

'Then he sucked 'cross it, so there, an' sucking is bad as biting!'

The hard-pressed little enemy appealed to Aunt Marcia. 'I never did an' thing 'cept suck my half.'

'I saw his tongue!'

'Twasn't either; it was his tongue he saw!'

'Huh, 'sif I couldn't tell!'

'They look just 'zactly alike, tongues do; it was his own tongue he saw, so!'

'O, wait!' exclaimed Aunt Marcia, laughing in spite of herself. 'Come up here and sit on this step, both of you. I want to tell you something. Ready?' Well, when two countries fight—disagree, correcting herself politely, 'and can't decide whose tongue is 'cross' the enemy's line, they are obliged sometimes to settle the dispute by arbitration. Ar-bi-tra-tion; its a long word, isn't it? But it simply means choosing another country that isn't 'intimate' with either of them to say which of them is right. Now if you were two little countries—

'Play we were. I'll be 'Merica.'

'No, I want to be 'Merica!'

'America doesn't fi-quarrel,' Aunt Marcia interposed gravely. 'One of you can be—O, Russia, and the other one—er—Japan. Then we'll get—we'll get'—Aunt Marcia's eyes, seeking inspiration, lighted on the lordly old gobbler sauntering about the yard—'we'll get Turkey to arbitrate! He shall decide who shall have the candy! Do you both agree?'

As if they would not agree to a play like that! The old gobbler was coaxed up, and the case—and the gritty stick of candy—placed before him. He eyed it sagely—seemed to be weighing the claims of both hostile countries—stooped lower and lower—and gobbled it up! Turkey had arbitrated!

There was an instant's astonished silence, and then a new sound floated in to Mother's ears—a nice, friendly, jolly sound. Theodore and his best enemy were laughing at the tops of their voices!

Aunt Marcia came back, smiling. 'It was quite successful,' she said. 'It's a pretty good way to settle disputes. Everybody's satisfied—even Turkey!'

'If it would only last!' laughed Mother.

My Little Gray Kittie and I.

When the north wind whistles round the house,

Piling snowdrifts high,

We nestle down on the warm hearth-rug—

My little gray kitty and I.

I tell her about my work and play

And all I mean to do,

And she purrs so loud, I surely think

That she understands — don't you?

She looks about with her big, round eyes,

And softly licks my face,

As I tell her 'bout the word I missed,

And how I have lost my place.

Then let the wind whistle, for what to us

Matters a stormy sky?

Oh, none have such jolly times as we—

My little gray kitty and I.

—From Angel of Peace.

Little Doctor Helen.

When little Helen heard that Captain Crosby was ill, she felt sorry, very sorry indeed. She had once been ill with the measles for nearly six weeks, and she knew how hard it was.

'Does he have to stay in bed, and is he all red spots?' Helen asked.

'Oh, no, he sits in the garden, and sometimes he takes a walk,' her mother said. 'He can't sleep, that's the trouble.'

By and by Helen went out to the kitchen. 'Norah,' she said, after she had eaten a fresh, crisp ginger biscuit, 'do you know where Captain Crosby lives?'

'Yes,' said Norah. 'He lives at the corner of John-street, just about ten minutes' walk from here.'

'I know where that is,' said Helen.

She walked slowly out of the kitchen door and down the little gravel path that led to her own special garden. In the garden there were all sorts of bright flowers; but the most beautiful of all was a great scarlet poppy, with rings of black and a heart of black and gold.

Helen knelt down close to the poppy plant and smoothed its rough stalk with her little hand.

'You'll have some more flowers,'

she said, softly. 'You have ever so many buds, you know. And I must take your biggest child to Captain Crosby to make him sleep. On that pillow at grandmother's there are poppies, and it says, 'sleep well.' They are only embroidered poppies, but you are real.'

Then she broke off the great scarlet blossom with a long stem, and went to see Captain Crosby. When she reached the house there he sat in the garden, an old man, with a tired face. His eyes were shut, and for a minute Helen had a little lump in her throat.

'I have brought you my first big poppy, to put you to sleep,' said Helen, in her soft little voice. 'If you will hold it I think you will go to sleep very soon. It's from my very own garden.'

'Will you sit down close to me and tell me about the garden?' asked Captain Crosby. 'I used to have one when I was a little boy.'

'Why, of course,' said Helen. She sat down on a stool close to the old captain, and told him all about her garden, and he held the big poppy and looked right into its heart while the soft voice went on and on. By and by the poppy slipped from Captain Crosby's hand, and Helen saw that he was sound asleep.

She sat still, thinking about the garden and the bees and butterflies, and before long her eyes were tight shut. When she opened them again, Captain Crosby's watch was in his hand.

'I must have slept over an hour,' he said. 'You and the poppy are a pair of wonderful doctors. I believe I shall sleep to-night and dream of my old garden.' And he did.

Many of you would like to be able to do what little doctor Helen did, wouldn't you? God bless the little doctors who unconsciously do us more good than all the medicine in the world!—'Christian Age.'

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