



Mrs. Frog and Her Children.

By Louise Harcourt.

They were a highly respectable family of frogs—in fact, quite aristocratic; well taught, and very careful in choosing their friends and associates. They would not notice any dirty, ill-behaved frogs.

There was Father Frog and Mother Frog, and ten fine little frogs—brothers and sisters; and very happy they were together. Mrs. Frog was a most tender mother. She took great care of her little ones. They were washed and brushed till their skins fairly shone, and their faces, hands and feet were always clean as soap and water could make them. Mother Frog taught them to behave well, to tell the truth always, and to assist her in cleaning up and keeping their little house bright and neat. They lived on the banks of a clear, sparkling stream.

Now, it happened that one day, while Father Frog was away at his work (he was a very hard-working frog), a large fish, with brilliant eyes and bright, shiny scales, sailed up to the door. He brought a message from Mrs. Frog's sister, who lived down at the water-mill.

"Mrs. Frog," said the fish, "your sister is very ill, and she wants you to come down as quickly as possible."

Mother Frog's tears flowed down her face, and she would have dried them with her handkerchief, but she did not have one. So, wiping her eyes with her paw, she called up her ten little children, and spoke to them:

"My dear children, I must leave you for a short time, but you may be sure I shall not be long. Keep near the house, be good children, and remember you must not go to the bog—you will get into trouble if you go there, but if you remain here till I return all will be well with you."

She kissed them all round, and

then got out her canoe and paddled down to the mill, but I shall not tell you what she saw there, because I wish you to know all about the little frogs. I am very sorry to say they did not obey their mother. She had not gone far down the stream when they began to hop and skip and shout.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" they shouted. "This is really going to be a splendid day for us. It is the first time we have ever been left without mother or father to take care of us, and we are quite big enough now to take care of ourselves. This is a very dull place, and we are tired of it, and mother is unkind to keep us here all the time. We will just run and see how the bog looks, and whether there are any children down there to romp with us."

"Oh, sisters and brothers!" exclaimed the eldest son, "I beg you will not go from home! It is not safe for little frogs to travel abroad while the sun is shining overhead. Moonlight is the best and safest time, and mother will be so grieved if you disobey her."

"Nonsense!" they all cried. "You are a stupid frog—nothing but a poor coward! Shut up, now! Stay at home alone if you want to. We are going to have some fun, I tell you, and before mother gets back we shall be here to meet her."

So they laughed at their sensible brother's talk, and as they were nine to one, he could do nothing but give some angry croaks. Away to the bog the nine set off. The wise little frog should have remained at home and kept house till his mother's return, but he wanted to see what the others were doing. So he went by another road, and climbed up a bank, and saw his brothers and sisters at play. Said he: "If anything frightens me, I'll leap into that reedy pool yonder."

At some distance off a large duck

was swimming about among the reeds and grasses which were growing in the pool. She had been there for hours. It was a hot summer's day, you know, and she found it very pleasant to sail slowly along on the water or rest quietly with half-shut eyes. At length the sun was setting, and shadows were coming along the bank. The duck felt it was quite supper-time, and she was really very hungry; so out of the water she came, and waddled about, looking for something nice and fresh.

"Ah!" she said, "what a lot of beautiful, fine, fat frogs those are! I shall have a delicious supper!"

She waddled quickly up to them, and before they could scream or run away, she had gobbled up every one. The poor little frog on the bank was so overcome with fright at the dreadful fate his brothers and sisters had met, he fell into the pool and never slept a wink that night. The duck went home feeling comfortable after her nice meal, and she meant to come another day in search of more such frogs.

Father Frog and Mother Frog reached home while the stars were shining brightly. How desolate and still the house looked! No little children to run and meet them and welcome them home, as they had expected. All was silent. After calling and searching around all night, they told each other that it was plain something dreadful had happened, and they should never see their dear children again. Poor Mother Frog! she wept as though her heart would break.

"If even I had one left to comfort me! I shall be so lonely all day when my husband is away at his work. Oh, dear!—oh, dear!" And the great blinding tears rolled down her cheeks.

Father Frog spoke kindly to her, and told her "to cheer up," and just at daylight, when she had about given up all expectation of ever seeing her children again, the one poor bedraggled little frog came hopping in and told her the awful story.

Of course, she was overjoyed to have even one of her babies safe, and after that she never went away from home until she was sure that there were no wicked ducks to make a supper of her tender offspring.

Lost, Stolen or Strayed.



Poor Bab is overcome with grief,
Her tears they nearly blind her;
For, oh! (in telling I'll be brief),
Her pet doll—she can't find her!

When, ah! she has a happy thought!
My doggie p'raps can aid me;
To show his love he oft has sought,
And always has obeyed me.

"Go, Fido, seek my 'Tilda Jane,
She's in this great world straying;
If you my gratitude would gain,
You'll heed what I am saying."

