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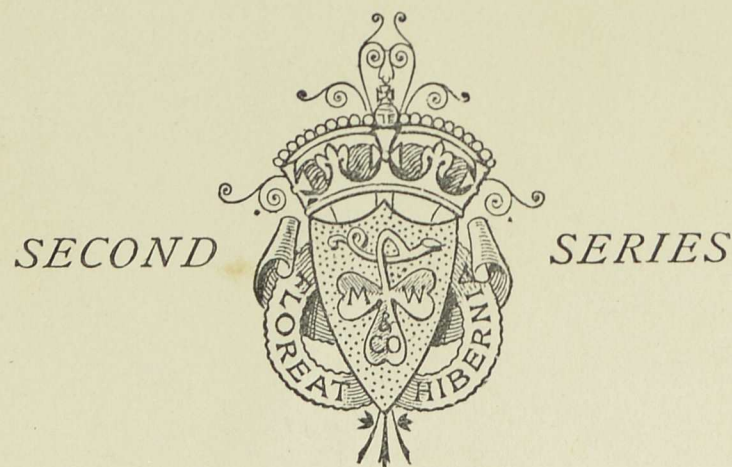
1887.

MARCUS WARD'S
PICTURE LIBRARY
OF
ANIMALS

*Pictures, telling their own Stories to little ones who cannot read, and
interesting Stories for children who can, about*

SHEEP, DONKEYS, PIGEONS, AND SONG-BIRDS

Twenty Plates in Colours, and numerous Woodcut Illustrations



MARCUS WARD & CO.
67 & 68, CHANDOS STREET, STRAND, LONDON
AND ROYAL ULSTER WORKS, BELFAST

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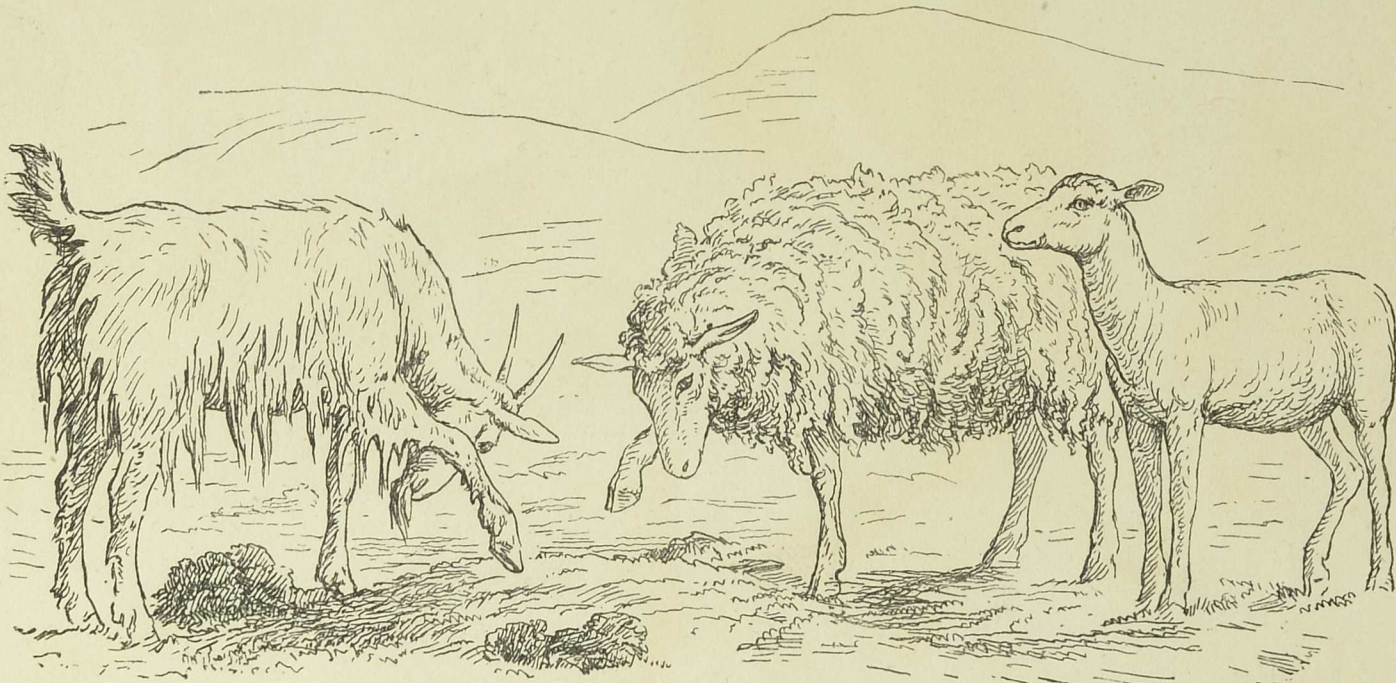
MARJORY, THE SHEPHERD'S GRAND-DAUGHTER.



MARJORY was the Shepherd's grand-daughter; look at her in the blue hood and red petticoat, she has got a basket of eggs upon her arm, and she leads her pet lamb by her side. I will tell you how this lamb became her pet. Marjory's grandfather lived in a cabin upon the side of a hill which ran down to a lake that had reeds and rushes growing round it. The Shepherd had a dog called David, who helped him to mind Farmer Cuthbert's sheep. Marjory had a friendly cat called Tabitha, who made friends with everybody. Tabitha and David were friends, and Tabitha was also kind to the cocks and the hens.



One of Farmer Cuthbert's sheep had a lamb; it was in the cold month of March that the little lamb was born. The Shepherd did not take his sheep to the mountain when it was cold, but in the summer he took them



there, and let them eat the sweet herbs and the heather. One day, some weeks after her lamb was born, the sheep mother left her com-

panions and wandered away to the mountain with her lamb at her side. When she got there, she found the old goat, Nathaniel, who lived on the



Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

mountain, and she went to talk to him. The sheep and the lamb stayed with Nathaniel all the afternoon, but in the evening, when it grew cold, the sheep set off to go back to the valley. The night came on, and it grew



so dark that she lost her way, and fell down a steep part of the rock and was killed. The lamb tumbled down too, but he fell upon his mother and was not killed. He bleated very sadly, for he was cold and frightened, and he could get no answer from his dead mother; he stood beside her body and gave out trembling little

moans in the dark, cold night. Now the place where the mother had fallen was not very far from the Shepherd's hut, and the wind brought the sound of the orphan lamb's moaning towards the window of Marjory's bedroom. Marjory was sleeping in her comfortable bed whilst the lamb was crying,



“Baa, baa, baa.” She woke from her sleep, and sat up in bed and listened. It was dark in Marjory's bedroom, but she was not afraid of the dark. She knew at once that the “Baa, baa” must be the voice of some little lamb lost upon

the mountain. So she got out of bed and went to call her grandfather; she tapped at his door, and shouted through the keyhole, “Grandfather, grandfather, I hear the voice of a lamb in distress.” The Shepherd turned in his bed and answered, “No, my child, it is not a lamb, but the voice of the wind that you hear. Go to bed, and don't disturb me out of my sleep.”

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

Marjory went to bed again, but she had not lain many minutes before she heard the voice calling, "Baa, baa, baa," and she got up again, and went to her grandfather's door a second time and shouted, "Grandfather, grandfather, I hear the voice of a lamb, calling out in distress." But the Shepherd was dreaming, and he said in his sleep, "No, my child, it is not a lamb, but the voice of the wind that you hear." Marjory went to bed again, and very soon she heard the little voice once more, and this time she did not go to her grandfather. She dressed herself and went out, all alone in the dark, on to the bare hill-side.

David, the good dog, got up and followed Marjory, and the two came together to where the dead sheep lay, and the little lamb stood bleating. Marjory took the lamb to the cottage, and wrapped him in her own red petticoat, and laid him at the foot of her bed until the morning. The lamb was very hungry and thirsty, for he



had no good mother to give him milk, and Marjory was puzzled what to do, because she had not got any milk, but the Shepherd had, and in the morning he gave her some. The Shepherd always carried a bottle of milk with him when he went out with his sheep, that he might have some to give to any little lamb that happened to be sick, or was too weak to run after its mother. Marjory called the lamb "Benjamin," and tied a piece of blue ribbon round his neck.

One day the Shepherd said to Marjory, as he was going out for the day,

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

“Grand-daughter, you must take Benjamin down to Farmer Cuthbert’s this morning, that he may see whether he is fat enough to sell.” Marjory was



very sorry, for she loved Benjamin. “Oh, my dear lamb!” said she, as she untied the ribbon from his throat, “I hope that Farmer Cuthbert will sell you to a kind master.”

When Marjory had fed the cocks and the hens, and had done all her morning work, she turned to her good cat and said,

“I’m going away for several hours, Tabitha; take care of the chickens whilst I am gone.” One of the hens, Bantam, had a nice brood of chickens;



she stayed with them inside a coop which the Shepherd had put up behind the dog kennel.

When Marjory had locked the cottage door, she set off towards the valley. Tabitha sat upon the garden wall and shut one eye; the cock perched upon the roof of the house

and crowed; the hens, all except Bantam, grubbed amongst the rubbish, and the stack of dry heather which was piled against the side of the hut.



Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

A magpie flew down from a fir-tree on the mountain, and alighted upon the door-step just as Marjory turned the corner of the hill and could be seen no more. When Marjory got to Farmer Cuthbert's, she saw the Farmer in the yard talking with a strange man, whose face she had never seen before. There were several sheep and lambs in the yard, standing about; the Shepherd was there also.

Farmer Cuthbert patted Benjamin, and said he was a pretty little fellow;



but the strange man pinched his flesh between his finger and thumb, and pulled one of his legs in a rough manner. "Please don't do that, Sir," said Marjory in a trembling voice; "you will hurt him." The man put his hands to his side and laughed aloud when Marjory said this, and as he did so, Marjory observed that he wore a belt round his waist, and that a long pointed thing hung from it such as butchers

wear. Then the poor child understood who this stranger was, and why he had pinched the flesh of Benjamin between his finger and thumb. Marjory burst into tears. "Oh, sir!" she said to Farmer Cuthbert; "don't let Benjamin be killed; please, please, don't." Farmer Cuthbert's wife came out just then to look at the lambs, and when she saw how unhappy Marjory was, she begged her husband not to sell the pet lamb. Farmer Cuthbert

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

said that he would let Benjamin grow up instead of selling him; he told Marjory that she might take him home and bring him up upon the mountain.

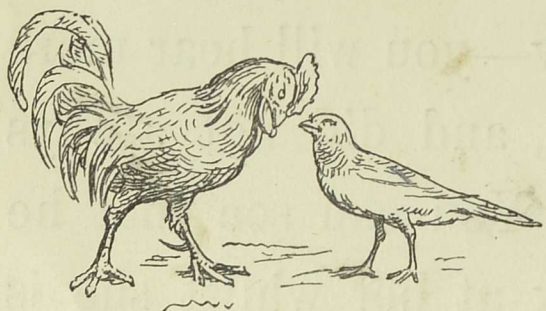
There were two other lambs belonging to Farmer Cuthbert whom he said should not be sold to the butcher. Look at them in the coloured picture. One of them is called Mattie. Her mother is licking her all over; that is her way of kissing, you know; she is saying, "I am so glad that my dear little child is not going to be killed," and Mattie is glad too. She does not know what being killed means, but she knows that it is pleasant to be alive—to have a green field to play about in, and a kind mother to love her. The other lamb in the meadow is a funny black-faced little fellow, called Smug. Look at him lying beside his good mother Dinah. Dinah has a black face also; she is a wise mother, and tells Smug of his faults sometimes. One of Smug's faults was being greedy—you will hear more about his greediness by-and-by; he was also wilful, and did not always take his mother's advice as he ought to have done. You can see that he turns his face away from his mother, he does not look at her whilst she is speaking to him. It was rude of Smug to look away, and it was silly of him not to mind what his mother said. Marjory had some dinner at Farmer Cuthbert's, and then she went home. Would you like to hear what had happened up there whilst she had been away?

I told you that a magpie had alighted upon the door-step. Mag was a sly bird; she had made up her mind to steal a chicken. She looked about her from the door-step, and she saw Tabitha upon the wall, so she strutted up and down and chattered to the cat. "Do you like fat mice to eat?" said Mag to Tabitha; "or do you like thin mice best?" "I like fat mice best," answered Puss. "Then I must say," Mag continued, "that you

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

are very silly to let Johnny get all the fat ones for his family." (Johnny was the name of an owl who lived near Farmer Cuthbert's barn.) "What do you mean?" asked Tabitha sharply, for she did not like to be called silly. "Did you never hear of the Fatsides family?" asked Mag. "Yes, I know all about the Fatsides," answered Tabitha; "they're *too* fat; their flesh is nothing but fat. I would not eat a Fatside if Johnny were to lay one down before my very nose." "Well, he won't do that," said Mag; "and, besides, I believe there are only two of them left. I passed by the barn just now, and I saw them basking in the sun."

Then Mag flew up to the roof of the cottage, and crowed exactly like Cock-a-doodle. "Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed the cock, "shut up there." "Never mind, I've got something to tell you," said Mag; "the eagle sent me to ask if you would teach him to crow. He has heard so much about



your voice from me, that he wishes to learn the art of crowing." "Where shall I find his majesty?" asked the cock, ruffling his feathers and bustling to and fro. "Oh! he's only a few hundred yards off," answered Mag; "if you just run round that ledge of rock yonder, you'll be able to see him." "I may as well have a look at him," said Cock-a-doodle to himself, "that won't commit me to anything." So away he went. Meanwhile Tabitha was trotting down towards Farmer Cuthbert's barn, hoping to lunch upon the two Miss Fatsides. Mag then walked to the back of the cabin, where none of the hens could see her, and she called out, just as she had heard Marjory do, "Cluck, cluck, cluck," and immediately all the hens rushed off to look for corn. Bantam went also; she left her little chickens, because she thought Marjory was calling her.

Whilst the hens hunted about everywhere, Mag flew over the top of the

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

house to the hen-coop, and was just going to pounce upon a dear little yellow chicken, when a sportsman who happened to be passing up the mountain saw the handsome Magpie, and thought he should like to have her. So he raised his gun and fired. Bang, bang, went the gun, and whirr, whirr, up rose Mag in the air. The shot did not kill her, but it carried off some of the feathers of her tail, and the noise gave a great shock to her nerves. Marjory found all her chickens safe when she got home, but Tabitha felt very much ashamed of herself when her mistress praised her at supper-time for taking care of everybody whilst she had been away; she knew that she had *not* been taking care.



Do you know what happens to sheep in June? They are shorn; that means that their wool is clipped short all over their bodies. Look at the large coloured picture, and you will see the shearer with his strangely-shaped scissors, cutting away. That man is called Joe; you will hear more about him by-and-by. Joe is very careful not to cut the skin of the sheep, he only cuts the wool, and it does not hurt the sheep to have their wool cut, any more than it hurts you to have your hair cut. The wool that is cut off is very valuable, it is prepared and made into woollen blankets and warm clothes for us; you see what useful creatures sheep are,





Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

they give us food and clothing. You know what the sheep says in the nursery rhyme to the child who asked him of what use he was?—

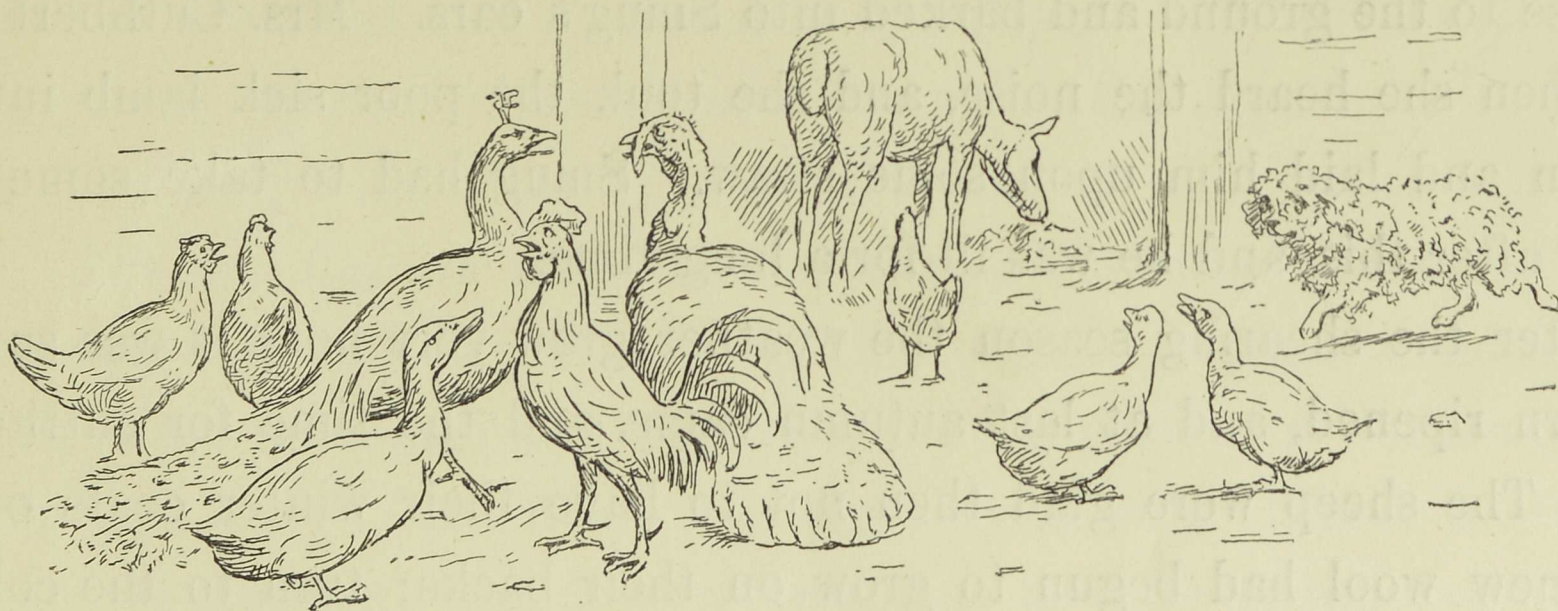
“Don't you see the wool that grows
Upon my back to make your clothes?
Cold, and very cold you'd get,
If I did not give you it.”

