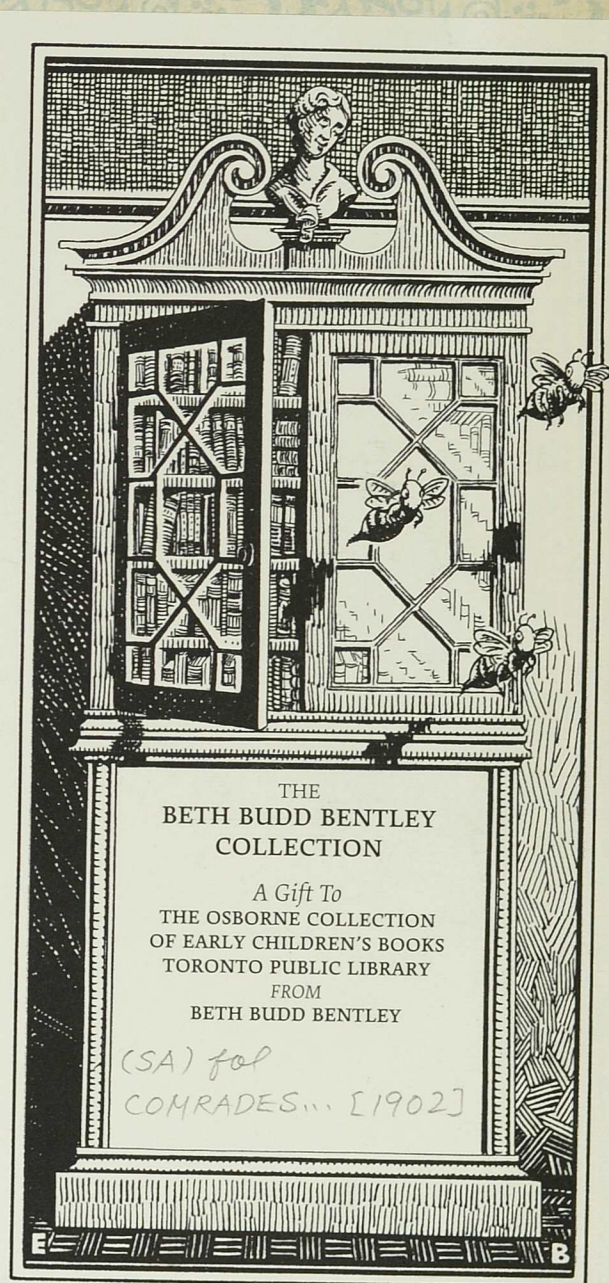


Comrades Three





This bookplate, designed by Eric Beddows, was commissioned by
The Friends of the Osborne and Lillian H. Smith Collections
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Comrades Three.



COMRADES THREE



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GRITTY'S FARTHING.



CREAK, creak, creak, went the churchwarden's boots as they tip-toed about the church. Chink, chink, went the sixpences and shillings, slipping from the hands of the congregation into the velvet bags that the churchwardens passed from pew to pew. Chink, chink, chink!

Five minutes later several pairs of boots creaked up the aisle in a little procession. One by one the velvet bags were deposited on a gold plate—a ceremony that took longer than usual this morning, because of a charity sermon that had just been preached by the bishop. The plate was then laid aside until service was concluded.

In the thinnest and flattest of the bags (the one that had gone the round of the free seats) lay a bright new sovereign which the worthy bishop had contributed himself; the only other occupant was a farthing, who was staring the bishop's sovereign almost out of countenance.

"You can look, but don't touch," cried the sovereign. "I'm a Jubilee, and very particular."

"Sorry, sir, I'm sure, but you bring to mind a fellow farthing I met once at a fried-fish shop: his face was just as shiny as yours."

The sovereign flashed a disdainful look at the farthing, who certainly had a disreputable look about him—what with a hole in his forehead, and a patch of verdigris on his coat, and a battered come-down-in-the-world appearance all over him.

"You're a farthing, I presume?" ventured the sovereign, after a long spell of silence.

"That's so, sir, and as hard-working and honest a farthing as one could meet in a day's march—always ready to fly here or there and do anybody a good turn; and whether it's an 'errin' or a horange, a drop o' milk for baby, or beer for the bigger folks, Lor' bless you, I gets good weight and measure. As for the sweetstuff shops, why, I knows 'em all with my eyes shut."

"My acquaintance with your specie is very limited," said the sovereign

proudly; "but to judge from appearances, you seem to have knocked about a good bit."

"That's not the word for it, sir. I've seen so much poverty, and so many ups and downs, I used to think life scarce worth living. If it wasn't for Gritty, I should have rolled into the canal and ha' done with it long ago."

"Who's Gritty?"



"Ah! that's through being a sovereign that you don't know Gritty. She's a sort o' little angel in a blue pinafore and patchy boots.

Gritty lives in Simon's Alley, and does kind things before folks ask her, looks after their babies, fetches and carries their washing, and takes a blind old woman to church every Sunday. That's how I came to be here. Lor' bless you, if any one had told me a half hour ago I should ha' been in this bag talking to you, sir, I wouldn't have believed 'em, for I knowed how Gritty had set her heart on a stick o' Black Jack."

"A stick of what?" cried the sovereign, with a shudder.

"Black Jack: treacley stuff, rolled into a paper, like a squib, that sticks to your teeth when you chump it. Well, it was a toss-up for Black Jack or whelks. Gritty's mother likes whelks; and the lame child

on the second floor back likes the sweet stuff; but she no sooner hears the parson say somethin' about 'help the starvin' children' than she squeezed me up tight, and said, with a kind o' ketch in her voice, 'I must, I must!' and in I went, hot and warm, out of her little hand into the velvet bag."

"What about—the——?"

"Black Jack, sir? Lor' bless 'ee, she'll go without it, that's nothing. The worst of it is, she'll be looking out for her poor '*farden*,' as she calls me, from morning to night; she knows me well, owing to this, sir," said the farthing, drawing attention to the verdigris that obliterated his features. "Sometimes she'll say, when she's waiting for her change at the chandler's shop, 'if you've got a little shabby farden in the till wi' a hole in it,' I'd like that best."

"Well," said the sovereign, who was interested in spite of himself, "I'm afraid she'll look in vain for you now; you're in quite another set."

"Oh dear!" sighed the farthing; then, as if to change his thoughts, he said, "May I ask, how your time is employed, sir?"

"Well, er, it's all much of a muchness with me. Sometimes I procure fine clothes and amusements, and sometimes I go to pay bills that there's a good deal of snarling about, and—"

"And have you any particular friend, sir, anybody like Gritty?"

"No, I think not. People like me for what they get out of me."

The rest of the conversation was cut short by the bag being carried away, and its contents hurriedly overturned; and in the clatter and confusion the farthing and the sovereign became separated altogether.

.....
"How much for this wreath of white lilies?"—"One guinea, sir."

"Well, send it to this address by two o'clock sharp."

The customer turned abruptly away; the florist proceeded to tie up the wreath, standing at his open door as he did so.—"Now, Missus, what are you doing, turning my flowers upside down; what do you want?"

"Only a daisy, or the least bit of flower; I ain't got much to pay for it: only this."

"We don't trade with farthings this end of the town. There, there. Don't 'ee cry. Here's some daisies. No, no, never mind the farthing; take 'em for love."

"Please let me pay for 'em; I'd like to pay for them with this, sir."

"Well, well! here's a white rose into the bargain. Who's dead then?"

"Gritty, Gritty, my only child, and me a widow!"

"Poor soul!" said the florist to his wife, who was nursing a bouncing baby at the back of the shop. Another customer came forward, the florist tossed the farthing and the sovereign into the till, and so they met again.

If anything, the farthing was more disreputable-looking than ever: for a coating of mud had dried upon what was once the best side of his coat, and the verdigris on the other side had spread considerably. Regardless of his old friend, the Jubilee sovereign, he rolled to the back of the till, fell flat on his face and wept.

"I know your grief, sir," said the sovereign, making towards him through a crowd of sixpences and shillings.

"I heard all about it as I lay in the doctor's pocket at the hospital: how your little friend was run over in Simon's Alley, with you in her hand."

"Oh, oh," cried the farthing, "that's what hurts, to think as I should be the cause of it!"

"Not at all, the blind beggar was the cause of it; she was running to give you to him."

"Not at first, sir. She had just come across me at the sweet shop, after a whole month's absence, and was tearing home to show me to mother. Then, all at once, she saw the blind beggar; and now I shall never buy her anything again. To think as a flower for her coffin was the last!"

"Yes, and I worried my young doctor to buy that lovely wreath of lilies, for, he says, he never met a sweeter, more unselfish child than Gritty. I heard him tell the nurses he half believed God sometimes lets the angels come from Heaven to show folks what real goodness is."

Once more the florist went to his till. "Look, wife, here's a Jubilee at last, and a holey farthing close beside him! Put 'em both by in baby's stocking; 'twill bring the rascal luck, and no mistake."

Lottie Haskell.

IN THE FIELDS.

IT'S far the pleasantest kind of play
To run in the fields on a sweet Spring day.

To pick the May that grows in the lane,
To gather the daisies and make a chain.

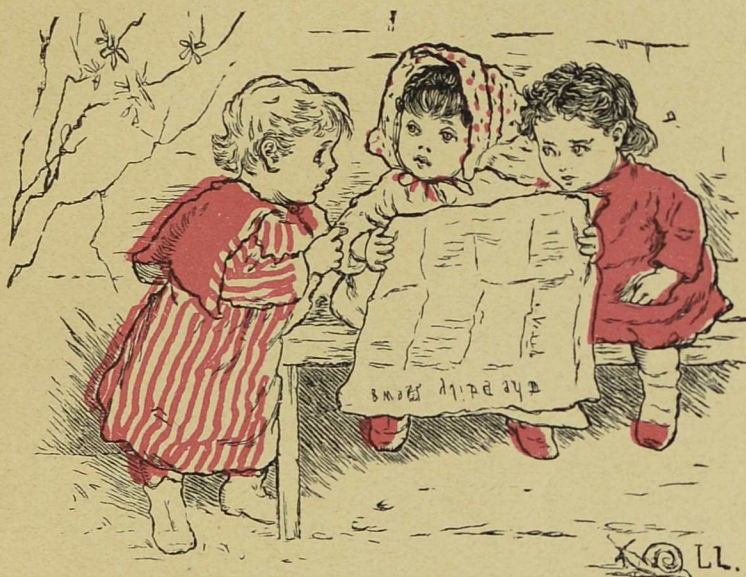
To pluck the flowers at the water's edge,
To make a picnic under the hedge.

To lie in the grass and roll about;
To call to each other with merry shout.

We always feel so happy
and good,
We'd *live* in the meadows
if we could.



THE DAILY NEWS.



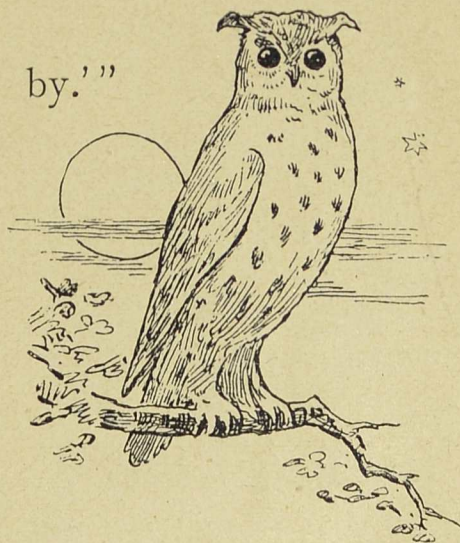
SAID I, "little maidens,
Will you tell me, pray,
Little maidens," said I,
"The news of the day?"

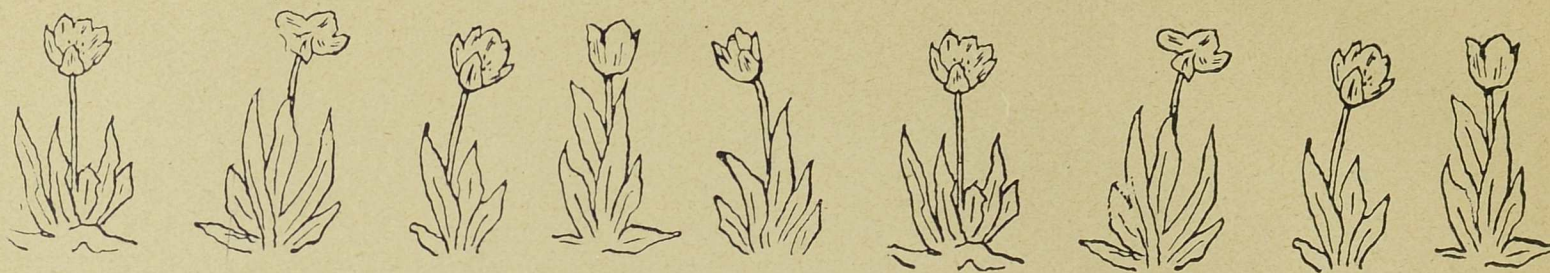
My good sir," said they,
"We will tell it you true
Said they, "my good sir,
We will tell it to you,

"Last night Mother Hubbard
Devoured in her cupboard
The whole of a gooseberry pie;
An owl who knew her,
Said, 'Mother, I'm sure,
It's a mercy there's nobody by.'"

