

down here on the pretence of coaching you, and seeing how the boat was getting on. The three hundred pounds, too, will be most useful for preliminary expenses. But we must be off. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, dear Bob," said Nelly, holding out her hand.

I made a violent effort to put a good face on the matter; and after having been so egregiously duped all along, I had to put the final touch by helping them into the boat and shoving them off, and in doing this I nearly fell into the water, and had to grasp a handful of twigs to recover my balance.

The boat vanished into the night, and when I turned from the spot with a heavy heart, I found a bough of willow in my hand.

"Pshaw!" cried I, throwing it away.

There was a terrible disturbance when the elopement was known, but the Martins forgave the couple in a few weeks, and when all turned out well, and Carroll's position at the bar became more and more established, my uncle was even jocular on the subject.

"Ah!" said he, at a certain christening dinner, "those barristers are such imposing fellows; give them an inch and they will take a Nell!"

It is all very well for him to joke; but I shall marry for money.

THE MINNOWS WITH SILVER TAILS.

(From Stories for Children.)

THERE was a cuckoo-clock hanging in Tom Turner's cottage. When it struck One, Tom's wife laid the baby in the cradle, and took a saucepan off the fire, from which came a very savoury smell.

Her two little children, who had been playing in the open doorway, ran to the table, and began softly to drum upon it with their pewter spoons, looking eagerly at their mother as she turned a nice little piece of pork into a dish, and set greens and potatoes round it. They fetched the salt; then they set a chair for their father; brought their own stools; and pulled their mother's rocking-chair close to the table.

"Run to the door, Billy," said the mother, "and see if father's coming." Billy ran to the door; and, after the fashion of little children, looked first the right way, and then the wrong way, but no father was to be seen.

Presently the mother followed him, and shaded her eyes with her hand, for the sun was hot. "If father doesn't come soon," she observed, "the apple-dumpling will be too much done, by a deal."

"There he is!" cried the little boy, "he is coming round by the wood; and now he's going over the bridge. O father! make haste, and have some apple-dumpling."

"Tom," said his wife, as he came near, "art tired to-day?"

"Uncommon tired," said Tom, and he threw himself on the bench, in the shadow of the thatch.

"Has anything gone wrong?" asked his wife; "what's the matter?"

"Matter?" repeated Tom, "is anything the matter? The matter is this, mother, that I'm a miserable hard-worked slave;" and he clapped his hands upon his knees, and muttered in a deep voice, which frightened the children—"a miserable slave!"

"Bless us!" said the wife, and could not make out what he meant.

"A miserable, ill-used slave," continued Tom, "and always have been."

"Always have been?" said his wife, "why, father, I thought thou used to say, at the election time, that thou wast a freeborn Briton?"

"Women have no business with politics," said Tom, getting up rather sulkily. And whether it was the force of habit, or the smell of the dinner, that make him do it, has not been ascertained, but it is certain that he walked into the house, ate plenty of pork and greens, and then took a tolerable share in demolishing the apple-dumpling.

When the little children were gone out to

play, his wife said to him, "Tom, I hope thou and master haven't had words to-day?"

"Master," said Tom, "yes, a pretty master he has been; and a pretty slave I've been. Don't talk to me of masters."

"O Tom, Tom," cried his wife, "but he's been a good master to you; fourteen shillings a week, regular wages,—that's not a thing to make a suer at; and think how warm the children are lapped up o' winter nights, and you with as good shoes to your feet as ever keep him out of the mud."

"What of that? said Tom, "isn't my labour worth the money? I'm not beholden to my employer. He gets as good from me as he gives."

"Very like, Tom. There's not a man for miles round that can match you at a graft; and as to early peas—but if master can't do without you, I'm sure you can't do without him. Oh, dear, to think that you and he should have had words!"

"We've had no words," said Tom impatiently; "but I'm sick of being at another man's beck and call. It's Tom do this, and Tom do that, and nothing but work, work, work, from Monday morning till Saturday night; and I was thinking, as I walked over to Squire Morton's to ask for the turnip seed for master—I was thinking, Sally, that I am nothing but a poor working man after all. In short, I'm a slave, and my spirit won't stand it."

So saying, Tom flung himself out at the cottage door, and his wife thought he was going back to his work as usual. But she was mistaken; he walked to the wood, and there, when he came to the border of a little tinkling stream, he sat down, and began to brood over his grievances. It was a very hot day.

"Now, I'll tell you what," said Tom to himself, "it's a great deal pleasanter sitting here in the shade than broiling over celery trenches; and then thinning of wall fruit, with a baking sun at one's back, and a hot wall before one's eyes. But I'm a miserable slave. I must either work or see 'em starve; a very hard lot it is to be a working man. But it's not only the work that I complain of, but being obliged to do just as he pleases. It's enough to spoil any man's temper to be told to dig up those asparagus beds just when they were getting to be the very pride of the parish. And what for? Why, to make room for Madam's new gravel walk, that she mayn't wet her feet going over the grass. Now, I ask you," continued Tom, still talking to himself, "whether that isn't enough to spoil any man's temper?"

