

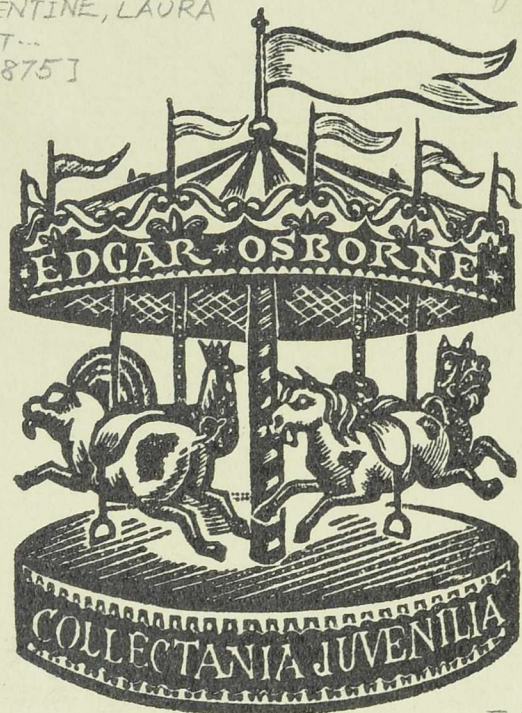
AUNT LOUISA'S

BIRTHDAY  
GIFT.



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VALENTINE, LAURA  
AUNT--  
[ca. 1875]

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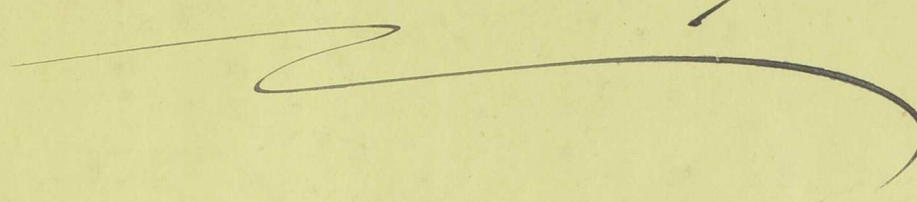
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Arthur H. Ewerly

March 13<sup>th</sup>

1875















AUNT LOUISA'S

BIRTHDAY GIFT.

COMPRISING

Country Pets.

Pussy's London Life.

Robin's Christmas Eve.

Hector, the Dog.

WITH

TWENTY-FOUR PAGES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Printed in Colours by Kronheim.



LONDON:

FREDERICK WARNE AND CO.

BEDFORD STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

NEW YORK: SCRIBNER, WELFORD AND ARMSTRONG.



# Preface.



*LONDON, New Year.*

THERE is a wonderful love and sympathy between children and animals, and Aunt Louisa is quite sure her COUNTRY PPETS, will be hailed as Portraits of old friends by her little readers : they will pity Poor ROBIN alone in the snow on Christmas Eve ; be amused by Poor PUSSY's experience of a LLONDON LLIFE ; and love and pity dear old HECTOR, who was so good to poor travellers lost in the snow.

*Bedford Street, Covent Garden.*





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C O U N T R Y P E T S.

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# THE DONKEY.

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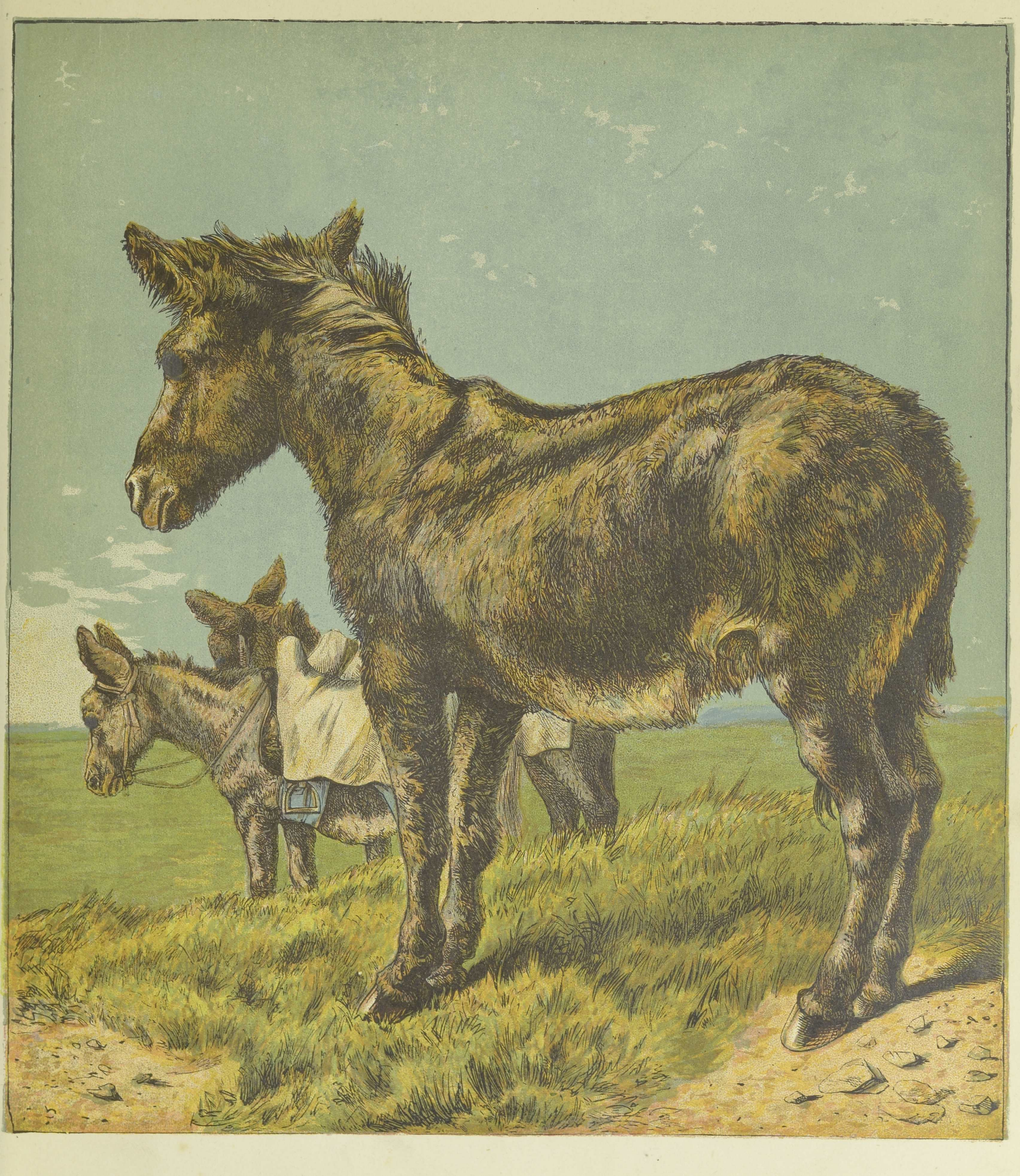
THE Ass, or Donkey, as we sometimes call him, is a very useful animal. He may be called the friend of the poor man, as he helps him in his daily toil with equal strength and patience, and is satisfied with little and cheap food. A thistle from the hedge is a dainty for the poor Donkey. I think he may be called the child's friend also, for the little ones owe much pleasure to the gentle, sure-footed beast, that carries them over the sands by the sea-side, or along the pleasant breezy lanes, or across the furze-covered common. Even baby may have a ride on this quiet steed, and be carried in a cosy basket, nodding his fat little head by the side of his bigger brothers and sisters.

