

## OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

### DISCOVERIES IN THE MOON.

There was an old woman  
Who lived in the moon;  
She made a rice pudding,  
But cut it too soon.  
When she found 'twasn't done,  
She gave it a throw;  
It came to our planet,  
And we called it *snow*.

When her little boy saw  
What his mother had done,  
He scowled and made faces  
That crowded the sun.  
He lost his dear pudding,  
And to wish is in vain;  
His tears fell in torrents,  
And we called them *rain*.

The man in the moon, who  
Had been off to town,  
Heard his little boy crying  
Which caused him to frown.  
He gave him nice sweetmeats,  
And told him to dine;  
Oh, then there was smiling!  
We called it *moonshine*.

*Wide-Awake.*

### TIT FOR TAT.

IN a certain house, in a certain street, in a certain city (the name of which, this being a true story, may not be mentioned) dwelt a cat and a dog who were not friendly. Tit was the cat and Tat was the dog. One was a fine, pure Maltese; and the other was a slick black-and-tan. Very good looking they both were.

In the first place all went well in their behaviour. That is, they bore each other's infirmities with well-bred forbearance. They slept in the same outhouse in peace, and ate off the same dish with no greater fuss than the close, firm laying back of the ears, which might have meant fear, or nervousness, or aversion. At any rate it was not perfect comfortableness.

And yet they were very well acquainted, were always together, and couldn't keep away from each other. Tit couldn't paw a mouse without the attention of Tat; nor could Tat worry any cat in a tree without Tit was in the window to observe it.

In a word, they seemed necessary to each other; and, as I said, all went well for a time. That is, until Tit came into possession of a kitten, and Tat was mother of a wee dog; which, by a strange coincidence, came to pass.

Then all was changed. There was Tit for Tat all the time there was not Tat for Tit. If Tat walked past, ever so demurely, the particular basket where kitten Tit lived mother Tit would fly at mother Tat in the most fearless and frantic manner; and slap the other, both sides of the head, with the velvet paw-pads that had claws in them.

On the other hand, if Tit happened to stroll the way of Tat's kennel, Tat showed her pretty white teeth, and growled terrible threats, and slowly and awfully made for that cat.

It was always in this wise: if Tit could only back herself out of danger she was quite safe; for then she made her two eyes flash and burn like two coals, and made the hair stand up all over her body, and her tail grew bigger than two tails; and she would hiss, and spit and sputter, and make herself something much to be feared, so that Tat was sure to beat a hasty retreat.

If there was any choice Tat was the more peaceable of the two; but both were bad

enough, and either would take advantage of the other if possible.

The only way that Tat could possibly get the better of Tit was to take her unawares when her back was turned. If Tat came upon her in such a case Tit was utterly defenseless, demoralized and panic-stricken.

One fine day it fell out that Tit had left her baby kit asleep, and was leisurely walking in the hall toward the stairway, lost in reverie and unprepared for danger.

Tat, the dog, espied her, and said, "Now is my chance," and slid slyly across the hall and sprang at the heels of Tit with a shrill yelp, which was enough to scare the wits out of any cat, be she ever so brave in facing the danger.

Tit sprang up into the air and then fled up the stairway like a flash of light. Tat flew after, barking wildly at his victory. On they sped, across another hall, up another flight, across still another hall, up still another flight, into the attic, and up through the open scuttle on to the roof, on and on—would you believe it?—under such headway neither could stop. Tit went straight off the roof, over and over she tumbled in air, down upon the walk below. And Tat went straight after her, over and over in the air, and down upon the walk below.

Tit being a cat, and having nine lives, came upon her feet all safe and sound and quiet as usual, except her tail had reached its utmost dimensions, and her ears were pinned back in the most extraordinary way upon her head, and she looked very much bewildered.

But, alas! poor Tat, being only a dog, and having only a life or two instead of ten, fell flat on her side upon the walk, perfectly senseless, the blood oozing from the nostrils, and her four legs stretched out as straight as four sticks.

