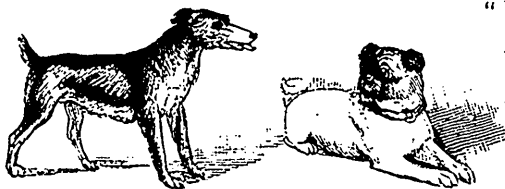


## ORIGINAL FABLES.

BY ELEANOR PROSSER, *Author of "Fables for You," etc.*

## GOLD MAY BE BOUGHT TOO DEAR.



"I CAN'T think how you get on in this weather," said a sleek, well-fed pug to a wiry-looking mongrel who was looking about for a bone; "you must be frozen to death at night, besides being half starved by day."

"Well, it certainly is a little hard sometimes," said the mongrel, "and I must confess I could do with a little more to eat; but for all that, I wouldn't exchange my life for yours."

"I'm glad to hear it, friend, for I certainly don't mean to give you the chance; still, I should like to know *why*. Perhaps you are not aware that I have three meals a day regularly, and very often sweet biscuits in between."

"So I've heard," said the mongrel.

"And, besides that, I have a basket lined with cushions to sleep in."

"You don't say so!" cried the mongrel.

"Yes, and my mistress is so fond of me, she can't bear me out of her sight. A little while ago she gave me a collar with my name on it and a silver chain."

"Ah," said the mongrel, "it's very flattering, no doubt, to be thought so much of, but never having been used to it, you see I don't miss it; and, to tell the truth, ma'am, I'd rather pick up my meals as I can, or even go without one now and then, as long as I can hunt a rat when I feel inclined, or have some fun with the rabbits when the keeper is out of the way."

"Oh, well, every one to his liking," said the pug indifferently; "it is well you are satisfied. I wouldn't be in your place for a good deal."

"I daresay not, ma'am; and though you may not believe it, I assure you I wouldn't give up my liberty for a silver chain, even with the biscuits thrown in."

## TWO BOOKS.

BY THE REV. S. BARING-GOULD, M.A.,

*Rector of Lew Trenchard; Author of "John Herring," etc.*

## IV.



THE day was Sunday, the time afternoon, after church. On this Sunday it was the turn of Jemima Anne and Jessie to go out. They walked down the lane together. Jemima Anne did not much like to be seen with Jessie, because Jessie was the kitchenmaid. Moreover, Jemima Anne was in her white straw, with spangled lace veil, her stamped crimson velvet dress, and, above all, the hummingbird fastened into the flame-coloured bow of her hat. Jessie, on the other hand, was in a quiet blue serge dress, and a little grey hat with navy-blue ribbon. No one was in sight, so Jemima graciously allowed Jessie to trip at her side. Should any one appear, then it would be another matter; she would sweep ahead, and Jessie might appear as though she were her maid, and held up her train.

It cannot be said that Tom Nayles was unexpected, or was wholly unexpected, for he was encountered or overtaken now and then in the lane, as Clover Farm adjoined the glebe land that lay in a ring fence round the Rectory, and the way to Clover Farm lay along the same lane as that which led to the Rectory. The lane was said to be haunted. Two white pigs, linked together by a silver chain, were reported to gallop down it on dark nights, and the girls at the Rectory were somewhat shy of