Sheep are shorn in June because their wool has then become thick and heavy, and it would be very uncomfortable to them to bear it during the hot weather, just as uncomfortable as it would be for you to wear your winter dresses and pelisses in the summer-time. Sheep are washed before their wool is cut. The Shepherd washes them in a running stream, and two or three days after, when their wool is dry, they are taken to the shearer. Lambs are not shorn, because their wool has not grown. Dinah was shorn—see how smooth she looks in the coloured picture.

Daisy and Cis, Farmer Cuthbert's children, stand beside Joe and look on. Marjory also came to see the shearing; she brought Benjamin with her, and Smug, the black-faced lamb, came and talked to him. By-and-by Mag came to look on also with all the others. She knew a great deal about wool, for in the spring, when she was building her nest, she had taken a good lump out of Dinah's fleece. Smug knew Mag, she often came to chatter to the sheep and the lambs. “Did you ever taste oil-cake?” she said to Smug and Benjamin, as they were munching grass contentedly together. “No,” answered Smug. “Your mother could tell you how good it is,” answered Mag; “she used to eat a great deal of oil-cake when you were a baby.” “Is it sweet?” asked Smug and Benjamin together. “Oh! very, very, very sweet,” answered Mag; “but there isn't much left now, the cows

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

ate so much in the cold weather." "Is there enough left for our dinner?" asked the little lambs. "About enough," said the magpie; "shall I show you where it is?" "Yes," said Smug. "No," said Benjamin; "my mistress would give me oil-cake if it were good for me, I don't wish to have any." "Very well," said Mag, and she flew to the end of the field. Smug was angry with Benjamin, and he ran after the magpie. Mag flew to the ground again when she saw Smug, and said she would show him where the oil-cake was. So she led the way to the farm-yard, and Smug trotted after her. Mag went into one of the cow-sheds, and there, in a corner, lay a small heap of oil-cake; it was broken and crumbly, so that Smug could



eat it quite easily. There were no cows in the cow-shed, nor any four-legged animals about anywhere, and there were no farm servants in the yard just then. There were only cocks and hens, and some ducks and a turkey and a peacock. One of the ducks waddled into the shed, and finding Smug there, she flew upon a rafter to see what he was doing. When she saw that he was eating oil-cake, she exclaimed, "Well, I never!" and tumbled down to tell her companions. "Oil-cake is not good for lambs," said the oldest hen when she heard of it; "it gives them the headache." "He'll make himself extremely ill," said the peacock.

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

“I should go and tell him so, if I were you,” said a young cock. “Well, it’s no concern of ours,” said the turkey as he turned away. Just then, Mrs. Cuthbert’s poodle dog ran out of the kitchen and asked what they were all talking about. “It’s stealing,” said the poodle, as soon as he understood; “I shall go and put a stop to it immediately.” So the poodle went into the shed and bit one of Smug’s legs pretty hard, by way of telling the lamb to leave off eating. Smug came away from the oil-cake, but directly he began to walk, he felt so sick and giddy that he fell down in a fit. “Serves him right,” cried the ducks, and the cocks, and the hens, and the peacock, and the turkey, who all stood round, while the poodle put his nose to the ground and barked into Smug’s ears. Mrs. Cuthbert came out when she heard the noise, and she took the poor sick lamb into the kitchen and laid him upon some straw. Smug had to take some nasty physic after this, and he was ill for a long time.

After the shearing season the weather grew very hot; it was summer, the corn ripened, and at last autumn came, and the time for cutting the corn. The sheep were glad then not to have their winter coats on, but some new wool had begun to grow on their backs; turn to the coloured picture and you will see, they do not look so smooth now as they did when they were first shorn. Farmer Cuthbert wished his sheep to eat some dried peas, because a change of food is good for sheep in the autumn; so he scattered peas in one field, and put hurdles round it to prevent the sheep from wandering away; he wanted them to stay in the place where the peas were, and eat them instead of eating only grass—you can see the hurdles in the coloured picture. There is also a large crook in one corner of the field; I will tell you what it is used for. When the Shepherd thinks that one of his sheep looks unwell, and that he ought to examine it closely, he

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

catches the sheep by putting the crook round its leg, and he then draws it to him, and can do for it whatever may be needed. Sometimes stinging flies get into the fleece of the sheep and hurt them very much, and the Shepherd has to take them away. When you get a thorn into your finger, you can run to Nurse and ask her to take it out for you. Nurse is not obliged to catch you by putting a crook round your leg, but sheep are not wise in the same way that children are.

One day Farmer Cuthbert sent all his people to the corn-fields to cut the corn; it was a pleasant time for the children, for they all helped in the harvest-work. Did you ever see men and women and children working together in a harvest-field? The men stand first—they cut down the corn with scythes; women follow after—they make the corn up into bundles, which they bind with wisps of straw that the children twist and give to them. The bundles are then called sheaves. Marjory and Daisy and Cis worked very hard in Farmer Cuthbert's corn-field. Benjamin did not come down from the mountain that day, he spent the time with Nathaniel eating heather and lady's bedstraw. Smug stayed with Dinah in the field between the hurdles. Smug was cross that day, for it was very hot, and he was tired of eating peas; he tried to get into the field where the reapers were, but he only scratched himself against a post and could not get in. Mag knew of everything that was going on, of course, and she flew about from tree to tree, looking about for some mischief to do. At twelve o'clock everybody rested; you can see, in the coloured picture, David taking care of a large stone bottle which belonged to one of the reapers. That reaper was Joe. Joe sat under a hedge and ate his dinner. When he had done eating, he took his purse out of his pocket and began to count his money over; but the day was very hot, and Joe was so tired that he



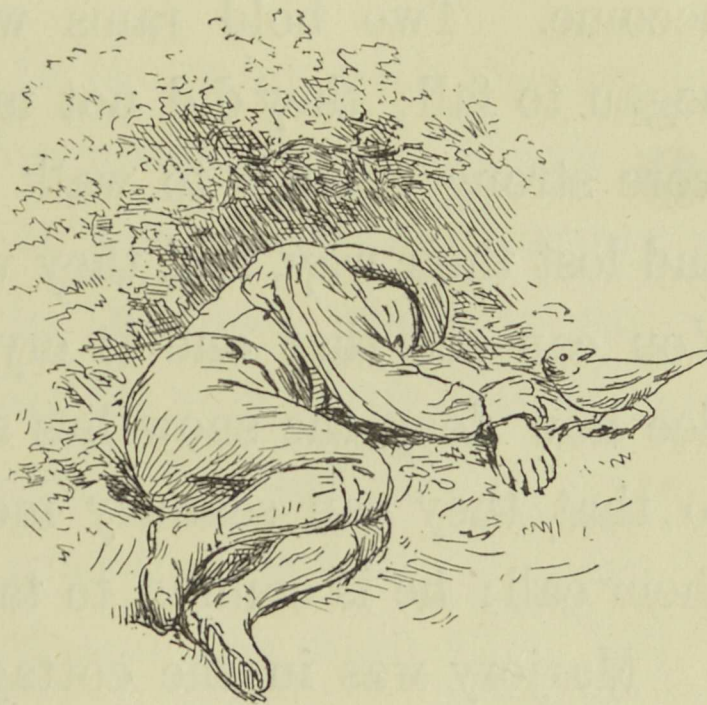
Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

fell asleep in the middle of his counting. Now Mag was sitting in a tree close by, watching Joe, and as soon as she saw that he was asleep, she came down and hopped up to him and took a piece of money out of his hand in her bill. Mag flew away with the money and hid it in a heap of stones.

Joe had a florin and a shilling and a sovereign in his hand, and Mag took them all away and hid them amongst the stones.

You will think this was very silly of her, because the money could not be of any use to her; but Mag liked hoarding. When Joe

awoke from his sleep, he found that all his money was gone; and though he searched for it a very long time, he could not find it.



When the winter came, it was cold in the valley, and cold on the mountain; it was cold everywhere; the river was frozen, and the sky was covered with clouds; the days were short, there

was no more playing in the fields for Marjory and Daisy and Cis. Marjory stayed at home and knitted stockings for her grandfather, and Tabitha

sat in front of the fire and purred to keep her company. The cocks and hens often came into the cabin, and Benjamin, who was now well grown,

slept in a shed outside.

One morning the sun shone brightly; everybody

thought it was going to be a fine day; Benjamin thought so too, and he went up the mountain to spend a little time with Nathaniel; but about



Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

twelve o'clock the clouds gathered and snow fell, until the hills and the plains and valley were quite covered with it. Look at the coloured picture; you can see how stormy it is, and what a sad, cold place the world has become. Two bold rams were feeding far from home when the snow began to fall; they did not make haste to return home; they fancied they were strong enough to walk in the snow, but they grew very tired at last, and lost their way, and they wanted the Shepherd to come and help them. You can see that one is crying "Baa, baa, baa;" he is calling for help. See how deep the snow lies around the rams; it comes up to their knees, so that they can scarcely move along. The Shepherd must have heard them call; he is coming to take them out of the snow-drift.

Marjory was in the cottage whilst her grandfather was looking after the sheep: suddenly she remembered Benjamin, and ran out to look if he was safe in his shed. He was not there. Then Marjory ran to the foot of the sheep-path and shouted, "Benjamin!" but there was no answer. Marjory went back to the house; she feared that her lamb was lost in the snow, and that she should never see him again. She sat upon a stool by the fire, and Tabitha came and put her paws upon her knees, and mewed in her face, as much as to say, "I am as sorry as you are, Marjory; I am very sorry for poor little Benjamin."



It grew dark, and the snow still fell, and the storm raged. Marjory opened the cottage door and looked up towards the mountain and called again, "Benjamin! Benjamin!" and a voice answered her. It was her grandfather's voice. He was coming towards the cabin with something in his arms. The Shepherd

Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

had found Benjamin; he was bringing him back to his mistress. When the Shepherd had laid Benjamin before the fire, and Marjory had given him a warm meal, he began to revive.

Whilst Benjamin was eating, Joe came to the cabin with another half-frozen lamb. Joe laid the lamb beside Benjamin; it was Smug whom Joe had brought. Benjamin was very glad to see Smug, and Marjory was glad too. She took Benjamin and Smug to the shed where it was nice and warm, and the two lambs lay there side by side until the morning. They talked sometimes and slept sometimes, and had a pleasant time together. Marjory and her grandfather and Joe had supper in the cottage; the Shepherd and Joe were tired, for they had worked hard all day.

Whilst Marjory was washing up the supper things, there came a tap outside on the window which made her start. She was not frightened; she went to the window and opened it, and who do you think she saw there? Mag, sitting on the window-sill, looking very cold and unhappy. Her fire-tree had been blown down by the storm, and one of her wings had been hurt, and she felt so miserable she did not know what to do. As soon as Marjory opened the window, Mag hopped into the room, and went straight up to the fire-place to warm herself. Any cat but Tabitha would have put up her back at this, and would, perhaps, have begun to spit at the bird; but instead of doing so, Tabitha got up and walked away, so as to make room for the magpie upon the hearth-rug.

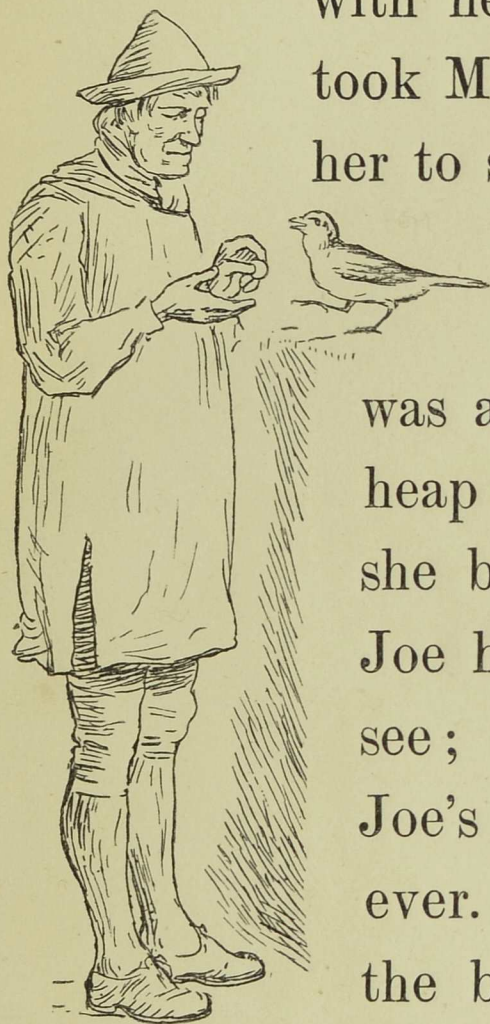
Mag looked all round the room and she saw Joe. She remembered about the money which she had stolen from him, and the thought of it






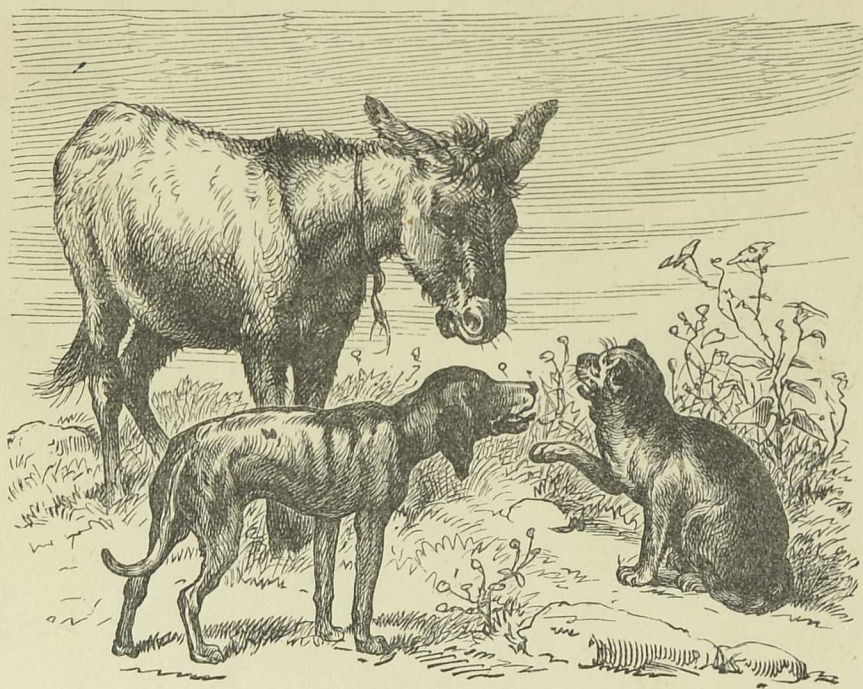
Marjory, the Shepherd's Grand-daughter.

made her feel ashamed. Joe was a good-natured man; he was very fond of birds, and not knowing that she was the thief, he soon made friends with her. He put some salve upon her wounded wing, and took Mag home with him. Joe kept her for a pet, and taught her to say, "Thank you; Joe," when he gave her food. Mag stayed with Joe all the winter; she learned to love him very much. When the spring came, and the snow was all melted from the ground, Mag went one day to the heap of stones in which she had hidden Joe's money, and she brought it all back to him piece by piece in her bill. Joe had taught Mag to be good by being kind to her, you see; that is the right way of teaching. Mag never stole Joe's money any more, though she loved hiding as much as ever. Sometimes Joe gave her broken pieces of china, or the bowl of an old pipe, or an empty matchbox, and Mag made a treasure-place at the top of the pig-sty, where she stored these nice things. Marjory often brought Benjamin to see Mag and Joe; they were great friends all their lives—Joe and Mag, and Marjory and the pet lamb.



DUKE, THE DONKEY.