Said I, "little maidens,
D'you think that it's true?
I, really, can scarcely
Believe it, can you?"

Said they, "my good sir,
It's as true as a book—
You can see for yourself,
If you only will look."





JOHNNY BULLFIELD.



"HAT a bother to have to sit here, mother!" said Johnny Bullfield, who was sitting bare-legged on the table, while his patient mother mended his torn knickerbockers.

There was such a sunny sky overhead this bright September afternoon; and his school-fellows had asked him to go with them on a secret expedition to old Farmer Roy's orchard.

It was most tantalising.

If it had been a wet day now, and his mother had asked him to stay in, it would have been different. It was just the way at school, whenever he was kept in it was sure to be a lovely day and something unusually exciting going on with the other boys.

But Johnny loved his mother. He was not a very obedient boy, perhaps, as a rule, and was often in disgrace at school, but he very seldom disobeyed his mother.

"It is a bother!" repeated Johnny, with a sigh.

"Never mind," answered Mrs. Bullfield, gently. "I'll be as quick as I can. You must remember, Johnny, it's your own fault for climbing the cherry-tree."

"Mother!"

"Yes?"

"Old Roy said he would send me to prison if ever he caught me stealing his apples again. Do you think he *really* will?"

Johnny was a brave boy, and the thought that his companions might at this very moment be in danger, if not of prison, at any rate of old Roy's big whip, filled him with great apprehension for them.

Before Mrs. Bullfield had time to answer Johnny's question, there was a clatter of horses' hoofs outside, and Farmer Roy himself was at the cottage door.



"Good afternoon, Mrs. Bullfield," said he.

Johnny turned white, as the thought of the prison flashed across his mind.

"Good afternoon, sir!"

"Those precious young rascals have been at my fruit again. I'm going to give them a lesson!" And he cracked his whip significantly in the air.

"I don't think boys count it as harm, sir," began Mrs. Bullfield, looking very distressed.

"Hullo! has Johnny sneaked home?" interposed he.

"No, sir; I had some clothes of his to mend, and told him to stay in. He's a good lad, and minded me. I'm sure, sir, he'd no intention of stealing your fruit."

Johnny leapt down off the table, trembling in every limb.

"Yes, I had, mother! If you had not told me to stay in I was going with the other boys——"

"*What!*" cried Farmer Roy.

"I'm very sorry, sir; but on my honour I'll not touch them again, if you'll let the boys off this time."

Farmer Roy took off his hat, wiped it round inside with his handkerchief, stuck it on his head, and remained silent a moment.

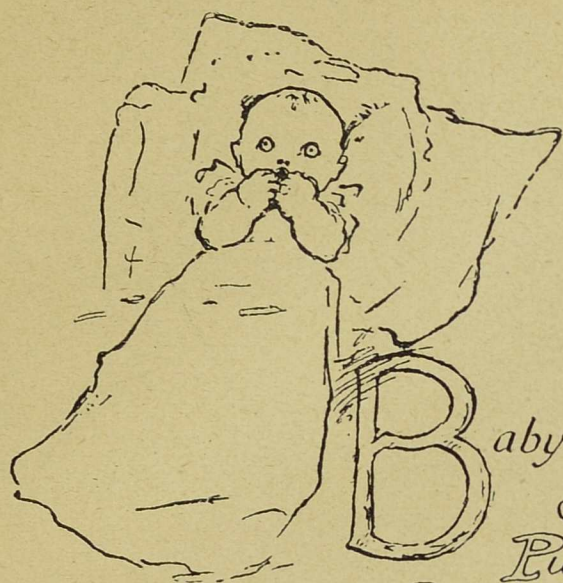
"Humph!" he said, looking from Mrs. Bullfield to Johnny; "a boy that isn't afraid to tell the truth, and that obeys his mother and stays in on a day like this, is to be trusted. Look here, Johnny, you're a brave lad, and a credit to your mother."

Johnny's face was all aglow.

"I'll let the rascals off this time, and what's more I'll wait until you're mended up, and you shall come along with me to the orchard, where I'll show you the trees I want spared. You're a boy of honour, and now I feel my fruit is safe."

This bright September afternoon was the happiest day Johnny had ever spent, and on waving his cap to his mother, as he drove off at Farmer Roy's side, he tasted the sweet fruits of obedience.

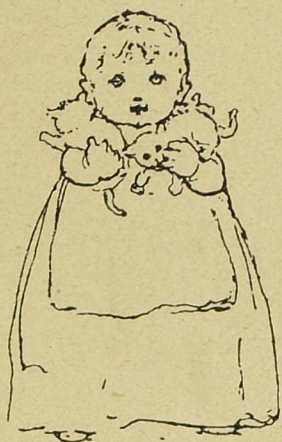




A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

Baby lay flat in the cushioned arm-chair,
Staring as hard as a baby can stare;
Pussy-cat sat by the fire, on the rug,
Staring at him with a wondering shrug;
"Why what *can* they see
(*'Tis* a puzzle to me)
In a creature as silly as silly can be?"

⁶⁶ **M**y little kitten could caper and run,
You haven't in you one atom of fun;
Fluff would sit daintily washing her face,
You don't mind looking a perfect disgrace;
Your eyes are not blue,
And you can't even mew,
Yet they drowned my poor Kitty, and did not drown you!



Baby grew tired of lying quite still,
Twisted his face up, and cried with a will;
Pussy slipped stealthily out at the door,
Said, "this *is* more than one's bound to endure,
You cross little muff!
They'll be sorry enough,
I'm sure, that they kept you instead of my *F*luff."



QUESTIONS

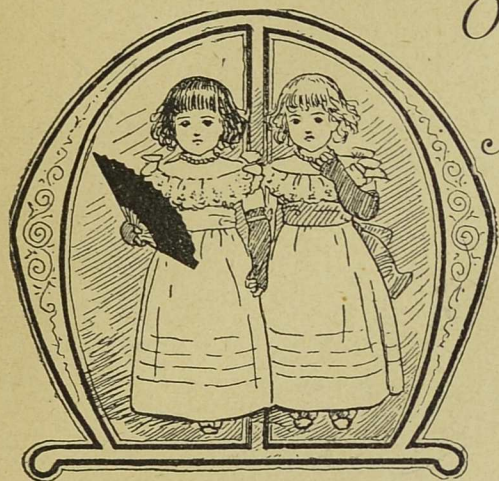
Mother, can you tell me why
Stars don't tumble
from the sky?

Does God fix them, close and tight,
In their places every night?

Mother darling, do you know,
In the morning, where they go?
P'raps the baby angels play
Daisy chains with them all day.
S'pose the sun, at night time, said,
"I don't want to stop in bed,"
O'er the world began to peep,
When he should be fast asleep:
Who'd blow out the big white moon
If the sun got up too soon?

Somehow, mother did not speak,
Only kissed her darling's cheek,
Held him tightly to her breast,
Laid him gently down to rest.

ONE OF GRANNIE'S TALES.



ANY years ago when your aunt Sophy and I were little," said Grandmother.

"How many?" we cried, one after another, like a tribe of Poll Parrots.

"Too many for such giddy heads to reckon back; besides, I forget the exact year myself. This I do know, that it was the thirty-first day of March."

"How can you recollect the date so well, Granny?"

"Easily enough, children: for brother Jack had come home from his first cruise that very morning, and I was entering the date in a little book he had brought me, or trying to do so, for Sophy was whirling round like a tee-totum, and Jack holding poor Toby by the end of his tail—to test his pluck, as he called it. All at once Sophy looked over my shoulder to see what I was writing.

"'It's not the thirtieth, it's the thirty-first of March: isn't it, Jack?'

"Jack reversed Toby, scratched his mischievous, curly head, thought for a moment: 'Yes, Sophy's right'; then, with a wild war whoop, and tossing poor little doggie to the ceiling like a ball of white wool, he said: 'I say, girls, you must turn out at five sharp to-morrow morning if you want to see the show!'

"'What show?'

"'Why the Royal Beasts of Burden, belonging to King Cockolorum of Africa.'

"'Going through our lane?'

"Jack nodded and buried his head in Toby's back.

"'Do, *do* tell us about them: their names and everything. I shall get up, won't you, Sophy?'

"'And me, too! Let me go, too,' said tiny Bessy.

"'Yes, yes, you shall go, too. Now Jack, tell us what is coming?

"'There's the one-eyed griffin, the double-tailed dragon, the weeping crocodile, the speckled unicorn, and a whole string of 'em.'

"‘Now, Jack, you’re poking fun at us!’ we cried.

"‘Well, get up and see for yourselves.’ With a long, shrill whistle Jack sprang through the window and was gone.

"You may be sure we got up early next morning—indeed, I doubt if any of us slept much all night, for in those old-fashioned days a show was a great sight to a country child. Once in the garden, I remember clambering on to the wall thinking I should see everything beautifully as it turned the corner. Sophy, who was more timid than I was, kept close to the gate, with Bessie clinging to her frock, both of them ready to fly instantly if the sight were too much for their nerves.

"We waited a long time; but nothing unusual happened.

"‘Hush!’ said Sophy. We listened—Yes, at last there *was* something coming a long way off, a sound like somebody sighing a lot of big sighs one after the other as fast as they could. Then the sighs grew louder, like animals panting and groaning: nearer and nearer they came, the ground seemed to shake under us, as if the animals were treading very heavily indeed.

"‘Jack! Jack!’ we screamed at the top of our voices; ‘quick, quick! they’re coming!’ In our hurry to rush down to the gate we had forgotten to wake brother Jack, and feared he would lose the sight altogether.

"‘Oh!’ said Sophy, ‘what a shame!’ For the sound was going away, getting unmistakeably fainter and fainter and farther and farther off, till it was completely gone. ‘What a shame for it to go by another way after all! I’m sure it was the procession. Let’s go and tell Jack.’

"Just then something, all legs and arms, flew over the hedge and flapped down like a big bird in the middle of the road, right in front of us. ‘*What’s the date Sophy?*’ it said, grinning. Of course, then we knew Jack had played us a trick, because it was the first of April!”

"O Grandma, I hope you payed him back for it,” we children cried out, “but what *was* the noise you and Aunt Sophy heard?”

"That, my dears, was the first railway we ever heard in our lives, and the first that ever ran through our village—a far greater wonder than Jack’s procession, and so we told him.



A REGULAR TURK.



A BABY KING.



OW I think I know what most little children imagine about a king: that he is a very great personage, indeed, who wears a gold crown on his hat all day long, and a mantle of scarlet and blue cloth, sweeping from his shoulders to the floor, bordered with a white kind of fur with little black dots on it, called ermine.

That he does nothing at all, only sits upon a throne, and looks down on the people who kneel in crowds at his feet.

If they bring him anything to eat or drink, they bring it in dishes and cups of gold and silver, and offer it on one knee, as if they dared not come too near him. And when any of his subjects have been disobedient, or have vexed him very much, he frowns dreadfully upon them, and orders his soldiers to take them away to be punished, perhaps to be kept in a dark dungeon till they are quite old and grey-headed.

Now I want to tell you of King Alphonso, who isn't at all like these kings you read about in your fairy books. His crown is his own curly locks, and his throne his dear mother's knee. When the great noblemen come to visit him, he gurgles and laughs, claps his little fat hand, and likes to play with their brave ornaments, gold sticks, long shining swords and bright sparkling jewels, that they have worn to do him honour: just as your own mother's baby would do if he found himself in such grand company.

There was great rejoicing when this little king was born. People could talk of nothing else. Even the children were full of it, and played at



serenading him under the palace windows Serenading means playing sweet music on a guitar, and singing softly under the window of some one you love very much ; and, of course, they loved their Baby King dearly.

It was a lucky day for all the babies in Spain when he had on his first pair of shoes, for his mother, the queen, ordered new shoes to be given to everyone of them ; to mark such a sweet event. I don't know how many babies there were in Spain who wanted a first pair of shoes, but they must have had to buy a great many.

I often think I should like to see all the toys in the king's nursery ; for the great people who come to see him must surely come laden with gifts, and what else could they offer a Baby King but beautiful toys ?

The first time he had a royal reception—that is a state visit from a lot of grandees from all parts of the world—the queen had him dressed in a white lace frock, made of some of the loveliest lace in Spain. His nurse, too, wore a dress of rich velvet that trailed yards behind her ; she sat with the Baby King in her arms, and the grand nobles came forward, one after the other bowed low before him, kissed his little hand whilst he

screamed and laughed with delight, when anything very sparkling caught his eye. But it took such a long time for all these great folks to come in and out the throne room, that the Baby King grew tired of smiling and clapping his hands; so he just put his head on nurse's shoulder, and fell fast asleep! Little kings are like all other babies, and don't care a scrap for state ceremonies, whatever big kings are fond of. To put a little fat arm round nurse's neck is better than having it held out for a crowd of bowing courtiers to kiss.

Before I finish this little story, I will copy a Spanish lullaby for English children to see. Maybe the royal nurse sometimes sings it to His little Majesty as she sits by his pretty cot:—

The Baby Child of Mary,
Now cradle He has none;
His father is a carpenter,
And he shall make Him one.

The lady good Saint Anna,
The Lord Saint Joachim,
They rock the baby's cradle,
That sleep may come to Him.

