

## Nelly, the Stable Cat.

Once upon a time, there lived in a pretty cottage home in the Isle of Wight, three little girls, named Mary, Frances, and Dorothy Trent.

Their father, Major Trent, was far away in India with his regiment. He had been so long parted from his wife and children that these little girls could scarcely remember their father, though they never forgot to pray for him when they knelt by mother's knee before going to bed.

Mrs. Trent was in poor health, so that there were few visitors at Rose Cottage, and no children's parties; but these little girls did not mind that, they were quite happy with each other, and with their dear mother. Their nurse, whose name was Hettie, was very kind, and took good care of the children when their mother was too poorly to have them with her; while a young lady, who came for two hours every day, gave them lessons in English, reading and grammar. Mary was eight years of age, Frances was six, and little Dorothy four years old.

victory and killed the rat. But not content with this feat, she resolved to let the children know how clever she had been. So with a good deal of trouble, she dragged the dead rat upstairs to the nursery, and laid it down on the rug in front of the fire, where, you may be sure, it caused quite a sensation.

Hetty thought puss had been clever indeed, but the children felt sorry for the rat.

"Poor little thing!" said Dorothy, almost ready to cry. "Perhaps it has some little children to take care of, and who will feed them now?"

"Why, of course, their father will," said Frances. "It is a father's duty to feed his children."

"Ah, but if he is in India, like our father!" said Dorothy. "Oh, I do wish Nelly had not killed the poor dear rat!"

"Well, Miss Dorothy," said nurse, "I am glad Nelly has killed the rat, but I am not pleased to have the ugly creature brought up to the nursery. So Nelly must just go down to the kitchen, and

"Now, my dears," she said, "I knew that Nelly had a little kitten, but I did not tell you, lest you should wish to keep it in the nursery, as I suppose you do?"

"Oh, yes, indeed!" cried all the children. "Do let us keep it, mother."

"No, my dears, I am sorry to disappoint you," said Mrs. Trent; "but if I allowed the kitten to stay, Nelly would insist on staying too, and I cannot allow a stable cat to be upstairs. Now, dears, you must promise me never to call Nelly up, and never touch the kitten either. Will you try to please me in this?"

"Yes, mother," replied the three girls, though they all felt very much disappointed.

But do you suppose that Nelly intended to obey her mistress? No, indeed; before six o'clock next morning the children were aroused from sleep by hearing Nelly mewing at the nursery door. The little girls sat up in bed and listened sorrowfully to their old favourite, who wished to get in.

"We can't let you in, dear Nelly," cried Mary. "You must just go away again."

But puss would not go.

At last the mewing became so loud and disagreeable that Hetty grew quite angry. She went to the door, opened it, and seizing Nelly with one hand, she gave her two or three hard cuffs with the other, and pushed her downstairs, along with the poor little kitten, who had done no harm. Well, it does seem a little cruel, but Hetty did not like cats. Then nurse returned to bed, as it was not yet six o'clock, but the morning being bright and sunny she first opened the window to let in some fresh air. A quarter of an hour passed quietly after this, and then the children were roused again. Nelly was mewing loudly, but this time she was underneath the window, and evidently in deep distress, while the poor kitten was actually shrieking, evidently with pain. Up jumped all the children, and Hetty too, and running to the window they peeped over, and then saw a very curious scene.

Nelly, being quite resolved to get into the nursery along with the kitten, had taken the little creature in her mouth, and began to climb up among the ivy and roses, evidently with the view of entering by the open window. But alas! the kitten was fat and heavy, and poor Nelly had found the weight almost more than she could bear. But as she was a self-willed cat, she would not give in, but had still toiled upwards through the roses, with their sharp and clinging thorns. At last a sad accident had happened. The kitten stuck fast between two rose stems, and was so tightly wedged between them that puss could not move her any farther. Then Nelly, not knowing what else to do, leaped down to the ground, where she sat mewing dismally. Meanwhile the kitten, finding itself deserted by its mother, mewed loudly in return. When the children looked out of the window and saw what had happened, their tender hearts were full of compassion, for the weight of the kitten had dragged the rose-bush from the wall, and there it hung, swaying about and mewing terribly. After a while, nurse was kind enough to get a ladder, and then the poor little creature was rescued from its position.

When mother heard the sad tale and saw how her little girls loved the kitten, she said,—

"Well, my dears, you may keep it as a nursery pet. It is quite old enough now to leave its mother; but as I cannot keep two cats about the place, Nelly must be sent away to Farmer Jones, who will be glad to have her, as he is much annoyed by rats."

Then the little girls, feeling how true it was that a kitten in the nursery was better than a cat in the stable-yard, made up their minds to the necessity of parting with dear old Nelly. But you may be sure that she was not sent away without first having been offered a saucerful of sweet milk from her friend the cow. Then, as she was carried away, the children watched her with tears in their eyes.

"Poor Nelly," they said, "I hope your little kitten will grow into as nice a cat as you have been."

Indigestion is stubborn, but K.D.C. overcomes it



Rose Cottage was indeed a pretty home, the front of the house being quite covered with ivy and creeping roses; while a large garden was at one side, which in summer time was full of strawberries. Behind the house was a stable-yard, with several outhouses, in one of which there was a fine cow. In this yard, too, lived Nelly, the stable cat. And now, my dear children, I am going to tell you a story about this cat, which I think will amuse you. Nelly had been the children's pet and plaything when she was a kitten, living in the nursery with them through the day, although she was always sent down to the kitchen to sleep. One day, when Nelly had grown to be a large and handsome cat, she was crossing the stable-yard, perhaps going to visit the cow—for Nelly and the cow were great friends—when quite suddenly a rat darted from a hole and ran past her. Now some cats are quite afraid to touch a rat, for a rat is a vicious little creature, with sharp teeth, and always ready to bite, but Nelly did not seem to be the least afraid. She attacked the rat at once, and though she was terribly bitten on the nose, she gained the

take the rat with her. Puss is really too large to be made a pet of now. She is quite a stable cat."

When mother heard about the rat, she agreed with nurse that Nelly should not be allowed to live in the nursery any longer.

"She can sleep in the kennel in the yard," said mother, "where she will be very useful in keeping down the rats. I believe there are a great many. Children," she added, turning to her little girls, "do not invite pussy into the nursery any longer; she is quite a stable cat, and must remain in the yard."

"Yes, mother," said the children. They intended to obey mother, but still they were sorry to lose Nelly as a playmate.

A whole month passed away after this, during which Nelly never once came near the nursery; but at last she appeared once more, and with something in her mouth! Was it another dead rat? No, it was a sweet little grey kitten, which the children seized with transports of joy.

The noise they made upon this occasion was, however, so great that mother came to see what was the matter.