry to the nest no less than ten of the pupæ or larvæ.'

‡ The jaws of the Neuter Ants are (in proportion to the creature's size) remarkably strong, and (like those of a bull-dog) often become so locked, that they cannot be loosened, and so the head of the conquered Ant may often be seen hanging to the leg or antennæ of the conqueror.—See 'Episodes of Insect Life.'





THE LAKE OF COMO.

SKETCHES OF ITALIAN SCENERY.

THE SPLÜGEN.

BY THE REV. J. THOMSON, PAISLEY.



ON Thursday the 13th June 1867, we returned from Venice to Milan by the way we had come. We broke our journey, however, at Verona, and remained there several hours to see that ancient city and its splendid Roman amphitheatre. The latter resembles the Coliseum at Rome, but it has been much less injured by the ravages of time. It was constructed in the first century of the Christian era, about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; and it is capable of seating 50,000 persons. We found all the rows of stone seats in the amphitheatre almost as entire as in the days when the gladiators fought, and when the wild beasts were let loose upon the persecuted Christians, for the amusement of that 'classical' but barbarous age.

In the evening, as we passed rapidly through the plains of Lombardy, with the Alps on our right, we saw a magnificent spectacle—a thunderstorm on the mountains. We were too distant from the scene to hear the thunder; but the brilliant flashes of lightning following in rapid succession, and making their rugged and snowy summits visible in the deep darkness, exhibited a scene of awful sublimity and grandeur.

On Friday the 14th, we set off from Milan for Lake Como, of which an excellent view is given in the engraving. This lake is in many respects the finest of any we had yet seen. Its steep and lofty banks, clothed with the richness of an almost tropical vegetation, its sur-

rounding mountains, and its clear waters reflecting the brightness of an Italian sky, presented a scene of exquisite beauty. The lake is about 40 miles in length, and it is about 700 feet above the level of the sea. As we advanced in the steamer, our course of more than twenty miles presented us with an endless variety of rich and beautiful scenery, such as can rarely be witnessed.

At length we reached Colico, at the northern extremity of the lake, where we found the Diligence ready to carry us over the Splügen. This is one of the highest of the Alpine passes, being nearly 7000 feet above the level of the sea, or about double the height of the loftiest of our British mountains. The road through this celebrated pass was constructed by the Austrians about forty years ago, to retain their hold of Northern Italy. Previously there had been only a bridle-path over the mountains, so that when the French army, under Marshal Macdonald, marched across in November 1800, the frequent avalanches of snow swept away numbers of men and horses into the abysses below. But now the road is broad and smooth, though often steep; and the numerous covered galleries, built of stone or hewn out of the rock, one of which is 1530 feet, or more than a quarter of a mile in length, render travelling comparatively safe, except in the depth of winter.

We reached Chiavenna about eleven o'clock at night, and then came the tug of war and the toil of ascent. Of this, however, we were entirely unconscious, as 'kind nature's sweet restorer' spread his genial influence over us for many hours. Though, of course, it was now dark, yet the moon was shining brightly; and it would have been interesting to view the scenery of the Alps by her pale and silvery light. That part of the journey, however, must remain an utter blank, and our readers must draw upon their imagination for a description of it.

At length, about five o'clock on Saturday morning, I awoke to find myself seated all alone in the Diligence, as all my travelling companions had become pedestrians, in

order to lighten the lumbering vehicle, as well as to exercise their limbs in the cold morning. There was certainly a great change of temperature from that of the previous day on the sunny plains of Italy; and a walk was obviously indispensable to remove the sensation of cold. On reaching the ground and surveying the scene now presented, one could not help admiring its stern sublimity, and wild and rugged magnificence. Far above, lofty mountains covered with snow frowned upon us; while down below there were deep ravines, through which silver streams, like white threads, were flowing rapidly. Leaving the road, we walked up and over grassy meads, brilliant with all kinds of wild flowers, which were nearly as numerous as the blades of grass. We went also through *holes* in the rocks, and vast stone galleries, like cannon batteries, with port-holes for air and light; and under their kindly shelter we had no cause to dread a descending avalanche.

