

A CHILD'S
GARDEN
OF
STORIES

MAUDE E. PATERSON

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THE FAIRY HELPERS

*A Child's
Garden
of Stories*

By

Maude Elizabeth Paterson

*Illustrated by
Estelle M. Kerr*

*Toronto
Morang Educational
Company Limited
1911*



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To

THE MEMORY OF

MR. AND MRS. JOHN F. LASH

GREAT LOVERS OF CHILDREN AND STORIES

THIS LITTLE BOOK

IS

DEDICATED



PREFACE

THE stories given in the following pages are those I have found to be best liked by the children to whom I have told these and others. I have tried to reproduce them as simply as possible in the form in which I actually tell them.

If we would obtain the magic that a true storyteller must have, we must become ourselves little children once more, with simple hearts full of love, seeing the beauty of the world around us and of the world of the imagination, entering into their lives in every way. Let us be comrades, and they will be willing listeners eager to go with us into fairyland, or any of those mysterious countries; for we are going hand in hand, seeing everything together. In telling the Nature Stories, let us unconsciously let the beautiful truths unfold themselves until Mother Nature's Fairyland is opened to the children. The Fairy Tales and Mythical Stories are to enliven their imagination, so that they may find pleasure in the lands of those invisible little people.

There are also stories full of fun and merriment, just to make them laugh and enjoy themselves — to increase, perhaps, their sense of humour; also stories that will give the children ideals in life, those that will bring to them facts and truths that otherwise might remain unknown to them for years, perhaps forever.

This little book is offered with the earnest desire that it may be genuinely useful to those who have much to do with little children.

Grateful acknowledgment is due to Miss Estelle Kerr for the use of "The Reading Lesson," "The Christmas Stocking," "Three Little Dutch Girls," and "Never-hurry Heinje"; to Miss Marjorie L. C. Pickthall for the use of "Christmas Morning"; to Miss Doris L. Huestis for the use of "What the Moon told Tiny Star"; to Mrs. Alice C. D. Riley for the use of "Daffydowndilly"; to Mr. Ernest Nister for the use of "A Long Way Round"; to Miss Anna G. Lash for the use of "The Brown Squirrels"; and to Miss Lillian B. Harding for the use of "The Fairy's Valentine" and "The Story of Hiawatha." Other stories have been picked up from various sources, and to the unknown authors of these, similar grateful acknowledgment is made.

MAUDE ELIZABETH PATERSON.

TORONTO, December 10, 1911.



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A GARDEN OF STORIES

THE FAIRY HELPERS

ONE bright, moonlight night in the summer time the Fairy Queen and her train of fairies, stepping lightly over the soft grass, came to a clearing in the woods with a carpet of green, velvet moss. Placing their queen in the centre of the ring, the fairies danced around and around her, laughing with glee.

By and by the Fairy Queen seated herself in a green throne, which we would call a "jack-in-the-pulpit" flower, and all the little fairies sat down near her, either in the flower cups or on the soft, green moss.

"Tell me, my pretty fairies," said the Queen, "are you all good helpers in this great world?"

"Oh, Fairy Queen," answered Poppy, the little red fairy, "I found a dear, little Robin Redbreast had fallen out of the nest in the tree above. The mother bird could not get him back again, so I took him up gently, flew up to the nest, and placed him with his brothers and sisters."

"That is a good fairy," said the Queen, smiling at Poppy.

"I saw a large bumblebee floating on a leaf down the stream," said Sunny, the little yellow fairy, "so I waded into the water and brought him safely to the bank."

"That is well," said the Fairy Queen. "Now, Bluebell, it is your turn."

"Some forget-me-nots were lying by the roadside," said Bluebell, the blue fairy. "They were fading away, so I carried them to the stream and planted them again."

"Well done," said the Fairy Queen.

"Oh, Fairy Queen," said Ferny, the little green fairy, "I found a large, green caterpillar lying on the walk. Some one had hurt him, so I helped him over to some moss out of harm's way."

"Very good, Ferny," said the Fairy Queen.

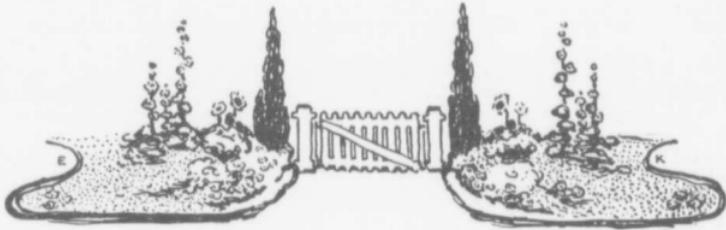
"A beautiful, orange butterfly was flying all around the garden," said Marigold, the little orange fairy. "He was very much afraid of the thunderstorm coming, and was looking for shelter, so I flew with him to one of our caves, and stayed with him until the storm was over."

"You are a good little friend," said the Fairy Queen. "And now, Violet, what have you to tell us?"

"Oh, Queen," said Violet, the dear little violet fairy, "I found some pansies with their lovely,

purple, velvet dresses all covered with dust, so I picked up a feather and gently brushed all the dust off and gave them a sprinkle of water from the stream."

"That is just like my thoughtful little Violet," said the Fairy Queen. "And now, my dear little helpers, there is a feast prepared for all the fairies to-night. The bees have sent honey, the butterflies honey-dew, and the flowers nectar. So let us away to the flower garden!"



NING-TING

AWAY over in an eastern country called China lives such a funny little boy named Ning-Ting. He is a Chinese boy and does not wear his hair all cropped short, as you do, but it is shaved off his head —all but a little piece at the back, and that is plaited into a little “jersey” or coat, like the boys here, he puts on over his baggy little trousers what you would call a blue shirt, and on his feet are such queer, tiny shoes, turned up at the toes.



Ning-Ting was sitting at the table eating his supper of rice, not with a spoon, but with two little sticks made of bone, called “chop-sticks.” He was very sleepy, and every now and then his head nodded forward and his mother called, “Ning-Ting, Ning-Ting, wake up and eat your supper.” “I

am not asleep, mother," answered Ning-Ting, "I was only thinking." Now I shall tell you what Ning-Ting was thinking about.

Next door to Ning-Ting lived his uncle Pon-ge-wan-ge, and his little boy, Ning-Ting's cousin, "Foo-Choo." Uncle Pon-ge-wan-ge was the owner of a little shop. He had all kinds of pretty fans and jars for sale. When Foo-Choo's birthday came, he gave him a very large kite made of coloured paper and with a long, long tail. Ning-Ting and Foo-Choo had such fun with it on windy days; away up in the clouds it would fly, and on very windy days both boys had to hold on to the stick.

But Ning-Ting kept thinking how very nice it would be if he could only have the kite all to himself; and one windy day when Uncle Pon-ge-wan-ge and Foo-Choo were away on a visit, Ning-Ting climbed over the fence into Foo-Choo's yard. Going on tiptoe across the yard, he went inside the shed and up the ladder to the hay-loft, where he knew the kite was kept. Just as he was tiptoeing across the floor, he heard a *thump, thump*. Ning-Ting jumped and looked around with eyes of terror; it was only the cat—but you know a little *voice* inside of Ning-Ting kept telling him he was doing something wrong.

But although he was frightened, Ning-Ting did

not listen to the little *voice*, and taking up the kite, he carried it carefully down the ladder, across the yard, and over the fence into his own yard. Then holding tightly on to the stick, he let the kite go, and away it went, swinging gracefully with its long tail — higher and higher and higher, until all the string was untwined from the stick, and then Ning-Ting could feel the kite pulling him off his feet. He thought this good fun, and as the kite pulled him, he went up and down on his heels and toes. "I do believe, if I let myself go, the kite would lift me up on top of the shed," he said to himself; and, yes, it was true, as soon as he stopped pulling, the kite lifted him right up on top of the shed.

Just then Ning-Ting heard voices, and looking down into the next yard, he saw Uncle Pon-ge-wan-ge and Foo-Choo. He was so frightened that he let the kite pull him away to the top of the poplar tree, and Uncle Pon-ge-wan-ge and Foo-Choo, looking up, wondered what kind of a queer bird was on top of the tree. Ning-Ting saw them looking, and, grasping the stick tightly, when the next gust of wind came, allowed the kite to pull him away — up-up-up — to the clouds.

Poor Ning-Ting dared not look down. And as it was just about sunset, it began to grow dark, and he could feel something crawling up his back like a

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snake. It was only his pig-tail, after all, and just then a large, round, yellow face loomed up — the Man in the Moon. "Halloo, how did you get here?" he cried to Ning-Ting. "The kite brought me," said Ning-Ting. "Oh, did it?" said the Man in the Moon; "and pray whose kite is it — yours?" "No-oo-oo," said poor Ning-Ting, and then he began to cry, "Boo-hoo, boo-hoo, boo-hoo, I want to go home! I want to go home!" "Oh, do you?" said the Man in the Moon, and taking out a large knife, he cut the string of the kite, and with a *thump* and a *bang* down came Ning-Ting to earth again.

Just then he heard some one calling, "Ning-Ting, Ning-Ting, wake up, wake up — you have fallen out of your chair;" and Ning-Ting found himself on the floor, with his mother bending over him. "The Man in the Moon, he cut the string; the Man in the Moon, he cut the string," he mumbled. "Oh, Ning-Ting, you have been dreaming," said his mother. "Come, and I shall help you to bed;" and I think Ning-Ting was glad it was all a dream — don't you?

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

IN a country over the sea lived a shepherd who was very fond of his lambs and sheep. He never had to drive them, for they loved him so much they would all follow him anywhere over the mountains and fields. In his hand the shepherd carried a crook, with which he used to drive away anything that might hurt his sheep; he also pulled down with it the fresh, green leaves that were too high for the lambs and sheep.

Rover, the shepherd's big collie dog, was ever a true friend to his master and the sheep. If one strayed away, Rover always ran after it and barked until it found the others, so he helped his master to keep the sheep together. Sometimes, when a little lamb got tired and could not keep up with the others, the good shepherd would carry it home in his arms. Every night he drove the sheep into the fold and counted them all, to see that none were missing.

One night the shepherd counted all the sheep and lambs, but a foolish little lamb ran out before the door was shut. The little lamb ran behind the fold and hid until the shepherd had gone home. He

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thought he would like to go over the hills in the moonlight, and that he was able to take care of himself; so away he skipped and jumped over the field. But by and by some dark clouds came and covered up the moonlight, and the little lamb lost his way. He could not see where he was going and the rocks and stones hurt his feet. He still went on trying to find his way, crying, "Baa-aa, baa-aa!" until at last his wool was caught fast in a thorn bush. "Baa-aa, baa-aa!" cried the poor little lamb, calling for the shepherd, but a wolf heard the call instead, and began to run over to the thorn bush where the little lamb was caught.

Every evening before going to sleep Rover would go out to see if all was safe. The evening the little lamb ran away, Rover came out, and snuffing around the fold, soon found that one was missing. So he ran back to the house of the good shepherd and pulled his coat with his teeth until the shepherd cried, "What is wrong, good doggie, — one of the sheep lost?"

Rover, barking and wagging his tail, with his nose to the ground, ran out quickly, and the shepherd followed him. They soon heard the bleat of the little lamb, and also the howl of the wolf. When the wolf heard the dog barking and saw the shepherd coming, he ran away, and the little lamb was safe.

The shepherd carefully picked out the thorns from the poor little lamb's woolly back, and when he saw the poor hurt feet, he took the little lamb up in his arms and carried it all the way home, while Rover frisked about joyously, wagging his tail.

The shepherd was thankful that he had found the little lamb before any one had harmed him; and how glad the foolish little lamb was to cuddle down beside his mother. I do not think he ever wanted to run away again. And the mother sheep would never close her eyes unless she felt her dear little lamb safely by her side.



THE LEAVES

"Come, little leaves," said the Wind, one day;
"Come o'er the meadow with me and play.
Put on your dresses of red and gold,
For summer has gone and the days grow cold."

As soon as the leaves heard the Wind's loud call,
Down they came fluttering, one and all.
O'er the brown fields they danced and flew,
Singing the soft little songs they knew.

— GEORGE COOPER.



THE LITTLE LEAF PEOPLE

HAVE you ever heard about the funny little leaf people? Thousands of these little leaf people live together, not inside their houses as we do, but on their houses. They stay on their houses all summer long. In the autumn time they change their light, green summer dresses for dark red and yellow ones; for these little leaves have only two new dresses in a year, and when washing day comes, they do not take them off as we do, but keep them on, and they are washed by the raindrops and dried by the sunbeams. All through the year they play together and talk to one another in whispers. If you go into the woods for a walk, you will see rows upon rows of these houses filled with these little people, and if the north wind happens to be out on the same day, you will hear, away up above your head, a clapping of hands, as he whistles to them to come out and play.

You can also hear the family in one house talking to the family next door, and it seems as if there was nothing but whispering all around you.

The little leaf people not only play and have a good time among themselves, but they also help to make others happy. The little birdies build their

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nests in their houses, and they shelter the birdies and keep them warm; and if the mother bird is away and danger is near, they all stoop down and hide the nest so that the sharpest of eyes cannot find it. Such a merry time these little leaf people have with the birds, butterflies, sunbeams, and raindrops. Sometimes they have a concert. The birds sing, the north wind whistles, and when they have finished, the little leaf people all clap their hands.

One day the little leaves began to sigh and cry, and the twig said, "What is the matter, little leaves?"

"The wind," said the little leaves, "has just told us that very soon we shall all be thrown to the ground to die."

The twig told it to the branches, and the branches told it to the tree, and the tree rustled all over and sent word back to the leaves, "Do not be afraid, little leaves, but hold on tightly until summer is over."

And so the little leaf people stopped sighing and rustling, and were happy all summer, and, when the days of autumn came, looked very beautiful with their red and yellow dresses. By and by Mother Nature called to them, and they felt like going to sleep, and one day when a puff of wind came, the little leaf people felt themselves falling gently towards the ground, and

"Were soon fast asleep in their earthy beds,
While the snow laid a coverlid over their heads."

THE BROWN SQUIRRELS



IN a tall, spreading fir-tree, high up from the ground,
A group of brown squirrels their dwelling had found ;
And there, safely sheltered, in stormiest weather,
Father, mother, and children lived snugly together.

One day, Mr. Squirrel had something to do,
And his wife, Mrs. Squirrel, said she would go, too ;
So Creep, Peep, and Bunny and Bushy and Gray
Were all left at home in their fir-tree to stay.

" My dears," said their father, " I hope you'll be good,
While your mother and I make a trip thro' the wood ;
Be kind to each other, and loving and sweet,
And have bright, smiling faces your parents to greet."

" Good-bye, dear Papa and Mamma," they all said,
" We will quietly keep in our snug little bed ;
But how glad we shall be when we see you come back,
And perhaps you will bring us some nice nuts to crack."



Then bidding their children a loving good-bye,
Straight down from the fir-tree, so tall and so high,
Scrambled father and mother with brisk little feet,
Bright eyes, bushy tails, and in brown suit complete.

Then on thro' the grass, and the heather, and fern,
They trotted away, but oft longed to return,
To see how all fared in their dear fir-tree nest —
And whether their darlings were safe and at rest.

“And so we are left all alone,” whispered Creep,
As he snuggled up close to his twin brother Peep;
“Now, Bunny and Bushy and dear little Gray,
Let's do nothing to vex our dear parents to-day.”

But, sad to relate, Master Bunny forgot,
Or would do the things his brothers said not;
He hustled and bustled, and pushed them about,
And put all their quiet and peace to the rout.

To Bushy, he gave such a whisk with his tail,
As made him half stagger, and really turn pale;
While dear little Gray in a meek, gentle tone
Begged with tears in her eyes that he'd let her alone.

In vain Creep and Peep tried to make him keep
quiet,
For Bunny seemed bent upon making a riot;

And so very noisy and rude he became,
That the rest, one and all, cried out, "Bunny, for
shame!"

And, "Bunny, for shame!" said another voice, too,
Which made Bunny start, when Papa came in view;
And his poor mother looked oh! so sad and dis-
tressed,
To find things had gone wrong in their dear fir-tree
nest!

"Come away," said his father, "you cannot stay here,
Come away, from your brothers and sisters so dear;
You must go by yourself, and be left all alone,
Till you truly are sorry for what you have done."

Then the rest all begged hard that Bunny might stay,—
"Papa, dear Papa, don't take Bunny away."
Bunny said not a word, for he very well knew,
That what Papa said, he would certainly do.