The Donkey has one fault: he is obstinate, and often tries to get his own way. There are children who ought to know better, who have the same fault. When they see how disagreeable it is in a Donkey, we hope they will try to be more docile and obedient themselves. The Donkey is made obstinate, sometimes, by ill-treatment. Indeed, all animals are affected by the temper of their owners. The Ass or Dog of an ill-tempered man or boy, is almost sure to grow like his master. So if you have a Donkey of your own, take care to treat it kindly, and set it a good example. In the East, Donkeys are much larger and stronger than they are in England. They will gallop along, and go great distances, and prove as useful—sometimes more useful—than Horses. You will see in the Bible that they are spoken of as fit to be ridden by judges and great men.













# THE DOG.



WHO does not love the Dog? Every English boy does, I am sure ; and nearly every English girl. Very many funny and pretty stories are told of Dogs. I will tell you one that was, I know, quite true. A Skye Terrier (you will see one with long shaggy hair in the picture,) grew very fond of a merry baby-boy once, and would always be in the nursery when he was bathed and dressed. And when nurse was ready for them, he used to bring her the little socks and shoes to put on ; and baby would crow, and laugh, and say, " Poor, poor," and pat Fido's head with his tiny soft hand, and then Fido would jump about and bark. At last poor baby was taken ill and died, and was buried under the Maythorn in the old churchyard. When Fido could not find his little playfellow he was very sad : he cried and howled, and would not eat the first day, and the next morning no one could find him in the house ; but nurse, who went to look at poor baby's grave that afternoon, found Fido lying on it with the child's little socks and shoes under his paws ! He had stolen them out of the nursery, and carried them to the grave, where he was scratching and whining, in hopes that baby would wake up and put them on ! Nurse had great trouble to coax him to go home with her, and for a long time he would steal away to the grave, and cry and whine there ; so fondly he remembered his little baby playfellow.













# THE HORSE.

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THE Horse is a noble creature, as intelligent and faithful as the Dog, when well brought up. The Arabs are the people who are kindest to their Horses: they suffer the animal to live in the tent with their children, and treat it as if it were quite one of the family. Thus it grows up gentle and sensible, obeys its master, and follows him about like a Dog.

Once an Arab chief was made prisoner by his enemies, who tied his hands and feet, and left him in a tent till the next day, when, perhaps, they would have killed him. But he heard his Horse whinny outside, and in the night he rolled himself over and over on the ground, till he got to the curtain of the tent. He lifted it up, and saw his good Horse standing close beside it. Directly the steed saw that his master could not get up to mount him, he took the chief's sash in his mouth, and carrying him thus, galloped away with him as fast nearly as the wind, and never stopped till he fell down with his load at the Arab's own tent door. The poor Horse was so tired that he died almost directly afterwards, but his master was saved, and brought back to his wife and his little children. Was not that a very clever and kind thing for a Horse to do?

The Horse has a very good memory. He soon finds his way in a new place; he is also very obedient to his master, and seems anxious to please and serve him. How good it was of God to make Dogs and Horses, and give them to us to serve and love us! let us be very kind to them, or He who made them will not be pleased.

# THE COW AND SHEEP.



HOW meek and gentle the face of the Cow is! She is the most good-tempered creature we know. I cannot tell what children would do without her, for she gives them the nice warm milk they drink for breakfast, and of which the rice puddings and custards are made. Cows are not as clever as Dogs and Horses, but they learn to know and care for those who milk and feed them. A Cow which had been long on board ship at sea, was taken on shore at Portsmouth when the ship came home, and put into a green field, where the sailors thought she would enjoy quite a feast on the nice fresh grass and cowslips. But after they left her she would not eat at all, nor stay in the meadow. She ran down to the beach, and stood there bellowing so loud and so long, that at last they sent a boat for her, and took her on board again, where she seemed quite happy. I think this will show you that Cows really do learn to love those who treat them well.

We have to thank the Sheep for our warm woollen clothing, as well as for food. It is one of the most useful of animals. Lambs are very pretty, playful little things. They run and jump about in the green meadows, when the spring comes, like a number of merry happy little children. They are not very clever, but they can learn to know the voice of their shepherd, which in Eastern countries they follow, as he walks before the flock; but they cannot be made to follow a stranger.













# THE POULTRY YARD.

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THE Cock is a noble bird, very brave and very kind. Brave creatures generally are kind. When some nice food is thrown down for the Poultry, or he finds a fat worm that looks very good, he calls the Hens and his little children the Chickens, and lets them begin to eat before he will touch any himself. Then he joins in the feast, and enjoys it all the better because he is not greedy. The Hen is a very good mother. She takes great care of her Chickens, and if she sees a Hawk high up in the air, she calls them all under her wings, and would be killed herself before she would let the cruel bird hurt them.