At last we reached the highest part of the pass, which is about 600 feet higher than that of the Simplon. Here is the boundary between Italy and Switzerland, the distance being about thirty-six miles from Colico on the south, and from Coire on the north forty-one miles. Now, however, our slow, snail-like upward movement was to give place to a rapid downward movement. No sooner were our fine fresh horses yoked to the Diligence than off we went at a brisk trot; and the wonder was how the charioteer contrived to keep the whole apparatus, with its living freight, from being tossed into the deep abyss below. Soon after commencing our descent, we came to a place on the side of the mountain where the road turns and winds about fifteen times, and where these *zig-zags* are close and almost parallel to each other. As we approached each turn, I expected that our driver would draw rein and walk at leisure. But he never stopped for a moment. On he went, trotting every step, where a false movement would have sent us all down 1000 feet or more; but he managed with wonderful dex-

terity. At these turning points in the road the horses before me seemed to perform three parts of a circle round the Diligence, and when they had wheeled round about, forward and downward they went as steadily and surely as before. I had never seen anything like this. At first, one almost unconsciously grasps hold of the seat, and with suspended breath wonders how he is to pass that turn, and where he is to land. Soon, however, he learns to have perfect confidence in the driver's skill, and fear departs. Now, what is this but *faith*?—faith confirmed by experience, and strengthened by exercise. Why should we not have similar faith in that unerring Guide and Shepherd, who leads His people like a flock, over mountains of difficulty and through depths of trial? 'He will guide them by his counsel, and afterward receive them to glory.' If, then, we are under His sure guidance and safe protection, no evil can befall us; for He says, 'My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.'

In passing down this steep and tortuous descent, and especially in looking up from the bottom to retrace our perilous path, the thought occurred for a moment—'This, surely, must be the "Via Mala," the bad way, so well known, and so much dreaded.' That, however, I soon remembered, is much farther down; and I wondered whether it could be even worse than that which we had just passed. About eight o'clock in the morning we reached the village of Splügen, where one of the branches of the Rhine flows, which is here a considerable stream, though not very broad. After breakfasting there, we again resumed our downward journey, and soon reached the true 'Via Mala,' down which we trotted as before. But the turns were not so sharp and sudden as those we had just passed. Still, the whole scene was very strange and grand. We literally went *through* the very rocks, which were from 1000 to 2000 feet right above our heads; and we crossed three magnificent bridges over the Rhine, one of which is 300 feet above the water; while the lofty

overhanging precipices, on one side of the river, almost touch those on the other. The space between the two is often not more than ten yards, and the sudden transition from the glare of sunshine to the gloom of these deep chasms, so narrow that only a strip of sky is visible above, was inexpressibly striking and sublime. The Rhine was on our right hand, far down in the deep gorge below, boiling and foaming in a channel which one could almost leap across. And then the cold mists, which were now beginning to gather in the northern sides of the mountains, enhanced the stern grandeur and mystery of the scene. No wonder that the exclamation burst from many lips, 'We never saw anything like this!' And yet, as we careered down the 'Via Mala,' two of our younger fellow-passengers were stuck upon the top of the Diligence, and above the mass of luggage on the roof, holding by the ropes and rails, while their feet were dangling over the precipices and the torrent beneath! Such a dangerous experiment can only be safely tried by those who are able to keep a steady head and a firm grasp.

On reaching Coire, we proceeded on our journey by rail to the Lake of *Constance*, which is a fine sheet of water, but scarcely equal in beauty to some of our Scottish lakes. In that celebrated town we spent the Sabbath, 'resting according to the commandment.' During the whole day we had heavy showers of rain, and cold, biting blasts. The visitors seemed to be very few, and the place has few attractions for them. It was here that John Huss, the great Reformer, was burned in 1415, by the Council of Constance, with the Pope at the head of it. His martyrdom seems to have extinguished the true religion there, for the people are 'wholly given to idolatry.'

In concluding these rapid sketches of Swiss and Italian scenery, I would express the hope that many of my readers may soon be able to go and see for themselves; and that when they do so, they may have as much pleasure as I

had in visiting these lands, and as I now have in the retrospect. Such visits to the Continent, if rightly improved, tend to keep our intellectual and moral being alive and healthy, to enlarge our views, to quicken our sympathies, and to rouse our energies in labours of love for those who dwell in lands 'where Satan's seat is,' and whence the cry is continually wafted to our sluggish ears, 'Come over and help us!' And now that the whole Continent, with the single exception of Rome, is open to the Gospel, surely the Churches of Britain should strive to enter in by that 'wide and effectual door,' and pray that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, in the healing of the nations.

WISHING FOR GRANDFATHER'S EYES.



EVER was little Myra better pleased than when going a walk with her grandfather; for he was so kind and gentle, and talked to her about the things they saw in so pleasant and cheerful a manner, that it was quite a treat to her.

If they saw any ants at work, 'Oh! oh!' he would say, 'what makes you so busy, when none of you have any rent or tax to pay? But I see how it is: you are at work for one another. Remember, Myra, we must not be idle; for when we have nothing to do for ourselves, we may always help other people.'

If they saw a bee winging his way from flower to flower, he was almost sure to speak of it. 'Well, Mr Buzzabout, will you tell us what you are doing? But we understand it very well, and will learn a lesson from you. Mind, Myra, that, as the bees get honey from every flower, you and I get good from everything.'