Then sleep thou, too, my baby,
My little heart so dear,
The Virgin is beside thee,
The Son of God is near.





Thanks

Giving.

G^{OD} doth each tiny sparrow feed,
 And clothes the lamb in wool so white;
 He scatters daisies o'er the mead,
 And bids the stars shine out at night.

He sends the sun to warm the earth,
 He paints the sky in colours gay,
 He fills the wood with joy and mirth,
 And doeth wonders every day.

Then if He feeds each tender thing,
 And clothes the lamb and tints the flower,
 We, too, may shelter 'neath His wing,
 And feel His love from hour to hour.

So we must thank Him, one and all,
 And unto Heaven our voices raise,
 It makes Him glad, when children small
 Lift tiny hands in joyful praise.



THE TELL-TALE BIRDIE.

THE TELL-TALE

BIRDIE.



THERE is a bird that whispers
My secrets, Robin dear;
He tells them all to Mother,
When I'm not by to hear.

For oft I say, "Dear Mother,
Now, how do you know this?"
"A little Birdie whispered,"
She answers, with a kiss.

If I am rude and angry,
Or throw my toys about,
This funny little Birdie
Is sure to find it out.

Although I cannot see him,
This little Bird sees me;
Pray, tell me, pretty Robin,
Who can this Birdie be?

"**I** CAN fly over the sea," said the gull, "and I can peep into the lighthouse, and see the men light the lantern, and, then, I ride on the mast of a ship and talk to the sailors, and—"

"Oh," said a fish, "I can swim *underneath* the sea, and see stranger sights than that: lovely shells and flowers, and the queerest of fishes."

"And I can't do either!" sighed a little girl, sitting on the rocks.

"Never mind," they both said, "you can go to school, learn to read and write, and grow up into a good and fine lady, and that's best of all."



EVERY Sunday afternoon, as soon as father lays down his pipe or his book drops from his hand, and his head begins to nod sleepily from side to side, Cyril, the eldest boy, steals on tip-toe to the arm chair, and throws a silk handkerchief over his father's face. This is the signal for "Mother's Story."

As little Daisy, with a wise shake of her golden head, once said, "Father's too big, he's forgotted to talk like children!"

Perhaps Daisy was right, for nobody could tell certain sweet old stories so well as mother. They sounded ever much sweeter and prettier, whispered by mother in the firelight than when spelt word by word out of the big Bible on week days.

Now on this particular Sunday, Cyril and Tom had vexed their father and mother so much that neither of them dared to ask for the story. Cyril had taken a little white mouse to church in his pocket, and the mouse got away, and ran about the pew. Luckily, father caught it, and kept it till service was over; but Cyril and Tom were sent out of church, and mother's face had looked very grave ever since. Now they were waiting for the story.

"Father's asleep," whispered Amy.

"I see, dear," said mother, gazing into the fire.

"Won't you tell us a story?"

Cyril and Tom said nothing; they knew mother was thinking of what they did in the morning. "Yes," said mother at last, "take your places, and I'll begin."

It was so like mother to put her arm round Tom, and to let Cyril lay his head against her knee, as if nothing had happened.

"Long ago," she said, "when Jesus, with two of his disciples, was



Jesus on His way to Jerusalem.

at a place called the Mount of Olives, he told them to go into a village, a little way off, and bring Him an ass which they would find tied up outside a stable. So the disciples went to the village, and found the ass, and began to untie it.

A man, who was standing near, said, "Why do you untie the ass?" But they replied, "The Lord hath need of him." And the man and his companions let the ass go.

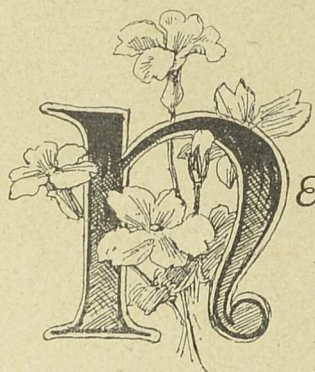
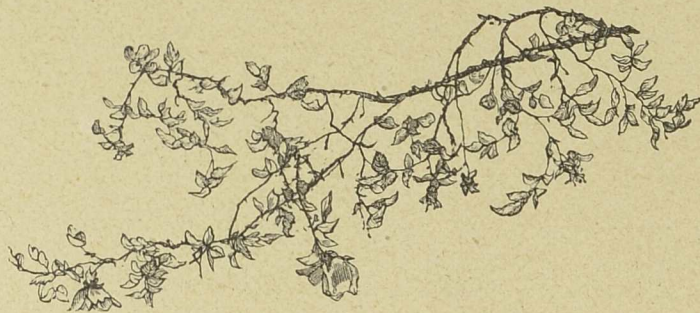
Then they brought it to Jesus, and covered it with some of their own clothes, and Jesus rode upon it into Jerusalem.

A great crowd of men, women and children followed Him, shouting and singing His praises. Some of them cut down branches from the palm trees, and strewed them in His way—so glad were they to see Him come into Jerusalem!

Now in Jerusalem there was a holy place, called the temple. It was God's house, and the doors were always left wide open, so that the people might go in and out, to sing and pray at all times.

Jesus rode up to this holy temple, and went in with the crowd following Him. But when He saw it full of men who did not love God, and who, instead of praising Him, were doing their week-day business, selling doves, and sparrows, and sheep, and counting and changing their money, Jesus was very angry. He made a little whip of cords, and drove them out of the temple, saying, "It is written, 'My father's house shall be called a house of prayer,' but ye have made it a den of thieves."

That was all "Mother's Story," but she bent down and whispered something in Cyril's ear that made him very happy; and the white mouse never went to church again.



A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

NEW Year's Day! The bells are ringing!
And little Teddy, closely clinging
To mother's neck, begins repeating
In lisping tones his long learnt greeting:—
"To each and all a Happy New Year,
But the happiest one to our mother dear!"

Good day,

Darling Mother,



A Happy New Year.

BABIES AND

BIRDS.



*W*HAT do you think they are doing, these children?

Why, looking at the birds eating the crumbs that nurse has thrown out in the snow to them. It has snowed so heavily in the night that the children cannot have the window opened. You see that it is quite blocked with snow. But the birds have got their crumbs all the same, and they are so grateful.

Listen: Mother is telling them a story of a little bird that she knew of. I can hear her, and if you listen very carefully, you will hear her too.

"A short time ago, a little girl, called Beatrice, found a tiny swallow on the ground. It was in the Spring, when the baby swallows are too young to fly, for they have to learn to fly just as your baby sister learns to walk. This poor little swallow had tried to fly too soon, and so it had fallen down, and could not get back to its nest.

Beatrice was a very kind little girl, and when she saw the poor swallow lying on the ground, half dead with fright and weakness, she picked it up and kissed it. Then she carried it gently into the house and fed it, and made a little warm soft bed for it in a

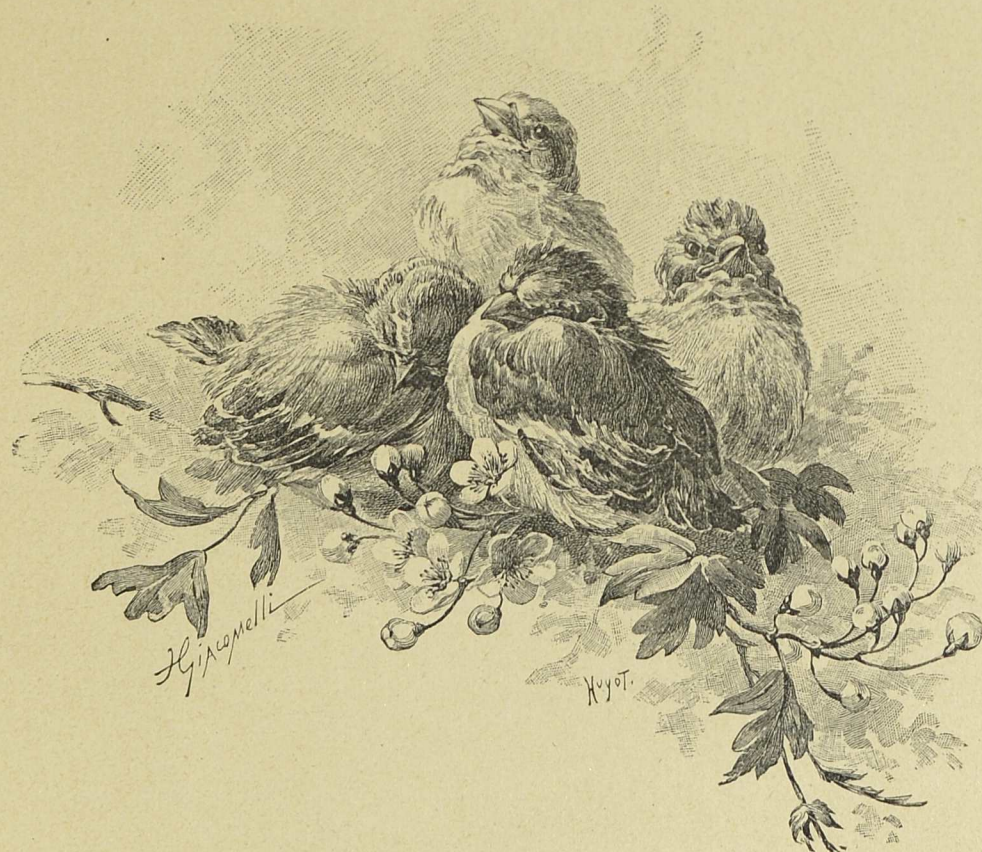
box. She would not put it in a cage, for it is always cruel to cage a wild bird. And the little swallow grew bigger and stronger every day, and soon it learned to fly about the room. But one day, when Beatrice was out, some one came and opened the window, and away flew birdie, singing for joy at the fresh air and the bright sunshine.

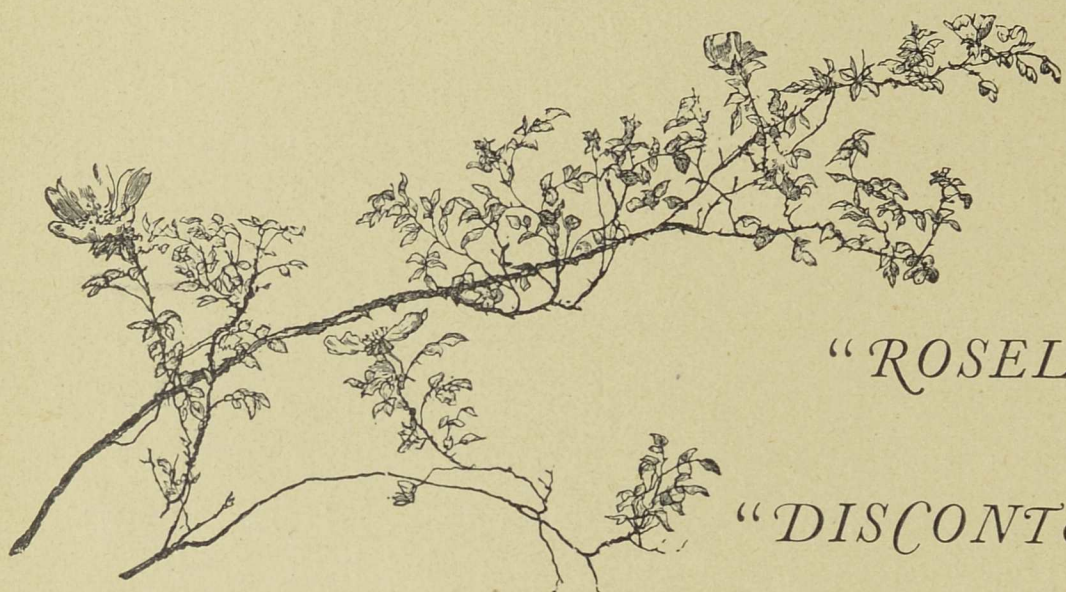
When Beatrice came back and found him gone, she was nearly heart-broken, for she really loved the little swallow, and all day she grieved that her pet had gone away—never to return—she thought. But as she was sitting by the window in the dusk of the warm summer evening suddenly she felt a cool breath on her face, just as if some one was fanning her, and then she heard soft wings fluttering, and there was the little swallow flying round her head, just as he used to do.

You may think how eagerly she ran and fetched him bread; and ever since then he has come twice every day to get his food quite regularly, at exactly the same time, and Beatrice is very happy again."

That was such a pretty story that the children clapped their hands when it was done.

"We will give the birds bread every day," said Lionel, as he leaned his head on his hand, and looked out. "Then, perhaps, they will love us, and fly round our heads too."





“ROSELEAF”
OR THE
“DISCONTENTED FAIRY.”



ROSELEAF was a little fairy. She had been given that name, because she was just like a rose leaf—so delicate in form and colour, such a pink and white little creature, that even by the fairies she was treated with more care and consideration than the others. If a shower of rain came on, quickly would they pull up a daisy, and hold it over her, for fear lest her golden hair and gossamer wings should be injured. They bathed her in the dew-filled buttercups; they fed her with the sweetest honey from the hare bells, and protected her from all the little discomforts which trouble even the tiny lives of the fairies. And yet, strange to say, Roseleaf was not happy. Now, one of the strictest rules amongst the fairies is, that they must not *reason* about anything. Certainty and stern reality must never exist with them, for “beauty is truth, truth beauty,” and that is all they need to know, and if they break this rule, they cannot live any longer in fairyland—for then would they be subject to all the ills which torment mortals, who ever search for beauty with eyes that are dim with tears of sin and sorrow, and so search in vain; and are surprised that beauty should shrivel up and vanish away, when touched by their soiled fingers.

