

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. FIDO'S LITTLE FRIEND.

One morning in May Fido sat on the front porch, and he was deep in thought. He was wondering whether the people who were moving into the next house were as cross and unfeeling as the people who had just moved out.

"The new-comers must be nice folks," said Fido to himself, "for their feather beds look big and comfortable, and their baskets are all ample and generous, and see, there goes a bright gilt cage, and there is a plump yellow canary bird in it! Oh, how glad Mrs. Tabby will be to see it—she so dotes on dear little canary birds!"

Mrs. Tabby was the old blind cat, who was the mother of the four cunning little kittens in the hay mow. Fido had heard her remark very purringly only a few days ago that she longed for a canary bird, just to amuse her little ones and give them correct musical ears.

While Fido sat on the front porch and watched the people moving into the next house another pair of eyes peeped out of the old hollow maple over the way. This was the red-headed woodpecker, who had a warm, cosy nest far down in the old hollow maple, and in the nest there were four beautiful eggs, of which the red-headed woodpecker was very proud.

"Good-morning, Mr. Fido," called the red-headed woodpecker from her high perch. "You are out bright and early to-day. And what do you think of our new neighbors?"

"Upon my word, I cannot tell," replied Fido, wagging his tail cheerily, "for I am not acquainted with them. But I have been watching them closely and by to-day noon I think I shall be on speaking terms with them,—provided, of course, they are not the cross, unkind people our old neighbors were."

"Oh, I do so hope there are no little boys in the family," sighed the red-headed woodpecker; and then she added, with much determination and a defiant toss of her beautiful head: "I hate little boys!"

to say, "We shall be great friends, shall we not, little boy?"

"Me love oo," said the little boy; "me wan' to kiss oo, little goggie!" And the little boy did kiss Fido—yes, right on Fido's cold nose; and Fido liked to have the little boy kiss him, for it reminded him of another little boy who used to kiss him, but who was now so big that he was almost ashamed to play with Fido any more.

"Is oo sit, little goggie?" asked the little boy, opening his blue eyes to their utmost capacity and looking very pensive. "O, nose he so cold, oo mus' be s'!"

But no, Fido was not sick, even though his nose was cold. Oh, no; he romped and played all that morning in the cool, green grass with the little boy; and the red-headed woodpecker, clinging to the bark on the sickly tree, laughed at their merry antics till her sides ached and her beautiful head turned fairly livid.

Then, at last, the little boy's mamma came out of the house and told him he had played long enough; and neither the red-headed woodpecker nor Fido saw him again that day.

But the next morning the little boy toddled down to the fence corner, bright and early, and called, "Goggie! goggie! goggie!" so loudly that Fido heard him in the wood shed, where he was holding a morning chat with Mrs. Tabby. Fido hastened to answer the call; the way he spun out of the wood shed and down the gravel walk and around the corner of the house was a marvel.

"Mamma says oo dot f'as, little goggie," said the little boy. "Has oo dot f'as?"

Fido looked crestfallen, for could Fido have spoken he would have confessed that he indeed was afflicted with fleas—no, with very many fleas, but just enough to interrupt his slumbers and his meditations at the most inopportune moments. And the little boy's guileless impeachment set Fido to feel very creepy-crawly all of a sudden, and without any further ado Fido turned deftly in his tracks, twisted his head back toward his tail, and by means of several well directed bites and plunges gave the malicious Bedouins thereabout located timely warning to behave themselves.

were, and of what good, noble birds they were going to be when they grew up.

The yellow bird, too, had four fuzzy little babies in her nest in the lilac bush, and every now and then she came to sing to the little boy and Fido of her darlings. Then, when the little boy and Fido were tired with play, they would sit in the rowen near the fence corner and hear the flower tell a story the dew had brought fresh from the stars the night before.

They all loved each other,—the little boy, Fido, the old woodchuck, the red-headed woodpecker, the yellow bird, and the flower,—yes, all through the days of spring and all through the summer time they loved each other in their own honest, sweet, simple way.

