

TOD'S ADVENTURES.

From the beginning of his life Tod was a most unfortunate cat. When he was three days old his mother pushed him out of the basket and growled at him fiercely.

The children settled his career by calling him homely, and no one ever noticed, as time went on, that he was the first to wash his face, to find his claws and play with his tail.

Both his sisters had golden-coloured eyes, but Tod's were a faded blue. Then, though he was black and white like the rest, his spots had provokingly settled in the most unbecoming places; one on the tip of his tail, one on his nose, and the rest hit or miss over his body.

It wasn't natural that any cat should endure such snubbing as he received. He had a good conscience, and knew he had always made less trouble than his two sister pussies. He gave up many a nice dish for them, and he would sit thinking when they were at play. This was another thing against him. They said he hadn't any fun in him, and was just a homely, poky kitten. Tod couldn't help two unbecoming tears at that. His mother told him to get out of the sun or his eyes would be weak, and his sisters stared at him till he went off by himself and wanted to die or run away.

He crept out in the yard after a time, feeling very wretched indeed. The children tormented him

from morning till night; he had to sleep in the cold corner of the basket, scarcely had enough to eat, while he heard vague suggestions of rivers and water casks that filled him with terror. So he decided to run away. It was a cold December morning that Tod set out to find a home. Dogs teased him, teams frightened him, boys stoned him, but Tod kept resolutely on through the snow for a mile. Then, safe from the city noises, he sat down to think. He had never been more than presentable as to appearance, and now with one ear torn, a lame foot, and tufts of fur missing, the prospect of a welcome any-

where was not over probable. Besides, he was hungry, and the cold severe. However, he went on again till he came to a quaint old house, with small window panes, and queer little gables on the roof, that seemed as dilapidated as he was. Tod crept up to an open window and inspected it. He scrambled to the sill by means of the old ivy vines and looked into the room. Not a soul within! Tod entered. He had never seen anything quite like it in his life. There was one easy

the door opened five minutes later, and a grave, elderly gentleman took his seat at the desk. If Tod had been less hungry he would not have moved at all, but after he had watched the "scratch, scratch" of the pen for a half hour, he ventured a timid "Meow."

The gentleman glanced about the room in amazement. He wasn't a lover of cats, and took umbrage at once.

"Meow—meow," cried Tod, louder than before, but motionless still.

Slowly the straying eyes came back to the desk—to the pigeon hole, and were transfixed. Tod did not move, and didn't know how to explain his presence.

"Well, I declare! Bless my soul!" exclaimed the worthy gentleman, and pushed back his glasses.

"Maria! Maria!" he called, and as the door opened, "How did this happen?" and he pointed out Tod to the astonished Maria.

"Window!" said Maria, shortly.

"Ah! to be sure," replied the gentleman. "Take it, wash it, give it some milk, bring it back."

Maria obeyed, and added a blue ribbon to Tod's neck. Tod gravely crawled into his pigeon-hole once more.