And so, Roseleaf, instead of dancing in the sunlight with her tiny companions, content with simply enjoying its beauty and warmth, wished to discover *why* the sun shone by day and not by night, and what was the cause of its heat, etc., etc., and she became quite pale and thin through fretting after this hidden knowledge, until one bright day she

determined to climb one of its rays, and find out for herself the reason of the sun's power.

She slipped away from her companions, unperceived, and began her ascent up the biggest sun ray of all. At first it was easy climbing, but presently it became so steep that Roseleaf had often to stop and take breath, and then the heat increased fearfully, the nearer she got to the sun.

Poor little fairy! Her efforts were in vain after all. Bravely struggling on, the heat at last overpowered her; she swooned away, and slipping off the sun ray, she fluttered senseless through the air, like the petal of a rose in the evening breeze. But the kind west wind, filled with pity, blew towards her a soft grey bit of cloud. She sank into its downy folds, and lay motionless—one tiny hand pillowing the pale wee face, the other, half hidden in the folded mists of the cloud, whilst her golden hair floated in the wind.

When she recovered consciousness, she opened her blue eyes, and gazed about her in astonishment; and then her fairy nature asserting itself, she forgot all the horrors of *reality*, and gave herself up to the pure enjoyment of the beauty which surrounded her, the lovely blue sky through which she was floating, the other little clouds, some white like swans-down, some pearly grey, some tinged with pink, some edged with silver and gold, and the earth, far away, looking like a beautiful distant isle. But alas! her pleasure was short lived. A storm arose, the cloud burst beneath her, and once more Roseleaf found herself falling through the air, drenched to the skin by the merciless rain, which drove her along, ever down and down, lower and lower, until—splash! she had fallen into the sea.

Down she fled beneath the cool green waters. The mermaids would fain have taken her into their arms, and hidden her in their golden tresses; but Thetis, the goddess of the sea, was wrath, and ere the kind mermaids could reach her, Roseleaf was turned into a little pink and white shell. And there she lies, and always will lie, at the bottom of the ocean, far away from fairyland and all her merry friends of yore.

For she had broken the bubble of sweet fancy, and for ever after must remain a little bit of reality herself.

Helen B. May.



BUTTERCUP

GOLD.

"*B*UTTERCUP, buttercup, give me your gold,
For this is my birthday; I'm seven years old."
Buttercup, nodding, said, "What would you buy?"
"A pair of white wings to fly into the sky."
Buttercup whispered, "Whom there would you see?"
"Kind God up in Heaven who loves you and me."

"Then what would you say if you found Him at last?"
"I'd ask Him to make me grow up very fast."
Buttercup, smiling, said, "Dear little man,
Please stay in our meadow as long as you can.
All that we have we would willingly give
To keep you beside us as long as we live.
Hold up your frock, here's a lapful of gold,
But ask for a heart that will never grow old."

THE LESSON.

NOW, Carlo, listen well to me,
And try to learn your ABC.
Aren't you ashamed to be a dunce?
Sit up and say it, sir, at once."

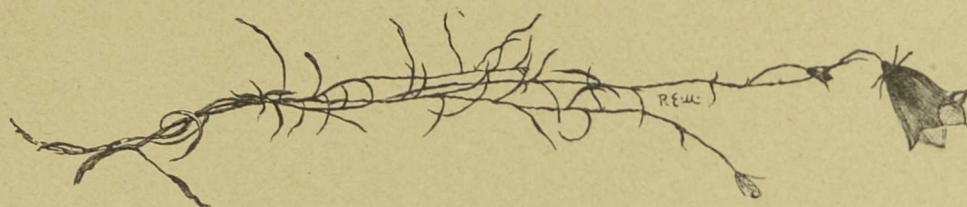
"Bow-wow," said Carlo, "bow-wow-wow
Please, teacher, have I finished now?
Of course, I dearly love to learn;
But now I'm sure it's Pussy's turn."





PUSSY.

PUSSY-CAT, pussy-cat, up in the tree,
You're not a birdie, so jump down to me—
You'll frighten the songsters if you stay up there,
Breakfast is ready, come down for your share.



MAID MARJORY.



It was a sad little party that met round the breakfast table one rainy April morning, at Fair Oaks Cottage, to discuss the contents of the large black-edged envelope, sealed with heavy armorial bearings, that had arrived the night before. An almost overwhelming sorrow had, but lately, entered through the rose-grown porch; and now this new perplexity had come, demanding an almost immediate decision, for the words of the letter were harsh and imperative, and the temper of the writer was not one to brook delay. The father, and sole bread winner, was gone; the gunboat, of which he had command, having been cast away in a storm in a remote latitude of the Pacific; and his widow, face to face with penury (dreaded only for her children's sake), was forced to put away her grief to plan the means of living.

By means of careful economy at home, Charlie, who was twelve years old, had been placed in one of the less expensive of our public schools. Gwendoline, the eldest of all, had received a good education, of which she was now preparing to make the fullest use, having accepted a position as English governess at a small *pension* in a little German town. And Mrs. Staunton herself was advertising for pupils in music and singing. But, with their utmost efforts, the struggle must needs be a hard one, and the issue uncertain. Charlie's education could not be entirely stopped, and there were four little ones, of whom ten-year-old Marjory was the eldest, to house and feed, to say nothing of clothing.

Gwendoline was the first to break the, until lately, unaccustomed silence; she was a tall, fair girl, with frank blue eyes, and masses of straw-coloured, wavy hair. "Dear," she said (this was what she always called her mother), "What is it that Grandmamma wishes; and why has it worried you so? You look twice as pale as you were yesterday. She *must* be a cruel woman to have left you alone ever since you married papa; and now, just when you are in such terrible grief, to write you an unkind letter."

"Hush, Gwen, darling!" said Mrs. Staunton, sadly; you must not speak so of Lady Staunton. Remember always that she is your dear father's mother; and, besides that, we must never judge others entirely from our own standpoint. Flossie, have you and Dolly finished breakfast? Yes? Well, you can take Trot into the garden between you; be very careful of him. You may play there in the sun, near this window."

"Let me stay, mother dear?" pleaded Marjory.

"Yes, my child, you may stay. Now that the little ones are gone, there is something that I have to say to you and Gwen. You are but a wee lassie, I know, Madge, to share mother's troubles; but it cannot be helped, and I know my little woman will take her share as bravely and thoughtfully as she can."

Marjory's small face flushed brightly with pleasure at her mother's praise—not undeserved, indeed, for, although as very a pickle on occasions as ever chased chickens and climbed trees, she was, in reality, womanly and wise, with a quaint kind of wisdom far beyond her years. As a rule, people were somewhat puzzled to decide whether she were an extremely pretty child, or quite the reverse. She was tall for her age, long-legged, and slight, with a clear, pale skin, large dark violet eyes, and a shock of tawny curls. Charlie always called her "the spider" when he wished to be aggravating, because she was dark and thin.

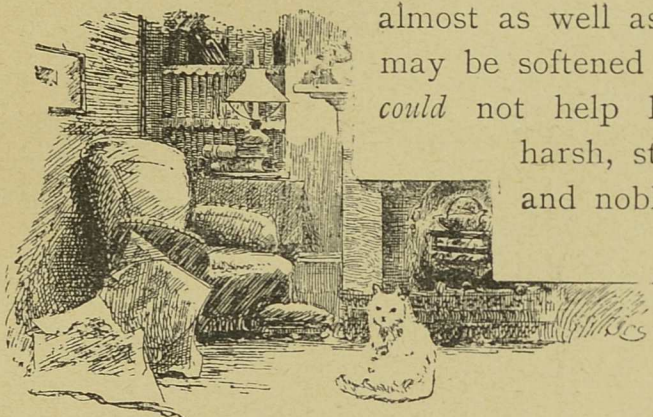
To return to our story. "You know," resumed Mrs. Staunton, "that neither your father nor I have ever seen his mother since our marriage, although, previously, they were deeply attached; but you do not know the reason for the estrangement that has always been so great a sorrow to me. Lady Staunton is, in some ways, a peculiar, and also an extremely proud woman, and she could not reconcile herself to the idea of having for a daughter-in-law a penniless girl of comparatively obscure birth—the child of a struggling country doctor. It was her dearest wish that your father should have married his cousin, Lady Edith Blakeley, but this could not be, for his whole heart was given to me. We married against her will, and she not only disinherited your father, but cut herself off entirely from all communication with him."

"Hateful old thing," interpolated Marjory, indignantly, "as if any lady, or the Queen herself, could be one quarter as nice or as beautiful as you." Mrs. Staunton smiled, "You love me too well to be quite just to Lady Staunton, Madge; think, dearest, she is a lonely woman, and, surely, scarcely realised how deeply we loved one another. Our marriage overthrew the whole scheme of her life; you are not old enough to understand how natural it was for her to be hurt and angry. Even I did not realise then how much I had wounded her. But I have often thought of it since, and sorrowed for the pain I gave her."

"But *what* has she written about now, dear?" enquired Gwen. Tears sprang to her mother's eyes. "I will read you a portion of the letter," she said; "it ran thus:—'You have, I believe, several children, one of whom, if I am rightly informed, has been named after me. Why, I am at a loss to conjecture. If you send this little girl to me, to be given up without reservation to my authority, I will see that she receives an education befitting my grand-daughter, and endow her, provided her conduct please me, with a sufficient portion; under the sole condition that during my lifetime she shall visit your side of her family but once, for a week, in every three years.'"

A cry from Marjory interrupted the reading: "O mother, I can't—how could I? I don't want her portions or educations. I'll stay with you, and help you take care of Flossie and Trot. Dolly can go; we'll change *her* name to Marjory."

"Would you not go if I asked you, Madge?" said her mother, quietly weeping. "If I thought it the most kind and just thing for my little girl to try and make some amends to a sad and lonely mother. Father was *her* child, you know, and I think she loved him



almost as well as I love you. Then, too, who knows how her heart may be softened to all the world by having something to love. She *could* not help loving my Marjory. I saw her portrait once—a harsh, stern face, but beautiful, with something very grand and noble about it.”

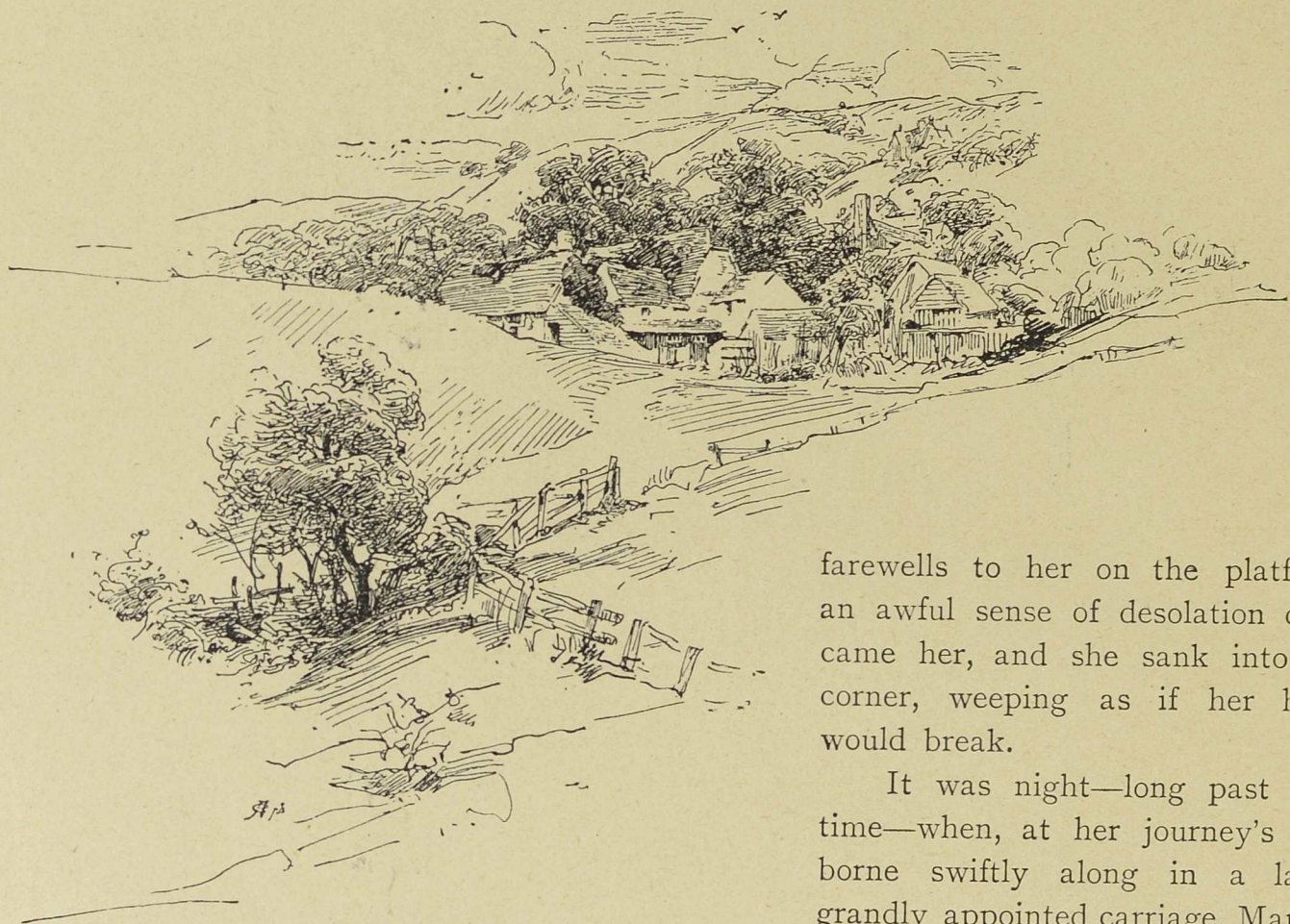
“Besides, dear,” said Gwen, who had turned very pale, “Molly could have all the teaching I have so longed for her to have; she would not forget us, I know. And what could she learn here, looking after the little ones? You will have enough to do with teaching them to read and write, and giving your music lessons, poor dear!”