Ducks are said to be greedy birds, and I think there is a difference between their way of eating and a Fowl's. They look very pretty sailing on the pond.

Ducklings are the prettiest little birds that can be seen when first they come out of the shell—little golden puffs of feathers.

When Ducks lay early in the year, and it is rather cold, Mamma Duck strips off more of her feathers, to make her nest nice and warm for the nestlings, than she does when she lays later in the season. This shows a degree of sense and reflection in the bird we could hardly have expected.

If the eggs of a wild Duck are given to a tame Duck to sit on, the young ones will not be tame like her own nestlings, but will at once run away and hide themselves with wonderful cunning. But the pretty Ducks in this picture are tame ones, like those you may feed at the farm.













# RABBITS AND PIGEONS.

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**R**ABBITS are especially the pets of boys. It is a very pretty sight to witness a number of wild Rabbits come out and play on the grass in the moonlight, as we have sometimes done. They are very much afraid of Weasels ; creatures which are their natural enemies. If a Weasel follow a Rabbit who has young ones at home, she will run in any other direction, and play all sorts of cunning tricks to prevent him from finding her house or burrow. Fancy rabbits are often very handsome.

Pigeons are very pretty birds, very affectionate, and easily tamed. They like companions. A gentleman once had one Pigeon only : as it had no friends of its own race, it became very fond of an old Barndoor Fowl, whose side it seldom left. It would run about all day with him, and roost by his side at night ; and the Cock never drove him away, but seemed to be much attached to his Pigeon friend.

Some Pigeons will carry letters from one place to another. When Paris was shut in by enemies, the poor people sent letters to their friends under the wings of these birds, and so conveyed tidings of their welfare, and directed how help could be given to them, through a Pigeon postman. For the sake of our brave allies we must henceforward cherish Pigeons.



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ROBIN'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

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# THE ROBIN'S CHRISTMAS EVE.

By C. E. B.

'T WAS Christmas time : a dreary  
night :

The snow fell thick and fast,  
And o'er the country swept the wind,  
A keen and wintry blast.

The little ones were all in bed,  
Crouching beneath the clothes,  
Half-trembling at the angry wind,  
Which wildly fell and rose.

Old Jem the Sexton rubbed his leg,  
For he had got the gout ;  
He said he thought it wondrous hard  
That he must sally out.

Not far from Jem's, another house,  
Of different size and form,  
Rose high its head, defying well  
The fierce and pelting storm.

It was the Squire's lordly home.  
A rare old Squire he,  
As brave and true an Englishman  
As any one could see.

The Squire's lady and himself  
Sat cozily together,  
When suddenly he roused himself,  
To see the kind of weather.

Lifting the shutters' ponderous bar,  
He threw them open wide,  
And very dark, and cold, and drear,  
He thought it looked outside.

Ah, Squire ! little do you think  
A trembling beggar's near,  
Although his form you do not see,  
His voice you do not hear.

Yes, there he stands,—so very close,  
He taps the window pane ;  
And when he sees you turn away,  
He feebly taps again.

But all in vain ; the heavy bar  
Was fastened as before ;  
The Squire's burly form retraced  
His highly polished floor.

Now, is there any one who thinks  
It cannot be worth while  
To write about a Robin's fate,  
And treat it with a smile ?

If so, I bid them to their mind  
Those words of Scripture call,  
Which say that not without God's will  
E'en little birds can fall.













Our Robin's history simple was,  
There is not much to tell,—  
A little happy singing bird,  
Born in a neighbouring dell.

And through the summer, in the wood,  
Life went on merrily ;  
But winter came, and then he found  
More full of care was he.

For food grew scarce ; so having spied  
Some holly-berries red  
Within the Rectory garden grounds,  
Thither our hero fled.

One evening everything was dull,  
The clouds looked very black,  
The wind ran howling through the sky,  
And then came grumbling back.

The Robin early went to bed,  
Puffed out just like a ball ;  
He slept all night on one small leg,  
Yet managed not to fall.

When morning came he left the tree,  
But stared in great surprise  
Upon the strange unusual scene  
That lay before his eyes.

It seemed as if a great white sheet  
Were flung o'er all the lawn ;  
The flower-beds, the paths, the trees,  
And all the shrubs were gone !

His little feet grew sadly cold,  
And felt all slippery too ;  
He stumbled when he hopped along  
As folks on ice will do.

And yet he had not learnt the worst  
Of this new state of things ;  
He'd still to feel the gnawing pangs  
That cruel hunger brings.

No food to-day had touched his beak,  
And not a chance had he  
Of ever touching it again,  
As far as he could see.

At length, by way of passing time,  
He tried to take a nap,  
But started up when on his head  
He felt a gentle tap.

'T was but a snow-flake, after all !  
Yet, in his wretched plight,  
The smallest thing could frighten him,  
And make him take his flight.













But soon he found he must not hope  
From these soft flakes to fly:  
Down they came feathering on his head,  
His back, his tail, his eye!

No gardeners appeared that day;  
The Rector's step came by,  
And Robin fluttered o'er the snow  
To try and catch his eye.

But being Christmas Eve, perhaps  
His sermons filled his mind,  
For on he walked, and never heard  
The little chirp behind.

Half-blinded, on and on he roamed,  
Quite through the Squire's park;  
At last he stood before the house,  
But all was cold and dark.

Now suddenly his heart beats high!  
He sees a brilliant glare,  
Shutters unfurl before his eyes,  
A sturdy form stands there!

He almost frantic grew, poor bird!  
Fluttered, and tapped the pane,  
Pressed hard his breast against the glass,  
And chirped,—but all in vain!

So on he went, and as it chanced,  
He passed into a lane,  
And once again he saw a light  
Inside a window-pane.

Chanced, did we say? let no such word  
Upon our page appear:  
Not *chance*, but watchful Providence,  
Had led poor Robin here.

'Twas Jem the Sexton's house from which  
Shone forth that cheering light,  
For Jem had drawn the curtain back  
To gaze upon the night.

