

in this hot weather swim about in that pure and cool water where the fish is, *what a pity I cannot do as I please!*" So there was a very wise and good spirit present, and he wished to teach them how ignorant and foolish they were; and so he said to the bird, "Believe me, my dear little bird, it would not make you happy to have your own will in this. Do God's will, and stay where He has put you, and sing your song, and be happy, just as He wishes you to be." "But I wish," said the bird, "to have my own way, and to go to the water. I don't believe what you tell me." Then the good spirit said to the little gold-fish, "Believe me, my dear little fish, you will not be happy if you had your own will in this, and if you were in the cage. Do God's will, and stay where He has put you, and swim about in the pure water as He wishes you." "But I wish," said the fish, "to be in the cage, and I don't believe what you tell me." So the good spirit sighed, and he said, "Oh, I wish you believed me, and did God's will and not your own, but, if not, I will give you your own way, and you will learn, perhaps by sorrow and pain, who is right, and who loves you best." So he put the fish into the cage, and the bird into the water! Oh, what misery there was! The bird was almost drowned, and the fish was almost choked, till they both cried in despair to the good spirit to help them, and promised they would always believe what he said, and never judge for themselves how to be happy, and never after this think they were sure to be happy by having their own way, or by doing their own will.

Now, my dear children, you are just as foolish as the little bird or the little fish if you think you are sure to be happy by *just getting your own way and doing your own will*, without ever thinking whether your way was right, and your will wise and good.

I have not yet told you where the right road is, but only of a wrong road to happiness, which is very broad and full of people. In the meantime say to God,—

"My Father, I thank Thee for creating me to be happy; I bless Thee for all the mercies Thou hast already given me in this world,—for my health, my food and raiment, my friends and relations, and all I enjoy every day. But, oh! my Father, teach me how to be happy for ever and ever. Leave me not in ignorance, lest I should be so foolish as to seek happiness in my own way and not in Thy way, and by doing my own will but not Thine. Hear me for Christ's sake. Amen."—*Edinburgh Christian Magazine for January.*