

away upon a little mission of her own. If Mattie's Cousin Dora had not come to stay a whole month with her just then, she would have missed her; but as it was she was utterly and hopelessly forgotten.

But just a few days before Cousin Dora went away, Mr. Stevens came in bearing a basket with twelve fluffy little puff balls of chicks, and old Croaker in the midst, seated in solemn state.

'Your missionary hen presents you with her gold coin,' he said to Mattie, whose cries of delight at sight of the tiny yellow birds brought the whole family upon the scene.

As for old Croaker, she looked profoundly wise, put her head to one side, and clucked loudly, all of which meant exactly what Mr. Stevens translated out of the hen language, thus:

'I knew what I was about. Twelve eggs would have been a very small offering for such a cause. They would have brought you only one shilling; so I invested in chickens, which, if you will care for properly, will, in time, bring you a shilling a-piece.'

And that is exactly what Mattie made out of her missionary hen that time. Wasn't old Croaker a bird of wisdom?

### Johnny's Servants.

Twenty little servants

Has Johnny, all his own,  
Not brownies, elves, nor fairies,  
But sturdy flesh and bone.  
They crave in Winter, raiment;  
In Summer they go bare,  
No further pay they covet  
Than work and play to share.

They're faithful little servants,  
They never disobey;  
They're never rude to Johnny.  
And never in his way.  
They do as Johnny bids them;  
They go where Johnny goes;—  
His ten little fingers,  
And his ten little toes.

### A Polite Child.

This little boy is four years old;  
He has such pretty ways,  
And, when he turns to leave the  
room,  
'Excuse me!' always says.  
—'Little Folks.'

### My Squirrel Friend.

(Helen M. Richardson, in 'Zion's Herald'.)

Have you ever noticed the little cushioned thumbs between which the gray squirrel holds the kernel of the nut which he is eating? If you ever have the good fortune to tame one sufficiently, watch him while he is eating the nut which you have cracked for him.

He first seizes it in two monkey-like claws so many jointed that he can twist them into almost any shape while extracting the kernel. When a piece of meat escapes from the shell, notice how quickly it is grasped between the two padded joints which serve the squirrel as thumbs. Between these soft cushions he holds the dislodged nutmeat, at the same time firmly clutching the shell, to make sure of any more food which it may contain.

Gray squirrels are very easily tamed, patience, kindness, and nuts being the chief requisites. As all squirrels are in the habit of punching an uncracked nut into the ground for future use, if they do not happen to be particularly hungry, I have learned that more pleasure is gained from their company by cracking the nut before presenting it to them. The temptation to stop and eat is thus increased, and the taming process is greatly simplified.

The first gray squirrel whose acquaintance I made came to me in the form of a surprise, as good things are apt to come. I called him 'Silverskin.' His coat was such a pretty, silvery gray, the name seemed to suit him better than any other. And then his tail! The first time that I saw him, he stood beneath it like a monk saying his prayers. His forepaws met upon his breast in an attitude of supplication, and his large eyes looked appealingly into mine.

I had no idea, then, that I could tame him. He was merely a chance acquaintance, such as I am frequently making among the little wild people of the forest. I might never see him again, but I stopped to admire him and to speak a gentle word. After our first encounter, however, we were continually run-

ning across each other, and I soon found that, if I desired the companionship of my little friend, I must make it worth his while to stay with me. So I got in the habit of holding a cracked nut in a motionless hand for a bait. It was as alluring to the squirrel as a piece of cheese is to a hungry mouse. A dart—and the nut changed owners.

After a while I ventured to hold one a little beyond his reach, still keeping my hand motionless. Slowly, cautiously, with much writhing of the body and twitching of the bushy tail, the squirrel approached, put two monkey-like claws in my hand, and reached up for the nut.

He soon grew perfectly fearless, and would sit as confidently upon my knee as if it had been the limb of a tree. He always kept me in full view, however, and always faced me while eating.

Before the summer was over I could call him to me as easily as though he had been a dog; and often, when I have been asleep in my hammock, I have been awakened by a quick jerk at the rope, to encounter the large brown eyes of my little friend fastened intently upon me. He would then begin a systematic search from hands to feet for the nuts which he seldom failed to find.

### A Mother's Song.

Good-night, and wings of angels  
Beat around your little bed,  
And all white hopes and holy  
Be on your golden head!

You know not why I love you,  
You little lips that kiss,  
But, if you should remember,  
Remember me with this:

He said that the longest journey  
Was all on the road to rest;  
He said the children's wisdom  
Was the wisest and the best.

He said there was joy and sorrow  
Far more than the tear; in mirth,  
And he knew there was God in  
heaven  
Because there was love on earth.  
—Selected.

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