In this way Myra used to be entertained by her grand-

father, who likened her to a fresh bud that would soon burst into a flower, and himself to a faded leaf which was almost ready to fall from the tree.

One day, after Myra had a pleasant walk with her grandfather, she sat down to do a little sewing with her mother, and then they talked together in the following manner :

'I wish I had grandfather's eyes, mother.'

'Do you, dear? I hardly think that he could spare them. But what can you possibly want with the eyes of your grandfather, Myra?'

'Oh! if I had his eyes, I should see all that he sees when we are walking together; but now I cannot see half so much as he does.'

'No! that is very strange, when you are young and he is old. He often says that his sight is not what it used to be; and then, you know, though the Bible is in large print, he is obliged to use spectacles.'

'Yes, mother, but for all that he can see more than I can.'

'Tell me what you mean, love, for I cannot at all understand you.'

'Why, when we walk out in the fields and lanes, let us look at what we will, he says he sees God's goodness in everything.'

'Ah! Myra, it is not grandfather's eyes, but grandfather's faith that you want. Pray to God to open the eyes of your understanding, to give you a heart to love and trust Him, and you will then see Him, not only in all the works of His hand, but in all the events of life.'

Methodist.



SONG OF THE MOUNTAIN FAIRY.

I'M a little fairy thing,
 I am always on the wing,
 Playing away till the dawn of the day.
 I always shun the town,
 But I love the thistle-down :
 On it I am borne by the wind away.

I've a queen, and I've a king,
 And we're ever on the wing
 In soft summer nights, till the break of day.
 We shun the noisy town,
 But we seek the mountain brown :
 In the heather-bells we hide all the day.

Then at night we venture out
 All together with a shout.
 On the green bank by the streamlet we play ;
 There we dance, and there we sing,
 All around our fairy ring :
 In the blue hare-bells we hide all the day.

Now, dear little children all,
 Fairies love you great and small,
 And wish that you could come with us to play ;
 But at night you're fast asleep,
 So we'll through your windows peep,
 And fly off at the dawning of the day.

MONA B. BICKERSTAFFE.

A MAN FRIGHTENED BY HIMSELF.



YOU will find few people now-a-days who are silly enough to believe in ghosts; but fifty years ago it was a very different matter, especially in the wilder parts of England; and it was in one of these out-of-the-way places that two men were sitting one night beside a cosy fire in the little village inn. And by-and-by (whether it was that they thought it pleasant to talk of terrible things while they were safe in that comfortable room, or that the howling of the wind outside put it into their minds) they began to talk about ghosts. One of the two who had just eaten a good dinner, washed down with several tumblers of good strong beer, felt very brave after it, and cried out, snapping his fingers, that he didn't care a straw for all the ghosts in the world. The other only laughed at him, and said he wouldn't be quite so brave when it came to the proof; and so they went on, the one boasting, and the other making fun of him, till at length the first man began to get angry.

'It's all very well for you to laugh,' said he, 'but laughing breaks no bones. Now, I'll just tell you what! I'll go through the churchyard at twelve o'clock to-night (it's just eleven now), and come out on the other side without being frightened a bit; I'll give you ten shillings if I don't.'

'And I'll give you ten shillings if you do,' said the other, 'and there's my hand on it.'

They shook hands accordingly, and the second man continued, 'Now, I'll tell you what you must do to show that you have really been there. Take three of these knives in your hand, and stick one of them in the ground at the place where you go in, another beside the monument in the middle of the churchyard, and the third by the little green gate on the other side. I'll be there to see you come out, and then it will be all right.'

The other agreed, and when it began to get near twelve o'clock, he got up, took the three knives in his hand, and marched boldly out of the house, and away along the long, lonely road that led to the churchyard. He whistled loudly as he went to keep up his courage; for now that he was away from the bright, warm fire, and out on the bare, dreary road, with the wind moaning dismally through the trees, and the half-clouded moon making everything look weird and shadowy, he began to feel rather low-spirited. However, he went steadily on till he came to the churchyard, and stuck his first knife courageously enough. But as he got farther in, everything looked so lonely and desolate that he began to feel very much frightened, and his hand trembled so much that he could hardly stick the second knife at all. As he did so, the clock in the steeple struck twelve, and the deep hollow sound startled him so much that he fairly jumped, and hurried off as fast as his trembling limbs would let him, towards the little gate on the other side. Just as he got within a few yards of it, an old owl perched on a tree above his head, gave such a frightful scream that he lost all self-control, struck the knife be-

hind him without looking where it went, and tried to run away—when, lo! he found himself seized and held fast, as if by some invisible hand. He struggled, and screamed, and called for help—but all in vain; and at last, out of sheer fright, he fell to the ground and fainted away.