 HIS story is all about a donkey who was called Duke. You will see his picture if you look at the next page. He looks very unhappy, does he not? standing in the snow. You see how the little white flakes are falling all over his rough coat, and they have quite covered up the grass, so that he can't get anything to eat. He seems very patient and quiet, and you will hardly believe, I daresay, that he is a very proud and stubborn donkey. Yet he is.



Sometimes, when it wasn't snowing, and Duke was getting what dinner he could find upon the common, the dog and the cat from a farm-house near where Duke's master lived used to pay him a visit. They didn't come often in winter; not that Rover minded the cold, but Jess, the cat, was much too afraid of getting her feet wet, and of soiling her soft fur jacket, to go so far, except when the ground was warm and dry. Duke was rather ashamed of speaking to creatures so much smaller than himself, but then he hadn't anybody else to talk to, and Jess and Rover were better than nobody, though they did speak sometimes as if they thought themselves quite as good as a donkey any day.

“We've come to pay you a visit,” said Jess, holding out a paw. “Why are you looking so dull? I'm sure there are plenty of thistles here, horrid



Duke, the Donkey.

prickly things! I scratched my nose on one as we crossed the common. You never see *me* looking dull, even when the mice are scarce." "You don't know what it is to have come down in the world," said Duke. "You are only Farmer Thompson's cat. I don't suppose you ever saw a real live lord in your life. If you had had a grandfather who was donkey to a duke, you would look dull too." "There's something in that," said Rover. "I always told you you were too proud, Jess. Everybody knows that cats are of no family to speak of. Poor silly things! I've only to bark, and they all fly." "I think you are very rude, both of you," said Jess, arching her back



and looking very spiteful; "and I shan't stay to be called names. I wouldn't be a donkey, to be beaten, and starved, and made to draw coals, and do all sorts of mean work, and to be left in the snow all day, even if my father had belonged to the *Queen*. I'll go back to my warm seat on the window-ledge, or curl myself up in the cosy basket my mistress lined for me. That is better than being chained in a kennel, with only a straw bed to lie on, Mr. Rover." "Now she's gone, we can talk sensibly," said Rover, sitting down on the grass at Duke's feet, "It's best never to mind what the cats say. They are poor silly creatures, and have no sense. You can tell me about your grandfather, if you like. I'm rather tired with running after the sheep all morning, and I'll just take a rest while you are talking."

"It's a good thing my grandfather didn't know what the family were coming to," said Duke, in a sad voice, "or he wouldn't have been so proud

Duke, the Donkey.

of his travels. He was born in Spain, where he had nothing to do all day but amuse himself, for nobody worked much there. He was tall and sleek and very handsome, and an English nobleman admired him so much that he took him back with him to England. My father has often told me of the fine box that was fitted up for him on board ship, all softly padded, so that if the steamer rolled about he might not be hurt against the sides. He had a groom to do nothing but wait upon him, and the ladies used to come every day to pet him and praise him.

He was very well treated in England, but he used to tell us never to forget that we were of an old Spanish family, and quite above doing any work. He would never have brayed again, if he could have seen me now. Ah! Spain is the land for donkeys." "I don't know about donkeys," said Rover, getting up, "but I've heard that in these lands over the sea they sometimes actually harness the dogs and make them draw carts, so England's the place for *me*. Good-bye; I must go and look after my foolish sheep."

Duke thought Rover was very unfeeling, to run away and leave him all alone. It made him so cross, to be treated like that by a dog, that when his master came for him to do his afternoon's work he refused to move. I told you Duke could be very obstinate, though he looked so meek. It was pleasant and sunny out on the common, and it was a great deal nicer to be idle than to drag a heavy cart over the rough country roads, just like any common donkey who had never heard



Duke, the Donkey.

of Spain. But Duke's master was a busy man, who had very little play-time himself, and he could not let his donkey be idle all day long. So, when he had pulled and pulled at the rope, till you almost would have thought he would pull Duke's head off, he just took up his whip and thrashed Duke till he *had* to move.

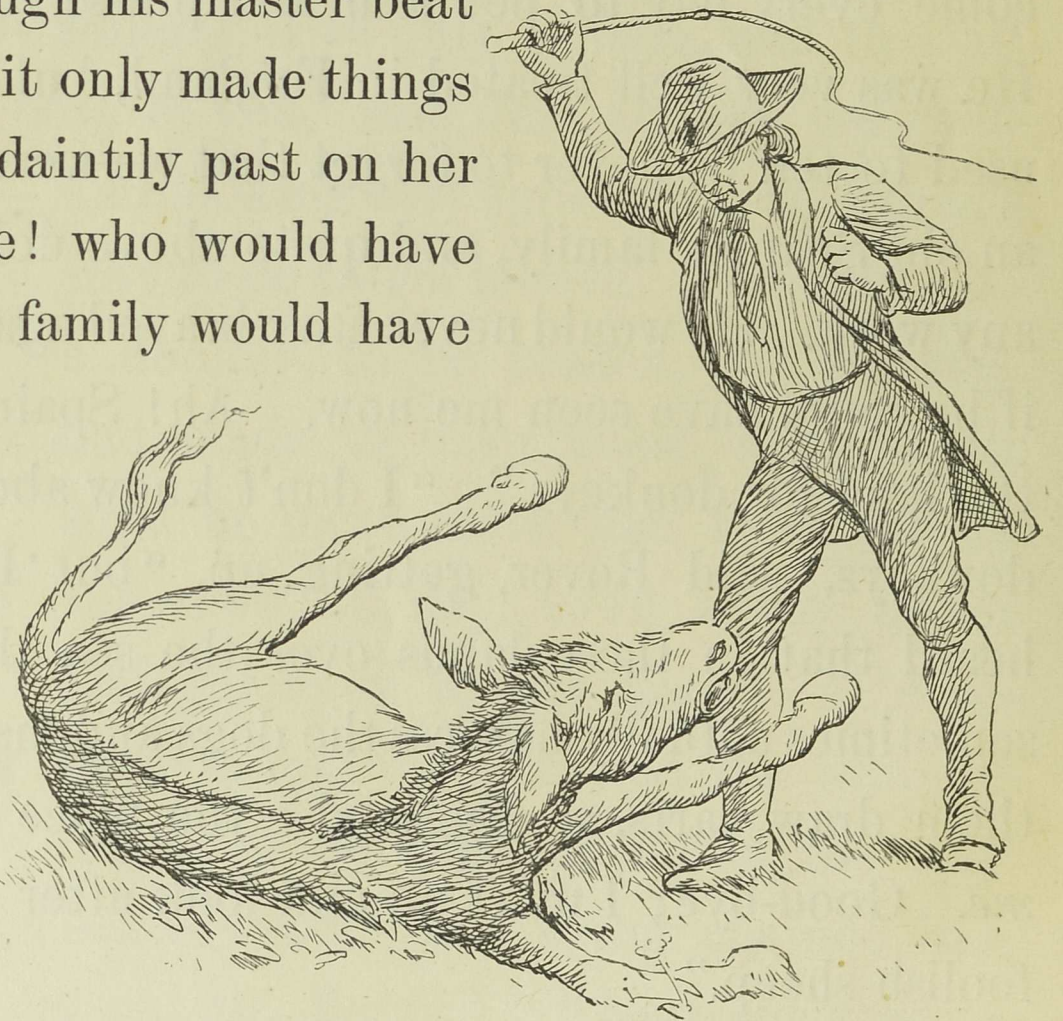
But oh, how stubborn and how naughty he was! stopping every minute or two to rest, though he wasn't a bit tired, and even lying down in the dust and refusing to get up, though his master beat him till his arm was sore. And it only made things

worse when Jess came stepping daintily past on her velvet paws, and said, "Dear me! who would have thought a donkey of such high family would have come to this!" Of course this

sort of thing couldn't go on, and as Duke grew worse every day rather than better, his master was only too glad when he had a good chance of selling him. Duke did everything he

was told on the day his new

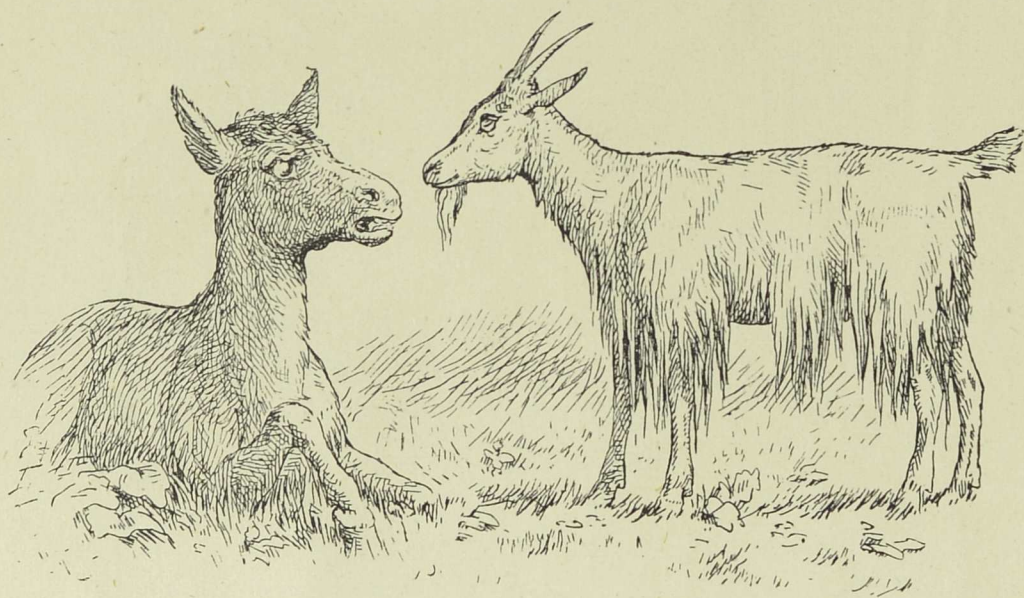
master came to see him, because he hoped to be taken to live in a grand family where he would have no work to do. If you look for a moment at the coloured picture, you will see that Duke's new home was at the seaside, and that he has two companions, a goat and another donkey. That is he standing nearest, holding down his head and looking very sulky. He has seen the nurses and the little boys and girls walking about and playing on the sands, and he is saying to himself, "If one of those children





Duke, the Donkey.

tries to get on my back, I'll soon toss him off again." You would have thought he would be glad to have a friend of his own race to talk to, but his new companion, who was very gentle, was only an Irish donkey, and knew nothing about fine people. This donkey, who was called Sam, was a great favourite with all the children, because he never kicked, and he always went at a gallop, which is what they like. He had been a Hampstead-heath donkey before he came to the seaside, and had been used to very hard work, especially at Easter and on Whitsun Monday, when thousands of poor



people from London crowd the Heath, and every little child must have a penny to pay for a ride up and down the gravel.

"Ah! that's the place to teach proud people a lesson," said Dinah, the goat, who was always laughing at the grand

airs Duke put on; "no time to rest there, as we are doing on this warm sand; it's just up and down, up and down, all day long, whether you are tired or not. I've been there myself." "Oh, it's not so very bad," said Sam, who was always contented. "Since they gave us that fine stone trough at the end of the row, and let us dip our noses into it as often as we like, it has been quite pleasant."

"You call that pleasant!" said Duke, lifting his nose in the air. "But of course you never knew anything better. I have been used to something very different; I can't be expected to like being made a drudge, when my family never stooped to do any work." "Dear me! dear me! what a silly creature you are!" said Dinah. "I have always heard that donkeys were

Duke, the Donkey.

very foolish, however. What a tiresome place Spain must be, if you are all idle there, and never do anything but talk about yourselves!" "I didn't say we were all idle," said Duke, angrily: "of course some of us—the common families among us—have to do the work. But even then, if there is a wine-cart to draw, or the lightest load to pull, they never dream of asking *one* of us to do it. There are always five or six of us at the least harnessed together, and sometimes even a dozen, so that really it is hardly work at all. And then our trappings! why, you can't fancy how fine they are, my poor Sam! you who are only an Irish donkey. We have a cover in our family still, that belonged to my grandfather, made of the softest wool, and all fringed with tassels. We once had his bells too, and the crimson nets that covered his ears to keep away the flies, but my father's master sold them. They know how to treat us properly in my country, I can tell you."



"I wonder you don't go back," said Dinah, laughing to herself. "My master always treats me well," said Sam, "though I never heard anyone speak of my grandfather; I found out long ago the best way to make him kind was just to do always what he bid me. Of course my legs *do* get a little tired with running up and down, but then I never get beaten, and the children are all fond of me. There come Master Fred and Miss Nellie. I daresay Miss Nellie wants a scamper, so I must stop eating."

If you turn to the large coloured picture, you will see what a grand gallop Nellie is having on willing Sam's back. You will wonder to see

Duke, the Donkey.

that Duke is there too. Duke meant to rebel. No child should get on *his* back, he told Dinah. But the boys thought differently, and when three of them came with thick sticks, Duke thought it was best to give in, and take Sam's advice just for once. So Fred was mounted, and there he goes, looking as if he thought it was very good fun, though he has hard work to keep his seat, with Duke kicking up his heels every now and then, stopping



short at one moment, and then bolting on the next, as the boy's stick comes down upon his back. Nellie was very much frightened, and felt sure that her brother would be thrown; but Fred was a brave rider, and held on firmly. "You shall always have Sam," he said, for he was very kind to his sister. "*I'll* make this new donkey go; he shan't get the better of me."

"Why were you so unkind to Master Fred?" said Sam, when he got his breath back again; "he's a nice little gentleman, and quite a light weight."

"Oh, you don't understand," Duke answered. "Of course it's easy for *you* to be patient and good-natured. Nobody understands our feelings. The only person I ever knew of who did was a great poet."

"What is a poet?" asked Sam; "I never heard of one before." "I know," said Dinah, who had been lying on the warm sand all the time waiting for her friends. "A poet writes rhymes for little children, such as 'Jack and Jill,' and 'Humpty Dumpty,' and 'Little Jack Horner.' I have

Duke, the Donkey.

lived a great deal with children; I know all these poems, and many others as well."

"My poet wrote for grown-up people," said Duke. "He was very sorry for our race, and thought we were sadly ill-used, so he made some verses about one of our family, which were put into a book. He even asked my grandfather to go and live with him in a flowery valley, where he could enjoy himself all day long, and never do any work. If he had known what was to happen to us, I am quite sure he would have gone."

"Why didn't you go yourself?" asked Dinah; "the poet would take you, I daresay, if he's so very fond of your family."

Duke felt sure that Dinah was laughing at him, and as he didn't like to be made fun of by a goat, he did not answer this question. He thought



about it a good deal, however, and the next day, when he saw Fred running down to the sea to have his bath, and noticed that he left a whip lying on the sands beside his clothes, he quite made up his mind that he *would* run away and find the poet.

Now Sam was such a good and trusty donkey, that the boys often left him alone for a good while at a time, feeling sure that he would never think of moving away without leave. They were never far off, however, and Duke knew that his only chance of carrying out his plan was to steal away in the morning before the little boys and girls had begun to think about riding. "You have eaten all the grass here," he said to Sam; "I'll

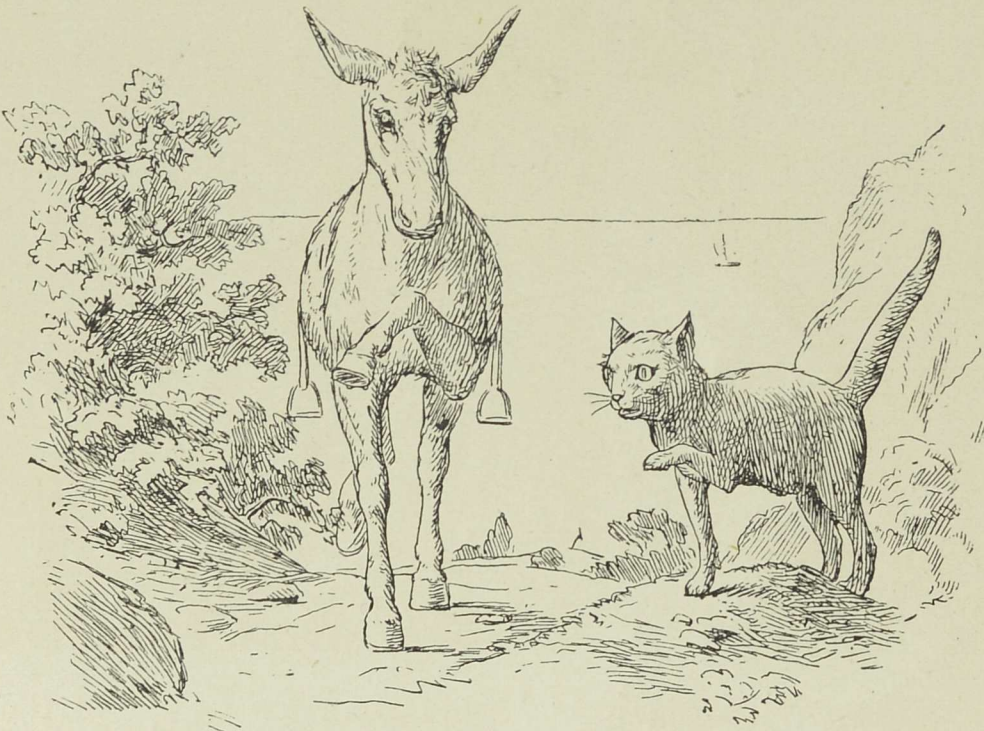




Duke, the Donkey.

just move on a little to that fine bunch I see growing over there.” Sam wouldn’t have stirred; but Duke was wilful, as we know, so he went away slowly at first, and pretending to eat. Then he saw that the boys were bending, with their heads close together, over a little boat that they were trying to sail, and so he broke into a trot, and then into a gallop, and before they could jump up and run after him, he was away along the sands, and almost out of sight.

