

HEVI.

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.

"I hope, my son," said Hevi's mother to him, one bright sunny morning when he had come in from play, "I hope you will never forget, no matter how long your life may be, that, if you want your friends to believe that you are in any way better than they are, you must show that you are superior, and not merely talk about it."

Hevi said nothing. He had been telling his mother of a conversation he had had with some of his young companions, in which he had boasted a good deal about himself and his relations; about what his father had done, and what he intended to do when he should get to be as big as his father. So he hung his head a little, as his mother gave him this piece of advice.

"But, mother," said he, after a few moments, "father talks about what he has done, and about what he intends to do, too."

"Yes, my dear," said his mother, sadly, "I know that; and although I want you to imitate your father and be as much like him as possible, I don't want you to get into a habit of boasting. And now run off, and take your bath."

Hevi was an elephant—a young fellow, not as high as a horse. He had a good disposition and high spirits, and was generally liked, though, as he was bigger and stronger than most of the young elephants he associated with, he sometimes showed himself their master in a way they did not fancy. He lived with his father and mother, and a large herd of other elephants, in a great wood not far from the shore of the ocean. His father was the chief of the herd, and the largest and strongest elephant that had ever been seen in those parts.

"Mother," said Hevi, one day, as he was starting off to take his daily bath, "I saw a whale out at sea yesterday, and when I told father about it, it seemed to make him angry. Why was that?"

"My dear son," said his mother, anxiously, "I do wish you would try and never say anything about whales to your father. Nothing annoys him so much as an allusion to them. Now go along."

Hevi walked away, and his mother, turning to enter the woods, heaved a sigh. She was thinking of her husband. "I wish," she said to herself, "that he could get rid of that silly jealousy of whales. He hates to think that there is a creature on earth bigger than himself. And whales are bigger; I know that, for I have seen them."

In about half an hour from this time Hevi's father came home. It was nearly noon and he wanted his dinner. As he came up to his wife, who was standing by a great pile of fresh grass and tender young leaves which she had gathered together, she noticed that he looked out of humor;

"Has anything worried you, my dear?" she said, kindly.

"Worried me? Of course not. Why should I be worried? To be sure there were two strange elephants, from Tamburra, over there with the herd to-day, and they were talking such ridiculous stuff, that I felt inclined to give them a pretty heavy hint to go home."

"What did they talk about?" asked his wife, as she turned over the pile of dinner to find some nice bits for her husband.

"Oh, all sorts of nonsense. It seems they have travelled a good deal, and they have entirely too much to say about what they have seen. I don't believe half of it. They have lost their respect for their own kind, and are full of talk about the great deeds of other creatures, especially men. To hear those fellows talk, you would think

and if he had not slipped in between two great rocks, where it was impossible for me to follow him, I would have broken every bone in his body. And then those two strangers had the impudence to talk about some whales they had seen, and their great size. Size indeed! as if a miserable whale could compare with an elephant!"

"But, my dear," said his wife, "I do wish you would try to get over your prejudices on this point. You know whales are bigger."

"They are not!" said he, sharply. "They are nothing of the kind. Let me hear no more such nonsense. Where's Hevi?"

"He is taking his bath," said his wife, very glad to change the subject; "I'll call him."

So saying, she went out to the edge of the wood: but when she looked toward the beach, she stopped, terror-stricken. There

Hevi's father did not hesitate. He dashed into the water and waded rapidly toward his son. But soon he stopped, his feet sank in the sand, and he found he could not proceed. At the spot where he was struggling to get forward, the sand was very soft, and his immense weight forced his legs down so deeply—sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other—that he could scarcely keep himself from falling over.

The water was always deep enough over this soft spot for Hevi to swim, but it was entirely too shallow to bear up his father; and so the great elephant, finding that matters were getting worse and worse the more he pressed forward, endeavored to turn back, so that he might find a firmer portion of the beach.

His distressed wife, seeing his plight, rushed to his assistance.

"Oh!" she cried. "you, too, will be lost!"

"My dear," said her husband, a little sharply, "will you let go my tail? I can never get out, if you keep pulling me that way. I want to turn around."

With a groan, she stopped pulling at his tail and stepped back to give him room to scramble out.

Casting her eyes seaward to poor Hevi, who was dismayed at seeing himself so far from shore, while his father was actually turning back and going away from him, she perceived something which made her heart jump with joy.

Out at sea, but not very far from poor Hevi, she saw a great spout of water rise into the air!

It was a whale! She plainly saw his great back and head above the water.