But one morning Fido sat on the front porch and wondered why the little boy had not come to the fence corner and called to him. The sun was high, the men had been long gone to the harvest fields, and the best of the early autumn day had driven the birds to the thickest foliage of the trees. Fido could not understand why the little boy did not come; he felt, oh! so lonesome, and he yearned for the sound of a little voice calling "Goggie, goggie, goggie!"

The red-headed woodpecker could not explain it, nor could the yellow bird. Fido trotted leisurely down to the fence corner and asked the flower if she had seen the little boy that morning. But no, the flower had not laid eyes on the little boy, and she could only shake her head doubtfully when Fido asked her what it all meant.

At last in desperation Fido braced himself for a heroic solution of the mystery, and as loudly as ever he barked three times,—in the hope, you know, that the little boy would hear his call and come. But the little boy did not come.

Then Fido trotted sadly down the lane to the pasture to talk with the old woodchuck about this strange thing. The old woodchuck saw him coming and ambled out to meet him.

"But where is our little boy?" asked the old woodchuck. "I do not know," said Fido, "I waited for him and called him again and again, but he never came." Ah, those were sorry days for the little boy's friends, and sorrier for Fido. Poor, honest Fido, how lonesome he was and how he moped about! How each sudden sound, how each footfall, startled him! How he sat all those days upon the front door stoop, with his eyes fixed on the fence corner and his rough brown ears cocked up as if he expected each moment to see two chubby arms stretched out toward him and to hear a baby voice calling "Goggie, goggie, goggie!"

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

Don't be mean, or resort to underhand practices in your dealings with others. The young man who falls to live up conscientiously to a firm purpose of frank straightforwardness has begun the formation of a despicable character. There is no quality so thoroughly detested by many men, and properly so, than the utterly contemptible habit of doing mean, base things covertly and under cover of hypocritical smiles and professions of self-righteousness.

Christ Himself when on earth, took occasion many times to denounce in the most solemn and emphatic manner the divine abhorrence of sneaking, hypocritical, Pharisaical methods. He could tolerate the sinner who did not attempt to justify his actions and who did not pretend to be what he was not.

There are several notable instances where He showed them special mercy, but He expressed invariably the utmost abhorrence of the duplicity of the sneak and double-dealer. He gave "two faced" creatures very distinctly to understand that future happiness was absolutely impossible for them unless they repented and mended their ways.

Similarly, all men of good moral principles and high character have an instinctive hatred for the wretched spirit which plots in the dark and carries out nefarious designs under the cloak of virtue and innocence. Therefore the young man who neglects to uproot from his nature, the last vestige of this noxious inheritance bequeathed us by the devil in the Garden of Eden, insures to himself the contempt of high minded fellow-beings and an almost certain future of eternal misery.

Judas Iscariot is the prototype of the mean and deceitful men of all subsequent times. He professed reverence and respect for Our Saviour in the presence of the divine Master, but had recourse to a base, underhand trick in betraying Him to His enemies. We know what happened to the un-peakable traitor and his act is held in utter abhorrence even by those who are consciously or unconsciously his imitators.

There is no name in history so absolutely and universally execrated as that of Judas. No term in any language expresses or suggests anything lower, viler and more hateful than this name. Yet every person who betrays his friend or neighbor, by secretly injuring him, by word or deed, shares the ignominy which attaches to the conduct of the arch traitor. It is Judas-like to testify against the happiness and good-repute of your neighbor either through a sense of envy or vindictiveness.

And such conspiracy operates commonly along the lines of secret defamation and underhand acts of injury of the source of which the victim is ignorant. It is just here that the unutterable baseness of this sort of thing comes in. The person who is attacked in the dark cannot identify his assailant, and is unable to defend himself and vindicate his cause as he would, if confronted by his enemy in the daylight. For this reason Catholic faith and charity command and exhort us to shun this, the most reprehensible of moral misconduct. The injury inflicted upon one by secret detraction nine times out of ten cannot be repaired by the hand that is responsible. It is like freeing to the winds the seeds or germs of a fatal contagion. Once the thing is done it passes beyond the power of the doer to recall it or avert the frightful consequences of his damnable deed.

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