

## THE CHILDREN'S STORY.

OTHO.

Otho was in a bad situation. True, Otho was but a dog,—a shaggy milk-white Esquimo dog, his sharp eyes nearly hidden in curly hair, and his little tail so curled and so covered with long hair as to be out of sight.

Born far away in the North, amid the fogs and ice of Labrador, he had first voyaged southward in a "sealer," then travelled westward as far as Kansas in the character of a "wonderful performing dog." He would bound over chairs and run up ladders with remarkable rapidity; and as a "speaker," his voice at once commanded admiring attention.

But fate, in the shape of a carelessly-placed show-chest, had fallen heavily upon Otho, and broken one of his legs. Then his showman master, thinking that the care and cost of nursing him would not be repaid by any future service of the dog as a public performer, had quietly opened a back window and dropped Otho into the cold world, to get a living on three legs, or to die, according to his luck or his pluck.

And so thus it happened that the white, curly and ill-used Otho found himself a limper, and probably a cripple for life, in a back lane of Ottawa, Kansas. It was a black day in Otho's hitherto rather jolly life.

Towards evening, he dragged his painful limb down the lane and out to a corner of the main street.

"O papa! papa! On'y thee 'at pitty white doggy! Poo' itty fellow, he tan't go!" "Top, papa, 'top an' 'et me poor him!"

It was Minnie—little three-year-old Minnie Wistarside sitting beside her father on the seat of their wagon: Mr. John Wistarside, a great, plain, kind-hearted young farmer, and Minnie, his little daughter and pet. They had driven into town from their farm that afternoon.

Papa Jahn stopped the wagon to please Minnie, and then his own kind heart gave a throb at sight of poor Otho's condition.

"Oh, let's we tarry him home," pleaded Minnie; and John, after some little hesitation, put Otho in the wagon at Minnie's feet and drove homeward.

Wife Mary's natural resentment at being compelled to receive an invalid dog into her household was in part disarmed by Otho's white, curly wealth of hair, and by Minnie's pitying fondness for him. So Otho was nursed and cared for. His leg was set and "splintered up" by John, and in a month he was frisking on it, and became the joy, the delight and the romping companion of fast-growing, golden-curled little Minnie.

But he was no longer Otho. Of course he could not tell his name, however badly he may have missed it; and Minnie took the grave responsibility of giving him another. To her *Pinky* and *Pink* were the prettiest names she could think of. So Otho became "Pinky," and after a day or two he liked the new name as well as the old one. Like Minnie, he neither knew nor cared a straw for ancient history.

But, though contented with the quiet life he now led at the prairie farm, Pink never forgot his circus accomplishments. He would often mount the pony, and, turning a somerset in the air, alight on his feet upon the animals back with perfect ease. Sometimes, too, he accompanied John to town. There if he saw a ladder leading to the top of some high building, he would ascend it, and seating himself upon the topmost rung, would wave his forward paws in apparent expectation of the applause that once greeted his performances.

He was extremely fond of sweetmeats, and while other dogs seemed generally to

prefer meat, Pink would perform almost any trick he had ever been taught for a slice of cake or a bit of candy.

Two years passed. They were prosperous years with John and Mary Wistarside, who had built and moved into a new frame house, situated on a road near half a mile from the old "dug-out" in the creek-bank, where they had made their first humble homestead on their large and now profitable farm. The old earth-house had been abandoned, though not filled up. For a year or more not even John himself had been to it, and Minnie had almost forgotten it.

On the day of my story John was at work at the farther side of his farm. On coming home to dinner, he remarked to Mary that the air seemed very "muggy," and that if it were not so late in the season, he should fear a cyclone. An hour later he went back to his labor. Minnie and Pink were out together, too; and Mary, as usual, became busied with her household cares.

An hour or two later, the industrious housewife having finished her work, was dressing for a pleasant evening hour with John, Minnie and Pink, enlivened, possibly, by a call from their neighbors, or by a ride around the broad green farm, when she noticed that the room had grown suddenly dark. The air, too, had all at once become strangely heavy and close. What John had said at noon came into her mind. She ran to the door; and there a singular, and even to those who are accustomed to the tempest-phenomena of the West, an appalling spectacle met her eye.

