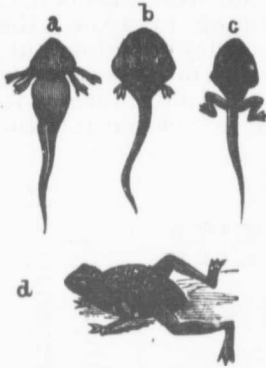


The Lord is Shepherd, I shall not want.
Psalm xxiii. 1.

A WONDROUS CHANGE.

BY MRS. JENNETT M. WEST.



TADPOLE TO FROG.

WE had resolved to see this wondrous change for ourselves, and this is the way we accomplished it. In the farther corner of the orchard was a low place where a little water stood, although it was dry the greater part of the year. The croaking of some tuneful frog drew the children thither, and soon home they came in procession, arms outstretched, backs bent, eyes fixed upon slippery masses they were carrying upon pieces of bark. To be sure they had spattered their clothes and their feet were wet, but I long since learned that knowledge is oftenest obtained under difficulties, and here was something new for us to learn. For these little black balls each in the centre of a sphere of albumen were nothing less than frogs' eggs; there were hundreds of them.

How long the eggs had been upon the water I do not know, but about three days after we found them they began to undouble. Yes, undouble, that is the very word; for this little taddy does not grow until, like the chicken, it has used the whole egg, but grows entirely in the black centre, then the long tail which was doubled back on the side straightens out, and after it has dozed in a nearly stupid condition on its side for a day, it rights up and commences to feed upon the rest of the egg. (a) Soon it would swim across and around the world in which we put it, but preferred to remain quiet most of the time.

The saucer was soon too small, and some were put into a large glass fruit-dish, where they chased each other about, spattering the water and sometimes leaping from it, as we knew from the unfortunate ones which we found upon the table; but day after day they grew on, and no one knew how. They were kept in rain-water and it was seldom changed, but we never supplied them with any food which we saw them eat.

For two months they swam or rested, just the same little taddies as at first, only larger, their bright eyes peering from the edge of the water; but now comes the the discovery that they have hind legs, little weak things stretched back against the tail. (b) But a grander home must be given them. A large tub was placed under the cherry-tree, earth put in the bottom, and a pile of stones in the centre, upon which they were expected to climb when their tails dropped off.

In three or four weeks after the hind legs were seen, the fore legs pushed through, often one at a time, so while one was out the other could be seen folded under the skin (c); and to our great disappointment they shewed no intention of mounting our stone-pile to leave a now useless appendage. Nature works in no such wasteful manner. The body, which had been so almost jelly-like, now shows more decided form, the head lengthens, the bony frame-work discloses itself by points and angles here and there, and the tail, day after day, narrows and shortens until it all disappears and the entire substance of it has been taken into the body and utilized there. Surely a wonder of wonders, and on the last of August we have perched upon our stone-pile a tiny but demure-looking frog (d), developed certainly a week ahead of the rest. Patiently we waited for all the family to get ready, when they were carried by the children, who had watched them so long, to a more congenial home.—*Illus. Chris. Weekly.*

He led them on safely, so that they feared not.
Psalm lxxviii. 53.