And then thro' the fern and the heather and grass,
In sadness and silence right onward they pass,
Till they came to the skirts of a dark, gloomy wood;
Oh! how Bunny wished that he'd only been good.

At last to another tall fir-tree they came,
Which looked like their own, but it was not the
same;

And up its high stem little Bunny must go,
Tho' it made him quite giddy to look down below.

In a hole in the trunk little Bunny must stay.
Oh! how his heart sank, when Papa went away;
And night soon came on, so dark and so drear,
And Bunny's teeth chattered with cold and with
fear.

"Oh! I wish I were back in our own fir-tree nest,
The snuggest, the softest, the warmest, the best;"
So said Bunny, with many a shudder and sigh,
While the wind whistled loud thro' the fir-tree so
high.

But hark! what's that noise? "Something's coming
this way!

Oh! Creep, Peep, and Bushy, and dear little Gray,
Shall I never again your dear faces behold,
And must I die here of fright and of cold?"

But, what was the noise that had frightened him so?
Ah! Joy for poor suffering Bunny to know
That Papa had come back for his penitent child,
And he would not be left in the forest so wild.

And then, thro' the grass and the fern and the
heather,
Straight back to their fir-tree they travelled to-
gether.

How cosey, and cheerful, and bright did all seem ;
Bunny felt as if waked from a terrible dream.

And he told his dear mother how good he would
be,

If he only might stay in their dear old fir-tree ;
And she said, while a tear glistened soft in her eye,
"Indeed, my dear Bunny, I'm sure you will try."

Then crowding around him, in gladsome array,
Came Creep, Peep, and Bushy, and dear little Gray ;
And they kissed him and hugged him, and told o'er
and o'er

How sad they had been till they saw him once more.

"Not one nut could we crack, not one wink could
we sleep ;

We kept thinking about you," said kind brother
Peep.

And then Bunny told them, he'd never again
Be so rude, and so naughty, and cause them such
pain.

"And now, my dear children, 'tis time," Papa said,
"We all had some supper, and went off to bed ;
In love and in peace let us henceforth agree,
And long life to the nest in the dear old fir-tree."

THE LITTLE GLEANER

ONCE there was a little boy who went out to glean in a wheat-field. The harvest was over, but the harvesters had left here and there stray bunches of grain, and as the little boy's mother was poor, he was glad to gather them up. He walked about for a long time, but his sheaf was still quite small, and as the sun was going down, he saw that he must go home. "Oh," he said aloud, "how much work it is to get so little; if only every grain of wheat was a grain of gold!"

As the little boy spoke, a grain of wheat fell from its stalk, rolled along the ground, split open, and let out a charming little lady. Her gown was a red poppy flower; she wore the petals of a daisy around her neck; and on her head was a violet. She was the prettiest little fairy you ever saw or heard of. "I am the fairy of the wheat," she said to the little boy, in a silvery voice. "I have seen you at work, and I would like to do you a favour. The wish you have spoken of shall be given to you, if only you are a good boy till bedtime. Remember, not one bad action or one evil thought!"

The fairy then vanished, and the little boy was so surprised that he could not find words in which to thank her. Could it be true? Every grain a grain of gold! Well, it was worth trying for. So he gathered as large a pile as he could carry, and, it being already late, he walked as fast as he could towards home.

As he came near the village, he met a little girl in charge of a flock of sheep. She was having a great deal of trouble about keeping them together. She ran hither and thither, but some were constantly straying, and one wee lamb was so feeble that she had to carry it in her arms. "How she does dawdle!" said the little boy, as he hurried by. "They'll send some one to help her, I suppose, when they find she doesn't get home. At any rate, I have no time to stop." And so saying, he went quickly on.

When he reached home, he put the sheaf of wheat carefully down, that he might not lose any of the golden grains. But his care was useless; the wheat was wheat, and not a grain was gold. "The fairy did not tell the truth," said the little boy, and he went to bed in a very ill humour.

The next day the little boy went again to the wheat-field. As soon as he was fairly at work, he heard a rustling sound, and, turning, saw the fairy,

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more bright and winsome than ever. "Oh, fairy," he cried, "you do not speak the truth; my wheat was wheat, and not gold." The little lady looked at him with sad eyes and said gravely, "Do you remember about the little girl you saw on the way home, trying to drive the sheep? It would have been so easy for you to have given her a little help." The boy blushed and hung his head. It was true. He had behaved very selfishly towards the young shepherdess.

"I shall give you another chance," said the fairy; "but remember, the conditions are the same as before." And so saying, she vanished. The little boy went bravely to work, and at sunset he took up his sheaf of wheat and started homewards. On this occasion he had plenty of time, and he made up his mind to help any one who came in his way, but no one was on the road. There was no trace of life, except for a little bird singing on the hedge close by. The boy listened a moment, and then picked up a stone and threw it over towards the hedge. The bird was not hit, but it was greatly frightened, and it flew away with cries of terror.

The little boy went on his way, and in due time reached home. Once more he put down his bundle of wheat with the utmost care, but it was useless. No sign of gold; only wheat came out of the stalks

as he rubbed them in his hands. He lost courage, and the next day he went back to the field with a heavy heart. What had he done to displease the fairy? Perhaps she was only making fun of him.

Again the fairy came. She looked at him with sorrowful eyes. "A bird was singing on the hedge," she said. "His nest of little ones was close by, and he was happy; but you threw a stone at him and frightened him away. Grains of gold cannot be earned in that way. Try again; perhaps to-day you will do better."

So the little boy set to work once more. He worked hard, but after a while he lay down in the shadow of a tree to rest. He had not been there long when he felt little pricks on his leg. He sprang up and found that he had been lying on an ant hill. The ants had not been able to get to their nest and had taken means to push the little boy away. "Stupid creatures," shouted the little boy, and he ground his heel into the ant hill. Then he took up his bunch of grain and went home. For the third time his hopes were vain. The wheat was wheat, and there was no gold.

The next day he went again to the field. This time the fairy did not come. He thought over what had happened the day before. "Ah, I see," he said to himself, "it was because I had crushed

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the ant hill. Well, my wheat will never be gold, but I must try to be good just the same." And he went on with his gleaning, saying, "If my wheat is not to be gold, I must at least get wheat so that my mother can have bread this winter."

When at length he left the field, the first stars were peeping out of the sky and his bundle was heavier than usual. After a while he overtook an old woman, who was on the way to the village. She, too, had been gleaning, and bore upon her shoulders a heap of grain that bent her feeble back nearly double. "Mother," said the little boy, "your bundle is too heavy for you. Let me take it on one shoulder and put mine on the other. In that way we shall both get on faster." "Heaven bless thee, dear lad," said the old woman; "I am so tired I can hardly stand. 'Tis well that I have not far to go, — only to the little hut yonder."

She gave the boy her bundle, and they plodded along together. Soon her humble home was reached, and he went on, followed by a shower of thanks.

When he reached home, he found that his mother had been threshing out the grain he had already collected. She showed him a big bag full and said, "What you have there will surely be enough. You have never brought home so much



HELPING THE OLD WOMAN

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before." Saying this, she helped him to put his burden down, and pointed to the fireplace, where his supper was smoking on the hearth. All at once she cried out with surprise, and let fall a handful of grain, which trickled on the floor with a ringing sound.

"My son," she called, "this is not wheat. It is heavy, and cold, and yellow." "Mother, mother, can it be true?" the little boy cried. He fell upon his knees and seized a head of wheat. The grain fell into his hands, heavy and cold — his wheat had at last turned into gold.

"Oh, the good fairy!" cried the little boy. "I had forgotten all about her promise, and I did not think she would ever do anything for me after I had been such a bad boy. Thank you, fairy, thank you." "It is well," a silvery voice called from without the half-open door; "I cannot repeat the gift, but be good just the same, and do not forget to visit the old woman you helped to-night."

The little boy slept soundly, and next morning he was early at the old woman's hut. She was already up and was counting her treasure with a trembling hand. "No more need to work," she was saying; "I have enough here to support me all my days. The thoughtful kindness of a little child has changed all my wheat to gold."

THE LITTLE SEED-CAKE

A LITTLE old woman and a little old man lived in a little old house all by themselves. One day the little old man asked the little old woman to bake some seed-cakes for supper, as he was very fond of them.

When the seed-cakes were baked brown enough, the little old woman took them out of the oven and placed them on top of the stove. Just then one of the little round seed-cakes stood right up on its edge and, rolling over and over, ran away.

"Stop, stop, little seed-cake!" cried the little old woman, the little old man, the little old pot, and the little old pan, but the little seed-cake ran faster and faster across the kitchen floor, through the doorway, and out on the walk.

"Stop, stop, little seed-cake!" cried a little boy.

"No, no," said the little seed-cake, "I've run away from a little old woman, a little old man, a little old pot, and a little old pan, and now I am going to run away from you if I can," and away she rolled over and over.

Then a little girl called to her, "Stop, stop, little seed-cake!"

"No, no," the little seed-cake called back to her, "I've run away from a little old woman, a little old man, a little old pot, and a little old pan, and a little boy, and now I am going to run away from you if I can," and on she went, faster and faster.

A dog came bounding along and barked loudly, "Stop, stop, little seed-cake!"

The little seed-cake answered, "No, no, I've run away from a little old woman, and a little old man, and a little old pot, and a little old pan, a little boy, and a little girl, and now I am going to run away from you if I can," and away down the hill she rolled, over and over and over.

A white pussy tried to catch her, crying, "Mew-eou, mew-eou. Stop, stop, little seed-cake!"

Again the little seed-cake answered, "No, no, I've run away from a little old woman, a little old man, a little old pot, and a little old pan, a little boy, and a little girl, and a little dog, and now I am going to run away from you if I can," and away went the little seed-cake faster than ever, over and over and over.

Then a robin redbreast flew down from a tree, calling, "Cheer-up, cheer-up! Stop, stop, little seed-cake!" and once more the little seed-cake answered,



"No, no. I've run away from a little old woman, and a little old man, a little old pot, and a little old pan, a little boy, and a little girl, a little dog, and a little cat, and now I am going to run away from you if I can," and away went the little seed-cake along the road and down a bank, faster and faster, until at last she came to a stream where she stopped suddenly, as she could not swim.

Then a sly, old fox came along. He had a reddish brown coat, a long, black nose, and greenish eyes set close together in his head. "Well, little seed-cake, where did you come from?" asked the fox.

"Oh," answered the little seed-cake, "I've run away from a little old woman, a little old man, a little old pot, and a little old pan, a little boy, a little girl, a little dog, a little cat, and a little bird, and now I am going to run away from you if I can."

"Yes, if you can," said the fox; "but how are you going to cross the stream?"

"I don't know," said the little seed-cake.

"Climb up on my back, and I will take you over," said the fox.

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"No, no," said the little seed-cake.

"Well," said the fox, "if you are afraid to roll up on my back, roll up on the end of my tail."

So the little seed-cake rolled up on the end of the fox's tail, and the fox began to swim across the stream.

But very soon his tail was in the water. "Oh, Mr. Fox! Mr. Fox!" cried the little seed-cake, "I am in the water."

"Roll up on my back, then," said the fox, and the little seed-cake rolled up on the fox's back. But soon the fox's back was in the water, and the little seed-cake cried again, "Oh, Mr. Fox! Mr. Fox! I am in the water."

"Roll up on the top of my head, then," said the fox. And the little seed-cake rolled up on top of the fox's head. But soon the fox's head was in the water, and the poor little seed-cake cried again, "Oh, Mr. Fox! Mr. Fox! I am in the water."

"Roll up on the end of my nose, then," said this sly, old fox, and the little seed-cake rolled up on the fox's nose. The fox opened his mouth and swallowed her, and that is the end of my story.

THE FOUR GOLDEN PEAS

PART I

ONCE upon a time there was a terrific giant called Crimplejaw; there was also a very good little girl named Popsie. They did not live in the same street—in fact, Crimplejaw lived up the mountain in a mighty cave between two leaning rocks, while Popsie lived at No. 1, Tidy Street. The town was right at the foot of the mountain, so whatever street you looked along you saw the mountain at the end of it, towering up to the very clouds; and there, too, half-way up the side, you saw the two leaning rocks where Crimplejaw lived; but though they looked so near, it was really a very long way from Tidy Street.

Crimplejaw did not eat boys and girls, fortunately; but he was a very troublesome giant, all the same. He would come striding down the mountain every now and then, and do no end of harm in the neat, little town. Sometimes he put his foot through the roof of a cottage and made a great hole that let the rain in; sometimes he

would run after the boys and girls and tear their frocks, and pull the strings off their hats; and sometimes he would sow weeds all over the gardens, till the place was quite a wilderness. So, of course, Popsie made up her mind that Crimplejaw was just the sort of giant that ought to be taught better.

Well, one day, when she had a holiday, she set off up the mountain to see if she could teach Crimplejaw better. And she walked and walked, and she climbed and climbed, and she was ever so tired before she got to Crimplejaw's cave. But she got there at last; and she took care not to go in by the door, but she climbed to the top of the rocks by a roundabout road, and stood on the roof of Crimplejaw's house. There was no smoke coming through the hole which served as a chimney, so she peeped down, and there she saw Crimplejaw lying fast asleep on a bundle of rags. Half the buttons were off the great, greasy coat which he wore, his stockings were all down to his ankles, and his shoes down at heel. All together he was the worst-looking giant you ever saw.

Presently Crimplejaw woke, and, looking up at the roof as he lay lazily upon his back, he spied Popsie peeping down the chimney. Directly he saw her he bellowed like fifty bulls; but Popsie

was not going to be frightened by noise, so she waited till he had done, and then she called down the chimney, "Crimplejaw! why don't you pull your stockings up? Why don't you sew the buttons on your coat? and why don't you mend your shoes?"

But Crimplejaw answered only:

" You foolish young jackdaw,
Fly home to your nest ;
I'll none of your preaching —
My own way is best."

" No, no, Crimplejaw," answered Popsie, " your own way is not best, though I daresay you like to have your own way, like other giants. But why don't you let us have *our* way, too, instead of spoiling our nice, little town as you do?"

" Popsie dear!" answered the giant, " do leave off your preaching, and come down here to help me mend my coat!"

" Oh! well," said Popsie, " if it comes to that, I don't mind doing you a good turn."

So she came down to the entrance of the cave and walked in.

" Here is the coat," said Crimplejaw, flinging it on the ground at Popsie's feet. " But wait a minute; have a soother?"

So saying, the giant poured out what looked like wine into a small vessel, and handed it to Popsie.

"No, thank you," said Popsie, "I am not thirsty."

"Well, well, just a sip," urged Crimplejaw, "for friendship's sake."

Popsie took a sip for friendship's sake, and the giant tossed the remainder of the liquid down his own throat. Directly he had taken it, he stretched his limbs and fell into a heavy slumber; and even the sip that Popsie had taken made her feel so heavy that she had to shake herself and run into the fresh air to prevent herself from falling fast asleep. She began to think it would have been better if she had not gone into the cave. Soon she found that she would have to give up teaching the self-willed giant better for that day, and get home as fast as her sleepy eyes and languid limbs would let her.

PART II

THE days went by, and Popsie had another holiday. She thought of Crimplejaw; but where was the use of trying to teach such a self-willed giant better? And perhaps, if she went to his den a second time, she would not get off quite so well. He might send her home with a ragged frock or a pinafore in tatters. So she went out into her neat, little

garden and thought she would spend her holiday there instead. She fetched a basket, and looked about for any stray weeds that might be lurking in hidden corners.

While she was thus occupied, she spied a little bird, all of ruby red, hopping from branch to branch of the apple tree, and as he hopped about he sang these words:

“Springing from out the bright green sod,
Just on the spot where the fairy trod,
Clinging about the hazel rod,
Is the plant with a magic golden pod.

“The magic golden pod will show
Four little peas sitting all in a row ;
Take them and give them all four to the foe :
You will see what you'll see, and know what you'll know.”

“What a very queer bird!” exclaimed Popsie to herself. “I suppose the ‘foe’ means Crimple-jaw; but where on earth can the golden pea-pod be?”

She looked all over the garden, but not the sign of a pea-pod could she find. Then she remembered that the red bird said that it was growing from the sod. So she went into the paddock where the old, gray pony lived, and there, sure enough, was the pea-vine climbing up a hazel bush; and there hung

the golden pod, which the old, gray pony was looking at with a solemn face.

"Well, to be sure!" cried Popsie; "here it is all the time! And now for the four little peas."

She plucked the pod and opened it, and what did she find inside but four little golden peas, all in a row, with words written round about them, one word around each pea:

Patience. Perseverance. Prudence. Punctuality.

