



THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

### QUITE A SINGER

BY MALCOLM DOUGLAS.

A LITTLE man, pressed for a song,  
 Could not be induced by the throng.  
 "I'm sorry," he said,  
 With shake of his head,  
 But I've not brought my music along.

"It's a pity it happens just so,  
 For you'd all like my tenor I know,  
 So high it can rise  
 That I oft close my eyes  
 So terribly dizzy I grow

"The musical scale, as you see,  
 Has the letters from A up to G,  
 And, if it were set  
 Through the whole alphabet,  
 I believe I could go up to Z!"

### ESTHER'S FIVE BIRTHDAYS.

ESTHER had really had six birthdays, and this was her seventh, but there were only five to read about in mother's diary. Esther had just learned to read writing, and if her mother had not written a very plain hand indeed, I don't think the little girl could have spelled it out.

There was nothing written the day she was born; but the next year, the day she was one year old, there was this entry, and the ink was already a little faded—already, though the little one had hardly learned to read it:

"My little daughter is a year old to-day, may God make her a blessing to me"

And then Esther turned the pages, page after page, for a whole year's writing, and found the date again

"Esther's second birthday; may God spare her to bless her father's life and mine"

The next year there was nothing written, for a little baby-boy had come into the family, and mother was too busy to write in diaries. But the next, her birthday was marked by a tiny little flower pasted in the

book, with these words, "May the darling be like this flower; living to shed sweetness on others."

Then came the fifth birthday; but ah, there were many tear-drops on the pages now. God had taken the little black-eyed boy to play in the garden of Paradise, and mother had written in a trembling hand, "Heavenly Father, spare me this child, and make her worthy of being an angel's sister."

And there was only one more birthday. Esther remembered that well; she had had a party, with six little girls invited, and six little candles burning on her cake, and lots of fun; but mother's diary didn't tell any of that; it only said, "I ask as a birthday gift for my darling, the grace to be thy child."

"I thought birthdays were for getting things," said the little girl to herself; "but mother only thinks about my being things."

And before she went to bed, Essie peeped into the old leather-covered diary again, and read,

"Seven years old to-day! Lord, prepare the darling for what thou art preparing for her."

### THE LITTLE QUEEN

ELSIE was five years old, so mamma gave her a birthday party, and invited four little neighbours. Brothers Jack and Will were invited too, of course, and the seven little folks had a very merry time.

Before they began the games aunty made Elsie sit in a big chair for a throne, put a gilt paper crown on her head, a gilt-covered rod in her hand, and introduced her to her little friends as Queen Elsie, Will and Jack appeared with high paper caps on their heads, and toy swords over their shoulders, and stood beside Queen Elsie's throne—the big chair—and declared themselves her loyal knights and her body-guard. The other children came and bowed to her.

Elsie did not quite know what to make of it, for she was very shy. She liked it better after she stepped down from the

throne, took off her crown, laid down her sceptre, and was plain Elsie Brown, playing games with her brothers and little friends.

Many a poor, little real queen would be glad to be only just an ordinary little girl, free to run about and play just as you do.

### RAYMOND'S PIGEON.

THE day Raymond was twelve years old, his uncle sent him a carrier pigeon. Raymond put it in a cage, and asked all the boys he knew to come and see it. For awhile it had the best of care, and soon it became very tame. It would eat corn from Raymond's hand, and would perch on his arm or shoulder and be carried from room to room. But soon Raymond grew tired of caring for his pet. One day he went to play ball, and forgot all about the pigeon. The next day he went over to Ralph Weaver's after school, and did not get home till dark. Then he went to bed, meaning to feed it in the morning.

As soon as he got up, he went down to the pantry for some stale bread; but there wasn't any. So he asked his mother for ten cents to buy some corn. His mother gave him the money, and he ran off for the corn; but on his way he passed a candy store, and the window looked so tempting that he bought gum-drops.

He was afraid his mother might ask him about the corn, so he hurried off to school. When he came home in the afternoon, he got some bread-crumbs and fresh water and went to feed the pigeon. He opened the door; but pigie did not come out. He looked in, and there it was lying dead on the floor. It had starved to death. Oh, how sorry Raymond was about the gum-drops! Mother made him go without anything to eat for a good while, so that he would know how it felt to be very hungry.

### THE BIRD AND THE BUTTERFLY.

BE careful, dear little butterfly. Don't you know that birds like to eat butterflies? See that bright little fellow, perched on a twig, singing his merry song. He is watching for you. He sees the brilliant colouring of your wings. He says, "O dear, such a pretty butterfly as that must be very good." See his sharp eye following you. Now you float carelessly along, and alight on the nearest flower. There! quickly the bird darts down, and you are struggling in his strong beak. Just a moment, and the brightest of insects has become food for the gayest of birds.

DR. PRESTON has a big dog named Lion, and when he goes to visit his patients Lion always goes too. He runs along under the carriage, and when the doctor stops at a house Lion jumps up on the carriage seat and keeps guard until the doctor comes out. One day the doctor was visiting a sick boy, and he left his medicine-case in the carriage. He sent the boy's brother out for it, and when the boy put his hand on the case Lion caught his arm, and would not let go until the doctor came out.