

WE AND OUR NEIGHBOURS.

CHAPTER I.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET.

"WHO can have taken the Ferguses' house, sister?" said a brisk little old lady, peeping through the window blinds. "It's taken! Just come here and look! There's a cart at the door."

"You don't say so!" said Miss Dorcas, her elder sister, flying across the room to the window blinds, behind which Mrs. Betsey sat discreetly ensconced with her knitting work. "Where? Jack, get down, sir!" This last remark was addressed to a rough-coated Dandie Dinmont terrier, who had been winking in a half doze on a cushion at Miss Dorcas's feet. On the first suggestion that there was something to be looked at across the street, Jack had ticked briskly across the room, and now stood on his hind legs on an old embroidered chair, peering through the slats as industriously as if his opinion had been requested. "Get down, sir!" persisted Miss Dorcas. But Jack only winked contumaciously at Mrs. Betsey, whom he justly considered in the light of an ally, planted his toe nails more firmly in the embroidered chair-bottom, and stuck his nose further between the slats, while Mrs. Betsey took up for him, as he knew she would.

"Do let the dog alone, Dorcas! *He* wants to see as much as anybody."

"Now, Betsey, how am I ever to teach Jack not to jump on these chairs if you will always take his part? Besides, next we shall know, he'll be barking through the window blinds," said Miss Dorcas.

Mrs. Betsey replied to the expostulation by making a sudden diversion of subject. "Oh, look, look!" she called, "that must be *she*," as a face with radiant, dark eyes, framed in an aureole