“You are right, Gwen. Madge, my darling, you will be brave and good, and help me to bear this? You shall not go against your will. If you are unhappy, you shall return home to us, come what may.”

“I will go, I will go, my dearest, dearest mother,” sobbed Marjory, flinging herself upon her mother’s bosom. “I will be good, but I shall never, never like her. I’ll try to—to be—be kind to her, though, because my papa was her child.” And mother and child clung together weeping.

And so it was decided that Marjory should leave the pleasant cottage in the old-fashioned Surrey town where her young life had begun, and go forth into what was for her an unknown country. For Staunton Place stands in one of the wildest parts of Cornwall, looking down upon the sea, near the estuary of the river Comel, and within sound of the moaning of the waves over the Doom Bar at its mouth. A dangerous and a rocky coast, indeed; and many a ship, seeking the difficult haven, among the tumult of winds and waters, never gains it, but is ground to pieces on the sharp black rocks, and her fragments scattered on the shore or borne away in the under tow.

Day followed day all too quickly, bringing the dreaded parting nearer and nearer, until (quite suddenly it seemed) it was upon them. Marjory’s little trunk lay, all ready, corded and labelled, in the narrow passage; nearly all the farewells were over, when Charlie, who had been scarcely seen since breakfast, came forward with suspiciously red eyes, and pushing a small wooden box into her hand, said, “I thought you’d like to have him with you.” “O Charlie! Your guinea-pig!” cried poor Marjory, completely breaking down. “How *kind* of you; he’ll be the *greatest* comfort to me; but what will you do without him?” “Oh, I shall do alright, don’t bother about that; and, I say, Molly, if you find any sea-gulls’ eggs, you might blow them, and send me some.” Marjory kept up bravely all the while she was journeying with her mother and Gwen towards the great terminus where she was met by an austere-looking woman, who announced herself, with great dignity, as “my lady’s housekeeper, at your service, madam.” But when the actual separation came, and she could no longer see the two dear figures standing waving their



farewells to her on the platform, an awful sense of desolation overcame her, and she sank into her corner, weeping as if her heart would break.

It was night—long past bedtime—when, at her journey's end, borne swiftly along in a large, grandly appointed carriage, Marjory saw, for the first time, the lights

of Staunton Place. A solemn white-headed butler received Mrs. Enefer, the housekeeper, and her weary little charge.

"My lady will see Miss Staunton at once," he said "unless she would first wish some refreshment."

Marjory shook her head, declining the proffered meal, and was then accordingly ushered through a great oak-panelled hall, where a roaring fire danced and flickered, and pale portraits in antique costume looked down from the walls. She followed the butler up the wide oak staircase, with its broad, shallow steps, and on through a suite of spacious rooms, where tall mirrors showed her dozens of little black-robed figures advancing on every side. If she had not thought it beneath her dignity, she would have liked to cling to the man's hand, the place looked so vast and terrific. At last, passing through a large saloon, all white and gold, her guide paused before a door leading therefrom. "My lady is in the boudoir," he whispered, discreetly tapping on the flower-painted panels; and in another moment Marjory was standing in the presence of her grandmother. Straightening her small self up as best she might, the child advanced over the soft carpet to where, in a stately high-backed chair, a lady, with piercing black eyes and hair like silver, sat, with broidery-work in her long white hands, which flashed and sparkled with jewelled rings. As the door closed upon the retreating form of the servant, Lady Staunton raised her head,

and her eyes met those of Marjory. The child drew near and held out her hand with the quaint courtesy peculiar to her. "How do you do, Grandmamma?" she said. "Am I like what you expected me to be?" Lady Staunton dropped the small, grimy hand, and, rising, turned away towards the fire. "Thank you, Marjory, I am well," she replied; "I do not think I gave much thought as to your possible appearance. To-morrow morning I shall be able to judge better as to that." And ringing the bell, she consigned the tired little traveller to the care of the maid engaged to wait upon the new-comer—a bright, rosy-cheeked country lass, whose kind care and gentleness went far to console Marjory for her strange reception.

The next morning dawned fair and sunny, and Marjory, running to her window, looked out across the terraced garden at the back of the house, to the sea which lay, blue and shining, in the sun.

"I am to take you to my lady at ten o'clock, Miss Marjory," said Mary. "Then I am not to have breakfast with her?" "Dear sakes! no, Miss; your breakfast's all laid ready in your own sitting-room here." And throwing open the bedroom door, Mary showed a pretty room, furnished in bright-coloured chintz, and facing also the garden and the sea. When ten o'clock came, and Marjory was again taken to her grandmother, she found her in her morning room, an oak-panelled chamber, with old water-colour drawings on the walls, of ladies with very highwaisted dresses, and gentlemen with curious large collars and lace ruffles. Lady Staunton was sitting writing at an antique bureau. She was even paler than she had been the night before, Marjory noticed, almost as white as her fine muslin kerchief and lace mob cap. "Good morning, Grandmamma," said the child. "It was very kind of you to get such a pretty room ready for me, and to let me keep my guinea-pig in my sitting-room." "Your *what*, child?" said Lady Staunton. "My guinea-pig, Grandmamma; my guinea-pig that—that Ch—Charlie gave me," gulping down an obstinate lump in her throat." "Come, come," said the old lady hastily, but not unkindly, "you must not cry; little girls that fret foolishly and make themselves ill, are a misery to everyone near them."

"I am not going to fret or make myself ill, and—and I shall soon get used to being here. I shall like it better soon—quite soon. And I want to be kind to you and cheer you up. I won't be a misery to you. You won't be so lonely now I'm come—will you? Of course *I* think you were very unkind to my mother, though she doesn't; and, perhaps, I think that only because I don't understand. 'I am not old enough yet,' she says. Are you fond of French poetry? I can say *Le Chat et les Rats*, if you would care to hear it."

"Not just now, my dear," said Lady Staunton; "some other time, perhaps. What did you say about your—your mother? Did not she tell you I was an ogre, a hard-hearted old witch?"

"Dear me, no. Why did you think so? But I know a capital fairy story about a witch, and another about an ogre, too. I wonder if I could remember them. Why,"

suddenly glancing round, "where did you get my portrait?" Indeed, the miniature that lay among the papers on the open bureau, and of which Marjory's quick eyes caught a glimpse, might well have been painted from herself and none other: there were the same bronze-coloured curls, the same dark, wistful eyes and laughing mouth, the same haughty, finely-cut features. "May I look, if you please, Grandmamma?" Lady Staunton silently pushed the portrait towards the child it so strangely resembled, but the little girl gave a cry of disappointment: "Why, it isn't me after all; it is a *boy's* portrait, and what a funny, pretty kind of suit he has. That white frilled collar looks beautiful, turned back over his velvet jacket. How I wish he would come and play with me. Do you know him? Do you think his mother would let him come? I would so like another little child to play with. Could you ask her, Grandmamma?" Lady Staunton's hands shook as she gently disengaged the miniature from Marjory's eager hands, and shut it away in a drawer in her bureau, and her voice was not quite steady as she answered:

"I cannot, Marjory. This was my son Vereker when he was a child—when he was a child, and loved his mother better than all the world beside. But the child grew to manhood, and the man was lured away from her by false friends, by cunning designs, until he forsook her utterly. And now he is drowned and dead—drowned and dead—and can never grieve her any more. Her most deadly enemy is the woman who hardened the son's heart towards his mother. Let them reap the fruits of disobedience, and be glad with the harvest thereof. Go to your room, child—you hurt me. I am not well to-day."

The long Spring days sped on, with sun and wind and rain, bringing an undefined kind of union between the dwellers in Staunton Place. For a week after their strange interview in the morning-room, Marjory scarcely saw her grandmother, who was indisposed, and kept her room much during this time—having had, as Mrs. Enefer said, "one of her attacks." But, on the seventh day after, Marjory received a summons to take luncheon with Lady Staunton in the great oak-panelled dining-room.

"Oh, I am glad, Mary," she cried, clapping her hands; and then, suddenly remembering the fact that Mary, who was her messmate upstairs, might feel grieved at this distinctly-shown preference for other society, added, "but I *like* having my dinner up here with you, too; only, you see, Grandmamma was papa's mother, and I came here on purpose that she shouldn't be lonely any more. Papa loved her—so, of course, I do; and, of course, she must love me, and we like to be together. And oh, Mary, be quick and brush my hair, and give me a clean pinafore—my best one, with the lace on it."

And, with a sense of happy importance, the little woman tripped demurely down the wide, shallow staircase, at the foot of which she found Gervase, the butler, waiting to conduct her to the dining-room. At the end of the great table, which shone and sparkled with massy silver and old cut glass, sat Lady Staunton, looking, if anything, paler than before. But she held out her hand and smiled at the child with such a gracious gesture, such a sad, sweet look, that the impulsive little heart beat high with pity and love; and

running forward, Marjory threw her arms round Lady Staunton's neck and kissed her heartily; while the butler stood aghast and petrified with astonishment that anyone should venture to take such an unheard-of liberty with the proud, cold mistress of Staunton Place—and that “anyone,” a thin, long-legged child, in a shabby black frock, too!”

“Dear Grandmamma, you are better, are you not? I wish you would have let me come and help amuse you when you were ill. When Charlie fell off the cherry-tree and broke his arm last summer, I used to sit beside him nearly all day. Sometimes I used to read to him, and sometimes tell him stories out of my own head—he liked those best; and he said he did not feel the pain of his arm half so much as he would if I hadn't been there. So, next time you don't feel well, you'll let me sit with you, won't you?”

“Yes, Marjory,” replied Lady Staunton, “and so you tell stories all out of your own head,” and she sighed. Did, perchance, a vision flit across her memory, of just such another bright-eyed, curly-headed creature, perched

up on the end of her bed, weaving playful fancies about fairies and princesses, and what not? So long, so long ago, and here, again, were the eager dark eyes, the soft, clear voice. She roused herself from her brief reverie, and, looking towards the child, could hardly forbear smiling at the quaint appearance she presented. Marjory was seated in a chair just three times too large for her, struggling manfully with a knife and fork, at least, as proportionately unaccustomed. “You are not comfortable, child. Gervase, bring the small, carved chair for Miss Staunton, and ask Mrs. Deborah to open the cabinet in my boudoir, and to bring me the knife and spoon and fork, and the small silver tankard that she will find in the left hand compartment, nearest the door; here is the key.”

So Marjory was installed in the chair which had once been her father's, and drank out of the little silver cup bearing the interwoven initials “V. S.”



During luncheon she talked away with the ease, but not the artificiality, of a well-bred young woman of the world, who finds herself an honoured guest, and is desirous of making her presence still more welcome. When the meal was over, and Lady Staunton rose from the table, Marjory slipped down from her chair, saying, "What are you going to do this afternoon, Grandmamma? As you're not quite well, I don't think you ought to go out. There's a very cold wind, you know." And she looked up seriously into Lady Staunton's face, as she unconsciously echoed the anxious words heard at home sometimes from her mother's lips—"It's such a bad thing to catch cold when you've not been well."

"Is the wind cold? then I will take your advice, Maid Marjory, and remain indoors. But you must have your usual run along the cliffs with Mary. Do not forget to have your furs put on you."

"My what, Grandmamma?"

"Your tippet, child, or boa, or jacket; have you nothing of the kind, then?"

Marjory blushed, and, twisting her small fingers uneasily in and out of each other, she answered:

"Well, no, Grandmamma; but I have a beautifully thick black cloth jacket, that keeps me quite as warm. When I had a bad cold in the winter, mother tried to make me a beautiful fur jacket out of her sealskin that she had when she was married." (Lady Staunton's brow darkened.) "But," resumed Marjory, beginning to laugh merrily, "it didn't answer at all; the fur was just a little too old, mother supposed, for it went and fell all into little bits when she tried to stitch it. But it would have been a beau—ti—ful jacket," she concluded, pensively. "I wonder why things wear out so dreadfully fast. I'm sure mother mends, and mends, and mends, till her poor, dear eyes look quite pale and tired; but it never seems done. And then one's boots! she used to laugh and say she must learn cobbling from old Mr. Ivey in the village. Oh, Grandmamma, how I wish you could see old Mr. Ivey, you *would* like him so; he sits in the funny little porch to his house all day long; there's a kind of half-door, you know, and he has a bullfinch he whistles duets with; and he knows such interesting tales, all about pirates and treasure islands, and great white bears, and flying fish. Once he was a sailor, but he got wounded in a battle, and now he sits and mends shoes all day."