Those were the four words written around the four peas, and, now that she had them, Popsie did not know what to do with them. So she thought and thought. And at last, up she jumped from the bank where she was sitting and shouted aloud, "I know!"

PART III

"I KNOW!" shouted Popsie, and into the house she skipped, with the pea-pod in her hand. She ran to her mother and asked if she might bake a little cake, and her mother said she might. So she went to the kitchen, and got the flour and the currants and put them in the bowl, and mixed them well, and into the middle of the flour and currants she put *the four little peas*. She added the water, and a little salt out of the salt-box, and all the other

things that cooks put into currant cakes, and then she put it into the oven; and all the time that the cake was baking Popsie was dancing about, round and round the kitchen, upstairs and downstairs, into the garden and back again, singing to herself as she danced:

“Bake! oven, bake
Old Crimplejaw's cake!
And get it done quickly, please.
Burn! fire, burn!
Till it's done to a turn;
The cake with the four little peas!”

So the oven did its very best, and baked the cake right through, and nice and brown all over, long before Popsie's holiday was at an end.

Then Popsie put on her hat and took the cake, and sped up the mountain with the foot of a gazelle. And when she reached the cave she cried, “Crimplejaw! Crimplejaw! come out and have some cake.”

“Let me see it,” grunted Crimplejaw, crawling out of his den.

“Here it is,” cried Popsie; “does it not look good?”

“Let me smell it,” grunted Crimplejaw.

“Certainly,” answered Popsie, “take it and smell it by all means.”

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“Let me taste it,” grunted Crimplejaw; and in the twinkling of an eye he thrust the whole cake into his great mouth. Then he burst into a roar of laughter which shook the rocks. “Ho! ho! ho! you didn’t think I would eat it all, did you?” he cried.

“I don’t mind,” laughed Popsie, skipping about. “I made it on purpose for you.”

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And even while she spoke, lo! the four little magic peas began to do their work. Crimplejaw began to shrink and shrink. He grew smaller and smaller, and shorter and shorter, till at length he was no bigger than any other man. And he went and lived in the neat, little town, in a snug, little house in Tidy Street, and he became Popsie’s gardener, and kept the garden, oh, ever so trim!

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THREE LITTLE DUTCH GIRLS

THREE little Dutch girls
Running very fast,
And the first little Dutch girl
Looks just like the last.
And they each have a bag,
And they each have a slate,
And they each are afraid
That they'll get there late.

In their quaint wooden shoes,
And their caps and aprons white,
To see them running, running,
Is a very pretty sight.
The six wooden shoes
All make such a clatter,
The people all run out
To see what's the matter.

For they run and they run
On the dike by the sea,—
How they keep on their shoes
Is a wonder to me,—
But before the bell stops
They will be at the gate,
For they'd rather be tired
Than reach the school late.

— ESTELLE M. KERR.

THE WANDERERS

ONCE upon a time a poor old man walked the streets every morning, pushing a hand-cart filled with vegetables. "Fresh vegetables here!" he would cry. "Potatoes, cabbages, onions, peas, beans, and corn! Who'll buy? Who'll buy?"

One day he met a kind, old gentleman who said, "Your cart of vegetables is heavy for an old man like you to push all day."

"Yes, sir," replied the old man, "but I have never had enough money to buy a horse or a donkey."

"I have a donkey out in the fields on my farm," said the kind, old gentleman; "and, as I hear that he is growing fat and lazy, I shall give him to you."

"Oh, thank you, kind sir," said the old man. "A donkey will be of great use to me." So one morning "Neddy," the donkey, was brought into the city, and was soon hitched up to the cart, the poor, tired old man driving, and away they went quite fast through the streets of the city.

But sometimes people did not buy many vegetables, and often there was very little supper for Neddy and his master. Then Neddy would think

of the green fields far away and the sweet clover tops he liked so much.

At last one day he said to himself, "I am going to run away back to the farm." So he tugged and tugged at his halter, and tried to bite it in two with his teeth, until with a jerk the old rope broke.

Early next morning Neddy trotted out of the stable into the road and galloped away.

Just at the end of the street, he heard a loud noise and clatter, and around the corner, barking, snapping, and growling, rushed a big, black dog, with a kettle tied to his tail.

"Hello, Rover," called Neddy. "What's the matter?"

"Oh," said Rover, "my little master was playing with some cruel boys, and they tied this kettle to my tail. Bow-wow-wow, bow-wow-wow! I am going to run away."

"Come along with me, then," said Neddy, "for I am running away, too."

So away went the Donkey and the Dog along the highroad.

As they were passing a garden, they suddenly stopped and listened. "Mew-eou-eou, mew-eou-eou!" they heard, and looking up, they saw a gray cat perched on the fence. All her fur was matted and wet.

"Why are you crying, Pussy?" asked Rover.

"Oh," said the gray cat, "my little mistress will wash me in a basin of water, and will not listen when I try to tell her that I can wash myself with my own little tongue with the prickles on it. Mew-eou-eou, mew-eou-eou! I am going to run away."

"Come along with us, then," said Rover, "for we are running away, too."

So the Donkey and the Dog and the Pussy went along the highroad together. As they were passing a farmyard they stopped and listened again.

"Cock-a-doodle-doo, cock-a-doodle-doo!" crowed a rooster, with a loud and angry voice.

"Whatever are you making such a row about?" asked the Donkey.

"My mistress gives all the corn to the hens and the chickens," said the Rooster. "She thinks that I can always find enough for myself. Cock-a-doodle-doo! I am going to run away."

"Come along with us, then," said Rover, "for we are running away, too."

So away went the Donkey, the Dog, the Pussy Cat, and the Rooster along the highroad together.

They went up one hill and down another and across some fields. Towards evening they came to a wood where the trees grew very close together,

making it quite dark. Suddenly they all stood still, for just in front of them they saw a house all painted white, with a door in front, but only one little window away up near the roof.

All was quiet; no sound could be heard. "I wish I could see in that window," said the Donkey.

"Well," said wise old Rover, "one of us can peep in, anyway. Neddy, stand here underneath the window, and I shall jump up on your back. Now, Pussy, spring up on my back, and, Cocky, fly up on Pussy's back and peep in."

"What do you see?" asked Rover, softly, when all were ready. "I see four men sitting at a dinner table," answered Cocky. "All get down," said Rover, "and I shall tell you what to do. Neddy will go to the front of the house; and I shall go to the back, and Pussy and Cocky will go over to the sides, and when I bark, all yell as loudly as you can."

So, when all were in their places, Rover barked, "Bow-wow-wow, bow-wow-wow;" the Donkey brayed, "Hee-haw, hee-haw;" Pussy cried, "Mew-eou, mew-eou;" and Cocky crowed, "Cock-a-doodle-doo, cock-a-doodle-doo."

Such a terrible noise had never been heard in the woods before. The four men were so frightened that they threw down their knives and forks and ran to see what was the matter.

Then the Donkey, the Dog, the Pussy Cat, and the Rooster all went into the house and ate a hearty supper.

When it grew dark, they all fell asleep, the Donkey stretched out in front of the door, Rover with his head on his paws, Pussy curled up like a ball, and Cocky on top of the mantel-shelf.

After a while the bravest of the four men said to the others, "I shall go back and see what is in our house."

So he came on tiptoe and listened at the door. All was still. Then he thought he would light a match. Suddenly he screamed and jumped and danced all around in the dark, for something was kicking at his back, something biting his leg, and something scratching and spitting at his face, while something pecked and pecked on top of his head. "Oh, what is it, what is it?" he yelled, and running away back to the woods to the other men, he told them that a terrible wild animal was in the house. "Why, it kicked and bit, and spit and scratched, and pecked, all at the same time," he cried. "Let us run away as fast as we can."

Then for many days the Donkey, the Dog, the Pussy Cat, and the Rooster lived in the house together. But they were not very happy; and one bright morning the Donkey said, "I am going

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back to my old master, for he was always kind to me."

"I am tired of this place and am going home to play with my little master," said Rover.

"There is nobody here to pet and stroke me," sighed Pussy, "so I am going to run home to my dear little mistress."

"And I am going back to the barnyard," said Cocky, "for it is rather dull here in the woods."

So one bright morning, as the poor old man was setting out with his heavy hand-cart, Neddy came galloping round the corner, and trotting up to his old master, rubbed his nose against his sleeve.

The old man was very glad to have Neddy back again, and stroked and patted him as he hitched him up to the cart.

The same morning a little boy was playing in the garden when he heard "bow-wow-wow," and Rover rushed in at the gate, and bounding up to his little master, put his two dirty paws on his shoulder and licked his face.

"You dear old Rover," said the little boy, "where have you been? Come and have a bone, old fellow, and then we shall play hide-and-seek together."

A little girl was sitting on the veranda that morning when something soft rubbed against her.

She looked down, and there was her gray Pussy back again. "You dear Pussy," she cried, taking her up in her lap and stroking her soft fur, "where have you been? I have been so lonely without you."

In the barnyard the farmer's little girl was feeding the hens and chickens, when Cocky strutted in through the gate. "Why, here is Cocky back again," said the little girl. "Come and have some corn." And, as every day she was careful to give the Rooster plenty of corn, he was quite happy.

And the Donkey, the Dog, the Pussy Cat, and the Rooster were now happy with those who cared for them, and never wanted to run away again as long as they lived.

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THE SEVEN LITTLE KIDS

SEVEN little kids lived with their mother in a little stone house at the foot of a mountain. They were called Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Sometimes they would all go for a climb away up over the mountain top. Whenever they came to a deep chasm, — too wide for the little kids to jump across, — the mother goat would make a bridge with her body stretched across, and all the little kids would walk safely over their mother to the other side, and then down the mountain side they would come scrambling and tumbling. They had pure white fur coats like their mother, and when they got dirty, they would all bathe in the mountain stream and then run around in the sunshine to dry themselves.

One day the mother goat said she must go out and find some food; so, calling Monday, the eldest goat, she said to her, "Take good care of your little brothers and sisters, and keep the door locked, for sometimes an old wolf prowls around here." Then away went the mother goat, and the little kids locked the door and began to play. They played "Goat in

the Corner," "Hide and Seek," and then chased each other all around the room.

Then came a heavy knock on the door, and the little kids stopped playing and peeped out of the window. "Oh, it is the old wolf!" cried Monday. "I see his gray foot. All keep quiet, and he may go away again." The wolf waited a few minutes and then walked away up the road. "Ah, ha! I must have a white foot like the mother goat," said this sly old wolf to himself. So he walked over to the edge of the stream, and dipped one foot in the water; then walking very slowly and carefully, he went up to the mill, and when the miller was not looking, put his foot in a bin of flour and glided out very softly.

Back went the wolf by the road to the little goats' house and knocked gently on the door. Monday peeped out of the window, and seeing the white foot by the door, cried, "Oh, it's mother!" and flung open the door. The old wolf sprang in, and the little kids ran to hide upstairs and downstairs, and little Sunday hid himself in the clock. But the old wolf found Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, and swallowed them all down whole. Then he went out across the fields, and feeling tired, lay down on a green bank by a stream and fell sound asleep.

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By and by the mother goat came home, and seeing the door wide open, wondered where all her little kids could be. "Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday!" called the mother goat. But there was no answer. "Sunday!" called the mother goat again, and a little voice answered, "Here I am, mother, inside the clock." Then the mother goat opened the door, and out jumped little Sunday.

"Oh, mother!" said the little goat, "the old wolf came and swallowed all my little brothers and sisters."

"Never mind, Sunday," said the mother goat. "Bring me my shears and a needle with a strong thread, and we shall find the old wolf."

So the mother goat and little Sunday went across the fields and soon found the old wolf sound asleep on a bank by the stream. The mother goat ripped him up with the shears, and out jumped Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

"Hush! don't make a noise, but each one find a stone," said the mother goat, and when the little kids came back with the stones, the mother goat put them inside the old wolf and sewed him up again.

Then all the little kids ran as fast as they could to the mountain stream and washed themselves

clean. When they were all dry, the mother goat called them in to dinner, and the little kids munched and munched away at the celery and carrots that their mother had brought them from the fields. The old wolf slept soundly for a while, then getting up slowly, walked to the edge of the bank and leaned over to take a drink from the stream. Then there was a great splash, as the old wolf fell headlong over into the water, and no one ever heard of him again.

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SNOWBALL

FLOSSY, the farmer's little girl, was very fond of her tiny, pet kitten. "I think I shall call her Snowball," she said, "for her fur is so soft and white, and when she curls herself up for a nap, she looks like a ball of snow."

One day Flossy could not find Snowball anywhere. "Here, Kitty, Kitty, Kitty," she called, looking all over the house and garden; but Snowball could not be found. At last cook called to her, and said she heard scratching at the cellar door leading into the kitchen. So Flossy opened the door, and Snowball bounded in—but such a dirty Snowball, her soft, white fur all covered with coal dust.

"Oh, what a naughty Pussy!" cried Flossy. "I suppose you have been trying to catch mice again in the cellar, although I told you not to go there any more. Well, this time you must be made clean." Catching up Pussy quickly in her arms, Flossy plunged her into a basin of water which stood on the bench close by, and although Snowball struggled hard and tried her best to bite and scratch, and cried, "Mew-eou, mew-eou," Flossy held her firmly till she was well washed and clean



EmKerr.

again. Then, as soon as she was free, Snowball jumped down and ran under the stove, where her fur soon became soft and dry.

But Snowball felt sulky and would not come

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out, even when Flossy called her and offered her a saucer of milk. "I can wash myself with my own little tongue and paws," she said to herself. "I will not be washed like a baby; I hate water. I am going to run away." And by and by, when the kitchen door was open, Snowball slipped out and ran across the yard and out of the barnyard gate and into the road. Away she ran, faster and faster, until suddenly she stopped short, for she heard "bow-wow-wow," and a big, black dog came bounding towards her.

Poor little Snowball was terribly frightened and ran quickly up a post to the top of a high fence and was safe, although she trembled all over when the dog kept on barking and barking and looking up at her. At last she jumped down on the other side of the fence into a beautiful garden of flowers, but soon she saw the gardener coming with his rake, and had just time enough to hide herself inside a large flower-pot in the corner of the garden. As the gardener worked busily for some time among the flowers, poor Snowball was very much cramped, as she was obliged to keep so very still. At last the gardener walked way, and Snowball, running quickly across the garden and over a small gate, found herself in a barn-yard, with many hens and chickens strutting about.

Just then a little boy ran out of a house close by and called, "Here, Pussy, Pussy, Pussy;" but Snowball darted under the barn before he could catch her, and stood panting and trying to get her breath after her long run. "Oh, dear," she meowed, "why did I run away from home? I must try and get back again." So, after having a good rest, Snowball set out again, creeping softly out of the back gate.

That evening, as Flossy was sitting in her little rocking-chair on the veranda, she felt something soft and warm rubbing against her. Stooping over, she found her little Snowball, with her fur all dirty and matted, mewling pitifully and looking up at her. "Oh, you poor Kitty!" Flossy cried; "where have you been? I have been hunting for you all over the place!" and taking Snowball up in her arms, she stroked her fur very gently and said, "Never mind, Pussy. I forgot that little cats do not like water; but after this you may clean yourself with your own little tongue and paws." And then Flossy carried poor, hungry Snowball into the kitchen and gave her a saucer of cream; and as she lapped it up with her little, red tongue, Snowball said to herself, "How could I have run away from my dear little mistress?"



THE READING LESSON

My dog delights to bark and bite;
That does not trouble me;
But, oh, I wish that I could run
And jump as well as he!

And so I've made a little plan,
And Tom, my dog, agreed
To teach me how to run and jump
If I teach him to read.

—ESTELLE M. KERR.

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

ONCE upon a time three little pigs lived with their mother in a cosey little house. The eldest pig's name was Piggy-big, the second pig's name was Piggy-wig, and the little pig's name was Piggy-wee. The three little pigs grew so fat and so big that the Mother Pig said, "Now, my children, the time has come for you to go out into the world and seek your fortune."

So one bright morning Piggy-big, Piggy-wig, and Piggy-wee set out together down the highroad that led out into the world. Soon a farmer's cart came along loaded with straw.

"Please, Mister Farmer, will you give me some straw to build a house?" cried Piggy-wee.

"Here you are, little pig," answered the farmer, and tossed down a large bundle of straw, and Piggy-wee built himself a house of straw, with a door in front and a door behind and two little windows.

Piggy-big and Piggy-wig went farther along the highroad, but soon stopped to watch some men digging deep down into the earth and bringing up shovelfuls of damp clay. "Will you please give me

some of that clay to build a house?" asked Piggy-wig.

