

SUGAR and Spice



London.
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Printed in Bavaria
876 $\frac{a}{2}$

New York:
C. P. Dutton & Co.

TBC (sm)
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37131 053 617 148

SUGAR AND SPICE.



AFTER all, there is no time like Christmas; at least, that is what May says—she is my eldest sister you know, and I *think* I think so too. But I'm not quite sure, for it's Christmas-time now, and I always seem to think there never has been a time quite so good as the time that is now.



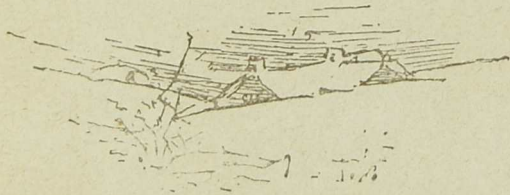
At Christmas-time, of course, there are no lessons, and no horrid sums to add up wrong, and one can almost do what one likes—though not quite—and it is such fun putting up the holly and



mistletoe and helping to make the pudding, and running messages, and a heap of other things which only come at Christmas.

And then there is the snow. Of course, it is very dreary when it is snowing, and we are not allowed to go out doors; but then, when it has all come down, and the sun comes out, and we can run about and play, and throw snowballs at one another, and watch Pongo rolling about, one forgets all about the sad time that has just gone. Pongo is our little dog, you know, such a funny, fluffy, furry little dog he is too, just like a ball of worsted.

My big brother Jack says little dogs are no use, they are only in the way; but I am quite sure





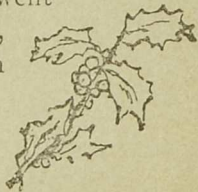
they are not, and I am certain we should never have got home the other day if it had not been for Pongo. The snow had just given

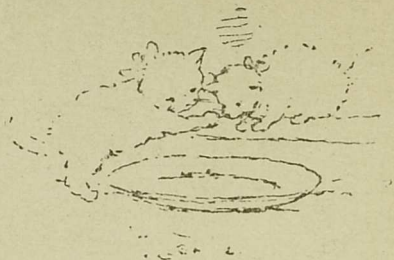


over, and we asked Mamma to let us go and help John to bring home the holly. So she wrapped us up with gloves and mufflers, and cloaks, and our very strongest boots, and told

us to take great care of ourselves and not to lose little Pongo on the way.

We had great fun gathering the holly-boughs which John chopped off; and when he had finished, we each took a branch and started off home. But we didn't get very far before the snow came on again, and we went first one way and then the other, for we could not see an inch before us, and May said I began to cry, though I am



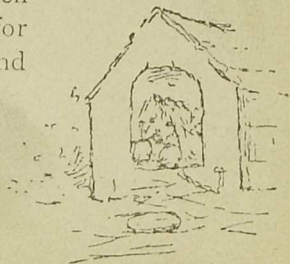


quite sure it was only the cold wind that brought the tears into my eyes; and then we stood quite still until May thought, perhaps Pongo could show us the way home. So she said, "Home, Pongo!" and he sniffed about a little and trotted off just as fast as ever he could, until we could scarcely keep up with him, but he found his way home quite right. So you see there *is* some use in little dogs; and so I told Jack when we got home.

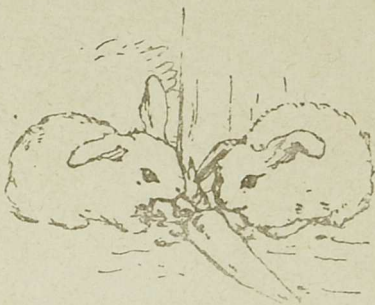
Of course, we have other pets besides Pongo. There's our old cat Tabby and her two kittens—

one grey and one white—Sugar and Spice we call them. Sugar is a big strong fellow, and if he goes on growing as he does now, he will soon be as big as old Tabby herself ; but Spice, his little white sister, has only just started to grow, and when we give them their saucer of milk, he often pushes her away, for he is a very greedy little cat ; and, indeed, I think most cats are until they are properly taught. So May takes him up on her shoulders when he has had his share, and poor little Spice gets some after all.

Then, there is our grey parrot who can speak quite a number of words, and I think she ought to be able to, for she has been learning and learning for ever so many years ; and Mamma says she believes she is quite as old as she is, which always seems very funny to us. She—



Baby was having his breakfast in his high chair, but somehow or other he fell out. I suppose, though, he didn't hurt himself; and when I came in I saw old Tabby sitting in poor Baby's chair, washing herself. She had eaten up

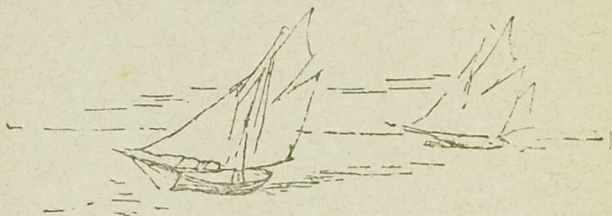


all his breakfast, and was purring away as hard as ever she could.

But I don't think I love any of our pets quite so much as my two bunnies. One is quite brown and the other is white with black spots, and they



know me so well. They are not at all frightened when I take them up and nurse them, but I can only see them on fine days, when nurse says we may run about in the yard. On rainy days we have to sit in and play. Sometimes we borrow the very biggest clothes basket and go to sea in it. We take Bobby with us, but he does not seem to like the sea at all, and always tries to get out. Baby, our little sister—she's a year younger than I am—thinks, perhaps, he is seasick, but I don't see how he can be, because, of course, we are only pretending.



Printed by E. NISTER, at Nuremberg (Bavaria)

