

sent for Dawson, and said she knew how fond he was of animals, and how kind he was to them, and as a reward she would like to make him a present of the gulls.

Harry thanked her warmly, and Miss Porchester was pleased. She thought what nice manners he had.

It will be an object of interest to you Harry, to feed them and look after them. You may ask the cook for the meat every day after breakfast. I hope you will succeed in taming and civilizing them, and making them really an attractive ornament of the grounds."

Harry showed a lively interest in his charge. He had a good old-fashioned wooden whistle, with an honest pea in its throat, which sent forth a fluty note with a pleasant flutter, correcting all harshness and imparting a musical tone. Its sound floated harmoniously on the air, and did not offend the Doctor's sensitive ear. Yet the Doctor had qualms about allowing it. All musical toys were strictly forbidden by the rules of the school, and when first the Doctor heard the whistle, he pricked up his ears and hurried off to dis, over the off nder.

Harry had need of all the diplomatic art at his command to explain that he was trying to accustom the gulls to come for their dinner at the sound of the whistle.

"Well, my boy, I am not sure that I approve of the plan. If you are allowed to use your whistle, other boys will expect the same indulgence. We shall have them all trying to train the gulls. We have had plaques of brazen horns, root-toots, jews'-harps, drums, penny whistles, gongs manufactured on the premises out of biscuit-tins. The rule was made to prevent the nuisance of such barbaric noises. I do not feel comfortable about allowing your whistle."

"I'll only use it for the gulls," said Mayn't I try it? It would save a lot of time if I could train them to come at its call."

The Doctor's brow contracted as he paused a moment to reflect. With some reluctance he presently consented, not actually to forbid it. He would give it a trial, and if he saw the shadow of a reason to think it was becoming a nuisance, the whistle would be confiscated.

Harry was careful not to risk his chance by any unlawful performance of the fluty notes. They were only heard at feeding-time. For many days there was no result, but perseverance gradually won its way to some success. The gulls learnt to connect the ideas of whistle and food. The warbling notes brought them from one leg to two, then they wagged their tails and took to the water, and finally they showed such ready obedience to the call that Miss Porchester regarded it as a distinct advance towards civilization.

Another symptom of more friendly recognition with satisfaction. They took guard for mankind was noticed by their coming up towards the house in the evening, and instead of sleeping on the island, as had always been their habit,

they often passed the night among the shrubs round the house. Miss Porchester was much gratified by this favorable turn.

"Really, John," she said to her brother, "the gulls are proving quite a success. Harry deserves great credit for his success in reforming their character. They will soon be completely domesticated."

But Harry regarded that innovation of roosting among the shrubs with uneasiness. He knew that a lank black cat often prowled about the garden at night. He had shivered ere now when demon screeches suddenly roused the silence of night and startled him out of a sound sleep. He was sure that green-eyed monster would make short work of the gulls if it happened to come across them in the course of a nocturnal prowl.

"I should like to make them a safe sleeping place," he said to Miss Porchester. "I could easily do it with fir poles and wire netting. Do you think I might?"

Miss Porchester thought it a good idea. She went with Harry to select a suitable spot, and they decided upon a small clearing among the shrubs under the window of Harry's dormitory.

"I shall be able to hear them at night," he said, "if anything alarms them. But I hope we shall make their castle strong enough to defy the cat."

Harry got three of his dormitory mates, Hercules, Simpkins and Browser, to help him in the work. John Carey produced the fir-poles from the wood-yard, and the wire netting came from somewhere. They worked at odd times, and in a week they had built a very respectable concern. A packing case, set up on end, made a good shelter from rain. They were very proud of the result.

"It is a jolly sight better than the one at Punchey Brown's," said Harry.

"Rather so," said Browser.

It was no easy matter getting the gulls to take advantage of their safe retreat. For several evenings it was only effected by careful strategy. But one day an itinerant fishmonger called with a cart-load of sprats and Harry bought a supply. And that evening, at roosting time, he threw a sprat to each gull as they were coming up to the house.

They had never tasted such a tit bit since they left their native haunts on the cliffs of Connemara. They came on eagerly, and asked for more as plainly as gull-language and movement could make it. Harry presented other sprats towards them, and lured them on till they were close to the open door. Then he tossed the contents into the enclosure, and the gulls scurried in after them. So long as the sprats lasted all was plain sailing at bed-time. And before the sun rose to-day a new method had proceeded so successfully that the whistle was enough to call the gulls, and they went to the familiar place without giving unnecessary trouble.

John Carey was given strict instructions for looking after the gulls in the