

what—she had hot water, blankets, irons at the fire; but besides there was a well-spread table—tea, sausages, gruel, broth, toast, and all ready. She met us with uplifted hands.

"All along o' they dratted birds," she cried. "I wonder he hadn't broke his neck afore."

Then Mr. Martin came in. "They are clean gone this time," he said. "The scoundrels! we had thought to have nabbed them there too, pat enough."

"What scoundrels?" Harry asked.

"Was it them I saw cooking?" I asked.

Then I had to tell my story.

"Cooking!" cried the chief policeman. "Nice cooking! They are the worst gang of coiners out! You may think yourself lucky you got off as you did, my boy. That fellow sticks at nothing! But we shall have them yet."

But Puck! I was so anxious to hear all about my pigeon.

"Ah!" said little Mrs. Gates, who made one of the party. "Doesn't it seem like a Providence that we should have altered our minds and gone to my brother's at Rundlewood, where that very bird was hatched and brought from? and of course he flew straight there, as Harry and Tom had always used to send their messages, and came right up to Tom waddling and lifting of his wing to show him what he'd got, and Tom with the writing he couldn't make head nor tail of, and brought it to Harry, thinking it was one of his larks, and Gates, as soon as he'd read it, starts off without a morsel in his lips—"

"And you as bad, little woman, so you needn't talk," said her husband.

"Then you didn't call for me on Sunday, Harry?" I asked.

He looked up surprised.

"Oh! of course! you never got my letter. Why, I sent word that you was to meet me at the station, as we should not have time to come for you, leaving early for Rundlewood. You've got that letter?" he asked of Betty.

"Better!" returned the good old woman, nodding at me. "Oh, he'll soon be better when he gets his appetite."

There was a general laugh at that. It seemed to me as though I should be *all* appetite for the rest of my life.

I was so shaken and queer that when Mr. Timms came in next day he would not hear of my going to work just yet.

I was to rest for a week, and Harry proposed I should go to stay at Rundlewood, his brother-in-law's place.

You may guess my delight when I found that it was a sort of menagerie on a small scale.

Mr. Farmer trafficked in such things, going to and fro between the seaport towns and Rundlewood, to buy the animals brought from abroad, and disposing of them to gentlemen and others who had a fancy that way.

There were foreign sheep, and goats, and antelopes, two young bears, lots of monkeys and dogs, and birds without number—kinds which I had never even heard of.

Here I found Puck again—or rather he found me—for I had not been there many minutes before he found his way to my shoulder.

I entered into the ways of the business so heartily, that good Mr. Timms said it would be a pity to hinder my bent. I should make a better naturalist, he said, than ever I should a bookbinder. No doubt he was right.

Any way, he kindly cancelled my indentures, and my home was made for many a year at Rundlewood. There

in time "Farmer and Reed" became pretty well known, and there my son Mark was born.

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"So that was the same man who came in with the bird to-day?" son Mark asks, when my story is ended. "The man you saw in the attic?"

Well, I did not recognize him, nor he me, it seems. But the sight of the lad's face scared him, by its likeness to the one which no doubt was printed on his memory as his had been on mine, though it was only when I saw it in the same aspect, turned upwards in sudden terror, that I recalled it.

What he had specially to fear from me it is impossible to say.

Perhaps the remembrance of the boy he had left to starve in the empty house had haunted him, for it is true enough that an evil conscience "doth make cowards of us all."

THE END.

FASHIONABLE DOGS.

In the hot season in London, dogs are compelled to wear muzzles, and some of the daintier of their kind, reared in the lap of luxury, have muzzles that cost twenty dollars a-piece. Silver and silver-plated ones are quite common, and great care is taken with the fit. Poodles are decorated with gold bangles, and terriers with gold and silver collars. Mr. Poodle's bangle has his name engraved on it, and he wears it on his right fore-leg. One of the fashionable ladies of London recently walked out with twelve hundred dollars worth of diamonds around her dog's neck. A tailor-made coat, too, he wore, which in cold days is lined and trimmed with fur. He goes with his mistress to be "measured," and again to "try on," and if the garment does not fit, it is altered to suit. This coat may have cost eight dollars. Navy-blue, faced with red, looks nice. A soft wire-brush is a toilet requisite for Mr. Doggy to smooth his hair, and a basket is always at hand in a snug corner for his lordship to curl himself up in. The delicacies of the season are specially cooked for him. A lap-dog is never allowed to go out by himself. His mistress leads him along by a silver chain. It may have cost from fifteen to thirty dollars.

THE "KILKENNY CATS."

In 1798, during the Irish Rebellion, Kilkenny was garrisoned by Hessians. The soldiers used to amuse themselves by tying two cats together by the tails and hanging them over a clothes-line, where they would fight desperately till one or the other, or both perhaps, were killed. When this cruelty became known to the officers they determined to stop it, and so sent an officer every day to watch for any offence of this kind, and to punish the offender. The soldiers would keep a man on watch themselves, and when the word was given of the approach of the officer the cats would be let loose. One day the man neglected to keep a look-out, and the officer coming upon them suddenly, one of the soldiers divided the cats' tails with his sword, and the cats ran off, "leaving their tails behind them," like Bo Peep's sheep. The officer inquired about the curious sight of two cats' tails hanging on the line, and was told that two cats had fought desperately, destroyed each other but the tails, and the soldiers had picked up these appendages and hung them on the line.