She starts off Fido with a push,
Then down the hill he's flying!
And there asleep beneath a bush,
Matilda Jane is lying!

Since then Bab's always heard to say,
There ne'er was dog so clever;
His praise she sings the livelong day,
And loves him more than ever.

A Quaint Sermon.

Mr. Dodd was a minister who lived many years ago a few miles from Cambridge, and having several times been preaching against drunkenness, some of the Cambridge scholars (conscience, which is sharper than ten thousand witnesses, being their monitor) were very much offended, and thought he made reflection on them. Some little time after, Mr. Dodd was walking toward Cambridge and met some of the gowmsmen, who, as soon as they saw him at a distance, resolved to make some ridicule of him. As soon as he came up they accosted him with, "Your servants, sir!" He replied, "Your servant, gentlemen." They asked him if he had not been preaching very much against drunkenness of late. He answered in the affirmative. They then told him they had a favor to beg of him, and it was that he would preach a sermon to them there from a text they should choose. He argued that it was an imposition, for a man ought to have some consideration before preaching. They said they would not put up with a denial, and insisted upon his preaching immediately (in a hollow tree which stood by the side of the road), from the word malt.

He then began: "Beloved, let me crave your attention. I am a little man—come at short notice—to preach a short sermon—from a short text—to a thin congregation—in an unworthy pulpit."

"Beloved, my text is malt. I cannot divide it into sentences, there being none; nor into words, there being but one; I must, therefore, of necessity, divide it into letters, which I find in my text to be these four—m-a-l-t. M is moral, A is allegorical, L is literal, T is theological."

"The moral is to teach you rustics good manners; therefore M—my masters, A—all of you, L—leave off, T—tippling."

"The allegorical is when one thing is spoken of and another is meant. The thing spoken of is malt. The thing meant is the spirit of malt, which you rustics make: M—your meat, A—your apparel, L—your liberty, T—your trust."

"The literal is, according to the letter: M—much, A—ale, L—little, T—trust."

"The theological is according to the effect it works. In some, M—murder; in others, A—audacity; in all, L—looseness of life, and, in many, T—treachery."

"I shall conclude the subject—First, by way of

exhortation: M—my masters, A—all of you, L—listen, T—to my text.

"Second, by way of caution: M—my masters, A—all of you, L—look for, T—the truth."

"Third, by way of communicating the truth, which is this: A drunkard is the annoyance of modesty; the spoil of civility; the destruction of reason; the robber's agent; the ale-houses' benefactor; his wife's sorrow; his children's trouble; his own shame; his neighbor's scoff; a walking swill-bowl; the picture of a beast; the monster of a man!"—[Penny Magazine, 1832.]

The Autumn of Life.

Some lives are like the autumn leaves

That flutter softly to and fro

In every fair breeze that faintly grieves—

The leaves gleam richest as they go.

In one swift burst of regal hues

They blaze with crimson and with gold,

And none of their perfection lose

When, withering, they drop their hold.

The leaves, at last, when all is done,

Show us anew the days of June—

The golden glory of the sun

And softened luster of the moon,

The red that riots in the dawn

Is mingled with the restful brown

That tints the leaves ere they have gone,

While they are slowly swaying down.

Some lives are like the autumn leaves:

The rose-hued memory of youth

In all their acts a pattern weaves

With the most precious gold of truth;

And they grow fair, and fairer still—

Like autumn leaves their beauty glows

With newer charm and grace, until

These lives are perfect at the close.

"Let us have peace," said the English invader. Can you not see that the white strangers love the Redmen." "Ah, yes," replied the intelligent Indian, "they love the very ground we walk upon."

His First Day at School.

She lost her little boy to-day;
Her eyes were moist and sweet
And tender when he went away
To hurry down the street.
She stood there for the longest while
And watched and watched him; then
She said—and tried to force a smile—
"He'll not come back again."

Inside the house, her tears would come,
She sank into a chair
And sobbed above the battered drum
And trumpet lying there.
The sunshine stole into the place—
It only made her sad
With thinking of the pretty grace
His baby tresses had.

She minded all his little ways;
She went to see his crib
Up in the attic; then to gaze
At platter, spoon and bib,
And all the trinkets he had thought
So fair to look upon—
Each one of them this murmur brought:—
"My little boy has gone."

She wandered through the house all day,
To come on things he'd left.
And O, she missed his romping play
And felt herself bereft!
When he came home, with shining eyes,
To tell of school's delight,
She kissed and held him motherwise
With something of affright.

This is the pain in mothers' hearts
When school days have begun;
Each knows the little boy departs,
And baby days are done;
Each mother fain would close her ears
And hush the calling bell
For, somehow, in its tone she hears
The sounding of a knell.

—Chicago Tribune.