Now this little town where Sam and Duke lived was in Wales, where there are many high wooded mountains that slope down to the very beach,



with winding paths that lead to the sea. Duke, who could run very fast when he liked, went quickly up one of these, and was soon lost among the thick trees. When he had gone quite a long way from the little town, he felt very tired, and thought that he might rest a minute before he went to seek the

poet. So he had a good breakfast of tender grass, and a drink out of a little stream that ran down the hill, and he felt quite strong again. The first living thing he met was a cat, creeping stealthily through the bushes in search of birds.

“Please, Cat,” said Duke, very politely, “can you tell me where the poet lives?”

“Up on the top of the mountain,” Puss answered; “poets like to live among the clouds, you know.” Duke remembered Jess, the farmer’s cat, and thought that *this* cat might be mocking him too; but there was no one

Duke, the Donkey.

else to ask, and so he climbed on. By-and-by he came to a bird sitting on the branch of a tree, and singing very sweetly all to himself.

“Do hush a minute and listen, Blackbird,” said Duke, crossly, “and tell me where the poet lives.” “We are all poets here,” answered the blackbird. “Was it the thrush you wanted, or the nightingale, perhaps?”

“You don’t know anything about it, that is clear,” said Duke, angrily turning away. He began to feel the saddle very heavy, and tried to knock it off by rubbing himself against a tree, but it wouldn’t come; it was too well fastened on. Perhaps he would have turned back, but the thought of Sam trotting over the burning sands, with Fred or Nellie riding him, made Duke wish to go on. So he climbed, and climbed, till the sea was far, far below him, and the trees began to get thinner, and there was no more grass. At last he came to the very top of the mountain. What do you think he found there? Not the poet—oh no—but only a cock, perched high up on a fir-tree, and looking down at him. And the cock, when



he saw Duke, called out, “Cock-a-doodle-doo! Mistress, here’s a fine donkey with a new saddle on his back come for you.” “Do stop that horrid noise,” said Duke, “and tell me where the poet lives.”

“Mistress, Mistress!” screeched the cock, flapping his wings, “come here, quick; here’s a donkey come to seek for a poet. Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

“I never met with such rudeness,” said poor Duke, who was very tired. “The cat told me he lived up here, but I might have known she was laughing at me.” “What! our Tabby, do you mean?” asked the cock; “depend upon it, she meant me. She’s a very wise cat, and a great friend

Duke, the Donkey.

of mine; you mustn't say she was laughing at you. Of course she thought you were seeking *me*. I'm the chief person here; I waken everybody in the morning." "You a poet!" cried Duke, "with that dreadful harsh voice disturbing people when they want to rest! You, who can't say anything except that ridiculous cocka-doodle-doo of yours! *You* are not the poet *I* want, at any rate." So Duke went away over the top of the mountain, leaving the cock flapping his wings, and crowing angrily to all the hens that the donkey had insulted him.

But though Duke wandered about all day long, and asked every bird



and beast that he met if it could tell him where the poet lived, there was not one of them that gave him a proper answer. Some of them were sure he must mean the new dog at Farmer Smith's, because he barked so loud; others thought it must be the strange bird in the cage Duke wanted, because no one could understand a word it said. They couldn't agree among themselves. At last Duke came to a cottage where he was quite certain he would find the

poet, so he climbed up the steep bank, and peeped between the tree branches through the windows, but the cottage was empty. "Perhaps if I go round to the door I may find him," Duke thought, so he scrambled down again.

But the door was shut fast, and though Duke brayed loud, nobody came to open it. Only some ducks waddled round the corner, crying, "Quack! quack! Why do you make such a noise?" they asked. "It's against the rules. This is the time when the ducklings go to sleep."

Duke, the Donkey.

“I want the poet,” said Duke. “Is he asleep too?” “Our drake is French,” said the fattest of the ducks, who spoke for the rest. She was very fat, and almost ready to be killed and eaten. “Yes, speak to him,” cried the other ducks, who were quite lean; “you are the plumpest, we leave it to you.”

“Our drake comes from Rouen,” the fat duck began again. “He will be very polite to you. French drakes are much more polite than English ones. He will talk poetry to you. It comes quite easy to him. You will find him at the pond round the corner. We will go with you. We are only taking an airing; it won’t disturb us,” said the fat duck, looking very important.

“Yes, yes,” cried all the ducks, “let us go with him.”

“You all think yourselves so clever, you two-legged animals,” said Duke, with an angry bray. “Do you think I came all this way to see you?”

The ducks looked very much astonished. “What is he saying?” they asked each other. “Let us go for our drake to protect us,” they cried, waddling as fast as they could out of the way of Duke’s hoofs, as he trotted up the hill once more.

Now all this time you will wonder what Sam and the donkey-boys were doing. Something pleasant had happened to Sam. If you look at the coloured picture, you will see that he has got two little children seated in panniers on his back. Sam has been hired by their father because he is so gentle; he is to be the children’s donkey for all the rest of the summer, and they are to have a ride every fine day. Their father has bought the panniers for them because they are too young to ride as Fred and Nellie do, but they do not need anybody to go with them except their nurse, for Sam is very careful. You see them now crossing the field, where the grass



Duke, the Donkey.

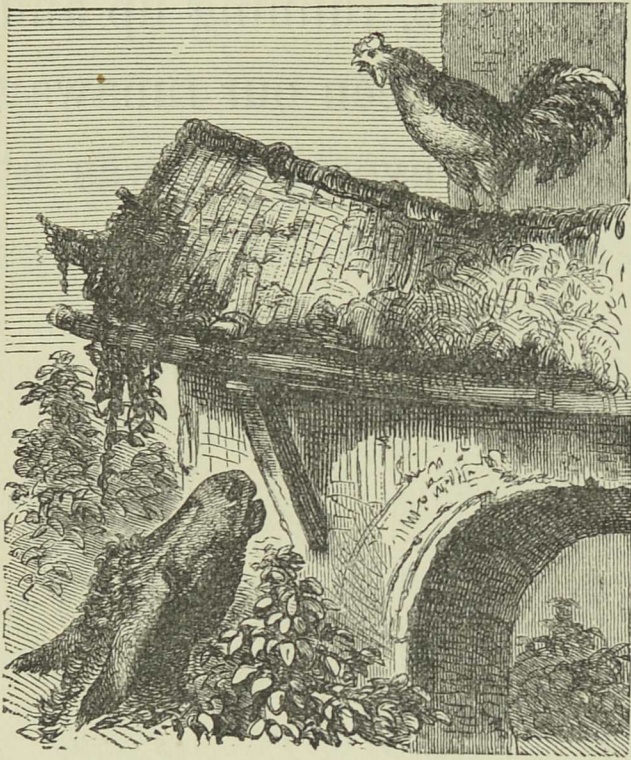
is short and smooth. Brisk, the terrier, thinks it fine fun to bark at Sam's nose; but Sam knows it is all play, and he doesn't mind. The boys who had charge of Duke had a hot time of it you may be sure, running up and down the town, and calling out to everybody, "Have you seen our runaway donkey?" But nobody had seen the donkey, because everybody was at breakfast when Duke set off; so after they had searched the town, there was nothing for it but to climb the mountain and to search there too. The cat could have told them something, but then they didn't understand her language; the blackbird sang with all his might to them that Duke had gone to seek the poet, but they never listened to him, and went quite the wrong way.



All this time Duke was wandering about the mountain top, and he began to think that he had made rather a mistake, and that Sam was right after all in sticking quietly to his work. Of course it would never do to go back and tell Sam that, it would make him vain, and poor Sam was only an Irish donkey. Then Dinah would be sure to laugh at his misfortunes; and, worse than all, what a thrashing the boys would give him! No, he couldn't go back, and he might find the poet after all, before it grew quite dark. Just then, he saw a building higher up the hill. The bank was steep, and Duke stumbled a great many times as he climbed it. Just as he had almost reached an arched door that led to a farm-yard, his fore-foot slipped, and a great branch of a tree catching the saddle, he was left hanging there and quite helpless. "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" cried his old friend the cock, flapping his wings on the roof of the arch. "Who comes here? Why, it's the donkey! Mistress, Mistress, here's the donkey back

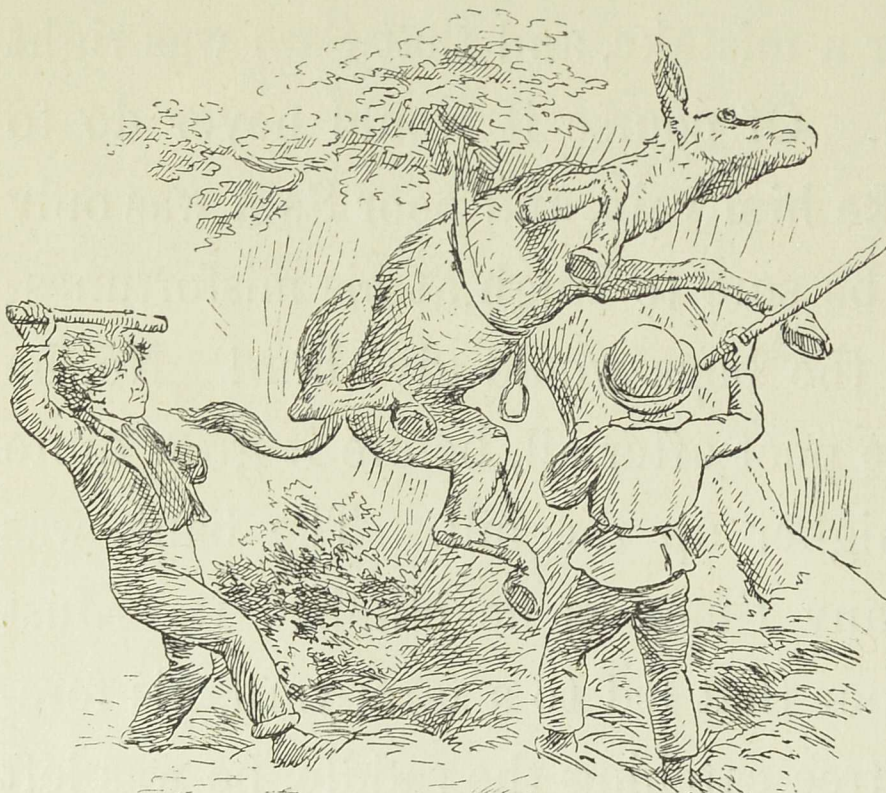
Duke, the Donkey.

again!" "Oh, please, good cock, cry a little louder," said poor Duke; "the brambles are scratching my face, and I am nearly choked with the saddle.



You have such a strong, clear voice, they will be sure to hear you." "Oh, ho! so you like my voice now, do you? No, no, Mr. Donkey, get your friend the poet to help you, or call out yourself; you have a fine voice, everyone says, and I'm sure it is louder than mine." "But I've no breath left to bray with," said poor Duke; "do just call out cock-a-doodle-doo again, dear Mr. Cock, and I'll *never* grumble at you in the mornings any more."

The cock thought it would never do to yield, with all the hens in the yard below listening for what he might say next, and I don't know how



long Duke might have waited for some one to help him, if the donkey-boys, hearing all this noise, had not come up at that moment. You can guess what a dreadful thrashing they gave him with their heavy sticks. The cock watched it all from the roof, and then he flew down to the yard to tell the hens that that was the way disobedient people were punished, and what a good

thing it was he had been firm, and had not crowed. Duke was very sorry he had ever tried to run away. When he got down the hill, and back to the stable, he found Sam there. "Oh, Sam!" he said, "you needn't envy me

Duke, the Donkey.

any more. What's the use of having a grandfather who was donkey to a duke if this is all that comes of it?" "Never mind," said good-natured Sam, "just do what they tell you to-morrow, even if they want to put Master Fred on your back, and they will soon forget all this. Of course it is easier for me to work, because we are not of high family at all, and nobody ever wrote verses about us." "Sam," said Duke, in a very low voice, "I don't think there was a poet on the hill at all."

But Fred never had a chance of mounting Duke again, for the boys would have nothing more to do with him, and his master was glad to sell him at a low price. When the summer was ended, Sam too changed his home, and went to live with a London costermonger. In the last coloured picture you see him at his daily work. He has got, as he deserves, a good, kind master. That girl, I am sure, likes to come often and buy from him; they sell all sorts

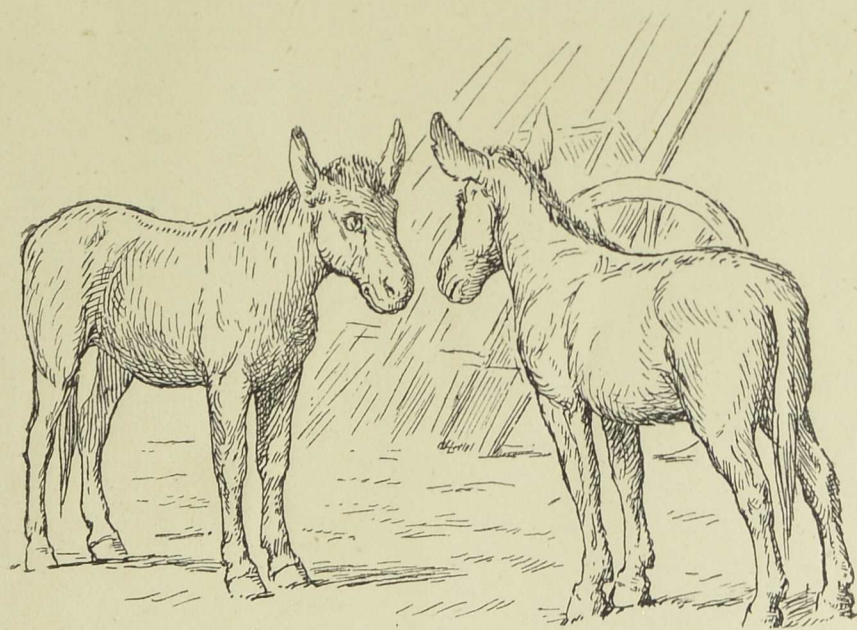


of things out of that little cart—fish, when they are plentiful, and fruit and vegetables. I have not time to tell you of all the ups and downs of Duke's life, or how he too came at last to be a costermonger's donkey. But I know that Duke has found out that it is not such a bad thing to work as he once thought it, and that he hardly ever grumbles at all now. Sometimes, on a great holiday, Duke's new master and mistress go out in the cart for an airing, all dressed up in their best, and Duke is growing quite proud of them, because he sees how friendly everyone is with them. They don't forget him either, but get out at all the steep places to



Duke, the Donkey.

walk. Once, when he had pulled them all the way to Barnet Fair, and was resting beside the other donkeys, he heard a voice that he knew, and, turning round, there he saw Sam, who was braying loudly to him. Of course they were very glad to rub noses, and to talk together of Dinah, and of the little town by the sea. "And did you ever find the poet?" Sam asked. "Hush," said Duke, "I never talk about these things now, Sam. My master doesn't know anything about my family, and I may tell you, Sam, that I have been a great deal happier since I have been too busy to think of my grandfather who was donkey to a duke."



MINA AND THE PIGEONS.



HE pigeons ought to have been very happy, they had nothing to do but to fly about all day, or to sit on the roof and talk to one another.

There was the old Jacobin, with his great ruff round his neck, looking as wise as a judge, and giving good advice to the others. He was just now talking to Dick, the carrier pigeon, and asking him when he was going to take his next journey.

“That I cannot tell,” answered the carrier pigeon; “Mina has not told me where her father’s regiment is going.”

The Jacobin shook his head gravely.

“And there’s going to be fighting soon.”

“Yes, Mina and her mother are very sad when they think of it.”

“Mina tells you everything,” said Puff the Pouter, who was sunning himself close by; “she thinks more of you than of any of us.”

“That is because I fly home with the letters when her father is away, and she is glad for me to bring news of him.

“It is not fair,” said Mrs. Fantail, who was strutting up and down, spreading out her beautiful white feathers.

“It is not fair,” said two glossy necked pigeons, who were perched on the chimney.

“Don’t be so silly,” said the Jacobin; “you get notice enough, and you



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Mina and the Pigeons.

don't run into any danger as Dick the Carrier does. Here, in these pleasant woods, no one dares to shoot at us. But when Dick is flying abroad, that is quite a different thing—especially in these war times.”

