

# HOME AND SCHOOL

Vol. IV.]

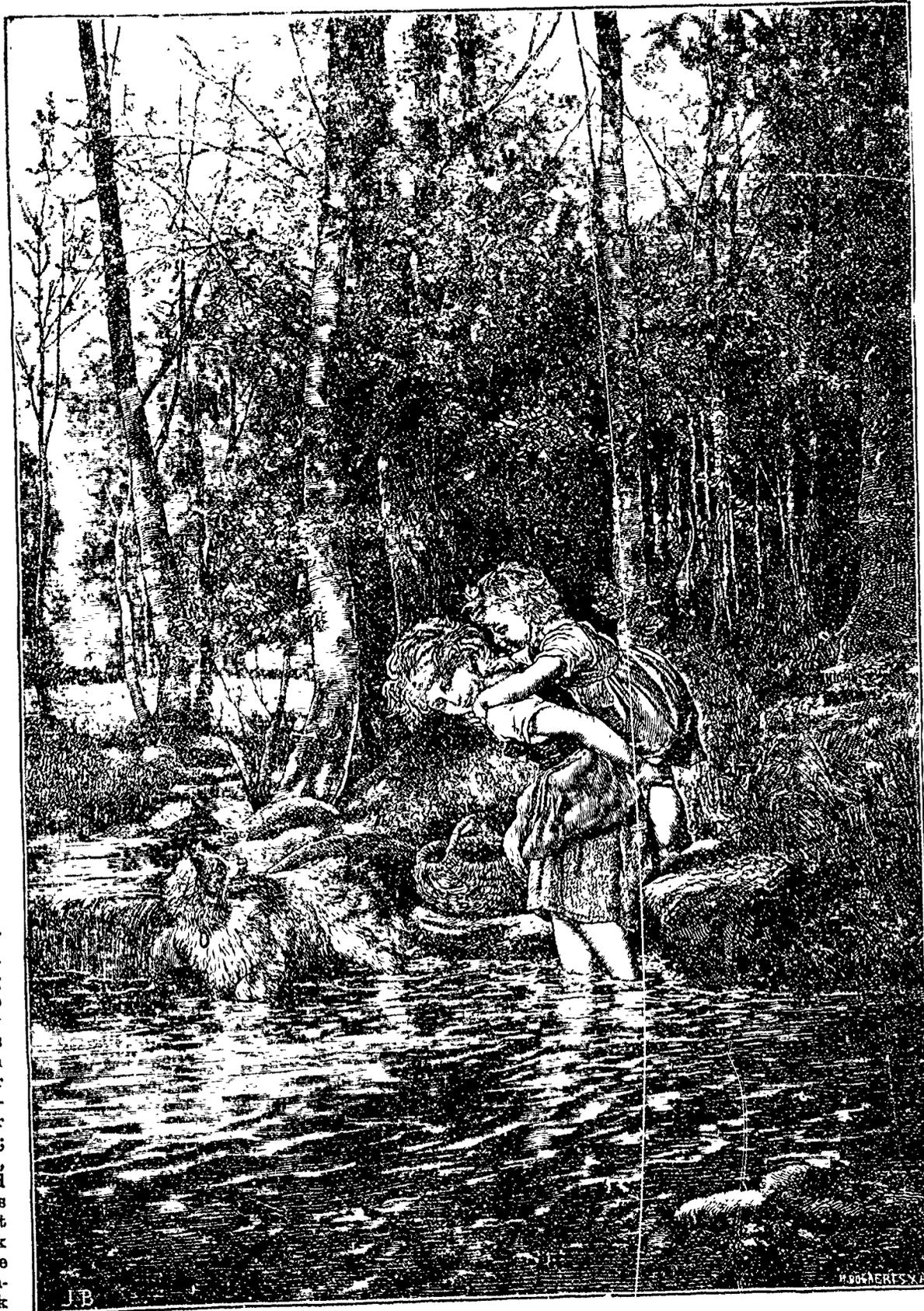
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## The Shortest Way Home.

Yes! and the very nicest way, too! for does not Willie get a ride by going this way? and how much nicer the cool, soft water feels to Nell's feet than the dusty bridge would if she went the other way. No need of that anxious look on your face, Master Will; Nell can carry you and her basket, too, if you just hold on tightly. Jip likes this way the best, and thinks his little friends are a long time getting started; he looks back as if to assure Master Will that there is not the slightest danger.

How many of the young folk who look at pictures ever see half the beauty there is in them? It is one thing to simply look at a picture and call it "pretty," and quite a different thing to look at it carefully, noting all the different ideas the artist meant to express in it, and all the beauty stamped on the various scraps of the picture which make it so attractive as a whole. In this picture we naturally notice the children first, the half-fearful look on the little boy's face, and the reassuring look of his sister; then the intelligent look of the dog who is impatient to be going but who evidently intends to wait for his little friends; then from the animate objects our glance passes to the surroundings; how clear and pretty the water is; we almost fancy that, were we near, we could see the smooth stones and the little pebbles at the bottom. Now look at the woods in the back-ground; the sunshine falls on the brook and the edges of the woods, but farther in the shadows are deep



THE SHORTEST WAY HOME.

and cool, and we think of the white flowers, of the mandrakes and the beautiful ferns and mosses that must be growing in there.

Pictures are great educators, and especially such pictures as this one which portrays some phase of human nature and some of the beauties of nature which God has placed around us for our enjoyment. Madam De Stael has called beautiful architecture "frozen music," and if the beautiful as expressed by man in piles of stonework and masonry can be spoken of thus, what should be said of the beauty depicted on some canvas or even in lithograph which bring to our eye some scene of nature or some view of human disposition, so strikingly set forth, as to impress us with the involved idea at once. God has given us a love for the beautiful that it is our duty to foster and educate, and furthermore make it redound to His honour and glory. We are to use all our gifts and graces for Him and He will add to them if we will let Him. Saving grace exercises a refining influence on the mind and the soul, and we often see persons, destitute of any refinement before their conversion, who afterward develop a taste, not only for the beautiful things that recommend themselves to our sight, but also for fine literature, music, etc. In conclusion, I will add that each one of us are artists, painting the pictures of the soul on our face, actions, and conversation; let us see to it that the two essential tints—love to God and to our neighbour—are not lacking, for if they be not used, our picture will be but a confused