Meanwhile his friend, who was waiting for him outside the gate, as they had agreed, got rather uneasy at hearing these fearful cries, followed by a dead silence, and thinking that something must have gone wrong, he ran into the churchyard to help his companion. Finding him lying senseless, he tried to lift him up, and then found that the poor man had run his knife through *the tail of his own coat*, and thus pinned himself to the ground, like a butterfly on a cork.

The worst frights, you see, are those which men give to themselves; but if we trust in God, we need be afraid of nothing.

D. K.

WILD FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN.

NO. VI.—PARNASSIA PALUSTRIS.



O, mamma, please wait a few minutes until we gather more of this lovely flower.'

'Indeed, Grace, I think you have got a very large bunch already. What do you want with such a quantity?'

'Oh! to fill all the flower-stands in the house. Really, mamma, I cannot stop gathering it, for every blossom I meet seems finer than the last!'

'But you will wet yourself, my dear. Remember you are walking through a marsh.'

'Oh, no! only on the edge—Robert, indeed, has gone very far in.'

'Well, come back now, dear, for it is time to return home; and on the way we can examine and talk of this flower which you admire so much.'

Grace was soon at her mother's side, laden with a huge bouquet; and Robert overtook them presently, exclaiming, 'Now please, mamma, tell us the name of this plant, for we did not take time to ask you before.'

'It is called "*Parnassia palustris*," or common grass of Parnassus.'

'Do you mean,' said Robert, 'that this is the kind of grass which grows on Mount Parnassus?'

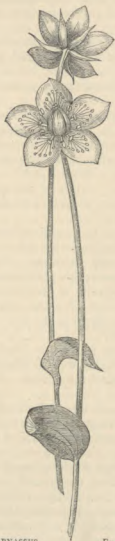
'No, no, Robert,' said his mother, smiling; 'it has gained the name only on account of its extreme beauty, which is supposed to render it worthy of being the favourite flower of the Muses. Indeed, we cannot wonder that so chaste and elegant a blossom should be considered fit to grace any spot, however well-known to fame; but, in reality, travellers do not even mention it as amongst the flowers of Mount Parnassus, nor is it at all likely to flourish on that classic mound, being a bog-plant, usually found in low, marshy situations.'

'I don't see that it is the least like grass, mamma,' observed Grace.

'No, it bears no resemblance whatever to true grasses with their hollow jointed stems, and green flowers, and I can give you no reason for its being so called, except that it was erroneously supposed to be as common as the grass itself on Mount Parnassus. We must also remember that the term grass was used in a much wider sense in ancient times. The lilies of the field are alluded to by our translators of the New Testament, as the "grass, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven."'

'Does this beautiful flower grow in other countries?' asked Robert.

'Oh, yes! it is common on spongy bogs in most parts of Europe, and is very abundant in Scotland and Ireland; also in Wales, and the north of England, where it blossoms luxuriantly, during the months of August,



GRASS OF PARNASSUS.

Favonissa palustris.

September, and October. A smaller species has been found in Russia, and on the borders of Lapland, in full blow in July.'

'Has this plant any useful properties?'

'In former days it was considered a remedy for many diseases, and, in consequence, called the Noble Liverwort; but I do not know that it is used for any medicinal purpose at present.'

'Would you say it was a white flower, mamma?'

'No, Grace, it is cream-coloured, and beautifully veined with a darker shade. The corolla has five petals.'

'But, mamma, I observe something very curious and pretty on each petal. What is it?'

'A nectary, Grace. That is the great peculiarity of the grass of Parnassus, as well as its chief beauty.'

'What is a nectary?'

'It is that part of the flower which contains honey, and is sometimes hidden in the calyx, sometimes in the tube of the corolla, and in other cases is distinct from either. The nectaries in this plant are arranged opposite each petal, and consist of fan-shaped fleshy scales, fringed with a number of white hairs, having each a transparent wax-like gland at the tip.'

'What are glands?'

'Small soft globes which are filled with liquid; you can see them remarkably well in this flower, where they form a very ornamental termination to the fringe of the nectary.'

'How like the leaves are to those of a violet, mamma; except that they have much longer stalks. Stay! here is one without any, growing right out of the flower-stem.'

'Yes, Robert, the leaves are cordate, or heart-shaped, and not nearly so high as the flowers, which are usually six or eight inches from the ground; the stem is angular, and here and there clasped by a leaf.'

'I see several such odd-looking little leaves without any stalks. It is really a very curious and interesting plant, now that we know something about it. Are the

bees particularly fond of it, because the nectaries are so easily got at?’


‘I do not know that they are, Grace. There are no flowers that secret their honey well enough to puzzle the bees, who are sure to find the hidden treasure, and load themselves with spoil.’

