

THE RABBIT AND THE DOG.

THE well-known rabbit is rather smaller than the hare, but closely resembles it in form. In its natural state it lives in the ground. This little animal has several deadly enemies. The ferret goes into the hole and sucks the blood of the rabbit without mercy. The dog also loves to kill rabbits, but he often leaves them dead upon the ground.

The rabbit in our picture is called a jack rabbit. He is larger than the little fellows you can see in the woods on a pleasant day, and larger than the pets you have kept in your own doorway. This specie of rabbit can run faster than a dog, but he sooner becomes tired. He runs in a circle, and the dog runs straight across the circle and thus catches him by strategy.

The study of natural history is very interesting and instructive. It seems as though one who sees the wonderful creatures God has made, would be led to admire and love One who formed them. We should not only love and serve God, but we should be kind and merciful to every creature he has made.

NO!

CHAPTER XIII.

CAUGHT.

YES, Mimy's words had come true—Jack had "gone down like a ninepin." He had literally "fallen" in love. Heretofore he had thought his mother's eyes the most beautiful in the world, and was glad that both Anne and Alice inherited them, but now blue was "your only wear." Blue was his colour—he wondered that any other tint was ever admired; and hair like that! words could not express his admiration of it. When she came to the bank Jack flew to open the door for her, either on her entrance or exit, tingling with bliss if she looked at him; and she did look after a time, for such eager devotion could not escape her notice. Then she smiled, and our poor boy felt as if the sun shone into his dingy surroundings; that smile filled his thoughts by day and his dreams by night. In short, this Jack, who had been developing into a steady, hard-working, sensible fellow, became a fool for the time. Frank Sherman laughed at and teased him immoderately, but Jack scarce heard his witticisms, and when one evening they were invited to a small party at Mr. Gray's house, and Jack was actually introduced to Miss Blythe, radiant in a white dress that looked like wings to her adorer, though it was only silk, Frank drew him aside for a moment.

"Jack!" said he, "don't make an idiot of yourself about that girl so openly. Do look at somebody or something else! You make a sensation; give us a rest, old boy."

Jack coloured hotly. He had only one idea in his mind in these days; there was but one person in the world

to him, and to be so roughly shaken up astonished him. It was a good lesson, so he devoted himself for the next hour to Miss Ellen Gray, Mr. Gray's daughter, a plain, sensible girl ten years older than Jack; but after supper he had an opportunity to converse with Jessie Blythe, and thought he had earned the indulgence. Unfortunately, those red lips uttered many things he did not agree with.

"O how stupid an evening is without dancing!" Miss Jessie said, behind her fan, in a confidential tone. "Don't you think so, Mr. Boyd?"

"O no!" answered Jack, looking at her with eyes that said, "Stupid! beside you!" but his words were, "Perhaps that is because I don't dance."

"Don't dance! O, how can you exist? Really life would be a burden to me if I couldn't dance. What do you do with yourself evenings?"

"I read a good deal; and then there are the weekly church meetings, and the Chautauqua Circle, and—"

"O my! You're one of the sober sort, I see. What do you do at parties?"

"I don't often go, and then I look on, or some one is kind enough to talk with me," said Jack, with an expressive little bow.

"Dear me! You must learn how to dance, and come to my Germans; I'm going to have three Germans this winter. They're just heavenly, Germans are; and I brought home with me such lovely things from Paris for favours. You will enjoy it so much!"

"O I'm too old to learn dancing, I'm afraid."

"O, not a bit! Just go to old Maillard and take private lessons: he is such a good teacher!—the best in the city. I shall depend on you; now remember! O, there's pa. Good-night. Call and see me," and with a bewitching sidelong look from her blue eyes, and a bright, swift smile, this angel disappeared.

Jack's brain was in a whirl. He had never wanted to dance before, but the idea was full of rapture now; nothing but Monsieur Maillard's high price for private lessons delayed his acquisition of the accomplishment. Really he could not afford it—that is, if he continued to send Miss Jessie the bouquets that were delivered at her door so often, quite anonymously.

But he did call on her, again and again; and she was one of those young women who are all graciousness and cordiality to every young man they see. Fonder of herself than of any earthly or heavenly thing—admiration more than finery even—Miss Jessie Blythe had an empty head and a cold heart, under her great beauty. The idea in life was to "have a good time," as she expressed it; and she carried out that idea with a single-mindedness that, applied to better things, might have made her something of a woman. But to Jack's eyes, as well as to many another man's, her fascination of look and manner was so great that she

seemed to have all the qualities she really lacked.