"A delightful person, my dear, I have no doubt; now run upstairs and get ready for your walk. Stay, send Deborah to me, I must arrange about having some furs bought for you at once; the Spring is so cold upon this coast. And, Marjory, would you like to come and sit with me when you return?"

"In the big white and gold saloon?"

"My child, I have not used that room for years!"

"But it *is* such a pretty room, Grandmamma; do use it now! We will sit there together by the fire, and I will amuse you so nicely; do. May I tell Mrs. Enefer that you want the fires lighted there?"



A strangely softened expression stole over Lady Staunton's beautiful, haughty face, as, after giving her consent to Marjory's proposal, she watched the slight little figure, with its aureole of bronzy gold, dance away out of sight. When Marjory returned from her walk, it was to find a goodly fire blazing in the great saloon, lighting up the portraits on the walls and the stately furniture, covered with rich faded yellow brocade; flickering in the tall mirrors with their pillared sphinxes. Lady Staunton was sitting by the fireside, in the grey Spring twilight; before her stood her embroidery frame, while, close at hand, on a curved-legged table beside her, lay a bundle of letters, yellowed by time, and tied with pale pink ribbon. The candles were not yet lit; a scent as of dead rose-leaves filled the room. Lady Staunton's eyes looked dim; their diamond light had faded. Could she have been weeping?

"Come in, Marjory," she said, "I have waited tea for you." As the shadows deepened, the firelight flickered brighter. "Don't let us have candles," pleaded the child, "it is so pleasant to be sitting like this—just talking. Mother used to call this wee time, between the day and the night, 'Blind Man's Holiday'; I wonder—I wonder what they are doing at home now?" There was a slightly desolate, wistful tone in the little voice that struck on her grandmother's heart, and awoke feelings half of pity, half of jealous irritation. Then Marjory rose to her feet from her pleasant nest on the hearthrug, and began to explore the shadowy room. She stopped, in delight, before a harpsichord.

"What a dear flat piano! and it is just the shape of a harp, too. How pretty it is, shall I play you something, Grandmamma?"

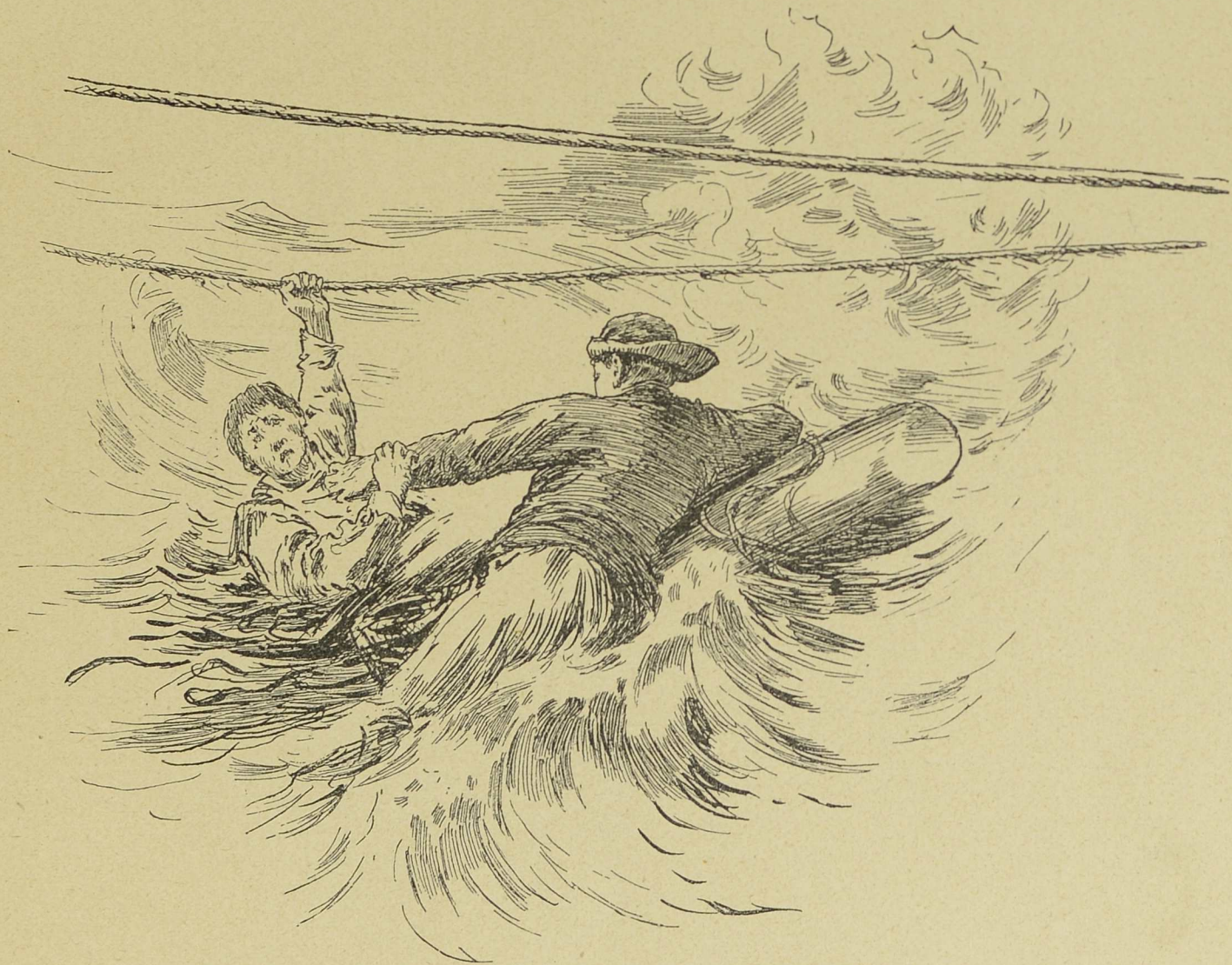
Scarcely waiting for an assent, she played her little repertoire through, with an ease and facility of execution, well-nigh wonderful in so young a student. The old instrument seemed to respond lovingly in faint, mellow tones, to the soft touch of the small deft fingers.



"How well you play, my dear," exclaimed Lady Staunton, surprised, "where did you learn such correctness, such lightness of touch, and such truth of expression?"

"Oh, mother taught me," rejoined the child carelessly, "I'm so glad you like my playing. I can sing, too, but I can't think of anything just now, but a song our old Scotch nurse used to sing," and, striking a few accompanying notes, she began to sing, in a voice like the song of a missal-thrush, but with a quaint sad thrill in it:

“The love that I hae chosen
I’ll therewi be content,
The saut sea shall be frozen
Before that I repent:
Repent it, shall I never
Until the day I dee,
But the Lawlands o’ Holland
Hae twinned my love and me.”



“‘Twinned’ means ‘parted’ in Scotch, you know, Grandmamma. I am so fond of that song, though I hardly know why; it makes me feel inclined to cry, somehow, so I won’t sing any more of it just now. Is that a draught-board, and shall we play draughts together? Mother and I used often to have just one game before I went to bed.” She leaned her elbows on the table, between herself and her grandmother, and framing her face in her two hands, looked up into the old lady’s face with a deep sigh. “How I wish you and my mother could know each other. You *would* like each other so, I *know* you’d get on together.”

Lady Staunton turned her piercing eyes sharply, for one moment, on Marjory's face, and, meeting nothing there but a most complete and wistful innocence, turned them away in silence.

And, by degrees, the bond between these two strangely assorted companions became happier and closer day by day. Day by day Marjory became more necessary to her grandmother, more beloved by her. The sad, stern lines seemed to be passing away from Lady Staunton's face; her step became lighter, her smile more frequent; her voice took a warmer, less distant inflection. And Marjory repaid her love an hundredfold, by loving her in return, and by looking rosy and happy. Not that she forgot the dear ones from whom she was exiled, but she loved her grandmother fondly; and the fresh, bracing winds from the Atlantic blew colour into her cheeks and strength to her limbs. And what really healthy and active child, however loving, can be consistently unhappy—be the cause what it may? Besides, she felt she was fulfilling her mission; already her dear father's mother was visibly happier since her arrival. The change from this tranquil life came suddenly and strangely. One afternoon, despite the gale that was blowing, or rather because of it—for Marjory enjoyed nothing more than a scamper in a high wind—she and Mary were walking together on the broad sands, among the scattered rocks. Marjory was in the wildest of spirits, dancing from one rock to another, pursuing her vagrant hat along the shore, performing fantastic dances in and out, around the clear rock pools, when she was aroused from her happy play by a cry from Mary.

"Oh, Miss Marjory, we must go home. My lady 'd niver forgive me if I let ye stay here any longer. There's a wreck, my honey, a ship on the Doom Bar. Poor souls, poor souls! there's little help for them now i' that sea, and the wind where it is."

It was only too true. There, not more than a few hundred yards from the shore, lay a ship (a foreign merchant vessel) as it were gasping out her life under the repeated blows of the great savage masses of water. In a few moments, the beach, so lonely before, became the stage for an animated scene: the men were bringing out the rocket apparatus, groups of women stood about with desponding, anxious faces, in which no great excitement, however, was written. It was too frequent an occurrence for that.

"Come home, Miss Marjory, come home," urged Mary in vain.

"No, Mary, we will not go home," she answered, "we might be able to help a little, perhaps; and I know my Grandmamma would be pleased for me to stay: she would think it was right."

So they stayed, Mary not wholly unwilling, and Marjory, deeply, painfully excited, watched, with the tears running down her cheeks, the unavailing efforts, repeated over and over again, to save, at least, some of the crew of the fast vanishing ship.

Twilight crept over the cruel foam, the broad expanse of dark, angry water, and all hope seemed vain: when there came a cry, a mighty effort, a quick confusion of voices and footsteps, and two fishermen bore something up the beach in their arms, laying it down upon the sand, while the little crowd closed round it.

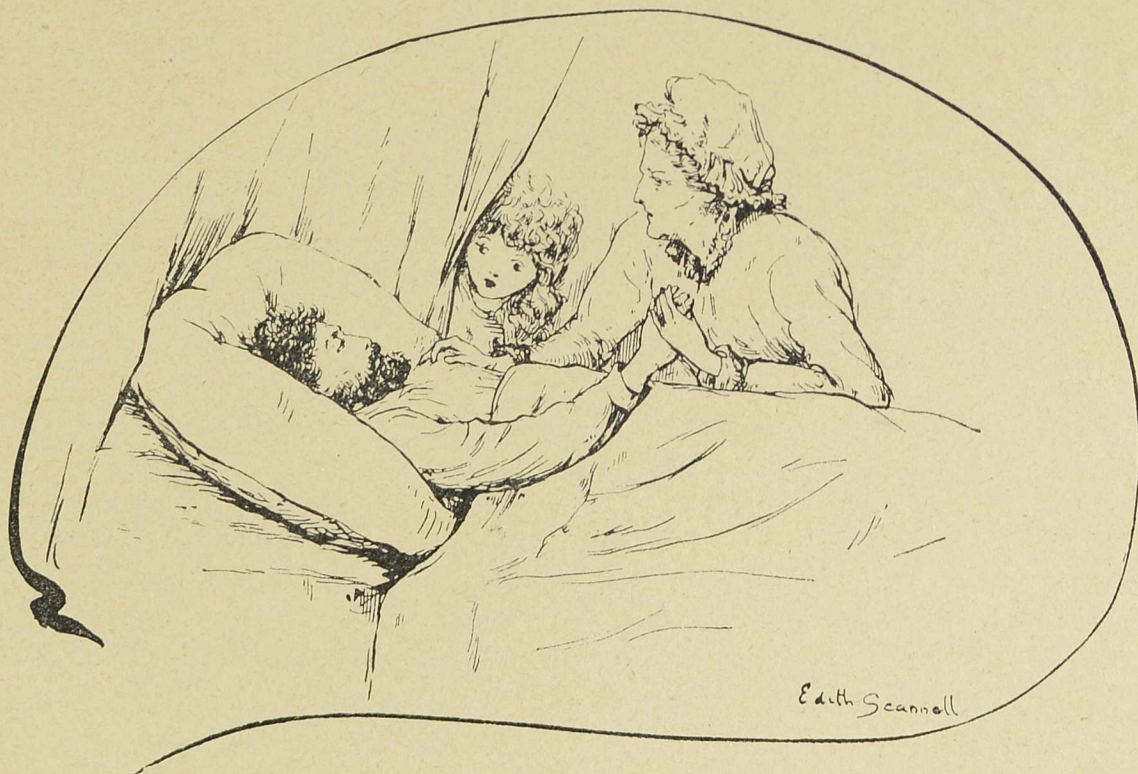
"They have saved a man, have they not, Mary? Run, run and see; oh, I hope they have saved a man. No, we will both go; perhaps he may have been hurt on those cruel rocks. Come, Mary."