A lurid gloom was in the sky. At the same time a frightful roar broke upon her ears; and up in the northwest she saw what nearly froze her heart with terror and anxiety.

A vast, balloon-shaped pillar of what at one moment looked like black vapor and the next instant seemed like illuminated dust, glittering against the dark sky behind it, was rushing down across the country—coming directly towards the farm and the house in which Mary stood. The ragged edges of the cloud about it sparkled as if with flame.

Onward it came, a messenger of death and destruction, with steadily increasing roar. At the base of it, where this stormy apparition touched the earth, a fiery, lambent "foot" seemed to play to and fro; and wherever this ghastly foot touched, houses, trees, straw-ricks, barns, everything disappeared on the instant.

As it drew nearer in its destructive course, Mary saw that all around it and high in the sky about it, the air was filled with branches of trees, boards, and fragments of whatever had been in its path.

For an instant she gazed, fascinated by her fear and the awful grandeur of the sight. Then, recalling John's frequent instructions what to do in such emergencies, she ran into the cellar.

Scarcely had her foot left the last stair, when, with a roar and a deafening crash, the house above her was lifted, whirled around and swept away. Timbers, bricks and underpinning-stones fell into the cellar; and a torrent of rain, mingled with hail, dirt, straw and leaves, half-buried poor Mary where she crouched and clung in a corner.

But the cyclone passed as quickly as it had come. In three minutes it was over; and then Mary Wistarside, in an agony of terror,—for her loved ones, not for herself, for she was safe and unhurt,—crying aloud to God to protect them, hurriedly climbed up the broken stairs and set off in search of John and Minnie.

What a spectacle was that which met her eye when she looked over the prairie! The house gone, and every out-building, even the fences and garden-trees demolished and swept away. Of the eight cows in an adjoining pasture,

only one remained, and that one lay maimed and groaning with pain. It seemed to the poor woman that every living creature save herself had been killed, and that she alone was on earth.

Hardly knowing which way to look, she started towards where John had been at work, hoping that Minnie was with him, and that the storm had been less severe on that part of the farm. She had gone about half a mile, when she saw her husband coming towards her; but he was alone.

When Mary told him that Minnie had gone out after dinner and had not returned, a shiver passed through his frame. For a moment Mary thought he would faint; but he regained his strength, and then, nearly wild with grief, they both began searching for their lost child.

Their nearest neighbors lived nearly a mile away. To them they hastened for aid; but found these people even more afflicted than themselves; two of the family had been killed by the tornado.

Till ten o'clock or later in the evening they searched, but in vain: they found only the rubbish scattered in the track of the cyclone, and the dead bodies of cattle.

At last, worn out with fatigue and suffering, Mary could go on no longer; and they bent their steps to their old "dug-out" house in the creek-bank—the only place remaining to them where they could hope to find shelter.

The rude door stood ajar, and as John mechanically pushed it open and looked into the gloom within, a sound sweeter to him and Mary than celestial music—Pink's gruff little bark—came to their ears.

And then as their hearts bounded with a new hope, they saw the white, shaggy little Esquimo dog stalking suspiciously forward in the darkness, and heard a half-alarmed small voice asking, doubtfully, "Is that you, mamma?"

It was Minnie! and need one try to describe the happiness of John and Mary Wistarside? What to them now were houses and cattle lost! Here was Minnie, for whom their hearts were breaking, safe and sound in the old "dug-out"!

And Pink! What had Pink to do with it, does the reader ask?

A great deal, as nearly as Minnie could explain. The two had wandered away to the creek, when, seeing the sky so black and hearing such a dreadful roaring, Minnie was frightened and started to run for home. But Pink caught her dress in his mouth and fairly pulled her along to the door of the old dug-out, into which, as the awful roaring grew louder, they both ran to escape the cyclone.

