

handsome head drop down on his mother's bosom instead, and wept there like a child. As the sunset they parted.

'Good-by, my boy, and God bless you. You'll keep your promise, for mother's sake.'

'Yes, mother, with God's help. Good-by!'

Across the fields, with the little Bible in his bosom, and his bundle on his arm, went poor erring Dick, and down the pathway Mrs. Arnold returned to the cottage.

'I'll never give up my boy,' she said. 'My prayers shall prevail with God for him. He will return to us yet, and be the comfort of our old age.'

But her husband, bitter and remorseless of heart, laughed her to scorn.

Month followed month; summers came and went; harvests were sown and gathered in; winters heaped their white snows, and spring sunshine came and melted them. Pretty, dowerless Rose had married and gone to live in a happy home of her own, while Mrs. Arnold, busy with her daily tasks, did not lose hope.

Just about that time the whole country was ringing with the renown of a young reformer—a man of talents and genius, who was spending the best days of his manhood for the good of his fellow-men.

News came at last that this wonderful man would deliver a lecture in the village. Preparation was made, and expectation was on tiptoe. On the appointed night Mrs. Arnold went with the rest. The speaker took the stand, and announced the subject of his discourse. It was

'FOR MOTHER'S SAKE.'

The poor mother, her heart yearning for her absent son, looked on and listened, blinded by swift-flowing tears. She could scarcely see the tall form of the handsome speaker; but his words thrilled her through and through.

The audience sat spell-bound, breathless, until the lecturer drew near the close of his remarks.

'For mother's sake,' he said. 'That one little sentence has made me what I am. Who, in this crowded room, recognizes me? Five years ago, on just such a night as this, I was a prisoner in the old jail over yonder. My mother's love saved me from the consequences of intemperance and youthful folly, and when I parted from her under the old

locust trees out there in the lane, I promised to be a better man—for mother's sake! Neighbours and friends, you know me now. I am Dick Arnold. I kept my promise—I have been a better man "for mother's sake!" I wonder if my mother is here and hears my voice to-night?'

'Oh, thank God! Oh, my boy! my boy!'

In another minute he had her in his strong arms, her gray head pillowed on his breast. She looked at him with yearning, wondering eyes.

'Yes, I do not mistake—you are my son. Oh, Dick!'

He held her closely, tears streaming like rain over his bearded face.

'Your own boy, mother. God has made him what he is "for mother's sake!"'

#### FOUR-FOOTED FRIENDS.

BY G. S. MERRIAM.

There seems to be hardly a creature that has such a genius for comfort as the cat. Yesterday, on a dreary March day, I saw in the fields an old tabby ensconced on the top rail of a fence, head and paws and tail deftly tucked together, and from the half-shut eyes came a gleam of luxurious repose. Cats are often to be seen with those half-shut eyes. They seem to have the art of prolonging indefinitely that blissful state between waking and sleeping—as it were, just enough awake to know one is asleep—which we taste only in brief snatches. Put a cat in a strange room, and in the briefest possible time she discovers and occupies the softest and warmest place. Or let her, in a strange place, be suddenly attacked by a dog, and by the swiftest instinct she goes straight to the safest spot within reach,—up the nearest tree, or behind some effective barricade. No Napoleon or Wellington had ever so quick an eye for the strongest military position. The cat is a creature of luxury, of the chase and of war; a true savage with such perfect grace as no human savage ever possessed, and such an equipment of agile muscle as no human frame is endowed with. In the midst of our homes, the cat remains a splendid barbarian, recalling the fierce beauty of the lion and tiger, suggesting the jungle and the Himalayas. I find a cat all the bet-