“Hush!” said Puff the Pouter, “what is that?”

It was the voice of little Mina singing—



“The doves have built a nest in the wood,
So the swallow whispered to me,
He said I should go,
When the breezes blow,
To see the nest rock in the waving tree.

“‘Rockaby, rockaby!’ so they sing
To the little ones in the nest;
The swallow said O,
It is worth while to go,
To hear the doves sing their young ones to rest.

“‘Rockaby, rockaby, on the tree top,’
So the doves sing through the long, long day;
I should like to go,
But the way I don't know,
And there's nobody here to show me the way.”

Just then two of the pigeons, named Dart and Prin, who were always flying away from home, came and settled on the roof, singing,

“Through the branches of the trees,
Everywhere we're flying;
Leaves, and seeds, and birds, and trees,
Everything we're spying.”

“Perhaps,” said Dick, “you can tell us where the doves live, you see more than most of us.”

“No, we can't, but we can find out,” answered Dart and Prin. And Mina sang on;

Mina and the Pigeons.

“The doves are away in a wood so green,
Beside a lake so glassy and clear,
Who will help me
To find the tree
Where they have built their nest this year?”

Ruff the Jacobin, Dick, Dart, and Prin, all cried, “We will, we will.”

Mina thought they said “Coo, coo,” and she smiled and nodded, saying, “Coo, coo, but it is not dinner-time yet.”

“A wood by a lake!—the pigeons in the new pigeon-house were talking about a lake; we will go and ask them.”

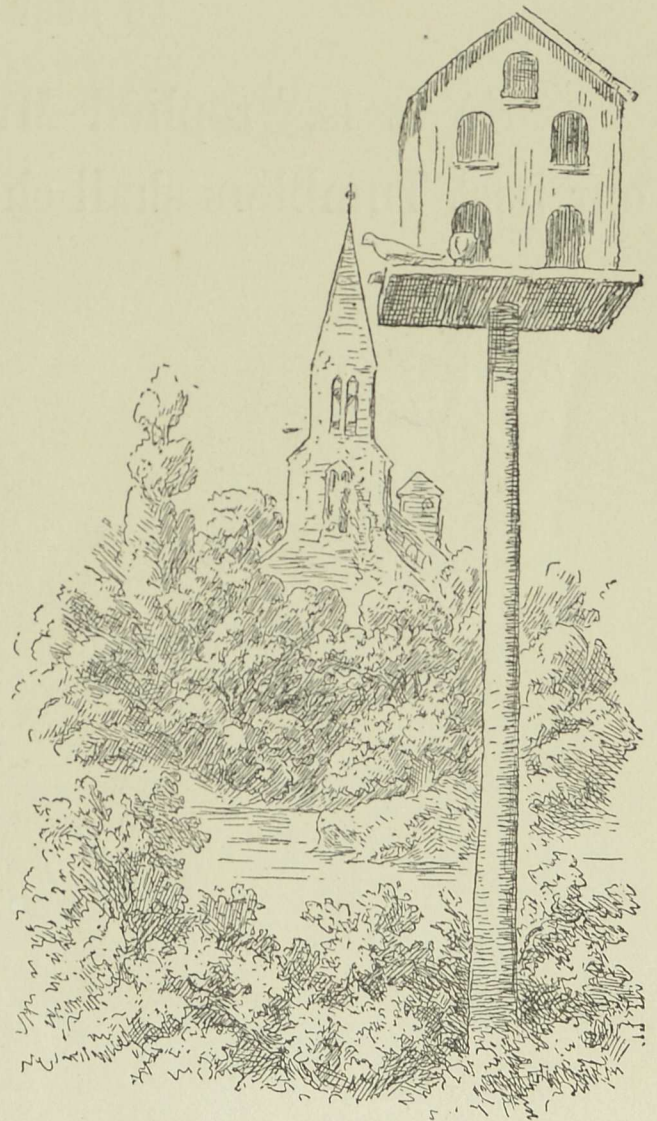
The new pigeon-house was placed on a high pole. There were pigeon-holes for the pigeons to make their nests and sleep in, and all round was a broad ledge upon which they could sit and look out. It was in a pleasant part of the garden, and close by was a pool of water, and across the pool the church was to be seen. And the pigeons liked to hear the bells ringing.

Dart reached the pigeon-house first, as he flew very quickly. Three pigeons were sunning themselves on the broad ledge, and one of them, looking up at Dart, said, “What is the matter? why are you in such a hurry?”

Then Dart said, “Do you know a wood by a lake?”

“Yes,” said the pigeon on the ledge, whose name was Mrs. Barb; “it is not far from here.”

“And do you know anything of some doves who have built in a tree in the wood?”



Mina and the Pigeons.

“Of course I do,” answered Mrs. Barb; “the doves are our cousins. Mr. and Mrs. Ringdove chose the place you speak of early in the spring. I was there only a few days since, looking at their nest and their little ones.”

“Oh,” said Dart,

‘The swallow said O,
It is worth while to go,
To hear the doves sing their young ones to rest.’”

“So it is,” replied Mrs. Barb; “and whenever you want to go, two of our best Tumblers shall show you the way.”



This was good news for Dart to go home with, and he and Prin returned just as Mina and her mother had come out into the courtyard to feed the pigeons.

It is now time to explain who Mina was. Mina was a little girl eight years old, who lived with her mother in a cottage in the grounds of a rich nobleman. It was just outside the garden wall of the castle, and there was

a large yard to it, with pigeon-houses all round, for it was the business of Mina's mother to look after the pigeons belonging to the Count.

Mina's father was a soldier, and he was away with the army, for there was war in the land, and no one knew how soon a battle might be fought.

All the people who had husbands, or fathers, or brothers, or sons, who were soldiers, were in great fear, for they knew that many would be killed;



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Mina and the Pigeons.

perhaps those belonging to them. Dick the Carrier had just returned with a message from Mina's father to say that he had not yet had to fight, but Mina and her mother did not know how soon he might have to do so.

Mina and her mother were thinking about him all day, and were just now wishing that the war was over, and that he could come back to his native village, and help them to take care of the pigeons. After this war he would be able to do so, for his time of service would be at an end.

The pigeons were busy eating their dinner in the courtyard; Mina was holding a great dish of peas, and her mother was scattering them on the ground. Toby the dog was watching them. He had just eaten his dinner, and was waiting to have a run with Mina. Toby knew quite well he must wait patiently until the pigeons were fed. Muff, the cat, was seated on the top of some steps. She was too good a cat to touch the pigeons, for she had been trained not to do so. Still, the pigeons were a little afraid of her, and did not let her come too near.

There was a door from the courtyard into the castle garden. It was open now, and soon Mina would go along the smooth gravel walk, and by the flower-beds, where there were so many sweet flowers, and would rest herself in the shady arbours. Toby always went with her, for he was a good dog, and did not run over the borders.

When the pigeons had eaten as much as they wanted, they flew up to the roof, and Dart told Ruff and Dick what he had heard about the doves.

“Why should not Mina go to-day?” said Ruff; “it will give her something else to think of than this horrid war.”

Dart went off to fetch the Tumblers, and brought them to Ruff, and Dick, and Prin, who were waiting in the garden, where Mina and Toby were strolling about. Mina was looking at a rose-bush, covered with red roses,

Mina and the Pigeons.

when the pigeons came fluttering round, saying, "Coo, coo, coo." And Mina thought she heard the wind whispering to her,

"You shall see, if you will follow,
What was told you by the swallow."

She looked round to see if any one was speaking, but no one was there; then she looked up, and, behold! the Tumblers were tumbling over and over in the air.

"Oh, you beautiful birds!" said Mina. And as she watched them, she heard the song going on, or rather another song, as if the Tumblers had taken up the tune, and were twisting and turning it as they tumbled about in the air;

"Follow, follow, we will take
Little Mina to the lake;
Follow, follow, she shall see
Waving wood and bush and tree.
Tumble, tumble,
Do not grumble,
Though the journey long should be."



Then the Tumblers turned over and over half-a-dozen times so cleverly that Mina cried out, "Well done! well done!" At which the pigeons cried out, "Coo, coo, coo!" which made Mina think that after all it must be the wind that was singing, or the pigeons would have answered in some other words. Again she heard the song,

"Tumble, tumble,
Do not grumble,
Though the journey long should be."

"How can I grumble?" said Mina, when you are doing all you can for

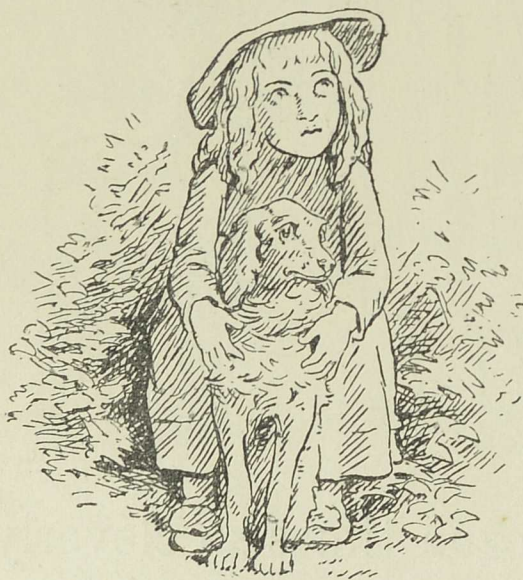
Mina and the Pigeons.

me, and amusing me on the way. You are the dearest birds in the world, and I hope you will come and dine with our pigeons whenever you please."

"Coo, coo, coo," said the Tumblers, and Mina supposed they meant "Yes."

Still she was more than ever certain that the wind was singing the song. She walked on watching the graceful Tumblers, and the time went very quickly, so that it was no wonder that she did not notice how far she was going. Suddenly she said, "Why, here is a lake, and here is a wood, and there is a tree! And then she stopped for a moment, she was so surprised. Then she clapped her hands and said, "And here are the doves!" Yes, there they were, and Ruff, and Dick, and Dart, and Prin, and the Tumblers perched on the boughs above and cooed for joy.

But they did not coo long, for the doves began to sing their song.



And as they sang, Mina sat down to listen, with her arms round Toby. It was a very sweet song, and it made her feel quite happy, for it said, "Peace, peace!"

Ah! Mina thought, if it could be peace and no war, then her father would come home and live with them.

She listened and listened, and felt that if she could always hear the song she should never be naughty, or feel cross and angry, and certainly never go into a passion.

"Peace, peace, how sweet to be at peace,
To be at rest!

Sleep little ones, in safety sleep,
Warm in your nest.

No harm shall come, though dark may be the night;
Sleep, sleep in peace until the morning light.

Sleep, sleep, in safety sleep,
A loving watch we keep—

Peace! lullaby!"

Mina and the Pigeons.

Ah! it was not the wind singing now. Mina knew well enough that only the doves could sing so sweetly. And the song went on and on through many verses, all telling of the pleasantness of peace.

Mina whispered to Toby that it was quite worth coming to hear. And Toby, who generally howled when he heard anything like music, nodded his head sleepily, for he was going off into a doze.

“No, no, Toby,” said Mina, “you must not go to sleep; it is only the little doves that the lullaby is meant for. Wake up, wake up, for it is time to go home.” And she patted Toby, and rose up softly, and the two walked homeward.

At home there was another surprise for her; her father had come, and Mina was full of joy.

But it did not last long, and Mina began to cry as bitterly as her mother.

Her father had been allowed to come for a few hours only. There was going to be a great battle before long, and Mina's father would have to fight.

“And perhaps he will be killed, and we shall never see him again,” said Mina's mother.

“Father shall not go,” sobbed Mina; “I will hold him fast, so that he cannot get away.”





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Mina and the Pigeons.

But Mina's father was obliged to go, and he kissed Mina many times, but she and her mother could not say, "Good-bye."

"You must take Dick," sobbed Mina; "and send him to us when the battle is over."

So the father took Dick with him, and all the pigeons were very sad when they knew that Dick had gone, for they did not know if they should ever see the Carrier Pigeon or his master again.



"War is a bad thing," said Ruff gravely, "guns, drums, cannon, smoke, firing, swords, pistols, bayonets."

The pigeons came close round Ruff to hear about it.

"Is there a very great noise?" asked Puff the Pouter.

"Very," answered Ruff, "louder than thunder."

The pigeons huddled closer together.

"And the soldiers?" continued Puff.

"Yes, they are in the midst of it, killing each other."

The pigeons thought of Mina's father.

"Poor Mina," said Ruff.

"Poor Dick," said Dart.

And many days went by, and no Dick came back. Mina and her mother watched for him every day, so did the pigeons on the roof, and the pigeons in the pigeon-house, and even the doves in the wood wanted to hear of him. They sang, "Coo, coo, coo," to their young ones, but the song sounded mournful to Mina.

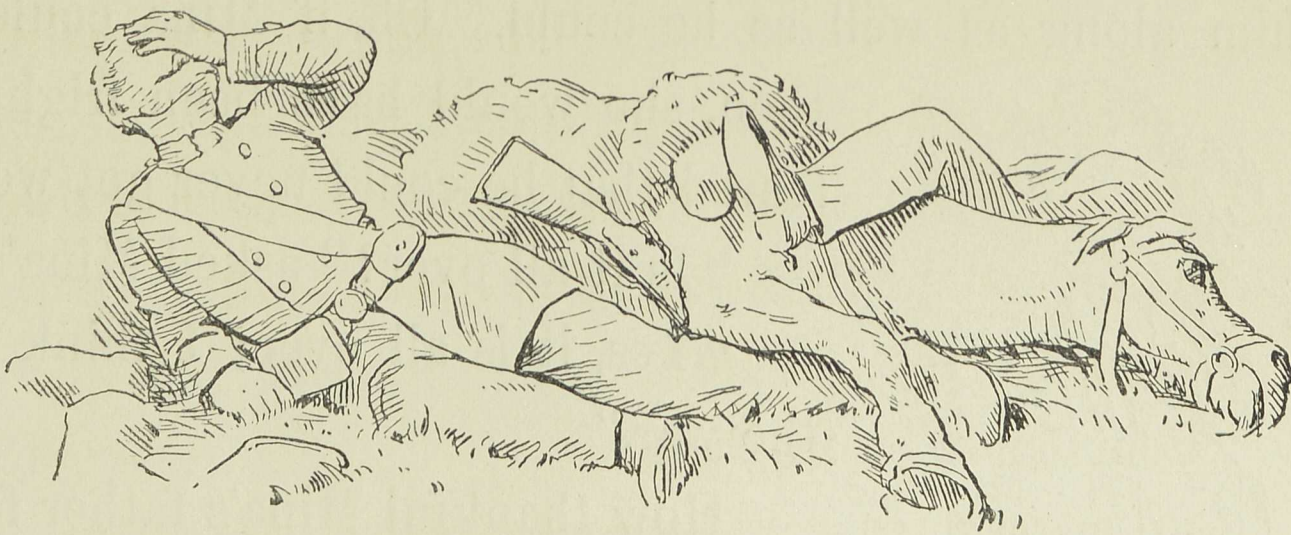
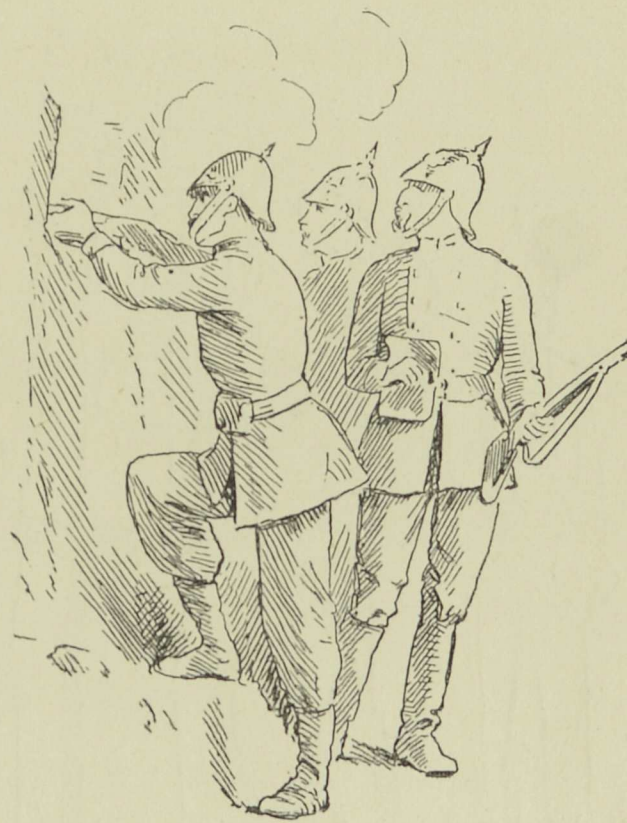
Mina and the Pigeons.

At last Mina's mother heard that the fighting had begun, and the great battle was soon coming. But that was all she knew. When it was over, Dick would come. How she longed to see him. And poor Dick! he was longing to be at home, for he was shut up by himself in a small room in one of the houses in the great town, not far from the field of battle. There was food and water left for him, and when the fight was over, his master would send him home.

