

that is, told them stories, 'earthly stories with heavenly meaning,' so the little maiden called them. Away behind him the hill rises covered with flowers; here and there a little patch of cultivated land wherein the sower cast his seed. Along the deep blue waters the villages cluster. The white houses standing out sharp and clear. At his feet the waves gently ripple to the shore; on the pebble ridge are all the belongings of the fisherfolks—the boats, the nets, the ropes. Away on the sea are the fishing-boats, their sails reflected in the still water and about them on every side are the birds. Around him are gathered the multitude—sturdy men and comely women, and bright-faced little children.

Now for us, as for them, there wait many parables at the seaside if we have but ears to hear.

Some years ago I was going along the north coast of Cornwall—the grandest bit of coast God ever made, as we Cornish folk think. Below there stretched the cliffs a good three hundred feet—here a rugged mass of stone reared itself like a castle fronting the fierce Atlantic; here was a sheer descent where some masses have fallen and swept down to the waves below; here it was hollowed out into a little grassy spot, where the patches of furze lit it up with gold, and the purple heather and many another flower made it beautiful. Far down below the great waves dashed in thunder and shot up columns of spray. Then the cliff rounded and sank away into a little bay with stretch of beach, where the water changed from indigo to vivid green as the waves swept far up the yellow sands.

A little way from the shore was a group of black rocks about which the breakers foamed and surged. Far away, up and down the coast, stood out the headlands that do shut the helpless ships as in a trap when the north-west gales sweep the coast. Here it was that we sat together my good friend and I, whilst he told me his story. 'You see that group of rocks out there,' he began, pointing to the spot, 'well, it happened there. It was one November day, a tremendous gale had been blowing all night, and when I went out in the morning I saw a barque off the coast. If the wind held where it was I knew there was nothing for it but her coming ashore. I got on my horse and galloped off to the coastguard station, and they got ready to come off at once, whilst I hurried back as fast as I could. To and fro she drove nearer and nearer, until we saw that she would come in right there. The coastguard got out the rocket-apparatus and made all ready to fire as soon as she struck. Presumably a great sea lifted her right on the rocks, and then went back, leaving her perched up there high and dry. You could see the poor fellows huddled together,—frightened out of their wits, as well they might be.

'The mortar was fired at once, and the first shot just carried the rope right across the rigging. But, bless you; as soon as ever the fellows heard the gun fire every man rushed as hard as he could into the fore-castle and shut the door. They all thought we were a set of savages trying to kill them, and that we might take the ship and the cargo. It was a sight to see. There was the rope hanging over them;

and every one of us ready to risk his life to help them, and they thinking that we wanted to kill them.

'Well, presently the sea began to boil again, and the great waves came sweeping about her. I knew that she couldn't stand that very long. What could we do? It was enough to make a man go mad—to see the rope dangling within their reach, and the great sea ready to sweep them all away; and they all trembling down in the fore-castle, cursing us for a set of Cornish wreckers. What more could we do? And in a few minutes they must all be swept away. We just stood and looked down upon the ship, every one of us feeling as miserable as we could, that they should be such fools. At last one of the coast guards could stand it no longer. He laid hold of the rope and swung himself hand over hand and got on board, and taking hold of the directions he ran up to the fore-castle and shouted to them to open the cabin door. They were more frightened than ever, and thought the murderers had got them now. Somehow he managed to get the door open, and then flung himself in amongst them all. "There, I've come to save you," he cried.

'They clustered about him, and one began to explain to the others what he meant. Then one crept up on the deck and looked at the rope, and then saw the large crowd on the cliff, and the coastguardman got him to step into the buoy. Timidly, one after another crept up to watch, and they jabbered together in their lingo. Then another was drawn up in safety, and another, until they were all safe. They all stood on the cliff and watched the great seas rise up again and come tearing the ship to pieces. Then they seemed to understand it all, how that we had come to save them, and not to kill them. Their eyes filled with tears, and they turned and flung their arms about our necks and they laughed and cried and hugged us and kissed us on both cheeks, and did not know what to do to show us how glad and how thankful they were.

'Then we took them to the farmhouses around, and got them dry things and plenty to eat, and found a place for them to sleep in, and took all the care we could of them until they could get away. They tried to tell us with eyes and fingers and lips what they wanted to say, but all we could make out of it was this, that at "first they took us for devils, but they found out that all the time we were angels."

I went on my way and turned inland, and toward my home. But the story I have never forgotten, and never shall. Fools and madmen indeed! And I have seen in my dreams the rope dangling over them, and the frightened men hiding terrified from their deliverers.

So is it that the blessed Saviour stands, looking forth upon the world which he has redeemed, and across which he has thrown the rope of mercy binding earth to heaven. The direction is so plain; the deliverance so easy, salvation within reach. And yet how many foolish souls do hide themselves, afraid of the All-gracious Lord, as if he came to kill and not to make alive. So men go sinking down into perdition whilst Christ stands with tearful eyes, and hands outstretched to save them. 'Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.'—'British Workman.'

A Cat's Mother-Love.

(Dallas L. Sharp, in 'Youth's Companion'.)

Just as wonderful as the adoption of Romulus and Remus by the wolf in the Roman story, is that of two baby gray squirrels by Calico, my neighbor's three-colored cat. She has eaten scores of squirrels, and hence our amazement at her adoption of these two.

They were brought to the house before their eyes were open—so young that no one knew how to feed them. Must they both starve? It happened that Calico had a new spring family of kittens, so young that they, too, had not yet seen daylight. As there was always an abundance of Calico's kittens about, it was decided, as a last resort, to rob her of two, and if possible, substitute the squirrels. The kittens were twice as large, and Calico's tastes were perfectly well known; but the squirrels might as well be eaten as starved to death.

Calico was curled up in a basket under the kitchen table when the squirrels were brought in. She looked concerned, of course, but not a bit worried, as two of her kittens were taken out of the basket and placed in a hat on the table. She did not see when they were lifted from the hat and the squirrels put in their place. Soon she missed them and began to fret and fidget, looking up towards the hat, which the hungry squirrels kept rocking. Then she leaped out upon the floor, purring, and bounded upon the table, going straight to the hat.

There certainly was an expression of surprise and mystification on her face as she saw the change that had come over those kittens. They had shrunk, and faded from three bright colors to a pale gray. She looked again and sniffed them. Their odor had changed, too. She turned to the watchers about the table, but they said nothing. She was undecided, half inclined to go back to the basket, when one of the squirrels whimpered—a genuine universal baby whimper. That settled it. She was a mother, and whatever else these things were, they were babies, and that was quite enough, especially as she was needing just this number here in the hat to make whole her broken family.

So she took them tenderly by the neck and leaped down to her basket, and when they were both safely landed she curled up once more, contented and happy, and began to feed and wash them.

To-day they are sleek, full-grown, romping fellows that torment her with their pranks. She cannot understand them, for they will not eat squirrel, nor do a dozen things that kittens ought to do.

Yet Calico has more patience with the squirrels than with her own children. Long after the kittens were boxed on the ears and sent off about their business, Calico allowed these squirrels to tag her about and plague her without giving them a slap.

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