

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

A CUNNING DOG.

DOGS sometimes exhibit traits that are human; and we sometimes wonder whether Pythagoras was very far wrong in his theory that the souls of men at their death, and also before their creation, inhabit the bodies of animals.

Certainly, if so, the soul of a certain little black spaniel named "Nig" must originally have belonged to some greedy boy whose indulgent parents fed him upon knick-knacks until he died; for never was there an animal more particular in his tastes with regard to food. Many times Nig would go supperless to bed because his little master insisted upon his eating plain bread and butter instead of cake; and he was known to fast an entire day on one occasion, because his breakfast consisted of fried potatoes and beef bones rather than hot rolls, of which he was extravagantly fond.

But little boys learn to get their own way, and little dogs are quite as apt.

After a time Nig concluded that the only sure method of obtaining what he wanted was to eat, or hide away, what was first given him, and then beg for more; and therefore he would carry off the crusts which he found upon his plate, bury them at the foot of the garden and then return, and with wagging tail ask for a doughnut or a cookie, which he seldom failed to receive.

By this and other tricks the spaniel generally managed to secure such food as he best liked; and for a long time, the shrewdness which he exhibited and the hearty laughs which he excited made his master forget how bad were the habits which he was forming. But one day Nig made too great a fuss about the supper which was set before him, and as a punishment, a severe order was issued:

The dog was to eat just what was left from the table, and nothing more. What was good enough for the family must do for him.

That night Nig slept in happy unconsciousness of the new rule; but when morning came and breakfast was over its full import became known to him. For his master had eaten codfish and potato, and codfish and potato was all that was left for Master Nig.

A plate with the fishy food was prepared and placed in Nig's corner, and he was invited to partake. At first he approached with evident hunger and delight, sniffing eagerly at the offered plate; but when his nose told him what it contained his countenance and his tail both fell. He looked at his master in a reproachful manner, and turned sadly away. He was called back and ordered to eat. Slowly he returned, but instead of eating, he carefully pushed every particle of the food from the plate to the floor, crowded it close under the rim of the dish, and again retired to a chair, where he seated himself, looking soberly at the plate and then at his master, as though entering a remonstrance against such a breakfast.

But his master was obdurate and spoke sternly:

"Nig you must eat that fish and potato

before you have anything else."

No sooner were the words spoken than the dog leaped from the chair, ran to the door and disappeared.

For two entire days nothing was seen of him, and his master began to fear that the little fellow was lost, when, early upon the morning of the third day, Nig presented himself at the door and began to beg for his breakfast as usual.

Hoping that the dog's hunger had overcome his scruples, the fish and potato was again presented to him. He regarded it for a moment with a sorrowful air, ears and tail drooping low, then turned and quietly walked out of the door without tasting it.

This time he was gone nearly a week, and when at last he returned, his master succumbed. The obnoxious fish and potato were thrown away, and Nig fared sumptuously upon fresh beef and hot rolls.

Since that time the spaniel has eaten only such food as he prefers. Like many children he had fought the battle out and conquered.

AN ARABIAN STORY.

IN the tribe of Neggdeh there was a horse whose fame was spread far and near, and a Bedouin of another tribe, by name Daher, desired extremely to possess it. Having offered in vain for it his camels and his whole wealth, he hit at length upon the following device, by which he hoped to gain the object of his desire. He resolved to stain his face with the juice of an herb, to clothe himself in rags, to tie his legs and neck together so as to appear like a lame beggar.

Thus equipped, he went to Naber, the owner of the horse, who he knew was to pass that way. When he saw Naber approaching on his beautiful steed, he cried in a weak voice:

"I am a poor stranger; for three days I have been unable to move from this spot to seek for food. I am dying; help me, and Heaven will reward you."

The Bedouin kindly offered to take him up on his horse and carry him home; but the rogue replied:

"I cannot rise I have no strength left."

Naber touched with pity, dismounted, led his horse to the spot, and with great difficulty set the seeming beggar on its back.

But no sooner did Daher feel himself in the saddle than he set spurs to the horse and galloped off, calling out as he did so,

"It is I, Daher. I have got the horse, and am off with it." Naber called after him to stop and listen. Certain of not being pursued, he turned and halted at a short distance from Naber who was armed with a spear.

"You have taken my horse," said the latter. "Since Heaven has willed it, I wish you joy of it; but I do conjure you never to tell any one how you obtained it."

"And why not?" said Daher.

"Because," said the noble Arab, "another man might be really ill, and men would fear to help him. You would be the cause of many refusing to perform an act of charity, for fear of being duped as I have been."

Struck with shame at these words, Daher

was silent for a moment, then springing from the horse, returned it to the owner embracing him. Naber made him accompany him to his tent, where they spent a few days together, and became fast friends for life.

THE ROSE-BUSHES.

IN front of my father's house, on the bank of a gently flowing river, grew two rose-bushes. They blossomed all the season through. The flowers were very beautiful, but they were all of the same form and the same colour. The pure, pale pink, ever repeating itself from week to week, and from year to year, became wearisome. We longed for a change; not that we disliked the flowers—for nothing could be more lovely, either in the bud or bloom—but we wanted something new.

I learned the art of budding. Having obtained from a neighbour some slips of the finest kind, I succeeded in inoculating them upon our own bushes. The success was great. Five or six varieties might be seen flowering all at one time on a single plant. The process was not much known at that time in the district. Our roses became celebrated, and neighbours came to see and admire them. They were counted a treasure in the family.

When their fame had reached its height a frost occurred, more severe than usual, and both the bushes died. They were natives of a warmer clime, and too tender for our severer seasons. Had the buds been inserted into a hardier stock, our beautiful roses would have survived the winter, and would have been lovely and blooming still. It was a great mistake to risk all our fine flowers on a root that the first severe frost would destroy.

This happened long ago, when I was a boy. I did not then understand the meaning of the parable. I think I know it better now.

LENDING A PAIR OF LEGS.

SOME boys were playing at ball in a pretty, shaded street. Among their number was a lame little fellow, seemingly about twelve years old—a pale sickly-looking child, supported on two crutches, and who evidently found much difficulty in walking, even with such assistance.

The lame boy wished to join the game; for he did not seem to see how much his infirmity would be in his own way, and how much it would hinder the progress of such an active sport as base ball. His companions, good-naturedly enough, tried to persuade him to stand on one side and let another take his place; none of them hinted that he would be in the way; but they all objected for fear he would hurt himself.

"Why, Jimmy," said one at last, "you can't run, you know."

"O, hush!" said another—the tallest boy in the party—"Never mind, I'll run for him, and you count it for him," and he took his place by Jimmy's side prepared to act. "If you were like him," he said, aside to the other boys, "you wouldn't like to be told of it all the time."

How many times loving hearts will find a way to lend their powers and members to the aged, the poor, the sick, and the weak.