Where was his master?

Mina's father was with the other soldiers, obeying the commands of his captain. He had fired many times at the enemy, and they were firing in return. Sometimes a soldier fell by his side, and then another, and it all got confused, and he heard the galloping of horses, and the sound of trumpets and clash of swords, and he fell to the ground. After a time he opened his eyes, but he could not tell where he was, because of the smoke. He was sore in all his limbs, and his arms were bruised, and the blood was flowing from a cut in his forehead. Round him were the bodies of dead soldiers and dead horses. He did not dare to move, for the guns were still firing, and the smoke was thicker than ever, so that he could not have found his way to the city.

He did not know how long he lay there, stiff and bleeding; but at

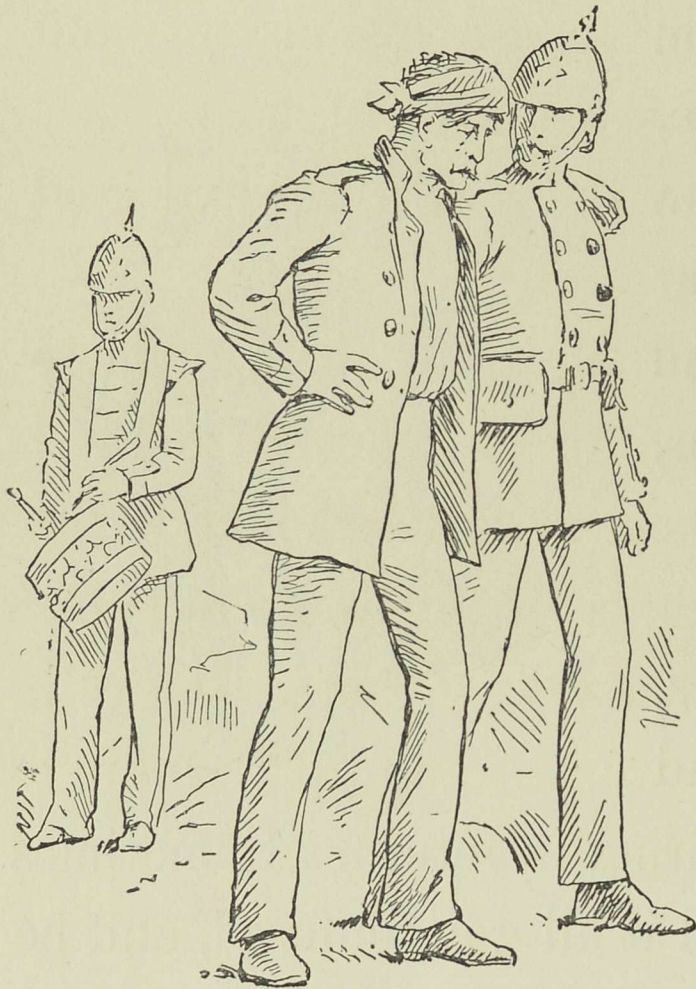


Mina and the Pigeons.

length the firing became fainter and fainter, and a soldier whom he knew went by, who shouted to him, "We have won the battle."

Perhaps the soldier expected that he would shout "Hurrah!"

But Mina's father was too weak to shout. Besides, he did not feel that it was a time to be joyful. Many of his soldier companions whom he had known since they were boys were lying dead on the battlefield, and their wives and their little children would never hear them speak again.



Then another soldier came, and he stopped and helped Mina's father to get up, and led him towards the city. They went along very slowly, for Mina's father was very faint and feeble. The soldier tied a handkerchief tight round his forehead to stop the bleeding, and helped him along as well as he could. Oh, if Mina could have seen her father then, she would have been frightened, and would have feared that he could never get well again.

"Is it all over?" asked Mina's father.

"Yes, it is all over; I think this will be the end of the war."

How thankful Mina's father felt.

The two men went on to the city. It had been on fire, and some of the houses were burned. Men and women and children were running about the streets, many of them crying; they knew not where to go, for the flames were still going up.

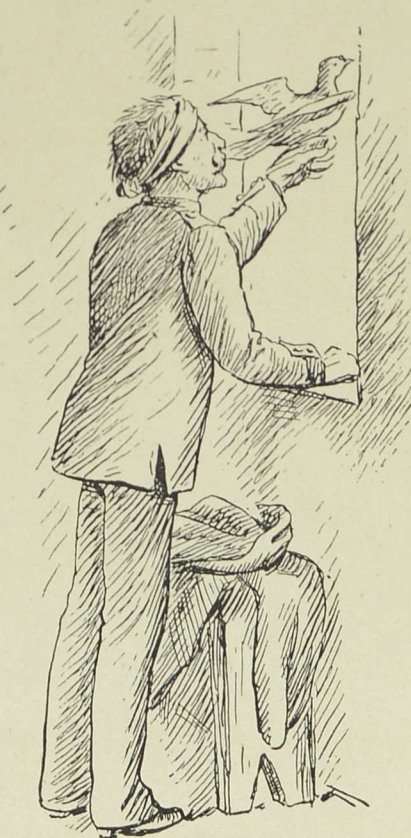


Mina and the Pigeons.

Mina's father managed to find his lodgings, and was glad indeed to find poor Dick unhurt, though he looked frightened, and his feathers had a ruffled appearance. And Dick was overjoyed to see his master, and nestled up to him, and cooed, and rubbed his beak against his cheek.

For Dick, as he afterwards told the pigeons on the roof, never expected to see Mina's father again.

"There I was," said he to Ruff and Puff and the rest of them; "there I was, cooped up in a wretched little room with the window barred. I could hear the firing, and the roar of the cannon, and the shouts of the soldiers. And all at once there came a great light, as if torches were being lighted all over the city, and then there came a cry, so loud, so shrill, 'The town is on fire!' and after it, I heard the women and little children shrieking, and calling out for help. And I beat my wings against the window to try to get out, for the heat was great, and I thought I should be stifled; but it was in vain, and I dropped exhausted on the floor, and lay there trembling, until I heard a step on the stair, and the bar of the door slipped back, and my master, pale and wounded and covered with blood, stood before me, and I nestled into his arms. Oh Ruff, Puff, Dart, Prin, and all the rest of you, war is a dreadful thing!" This is what Dick said to the pigeons.



And as Mina's father stroked Dick's head, he too said to himself, "War is a dreadful thing." But to Dick he said, "Now, my good bird, you shall take a joyful letter home."

So he wrote a little note, and when he had bathed Dick's feet in vinegar, he tied it under his wing, and carried the bird downstairs into the



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street. "Away, away, good Dick! Good speed! good speed!" And he tossed him up.

Dick rose high into the air, above the burning city. He looked down upon the red and yellow flames leaping up, and by their light he saw the poor dead soldiers lying beside their dead horses. It was a sad sight.

But Dick did not linger over the battle-field; he flew far, far away towards home.

How glad were Mina and her mother to see the Carrier Pigeon! How they kissed and stroked him, and praised and thanked him; and what a meal they gave him!

Before long, the postman brought a longer letter from Mina's father, to tell them that his wounds were healing, that he was getting stronger, and that in a week's time he expected to be at home.

What preparations there were being made to welcome him! The whole house was put in order. The best sitting-room, that was never used but on state occasions, had fresh muslin curtains to the windows; there were wreaths of evergreens on the walls and over the doorway, and all the vases were filled with flowers.

Mina had made a scroll for the outer door, and had marked out "Peace" in letters formed of red roses upon it. And Mina's mother had made the largest cake she had ever made in her life, full of currants and raisins and citron and all good things, and had



Mina and the Pigeons.

roasted a supply of coffee, and had got out all the best china coffee-cups; for would not everyone in the village be coming to see Mina's father, and would they not need refreshment? And Mina and her mother went about the house and pigeon-yard, talking and singing, and sometimes even crying for joy.

Of course the pigeons knew all about everything, and Ruff had marshalled them on the roof to give a grand welcome to the returning soldier. As for Dick, he was wild with delight, and flew round and round and far away, to see if he could see anything of his master.

"Yes! yes! he is coming; he is not many miles away." So said Dick.

"And the neighbours are going out to meet him, and to bring him home in triumph," said Dart.

"And they have put on their best clothes, and they have got drums and music, and flags and banners," said Prin.

"I can hear them," said Puff the Pouter, in a great state of excitement.

The pigeons put their heads on one side and listened.

"We can all hear them," cried the pigeons with one voice.

And in spite of the efforts of Ruff, who had hoped they would make a grand show on the roof, they all departed to see as much of the festive doings as possible.

Nearer, nearer! Mina and her mother heard the music now, and Toby began to howl. Nearer, nearer!

The boy who helped in the pigeon-yard rushed up and flung open the gate.

"He comes, Madame! he is here!"

And in another moment Mina and her father and mother were embracing each other; whilst Toby was frantically barking round them, and trying to lick his master's hand.

Mina and the Pigeons.

The pigeons had returned to the roof, and sat watching the meeting, and crying, "Coo, coo, coo," so loud, that Mina's father looked up at them.

"Give them an extra feast to-day, Mina," said he; and Dick the Carrier flew down and alighted on his master's shoulder.

Ah! what a joyful day it was. The sun was shining, the birds singing, everyone's heart was rejoicing, and Mina's mother bade all her neighbours welcome, and coffee was served, with slices of the great cake that tasted better than any cake had ever tasted before.

Home! Home at last in peace and safety!

"Home! home!" said the neighbours; "welcome home!"

"Home! home! welcome home!" cooed the pigeons.

And Toby again licked his master's hand, as much as to say, "Welcome!"

Then Mina's father thanked his friends for their kindly greetings, and as he ended his speech he pointed to the word over the door, "Peace."

"Yes," said he, "Peace! Peace is the best for our land."

"Amen!" said everyone.

And Mina and her mother, each holding a hand of the father, said "Amen! Amen!" many times.

They were happier than ever now, and there was no fear of the father's having to go away again. The war was over at last, and there was peace. Everyone rejoiced at this, for war is a dreadful thing. So Mina's father had said, so Dick the Carrier had said, so said Mina and her mother, and the neighbours, and Ruff, and Puff, and all the pigeons. The pigeons also left off being jealous of Dick. They even became as proud of him as Mina was, and were never tired of hearing him tell about the war.

And far away in the woods by the lake the doves were rejoicing that there was peace in the land. They had left off their mournful song, now



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Mina and the Pigeons.

that Mina was happy again; and the next time she went to hear them they were singing,

“Peace, peace, peace! The best thing in the world is peace.”

“And to be at home again,” said Mina, holding her father’s hand tight.

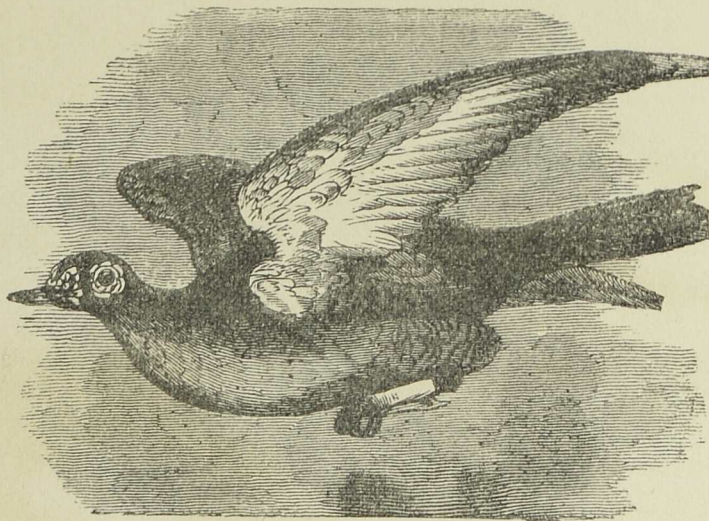
“Yes,” said the father; “when I think of so many brave soldiers who were shot down, I feel very thankful that I was spared to come home and take care of my little Mina and her mother.”

“Father,” said Mina, “when Dick brought us your letter, it was like the dove coming back to the ark with the olive leaf, to tell that the danger was over.”


Mina and her father wandered along by the river and past the church, and Mina thought she had never been so happy in her life. And looking up at her father, she said, “Do you know what the doves and the river and the bells are saying to me?”

And Mina’s father smiled, and said, “No, my child. What is it?”

Then Mina answered, “They are telling me that peace brings joy into the world. Hush! do you not hear them singing—“Peace, peace, peace”?”



CAGED AND FREE.

HE winter has long passed, the spring is over, and summer has just begun; the birds meet together in the wood, each one has something to say. The Nightingale comes shyly out from the shade; she does not sing, but she tells a little story. "I made a nest in a secret place," the Nightingale says, "and my four little children were born there; they are all fledged now, and pick up ants, and spiders, and good things under the trees; they have been pecking about all this morning, but they say



spiders are not good to-day—how do you find them, my friends?" "Snails are good," said Thristle, the large thrush, "they are so full of juice." "But ivy berries are better still," said Missel, the other thrush, "and mistletoe berries are the best of all."

Look at the Lark high in the air above all the other birds; he sings as he flies, he does not talk about food. Swift, the swallow, sits on a branch and looks up at him. "How silly he is," says Swift, "to sing so much. I catch flies whilst I am flying, I do not waste any time. The air is full of nice flies now." Jenny Wren sits upon the branch also. She is not gay; she wishes that she had pretty feathers in her wings and on her breast, such as Bully the finch, and Goldie his cousin, and Robin Redbreast have. Black



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Bob talks about a cherry-tree. "I know a fine one," Black Bob says, "and the cherries upon it are all ripe." "Where does it grow?" asks Robin Redbreast; and Black Bob answers, "In a garden that I know."

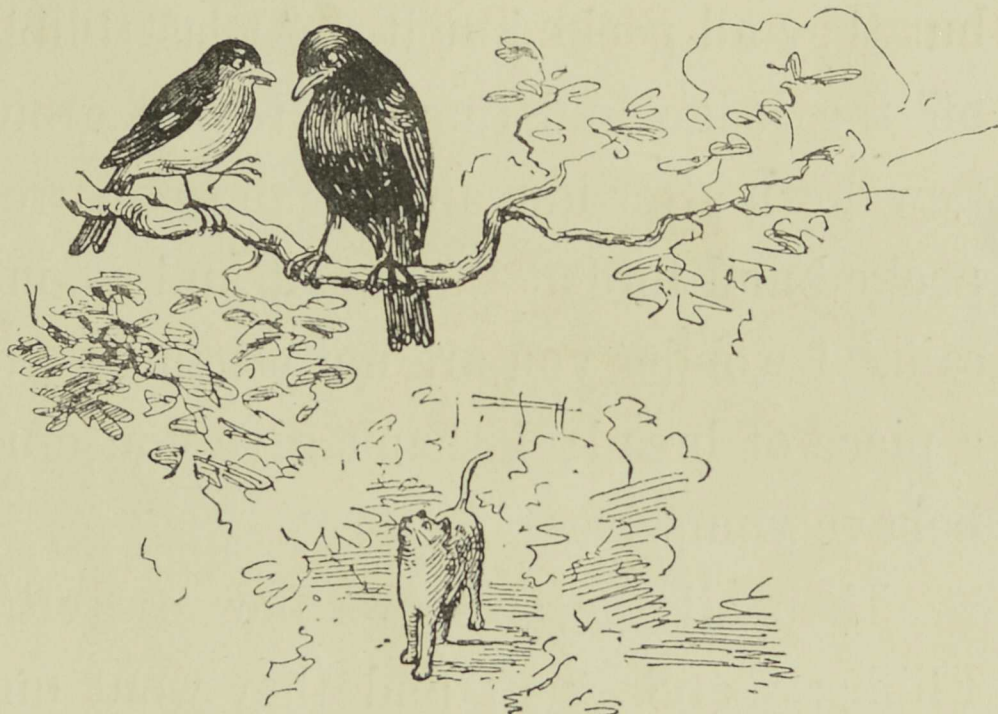


Now the garden was not far from the wood in which the birds were, it belonged to a good gardener called Sam. Robin Redbreast knew him very well, he was kind to Robin and to all good birds. Robin did not steal cherries, or currants, or any sort of fruit; he knew that this was wrong, for Sam had told him so. Black Bob stole cherries and green peas, and so did Black Bill his brother; there is no likeness of Black Bill in the first coloured picture, but you will see him by-and-by. Sam knew the

thieves, and he had a plan in his head. Robin did not know about Sam's plan, but he knew there was a cat in the garden, and he told Black Bob about her. "Pouncer is a strong cat," said Robin to the birds; "I saw her kill a sparrow once, shall I tell you how it happened?" "Yes, tell us, Robin," the birds said.