‘So, you see, mamma, there’s no use in trying to conceal precious things. It is better to be open and generous like the grass of Parnassus, and willing to contribute our portion to the general good.’

‘Yes, Grace. Let us take example by this beautiful plant, which adorns the rough, uncultivated bog, and strive to benefit our fellow-creatures. Let us have God’s “Word hidden in our hearts,” esteeming it “sweeter than honey, and the honey-comb;” and, at the same time, be ready to share our heavenly treasure with those by whom we are surrounded, so that, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, we may feel the happiness of being in any small degree the means of brightening and sweetening the lives of others.’

S. T. A. R.

THE HOME OF THE WILD DEER.



I WONDER if there’s anybody in the world who does not like a holiday!’

So *thought*, but did not *say*, little Robert Moore, as he sat looking out of the open window one bright morning in the first week of September.

‘Papa,’ said Robert, as his father entered the room, ‘what do you think Smythe said to me to-day? That he never heard anything so stupid as for me to have lived eleven years in the Highlands, and never have seen a live deer!’

'Well, Robin, perhaps in a little you can tell him another tale. What do you say to coming with me next week for a peep at the Home of the Wild Deer?'

'Oh, papa! that *will* be jolly! *How* shall we go? *When* shall we start?'

'Well, I should like to leave this on Monday morning, as soon as we have got breakfast; and we will take the dog-cart and Old Lovey, and also take our own time to it.'

Poor Robin! He was in such excitement at the thought of this excursion, that I fear it unsettled his thoughts on Sunday, and he was very anxious to go to bed early, that he might not oversleep himself.

No fear of that! Had there been any one astir on Monday morning before the rooks, they might have seen a little face and a pair of keen eyes peering out at the grey dawning of the day; and when at last the nurse came to wake him, she found him fast asleep outside the bed, with 'one sock off and one sock on,' and a Deeside Guide-Book under his head.

It was a lovely morning; and, as Robin watched the small portmanteau stowed away under the seat of the dog-cart, and the wraps pushed in, he could hardly keep from jumping for joy.

'Now then, Robin! jump up, my man! or you'll be left behind!' said papa; and in a minute Robin was perched beside his father, with a nice fur wrap round his knees. Even Lovey seemed to enter into the scheme with some understanding of it, for she arched her neck, and stepped out with spirit, and evidently was disposed to put her best foot foremost. The air had that peculiar crisp freshness of the early autumn, the foliage was in all its beauty, no signs of decay had yet marred its loveliness, only here and there the gorgeous gold, crimson, and russet tints showed that brown Autumn's hand was already stretched out to claim the glory of the woods as his own. The air was filled with sweet scents and sounds, and as the scenery varied from the pretty villa with its

flower-beds and lawns, to the wild pine-woods, with all their solemn grandeur, Robin's delight knew no bounds; and it was only when poor Lovey showed signs of weariness, that he could be persuaded to confess himself hungry, though he did full justice to the cold beef and cheese, while poor Lovey was munching her crushed corn. The twilight was fast deepening into night as they reached the house of the friend who was to give them food for man and beast.

Early the next morning, the three were on their road. Lovey was growing stiff and old, and she began to droop her head, and seek the turnings off the road as often as she spied them.

'We'll stop here, Robin,' said Mr Moore, 'and rest old Lovey, and you and I will go and see Gilderoy's cave.'

'What! was he a *real* robber, papa? Oh! how fine!'

The little inn was not inviting; so, stabling the old mare, Robin and his father, directed by the grinning stable-boy, proceeded through a birch-wood to the famous 'Burn of the Vat.' I don't think there are many little Scotch laddies and lasses who have not smelt that sweetest of all perfumes, the scent of a birchen-wood. The dew of early autumn lay in spangles on grass and spray, and the graceful branches drooped over their heads, and here and there a noble pine towered high over them, while the late bees were humming over the heather blooms, and many a bright-eyed rabbit peeped at them, and then scuttled away into its burrow. On they went till the trees dwindled away till they were mere shrubs, while the country spread out wild and bare before them for many a mile; while flocks of sheep were dotted over the hill-sides, with their faithful collies lying in watch by their masters' side.

'Is it *very* much further, papa?' said poor Robin, whose legs began to ache somewhat, and whose face was scorched by the blazing sunbeams which poured

down on the travellers as they toiled along the dusty road. At last they began a gradual ascent; and, after half-an-hour's climb, found themselves looking *down* into the 'Vat' from the top. The sides caved inwards so as to make it somewhat perilous to go too near, and one solitary tree waved its boughs over the freebooter's refuge.

