



THE HERMIT CRAB.

BY ROBIN MERRY.

THE crabs are a numerous family, including such familiar creatures as the crayfish or craw-fish, of our rivers and the water of the salt-water seas. All these creatures are provided with five pairs of legs, the first pair being usually very stout and made to do duty for arms, hands, and pincers or scissors. Clumsy as these shears are, they are employed not only for securing food but also for conveying it to the mouth. As a weapon of warfare, they are to be despised, as many a boy can testify who has made too bold with a good-sized lobster or crab.

As an article of human food these animals maintain a very important relation. Lobsters and crabs in various parts of the world are in great demand, and by some the freshest representatives of the class are deemed a delicacy.

Our picture presents us with a specimen of a crab of very peculiar habits. It is called the hermit crab, and sometimes also the soldier crab. The first name it derives from its singular manner of life. It seeks for its home the deserted shell, and here it leads a kind of hermit life. But upon the upper surface of the shell the sea-anemone, (a sea flower,) finds a convenient place for anchoring itself. And the singular circumstance is that while the crab is a voracious feeder, catching and devouring such other creatures as tempt his appetite, he really seems to form a kind of friendship for the beautiful object that sits on the roof of his home; and it is said that when it is attacked

he will fight for his defence. Our picture represents the soldier sitting in the door of his castle watching for its defence, and for his own prey as well, while the delicate anemone is rearing above him its marvellous tracery of coral rock, and waving its hundreds of slender filaments in the water to receive the food which nourishes its own strange life.

THE HOLE IN THE POCKET.

THE other day a poor woman who lives near my house came running in in great excitement. "O!" she exclaimed, "Mrs. Marjorie, I am in so much trouble! I have just lost all the money I had in the world, between my house and the corner. I must have dropped it in the street. What shall I do?"

The only thing that I could advise was that she should insert an advertisement of her loss in the paper; and,

as she did not know how to write it, I wrote one for her. Then I said: "How came you to lose your pocket-book? Was there a hole in your pocket?"

She showed me a rip between the lining and the outside of her dress, and said she supposed she had slipped her money through that instead of into the right place. "I've been meaning to sew that for a week," she said, very sadly.

I felt too sorry for her to tell her that experience had taught her a very dear lesson; but it did seem hard that the savings of two months should have been lost for want of a stitch in time.

The homely old proverb says: "A stitch in time saves nine." Please think of it when you are studying your etymology, and are not sure about a derivation. It will take only a few seconds to look it up now, but it may save you much trouble at examination-day to be sure on the subject. Think of it, too, when your little playmate passes you coldly, and when you feel that you have given offence to your teacher or mother; a frank work of apology, a kind, forgiving look in time, may save you from many hours of regret and distress. A great many tangled and troublesome things in this world would be set right speedily if everybody believed in a stitch in time. You may apply this principle to everything in life, and it will never fail you. A great poet (Lord Tennyson) says:

It is the little rift within the lute
That by and bye will make the music mute.

A very tiny leak, if not repaired, will

cause the great ship to go down in the midst of the sea. Any small wrong thing may be corrected or mended while it is small, but every day that it is left alone it will grow larger and stronger. One weed is easier to pull up than ten are. Do not forget the stitch in time, wherever you may be.

TOUCH IT NEVER.

CHILDREN, do you see the wine
In the crystal goblet shine?
Be not tempted by its charm.
Children, hate it!
Touch it never,
Fight it ever.

Do you know what causeth woe
Bitter as the heart can know?
'Tis that self some ruly wine
Which would tempt that soul of thine.
Children, hate it!
Touch it never,
Fight it ever.

Never let it pass your lips,
Never even let the tips
Of your fingers touch the bowl;
Hate it from your inmost soul.
Truly hate it!
Touch it never,
Fight it ever.

Fight it! With God's help stand fast
Long as life or breath shall last,
Heart meet heart, and hand join hand,
Hurl the demon from our land.
O then, hate it!
Touch it never,
Fight it ever.

THE FORGIVING FATHER.

A LITTLE girl knelt to pray, but the memory of a wrong done that day came between her soul and Christ. She had disobeyed her father. She rose and went to his room.

"Papa," said she, as tears and sobs choked her voice, "I have come to tell you something I did to-day that was wrong. I want to ask you to forgive me."

"My dear child, I do not want you to tell me, I forgive you freely without." He dried away her tears and sent her back rejoicing.

As she knelt again for her heavenly Father's blessing, the readiness of her earthly father to forgive her was to her a type of the divine forgiveness. She realizes that "God pardons like a father who kisses the offenses into everlasting forgetfulness." —Forward.