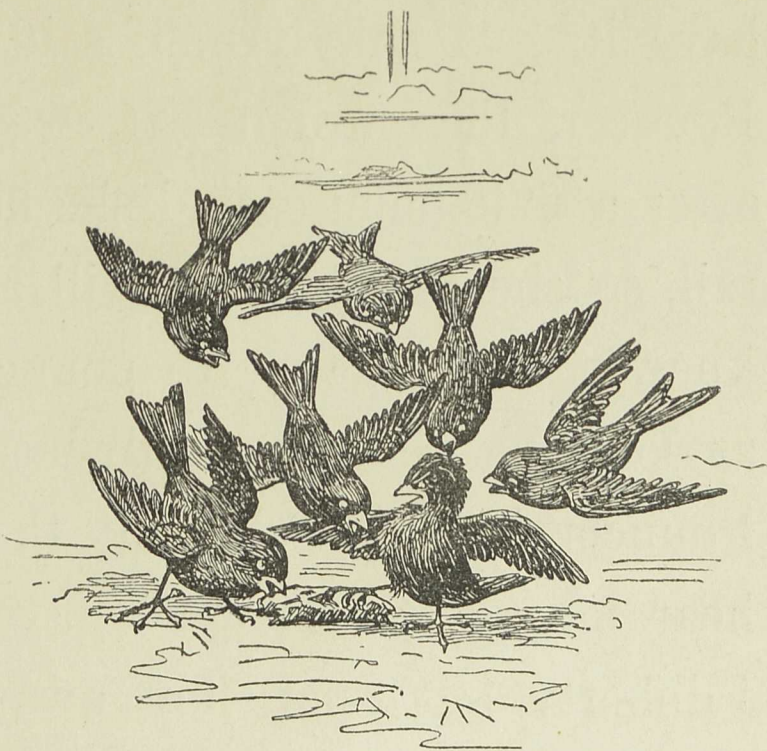
Caged and Free.

“It was a house sparrow,” said Robin, her name was Fliberty; she lived upon the roof of the gardener’s house with her father, and mother, and brothers, and sisters. I stayed near that house all last winter, and I saw a great deal of Sam and of the sparrows. One morning, when I awoke, I found that the earth was covered with snow; the north wind blew, the pond was frozen at the bottom of the field, some water in one of the



watering-cans was frozen, icicles hung from the palings and from the trees. Fliberty and all the sparrows crowded close to the chimney to keep themselves warm; I flew from behind the barn and came to the front of the house. ‘What are we going to do about breakfast?’ I said to Fliberty, and all the sparrows answered, ‘We don’t know, we can’t think *what* to do.’

Just then a window of the house opened, and a hand was stretched out and swept the snow away from the window sill, and then scattered crumbs of bread upon it. As soon as the window shut down again, I flew to take some crumbs, but before I could swallow even one,



Fliberty and all the sparrows came rushing down in a crowd. But I drove them off, right and left, until I had got all I wanted, and then I flew away and sat upon a twig of the holly-bush and looked on. The

Caged and Free.

sparrows gobbled and feasted until there was nothing left but one large piece of crust; this piece was too large for any one of them to eat alone, but they all pecked at it. At last Flibberty's big brother Snap dragged it off the ledge and tumbled to the ground with it. Then all the sparrows flew down after him and began to quarrel over the crust; they screeched and pecked and tore at the bread, and at one another. Sam passed by, and he said, 'I wonder you are not ashamed, you greedy birds, to quarrel so about a piece of bread; I shan't give you crumbs to-morrow morning unless you behave yourselves!'

Then all the sparrows flew away to the chimney tops, all excepting Flibberty and Snap, and they went on fighting over the crust. At last Snap got it, and made off with it in his beak to the end of the garden, and across a field; Flibberty flew after him, and they both alighted upon a rail, and there they quarrelled again. 'I'm the oldest,' screamed Flibberty; 'give it to me.' 'I'm the strongest,' said Snap; 'you shan't have it.' 'I saw it first,' said Flibberty. 'I snapped it first,' said Snap. Pouncer, the garden cat, was walking in the field just then, looking after a field mouse, and she heard Flibberty and Snap disputing upon the rail, so she stood quite still and watched them. I saw Pouncer, and I knew she was going to pounce upon the sparrows, so I called as loudly as I could from the holly-bush—'Look out, Snap; look out, Flibberty; Pouncer is coming.' But they were making such a noise they did not hear me, so the cat just gave one of her sly jumps and grabbed poor Flibberty, but Snap flew away. You see," said Robin, as he finished his story, "that Pouncer is both sly and strong."

"I'm not afraid of her," said Black Bob, "I shall go and eat cherries all the same." "So shall I," said Thristle the thrush. But Black Bill said,

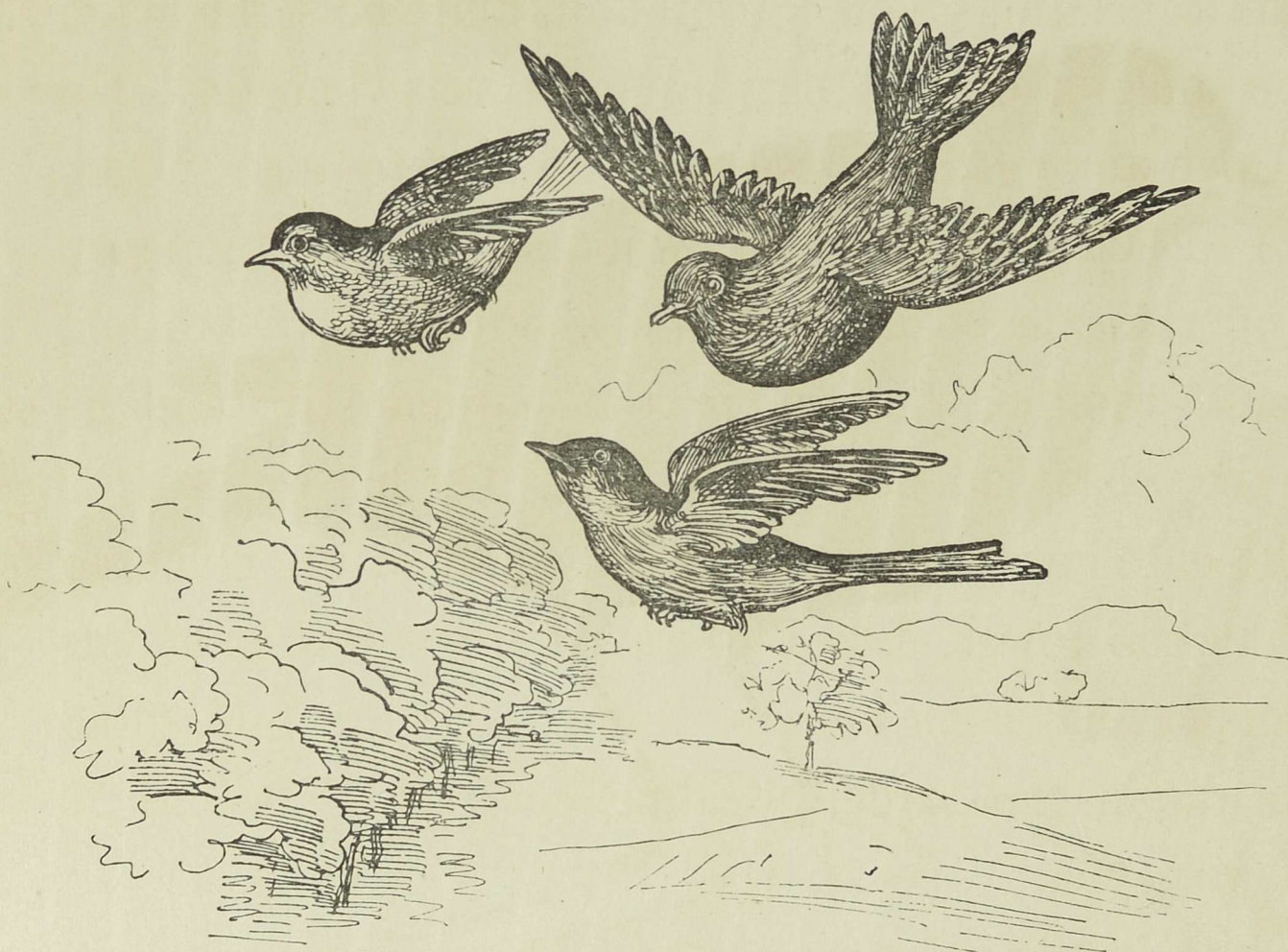


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Caged and Free.

“I shall fly into the woods and see if the wild strawberries are ripe; I shan’t go into the garden any more.”

Bill was wise, he flew into the wood; Bob was silly, he went into the garden and perched upon the cherry tree. Robin went into the wood with Bill; and the Nightingale went too, and the Ring-dove. Bully and Goldie followed them a little way, but when they found there was no fruit upon



the trees, they said it was dull there, and they flew towards the garden after Black Bob. “Come into the sky with me,” said the Lark, “it is never dull in the sky; come and soar, and sing along with me.” But they took no notice of what

the Lark said to them. Black Bill went a long way into the wood looking for strawberries. By-and-by he saw some in a sheltered dell, through which a stream was running, and he flew down to the ground and fed upon them. Whilst he was eating, he heard a little cry from the inside of a bush close to the stream. Black Bill looked into the bush and saw two nestlings in a wag-tail’s nest amongst the boughs. One nestling was big and one was little; the little one was peeping over the edge of the nest trying to see something upon the ground, and he kept crying, “Oh, my poor little brother!” “What is the matter?” said Bill;

Caged and Free.

“what has happened to your little brother?” Then the small nestling pointed to the big nestling, and said, “He lifted my little brother upon his back and threw him out of the nest. Oh! my poor little brother, I fear he is dead.” That big nestling was a naughty bird: he was not a water wag-tail at all; he was a young cuckoo who had got into the wag-tail’s nest, and wanted to have it all for himself.

Black Bill saw the dead nestling upon the ground, and the sight made him feel so sad that he did not care to eat any more strawberries. He heard the song of the Dove amongst the trees, and he flew to her. “Coo, coo, coo,” said the Dove, in her sad sweet voice, when he told her the story of the little nestling, and then he began to think about his own brother, Black Bob; he wondered whether he was in the garden still, and he determined to go and see what had become of him. On his way to the garden, Bill flew past the old church tower—you can see it in the coloured picture. An owl lived in the tower, and Bill stayed for a few moments to talk with him. “Pouncer has been here just now,” the Owl said, “and she told me Black Bob was in the garden stealing cherries. I would go and look after him if I were you.”

Poor Bob! look at him in the coloured picture. Sam has caught him and put him in a wicker cage, you see. Bill found him there, and he was very sorry for Bob. He is trying to put a cherry inside the bars for him; but Bob does not care for cherries now, he is too sad to eat. “Oh! dear brother,” said Bob, “I wish I had gone into the wood with you.” By-and-by Sam came into the garden; then Bill flew away from the cage, and perched upon the cherry-tree and sang to his brother; he told him all about the wood and the wild strawberries, and Bob chirped in answer now and then, but he could not sing, his heart was so full of sorrow.

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Sam took the cage in which Bob was a prisoner far away from the cherry-tree, and placed it upon the grass-plot in front of a large house—not Sam's own house, but the large house in which his master lived. There were no fruit-trees upon the grass-plot, but two birds were there, a parrot and a cockatoo.



Polly and Cocky were not in cages, yet they were not free; they were chained to their perches. Cocky stood upon one leg and talked to Bob. Cocky was a vain bird; he generally talked about himself. "Good Cocky," he said to Bob; "Cocky is a good bird, Cocky does not steal. Who are you?" Bob knew that he was a naughty bird, and that he had been stealing, so he hung his head and tried to hide himself; but he couldn't hide, of course, in a cage,

as he used to do in the bushes. Polly saw a cherry stalk with a stone at the end hanging from Black Bob's cage, and she craned her neck and swung round as far as she could, trying to reach it. When she found she

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could not, she ruffled her feathers and screamed, "Give a cherry to Polly, poor Poll; give Poll a cherry, bad bird." Then Cocky stamped his foot and called out, "Cocky does not steal."

Eddie and Kate, the two little girls who lived in the large house, came down the garden walk; Cocky and Polly belonged to them. When they heard what a noise the birds were making, they walked up to the spot and found poor Bob.

"Pretty bird," Eddie said, "don't be frightened; Cocky and Polly shall not hurt you." Bob looked up into Eddie's face when she spoke to him in this kind manner, and began to feel a little happy once more. Eddie ran away to the kitchen



garden, and soon came back with three large cherries in her hand. She gave one to Polly, and one to Cocky, and one to Bob. Bob took it from her, and when he had eaten it, he sang a verse out of one of his old songs, a merry song that he used to sing in the woods when he was free.

Eddie and Kate had an immense cage like a house, in which all sorts of little birds were put to live together. It was called an "aviary." Look at the children in the large coloured picture, talking to their birds.



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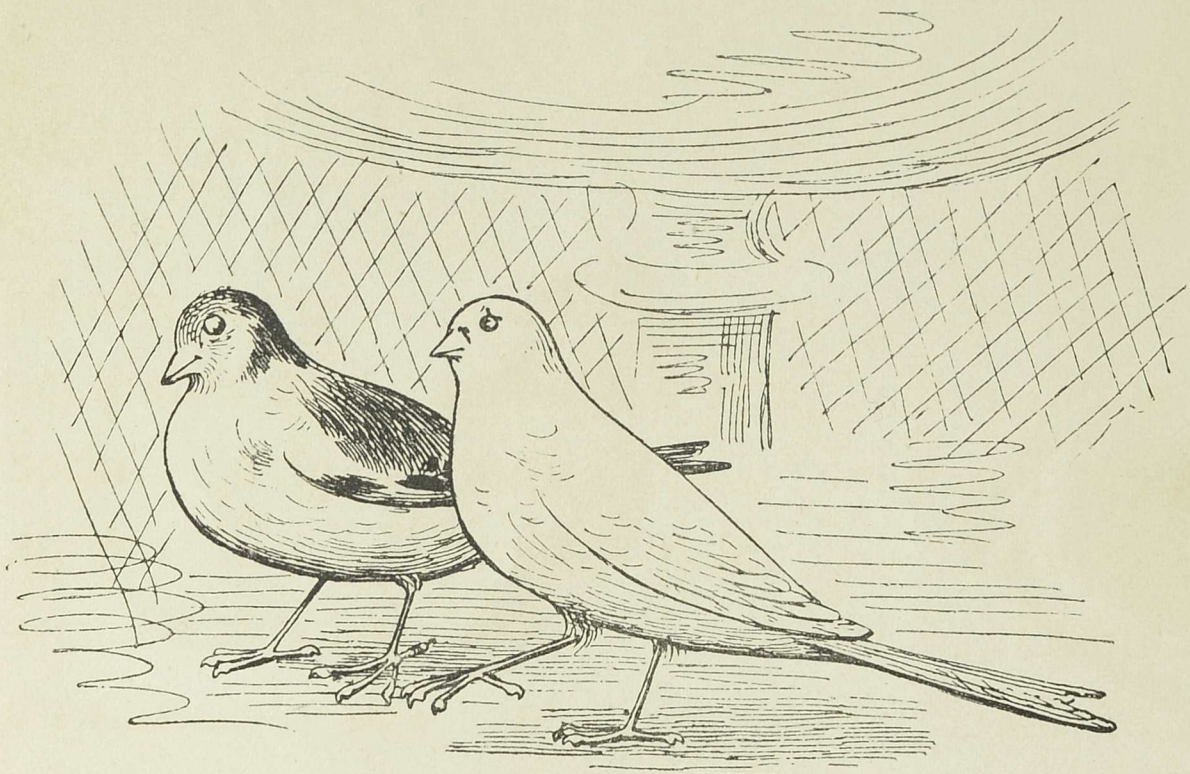
Caged and Free.

Cocky and Polly are too big to live in the aviary; they sit on their perches,



and walk on the grass-plot when it is fine; on wet days they are taken into the large hall, and are fastened to the tall perches which stand one on each side of the front door. They then talk to the ladies and gentlemen and little children who come into the house. "How do you do?" says Polly; "pretty Poll." And Cocky calls out, "Good Cocky. Cocky is a good bird. Who are you?"