It was not difficult for Lady Staunton's little grand-daughter and her maid to force a passage into the group that surrounded the injured man. He lay motionless and, apparently, lifeless: a tall, bearded man he seemed, but little could be seen of his face, for a wound on his temple, from which the blood still flowed, was being bandaged, not unskilfully, by one of the fishermen. "He'd better be carried to Helston Farm, I reckon," said a burly giant in a blue jersey, "he'll be better cared for there nor down by we."

"No, he must be carried to Staunton Place, to my Grandmamma's—she would wish it"; and Marjory, very white, but with firm lips and shining eyes, stood out erect from the rest. "It is a long way to Helston Farm," she continued, "and the poor man might die while you were taking him there—only think, if he were to die!" and a half-sob heaved her little breast. An acquiescent, approving murmur arose to the effect that "maybe little Missy were right; but as to my Lady wishing of it: what next? Anyhow, it might give the poor chap a chance if my Lady were pleased or not."

Slowly the little procession wound along up the cliff path with Marjory at its head. Up the cliff path, and round the long terraced garden through to the avenue, so as not to alarm Lady Staunton by besieging the garden entrance to the house. A blaze of lamplight from the open door flooded the broad grey stone steps, at the summit of which stood Lady Staunton looking out into the dusk.

"Thank Heaven, child, you have come back," she said. "Why do you give me such cause for alarm. I was just going to send the men-servants to search for you, and—why, Marjory, what has happened? What is this?"



"There has been a wreck, dear Grandmamma; a dreadful, cruel wreck, and they have only been able to save this one poor man, and he is dreadfully hurt; so I knew you would wish him to be brought here; and John Polperro has gone for the doctor. Can he have my room? Do let him, it is all ready; do, please, Grandmamma, let him have my room."

Lady Staunton, astonished beyond measure, nodded assent, and in less time than it takes to tell it, that helpless form was laid in the little rose-and-white curtained bed in Marjory's room, whither hurried Mrs. Enefer with lights and restoratives. In a few moments the doctor arrived, and, after a prolonged interview with his unconscious patient, was shown into the boudoir where sat Lady Staunton, and fidgetted Marjory, who was consumed with anxiety as to the fate of her protégé.

"He will do, Lady Staunton," said the doctor cheerily. He will do, and he may thank his good fortune, whoever he may be, that brought him here; another ten minutes exposure and neglect, and—. The doctor did not finish his sentence, but he lifted his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders, with a sufficiently expressive gesture.

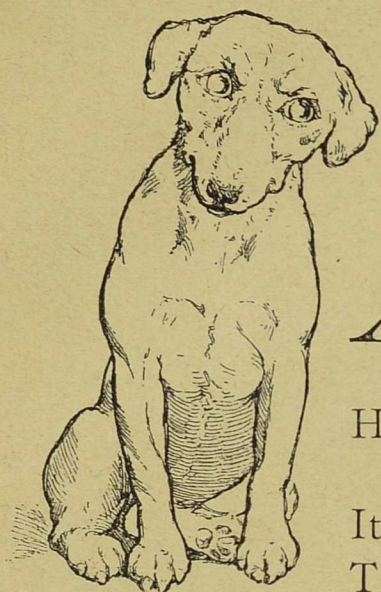
"Oh, the poor man! how glad, how glad I am!" cried Marjory, running to her grandmother and flinging her arms about her neck: "Oh, Grandmamma dear, he would have died but for you. You have saved him; how happy you must be, my dear, kind Grandmamma! And now I want you to take me to see him. Only think, we have not even looked at him yet."

And so eager was the child, and so winsome in her pretty, generous gladness, that it would have taken a colder heart than Lady Staunton's to resist her, especially as the doctor said that he should anticipate no harm to the sufferer from such a proceeding, as he was simply bruised and exhausted.

Gently Lady Staunton lifted the little silver cresset-lamp, shading, with her fingers, the light from the eyes of the sleeping man: only for one moment though, suddenly she staggered, and, as the doctor snatched the lamp from her almost lifeless fingers, she fell across the bed in a swoon. The stranger, awaking, opened his eyes and looked round him bewildered. "Where am I," he said, "mother, have I been ill? And Marjory, my Maid Marjory, am I dreaming?"

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A fortnight later Staunton Place re-echoed with glad voices. That tall, graceful girl, who stands on the terrace, feeding the peacocks, must surely be Gwendoline, and do we not recognise those sturdy robbers of "Grannie's" flower-beds as Flossie and Trot? Can that be Lady Staunton's voice that calls from the oriel window, "Come, children, your father and mother are waiting for breakfast?" It seems strange, indeed, yet we think that it must be so, for here comes Marjory, lovingly linked arm-in-arm with Charlie. What is she saying? Shall we listen? "Didn't I always say, Charlie, how *splendidly* Mamma and Grandmamma would get on, if they could only come to know one another?" Yes, it is no dream, but happy truth, thanks to the poor, wrecked ship that had rescued Captain Staunton in his peril; to Maid Marjory; and, above all, to Providence.



MR DOGGIE.

AS I was turning the leaves o'er and o'er,
I came to a doggie I'd not seen before;
Said I to myself, it is easy to see,
He's a very fine doggie, but whose can he be?

It's not Mother Hubbard's poor dog, for I've read
That the old lady's dog is supposed to be dead.
It can't be the doggie who worried the cat—
No, no, he's much too good-natured for that.

Perhaps it's the doggie in Hey diddle, diddle,
They say laughed so much at the Cat and the Fiddle;
Or it may be, thinks I, that the dog they call "Buff"
Has been sent to the shop for a ha'porth o' snuff.

Or the dog who will always "oblige with a song,"
"No, no," said a sweet little voice, "you are wrong."
And a sweet little maiden crept up to my side,
"Dearie me, why, that's my little doggie," she cried.

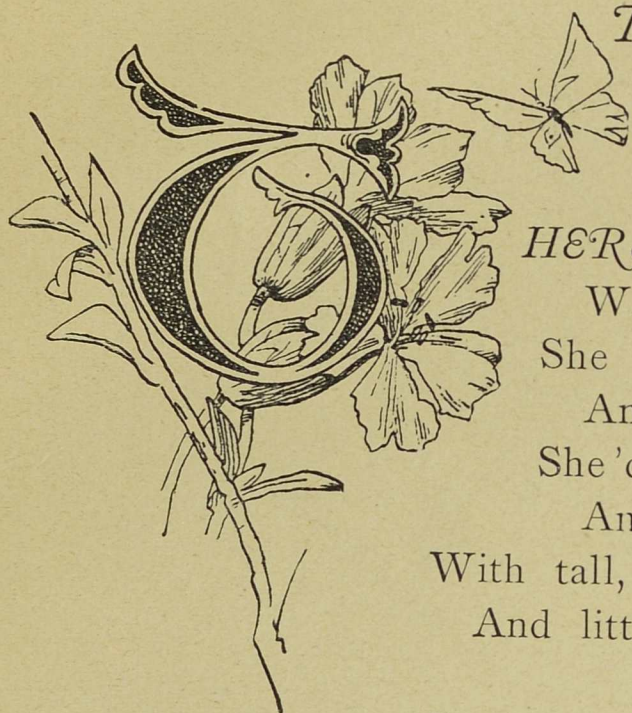
"And he's not Mother Hubbard's, he's my dog," she said,
And she shook all the fair little curls on her head;
Then she laughingly added, "you, surely, must know
That the story book doggies are dead long ago."





THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER.

THE GARDENER'S DAUGHTER.



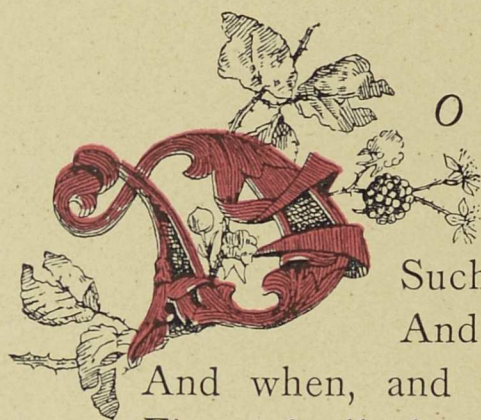
HERE was once a little maiden,
Who was very fond of flowers,
She tended them and weeded them,
And watered them for hours ;
She'd pansies and forget-me-nots,
And violets white and blue,
With tall, proud, yellow lilies,
And little white ones too.

She'd marigolds and hollyhocks,
And daisies white and red,
That grew in little borders
Around each flower bed,
With wallflowers and carnations,
And many a royal rose ;
She must have had a little bit
Of every flower that grows.

A Thrush came to the garden
And sang there every day,
And as for bees and butterflies,
They couldn't keep away.
The bees made lots of honey,
But it was not half as sweet,
As the pretty little
maiden
Who kept the garden neat.



*A LITTLE BOY'S
POCKET.*

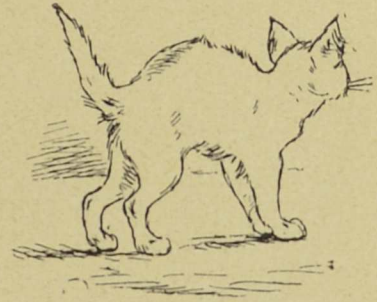


O you know what's in my pottet?
Such a lot of treasures in it!
Listen now while I bedin it:
Such a lot of sings it holds,
And everysin dats in my pottet
And when, and where, and how I dot it.
First of all, here's in my pottet
A beauty shell, I pit'd it up:
And here's the handle of a tup
That somebody has broked at tea;
The shell's a hole in it, you see:
Nobody knows dat I dot it,
I teep it safe here in my pottet.
And here's my ball too in my pottet,
And here's my pennies, one, two, free,
That Aunt Mary dave to me,
To-morrow day I'll buy a spade,
When I'm out walking with the maid;
I tant put that here in my pottet!
But I can use it when I've dot it.
Here's some more sings in my pottet,
Here's my lead, and here's my string;
And once I had an iron ring,
But through a hole it lost one day,
And this is what I always say—
A hole's the worst sing in a pottet,
Be sure, and mend it when you've dot it.



OLD

SULTAN.



THERE was once a peasant who owned a faithful dog, called Sultan, now grown so old that he had lost all his teeth, and could lay hold of nothing. One day the man was standing at the door of his house with his wife, and he said:

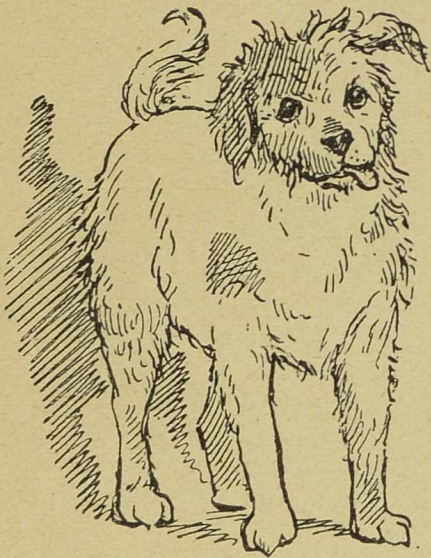
"I shall kill old Sultan to-morrow; he is of no good any longer."

His wife felt sorry for the poor dog, and answered: "He has served us for so many years, and has kept with us so faithfully; he deserves food and shelter in his old age."

"Dear me! You do not seem to understand the matter," said the husband; "he has never a tooth, and no thief would mind him in the least, so I do not see why he should not be made away with. If he has served us well, we have given him plenty of good food."

The poor dog, who was lying stretched out in the sun, not far off, heard all they said, and was very sad to think that the next day would be his last. He bethought him of his great friend, the wolf, and slipped out in the evening to the wood to see him, and related to him the fate that was awaiting him.

"Listen to me, old fellow," said the wolf; "be of good courage, I will help you in your need. I have thought of a way. Early to-morrow morning your master is going hay-making with his wife, and they will take their child with them, so that no one will be left at home. They will be sure to lay the child in the shade behind the



hedge while they are at work; you must lie by its side, just as if you were watching it. Then I will come out of the wood, and steal away the child; you must rush after me, as if to save it from me. Then I must let it fall, and you must bring it back again to its parents, who will think that you have saved it, and will be much too grateful to do you any harm; on the contrary, you will be received into full favour, and they will never let you want for anything again."

The dog was pleased with the plan, which was carried out accordingly. When the father saw the wolf running away with his child, he cried out, and when old Sultan brought it back again, he was much pleased with him, and patted him, saying:

"Not a hair of him shall be touched; he shall have food and shelter as long as he lives." And he said to his wife:

"Go home directly, and make some good stew for old Sultan—something that does not need biting; and get the pillow from my bed for him to lie on."

From that time old Sultan was made so comfortable that he had nothing left to wish for. Before long the wolf paid him a visit, to congratulate him that all had gone so well.

"But, old fellow," said he, "you must wink at my making off by chance with a fat sheep of your master's; perhaps one will escape some fine day."

"Don't reckon on that," answered the dog; "I cannot consent to it; I must remain true to my master."