When Jack went home at Christmas his mother soon noticed his entirely listless and abstracted manner; she thought at first he was not well, but he had no other symptoms of illness. Her bright, cheerful resolute boy had come back to her a silent, moody, absorbed man.

Mimy's eyes were sharp, too.

"You no need to coddle him now, Mis' Boyd," she said, sharply, as Manice was busy in the kitchen preparing a favourite dish for her boy.

"I dassay he'll eat it—men generally possess their stomachs in patience, ef they don't their souls; but you won't feed him out o' this slew. I know what's the matter of him; I've seen 'em before. He's bewitched with some girl or 'nuther, and I mistrust it ain't Miss Right neither, or he wouldn't be so glum. You wait a spell, and he'll tell ye; boys that is fetched up like youn always come home to their mas to be comforted. That's where you've got a hold on 'em, and a good grip, too."

Manice was startled at the idea, but she said nothing to Jack; she well knew such things would not bear handling. And the very next night, after she (and indeed all the rest) had gone to bed, there came a low knock at her chamber door, which she recognized. She rose from her knees to let him in; for she had been pouring out her soul to God, in all the earnestness of a mother's yearning affection, for her boy.

"Mother," said Jack, "put out the lamp, please, and let me sit down on the floor by you; I want to talk." So with one hand in hers and his head resting on her knee, as had always been his fashion, he opened his heart to his mother and told her all.

It was not much to tell, but it made Manice ache to see how much it meant to Jack.

"My dear boy," she said, gently, at the first pause, "do you think this young lady returns your feeling at all?"

"O! that's the worst of it!" he exclaimed. "I wish I could tell! O mother, she is so angelic to everybody that I can't take encouragement to myself."

Manice went on to ask a few questions, knowing that speech is a great safety-valve at times.

"Is she a cultivated sort of a girl, Jack? Tell me all about her."

"O I don't know, mother. She's been educated abroad. I suppose she is; she doesn't talk about it, but of course she is."

"Where have you seen her most?"

"I go there pretty often—to her father's, I mean; but then she is out most of the time. She goes to a great many parties; everybody invites her, and no wonder! O if you could only see her, mammy!" and off Jack went into a rhapsody about hair, and eyes, and face, and voice, and manners, quite too long for edification here: but Man-

ice listened with maternal patience, and then put another quiet question:

"Does she belong to your reading circle?"

"O no; she doesn't need to, I suppose. She'd rather dance, and no wonder! You ought to see her dance; it's like a bird in the air. She wanted me to learn, but I thought I wouldn't. She likes flowers."

This irrelevant little statement puzzled Manice; she did not know just why Jack "thought he wouldn't" learn dancing; but she made no comment.

"Is she a religious girl, at all?"

"I don't know," said Jack, meditatively. It evidently had not occurred to him before; his voice had a surprised tone. Manice's heart sank; she must say something to her boy that he would not like to hear, and it was hard to say it.

"Where does she go to church, Jack?"

"O to Grace, I believe. I think she does. But she don't go often, I guess. I have heard her say she was always so glad when Sunday came because she could rest all day; she goes out so much, you see, during the week."

Jack's tone was a little apologetic; he began to see his idol through other, calmer eyes, undazzled by the glamour of her beauty. Manice went on, her own voice trembling a little:

"My dear Jack, is it for your good—no, I won't take the lower motive!—is it right, for you to marry a girl who is not a Christian?"

Jack lifted his head from her knee and withdrew his hand.

"I don't think it is wrong! Lots of people do it!"

"But for you! I do not ask about anybody else. Is it right for you, Jack?"

"Well, I don't certainly know but that she is a Christian; some people are who don't talk about it."

Manice felt baffled, but brave.

"Find out, my Jack. If she is not, just sit down for one hour by yourself, and try to draw a picture of your future life tied to a wife who could not think, feel, or believe as you do; with whom you could have no sympathy and no help in the great aim and hope of your existence. Ask yourself honestly and plainly the Scripture question, 'Can two walk together, except they be agreed?' and if you come to the conclusion that it is not right to put yourself in so equivocal a relation, then, my boy, then will come the time for you to say 'No' with all the resolution of your nature, and the help of your God, to the severest temptation you have ever met. If this conclusion is one you will not accept, if you can consider it right to make your life a long disagreement with one who ought to be the very heart of your heart, then all I can do will be to pity and pray for you."

Manice stopped; a hot tear fell on Jack's hand.

Could she tell him what her own life had been? She had become