So our story goes once more to prove, what some know already, that a kind act, even a trifling one like John Wistarside's to poor Pink, is rarely lost in the world, but often returns a hundred-fold more than is given.—*Youth's Companion*.

## HANDSOME GOWNS AND WRAPS.

One of the most exquisite dresses of the season, says the *Philadelphia Times*, was designed by a rich artist for his beautiful wife, and his poetical conception was created under the guidance of the lady herself who, being able to pay well for work, makes the giving of remunerative employment one form of her judicious charity and declares it is a luxury of married life of which she only dreamed in her maiden home.

The dress is of fiery crimson, and over this is a robe of clear white net, worked in a pattern drawn from a frosted window pane, with long, fine, branching curves, breaking into a filagree of infinite inter-lacements at the ends of sweeping masses of frost form, filling up the intersects with an intricate guipure. This design alternates round the skirt with one more intricate and elegant adapted from the palm trees, also seen on frozen windows.

The whole is so skillfully blended as to make it, in its style, a work of the highest art, pronounced by the artist "a travesty of the crimson sun glowing in morning glory through the air to our inner world of home."

Another peculiar costume shows a skirt of white satin, richly trimmed with gold braid, gauze fringe, and sequins; polonaise of cream cloth, embroidered in gold, caught up with bunches of golden lilies, ferns and daisies; bodice turned back with gold lace; hair powdered with gold dust and ornamented with a spray of golden flowers; gold-colored stockings and gold embroidered shoes.

A striking Oriental dress worn by a brilliant brunette, has skirt and front of ruby satin, trimmed with gold and colored Egyptian embroidery, ornamented with coins, the bodice of pale blue satin, trimmed with embroidery to match. A scarf of black and amber satin, with scarf of ruby satin embroidered, passed from the left shoulder to the waist, and were there secured by an antique gold ornament. A handsome dress is of black tulle, trimmed with bouquets of Neapolitan violets and maiden hair, and a charming dress for a blonde is in blue gauze, delicately embroidered in silver frost-work.

A dress of cream satin and tulle is literally sprinkled over with butterflies and dragonflies. One of satin and tulle is powdered with but tereps and trimmed here and there with knots of amber satin ribbon, while a dress of white is finished with bunches of white ostrich plumes.

For a young lady a dress of tulle has the skirt made ballet style, with large gold drops on the skirt and a gold broche bodice trimmed with the same. Dark blue velvet and tulle forms a magnificent dress and is worn with handsome diamond ornaments, while still another in dark green is looped with emerald stars. Natural flowers are used to trim the dresses of tulle and other light fabrics, but they are very expensive and wither so soon that ribbons and flowers are preferable.

A model wrap for spring wear of pine-green ladies' cloth, is quite tight fitting; the front is trimmed with a triangular plastron, edged with silk cord and fastened on each side with diamond-shaped passementerie buttons. The same silk; cord describes deep round basques over the fronts, below which trimming the fronts remain open over the dress; over the basques are placed two deep round pockets trimmed with cords and tassels, coat sleeves with facings trimmed to match; a plaited width is added at the back to give the fullness required. This redingote comes down almost to the edge of the dress, but if desirable it can be cut short from the basque, and will then form a pretty jacket. Many young ladies wear the long wraps, but others fancy coats and jackets, which are equally fashionable. Some jackets are simply closed with buttons and button-holes, while others are braided, embroidered, or trimmed with silk cord. Cloth bodices are still popular, and can be worn with any dress. Sometimes they have a plaited plastron, either of the same material or of that of the skirt.

The condemnation given from the Judgment Throne—most solemnly described—is for all the "undones" and not the "done." People are perpetually afraid of doing wrong; but unless they are doing its reverse energetically, they do it all day long, and the degree does not matter.

We are not sent into this world to do anything into which we cannot put our hearts. We have certain work to do for our bread, and that is to be done strenuously; other work to do for our delight, and that is to be done heartily; neither to be done by halves and shifts, but with a will; and what is not worth this effort is not to be done at all.