Edie and Kate loved their canaries and parroquets; they liked to feed them and hear them sing. They had six canaries, as you see; one had some black feathers in her wings; Edie called her Cinderella. Cinderella was

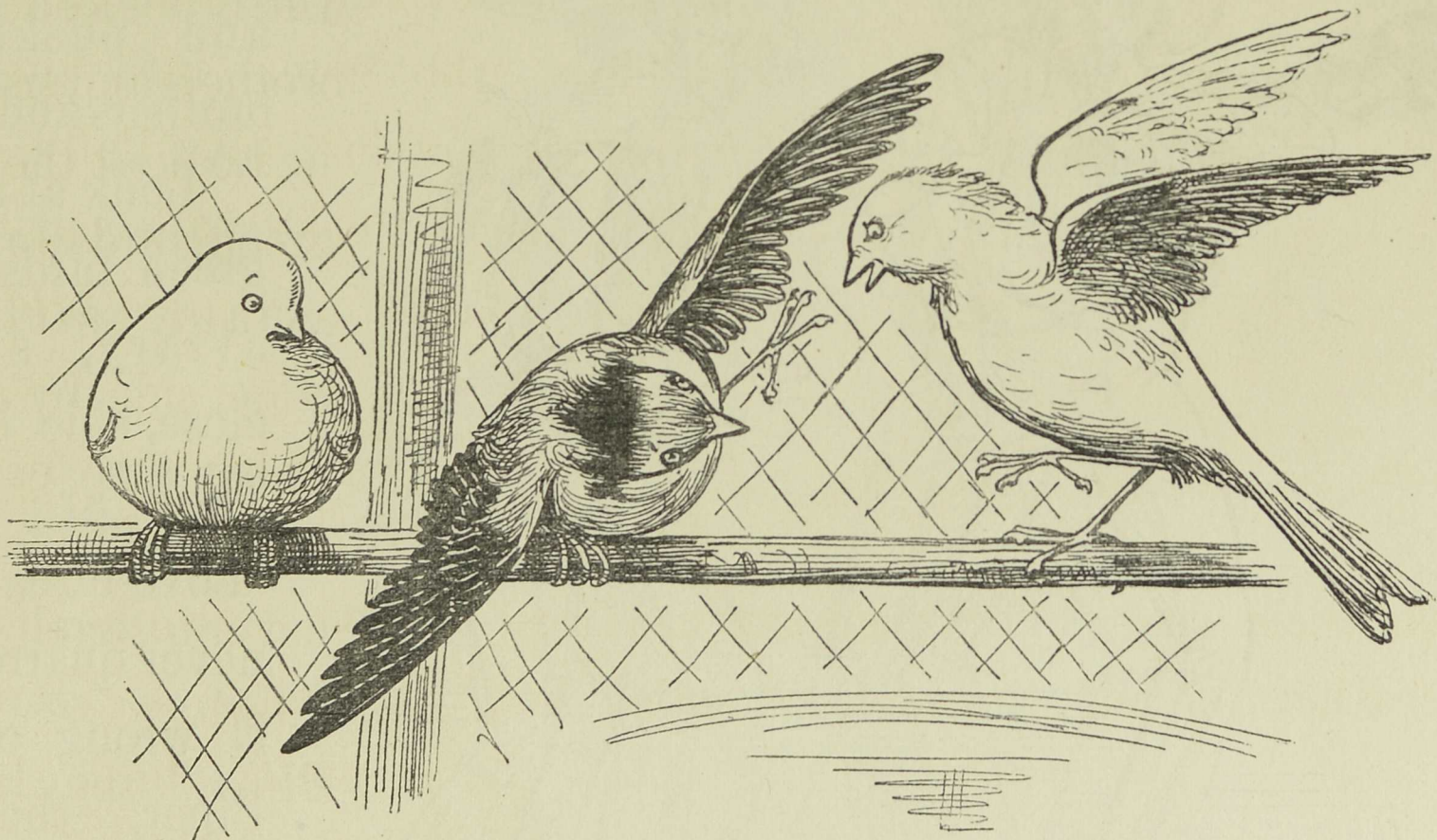


a pretty bird, but the prettiest of all the canaries was the Princess Seraphine. You can see her sitting upon the edge of the fountain talking to Goldie. Goldie is a prisoner now, you see. You remember that the goldfinch and bullfinch went after Black

Bob into the garden. Bully got amongst the peas, and Sam shot him.

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Goldie did not go to the peas; he found a nice clump of thistles in a corner, and feasted upon the seeds; but Sam caught him in a net, and put him into the aviary with the bright coloured birds, because he thought he would look pretty there. Goldie was a gay little fellow; he did not mope; he was pleased to be with the parroquets and the canaries, and he fell in love with the Princess Seraphine. But Seraphine did not care for Goldie, she did not like the black feathers in his wings, and she did not understand



what he said, because Goldie had lived in the fields all his life, and he spoke like a country bird.

One day Goldie found some thistle-down inside the aviary; now he loved thistle more than any other food, and he thought that Seraphine must love it too, so he brought her some to eat. But Seraphine fainted away when she saw the thistle-down; she said the scent of it made her ill. Goldie ate the thistle-down himself, and afterwards he fetched a fine hempseed, and laid it at the feet of the Princess. Seraphine was pleased with the hempseed, and she said, "If you could learn to sing like my brother

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Piper, Goldie, I would let you talk to me." So Goldie listened to the singing of Piper, until he had learned the notes of his song, and then Seraphine allowed him to sit beside her and sing to her. But Piper was jealous of Goldie, because he sang as well as he did; he pecked him and pushed him away whenever he found him talking to Seraphine. Piper

was a quarrelsome bird, he scolded and pecked his brothers and sisters.

Look at the two green birds in the aviary, sitting close, side by side. They are called "Love-birds;" they never quarrel. "It is wrong of you, Piper," they said, "to peck your brothers and sisters." "I will tell



you a story," said a large green bird, who had lost his mate; and, turning round upon his perch, he began.

"I lived in the woods once," he said, "in a warm country very far off, where parrots, and cockatoos, and other bright birds like us fly about amongst the trees. My father and mother were good—I lived with them upon a blue gum tree—but I had two wicked uncles, parroquets, whose

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house was on a branch of the same tree, just above our place. They quarrelled so that it was frightful to hear them. Well, we were all taken prisoners and put into a ship to come here. All the people in the ship loved my father and my mother and me, but my uncles were quarrelsome and bit the sailors, who wrung their necks and threw them into the water." That was the green bird's story, but Piper did not believe it; he flew at Cinderella directly it was finished, and pecked her.

The summer passed away, and autumn came. Look at the ripe corn in the coloured picture, it shines like gold; the lark is soaring over it into the sky, he is singing his autumn song; the lark soars and sings as joyfully in the autumn as he does in the spring.



A lark once made her nest in a field of corn. She had a kind mate, who sang to her whilst she sat upon her nest. There were five young birds; four of them were strong, but the fifth was weakly, he could not fly, he could only run about amongst the stalks of corn. The mother lark loved

They
taken
our place.

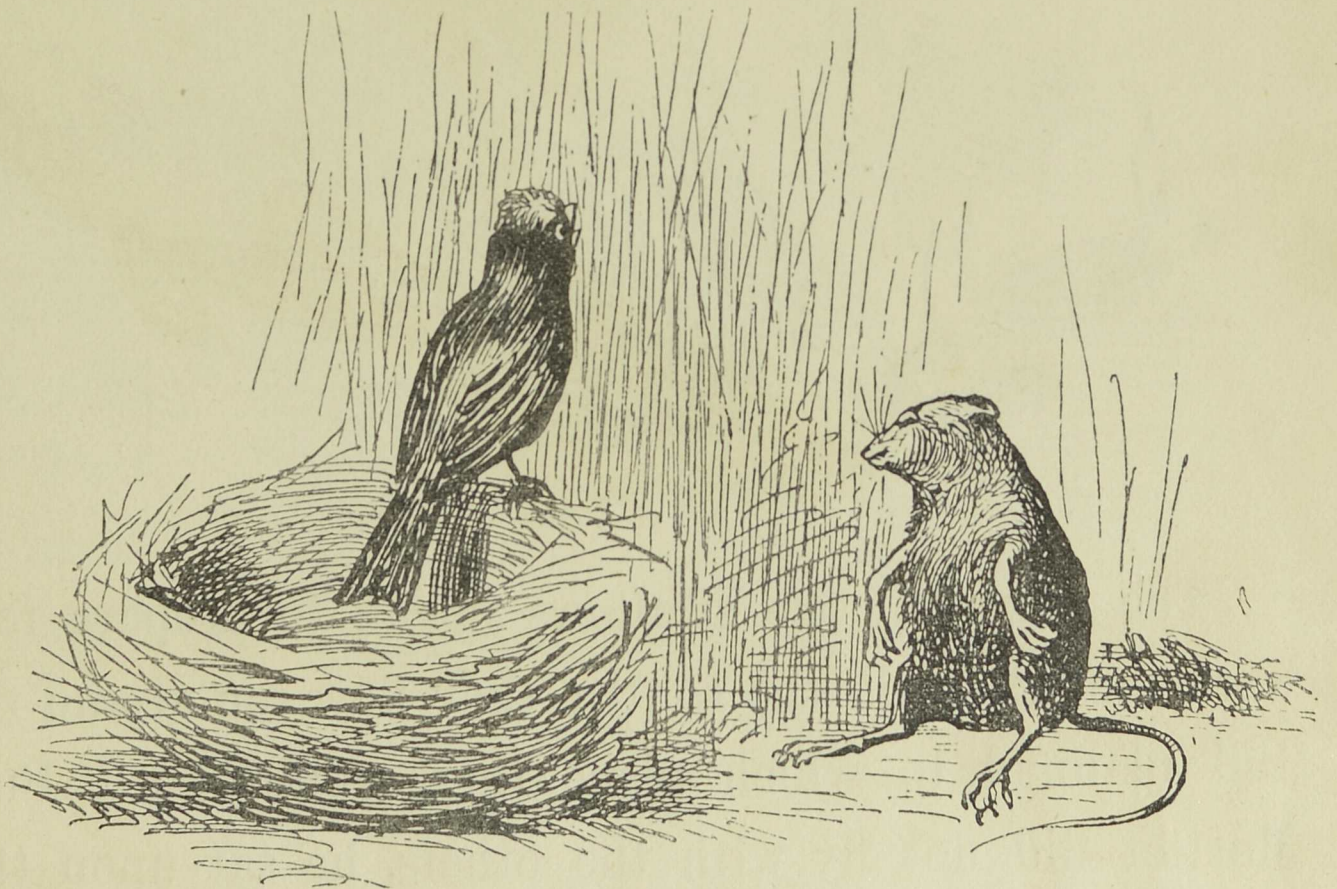


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all her children, but she loved the weakly one best, she often stayed in the nest with him instead of soaring into the air. When she remained with the nestling, the father flew up in the sunshine and sang to them both. The weakly bird wished that he could fly and sing, and once, when his father and mother were away, he sat on the edge of the nest and tried to trill a little song. A field-mouse, who had a home close by, heard him, and ran to her door to listen. "That's very good," said she to the young bird; "I can hear every word you say, and your song makes my heart glad."

That evening, the farmer and a friend of his walked through the corn-field and talked about the corn. "The corn is ripe," the farmer said; "we shall cut it down to-morrow."

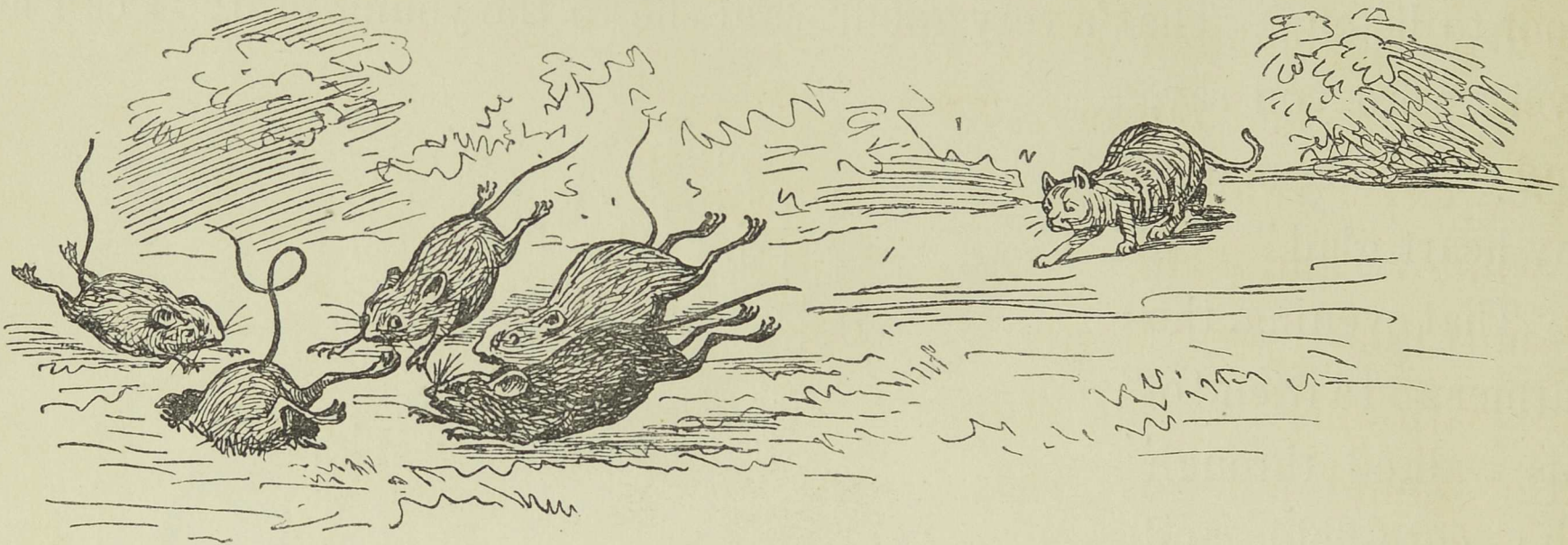


The father and mother larks looked at one another as the farmer said this. "What can we do with our weakly nestling?" they said; "we can fly away ourselves, and our strong children can fly, but what will our poor sick child do? the scythe will certainly kill him, or some person will find him in the nest and take him prisoner." The field-mouse heard what the larks were saying, and she popped her head out of her hole and said, "I will take care of your nestling; let him hide inside my hole whilst the reapers are reaping the corn." So the next morning early, before the farmer came to the field, the larks placed their little one

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inside the mouse's hole, and then, feeling that he was safe, they sprang up into the air and filled it with the sound of their joyful songs.

One evening in the autumn, Pouncer came into the field to look after the mice. Now the lark was lying inside the hole of his friend the mouse, and he saw Pouncer, so he trilled his song, and all the field-mice heard him, and ran and hid themselves in the earth.



The next day the swallows began to prepare for their journey to the warm countries in the south; they flew round and round above the field, and planned to which place they would go. But one swallow called Martlet did not fly with the others, he sat upon the ground and talked to the lark and the mice. "I am not going to fly away," Martlet said; "I mean to stay in England all the winter as you do. I've got a home under the roof of the large house, and I intend to stay in it." "You'll find it cold," said the field-mouse; "I bury myself deep in the earth, and even there it is chilly sometimes." The swallows all flew away, but Martlet went back to his nest. Martlet's home was near the window of Edie and Kate's nursery. He used to sit upon the window-sill and look at the children. There was a gilt cage in their nursery with two canaries in it. Look at the coloured picture and you will see. Piper is one of those

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canaries; he is good now, he does not quarrel, so the children have given him a companion to live with him, called Cowslip. Millicent, the nursemaid, feeds Cowslip with sugar; Cowslip takes it out of her mouth. Martlet watched the canaries and Millicent and the children, and wished that he might live in the gilt cage, and be fed upon sugar, and be petted as the canaries were. He hoped that some day the children would take him into their nursery.

One day a swallow passed the window and said, "Are you not gone yet, Martlet? come with me." But still Martlet would not go. That very night a great wind arose and blew down the swallow's nest, so that Martlet had no



place to shelter in; still he would not go. It grew colder and colder, and at last it snowed. Snow fell the whole of one day and night; it was so cold that Martlet was frozen to the window-sill, and the snow covered him all over. In the morning Millicent put her hand out to push aside the snow, and she found the swallow's little cold body under it. "Here is a dead bird," said she to Edie and Kate. "What a silly swallow he was," said Kate, "not to fly away before the winter came; now he is dead." But Martlet was not dead, he soon revived in the warm room and opened his eyes. "We cannot let you fly away, dear swallow," said Edie, "you would die out of doors, so we must keep you a prisoner until the spring comes. Edie put him into the gilt cage with the canaries, and so Martlet found



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himself in the very place where he had wished to be. But Piper pecked him, and even Cowslip would not let him be her friend. When Edie saw that, she put the canaries into the aviary, and left Martlet alone. One day, she placed the cage upon the window-sill, and Robin Redbreast came and sang this song to Martlet—

“In summer’s bright and happy days,
I seek not the homes of men,
They hear the lark’s inspiring lays,
Nor need my music then ;
But when other birds are sad and still,
I trill my song on their window-sill.”

Martlet grew in a cage. At last Edie placed his sill and opened the Martlet fluttered far, far away over river and the trees. swallows coming him how happy



very tired of being spring came, and cage on the window-door of it, and his wings, and flew the fields and the He met all the home, and they told they had been.

Martlet asked a pretty young swallow called Slender to be his mate. The two swallows built their nest in the same place where Martlet’s old home had been. They stayed there all the summer, but in the autumn they flew away together, as the pretty song says that the swallows do—

“Over miles and miles of moving water,
Over forests dark and vast ;
With wings that are strong and never falter,
Till they gain the goal at last—
The fortunate land where no wintry breeze
E’er withers the flowers, or strips the trees.”

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[ca. 1880]



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