"Ahem!" said a voice close to him.

Tom started, and to his great surprise, saw a small man, about the size of his own baby, sitting composedly at his elbow. He was dressed in green—green hat, green coat, and green shoes. He had very bright black eyes, and they twinkled very much as he looked at Tom and smiled.

"Servant, sir!" said Tom, edging himself a little further off.

"Miserable slave," said the small man, "art thou so far lost to the noble sense of freedom that thy very salutation acknowledges a mere stranger as thy master?"

"Who are you," said Tom, "and how dare you call me a slave?"

"Tom," said the small man, with a knowing look, "don't speak roughly. Keep your rough words for your wife, my man; she is bound to bear them—what else is she for, in fact?"

"I'll thank you to let my affairs alone," interrupted Tom, shortly.

"Tom, I'm your friend; I think I can help you out of your difficulty. I admire your spirit. Would I demean myself to work for a master, and attend to all his whims?" As he said this, the small man stooped and looked very earnestly into the stream. Drip, drip, drip, went the water over a little fall in the stones, and wetted the watercresses till they shone in the light, while the leaves fluttered overhead and chequered the moss with glittering spots of sunshine. Tom watched the small man with earnest attention as he turned over the leaves of the cresses. At last he saw him snatch something, which looked like a little fish, out of the water, and put it in his pocket.

"It's my belief, Tom," he said, resuming the

conversation, "that you have been puzzling your head with what people call Political Economy."

"Never heard of such a thing," said Tom. "But I've been thinking that I don't see why I'm to work any more than those that employ me."

"Why you see, Tom, you must have money. Now it seems to me that there are but four ways of getting money: there's Stealing"—

"Which won't suit me," interrupted Tom.

"Very good. Then there's Borrowing"—

"Which I don't want to do."

"And there's Begging"—

"No, thank you," said Tom, stoutly.

"And there's giving money's worth for the money; that is to say, Work, Labour."

"Your words are as fine as a sermon," said Tom.

"But look here, Tom," proceeded the man in green, drawing his hand out of his pocket, and showing a little dripping fish in his palm, "what do you call this?"

"I call it a very small minnow," said Tom.

"And do you see anything particular about its tail?"

"It looks uncommon bright," answered Tom, stooping to look at it.

"It does," said the man in green, "and now I'll tell you a secret, for I'm resolved to be your friend. Every minnow in this stream—they are very scarce, mind you—but every one of them has a silver tail."

"You don't say so," exclaimed Tom, opening his eyes very wide; "fishing for minnows, and being one's own master, would be a great deal pleasanter than the sort of life I've been leading this many a day."

"Well, keep the secret as to where you get them; and much good may it do you," said the man in green. "Farewell, I wish you joy of your freedom." So saying he walked away, leaving Tom on the brink of the stream, full of joy and pride.

He went to his master, and told him that he had an opportunity for bettering himself, and should not work for him any longer. The next day he rose with the dawn, and went to work to search for minnows. But of all the minnows in the world, never were any so nimble as those with silver tails. They were very shy too, and had as many turns and doubles as a hare; what a life they led him! They made him troll up the stream for miles; then, just as he thought his chase was at an end, and he was sure of them, they would leap quite out of the water, and dart down the stream again like little silver arrows. Miles and miles he went, tired, and wet, and hungry. He came home late in the evening, completely wearied and footsore, with only three minnows in his pocket, each with a silver tail.

"But at any rate," he said to himself, as he lay down in his bed, "though they lead me a pretty life, and I have to work harder than ever, yet I certainly am free; no man can order me about now."

This went on for a whole week; he worked very hard; but on Saturday afternoon he had only caught fourteen minnows.

"If it wasn't for the pride of the thing," he said to himself, "I'd have no more to do with fishing for minnows. This is the hardest work I ever did. I am quite a slave to them. I rush up and down, I dodge in and out, I splash myself, and fret myself, and broil myself in the sun, and all for the sake of a dumb thing, that gets the better of me with a wag of its fins. But it's no use standing here talking; I must set off to the town and sell them, or Sally will wonder why I don't bring her the week's money." So he walked to the town, and offered his fish for sale as great curiosities.

"Very pretty," said the first people he showed them to; but "they never bought anything that was not useful."

"Were they good to eat?" asked the woman at the next house. "No! Then they would not have them."

"Much too dear," said a third.

"And not so very curious," said a fourth; but they hoped he had come by them honestly.

At the fifth house they said, "O! pooh!" when he exhibited them. "no, no, they were not