'Well, now, Robin, here's a sad fix. We are all wrong; for, instead of coming *up* here, we should have gone *down* along that footpath beside the burn.'

'Oh, papa!' said poor Robin, '*must* we go back *all* the three miles again?'

'No, no, Robin; I think we'll manage it better than that—so come on along this braeside.'

A few hundred yards further the brae sloped down to the side of the burn which flowed through the cave; but Robin, who had been too excited to eat much breakfast before starting, was quite sick and giddy, declared he could *not* go down such a steep place.

'Well,' said his father, 'I know how we'll manage it; sit down, and take my stick in your hand, and *slide* down.'

No sooner said than done. Started by a gentle push from his father, Robin began his descent; and at length arrived, though somewhat in a dishevelled condition, at the foot, where the 'burnie wimpled' through soft green banks of emerald grass. Robin took a long drink from the fresh, cool water, washed his dusty face and hands, and then started for the cave. A large triangular stone blocks up and conceals the entrance to this pretty cave, and having squeezed through, they found themselves in a large, round cavern, the rocky sides overhanging so far as to leave only a small space open to the sky. The ground was carpeted with short, mossy turf of the most lovely green, while the burn ran through the centre; and here, the country people say, the 'Winsome Gilderoy' used to hide when the pursuit was hottest. Robin sat down, while his father repeated the Ballad of Gilderoy;

and then, rested and cooled, they retraced their steps to the little inn.

‘But, papa, we have never seen a wild deer yet, have we?’

‘Have patience, Robin, and I don’t despair of seeing one, or perhaps a herd, to-morrow.’

‘Oh! I *hope* we will! They must be so pretty in their own woods!’

That night they reached a fine farm on the borders of a large wood. After supper, as the moon was shining bright as day, their kind host proposed a stroll in the garden; and just as they reached the foot of the path which led into the field beyond, Mr Fraser held up his hand and made a sign for them to look towards the wood. At first Robin saw nothing but what seemed a dark line of shadow thrown by the trees on the grass; but presently it wavered, and, breaking up into patches, became transformed, in the silvery moonbeams, from shadowy forms into a herd of about twenty or thirty roe-deer. Their leader or sentinel advanced cautiously first; and, lifting his fine antlered head, he seemed to be spying out the land. Fortunately, the night was very still; and as the wind blew from *them* to the watchers, they suspected not how closely they were watched, and, following the leader, they began to browse most contentedly on the fine grass which was being carefully kept for the cows. Kind Mr Fraser took this spoiling of his goods with great patience and forbearance, knowing how pleased Robin was with seeing the pretty animals so close; but when a summons to come to the house for supper made it necessary to go in, he said, ‘Now, Robin, give your hands a loud clap, and you’ll see a scamper!’ Two claps of the hand and a shout from Robin, and the whole herd vanished like the ‘baseless fabric of a vision,’ but in *this* case they *did* leave a wreck behind, for next morning, when Robin looked at the place, he was astonished to see large patches of the juicy clover eaten bare, and still larger patches trampled down into the

ground—for deer, as also most wild game, are very destructive and wasteful in their eating. Indeed, the wild rabbit destroys more than three times what it eats, by biting out little bits at the sides of the turnip and carrot, and so destroying its growth.

Robin and his father then started on their way, and two nights after they reached Braemar, where they slept; and, rising at six, and taking a horse and gig from the inn, they drove to the beautiful Linn of Dee. Before turning down to the bridge which spans the Dee at the Linn, Mr Moore was trying to fall upon some plan by which they could leave the horse and dog-cart, and walk over the bridge, and see the three last of the old firs of the vast Forest of Mar. In the midst of various schemes a loud screech was heard behind, and then, bounding over the heather and 'moss pots' came a little fellow about Robin's age, with nothing on but a ragged kilt, and that of the scantiest. The nimble feet soon covered the distance between them, and the wee chap stood breathless and eager beside the horse's head, jabbering in Gaelic as fast as his tongue could wag. It was a case as difficult almost of management as a 'palaver' with a native of *New*, not *Old* Caledonia, but the sight of a bright new shilling and some pantomimic signs about the horse's head, seemed to clear up matters wonderfully, so, jumping up behind, he seemed to settle the matter unconditionally.

At the 'Linn' an old wooden bridge stretched across the dark chasm, while the water boiled and struggled in its rocky prison. Little Robin squeezed his father's hand tightly as they stood on the crazy old Bridge, and looked down into the dark waters below, and the bright tears rolled down his cheeks as his father told him how, two years before, a fine boy of fifteen had in bravado jumped across the Linn, and in recrossing had struck his head on the rock, and been carried away by the greedy waters; to be taken home, cold and dead, to his mother, who had only parted with him a few hours before.

The Home of the Wild Deer.

'He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.'

