

the whiter by contrast. It is a hard fate that made me a black sheep!" and with that he mopped off two more large tears with his tail, which was quite wet with them already.

"Now," said his mother, as she stopped browsing on some sweet grass that grew under a spicewood bush, "this is not only foolish, but it is very wicked. We live sometimes to find that what we thought a dreadful calamity was in reality a blessing. We cannot always see it, but we can at least try to believe that this is true. Some day you may have cause to be thankful that your coat is dark instead of white. It is not always what looks best that is best for us, and we must try to be contented with what we have and are."

The lamb thought "this did very well for his mother to say, who was white, and did not know how it felt to be the color of the shadows!" So he kept on discontentedly mopping his eyes, and felt that there was no trouble in the world like his.

Seemingly to add to his woe, just across the stream one of the prettiest of white little lambs, that had strayed away from its mother, was frolicking by itself, frisking and skipping about in the wildest glee. The grass was lovely and green, and here and there amidst it flamed the crimson of the "Pride of the meadow," and swayed the snowy chalices of the meadow lily. In the background was a dense forest, while, yet more distant still, tall crags lifted themselves toward the dark blue of the sky. The bright waters of the brook made rippling music as it flowed away, on its bed of stones, catching the sunbeams as it went. It was very beautiful as the evening lights and shadows played across wood and meadow. So the sulky little black lamb thought; and prettiest of all to him was the lovely little snow-white lamb that seemed so light-hearted and gay, and that had so much to make her happy!

Just as he was looking with wistful eyes at the envied fleece, there came a loud, rushing, flapping sound, and down swooped a great eagle, and, catching up the solitary little lamb with beak and claws, soared away to her nest in the crags, with the poor little victim bleating pitifully!

As the horrified black lamb sprang to his feet, and watched the terrible fate of the object of his envy, his mother spoke again:

"Well may you gaze in fear and trembling at the dreadful spectacle! So soon do you see the value of your own dark coat! Had you been white, as yonder poor little lamb, her horrible fate might have been yours! Your despised color has saved your life. You cannot be seen from afar, as white lambs are. What advantage would it have been to you to have been as white as snow, if you were only to serve as a dinner for a nest full of young eagles? Learn a lesson from this and never murmur

against a cross which does you no harm and may in the end prove a blessing."

## A LITTLE BOY'S TROUBLE.

**I** THOUGHT when I'd learned my letters  
That all my troubles were done;  
But I find myself much mistaken—  
' They have only just begun.  
Learning to read was awful,  
But nothing like learning to write;  
I'm real sorry to have to tell it,  
But my copybook is a sight!

The ink gets over my fingers;  
The paper cuts all sorts of shins,  
And won't do at all as I bid it;  
The letters won't stay on the lines,  
But go up and down and all over,  
As though they were dancing a jig;  
They are there in all shapes and sizes,  
Medium, little, and big.

There'd be some comfort in learning  
If one could get through; instead  
Of that, there are books awaiting,  
Quite enough to craze my head;  
There's the multiplication table,  
And grammar, and—oh, dear me!  
There's no good place for stopping,  
When one has begun, I see.

My teacher says, little by little  
To the mountain top we climb  
It isn't all done in a minute,  
But only a step at a time.  
He says that all the scholars,  
All wise and learned men,  
Had each to begin as I do;  
If that's so—where's my pen?  
—Selected.

**S** AID Peter Paul Augustus: "When I am grown a man  
I'll help my dearest mother the very best I can.  
I'll wait upon her kindly; she'll lean upon my arm;  
I'll lead her very gently, and keep her safe from harm.  
But when I think upon it, the time will be so long,"  
Said Peter Paul Augustus, "before I'm tall and strong,  
I think it would be wiser to be her pride and joy  
By helping her my very best while I'm a little boy."  
—Selected.

"Our bodies are His temples too,  
As Holy Scriptures tell;  
How pure, how stainless should they be  
Where He doth deign to dwell!

"How should we fear lest word or deed,  
Or thought of guile and sin,  
Should drive away the Blessed One  
Who dwells our hearts within!

"O Holy Ghost, Thou Spirit Pure!  
Still with us ever stay,  
And make us walk in wisdom's path,  
And holiness away."