

# PLEASANT HOURS

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THE BLACKSMITH'S PETS.

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NELLIE WINTERS and her brother, Hal, had gone with their parents to spend the summer months in the country. The children were always on the look-out for something new, and one evening, as they were strolling together, Nellie exclaimed:

"Oh, the swallows! The pretty swallows!"

"My!" exclaimed Hal. "If I only had brought my sling-shot! Wouldn't I make them dance? Why, I could kill half a dozen at one throw, I do believe."

"Hal, would you kill a pretty, little swallow?"

"Indeed I would. Wouldn't it be

fun? Why didn't I bring my sling-shot?"

"Buddie, I don't think it would be fun at all. See how low they fly; just as much as to say, 'I trust you.' I trust you."

"Ha! Ha! Nellie, you've got the wrong tune this time. The people won't let us boys shoot guns in these kind of places, for fear of frightening

horses, and these birds know it, and when they fly low, it is to say, 'I dare you, I dare you.' I never could take a dare, and wouldn't now, if I had my sling shot. Why, I'd sling it so softly, nobody would know it, and even the birds would wonder how they come dead. Ha! ha! Ah! you young gentlemen, just wait till to-morrow."

"Hal, don't hurt the little things;