They had only just crossed the bridge, when a fine old man, mounted on a white Highland pony, came up to them, and, having exchanged the usual greetings, seeing they were strangers, he began to point out the remains of the old Forest of Mar. Three noble Scotch firs still stand, the last survivors of the 'forest primeval' which at one time lay dark and solemn like a mantle at the foot of the everlasting hills, and where large herds of the noble red deer found food and shelter; and, doubtless, the wolf and the fox, the badger and the wild cat, found their lairs and dens. The old gamekeeper proved a pleasant guide and companion, and told many stories of his adventures in deer-stalking, ending by offering to show Robin the finest deerhounds in Scotland. The time was fast running on, and they had their breakfast to get; and so, presenting the little horseboy with his promised shilling, which made his black eyes glisten beneath his shock of shaggy hair, they turned the horse's head homewards.

And what a splendid breakfast was waiting them! Tea and coffee, ham and eggs, venison cutlets, kippered salmon, hot scones and cakes, with honey and preserves, did not tempt the travellers' appetites in vain. Robin declared he never was so hungry in all his life, and he did full justice to the good things before him.

And now they turned their horse's head towards the road which ran on the south side of the Dee, and which passed through the woods. The morning was lovely, and as they drove along, the stately pine-branches met over their heads, and the sunlight flecked the grass and ferns with glory, while the air was filled with the songs of the wild birds, and the late butterflies and dragonflies glanced through the openings, and made Robin half long to jump out and have a chase after the glittering beauties; but the day was wearing on, and they had 'many a league to go, to go' ere they reached their night's resting-place.

They were driving through a lovely wooded glen, where the silvery river ran on their left, fringed with fragrant birches, and, on their right, the grey rocks covered with firs, rose high over their heads. Lovey, wearied with the heat, had slowly dropped into a walk, and father and son, struck by the solemn beauty of the scene, had been riding along in silence, when Robin felt his father press his arm, and point silently with his whip to the right. There, high above them, but not far before them, a fine roebuck and his mate were making their way down the steep sides of the hill. Lovey, finding herself not minded, began to graze; and so they had the advantage of a quiet minute or two to watch the movements of the graceful animals as they slowly and carefully stepped down till they reached a projecting ledge of rock nearly over their heads. There the doe lay down, basking in the sun, while her lord stood keeping a look-out for danger. How Robin's eyes sparkled, and how careful he was not to make a sound that could startle the timid creatures! but, alas! Lovey trespassing on her master's indulgence, as others than horses do sometimes, chose to go too near the brink of a little burn that ran beside the road, and so the noise of the moving wheels attracted the attention of the deer, and, taking the alarm, they both bounded off, and were out of sight in a moment.

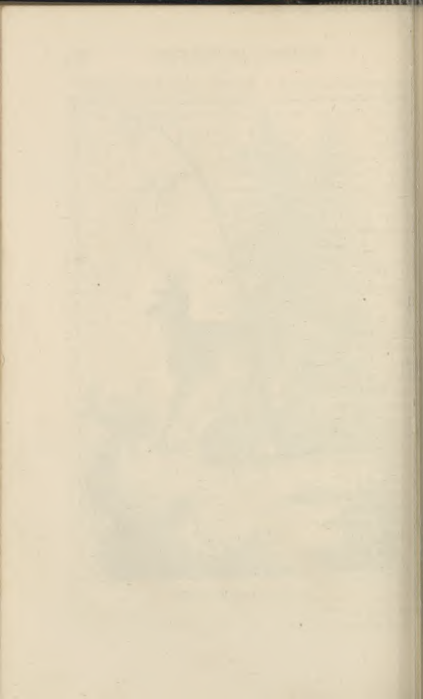
'How graceful they are, papa!' said Robin; 'how I should like to have a tame deer for a pet!'

'Well, I dare say you would like it well enough, but I fancy the poor fawn would tell another tale. I do not think it is kind to keep wild animals in confinement. Do you remember the tame hare?'

Robin coloured, and was silent. He did not care to be reminded of that, nor was he sorry when Pannonich Wells were visible through the trees, and he heard his father say they were to stay there all night. Indeed he was very sorry to leave the next morning, having made the acquaintance of a great many Nanny and Billy goats



THE HOME OF THE WILD DEER.



and *goaties*, as he called the kids—which gave him so much amusement that he was quite surprised when he was called in to have lunch before he started, to find it was past mid-day.