"Take what you want, piggy," said one of the men, and Piggy-wig built himself a house of clay, with a door in front and a door behind and two little windows, and the sunbeams soon baked the clay until it was as hard as stone.

Piggy-big went on down the highroad. After walking a little way, he saw some bricks piled up by the roadside where builders were at work. "Will you please give me some of these bricks to build a house with?" asked Piggy-big.

"You may have a few, piggy," answered one of the builders, and so Piggy-big built himself a red brick house, with a door in front and a door behind and two little windows, and when it was all finished, Piggy-big was very proud of his fine, red brick house.

All this time a sly old fox was watching the little pigs from a wood near by and saying to himself, "Yum-yum-yum, what fine, fat piggies!" And one morning he crept slyly up to Piggy-wee's door and knocked. Piggy-wee came to one of the front windows and peeped out to see who was there. "Good morning, Piggy-wee," said the fox. "Will you let me in?"

"By the hair of my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in," answered Piggy-wee.

"Then I'll blow your house down," answered Mr. Fox, and he huffed and he puffed, and huffed and puffed, until the straw house began to rock from side to side, and Piggy-wee had just time to run out of the back door and over to Piggy-wig's house. Piggy-wig saw him coming, and when Piggy-wee ran in, he slammed the back door right in Mr. Fox's face.

Mr. Fox growled and growled, and prowled and prowled around the clay house. At last he went boldly up to the front door and knocked, and Piggy-wig and Piggy-wee came to the front window.

"Piggy-wig, will you let me in?" cried Mr. Fox.

"By the hair of my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in," answered Piggy-wig.

"Then I'll blow your house down," said Mr. Fox, and he huffed and he puffed, and huffed and puffed, but he could not blow the clay house down.

"Are you going to let me in?" asked Mr. Fox again.

"By the hair of my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in," cried Piggy-wig.

"Then I'll scratch your house down," said Mr. Fox, and he scratched and scratched and scratched, until he made a hole in the side of the clay house, and Piggy-wig and Piggy-wee just had time to run out of the back door and over to Piggy-big's house.

Piggy-big saw them coming and held the back door wide open, and when the piggies ran in, he slammed the door in Mr. Fox's face, and it scratched his nose. Oh! how Mr. Fox growled and growled, and prowled and prowled around the red brick house, and Piggy-big, Piggy-wig, and Piggy-wee watched him from the window. At last he came up to the front door and knocked.

"Piggy-big, will you let me in?" cried Mr. Fox.

"By the hair of my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in," answered Piggy-big.

"Then I'll blow your house down," cried Mr. Fox, and he huffed and he puffed, and huffed and puffed, but could not blow the brick house down.

"Are you going to let me in?" cried Mr. Fox.

"By the hair of my chinny-chin-chin, I won't let you in," answered Piggy-big again.

"Then I'll scratch your house down," said Mr. Fox, and he scratched and scratched, and scratched and scratched, but could not scratch the brick house down and only hurt his feet. Then he growled and growled, and prowled and prowled around the house and over to the wood and back again. "Ah," he said to himself, "I'll try another way, as Piggy-big is so very proud of his house." So this

sly old fox crept up to the door again and knocked very gently.

The three piggies looked out of the window and cried, "Oh, ho! Mr. Fox, are you still there?"

"Oh, Piggy-big," answered Mr. Fox, "you have a very fine house and a very strong one, but I have only seen the outside. I am sure it must be very grand inside."

"Yes, indeed," answered Piggy-big.

"Couldn't you just open the door a very little way and let me have a peep?" coaxed Mr. Fox. And Piggy-big, who was so very proud of his house, opened the door just a little way, and Mr. Fox put his eye to the crack and peeped in.

"It is very grand, but I can see only one side," said Mr. Fox. And foolish Piggy-big opened the door just a little wider, and Mr. Fox gave a push and sprang past him into the house.

The poor little pigs were so frightened they rolled over and over each other on the floor, while Mr. Fox, spying some peas in a pot on the stove, danced around on his hind legs, crying, "Pigs and peas for dinner to-day! Pigs and peas for dinner to-day! Pigs and peas for dinner to-day!" Then came the sound of a horn, toot-toot, toot-toot, toot-toot, and Mr. Fox stopped suddenly and listened, and then crying, "Oh, piggies, the hunters are after

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me," ran pell-mell out of the house and away down the road to the woods. Faster and faster he ran, over the fences and hedges, sometimes hiding in the woods, then racing across the fields again, and never stopped until he came to another country. He never came to trouble the piggies any more. So Piggy-big, Piggy-wig, and Piggy-wee lived happy ever after.

CHRISTMAS MORNING

My counterpane is soft as silk,
My blankets white as creamy milk.
(The hay was soft to Him, I know,
Our little Lord of long ago.)

Above the roofs the pigeons fly
In silver wheels across the sky.
(The stable-doves they cooed to them,
Mary and Christ in Bethlehem.)

Bright shines the sun across the drifts,
And bright upon my Christmas gifts.
(They brought Him incense, myrrh, and gold,
Our little Lord who lived of old.)

O, soft and clear our Mother sings
Of Christmas joys and Christmas things.
(God's holy angles sang to them,
Mary and Christ at Bethlehem.)

Our hearts they hold all Christmas,
And earth seems sweet, and Heaven seems near.
(O Heaven was in His sight, I know,
That little Child of long ago.)

—MARJORIE L. C. PICKTHALL.



THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

LAST night I stayed awake to see what Santa Claus
would bring,
I heard a noise above me, and the merry sleigh-bells
ring.

Perhaps it was the reindeer's hoof
That made the snow fall from the roof.

And then I heard a gentle step. I thought that it
was he.

The door was softly opened, and my mother peeped
to see

If I were sound asleep in bed —
Or Santa would not come, she said.

I tried to look as if I slept, and shut my eyes up
tight,
But when I opened them once more, the sun was
shining bright.
He hadn't made a bit of noise,
But filled the stocking full of toys!

It bulges here, it sticks out there, and here's a ball,
I know.
On top there is a Teddy bear. What *can* be in the
toe?
I think it has the nicest feel,
The whole way down from top to heel.

I'm glad it's mother's stocking, for my socks are
very small,
I wonder how he knew that I am not so big and tall,
For everything he brought, I see,
Looks just as if he thought of me!

— ESTELLE M. KERR.

SPARKLE AND SHINE

SPARKLE and Shine were two little water-drops, who lived at the bottom of a deep well with Mother Water-drop and many little brothers and sisters.

"Dance, little water-drops," said the mother, "for we must keep ourselves pure and clean." So all the water-drops danced and sailed little bubble boats, and looked up at the stars away up in the circle of sky above the well.

Every day, cling-clang, cling-clang, down came the bucket, and thousands of little water-drops were drawn up into the big world, and Sparkle and Shine wondered what it was like up there. One day Sparkle and Shine found themselves going up, up in the bucket. When it reached the top of the well, a little girl lifted the bucket off the hook and carried it across the yard to the house. On the way over Sparkle fell out on the snow, but Shine was carried with the others into the house, and soon found himself in a dark, round room, where it began to get very warm.

It became hotter and hotter, and the little water-drops danced up and down and up and down, faster

and faster, until Shine could bear it no longer, and seeing a long, dark hall, sailed along it and out into the light again. Then he found himself lightly drifting across a room and over to an open window, where he suddenly became so stiff and cold that he could not move. But a dear, little sunbeam fairy soon came and warmed him up, and said, "Come up to the clouds with me, little raindrop," and Shine found himself sailing up, up in the air with a sunbeam. Higher and higher they went, until they came to a large cloud and found thousands and thousands of little raindrops floating across the sky. "Hello, Shine!" shouted one of them, and there was Sparkle close by, sailing away with the others.

"How did you get up here?" shouted Shine.

"Oh, with a sunbeam," answered Sparkle, and just then the North Wind and Jack Frost met them, and all the little water-drops shivered and shook and began to fall towards the earth. Then such a funny thing happened to Sparkle and Shine, for they felt themselves stretching out until they were not round any more, but long and thin and hard like a needle, and every time they turned over they stretched out little needle-points, until there were six little needles joined together, and Sparkle and Shine had a new name, "snowflake." Then

the little snowflakes met others, all falling gently towards the ground.

"Where shall we go?" asked Shine.

"Oh, let us all go where some seeds are planted," said Sparkle, "and help to keep them warm until the springtime."

"Oh, so we will," said all the snowflakes, and they fell faster and faster. Other snowflakes saw them and went, too, and the ground was covered more and more thickly with snow until there was enough to keep the seeds from freezing all winter.

Then the springtime came, and the weather began to be warmer. The snow turned into water and ran down into the earth, and the seeds drank it, and swelled and swelled until by and by little green shoots came out above ground from each seed; then other leaves grew, and when summer came, all the lovely flowers were blooming in the garden.

BOBBY'S SLEIGH-RIDE

ONCE upon a time there was a little boy named Jack who lived with his mother and sisters at the foot of a high hill. When Jack's birthday came, his father and mother gave him a bright, red sleigh with a picture of a reindeer painted on it. Oh, how glad Jack was, for now he could coast down the hill with the other boys!

On the morning of his birthday Jack could hardly wait to eat his breakfast, he was in such a hurry to play with his sleigh before school time. "Jack, will you please give me a ride?" asked little Mary. "All right; hurry up, little sister," said Jack, and when Mary was all ready, Jack seated her on the sleigh, and away they went faster and faster, until Mary could hardly hold herself on with both hands.

"Oh! thank you, Jack; it is a splendid sleigh to go," said little Mary, when Jack brought her to the door again. And now Jack was free to go to the hill.

"Do not coast down from the top of the hill," said Jack's mother, "as it is too high, and a tree grows in the way just halfway down."

"Oh, it's all right, mother," said Jack. "I can steer."

"Be careful, my son, and do just as mother tells you," she called as he went whistling away.

The first time Jack coasted from the hill halfway down. "That's hardly any ride at all," said Jack to himself, and climbing up to the very top of the hill, he stretched himself out flat on the sleigh, and away he went to the bottom of the hill, steering carefully past the tree halfway down. "Now, that's what I call a ride," said Jack, and he climbed up again to the top of the hill, and down he started. Faster and faster went the sleigh, until suddenly there was a crash and a bang, and all was still, and Jack was in the dark with little stars sparkling all around.

Then Jack felt himself floating higher and higher towards the clouds, and many little snowflakes came to meet him. At last he came to the palace of the King and Queen of Snow. The walls of the palace were formed of the driven snow, its doors and windows of the cutting winds. Above were halls all alike, large, empty, icily cold, and white. Cold blew the winds, when little Jack entered the palace gates.

Then two wonderful people came out all dressed in snowy robes with a fringe of icicles, and sparkling crowns of diamonds on their heads.

"Do you know where you are, little boy?" they asked. "This is the Ice Palace, and we are the King and Queen of Snow. If you will live with us, we shall give you plenty of ice-water and ice-cream."

"No-oo. No-oo," said poor, shivering Jack. "I want to go home to earth again."

"Oh! so you are a cry baby," said the king. "Well, if you want to go home, I shall turn you into a snowflake;" and he breathed on Jack until he felt himself growing colder and lighter, and twirling and whirling down to earth.

"I don't want to be a snowflake," said Jack, and then he heard a gentle voice saying, "Never mind, Jack dear; lie still, and you shall soon be well again," and opening his eyes, Jack saw his mother's sorrowful face, and putting his hand up to his head, felt it all bound up. Then he remembered the crash on the hillside. "Oh, I am so sorry, mother!" said Jack, feebly. "I should have remembered you always know what is best for little boys."

NEVER-HURRY HEINJE

WHEN little Heinje went to school
He never ran along;
He used to loiter by the way, —
It's not exactly wrong, —

But then I hardly think,
do you,
That's just the thing a
boy should do?

He liked to see the cows
get milked,
The ships start out for
sea,
To see the windmill
turning round

As busy as could be, —
But yet *he* never did a thing,
Did little Heinje van der Ling!



He always was too late for school,
Too late to fetch the wood,
Too late to help his mother, when
By hurrying he could;

And yet he was not really bad,
But just the slowest little lad.

One spring the floods came o'er the dike
And all to safety fled,
But Heinje was the last to come,
Cold, wet, and almost dead!
So Never-hurry Heinje found
That he was very nearly drowned.

And after that the lad began
To hurry up instead;
He hurried from the time he rose
Until he went to bed,
And at the school, to our surprise,
Small Hurry-Heinje won the prize!

— ESTELLE M. KERR.

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JAMIE WATT AND THE TEA-KETTLE

NEARLY two hundred years ago a little boy named James Watt lived with his father and mother in the village of Greenock, in Scotland.

Jamie was not strong like other little boys, and the greater part of his school days was spent in his room at home, where his dear mother watched and cared for him. She taught him to read and write, and told stories about strong and brave men, and soon Jamie could recite verses about "Bruce and the Spider," and about a great Scottish soldier named Wallace.

When Jamie was about eight years old, he went to visit his mother's relatives in Glasgow, Scotland. There was a dear grandfather and grandmother, and aunts and cousins, who were all very fond of Jamie, and loved to hear him tell stories and recite poetry about the brave men of Scotland.

Sitting one evening with his aunt at the tea-table, she said: "James Watt, I never saw such an idle boy. Take a book or do something useful; for the last hour you have not spoken one word, but you have taken the lid off that kettle and put it on again, holding now a cup, and now a silver spoon over the steam, and catching and counting the drops of hot

water it falls into. Are you not ashamed of spending your time in this way?"

"Oh, no, auntie, I am just trying to understand about the steam," answered Jamie, still watching the lid of the tea-kettle jumping up and down.

When Jamie went home again, his father began to teach him all about numbers, and he soon learned how to add, subtract, and multiply, almost as quickly as his father. And when his birthday came, Jamie found a box of small but sharp tools by his bedside, lying ready for him to use. That day he began to work in the shop with the workmen, where he made such wonderful toys, and all kinds of things with wood and iron, that the workmen said, "Jamie has a fortune at his finger-ends."

When Jamie grew larger and stronger, he went to the grammar school, where he learned to do all kinds of hard work with figures, and also made a small machine that his schoolmates thought was very wonderful indeed. But Jamie's happiest days were spent in the summer-holiday time, when he went to visit his kind uncle, who lived on the banks of a beautiful lake in Scotland called Loch Lomond. Jamie would spend long, happy hours both night and day by the lakeside, lying on his back among the trees, reading, or studying the stars, or trying to catch some fish.

After a few years Jamie grew to be a tall young man, seventeen years of age; but home was home no longer for Jamie, for his dear mother died within the year, and he soon left the village of Greenock, and went away to Glasgow, in Scotland.

After a few years he travelled from Glasgow to London on horseback, where he worked very hard for some years and became a strong and brave man "with a fortune at his finger-ends," for he made many new and wonderful machines.

After a time he became interested in steam, and then in an old engine, and wondered if he could make some kind of a steam carriage on wheels that would move along quickly. And so for many, many years Jamie Watt studied and worked hard with his hands trying to make a steam-engine. Many, many times it would not work, but always remembering the story of "Bruce and the Spider," and Wallace, and all the brave men of Scotland, Jamie did not give up, but tried and tried again. At last he made a splendid steam-engine, one of Scotland's greatest gifts to the world.

And in these days we have our great steamships that glide across the water, and our big steam-engines that carry us across the land, and so steam became a great giant and "little Jamie Watt" grew to be one of Scotland's grandest and bravest men.

WHAT THE MOON TOLD TINY STAR

A TINY star was twinkling
Far up in the heavens blue,
With all his little brother stars,
And little sisters, too.

And Father Moon was very poor,
And therefore very cross,
Being only at the quarter,
And much inclined to "boss."

And Tiny Star was sulky,
And so he would not shine,
And he was in the Milky Way,
The pretty twinkling line.

"You must be good," the big Moon sighed,
"A little child is sobbing;
It's tiny, tiny face is wet,
It's baby curls are bobbing.

"And it is sad, oh, very sad,
Because you won't be good;
Please, Tiny Star, please listen,
Make one child glad — you could."

And the Star shone his brightest the rest of
the night —
I knew in the end he would.

— DORIS L. HUESTIS.

THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE STARS

ONE evening Milly's dear mother tucked her up snugly in bed, and kissing her good-night, put out the light and left her all alone in the dark. Milly lay awake for a long time, and it was very, very dark, so she covered up her head with the bed-clothes and tried to go to sleep.

