

which were quite enough for one day's feast, they greedily and wastefully roamed from bough to bough, nibbling an apple here and another there, till they left hardly one sound. The annoyance of the owner of the house, who set great store on the fruit, may be imagined.

"There must be a perfect pest of squirrels in the garden!" he cried dismally, and then he sent for a number of traps, and the result was that four of the family were taken prisoners, and sent off, poor things, to make themselves as happy as they could in narrow cages, with only a wheel to run round and round in for exercise. Only Fluffy, Frisk, and Skurry remained in the old home, and very unhappy and forsaken they felt, though they had long been independent of home and its authority.

"How shall we know now when winter is near?"

"Oh, we must watch the signs as mother told us," answered Frisk. "The swallows have been gone this long time, and they said the winter was soon coming, and mother told us we should know by the fruit ripening, and the leaves falling, and the ground being covered with white."

But Skurry only laughed. True, from time to time he did put a nut or a piece of corn in the place he had chosen for a home, but it was a mere trifle. As he began to feel the cold he gathered up a little moss and a few leaves to line his nest, but the moss was all damp, and the leaves wet with the first storms of winter.

It did not matter, thought he, for when the time came, if ever it did come, there were the hoards of his father and mother and vanished brothers to make use of; time enough when the trouble came. A short life and a merry one for him. At last he felt bound to make some effort, but he found it impossible to rouse himself; he was too sleepy. So he crept to the different hoards, but found some one had been before him, and had left only a few of the poorest nuts and acorns, and he was so hungry that he devoured them then and there.

He went to beg from his sisters, but they refused to share their stores or holes with him; indeed there was not room for more than one in the nests they had made so snug with nice soft wool and moss, and they had only enough to last them through the cold weather. Frisk did her best for him and showed him a hoard in a hole of the tree which in his carelessness he had overlooked, and Ruddy's partly finished nest, and left him pretty fairly settled, though when she went he could not help contrasting his refuge with that of the others. "If only I had heeded mother's words and autumn messages," he said with a sigh.

What a biting cold wind blew over the earth on the last day of January, a regular hurricane with a terrible fall of snow, which worked havoc in the garden and orchard, and piled up in great drifts on the boughs of the trees! When the weather moderated the owner of the house and his man came down to see the damage, and to remove the boughs which had been stripped off by the violence of the gale, and as they did so they came by chance on Skurry's nest.

"What have we here?" said the gardener; and out of the hole he pulled the frozen body of the poor idle little creature, who had not been willing to take the warnings of autumn.

"Mischievous little things, very!"

said the master, who remembered the fate of his apples. "Yet one cannot but be sorry for so heedless an end to a bright and merry life. He had no store or comfort provided, poor little thing, for the dark days which were coming on him."

Humility.

In the ancient city of Carthage dwelt a holy man, who was held in much esteem among all the people for his piety and charity, and up to the time I speak of, was remarkable for his great humility of demeanor. But Scripture says, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

This man had begun to think a little more highly of himself than he ought, and at the same time to think a little less kindly of his neighbours. A spirit of vain curiosity, also, had begun to work in him, such as became not the Gospel of Christ. He prayed to God, not to save his soul nor yet to certify him that it was not in a safe state, but he desired to be informed what exact place he should hold in the kingdom of glory. No answer came immediately, and he laid him down to rest; a little before dawn he was suddenly awakened, and he heard a distinct voice saying to him, "Arise, go out into the principal street of the town, and there the question which thou hast asked shall be answered." He lost no time, and soon stood at the head of the main street of Carthage. Presently he perceived a figure emerging from a neighbouring street. It was an old man—his cheeks were furrowed, his countenance worn, and his garments very poor and mean. Yet there was no appearance of disquietude or discontent about him; on the contrary, he was cheerful, and he had that sort of twinkle in his eye which Solomon pictured to himself when he said, "He that is of merry heart hath a continual feast." He took no notice of our saint, nor our saint of him, but taking a besom from his shoulder he quietly began to sweep the crossing. Our saint said nothing, but he marked him; and in a little time the same distinct voice which he had heard in his chamber, addressed him thus:—"In the kingdom of glory thou art to sit at that man's feet." "O Lord," said the saint, "I thank Thee. I was waxing proud, and Thou hast taught me better." He went home, and it was remarked that from that time he became more charitable; he became more of a saint than he had been before, and less of a self-admirer.

Good Friends.

Pompey and Brownie were the best of friends: they never cared to be parted, even for a short time. When Brownie was harnessed and driven off, Pompey would usually run along by his side, and now and then cheer him with a friendly bark.

Sometimes when the dog got very tired, his master would lift him up into the cart for a rest, but Pompey was sure to let his friend know where he was. And I really believe Brownie liked to know he was close at hand.

When Brownie was turned into the fields, his constant companion would go too, and would even sit with him in the stable, and pretend to eat the corn. At any rate, Pompey liked to lie down on the warm hay, and take a cosy nap while his friend had a good meal. Such merry games they had together! You would have been delighted to see them.

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A Fox's Cunning.

While out with the hounds, I found a fox, and pursued him for nearly two hours, when suddenly the dogs appeared at fault. Their master came up with them near a large log of wood lying on the ground, and was surprised at their making a circuit of a few rods without any object in view, every trace of the fox seeming to have been lost, while the dogs still kept yelping. On the gentleman looking round, he saw the fox stretched upon the log apparently lifeless. He made several unsuccessful attempts to direct the attention of the dogs towards the place, and at length he got so near as to see the animal breathe. Even then Reynard did not show any alarm, but his pursuer aimed a blow at him with a branch of a tree, upon which he leaped from his lurking place, and was taken.

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