And now, with lantern in his hand,  
He hobbles down the lane,  
Mutt'ring and grumbling to himself,  
Because his foot's in pain.

He gains the church, then for the key  
Within his pocket feels,  
And as he puts it in the door  
Robin is at his heels.

Jem thought, when entering the church,  
That he was all alone,  
Nor dreamed a little stranger bird  
Had to its refuge flown.

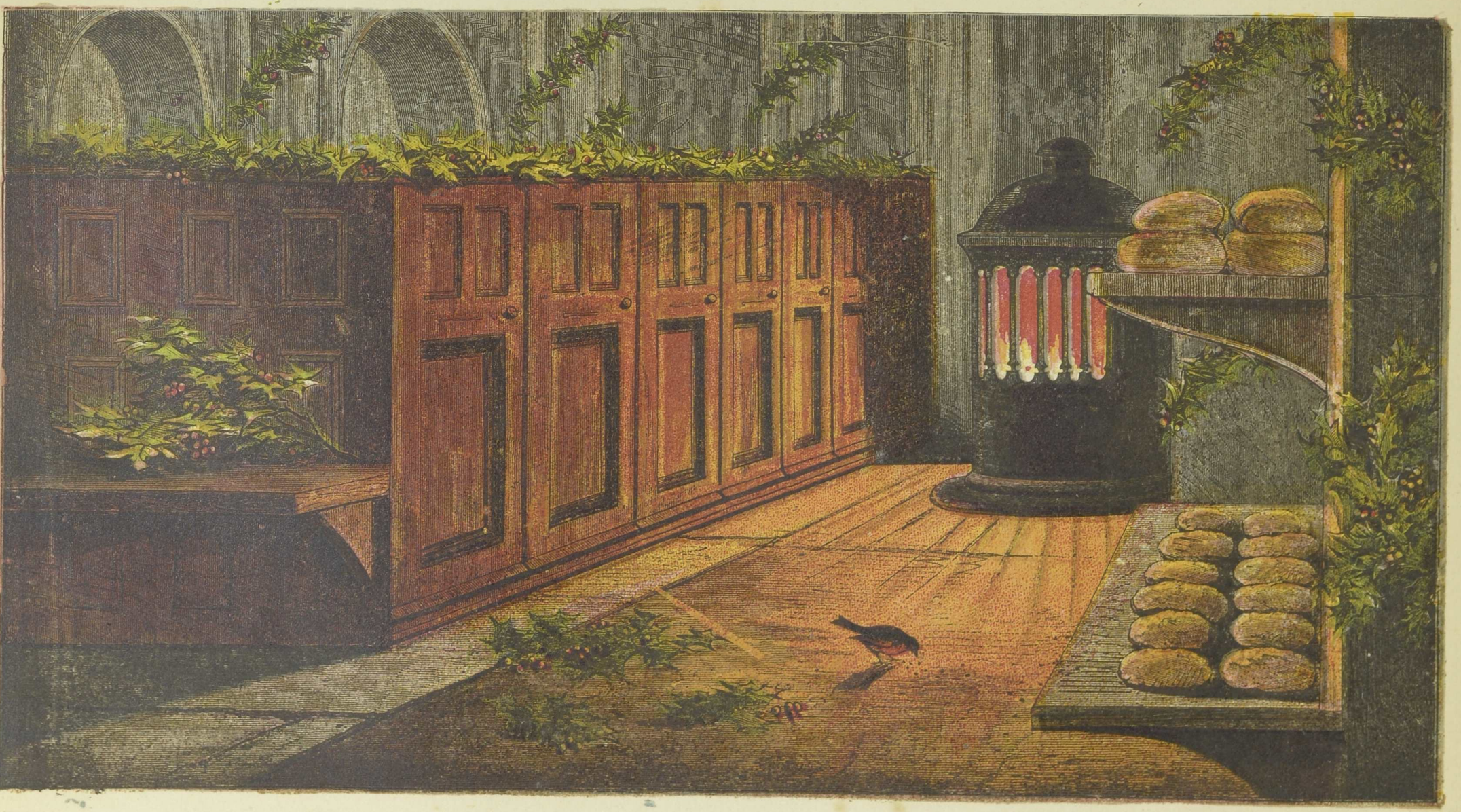


















The stove had not burnt very low,  
But still was warm and bright,  
And round the spot whereon it stood  
Threw forth a cheerful light.

Jem lost no time; he flung on coals,  
And raked the ashes out,  
Then hurried off to go to bed,  
Still grumbling at his gout.

Now Robin from a corner hopped,  
Within the fire's light;  
Shivering and cold, it was to him  
A most enchanting sight.

But he is almost starved, poor bird!  
Food he must have, or die:  
Useless it seems, alas! for that  
Within these walls to try.

Yet, see! he makes a sudden dart;  
His searching eye has found  
The greatest treasure he could have,—  
Some bread-crumbs on the ground!

Perhaps 't is thought by those who read,  
Too doubtful to be true,  
That just when they were wanted so  
Some hand should bread-crumbs strew.

But this was how it came to pass:  
An ancient dame had said  
Her legacy unto the poor  
Should all be spent in bread.

So every week twelve wheaten loaves  
The Sexton brought himself,  
And crumbs had doubtless fallen when  
He placed them on the shelf.

Enough there were for quite a feast,  
Robin was glad to find;  
The hungry fellow ate them all,  
Nor left one crumb behind.

He soon was quite himself again,  
And it must be confessed  
His first thought, being warmed and fed,  
Was all about his breast.

To smooth its scarlet feathers down  
Our hero did not fail,  
And when he'd made it smart, he then  
Attended to his tail!

Worn though he was with sheer fatigue  
And being up so late,  
He did not like to go to bed  
In such a rumpled state.













His toilet done, he went to sleep,  
And never once awoke  
Till, coming in on Christmas morn,  
Jem gave the stove a poke.

Then in alarm he flew away  
Along the middle aisle,  
And perching on the pulpit-top,  
He rested there awhile.

But what an unexpected sight  
Is this that meets his eyes!  
The church is dressed with holly green,  
To him so great a prize.