She never spoke, nor groaned, nor opened an eye, nor expressed a shadow of violence or reproach. She was dead and gone and no mistake, and that was all; and it was quite enough.

So now it was the most natural thing in the world to say she was the best and most amiable and most inoffensive dog in the world, and that she never did a wrong in her life. She never was ugly or selfish; but had a sense of the humorous that wouldn't let her be quiet and that this same cat was always leading her into mischief. And if she had committed all the crimes, no coroner could have found this little black-and-tan dog other than white because of the poor little orphan dog left behind.

But sadder than Tat, the dead dog, was the sight of Tit, the living cat. She walked around her dead companion, and looked him over carefully in the most hopeless and disconsolate manner, as if saying: "If I hadn't done it." That very way, you know, that people pick up and fit together the thousand and one bits of the porcelain cup that has fallen upon the hearth, and wonder if there is a cement that will make it whole again.

She said not a word, but drooped with dejection from the end of the nose to the tip of the tail.

She shed not a tear, but walked away from the dead dog, the lamenting household, the policeman, and all the small boys assembled, and entered the house.

She went straightway to the kennel, and

took the small baby dog by the nape of his neck, just as if he were a kitten, and carried him off, and put him in her own basket with her own kit; and fed him then and thereafter with more than the milk of human kindness from her own breast.

And the little baby dog grew up under her care, along with the baby kitten, into a very manly dog manhood. And peace prevailed.

And the mother kit grew lovely by reason of the divine pity expressed in acts.

And this is a true story of the way there was returned "tit for tat."

### PUBLICANS.

THE publicans were the Roman tax-gatherers, of whom there were several classes. The Roman senate farmed the taxes to rich capitalists, who agreed to pay a certain sum into the public treasury, and reimburse themselves with the taxes they collected. These capitalists were called *publicani*, and often formed themselves into a joint-stock company, appointing one of their number as general manager. He usually resided at Rome, and was called *magister*.

The *publicani* were an influential section of the Roman knights, an ancient order who occupied a kind of middle rank between the senators and the people. These, however, are not mentioned in the New Testament. The "publicans" so frequently referred to—there were the *portitores*, or men who were employed by the *publicani* to collect the taxes in the provinces. They were the actual custom-house officers, and were commonly natives of the provinces where they were stationed. They were supervised by the *sub-magistri*, who made the returns to the *magister* at Rome. Zaccheus was a *sub-magister*, or "chief of the publicans" (Luke xix. 2). Levi, or Matthew, was one of the *portitores*, or tax-gatherers.

The publicans, of whatever class, were looked upon with disfavor by the masses of the people. The complimentary reference of Cicero to the *publicani*, which has sometimes been cited as an evidence of their high respectability, is thought to have been merely the flattery of an orator who sought to accomplish political purposes thereby. The *portitores*, however, were especially detested. Their duty, if honestly discharged, would have made them unpopular enough; but when, as was often the case, they went beyond their legal rights, and levied exorbitant taxes, using all the machinery of the law to help them, their unpopularity greatly increased. Many of them were Jews, and were regarded by their Jewish brethren as no better than the heathen, with whom publicans were often classed. See Matt. xviii. 17. It is said that the Jews would not associate with them, nor allow them in the temple or in the synagogue; nor would they permit them to give testimony in Jewish courts. Even the presents which they brought to the temple are said to have been rejected. They were completely excluded from their fellows.

These statements serve to illustrate the reference made to the publicans in the Gospel narratives. They were classed with sinners. See Matt. ix. 10, 11; xi. 19; Mark ii. 15, 16; Luke vii. 34; xv. 1. They were mentioned with harlots. See Matt. xxi. 31, 32. They were alluded to as occupying the lowest position in morals, the vilest of the vile: "even the publicans." Matt. v. 46, 47.