



#### WHO SAID, "RATS?"

Our little Scotch terrier is death on rats. He ferrets them out and makes short work of them. Hence he is very useful about the barn, where the rats do much harm. If any one ever speaks the word rats, he will cock up his ears and look very wide awake, as if he understood all that was said, and as if asking, Who said "rats?"

#### NEW PLAYMATES.

"How do you feel, Nora?"

"Most unamiable. As you look, Frank."

"I'm as savage as a bear—and no wonder."

This brother and sister were returning home after spending several years on the Continent, where they had been sent to complete their education. During their prolonged absence, their father had married again, and they naturally felt that with a new mother and her little boy, their home would indeed be home with a difference. Their own mother had died when they were very young.

"I shall be perfectly polite to mamma, of course, Frank; but I do not expect to like her."

"Why not? It is the small boy that I do not fancy. If we had all grown up together it would have been better."

Nora laughed. She did not think Frank looked so manly as he evidently felt.

Meanwhile, their father waited their return with some anxiety. After years of solitude, his shadowed life had again been blessed with "fireside happiness" and domestic prosperity. He knew that the peace of his home was now at the mercy of his elder children, who could either add to it, or destroy it, for a time, at least.

On their arrival, he welcomed them with affection and pride; and before introducing them to their new mother, confided to them

something of what had been passing through his mind. He begged them to forbear from anything in thought or speech that could destroy the priceless crystal of family unity and assured them of their warm welcome home.

This direct appeal, so tenderly made, was successful. Before they had been in the house an hour, little Percy had distinguished them by his approval, and led them out into the garden to play with him. Frank tossed the little rogue into the air, and then gave him rides in the gardener's barrow, while Nora entered into the fun with spirit.

Percy's mother, hearing the shouts and laughter, went to the window, and, seeing the merry group, turned to her husband with tears of thankfulness, and said,

"After that," pointing to the child between his elder brother and sister, "I have not a fear. Our home will now be complete. I thank God for his kindness in opening their hearts to my child."

"And to *you*," whispered Nora, softly, who had entered unobserved by a French window. "Frank and I both feel quite sure we shall love you very dearly."

And indeed they did, for who could help it?

#### THE BIG BROTHER.

THERE are many things which nobody can do half as well as the big brother. For one thing, he can keep the peace. If there is a dispute between two of the little ones, or a general row in the nursery, the big brother has only to say the word and the belligerents will cease their strife. "Belligerent" is a long word, but the boys who are reading *Cæsar* may tell the others that it is made up of two Latin words, one of which means "war," and the other "waging or carrying it on;" so that when two children are quarrelling, and saying cross words which may presently cause blows, they are properly called "belligerents." Mother is a happy woman if she can trust her big boy to be her right-hand man, to settle all that goes wrong, and to set a good example.

Nobody equals a big brother in taking the children's part when they are attacked, whether it is by a savage dog, an occasional cow in the meadow, or the bad boys from the next street. How safe they feel when brother Tom advances boldly to the rescue, and how proud they are of him! With reason, too; for is he not strong and brave, and quick to act, knowing just what to do and just how to do it? I never yet heard of a cowardly big brother. Did you?—*Harper's Young People.*

#### THE FLOWERS.

God might have made the earth bring forth  
Enough for one and all,  
The oak tree and the cedar tree,  
And not a flower at all.

He surely might have made enough  
For every want of ours,  
For all that we could think or wish,  
And yet have made no flowers.

But glad we are that he has made  
The flowers to bloom so fair;  
Their beauty brightens all the earth,  
Their fragrance fills the air.

#### JESUS OUR KING.

JESUS is our great King. He should rule over all the earth, and over all our hearts. There are many people who do not love Jesus. Among them are some rulers and kings of the earth. When Jesus was on the earth, they put him to death. But on the third day Jesus came forth again alive from the grave, and now lives at the right hand of God in heaven. And God says that he has set Jesus as King upon the holy hill of Zion, and that he will give him all the nations of the earth to rule over. All the heathen shall come to him and obey him, and Jesus shall rule over them.

When Jesus was in the world he chose twelve men called apostles. And he said to them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Jesus still says the same words to his people. He wants them to take the gospel to everybody in all the world. If we love Jesus truly, we will try to do his commandments. Some must go and preach the gospel to the heathen. And those who cannot go, must give of their money to help the others to go. In this way, we can all help to take the gospel to the heathen. And so we shall help to bring the day when Jesus shall reign as King over all the earth.

#### A LITTLE SERMON.

"OWE no man anything." That is the text, boys and girls. Do you know where I found it? "In the Bible!" Right, my dears. And do you know what it means? Well, Johnny, speak up. "Don't get in debt!" That's it, my little man. It is a very bad plan to get in the habit of borrowing. It sometimes leads us into a great deal of trouble. If you borrow a top-string or a marble from Willie, be careful to pay him back promptly. If Mary lends you a book, be careful to return it as soon as you have finished it, and in good order. These are little debts, children, but your honour is just as much at stake as if they were greater. So remember to "owe no man anything."