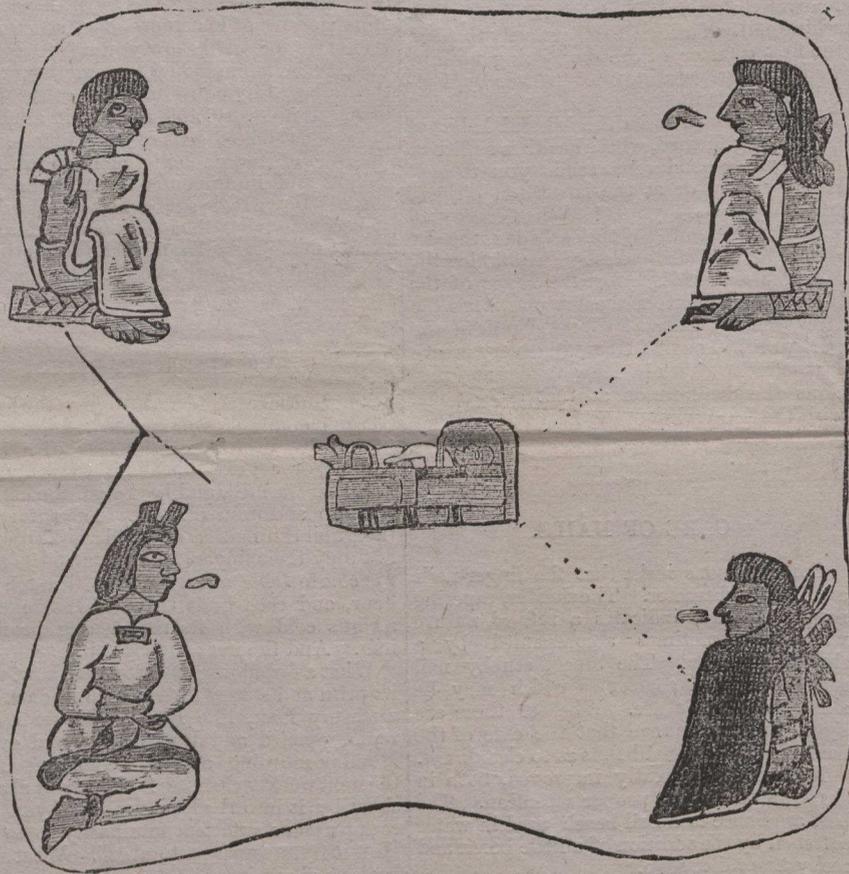
Without stopping to think, she shouted:

"O whale! whale! come here! Save my son! Hasten! He is drowning!"

The whale raised his head, and seeing the really dangerous situation of Hevi, who was nearly exhausted by his struggles, he swam rapidly toward the young elephant.

When he reached him, he put his head against Hevi and a little under him, and then, setting his great tail in motion, he swam steadily to the shore, pushing Hevi before him. He seemed to be swimming very slowly, but as he came near he sent Hevi shooting through the surf, and the little fellow actually turned over and over, two or three times, before he got on his feet in the shallow water. His mother rushed down to meet him.

"Oh, my dear Hevi! my sweet son!" she cried, as she tenderly twined her trunk around him. "You are saved. I have you again. But how did you dare to go out so far? You know how often you have been told never



MASTER MONTEZUMA'S PARENTS TAKE HIM TO THE PRIEST AND THE TEACHER.

that a man could do anything he pleased. To be sure he can master most of the smaller animals, but so can I—there is not one of them that I cannot conquer. I can crush a lion or a tiger under my feet; I can dash a buffalo lifeless against a tree; I can even master the rhinoceros, and if I once get my tusks under him, I can push him headlong over a precipice. And as to a man, I have shown how I can treat him. You remember that fellow who came into those woods with a gun, and how he killed a great many deer and other animals, and even fired at some of us elephants. But when I caught sight of him, I quickly turned the tables. I rushed at the blood-thirsty rascal, and, although he had his gun in his hand, he did not dare to shoot at me. He just turned and ran away at the top of his speed;

was Hevi far beyond the breakers, and apparently floating out to sea!

Without a word, the mother rushed down to the water edge.

"Hevi! Hevi!" she cried, "come in. You are out too far. Come in, or you will be drowned!"

Hevi, who seemed to be tired and unable to direct his course, called back in a voice which sounded as if he had swallowed some salt water:

"I can't. The tide is too strong."

"Hello there!" cried Hevi's father, who now came running to the beach, alarmed by the cries of his wife. "What are you doing out there? Come in, this instant!"

"He can't! He can't!" screamed the poor mother. "The tide is carrying him away! Oh! save him, my husband, or he will be drowned! Drowned before our eyes!"