Suddenly she saw a light. Oh, how frightened she was! She lay very still and listened, but nothing happened. She waited and waited, but nothing came. At last Milly was brave enough to lift the bed-clothes ever so little, and, peeping into the room, she saw a light, not so bright as the sunshine, but soft and beautiful. Milly became braver, and pushing back the bed-clothes, flung them away. The light flooded the room, and Milly looked out of the window and up into the sky, and there was a lovely, round moon.

Milly was so glad, but wondered how the moon got there. It wasn't there when she went to bed, and all the dear little stars — they must be the children! What pictures they made! And some were such tiny stars — they must be the little babies!



WATCHING THE MOON

And oh, what thousands and thousands of them were up there! Milly wondered if anybody had ever been able to count them all. And there was a very big star, brighter than any other. How beautiful it was! That must be the Polar Star that father told her about, that always stayed up near the North Pole and showed the way to travellers. And surely that must be the Dipper over there in the north, and the seven little sister stars close beside the Little Bear.

Milly felt so happy she was sure she would never be frightened at night any more. She laughed softly and was sure some of the little stars were winking and nodding at her, and the Man in the Moon smiled at her as he sailed away in the clouds, and Milly fell asleep wondering if the moon and the stars ever had any sleep. Anyway, she was very glad they were twinkling and sparkling up in the sky in the dark night-time.

THE STORY OF HIAWATHA

MANY years ago there lived with his grandmother, Nokomis, in a great forest of pine- and fir-trees, a dear little Indian baby named Hiawatha. His pretty wigwam home stood on the shore of Gitche Gumee, the Big-Sea-Water, and when the little red-skinned baby was put in his cradle — the pretty little cradle that grandmother Nokomis had made from the linden-tree and bedded with soft moss and rushes — he could hear the murmuring lullaby of the waves, as they rolled upon the shore. Sometimes Hiawatha would lie awake in his cradle outside the wigwam, and his grandmother would tell him wonderful stories of “the stars that shine in heaven . . .” and of “the moon with flecks and shadows on it.”

Hiawatha could hear the owl and owlet, far away in the pine-trees, calling “To-who, to-who,” as they watched all the night long, with great, bright, shining eyes. Nokomis called Hiawatha her little owlet, and she sang this song to him :

“Ewa-yea ! my little owlet !
Who is this that lights the wigwam ?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam ?
Ewa-yea ! my little owlet !”

and he fell asleep.

It was not very long before Hiawatha was able to walk into the forest alone. And then he saw the little birds of many colours, about whom his grandmother had told him stories as he threw them crumbs of bread, when they hopped to the door of the wigwam. He loved their singing and their beautiful colours. They soon made friends with him and told him all their secrets. He called them "Hiawatha's Chickens." He often climbed a tree, to peep into a nest, to see the mother-bird feeding her baby-birds. He knew just where the nests were to be found, and how the mother-bird taught her little ones to fly. For

"The little Hiawatha

Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets ;
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them ' Hiawatha's Chickens.' "

One day when Hiawatha was watching the birds, he saw a hollow place in one of the great pine-trees and a little squirrel, darting in and out, hiding its acorns. It would run up and down the tree so fast that Hiawatha sometimes lost sight of it. On tip-toe he crept near, and peeped into the cosy home, lined with leaves and moss, where all the acorns

were being stored for the winter. Hiawatha loved the little squirrel and called him his brother. And they talked and played together every day. It was not very long before Hiawatha found out that the great, wide, beautiful, wonderful forest was the home of a great many creatures whom he could call his brothers.

One day a shy, little brother rabbit crossed his path, and hid in the bushes. It was not afraid of him, but of some of the noises in the forest. He saw, too, the fleet-footed reindeer, with its great antlers, running through the trees, stopping for a moment to nibble at a twig here, or a bit of moss there, then starting off again, ever so much faster than even a little Indian boy could run.

While playing on the shore of the Big-Sea-Water, one day, Hiawatha saw the little beavers building homes or "lodges," as they called them, out of twigs and soft earth. They had such sharp teeth, they could gnaw right through the trunk of a big tree, and while they talked to Hiawatha and told him wonderful secrets, they still kept on working, never stopping to rest. Hiawatha told his grandmother the secrets his brothers in the forest told him, for,

"Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,

Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them 'Hiawatha's Brothers.'"

Hiawatha had now grown to be a fine, tall Indian lad, and he wanted to sail over the Big-Sea-Water. So he said he would make for himself a light canoe to float upon the water like a yellow water-lily. He walked into the forest, and finding a birch-tree, he said:

"Give me of your bark, O Birch-Tree !
Of your yellow bark, O Birch-Tree !
Growing by the rushing river,
Tall and stately in the valley !
I a light canoe will build me,
That shall float upon the river
Like a yellow water-lily !

"Lay aside your cloak, O Birch-Tree !
Lay aside your white-skin wrapper,
For the Summer-time is coming,
And the sun is warm in heaven,
And you need no white-skin wrapper !"

So the canoe was built, and it floated on the water like a yellow water-lily, with Hiawatha proudly guiding it.

"Thus the birch canoe was builded
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest ;
And the forest's life was in it,

All its mystery and its magic,
All the lightness of the birch-tree,
All the toughness of the cedar,
All the larch's supple sinews ;
And it floated on the river
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water-lily."

The birds sang gaily in the tree-tops, the squirrels danced merrily to and fro, the rabbits peeped shyly at him from the bushes, as he sailed over the shining Big-Sea-Water,—for they still loved him, and not only the birds and the beasts, but the people loved him, too, and called him brother.

Hiawatha was the bravest, kindest, noblest Indian knight that ever lived.

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

A LONG time ago — nearly two thousand years — a little boy was born in a town in Cappadocia in the Far East. The little boy's parents named him George. They were very good Christians, and tried to train and teach their son so that he would grow up to be a real knight, good, strong, brave, and true.

When George came to the age of seventeen years, he said, "I am going to be a soldier," and he grew to be such a strong, brave fighter that he soon rose to high rank in the army and greatly pleased the Emperor of Rome, Diocletian.

But Diocletian afterwards became very cruel to the Christians, which made George burn with anger, and he spoke out boldly for his Christian brethren. At last he decided that he could do better service for the world, if he rode out alone on knightly travel, so he gave all his money to the poor and needy, set free all the slaves he owned, and went forth on his beautiful horse, well armed for brave deeds and ready to serve all in distress.

While riding one day through the plains of Libya, he came to a certain city, Silene. The people in this city were all in great trouble — a dreadful misfortune had come upon them; a monstrous dragon had come out of the marsh near by and had eaten nearly all their flocks and herds. Already the monster was living not very far from the city walls, and the people could keep him at that distance only by giving him two sheep every day for his food and drink. If they had failed in this, he would have come inside the city, and poisoned every man, woman, and child with his horrible breath.

But now nearly all of the flocks and herds had been eaten, and the terrified people were praying and crying to God to help them.

The king of the city had one beautiful daughter, named Cleodolinda. She was very fair of form and face, and only twelve years of age.

One day Cleodolinda was wandering with her attendant and her pet goat, Freda, in the woods just outside the city. Hearing some water trickling over the stones, she asked her attendant to bring her a drink of water from the brook. While the attendant was away, something frightened the little goat, Freda. Away she scampered as fast as she could, and her mistress ran after her. Faster and faster ran the little goat around to the other side of

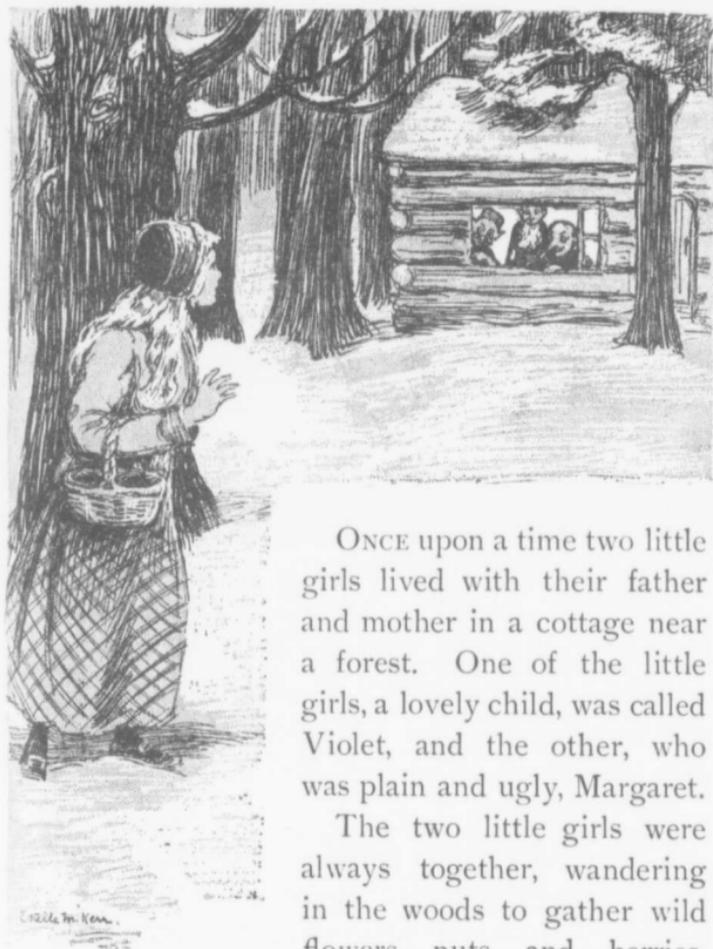
the city, until poor Cleodolinda was out of breath. Suddenly she felt something cracking under her feet, and found to her horror she was running on the path strewn with bones which led to the dragon's lair in the marsh; then she stood still, frozen with terror, for there was the great ugly monster, just a few feet from Freda and slowly crawling towards her. Cleodolinda opened her mouth and screamed as loudly as she could for help.

It was this very morning that St. George, as the people called him, bravely seeking to help the weak, was passing by on his knightly journeying. He saw stretching before him the horrible path of bones. Suddenly he reined in his horse, for he saw a beautiful maid crying for help and pointing to a monstrous dragon just about to catch a little white goat in its horrible jaws. "Fear not, I shall save you," cried St. George, and spurring his horse and calling upon his Lord, St. George rushed towards the monster. After a terrible battle, which lasted a long time, he pinned the large, ugly body to the earth with his lance, while Cleodolinda, trembling in every limb, held Freda safe in her arms.

Then St. George called to the maiden to bring him her girdle. With this he bound the dragon fast and gave the end of the girdle into her hand, and the wounded monster crawled after them like a dog, while Freda trotted along in front.

Walking in this way, they came to the city. All the people were very much frightened, but St. George called out, "Fear nothing; only believe in Christ, through whose help I have tamed this monster." Then he killed the dragon and cut off its head, and the king gave him great treasure. But St. George gave all the treasure to the poor and needy, and went farther on his way to help the weak and fight for the Christians.

THE WOOD ELVES



ONCE upon a time two little girls lived with their father and mother in a cottage near a forest. One of the little girls, a lovely child, was called Violet, and the other, who was plain and ugly, Margaret.

The two little girls were always together, wandering in the woods to gather wild flowers, nuts, and berries,

paddling with bare feet in the village brook, or sitting on the porch at home with their sewing. Violet's own dear mother died when she was just a tiny baby, and as her father had married Ursula Sachs (Margaret's mother), Dame Ursula, as she was called, was Violet's stepmother and often treated her cruelly.

When the winter time came, Violet's father went away on a long journey, and one bitter morning Dame Ursula called Violet to her, and giving her a basket, said, "Go thou into the forest, lazy one, and gather me a basketful of strawberries, for much do I long for my favourite fruit."

Violet burst into tears. "Oh, mother! Oh, mother!" she cried, "the ground is hard with frost and covered thickly with snow. There are no strawberries to be had in winter! It is so cold out-of-doors that one's very breath freezes."

"What?" cried Dame Ursula. "Would you dare to answer me? Off, off, I tell you, or I shall lay my broom about your back. Here, take this crust: it will serve you for breakfast, dinner, and supper;" and she handed her a piece of mouldy, black bread.

Taking her basket on her arm and crying bitterly, poor little Violet went forth into the snow-drifts.

Oh, how keenly blew the wind! and Violet shivered and shook with the cold. But on she went, hardly knowing where she was going, for the snow lay all around her, and often she found herself nearly buried in it.

She wandered in the woods for two or three hours. Never before had she gone so far into the forest depths. But suddenly she came on a little open space, in whose centre stood a quaint hut of pine wood, overshadowed by trees. As she drew near, she saw that it had but one window, and from this window three of the queerest faces imaginable peeped and grinned at her.

Now Violet had heard of the wood elves, and guessed that these were of the race. She knew that they were often very spiteful to mortals; but good girls always have courage, and as she was very cold and weary, she bravely walked up to the hut and knocked at the door.

"Come in!" cried a voice.

Violet entered, and there, sure enough, stood three wood elves, looking very hard at the bold girl who had dared to come into their house.

"What dost thou want?" said the eldest.

"I am very cold and very tired, for I have been walking in the woods two or three hours. May I sit awhile by your fire?" asked Violet, timidly.

"What is thy name?"

"Violet Sachs."

"I have heard of her," said the second elf, aside, "and that she is a good girl whom a cruel old stepmother treats very badly."

"Sit down and rest thyself," said the eldest elf.

So Violet seated herself on a wooden bench, warmed her aching feet by the blazing logs, and taking out her crust of bread, began to eat it.

"Wilt thou share thy bread with us?" said the youngest elf.

"That will I gladly do," replied Violet.

"Whatever is done, whatever is said,
With all who are hungry I'll break my bread."

"She has a good heart," said the eldest elf.

"And a sweet voice," said the youngest.

Then they all asked, "Why comest thou into our forest on this cold winter day?"

"Oh," she replied, "my father is away from home, and my stepmother bade me go in search of a basketful of strawberries."

"The old hag," muttered the second elf.

"Take this broom," said the eldest dwarf, "and sweep away the snow from the back door."

Violet wondered; but she had learned from earliest childhood to do what she was told. So she left the hut, and the elves began to talk about her.

"She is very good," said the youngest elf.

"She is very dutiful," said the eldest.

"She is very beautiful," said the second elf.

So they said one to another, "Let us each one give her a gift, that she may know the wood elves always serve those who are good and true. What shall our gifts be?"

Then said the eldest:

"Of all maids shall she be rarest,
Fairer shall she grow, and fairest."

Then said the second elf:

"Whene'er she opes her rosy mouth,
Sweet with the kisses of the south,
All shall admiringly behold
Each time a guinea drop of gold."

And then said the youngest:

"A noble prince shall take her as his wife,
And love shall brighten all her happy life!"

Meanwhile Violet had swept the snow away as the elves had told her, and underneath it lo! there bloomed a bed of the finest and ripest strawberries ever seen! So you may fancy that she very quickly filled her basket, and running into the hut, she poured out her thanks to her little friends. They all shook hands with her, bade her farewell, and pointed out the nearest way to the village where her parents lived.

When Violet lifted the latch of the cottage door, Dame Ursula stood before her.

"What brings you here, and without my strawberries?" she cried.

"But I have the strawberries, dame," cried Violet; and as she spoke a golden guinea dropped from her rosy mouth.

She went on to tell all about her travels in the wood, and at every word the guineas fell faster and faster, until the whole room was covered with them as with a layer of bright gold.

When Dame Ursula and Margaret saw the gold, they wondered, and Margaret begged Dame Ursula to allow her to go into the forest. She pleaded so hard that at length her mother gave her permission, though she warned her that the cold was almost deadly.

Dame Ursula wrapped her daughter up in a mantle of the thickest and warmest fur, and then threw over her head a fur hood. Then she filled her basket with cake, white bread and butter, and a bottle of hot milk.

Away went Margaret into the wood. She soon grew frightened of the snow, and would gladly have run back home, but she went on farther into the wood, and after a weary and toilsome journey, she found her way to the elves' hut. But her heart

failed her, and as she knocked at the door, she trembled all over.

The door suddenly flew open, and Margaret walked into the room, spoke never a word to the three elves, but took a seat in front of the fire, and began to eat her bread and butter.

"What nice bread!" said one of the elves.

"And what beautiful creamery butter!" cried another.

"Wilt thou give us a slice?" asked the eldest elf.

Margaret, who was feeling in better spirits and did not feel the least bit afraid of these quaint, little dwarfs, turned angrily upon them and said, "Do you think I have more than enough for myself, that you want me to spare it for other folk?"