For 'mongst the leaves the berries hung,  
Inviting him to eat;  
On every side were hundreds more,—  
A rich and endless treat.

He could not know that Christian folks  
Had brought the holly green,  
That so their joy for Jesu's birth  
Might in this way be seen.

Now, very soon a little troop  
Of children entered in:  
They came to practise Christmas songs  
Ere service should begin.

The Rector followed then himself,  
To help the young ones on,  
And teach their voices how to sing  
In tune their Christmas song.

And first he charged them all to try  
And feel the words they sang;  
Then reading from his open book,  
He thus the hymn began:

“Glory to God from all  
To whom He's given breath;  
Glory to God from all  
Whom He has saved from death.”

Now, when the Rector's voice had ceased,  
The children, led by him,  
Were just about, with earnest voice,  
The verse of praise to sing,

When suddenly, from high above,  
Another song they hear,  
And all look up in hushed amaze,  
At notes so sweet and clear.

'T was Robin sitting on a spray  
Of twisted holly bright;  
His light weight swayed it, as he sang  
His song with all his might.











His heart was full of happiness,  
And this it was that drew  
Praise to his Maker, in the way,  
The only way, he knew.

It seemed as though he understood  
The words he just had heard,  
As if he felt they suited him,  
Though but a little bird.

The Rector's finger lifted up,  
Kept all the children still,  
Their eyes uplifted to the bird  
Singing with open bill.

They scarcely breathe, lest they should  
lose  
One note of that sweet strain ;  
And Robin scarcely paused before  
He took it up again.

Now, when he ceased, the Rector thought  
That he would say a word ;  
For Robin's tale had in his breast  
A strong emotion stirred.

"Children," said he, "that little voice  
A lesson should have taught :  
It seems to me the Robin's song  
Is with instruction fraught.

"He was, no doubt, in great distress ;  
Deep snow was all around ;  
He might have starved, but coming here,  
Both food and shelter found

"Seek God, my children, and when times  
Of storm and trouble come,  
He'll guide you as He did the bird,  
And safely lead you home.

"Another lesson we may learn  
From those sweet notes we heard,  
That God has given voice of praise  
To that unconscious bird ;

"But unto us His love bestows  
A far more glorious gift,  
For we have *reason*, and our *souls*,  
As well as voice, can lift."

The Rector paused, for now rang forth  
The merry Christmas chime,  
And warned them all that it was near  
The usual service-time.

And we must close the Robin's tale :  
'T will be a blessed thing  
Should it have taught but one young voice  
To praise as well as sing.





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PUSSY'S LONDON LIFE.

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# PUSSY'S LONDON LIFE.

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UPON a sunny garden seat  
The Lady Grilda sat,  
Who was, we wish it understood,  
Merely a titled cat.

It must be owned this sounds too grand ;  
But I have heard them tell  
That, being born with so much grace,  
The name became her well.

This kitten was of Persia's breed,  
'T was thence her parents came ;  
Their coats were white and soft as silk,  
And Grilda's was the same.

But sadly vain my lady was  
Of all her lovely hair ;  
She thought no kitten in the land  
Could with herself compare.

And Pussy had another fault,—  
She'd often disobey ;  
Would sometimes to the larder go,  
And carry bits away.

With much regret her mother saw  
Her daughter's silly pride,  
And, as a careful parent should,  
To check such failings tried.

But Grilda, hating grave advice,  
Would shake her pretty head,  
And seldom listen to a word  
Of what her mother said.

'T was in a quiet country house  
She hitherto had dwelt,  
But many a wish to see the world  
Had Lady Grilda felt.

In London, or in some large town,  
She fain would go and stay ;  
Her beauty in this lonely place  
She thought was thrown away.

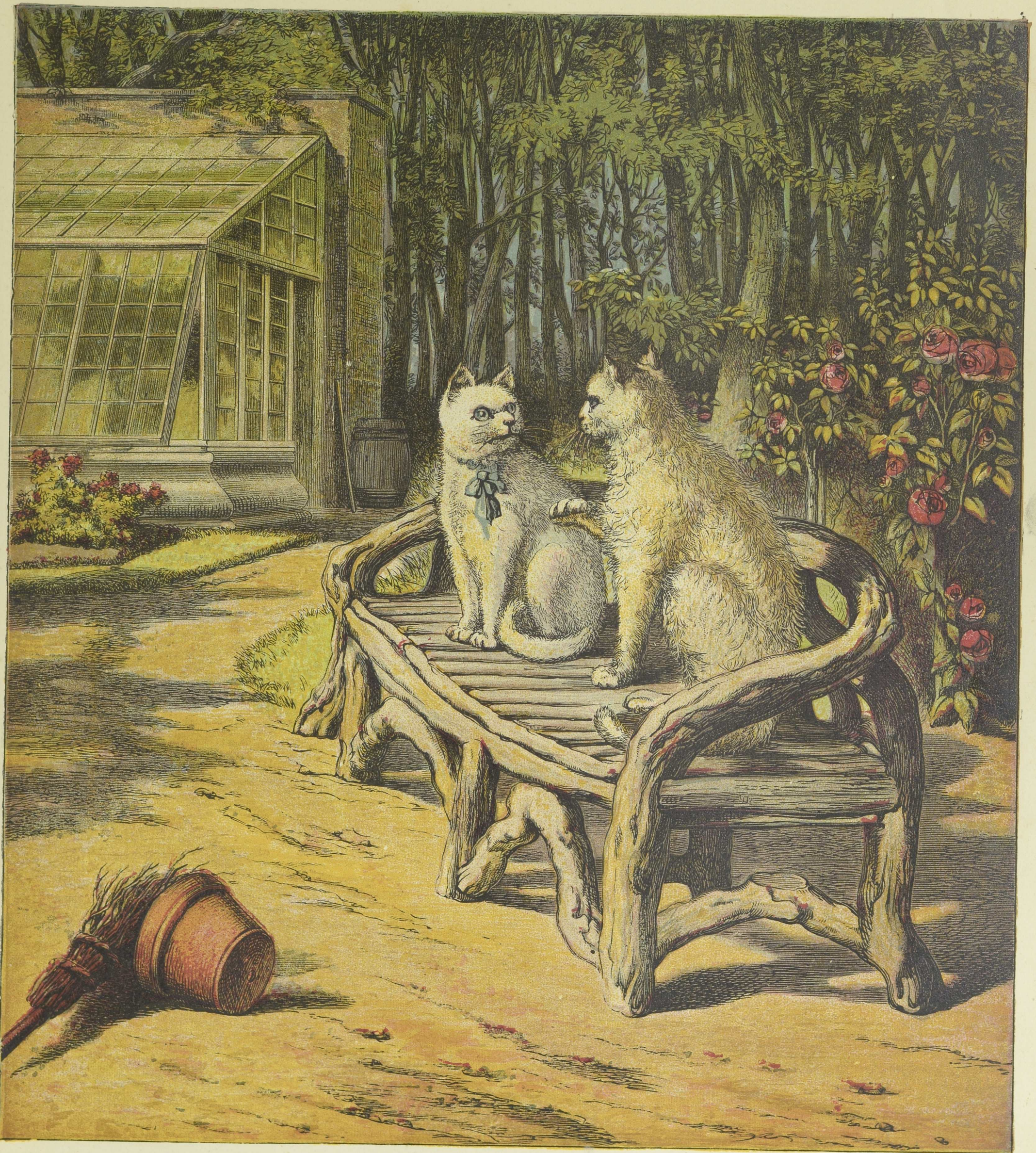
A change came o'er her life at last,  
And she was glad to know  
'T was settled that to live in town  
She very soon should go.