Their road still lay along the riverside; and, as they meant to sleep that night at the Inn of Aboyne, they were told to be sure and not lose sight of the river; but as the afternoon stretched on, a cold grey mist began to spread over the sun, making everything look cold and eerie; and as it increased to a thick white fog, the old mare was urged to increase her speed. But misfortunes do not go alone. Poor Lovey was not only tired, but she fell lame, and on getting out to see what ailed her, Mr Moore found that a sharp flint had fixed so tightly between her shoe and the foot, that he could not stir it. Robin produced his famous knife, with a large blade, but it snapped off at the first trial; nor was it till his father had pared away a part of her hoof that the stone could be moved from its place. This took some time, and when they set off again they found the shades of evening beginning to gather over them. Added to this, the road, hitherto firm enough, became nothing better than a beach of soft sand, which tried poor Lovey's powers to the utmost. There was no help for it, but Robin's father must get out, and lead the poor weary, bewildered animal by the head. And it was a mercy that it was so, for before this they had remarked that the road, as they thought, took a turn to the right, and they were going to turn the mare's head that way, when she refused to go on. This surprised her master, for she was a most gentle creature, and he got out to see what ailed her. What was his surprise at finding that it was not a road that lay before them, but a gap in the stone parapet of the bridge, and the supposed road was a sheet of water from a mountain fall. Right glad were both travellers to see the cheerful lights from the inn windows as they neared Aboyne, and before Robin's tired head was laid on his pillow, he sent up a heartfelt thanks to

his Father in heaven who had saved them from such a peril.

In the morning, as he waited for his father to come to breakfast, the room door was gently pushed open, and in walked a tame fawn. The pretty creature allowed Robin to stroke it, and eat some bread from his hand, and when his father came in, Robin's first words were, 'Oh, papa! such a darling little fawn! Do buy it, and take it home!' The landlady said it had been given to her little girl by one of the gamekeepers at the Castle, but she would see if she would not part with it to the young gentleman since he seemed so much to wish it!

Robin was delighted at the thought of being the possessor of such a lovely pet, and had already planned a thousand things for its comfort at home, when he heard a strange smothered sound outside the window, and going up to it, he saw a pretty little girl of nine years old, with her arms round the neck of the fawn, sobbing as if her heart would break. Robin's first thought was to go away and not *think* about what he had seen, only about the pleasure he should have when the fawn was *his*, but he could not leave the window; and as he looked at the little girl's attitude of sorrow, he thought what *he* would feel if *his* pet were taken from him to gratify another's fancy, till at last, not trusting himself to dally with his new-born resolutions of goodness, he jumped out of the window, and going up to the child, he said gently,

'Why are you crying? Don't cry; I don't like to see you cry.'

'Oh,' said the little thing, 'I can't help crying. Mother says that Lily is going away; and I *can't* part with Lily, I love her so, and she loves me. She would die if she went away from me—I know she would. Oh, don't let the gentleman take Lily away, little boy; *please* don't!' said the child, as she looked up in Robin's face.

Robin swallowed down a great lump in his throat, and brushed his hand over his eyes, as he said:

'Don't cry any more, little girl; Lily shan't go away from you. Only take her out of sight, please, for I *should* have liked to have a tame fawn; but I could not have enjoyed the thought of keeping it when it made you so sorry.'

Lily stayed with her little mistress; but though Robin felt a little sorry when he saw Lily and her little mistress racing down the garden walk as they drove away, when he got home he felt that he was a happier boy for having 'done as he would be done by,' than if he had been the possessor of a milk-white fawn, whose loss made another heart sad.

E. M.

THE BEST THAT I CAN.

'I CANNOT do much,' said a little star,
 'To make the dark world bright!
 My silvery beams cannot struggle far
 Through the folding gloom of night!
 But I'm only part of God's great plan,
 And I'll cheerfully do the best that I can!'

'What is the use,' said a fleecy cloud,
 'Of these few drops that I hold?
 They will hardly bend the lily proud,
 Though caught in her cup of gold!
 Yet am I a part of God's great plan,
 So my treasures I'll give as well as I can.'

A child went merrily forth to play,
 But a thought, like a silver thread,
 Kept winding in and out all day
 Through the happy golden head:
 'Mother said, "Darling, do all you can,
 For you are a part of God's great plan!"'

The Best that I Can.

She knew no more than the glancing star,
 Nor the cloud with its chalice full,
 How, why, and for what, all strange things were !
 She was only a child at school !
 But she thought, 'It is part of God's great plan
 That even I should do all that I can !'

So she helped a younger child along,
 When the road was rough to the feet ;
 And she sang from her heart a little song
 That we all thought passing sweet.
 And her father, a weary, toil-worn man,
 Said, 'I will do likewise the best that I can.'

Our best ! ah ! children, the best of us
 Must hide our faces away,
 When the Lord of the vineyard comes to look
 At our task, at the close of day !
 But for strength from above—'tis the Master's plan—
 We'll pray, and we'll do the best that we can.

American Presbyterian.