So she sat and warmed herself and munched at her bread and butter. When she had finished, the eldest elf said to her, "Take thou this broom and sweep away the snow from our courtyard."

"Sweep it yourself!" cried Margaret. "Am I to do all your dirty work?" So she sat and waited, and sat and waited, until at last the elves grew weary of her, and bade her leave the house. Then she hunted all about the open space for strawberries, like Violet, but you may be sure she found none. She searched and searched in the snow until her hands were numb with cold and her arms swollen.

The elves meanwhile spoke to each other of her bad temper and greediness and hardness of heart.

Said the eldest, "We shall show her that mortals cannot offend us. What shall we give Dame Ursula's daughter?"

Said the youngest:

"Since living she's greedy and grudges and cries,
Unhappy she'll be until she dies."

Said the second elf:

"Whenever she opens her mouth, I trow,
Mud shall fall from it in loathsome show."

Said the eldest of the dwarfs:

"Her heart is so hard that she shall be
The ugliest maid man ever did see."

And now Margaret, finding that no strawberries grew in the wood in winter, and afraid to face the forest elves again, turned back to her home, which she did not reach until late at night. She was very faint and tired when she at last sat down by Dame Ursula's fire; her nose was frozen blue; her skin seemed wrinkled and yellow; and no sooner did she begin to tell the tale of her sorrows than at every word froth and mud fell from her mouth.

Her mother was terribly angry, and called the wood elves all the wicked names she could think of;

but it did not do any good, and Margaret was unhappy ever after.

One day Dame Ursula boiled some lace in a vessel over the fire, and giving it to Violet, bade her go down to the river, cut a hole in the ice with her hatchet, and rinse the lace in cold water.

Violet did as she was told, but she found the river ice very thick, and it was hard to break an opening large enough.

Just then she heard a clatter of hoofs on the frozen river-bank, and looking around, saw that the king's splendid carriage had driven up, and that the young king was watching her with admiring eyes.

She made a deep and graceful courtesy, which charmed the young sovereign.

"Who art thou, maiden?" said he, "and what art thou doing with those pretty white hands?"

"I am a villager's daughter, sire," she replied, "and I am rinsing lace for my stepmother."

The king was delighted with her sweet voice, beautiful face, and graceful manners, and asking her a few questions, soon learned all about her life, and felt that so lovely a woman, with a soul so true and generous, would grace his throne.

"Violet," he said, "couldst thou love me?"

The maiden did not answer, but a rosy blush spread over her beautiful face.

“Wilt thou go with me, and become my wife and queen?”

Violet knew there was no happiness for her at home, and she had never before seen or dreamed of any person so brave, handsome, and splendid as the young king. She stepped, therefore, into the royal carriage, and was driven swiftly to the palace, where the king ordered a great feast to be prepared, and Violet became a queen and lived happy ever after; and the saying of the wood elves came true:

“A noble prince shall take her as his wife,
And love shall brighten all her happy life.”

THE STORY OF DAVID

DAVID was the youngest son of a rich man named Jesse. His seven brothers were fine, tall young men, but David was the handsomest and bravest of them all.

In those days people used to count their wealth by the number of their sheep and goats, and Jesse was the owner of great flocks. David used to look after his father's sheep every day, as they grazed upon the hillside. There were lions and bears in the country where David lived, and the shepherds had to guard their sheep very carefully, or they would have been killed by these fierce animals.

One day a lion and a bear carried away one of David's lambs. Most people would have been afraid to go after the two great, fierce animals, but David was so brave that he was not at all frightened. He thought only of saving his flock. He always trusted that God would help him whenever he was doing right, and that made him very brave. So he went out to fight the lion and the bear, and he killed them both.

David wrote a great many beautiful psalms, or

songs. There is a whole book of his psalms in the Bible. Some of the most beautiful of them all are the ones about the flocks of sheep and the little lambs and the shepherds who tend them. He wrote these psalms to tell us that God is always watching over us, and taking care of us, just as a good shepherd cares for his sheep.

At the time when David lived there was a king named Saul. Sad to say, Saul was not a good man, and did not try to please God.

People are not happy when they do what is wrong, and Saul was often very sad. His courtiers found that music made him feel better and happier, so they were always trying to find people who could play well. They heard that David played very sweetly on the harp, so they sent for him to come and play to the king.

So David left his flocks, and took his harp and went to the king's court. His sweet music soothed the unhappy king. When King Saul was calm and happy again, David was allowed to go home.

In the land of Israel, where David lived, there was always a great deal of fighting going on. The people of Israel had often to fight against the Philistines, who sent great armies to conquer their country.

In one of these wars David's three elder brothers

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had gone to fight against the Philistines. One day old Jesse, his father, told David to go to the army and find out how his brothers were, and to take them some food. So once more David left his sheep and set out on his journey.

When David reached the army of Israel, he found his brothers getting ready for a battle. The great Philistine army was drawn up not far away. The battle was just about to begin. But at that very moment a giant named Goliath stepped out in front of the Philistine army, and shouted to the Israelites in a loud voice, "Choose a man and let him fight me, and if he kill me, we will be your servants; and if I kill him, you shall be our servants."

Goliath was so big and strong, and was covered with such thick, brass armour, and had such a great heavy spear, that he felt quite sure that no one could kill him. The people of Israel felt terribly frightened when they saw Goliath. David was told that the giant had been shouting this message for many days, and that King Saul had offered a great reward to any one who would kill him.

When David heard that, he said that he would fight the giant. He knew that he was not nearly so big and strong as Goliath, but he felt sure that God would help him to kill the great Philistine chief.

Some of the people told this to King Saul. The king sent for David, and when he saw how young he was, he was afraid that this young shepherd would not be able to kill the giant. But David told the king about the lion and the bear, and how God had helped him to kill them; so the king said, "Go, then, and the Lord be with thee."

King Saul offered to let David wear his own armour. But it was too heavy, so David refused the king's offer, and went out to fight Goliath with no weapons but a sling and five smooth stones.

David was very clever at throwing stones with a sling. When he was out on the hills with his sheep, he used often to aim at a mark, till he could sling stones very straight and true.

When the giant saw young David coming to fight him without even any armour, he called out proudly, "Come on! and I shall give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field." But David answered, "You come against me with a sword and a spear and a shield; but I come against you in the name of the Lord of Hosts."

Then David ran quickly towards the giant, and with a swift jerk of the sling, he threw a stone which struck Goliath in the middle of the forehead. The giant fell on his face. Then David ran up, and

taking hold of the giant's sword, cut off his head with a single stroke.

The Philistines were dreadfully astonished and frightened, and they ran away. Then the Israelites shouted for joy, and ran after them, and killed a great many of them, and the country was saved. When David grew to manhood, he became king of Israel. He was greatly loved by all the people and ruled wisely and well.

THE FAIRY'S VALENTINE

ONCE upon a time, many years ago, on Saint Valentine's Day, a fairy brought to a mother in a humble home a very precious gift,— a dear, little baby boy. He had eyes so large and blue that they made one think of the lovely, blue sky, and when he smiled they twinkled so brightly that one thought of the little stars that peeped through his window at night-time.

Of course, the mother grew fonder of her baby every day, as all mothers do. There was, however, one thing that troubled her. She did not know what name to give him. There were a great many names for babies, but none of them seemed to suit this one.

After thinking for some time, this happy thought came to her, "The fairy brought the baby to me on the fourteenth of February, Saint Valentine's Day. Why, of course, I'll call him 'Valentine'! Valentine means Love. My wish is that when he grows up, he shall be much loved."

Just then the fairy came into the room, and said, "Your wish is granted. Your child shall be much loved."

"Oh, kind fairy," said the mother, "are you going to make him very rich?"

But the fairy shook her head, and replied, "Riches would not make everyone love him."

"Well," eagerly asked the mother, "is he going to be very beautiful and very wise?"

The fairy shook her head again, and softly singing

"Oh, Valentine,
That heart of thine,
With Love shall shine,"

she flitted over the cradle, where Valentine lay sleeping, kissed him gently on both eyelids, and waving her magic wand, was gone.

The happy mother pondered often over the words of the good fairy, as she watched her baby, year by year, growing taller and broader and stronger. February the fourteenth, Saint Valentine's Day, was very near again, and little Valentine would be five years old his next birthday.

One day, when Valentine returned home with his mother, after seeing the store windows, which were gaily dressed with pretty cards glistening with silver lace, and decorated with red hearts and little cupids, and white doves with letters in their beaks, he said, "Mother, why did you call me Valentine? I'm the only little boy with that name."

"Well," said his mother, "a long time ago there lived another little boy whose name was Valentine, and when he grew to be a man he was so good that people called him 'Saint' Valentine.

"He used to travel from village to village, and when the sick folk saw him, the look of his gentle, sweet face seemed to make them feel better. He always knew where the poor and lonely folk lived, too; and, as he went from home to home, the little children would gather around him, and listen to his wonderful stories of the birds and the flowers. He played games with them, too. When he became too old to visit the people, he used to send them loving messages. Saint Valentine was so much loved by all, that on his birthday, February the fourteenth, the people, remembering his kind deeds, sent love tokens to their friends, to tell them how much they were loved, just as Saint Valentine used to do. These tokens we call 'valentines.' And so, little son of mine, because the fairy brought you to me on February the fourteenth, I called you 'Valentine.'"

That night, when Valentine went to bed, the lovely, round moon shone right through his window. And she seemed to know that he was trying to be like good Saint Valentine, for she appeared to grow brighter and brighter the longer he looked at her.

Now we must remember that little Valentine had no brothers or sisters. When he grew older, he found out that there were boys and girls living near him, and that they did not have as many toys and picture books as he had. So, instead of playing by himself, as he used to do, he would carry his long train of cars or his spinning top down the street where lived his little friend, who only saw trains and tops in store windows. Sometimes he would bring his picture books to the little cripple across the way, who was never able to run about like other children. And Valentine would tell him the story of "Silverlocks," of "Tom the Water Baby," or of "Tiny Tim," until the little cripple forgot he could not jump and run like other children.

Valentine so loved to help make other people happy, that when it came near his birthday, Saint Valentine's Day, he ran off down the street to buy love tokens for his mother, his little friend down the street, and the cripple lad across the way.

Valentine's birthday came at last. And as he was sitting at his mother's knee, waiting to hear the story of good Saint Valentine, which she always told him on his birthday, the door bell rang. And there stood the jolly postman with a bag full of letters. One, two, three, he counted, all for Val-

entine. Oh, what fun it was, opening them, and taking out pretty cards on which were cupids and red hearts and flying doves, carrying in their beaks loving messages, one of which read:

“ I love you, Valentine, my dear,
For all the happiness and cheer
Which you have brought to me this year.”

That night, when Valentine went to bed, he dreamed of gold and silver hearts with birdies flying on them.

THE SUNBEAMS AND WATER-DROPS

EARLY in the morning, away up on the hillside thousands upon thousands of little Water-drops were sparkling on blades of grass and in the flowers. A tiny streamlet trickled along the roots of the grass, and when a gentle breeze came along, thousands of sleepy Water-drops woke up, and falling into the little stream, went hurrying along.

"Always join hands and run down hill, my dears!" called Mother Nature. So the little Water-drops, who are always good children, did just as they were told. Away they went down grassy slopes all sparkling in the sunshine. Faster and faster they ran, until, sliding over some smooth stones, they found themselves in a deep stream with wooded banks.

By and by the little Sunbeams asked the big, round golden Sun if they might go down to the earth and play. Mother Sun said, "Yes, my children, but do not forget to work as well as play." So down to the earth in a shining cloud came the little Sunbeams, and after helping the trees and grass and flowers, they danced and played with the

little Water-drops. Oh, how they all sparkled and shone, and what a good time they all had together! By and by Mother Sun called to them, "It is time to hurry home, my children." Then the little Sunbeams asked if the little Water-drops might come up with them. And soon the Water-drops found themselves sailing up, up towards the sky, and were soon in a silvery cloud that glided before the wind.

And one very hot day, when everything on earth was thirsty and dusty, a cold wind met the cloud, and all the little Water-drops shivered and shook and began to fall gently to earth — a shower of rain — to help the trees, grasses, and flowers.

LITTLE MISS DAFFYDOWNDILLY

LITTLE Miss Daffydowndilly was very unhappy because she had such an ugly, old, brown dress. Her mother told her not to mind, she would grow prettier by and by, if only she were patient and good. Her little worm friends, Twisty-Turny and Skinny-Wiggle, did all they could to cheer her up by bringing good things to eat and playing games, but she was just as sad as ever. "Oh, I should like to be bright, like the sunshine!" said Daffydowndilly.

Soon she began to get very drowsy and sleepy, and after a little time she slept soundly. Her mother covered her up gently with fine, soft earth, and she slept for weeks and weeks in her snug, little, earth bed, until one morning the sun was shining, oh, so brightly and warmly, and Daffydowndilly heard, "Tap-tap-tap, tap-tap-tap, wake up! wake up! little flower." Then something cracked, and she felt herself being drawn up towards the blue sky. She felt happier, for the sun had sent the sunbeams to cheer her up, and she felt herself growing stronger and stronger, and her dress was growing greener and greener every day.

The sunbeams kept on shining, beaming, and smiling, and Daffydowndilly tried hard to keep her dress very clean, and smiled at every one. By and by she grew into a beautiful, bright, yellow flower. All the children loved to look at her, and she made many people happy with her sunny beauty.

One day somebody planted her gently in a little green pot, and she was taken away and placed at the bedside of a little boy who could not go outdoors to see the flowers.

Oh, how pleased the poor little boy was to have the pretty, golden flower! He gazed at Daffydowndilly all day long, and was careful that she had plenty of water and sunshine, and Daffydowndilly was very, very happy, and grew lovelier and brighter every day, for now she was making a little boy happy.



DAFFYDOWNDILLY

DEAR little Daffydowndilly,
First flower of the spring,
Dancing away with the breezes,
Gladness and sunshine you bring.

Daring the cold of the March winds,
Braving the frosts and the snows,
Filling the woods with your glory,
Loveliest flower that blows.

— ALICE C. D. RILEY.

FLUFFY

AWAY in the corner of the barn a very snug nest, made of bits of hay and straw, was placed, and sitting up, oh, so proudly, with her body and wings spread over the nest, we found "good Mother Hen" keeping twelve fine white eggs warm beneath her soft breast.

There she sat patiently waiting day after day for about three weeks, when one morning she heard a tiny "peck, peck" inside one of the eggs, and very soon crack, crack went the shell and out came a dear little chick. The next day crack, crack went another shell, and out came another little chick. And every morning another little chick came out of the shell, until twelve dear little chickens, downy balls of bright yellow, nestled close to their mother. The last little chick that came out was so very soft and downy that her mother called her "Fluffy."

Mother Hen was very proud of her fine family, calling, "Cluck, cluck; cluck, cluck. Did you ever see such a fine lot of dear little chickens?" And the little ones cried, "Peep, peep, peep," and followed their mother all about and tried to scratch with their tiny feet.

The first day good Mother Hen took them all for a walk as far as the gate; the next day she took them outside the gate, as far as the big oak-tree; but the next day they all followed her as far as the stream. "To-morrow, my dears," said the mother, "we shall cross the stream."

So when the next day came, they all went to the side of the stream, and right in the middle of the stream lay a large, flat stone just above the water.

"Now," said Mother Hen, spreading out her wings and flapping them up and down, "fly over to the stone, my dears; fly, fly, fly." But the little chicks cried one after the other, "Peep, peep; peep, peep. I can't, I can't, I can't." "Oh, yes, you can," said the mother; "try, try, try." "Peep, peep. I can't, I can't," said eleven little chicks this time. But dear little Fluffy spread out her tiny wings and said, "Peep, peep, peep, peep. I'll try, I'll try," and flew over to the stone and back again; and by and by when good Mother Hen found a fine, fat worm in the garden, whom did she give it to?

Answer: Fluffy.

THE SUN, THE RAIN, AND THE WIND

THE Sun and the Rain were talking together, and what do you think it was about?

"Why," said the Rain, "the trees love *me* the better."

"Indeed, they do not," said the Sun, "they love *me* the better."

"Well," the Sun said, "I tell you what, I know a way we can find out. You see that Horse-chestnut Tree down there — it is full of baby leaf-buds; now the one that can make these leaf-buds open out into blossoms and leaves, that is the one the trees love better." "All right," said the Rain, "you go first." So the Sun began to shine just a little bit at first, but after a while he began to get warmer and warmer, hotter and hotter, and kept on shining for a long time, but the Horse-chestnut leaf-buds did not open into blossoms and leaves. "Well, I'll give up; you try now," said the Sun.