But the wolf, not supposing it was said in earnest, came sneaking in the night to carry off the sheep. But the master, who had been warned by the faithful Sultan of the wolf's intention, was waiting for him, and gave him a fine hiding with the threshing-flail. So the wolf had to make his escape, calling out to the dog:

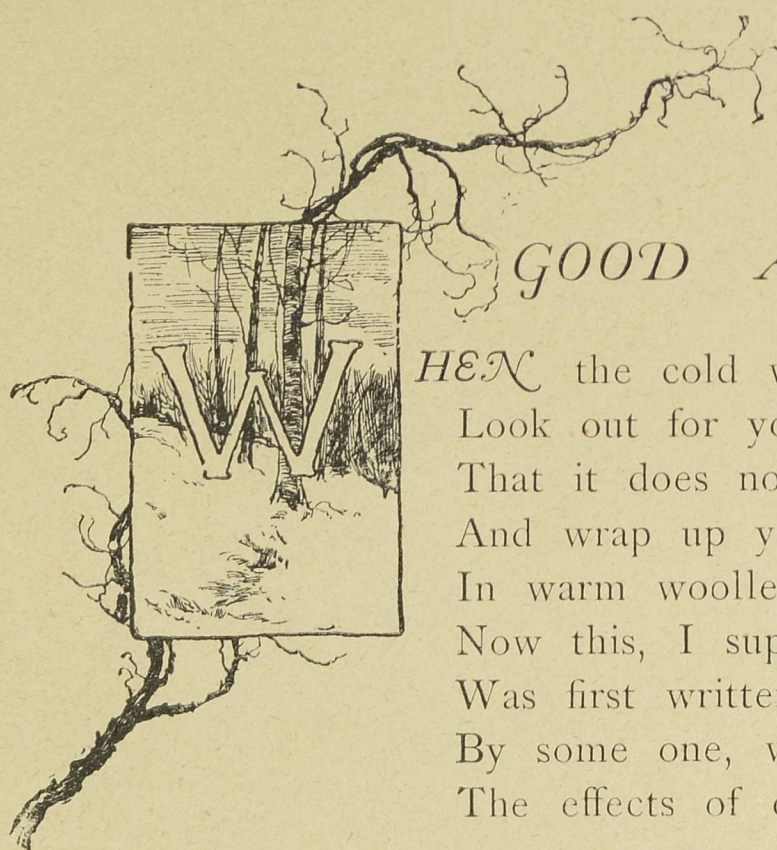
"You shall pay for this, you traitor!"

The next morning the wolf sent the wild boar to call out the dog; and to appoint a meeting in the wood to receive satisfaction from him. Old Sultan could find no second but a cat with three legs; and as they set off together, the poor thing went limping along, holding her

tail up in the air. The wolf and his second were already on the spot. When they saw their antagonists coming, and caught sight of the elevated tail of the cat, they thought it was a sabre they were bringing with them. And as the poor thing came limping on three legs, they supposed it was lifting a big stone to throw at them. This frightened them very much; the wild boar crept among the leaves, and the wolf clambered up into a tree. And when the dog and cat came up, they were surprised not to see anyone there. However the wild boar was not perfectly hidden in the leaves, and the tips of his ears peeped out. And when the cat caught sight of one, she thought it was a mouse, and sprang upon it, seizing it with her teeth. Out leaped the wild boar with a dreadful cry, and ran away shouting:

“There is the culprit in the tree!”

And the dog and the cat looking up caught sight of the wolf, who came down, quite ashamed of his timidity, and made peace with the dog once more.



GOOD ADVICE.

WHEN the cold wind blows,
Look out for your nose,
That it does not get froze;
And wrap up your toes
In warm woollen hose.
Now this, I suppose,
Was first written in prose,
By some one, who knows
The effects of cold snows.



BREAKFAST.

ON E sweet harvest morning,
As daylight was dawning,
Three bonnie brown birdies peeped down from a tree.
“Oh, where is our mother?”
They cried to each other,
“Our kind little mother; now *where* can she be?”

Where daisies are blowing
And corn flowers growing,
And poppies nid-nodding about in the wheat,
With wings flippy-flappy,
So busy and happy,
Their mother is looking for something to eat.

Now homeward she's flying
To baby birds crying,
“I'm coming, I'm coming! I haven't
been long.
Keep quiet and steady
Till breakfast is ready,
And try to say, ‘Thank you,’ and
sing me a song.”





A SAILOR'S BOY.

ANGELS.



Four children were staying with Aunt Hilda—four of us, Norah, Kitty, Fred and Nell. Soon after we came, she stood us in a row against the garden wall, to see how much we'd grown since last year, and put her hand on our heads, one after the other, and laughed, and called it "Walking up steps," then, she stopped laughing, and began to cry and kiss us and call us "poor mites!"

I remember, last year, we came with mother, and wore white frocks and pink sashes, and Fred, a blue sailor suit, but now we wore everything black, even to our socks and stockings. Poor mother was dead, and that was why Auntie cried.

Well, that first evening we sat on the lawn, in the moonlight; auntie said we might talk about mother and the angels a little bit, just to give us something sweet to dream about. "Only think," said Auntie, "how nice to have pretty angels watching us! How good we ought all to be! for God lets the angels come sometimes to see the friends they love very much."

"Does He?" cried Fred. "Then, I know, mamma will ask to come, because *she* loves us, and God will say 'yes,' because He's so kind! I wonder if she'll come to-night?"

"Perhaps," whispered Auntie, "perhaps she's here now." We looked over our shoulders, across the lawn, but could see nothing white and shining—only the gate and a bit of the road beyond, and Auntie's white rose-tree.

"Darlings, we shan't *see* the angels till we get to heaven," said Aunt Hilda.

"But, Auntie, are you sure—quite sure? Hasn't *any* one ever seen an angel?"

"Yes, dear, *Someone*, and in a garden, and in moonlight, too. Just as it might be now."

"Oh, Auntie, who was it, and wasn't He very happy?"

"No, dear, very, very *unhappy*. More sad and unhappy than anybody in the wide world."



"It was Jesus," said Kitty.

"Yes, it was Jesus. You know how He came to make us good and fit to live with Him in heaven; how cruel men mocked and hated Him, and drove Him from them; how even His friends forsook Him, and His heart was ready to break, so He went into a garden and prayed to God His Father, saying, 'Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done.' Afterwards God sent an angel to be with Him in His loneliness, and to comfort Him, and give Him strength to bear His sorrow."

Just then, little Nell, who had fallen asleep on Auntie's shoulder, called out: "Mother! mother!" "*She* can see her!" we cried.

"Yes, dear little Nellie sees her, because she's dreaming," said Auntie.

And we all saw mother that night, or dreamt we did.

ASHORE.

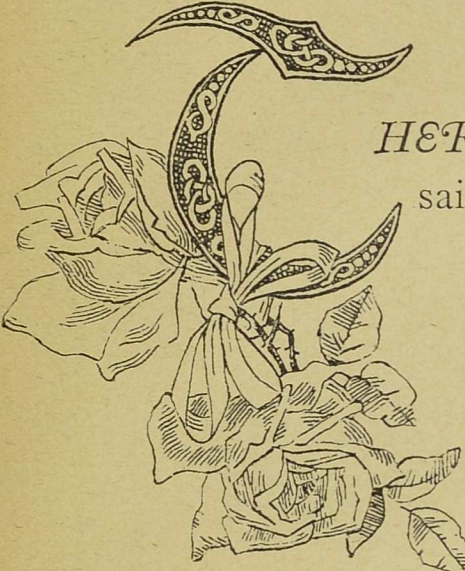
DOWN by the sea, Sailor,
Down by the blue, blue sea,
A ship is rocking her masts,
Sailor,
Close to the harbour quay.



Her sails are set, Sailor,
And the wind is fair, is fair,
They're only waiting for you, Sailor,
Waiting for you down there.

Ah, me, she may heave her anchor,
She may sail away from the bay;
I know of one little sailor
Who won't go a-sailing to-day.

A CAT'S PARTY.



HERE was only one hitch, otherwise it was a lovely party," said Mrs. Tabitha-Scratch to Sandy Maria Tortoiseshell. Sandy was a poor relation, and never went anywhere, for Persians and Angoras were proud creatures, and *would not* associate with her; however, when her rich relations gave a party, she used to make a little call next day, to hear how things went off.

"Everything was perfect," went on Mrs. Tabby, "music, dancing, fighting and refreshments '*ad lib.*'"

"What's '*ad lib.*', cousin?"

"Snatch what you can; every puss for himself, and the pantry for all—that's '*ad lib.*'"

"Dee-lightful!" cried Sandy, clasping her paws.

"Everybody was there—everybody worth knowing. Now, don't put your back up, Sandy, or I shan't go on. *I* didn't make you an ugly cat, with half a tail, did I?"

"No, cousin, no, please, go on, but they might have had me."

"Stuff! There was Tinker and Topsy, Snowy and Smut, Bully and Spitfire. But Bully and Spitfire behaved very badly indeed, all on account of a miserable sardine."

"That was the 'hitch,' I suppose, ma'm," said Sandy.

"No, I'm coming to that as fast as I can. We'd been playing at 'Fly on the wall,' rushing about all over the place, up and down the curtains, over and under the tables and chairs, till the whole lot of us were as hot as pancakes. Then Professor Grimalkin asked to be allowed to show his performing mice, by way of a change. He was just in the middle of the entertainment when we saw—"

"What, ma'am, rats?"

"No, worse than that; *something*, it wasn't a man, it wasn't a cat, and it wasn't a dog. Such eyes! Such a flat nose, and, oh, such a grin—a Cheshire cat couldn't cap it, if it tried for a week."

"And what was it doing, ma'm?"

"Scratching its head."

"What did you do?"

"Stood on the staircase, staring, as hard as we could, bushing our tails and sphitzzing."

"And what next?" cried Sandy.

"It ran towards us, but when it saw such a lot of us, and Bully and Spitfire ready to spring, it got scared and jumped up to the hall lamp, and swung on it, backwards and forwards, grinning all the time, till down it came, lamp and all. Such a crash! And down came the servants with pokers and tongs, for they thought it was burglars."

"Dear, dear, how exciting, Mrs. Tibby, ma'm! What did the Persians and Angoras do?"

"Scampered off, helter skelter, some upstairs, some down, some into cupboards, some under beds; one fell into the flour tub."

"And the mice, ma'm?"

"Got clean away, worse luck."

"Did you discover what it was, Mrs. Tibby?"

"Yes, a monkey! Disgusting to keep monkeys in a house, worse than babies, ten times."

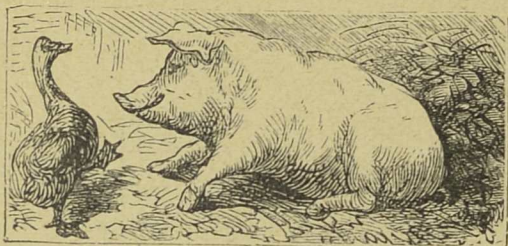
"Ah, well, that comes of your fine folks," said Sandy. "Good morning, ma'm."





THE CAT'S PARTY.

A FINAL DISTINCTION.



“*P*RAY, who are you, sir?”

“I’m a pig.”

“Oh, the pig that went to market, or the one that wouldn’t get over the stile, or the pig with a curly tail?”

“Not either, that I know of. I’m just a pig.”

“Then I’m sorry for you; since you belong to an obstinate set who never do what they’re wanted from morning till night.”

“Who are you, ma’am?” said the pig.

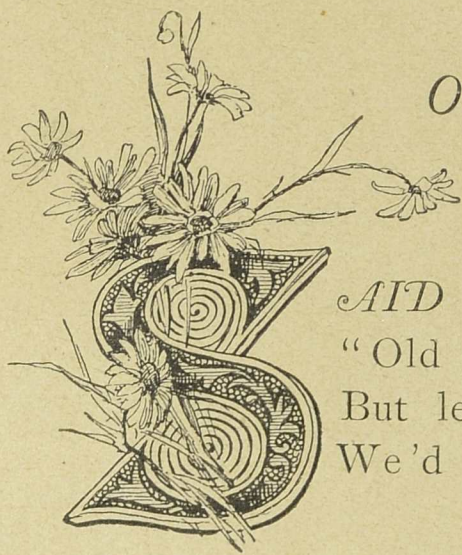
“I’m a goose, and one of the most valuable geese in the world.”

“Dear, dear, then you must be the goose that lays the golden eggs?”

“Not exactly, but tho’ my eggs are not golden, I’m more to the farmer than you are. I can give a pretty good guess that he likes me the best.”

“I don’t know about that,” said the farmer, who was standing by. “You’re one as nice as the other, and as my old woman says: ‘apple sauce does for both.’”

L. Haskell.



OLD FATHER

CHRISTMAS.

*A*ID two little people dressed in white:
“Old Father Christmas will come to-night;
But lest he forgets, or makes a mistake,
We’d better listen and be awake.”

But when the nursemaid put out the light,
These two little people dressed in white
Rolled themselves up in the counterpane,
And did not dare to look out again.

So carefully did they wrap the clothes,
You couldn't see the tip of a nose.

But when the bells were ringing ding-dong,
Old Father Christmas passed along;
"Whish," he said, brushing the snow from his nose,
"Whew! how the east wind
 blusters and blows."

Then, through the window,
 he spied the bed;
"I have to call at this house,"
 he said;
"The chimney's the proper
 way for me,
Why are they built so narrow,"
 said he.

In at the window he went instead,
Seated himself at the
 foot of the bed,
Filled the stocking
 with sweetmeats and toys,
All without making the slightest noise.

*Now wake little people dressed in white,
Old Father Christmas came last night;
He crammed your stocking—and,
 children, look!
He brought you a coloured picture book.*



