

However, the poor Butterfly was dead, and there lay the eggs on the cabbage-leaf; and the green Caterpillar had a kind heart, so she resolved to do her best. But she got no sleep that night, she was so very anxious. She made her back quite ache with walking all night long around her young charges, for fear any harm should happen to them; and in the morning says she to herself—

“Two heads are better than one. I will consult some wise animal upon the matter, and get advice. How should a poor crawling creature like me know what to do without asking my betters?”

But still there was a difficulty—whom should the Caterpillar consult? There was a shaggy dog who sometimes came into the garden. But he was so rough!—he would most likely whisk all the eggs off the cabbage-leaf with one brush of his tail, if she called him near to talk to her, and then she would never forgive herself. There was the Tom Cat, to be sure, who would sometimes sit at the foot of the apple tree, basking himself and warming his fur in the sunshine; but he was so selfish and indifferent!—there was no hope of his giving himself the trouble to think about Butterfly's eggs. “I wonder which is the wisest of all the animals I know,” sighed the Caterpillar, in great distress; and then she thought and thought, till at last she thought of the Lark; and she fancied that because he went up so high and nobody knew where he went to, he must be very clever and know a great deal; for to go up very high (which she could never do) was the Caterpillar's idea of perfect glory.

Now in the neighbouring corn-field there lived a Lark, and the Caterpillar sent a message to him, to beg him to come and talk to her; and when he came she told him all her difficulties, and asked him what she was to do, to feed and rear the little creatures so different from herself.

“Perhaps you will be able to inquire and hear something about it next time you go up high,” observed the Caterpillar timidly.

The Lark said, “Perhaps he should:” but he did not satisfy her curiosity any further. Soon afterwards, however, he went singing upwards into the bright blue sky. By degrees his voice died away in the distance, till the green Caterpillar could not hear a sound. It is nothing to say she could not see him; for, poor thing! she never could see far at any time, and had a difficulty in looking upwards at all, even when she reared herself up most carefully, which she did now; but it was of no use, so she dropped upon her legs again, and resumed her walk round the Butterfly's eggs, nibbling a bit of the cabbage-leaf now and then as she moved along.

“What a time the Lark has been gone!” she cried at last, “I wonder where he is just now! I would give all my legs to know! He must have flown up higher than usual this time, I do think! How I should like to know where it is that he goes to, and what he hears in that curious blue sky! He always sings in going up and coming down, but he never lets any secret out. He is very, very close!”

And the green Caterpillar took another turn round the Butterfly's eggs.