So the Rain began pitter-patter, pitter-patter all day long and for many days, but still the Horse-chestnut leaf-buds did not open into blossoms and leaves.

"I know the trees love *me* the better," said the Rain.

"Indeed, they do not; they love *me* the better," said the Sun.

"I'll tell you what, let's ask the Wind," said the Rain. "He knows everything, for he has been to places that neither you nor I have been."

So one day when the Wind was blustering by, the Rain called out to him, "Oh, Wind, Wind!"

"What is it?" said the Wind.

"The Sun and I want to know which one of us the trees love the better."

"Why, I don't know, but I will ask this Horse-chestnut Tree," said the Wind.

So he shook the Horse-chestnut Tree just a little, and said, "Horse-chestnut Tree, which do you love the better, the Sun or the Rain?"

"Why, we trees love them just the same, for they both help our children to grow; the Sun keeps them warm and happy, and the Rain gives them a drink when they are thirsty. So you see we love them both, one just as much as the other; for if we had only the Sun, our children would burn, and if we had just the Rain, our children would drown.

"And we love you, too, Mr. Wind, although sometimes you are a little rough and inclined to bluster, for you help to feed our children by shaking up the

sap from the roots and sending it through all the branches and twigs to the leaf-buds."

Away went the Wind with a rush and a roar, for he was in a hurry to tell the Sun and the Rain what the Horse-chestnut Tree had said.

The Sun and the Rain came out to meet the Wind, for they saw he was in a hurry.

"The trees love me the better," said the Rain.

"Indeed, they do not; they love me the better," said the Sun.

"Now, you are both wrong; the trees love you just the same, and they love me, too — one just as much as the other," said the Wind, as he went off whistling.

THE FAIRIES' NEW DRESSES

ONE day the Queen of the Fairies called four little fairies to her and said, "You have worked so hard and have been so helpful to all the birds, animals, and flowers in the woods, I am going to give you bright new dresses. Now, Poppy, what colour would you like your new dress to be?" This is what Poppy answered, "Oh, Fairy Queen, I see the beautiful clouds every evening at sunset. I love the bright crimson colour in the clouds. All day long I am wishing for the evening to come, when I can look up and see them again. I should like to have a dress the colour of the rosy clouds." "You shall have your wish," answered the Fairy Queen, and looking down, Poppy found herself dressed in a lovely, bright, crimson dress, which made her feel so happy that she danced round and round singing to herself.

"Now, Bluebell, it is your turn," said the Fairy Queen. Bluebell, smiling, said, "I just look up at the blue sky and think how beautiful it is. I have never seen any other colour so beautiful. I should like to have a dress the colour of the blue sky."

"Very well, Bluebell," said the kind Fairy Queen, and Bluebell found herself dressed in a bright blue dress. She was so happy that she trembled all over. All that day she smiled up at the blue sky and kept saying over to herself, "I am like the blue sky! I am like the blue sky!"

"Dear Buttercup, what colour do you choose for your dress?" said the Fairy Queen. Buttercup answered, "I am always thinking about the great sun. There is nothing else so beautiful in all the world. I love the sun and should like to look as bright and golden as he." The Fairy Queen smiled down into the face of Buttercup and said, "Your dress shall be bright and yellow like the sunlight." And Buttercup, dressed in gold, said, "Thank you, Fairy Queen," and began singing softly to herself, "I am like the golden sun! I am like the golden sun!"

"Now, Violet dear, tell me what colour you love best," said the Fairy Queen, in her sweet voice. "I am always watching to see the sky turn purple," answered little Violet. "I love the evening because the sky is soft and tender. I should like to be the colour of the sky at dawn, or as it is late in the evening. It is the most beautiful colour I ever saw." "Dear Violet, you shall look like the sky at dawn. Does that make you happy?" said the Fairy Queen. "You have made me very glad, dear Fairy Queen,"

said Violet, dancing about on her little feet. And then, as it was late in the evening, all the fairies, looking beautiful and bright in their new dresses, waving their wands and kissing their hands, said, "Good-night, dear Fairy Queen," and went away to sleep, very happy.

And now when the flowers wake up from their winter sleep, the beautiful, crimson poppy makes everyone glad with her bright dress, and the buttercup looks up through the grass like little bits of sunshine dotted all over the ground. The bluebell sways to and fro on her tall, graceful stem, but the dear little purple violet stays quietly at home, waiting for the children to find her among her soft, green leaves.

INSIDE THE BARNYARD GATE

ONE warm day Susie carried her baby brother to the great farmyard. A large barn stood on one side, and near this a poultry house. The chickens, ducks, and geese would come out and stray about the grassy lot. In one corner was a clear pond. Susie knew she would find many things out here to interest the baby. She walked about till the baby grew sleepy, then she carried him to a shed where cattle are fed in winter, and gently placed him on some clean hay and sang sweetly:

“What will you give, what will you give
For my little baby fair?
Nothing so bright as his bonnie blue eyes,
Or soft as his curly hair.
What will you bring, what will you bring
To trade for my treasure here?
No one can show me a thing so sweet
Anywhere, far or near.”

“Moo-moo,” said something near by. “Is that what you think?” Madam Jersey Cow looked very doubtfully at baby and asked, “Can he kick up his heels and frolic all over the yard?” “No,” said Susie, “he can’t walk yet.” “Ah, how old is he?”

"Nearly a year," replied Susie. "Nearly a year? My child walked when two days old." The cow sniffed and walked off.

"Baa-aa," said an old sheep. "Let *me* see. He's a nice little thing, but has he only two legs?"

"That's all," replied Susie. "Then mine is worth twice as much. If you had two babies, we might make a bargain. He seems to have no wool."

"Oh, see what curly hair he has," said Susie. "I do not wish to trade," said the sheep, as she trotted off with her lamb.

"Quack, quack, quack. Let me look at your baby," said Mrs. Duck. "His feet do not look as though he would make a good swimmer." "He can't swim at all," answered Susie. "Good-bye," said Mrs. Duck. "All my darlings can swim."

"Chip, chip, chip," was the next sound Susie heard, and down flew a robin from its nest in a tree. "Can he sing?" asked Mrs. Redbreast. "He's too little to sing," said Susie. "Too little?" said the robin. "Can't he sing fee-fee-filly-weet-weet?" "No," said Susie. "My children all sang nicely at four months," said the robin. "And has he no feathers on his breast?" "No-oo." Off flew Mrs. Redbreast.

"Cluck-cluck; peep, peep," Mrs. White Leghorn came along with her downy chicks. "I do not think

I would care to trade," she said. "Can your baby say 'peep, peep' when he is hungry?" "When he is hungry he cries," said Susie. "And his legs are not yellow," said Mrs. Leghorn, "good-bye;" and Susie laughed aloud.

"I don't wonder," said the old gray cat, with her three little kits. Susan fondled the kittens lovingly. "She's so proud because she has twelve chickens. I think a small family is much nicer, — three, for instance, — don't you?" "I think one enough, if it's teething," said Susie. "Mine never have trouble with their teeth," said the cat. "Perhaps I could teach your baby to catch mice. I will take him and let you have one kitten." "Oh, no, you don't understand me," said Susie. "I don't want to change at all. I'd rather have my little brother than anything else in the world." But Mrs. Puss took hold of him as if to carry him off. Baby gave a scream, and Susie awoke.

GOOD MORNING IN THE FARMYARD

ARISE, arise; 'tis early dawn,
The golden sun is breaking,
And far and near, this gladsome morn,
All nature is awakening.

Listen! Listen!
The cock wakes up with a "cockle-doodle-do,"
The ducks "quack-quack,"
The cows "moo-moo,"
The dogs "bow-wow," and the rooks "caw-caw,"
And the donkey responds with a loud "hee-haw."

"Good morning, children, one and all,"
The merry birds are singing.
With joyous welcome to the day
The farmyard is a-ringing.

Listen! Listen!
The cock wakes up with a "cockle-doodle-do,"
The ducks "quack-quack,"
The cows "moo-moo,"
The dogs "bow-wow," and the rocks "caw-caw,"
And the donkey responds with a loud "hee-haw."

TOMMY ROBIN



AFTER their return from the South, Mother and Father Robin went house-hunting for a tree in which to build their nest. They flew from tree to tree for several days, until they found a graceful elm where there were two drooping branches close together, and high up out of the reach of cats and other animals.

Then they began to work at building their little home. Early in the morning they would

fly over the fields and through the forests to find the bits of string, straw, hair, and hay they needed, plastering them together on the outside with mud, but making all soft inside with feathers, wool, and bits of down. One morning Mother Robin had just as many eggs in the nest as you have little fingers on one hand.

There sat dear Mother Robin keeping the eggs warm beneath her soft breast, while Father Robin sang cheerily on a branch close by, as he rested a moment from his labours, for he was very busy finding food for himself and Mother Robin, as she could not leave the nest. There she sat patiently waiting day after day, until one morning she heard a faint, little tapping and cracking, and one eggshell broke, and out came a tiny birdie, and soon another birdie broke its shell and came out, until instead of five little blue eggs lying in the nest, there were five tiny birdies without any feathers, who cuddled close together under the mother bird's wings. As the days grew warmer, Mother Robin left the birdies and helped Father Robin to find worms for her little family.

The bird that first came out of the shell was a little larger and stronger than the others. His father and mother named him "Tommy." One day he began stretching himself and pushing his little sisters

and brothers about. "Oh, Tommy," they cried, "do keep still — you are crowding us so." But Tommy did not listen. Craning his head over the nest, he looked over the branches and leaves and by and by hopped up on the edge of the nest.

"Oh, Tommy, Tommy, you will fall!" cried his little sisters, but Tommy did not heed. Spreading out his wings and flapping them up and down, he chirped, "I do believe I can fly." But instead of flying poor Tommy fell down, down, on the gravel walk beneath. He tried to stand up, but fell over again. The fall on the hard stones had broken one of his tiny legs. The poor little birdie cried, "Peep, peep, peep, peep," but mother and father were far away and could not hear.

Then Tommy saw two great eyes looking at him. They belonged to a large tomcat. "Peep, peep; peep, peep," cried Tommy, with a faint little chirp of terror; but just in time somebody called, "Go away, you naughty Pussy. Sh — sh," and the farmer's little girl Mary took poor, frightened Tommy gently in her hand, and wrapping him tenderly in her pinafore, ran with him into the house to find mother. "Oh, mother dear, look, look!" she cried. "I found this poor little birdie with its leg broken. It must have fallen out of the nest."

Mary's kind mother bound up Tommy's leg

(using a tiny stick for a splint) and laid him gently down on some cotton wool in a little, round basket, which Mary placed on the sill outside the window. And day after day Mary fed the little robin with worms and little pieces of bread and sugar, until Tommy's leg grew quite strong again and he would stand up in the basket and try to whistle, "Cheer-up, cheer-up."

Tommy thought to himself, "If only I could whistle loud enough for father and mother to hear, they would soon find me and take me home to the nest again."

Now as Father and Mother Robin kept their bright eyes wide open looking for Tommy, it was not many days before they spied him on the window-sill. Oh, how glad they felt, and how happy Tommy was as he nestled up close to his mother! They chirped and fluttered their wings to show Tommy how to fly, and it was not very long before Tommy spread his wings and away he flew, back to the nest with his dear father and mother, where he found his little sisters and brothers safe from harm and glad to have brother Tommy back again.

"Now," said Mother Robin, "it is time all my birdies should learn to fly." So the next day they all spread their wings and flew over to a branch near by and back again.

The next day they flew over to another tree and back again, and every day they fluttered their tiny wings and followed their mother until their wings felt so strong they could fly all along the garden. Sometimes they would hop on the ground looking for worms with their bright, little eyes, and singing and whistling, "Cheer-up, cheer-up."

But Tommy did not forget the little girl who had been so kind to him, and often flew to her window to take from her hand the bits of food which she seemed always to have ready for him. One day he took his brothers and sisters with him to the window, and the little girl was delighted to find that she now had the care of the whole of Mr. and Mrs. Robin's pretty family.

HENNY PENNY

AWAY out in the country lived a farmer who owned horses and cows, sheep and oxen, ducks and geese, hens and chickens, pigeons and turkeys, — all kinds of animals and birds; and as he was careful to give them proper shelter and food, he had a large barn built with a hay-loft above, where all the food for the cattle was stored away. There was plenty of straw and hay for the horses, bran for the cows, salt and cornmeal for the sheep, corn for the chickens, and peas for the pigeons.

One day Henny Penny (a little hen who was liked by all the hens and chickens) was pecking away on the floor of the barn. Suddenly something hit her on the top of the head, but she did not see anything. The next time she felt something hit her, she looked up very quickly, but could not see anything anywhere. "I do believe the sky is falling," said Henny Penny, "and I must go and tell the king." So away she ran as fast as she could out of the barn-yard gate into the highroad.

Soon she saw a duck waddling towards her. "Good-morning, Henny Penny," said Ducky Dad-

dles. "Where are you going?" "The sky is falling, and I am going to tell the king," answered Henny Penny. "I shall go with you and help," said Ducky Daddles.

Around the corner they met a goose. "Good-morning, Henny Penny and Ducky Daddles," said Goosey Poosey. "Where are you going?" "The sky is falling, and we are going to tell the king," said Henny Penny. "I shall go with you," said Goosey Poosey, "as I may be of some use."

As they came down a hill they met a cock. "Good-morning, Henny Penny, Ducky Daddles, and Goosey Poosey," said Cocky Locky. "Where are you going?" "The sky is falling," answered Henny Penny, "and we are going to tell the king." "I shall go with you to find him," said Cocky Locky, as he strutted along.

Just at the meeting of the cross-roads they met a turkey. "Good-morning, Henny Penny, Ducky Daddles, Goosey Poosey, and Cocky Locky. Where are you going this bright morning?" said Turkey Lurky. "The sky is falling, and we are going to tell the king," answered Henny Penny. "I think I may be of help to you, as I am such a strong bird," said Turkey Lurky, as he walked proudly along beside them. So Henny Penny, Ducky Daddles, Goosey Poosey, Cocky Locky, and Turkey Lurky,

all went together as fast as they could along the highroad to find the king and tell him the sky was falling.

As they came near a wood, they met a fox. "Good-morning, Henny Penny, Ducky Daddles, Goosey Poosey, Cocky Locky, and Turkey Lurky," said the fox. "Where are you all going this bright morning, if I may ask a civil question?" "The sky is falling, and we are going to tell the king," answered Henny Penny. "If you will follow me, I shall show you the way," said sly Mr. Fox Lox. So the birds all followed Mr. Fox Lox farther into the wood.

At last they came to a large, round hole in a bank. "Just pass in here," said Mr. Fox Lox. So Henny Penny, Ducky Daddles, Goosey Poosey, Cocky Locky, and Turkey Lurky ran into the hole without thinking, and Mr. Fox Lox quickly rolled up a great stone to the hole, and ran away to find his brother fox and ask him to share a fine dinner. When the poor birds found themselves all in the dark in the fox's hole, there was such a clucking, and scratching, and quacking and fluttering, but Henny Penny soon spied a little hole just beside the stone.

"Let us all scratch as hard as we can and try and make this hole bigger," cried Henny Penny,

and they all scratched and pecked so hard that soon they could just squeeze through, and away they all ran as fast as they could towards the farm. They soon reached the farm-yard and shut the gate fast, glad to find themselves safe at home.

Henny Penny was soon pecking away in the barn, as she felt hungry after her long walk. Suddenly something fell right on top of her head, and looking up, a pea rolled over her beak and on to the floor. So Henny Penny found that the sky was not falling. It was only a pea that had fallen through a crack in the floor of the hay-loft, and I think she was glad, don't you?

THE LITTLE GARDENER

WHEN little Mary opened her eyes on the morning of her sixth birthday, she found close beside her little, white bed a large, oblong box with a lock and key belonging to it. What could be inside, she wondered? Then, jumping out of bed, she raised the lid and peeped in; then, clapping her hands and dancing about the room, she cried, "Oh, what dear little garden tools! Just the right size for a little girl like me! Here is a rake, a hoe, a spade, and a trowel, and, yes, a tiny watering-can and a pail. What a lovely birthday present! I must run and give dear papa and mamma a good hug and kiss."

After breakfast Mary wanted to go out in the garden and begin work. But as her birthday came about the middle of March, it was a little early for gardening, her father said. So she waited as patiently as she could until the sunbeams and rain-drops had broken up the hard, frosty ground; then when father had marked out a nice, little plot of ground for her very own garden, she worked busily



with her spade, digging up the earth and making a garden bed.