Whilst sitting on the garden seat,  
As we before have said,  
Visions of future London life  
Completely filled her head.

But when a gentle step drew near,  
From all these dreams she woke  
To see her mother by her side,  
Who thus to Grilda spoke :













“To say a word or two, my child,  
Before we part, I come ;  
Words which, perhaps, may cross your  
mind  
When you are far from home.

“Grilda,”—the mother raised her paw,—  
“Grilda, attend to me ;  
Remember that where'er you go,  
You must obedient be.

“I pray you ne'er again to take  
A scrap that's not your own,  
Although it may be nothing more  
Than just a chicken-bone.

“And recollect that Pussy-cats  
Quite idle should not be ;  
The pleasant task of catching mice  
Is given you and me.

“Try and think less about your looks,—  
You're but a kitten small ;  
Surely in such a little thing  
Should be no pride at all.

“And now, my daughter, fare thee well ;  
Attend to what I've said ;”  
And then the mother rubbed her cheek  
Against her kitten's head.

I can't be certain that the tears  
In Grilda's eyes arose ;  
But, walking round her parent's sides,  
She purr'd and rubb'd her nose.

She really *meant* to try and mind  
All that her mother said ;  
But like a corn-sieve full of holes  
Was Lady Grilda's head :

The words went in at one white ear,  
But not, alas ! to stay ;  
For at the other out they slipp'd,  
And vanish'd quite away.

Her future mistress, when in town,  
Lived in Throckmorton Square ;  
And very shortly afterwards  
Grilda was taken there.

This town house, in her country eyes,  
Seemed fitted for a queen ;  
Such grandeur and such elegance  
She never yet had seen.

And in her silly little heart  
The foolish Pussy thought,  
“This seems the proper place for me  
To which I now am brought.











“A Londoner I am become,  
There’s something grand in that;  
I’m very glad I’ve ceased to be  
A simple country cat.

“Such vulgar work I need not do  
As running after mice;  
Poor mother might, at all events,  
Have spared me *that* advice.”

But one thing Grilda much disliked  
In this her London home,  
That not beyond the garden gate  
Was she allowed to roam.

Perhaps, too, if the truth were known,  
She rather long’d to go,  
Her graceful form and snow-white coat  
The London cats to show.

She almost hoped that as she pass’d  
They’d all turn round and stare,  
And wonder who that kitten was  
With such a noble air.

Within an empty attic room,  
In which she used to play,  
A window opening on the roof  
Was left unclosed one day.

Grilda had very often thought  
’T would be delightful fun  
To find some way of slipping out,  
And take a pleasant run.

Now was the moment for escape!  
But first of all with care  
She wash’d her face, arrang’d her tail,  
And smooth’d her silken hair.

That she was doing very wrong  
This naughty Pussy knew;  
Yet, springing on the window-sill,  
She through the op’ning flew.

’T was very pleasant for a time  
To play and run about;  
But soon she felt it dull, and wished  
Some kitten would come out.

And then she found with great dismay  
Her coat was getting soiled,  
And feared that, ere ’t was even seen,  
Her beauty would be spoiled.

From such a black and dirty place  
She saw ’t was time to go;  
So softly creeping down the wall,  
She gain’d the street below.





















Having from roof to roof skipp'd on,  
She'd wandered from the square,  
And reach'd a street which proved to be  
A busy thoroughfare.

She stood bewilder'd with the noise,  
Not knowing where to fly,  
When suddenly a savage dog  
Came running briskly by.

He stopp'd, for on a flight of steps  
The trembling cat he spied ;  
Then darting up, with grinning teeth  
To seize her neck he tried.

Never was cat more nearly caught.—  
The dog had touched her tail,  
When Grilda sprang, with bristling hair,  
Upon an iron rail.

He hoped to reach her as she clung,  
And leap'd with all his might ;  
But giving one more desperate bound,  
She vanish'd from his sight.

In vain he hunted up and down,  
And scented all around,  
For Puss was safely hid inside  
A coal-shed underground.

Whilst here she crouch'd behind some  
coal

In miserable plight,  
The owner came to close the door  
And lock it for the night.

Set free next day, misfortune still  
Appear'd to be her fate :  
A milkman chanced to leave his pail  
Outside an iron gate ;

The pail was nearly full of milk,  
Thus early in the day,  
And there it stood, a tempting sight,  
Exactly in her way.

'T was more than kitten could resist,  
So scrambling up the side,  
To reach the white delicious food  
Poor starving Grilda tried.