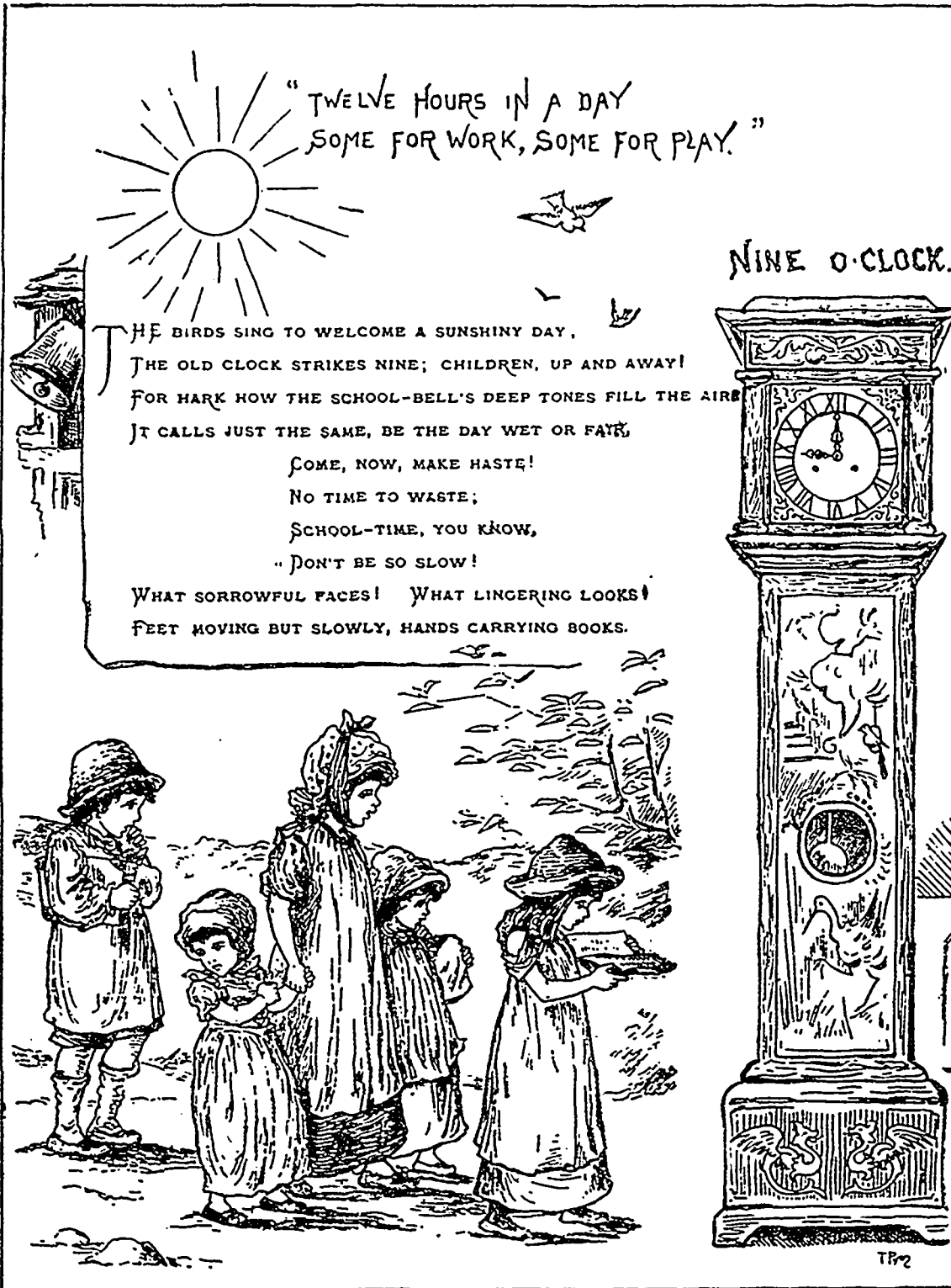
"Why, what shall I do with my papers, you young parasite, if you occupy that?" asked the gentleman. But Tod didn't move.

"Maria, bring me a piece of flannel."

Maria understood, and returned with a square of light blue. She settled it under Tod. Tod purred his satisfaction, and the

gentleman went on with his writing. Tod still occupies the study—an immense fellow he is now, weighing thirteen pounds, and gravely watches the conclusion of a novel, and often decides the fate of a heroine by his humour, so his master says.

He is a prime favourite with the family, while it is privately admitted that the gentleman, a very wise and quiet person usually, talks more nonsense with Tod daily, and takes more satisfaction in jesting with him than he often does in a company of learned doctors, and, most remarkable of all, he owns it. So you see Tod is at last appreciated.



chair, to be sure, and a few cheerful plants in an opposite window, but the walls were lined with straight walnut cases full of books.

"All books!" thought Tod, with some disgust, and looked about in search of a cozy corner for himself. He walked over a table of papers, examined a green iron frog that he couldn't see any use for, and tipped over a waste-paper basket, but no nook to his liking appeared.

Then Tod really showed himself a genius. He climbed again to the table, found an empty pigeon hole, and crawled in. There never was a more demure looking kitten, I am sure, when