The next day, Mary used her rake to make the ground more soft and loose, and then trimming the edges carefully with the hoe, she had her garden all ready for the seeds. These seeds were saved from the garden in the autumn time. She and her father had put them away in little packages with the name printed on the outside. She found the seeds of the sweet peas, daisies, nasturtiums, pansies, and mignonette, and when she had made some little drills just the right depth for the seeds, she planted these, covering them carefully with the moist earth.

Then came the waiting time—it seemed a very long time to Mary. Every morning, the first thing she did was to run out in the garden to see if there were any little green sprouts, such as she could see in the gardens all along the street.

At last, one bright morning, she spied little sprigs of green just peeping above the brown earth. Oh, how glad Mary was as she watched the little green sprigs grow higher day after day! How wonderful it all was! Father told her all about the roots under the ground, with their tiny mouths; next came the stems, leaves, and flower-buds, all from one tiny seed.

Mary loved the little flower-buds, — “baby-buds” she called them. At first they were very tiny, — just peeping out, all folded up, — but they grew and grew, and by and by the pretty buds opened out into lovely flowers. All this time she had been watching her little garden of flowers, tending them with loving care. If the blossoms drooped their pretty heads and looked dusty and thirsty, she brought out the little watering-can, and they all had a drink and were made clean. If a plant or flower seemed weak and bent over too far, touching the ground, she raised it gently and tried to tie it up carefully against a little stick, until it grew stronger; sometimes she would pick up stones or little sticks in the way of the flower. So, when the month of July came, Mary’s garden looked very beautiful, with nearly all the flowers in bloom, — the sweet peas, mignonette, and pansies all giving forth their sweetest perfume.

But Mary did not pluck any of her flowers, for she had a secret. I will whisper it to you. She was saving all her flowers for her dear father’s birthday, which came towards the end of July. She did not even tell mother, for she wanted to surprise everybody.

The day before the birthday Mary went away to the woods and gathered a bundle of little twigs and

branches and tied them together to form a dainty basket — weaving the slender branches in and out, and lining the inside with moss.

Next morning, as soon as the sunbeams wakened her, Mary dressed herself quickly, and taking the pretty basket and little garden shears, ran out into the garden and soon gathered her prettiest flowers and arranged them in the basket. How lovely it looked, — dear father's birthday present, — which she now placed ready for him beside his plate at the breakfast table, waiting. At last the breakfast bell rang, and father and mother came down into the dining-room.

"Many happy returns of your birthday, dear father!" cried Mary, throwing her arms around his neck. Then father spied the basket. "Oh, what lovely flowers, and what a pretty basket!" he cried. "Surely some kind fairy must have been here in the night-time;" and both father and mother looked as surprised and pleased as Mary could wish.

"I am the fairy, and the flowers came from my very own garden!" cried Mary; and father and mother kissed their dear, little girl again, looking at her with loving eyes. Mary danced around and around like a real fairy, for she felt very happy.

When some more blossoms came in her garden, Mary gathered a bunch for poor crippled Tommy,

who could not go outside to see all the beautiful flowers growing. Another pretty bunch of the sweet-smelling ones she placed in "Blind Betty's" hand, and during the long, bright days of summer, if you peeped through the bars of the garden gate, you would see happy, little Mary, with wide garden hat, rake, hoe, or spade, busily at work in her "very own garden."



A LONG WAY ROUND

WHEN the meadow's flowery with summer
It's a long way home from school ;
When the hedges are white
and dusty,
And only the wood seems
cool.

I went through the wood and
the meadow,
Where feathery
grasses grow,
To gather some flowers
for mother,
Because she does
love them so.

I gathered some love-
lies-bleeding,
Some may, and wild-
roses, too,
And you dear little
dog-violets,
I'm glad that I gathered you.



I stooped for some slim, white daisies ;
The kind that mother likes best ;
They grow in the shady churchyard,
Where the dear, dead people rest.

And if you go through the churchyard,
And then go round by the pool,
Where forget-me-nots blossom and flag-flowers,
It's a long way home from school.

You'll sit by the window and sew, mother,
And sing soft songs as you wait,
You'll hear the kettle sing softly,
And you'll wonder why I'm so late.

You'll hear all the others come laughing
For no one's kept in to-day ;
But you'll not see me among them,
For I'm not coming home that way.

I shall run through the orchard and garden —
You'll not hear a single sound,
Till I give you the flowers through the window —
For the door's such a long way round.

— E. NESBIT.

THE THREE BUTTERFLIES

ONE very hot day in the summer time three butterflies were flying all around a beautiful garden. Every now and then one of them would rest lightly on a flower with honey streaks, and sip some of the honey dew, then away they would fly again in the bright sunshine. One of the butterflies had wings of a deep, orange colour with black streaks, another had wings of the brightest yellow, while the third butterfly had very little colour in her wings, for they were of a dainty white with tiny streaks of yellow.

The three butterflies were very happy in the garden, for they loved the flowers and the bright sunshine. But one day it grew suddenly dark, and looking up, the butterflies saw a dark thunder-cloud rolling slowly up from the west.

"Oh, dear," said the yellow butterfly, "I do believe a thunder-storm is coming. We must find shelter at once. Where shall we go?" "Come over to Mrs. Lily's," said the white butterfly. "She is a good friend of mine, and I am sure she will take us in." So the three butterflies flew swiftly over to Mrs. Lily's and asked if they might enter, as a storm was coming.

"Well," said Mrs. Lily, "the *white* butterfly may stay, but as I have such pure white velvet carpets and do not wish them soiled, I cannot ask all." "Oh," said the white butterfly, "if we cannot all stay, I shall go with my friends."

So away they all flew again, and just then came a roll of thunder which frightened them very much. "We must go somewhere," said the poor butterflies. "Oh, here is Mrs. Nasturtium. She is my good friend," said the orange butterfly. "Please may we come in?" "You may come in," said Mrs. Nasturtium, "but I cannot ask your friends, for you can see what lovely orange velvet carpets and hangings I have in my little house, and I do not wish them soiled." "Come on," said the orange butterfly, "for I shall certainly not stay without my friends."

Just then came a little flash of lightning and a louder rumble of thunder. "Oh, what shall we do?" said the poor, little butterflies. "Oh, I know," said the yellow butterfly. "My friend Mrs. Yellow Tulip has quite a large house. Let us fly quickly over to her door;" and spreading their wings, the butterflies were soon at Mrs. Tulip's. "Oh, please let us in, Mrs. Tulip," said the yellow butterfly. "We are so frightened of the storm." "Walk right in," said Mrs. Tulip to the yellow butterfly, "but

your friends must go to some other place, for my yellow satin walls and floors are so easily soiled." "No, thank you," answered the yellow butterfly, "I shall go with my friends."

Just then came little drops of rain — "pitter-patter, pitter-patter." "Oh, dear, oh, dear, where shall we go?" said the poor, frightened butterflies, flying hither and thither. Then they heard a cheery voice calling, "Come in; come in, my dears, out of the storm;" and there was kind Mother Mullen calling to them with her doors wide open, and the tired little butterflies flew in just in time, for it grew darker and darker as the big thunder-clouds rolled up. The lightning flashed, the thunder rumbled and rolled, and down came the raindrops, faster and faster. Again the lightning gave a flash and the thunder rolled louder and louder, and as the three butterflies listened to the pouring rain on the roof, they felt very thankful to dear Mrs. Mullen.

At last the thunder-claps grew fainter and fainter, and the lightning gave a little flash now and again as the thunder-clouds rolled away in big masses, and by and by there was only a little pitter-patter of raindrops to be heard; and then suddenly out came the sunshine again, and the three butterflies, after thanking their kind friend Mrs. Mullen, said "good-bye" and flew all around the garden. How

lovely it looked, with all the tiny raindrops sparkling like diamonds in the sunshine, and the flowers so bright and fresh after the rain; but Mrs. Lily, Mrs. Nasturtium, and Mrs. Yellow Tulip hung their heads. As the three little friends passed out into the sunshine again, one of them said, "I do not wonder Mrs. Lily likes to keep her beautiful house spotless, and Mrs. Nasturtium to have lovely velvet carpets, and Mrs. Tulip shiny, satin walls, but what would have happened to us if kind Mother Mullen had not opened the doors of her simple home and taken us in?"

THE KING WITH THE ASS'S EARS

A LONG time ago a king ruled over a large country away over in the East. He was a good king, kind and just to his people, and they all loved him. The king was very fond of music, and one day he sent out invitations to the people all over the country, asking them to come to the palace and listen to all who could play on the harp. A lovely, golden crown all studded with precious stones was to be given to the one who made the harp give forth the sweetest and grandest music. The king also gave orders that a great feast was to be prepared for his people. All kinds of dainty foods and wines were to be made ready.

At last the great day came, and the king and queen were seated in state on the great red throne in the large assembly room of the palace, robed in purple velvet edged with ermine fur, and wearing each a golden crown. The lovely, golden crown for the musician who could make the harp bring forth the sweetest and grandest music was placed on a red velvet stand just in front of Their Majesties.

Very soon the people began to arrive. Everyone came, all dressed in their very best clothes. All the grandfathers and grandmothers, fathers and mothers, children of all ages, entered through the great doorway, looking very fine and happy. The little children were placed in front seats, so they could see as well as hear.

By and by all the players, holding their harps, came marching up the centre aisle, and, bowing to the king and queen, found places near them. Then, when all was ready, the harpers began to play, one after the other, on their golden harps, making all kinds of beautiful music, both grand and sweet. The king and queen and the great crowd of people listened carefully, but when all were finished, no one could tell who was the very best player, as all played equally well and brought forth lovely music from their harps. Just then came the sound of galloping horses and a loud knock on the door. When the doors were thrown open, there stood two of the most beautiful ladies you could ever dream of. One was dark, with black hair and bright, black eyes, and cheeks like rose-leaves. She was dressed in a long, sweeping robe of crimson velvet and a string of rubies around her neck. On her arm she carried a golden harp.

Just behind her walked the other lady, and the

children thought she must surely be an angel, she was so very fair and sweet. Her hair was bright golden, like the sunshine, her eyes as blue as the skies, and her cheeks lily-white. She was dressed in a long robe of pure white velvet, and a string of pearls hung around her neck. On her arm she carried a harp made of mother-of-pearl.

The beautiful ladies walked up the aisle towards the king and queen, and when they reached the throne, bowed deeply, and the dark lady said, "Oh, King, may we play on the harp for you?"

"Yes, beautiful one," answered the king; "we shall all be glad to listen to your music."

Then the proud lady in the crimson dress began to play on her harp, and it made all the people feel like dancing and marching and singing "God save the King," for her music was all about the king and his great country, and his soldiers and people. The harp sent forth the grandest music, and when it stopped, the people stamped and clapped and cheered, crying, "She will win the golden crown! she will win the golden crown!" When all was quiet again, the king bowed to the fair lady and said, "Now we shall listen to your music."

Then the fair lady began to play, oh, so sweetly and quietly. The music was all about our heavenly Father and His kingdom, the beautiful world, all

about the birds and butterflies, the grass and flowers, the sunshine and the skies, and our heavenly Father's love for all.

All the people sat very still and listened to the heavenly music, and when the playing was over, not a sound could be heard in the great hall, and every one felt, "It is like heaven. She will win the golden crown, she will win the golden crown." Just then the great bell in the tower began to ring, cling-clang, cling-clang, and the king, rousing himself, said to the people, "Let us away to the great dining hall where a feast is spread, and we shall make our choice of the music afterwards."

Then all the people crowded into the great dining hall and ate and drank all the good things the king had prepared for them, and I am afraid that most of them feasted too much, even the king, and it was a very noisy crowd that came back to the assembly hall singing "For he's a Jolly Good Fellow" and "God save the King." But when the king stood up on the throne, all was quiet again. "The music all about your country and your king is the sweetest and grandest," shouted the king, and lifting up the jewelled crown, he placed it on the head of the beautiful, proud lady in the crimson dress. All the people stamped and cheered and cried, "Hurrah for the king and the beautiful lady!" but the

little children were quiet and sorrowful, for they loved the "angel lady" best.

At last the crowd of people went to their homes, and as it was very late, were soon fast asleep. The king and queen also retired to rest, and all was quiet in the great palace. The king slept soundly for a while, and then suddenly awoke to find the moonlight streaming into his bedroom through the window, and there in the moon's rays stood the beautiful fair lady who had played on her harp for the king.

She glided softly up to the bedside, and looking down at the king, said, "Oh, King, you did not make a good or wise use of your ears to-day. Now instead of your own ears you shall have ass's ears," and touching the king's ears lightly with her finger, she glided away in the moonbeams.

The king stared at the moonlight for a while, but as he was only half awake, soon fell asleep again. Early next morning he awakened again, and having a dim memory of what happened in the moonlight, put his hands to his ears and, to his horror, found them long, pointed, and hairy. Then jumping out of bed, he ran to the mirror, and there was a picture of a king with long and pointed ass's ears. The poor king could not bear to look at himself and felt that a terrible thing had happened. What could he do?

All the people would laugh at him, and he groaned as he thought of it. Then seeing a red silk handkerchief, he tied it down closely all around his head, and got into his bed again.

After a while the king's valet knocked at his door, and entering, found His Majesty with a red silk handkerchief tied all over his head.

"Will Your Majesty be dressed now?" asked the valet. "Shall I remove the handkerchief?"

"No-o-o!" thundered the king; "leave the handkerchief alone. It is to be the fashion to wear them all around the head."

So all the men in the kingdom began to wear red silk handkerchiefs tied all around their heads like the king. But soon the king's hair began to grow, and the red silk handkerchief rounded out like a red balloon. At last the king sent for a barber, and taking him up into one of the highest towers, pulled off the handkerchief and said, "Cut my hair." The barber could hardly keep from laughing, the king looked so funny, and said to himself, "Oh, the king has ass's ears!" but the king looked so fierce, he quickly cut his hair close to his head, and when he was finished, rushed out through the tower door, where he was seized by the king's soldiers and put in prison. And every time the king's hair grew long another barber was sent for to cut it, and was after-

wards made a prisoner, until all the barbers in the country were shut up in prison but one, whose mother was a widow.

When the king sent for this barber, his mother came instead, and begged the king to spare her son, as it was well known in the country that a barber never came back again when the king's hair was cut.

"Send the barber to me," said the king, "and perhaps I may grant your request." And when the barber came, the king said to him in a stern voice, "If you will make me a solemn promise never, never to tell what you see, I shall let you go." And when the barber saw the king's head, he understood and gave the promise never, never to tell what he had seen.

But on his way downstairs after cutting the king's hair, the barber could not help saying to himself, "Oh, the king has ass's ears, the king has ass's ears," until at last he clapped his hand over his mouth to keep the words in. He wandered away out into the country and felt he must shout, "The king has ass's ears!" So when he came to a forest, he found his way to the darkest and thickest part of the deep woods, and there stood a large oak-tree with a round hole in the trunk; so putting his hands up to his mouth, the barber shouted into the

tree with all his might, "The king has ass's ears! the king has ass's ears! the king has ass's ears!" and it seemed as if all the leaves and branches began rustling and whispering, "The king has ass's ears, the king has ass's ears," for it was a fairy tree. But the barber went to his home and felt much better and able to keep his promise to the king.

The king was very unhappy and unkind to his people, and a "still, small voice" kept telling him that he was a cruel and wicked king. One day he was very angry with his chief musician, and threw his harp across the room, breaking the frame. The poor harper, who had done his best to please the king, picked up his harp and went away to the forest to find some strong wood to make a new frame. In the centre of the forest he found a stout oak-tree with a large hole in it. Cutting some of the wood from the tree, he soon mended the frame of the harp and went back to the king's palace.

One day the king sent for all the people to come to the palace and hear his chief musician play upon the harp. When all were seated, the old harper raised his harp to play a song of welcome to the people, but as soon as he touched the strings, the harp began to play, "The king has ass's ears, the king has ass's ears, the king has ass's ears." When the king heard this, his face grew redder and

redder, and he felt hotter and hotter, until, springing to his feet, he cried to all the people, "I have ass's ears. I made a poor and selfish use of my own ears, and the fairies gave me these," and he pulled at the red silk handkerchief.

But before he could take it quite off his head, the angel lady appeared and gently touched his ears, and when the handkerchief did come off, the king had his own ears again. All the people cheered and sang "God save the King," while the king hastened to send out his officers to set free all the poor barbers who had been in prison all this time. Then he felt better and tried hard to be a good king, and the people felt that their own king had come back to them.