The milkman saw her, and his lungs  
Sent forth so loud a yell,  
That overbalancing herself,  
Into the pail she fell !

As quickly out she came again,  
Dragged by the angry man ;  
And, smarting from his cuffs and blows,  
All dripping, off she ran.





# BREAD & BISCUIT BAKER







Alas, poor Pussy! every hope  
Of admiration o'er,  
She only long'd to find her way  
Back to her home once more.

But she, like others I have known,  
The lesson had to learn,—  
Though easy 't is to go astray,  
'T is harder to return.

At length she saw what seem'd to her  
A quiet little place  
Beside a post, where she might creep  
To wash her sides and face.

Yet even here poor Grilda found  
She could not safely stay;  
Some schoolboys passing by the spot  
Soon pelted her away.

Another little wanderer  
Was pacing up the street,  
Like Grilda, scarcely knowing where  
To turn her weary feet.

'T was Madge Dunlee, a beggar-girl,  
Sent forth to beg her bread;  
A child of want and woe was she,  
Untaught, uncloth'd, unfed.

No food that day had touch'd her lips,  
Yet all had pass'd her by;  
No one had seen her outstretch'd hand,  
Or listen'd to her cry.

And thus she linger'd on her way,  
Till coming to a shop,  
The fragrant scent of new-baked bread  
Caused hungry Madge to stop.

She knew, poor child! those loaves and  
buns  
Had not been baked for her,  
Yet from the pleasant sight and smell  
She did not care to stir.

She gazed so long, they came at last  
To order her away;  
The baker said 't was not the place  
For beggar-girls to stay.

A woman passing from the shop  
Possess'd a kindly heart;  
She broke a penny roll in two,  
And gave the child a part.

But just as Madge began to eat,  
Came Grilda to her side,  
And plain as starving Pussy could  
To beg a morsel tried.













“There’s not enough,” thought Madge,  
“I’m sure,  
For Pussy and for me;  
But yet how very weak and faint  
The poor thing seems to be!

“There, take a bit; I know so well  
How bad it feels to want;  
Though as to giving any more,  
No, Puss, indeed I can’t.”

But as she sat upon a step,  
Eating her bit of bread,  
Puss mew’d and touch’d her with her paw,  
Imploring to be fed.

Her constant cries and eager looks  
Went straight to Madge’s heart:  
Of every piece of roll she ate  
She gave the cat a part.

This little scene by chance took place  
Close to Throckmorton Square,  
And Grilda’s mistress from her house  
Observ’d the hungry pair.

She noticed how the beggar-child  
Her scanty meal had shared,  
And how, though wanting food herself,  
For Pussy she had cared.

She sent to bid her come within  
Her hospitable door,  
And gave her such a meal as Madge  
Had never seen before.

Once more in safety, Grilda learn’d  
A lesson from that day:  
That ’t is not well for little ones  
Always to have their way.

Her goodness to the stranger cat  
For Madge vast changes wrought;  
The lady placed her in a school,  
And had her clothed and taught.

And thus we see what great events  
From trifling things may spring;  
So let us kindness try to show  
To ev’ry living thing.





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HECTOR, THE DOG.

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# HECTOR THE DOG.

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Man loves the dog, the dog loves man :  
The dog is trusty, strong, and brave,  
And God has on the dog bestowed  
The power and will man's life to save.

And often has the tale been told,  
How, borne along in eager strife,  
While struggling hard to rescue man,  
The noble dog has lost his life.

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THE little inn of Martigny  
Had but few guests on Christmas  
Eve,  
For men at home made festive cheer,  
And cared not household joys to leave.

But near the door a trav'ler stood,  
Who with his host had earnest talk,  
With knapsack girt and staff in hand,  
All ready for a mountain walk.

“Nay, stay to-night; the way is long;  
Dark clouds are flitting o'er the sky;  
A storm is brewing, trust my word,—  
I hear the raven's warning cry.

“Come, friend, give up thy toilsome walk,  
And spend thy Christmas with us  
here.”

The landlord spoke with kindly voice,  
Himself a well-train'd mountaineer.

“Nay, press me not,” the man replied;  
“I must get home by Christmas Day.  
“The mountain-pass I know right well,  
Its hoary peaks and boulders gray.

“Ten years ago I left my home  
My fortune in the world to seek:  
It seems to me a long, long time  
Since last I saw these mountains bleak.











“I promised them that, come what might,  
I would be home on Christmas Day;  
So farewell; may God’s blessing be  
With me along my toilsome way.”

In the fast-fading evening light  
He then pursued his lonely road,  
Onward and upward through the snow,  
Leaving behind him man’s abode.

Above him rose the snowy peaks,  
Still glowing white against the sky,  
And many a crevasse, deep and wide,  
Around his path he could descry.

Upward and onward still he toil’d,  
His heart was beating loud and fast:  
He’d reach’d his own dear fatherland,  
Danger and toil were well-nigh past.

He long’d to hear his father’s voice,  
His mother’s kiss once more to feel,  
And in the quiet restful home,  
With them once more in prayer to kneel.

He long’d to spread before their gaze  
The honest gains of many a year,  
Earn’d with hard toil for those he lov’d,  
And guarded with a jealous care.

His father with his silver hair,  
His mother with her kind blue eyes,  
His sisters, little playmates once,—  
Would he their faces recognize?

Colder and colder blew the wind,  
It whistled up the mountain-pass;  
The blinding snow-storm flew before;  
The ice was slippery as glass.

Onward he went, but cautiously:  
“Surely I have not miss’d my way?  
The night grows dark, ’t is piercing cold:  
Can I hold on till dawn of day?”

And still he battled with the storm,  
That every moment fiercer grew,  
And stronger came the dreadful thought  
That he the way no longer knew.

And now his strength is ebbing fast;  
His head is sinking on his breast.  
Oh! could he in that fearful storm  
But find some shelter, gain some rest!

Happy for him that at that time,  
Alone upon the mountain-side,  
He knew that to his Father’s love  
His life or death he might confide.













The eddying snow-wreath whirl'd around,  
Snow hid the path, snow fill'd the air.  
He fell unconscious to the ground,  
The object of a Father's care.

Above the smooth white-sheeted snow  
The convent-walls rose dark and high,  
And bright the clear, cold stars look'd  
down  
From out the wind-swept winter sky.

The stately shadows, broad and dark,  
Lay stretch'd along the mountain-side,  
And through the narrow windows gleam'd  
The blazing logs of Christmas-tide.

It was the holy Christmas Eve,  
When joy in Christian homes should be,  
And in this lonely monast'ry  
Was friendly talk and quiet glee.

And truly none deserved it more  
Than these lone men of lowly mind,  
Who, in their Master's steps to tread,  
Had left the pleasant world behind.

That was a scene for painter's art,  
Those men so calm, so free from strife,  
Who bore upon each rugged face  
The impress of a noble life.

Nor men alone composed the group:  
Four dogs, of pure St. Bernard blood,  
Or slept unconscious on the hearth,  
Or by their masters proudly stood;

Calm, lofty, steadfast, great, and strong,  
A picture of the mountains round;  
Both dogs and masters in one tie  
Of kindly brotherhood fast bound.

What was their life? had selfish aim  
Enticed them to this lonely spot,  
Life's toil and burden to escape,  
Its battle-field to enter not?

No, surely; not in sinful ease  
The daily life of each was spent,  
But to fight hand in hand with Death  
Each nerve was strain'd, each pow'r  
was bent.

For here, amongst the snow and ice,  
The everlasting winter cold,  
Full many a weary traveller  
Had died unknown since days of old.

And so to seek and save the lost  
These men and dogs were living here;  
Bravely they daily risk'd their lives,  
Nor e'er gave way to thought of fear.



















Vespers are over. In the hall  
The monks are gather'd round the board  
To celebrate the joyful feast  
With the best cheer their stores afford.

The noble dogs are feasting now,  
Fed with kind hands and loving care,  
For if they share their masters' toils,  
Their joys and feasts they also share.

"Brethren and friends," the Prior said,  
"The night grows wild, the storm gets  
high,  
The dogs are restless; some must go,  
If help is needed, to be nigh.

"This night we'll sing our hymn to God  
With shepherds and the angelic host;  
But you will praise whilst yet you serve,  
And by the serving praise Him most."

So, taking hatchets, torches, ropes,  
The monks and dogs together went;  
They make towards the mountain-pass,  
And soon the dogs are on a scent.

Smelling and sniffing through the storm,  
Their noble heads bent to the snow,  
Close follow'd by the stalwart monks,  
They bravely up the mountain go.

"Full sure, I guess," said Brother Ralph,  
"Some traveller is out to-night,  
And sure I am that for his life  
With storm and snow he'll have to fight.

"And if but once he miss the path  
Hard by the precipice which winds,  
A fearful sight 't will be for him  
The mangled traveller that finds.

"But, see, the dogs are on the track;  
See how with one consent they go;  
They've turned the point, they're out of  
sight:  
And, hark! that baying down below!"

The monks rush on with breathless speed,  
All on the strain, no word they say;  
But as they breast the storm-blasts' rage,  
With silent earnestness they pray.

They turn the point, and down below  
The eager, striving dogs they see,  
All on a narrow ledge that hangs  
Projecting o'er the icy sea.

There's one way down, but e'en in light,  
When all is calm, on summer's day,  
While in pursuit of mountain goat,  
The hunter dreads that dizzy way.













The brothers pause, and peering down,  
Each grasps the other as he stands ;  
The noble hounds will do till death  
What their life-saving law commands.

First one and then the other down  
That fearful steep, with shuddering  
cry,  
They creep, they cringe, they bound, they  
roll,  
And now on snow-slip swiftly fly.

The snow-slip takes a happy turn,  
And lands them on the icy sea,  
And sharp glad barkings upward send  
The tidings of their victory.

And thanks to GOD ! the storm is past,  
The gentle moon gives out her light  
To guide their footsteps down each steep,  
And aid their swing from height to  
height.

They reach at length the sea of ice,  
Three dogs come bounding to their  
side :  
The fourth, brave Hector, where was he  
Hurl'd by the avalanche's slide ?

Anxious and eager rush the dogs  
To where a face of hopeful glow  
And firm resolve, in death-like swoon,  
Peers upward from the open'd snow.

What dogs could do these dogs have done ;  
Man's skill and care must do the rest ;  
And sooner far than could be thought  
Their efforts with success were blest.

But other cares await them now :  
No sooner had they shown the man,  
Then, darting off with eager haste,  
The hounds to farther distance ran.

Hector they seek with whine and cries ;  
They scratch the appalling mound of  
snow,

Which, loosen'd from the mountain-side,  
Had swept them with it down below.

Vain work for dogs ! vain work for men !  
Thousands of tons of ice and snow,  
Heap'd up in one vast funeral pile,  
Poor Hector holds entombed below.

Alas ! poor Hector ! Gone for him  
Those scampers on the mountain's side,  
Where to lead men from height to height  
Still upward, was his joy and pride.













Gone the sweet smell of pine-clad hill,  
The bright blue sky, the sunny slope,  
The torrent's roar, the eagle's cry,  
The foes with which he used to cope.

For winter oft would send the wolf  
To prowl among the flocks below,  
And oft the bear would seek the herds  
That shudder'd on their path of snow.

Then mighty courage filled the heart  
Of Hector, bravest of the brave,  
And forth he rushed with eager haste  
The trembling flocks and herds to  
save.

But now no more: his work is done;  
The dog has met a hero's end!  
With deep-drawn sigh the brethren mourn  
Their mute companion and their friend.

Then on with heavy hearts and slow  
They bear with toil the rescued man,  
Mounting still upward to the height  
From whence their steep descent began.

And slow, and hanging low their heads,  
As if oppress'd by sense of shame  
Mingled with grief, the noble hounds  
In silence to the convent came.

There watchful care attends the couch  
Where rests the traveller return'd,  
And swift feet carry to his home  
Good news from one they might have  
mourn'd.

But as each Christmas-tide return'd,  
And still he toil'd in life's rough way,  
With thankful praise he joined in thought  
Hector, the dog, and Christmas Day.

