

FAMILY PETS

JACKY JACKDAW
AND THE REST OF THEM



By E. E. S.

FAMILY PETS.

THE HISTORY OF
JACKY JACKDAW AND THE REST
OF THEM.

By E. E. S.

LONDON :
GOSPEL BOOK DEPOT, 20, PATERNOSTER SQUARE E.C.

MADE AND PRINTED IN ENGLAND

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY . . .	vii.
CHAPTER I	
SEVEN—AND THE BABY . . .	1
CHAPTER II.	
TWO LITTLE SPARROWS	7
CHAPTER III.	
JACKY JACKDAW . . .	12
CHAPTER IV.	
BLUE LOBELIA	18
CHAPTER V.	
DISOBEDIENT DICK . . .	22
CHAPTER VI.	
GRANNIE'S SURPRISE	25
CHAPTER VII.	
LOST LULU	31
CHAPTER VIII.	
THE STUFFED BROWN RABBIT .	37

	PAGE
CHAPTER IX.	
A VISIT TO FRANCE	41
CHAPTER X.	
NANNY THE GOAT	47
CHAPTER XI.	
MOTHER MOLLY AND THE BABY BUNNIES	53
CHAPTER XII.	
THE SOLDIER'S STICK	59
CHAPTER XIII.	
ROGER AND PEGGOTY PIG	64
CHAPTER XIV.	
A GREAT SNOWSTORM	69
CHAPTER XV.	
THE LITTLE STRANGER	74
CHAPTER XVI.	
BUSY BEES	77
CHAPTER XVII.	
POTIFA AND PINNA	83

INTRODUCTORY.

OLD Win had a soft, curly coat of brown and white, and big floppety ears, and she lived with her master and mistress and five children. The eldest little girl was eight or nine years old, and the youngest was a baby.

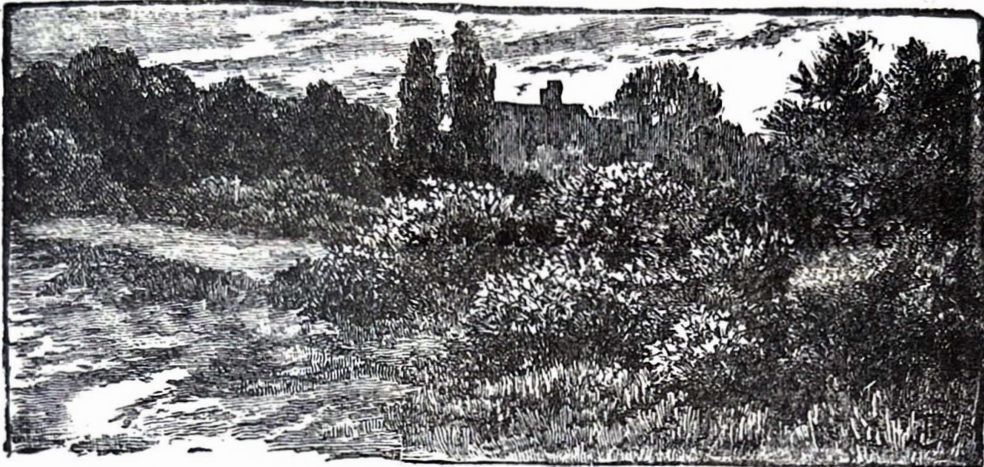
One day old Win was left alone in the room in charge of the cradle with the baby inside it. She felt she must take good care of the baby, and when Mr. and Mrs. Green came into the room she was on the watch at once. Mr. and Mrs. Green were friends of the family, it is true, but the baby did not belong to *them*, and perhaps they had come to steal her away. How was old Win to tell what they might do ? So when they came near the cradle she growled, and Mr. and Mrs. Green understood that they must not touch the baby.

Another day baby went to the photographer's, and old Win went too ; she lay down close beside baby with her nose on her two front paws, and kept quite still, and when the photo came home it was just like both of them.

Old Win did not live very long after that, but

baby Ettie grew into a school-girl, and by-and-by became a woman. She had many friends with four feet like old Win, and others with feathers and wings, and she hopes you will like the stories she has written about some of them.





FAMILY PETS.

CHAPTER I.

SEVEN—AND THE BABY.

SEVEN children meant seven little mouths to feed and seven little bodies to clothe, besides school bills and doctor's bills and lots of other bills ; so every morning when their father had eaten his breakfast he hurried off to the town to earn the money to pay for it all.

He was a very kind father, and when

fair time came round he remembered to bring these seven little children some gingerbread home with him, brown crackly gingerbread rolled up into curls, so thin that it broke almost with a touch, and so delicious that it melted in their mouths.

One day he brought them quite another sort of present, it did not need carrying, for it ran along on four little legs of its own, and was pleased to come. It was very small and very pretty, with patches of tan colour on its smooth black coat, altogether a very handsome little dog.

And presently father told them that the poor little thing had been lost in the town, and that it had told him in its doggy way that it wanted to go home with him.

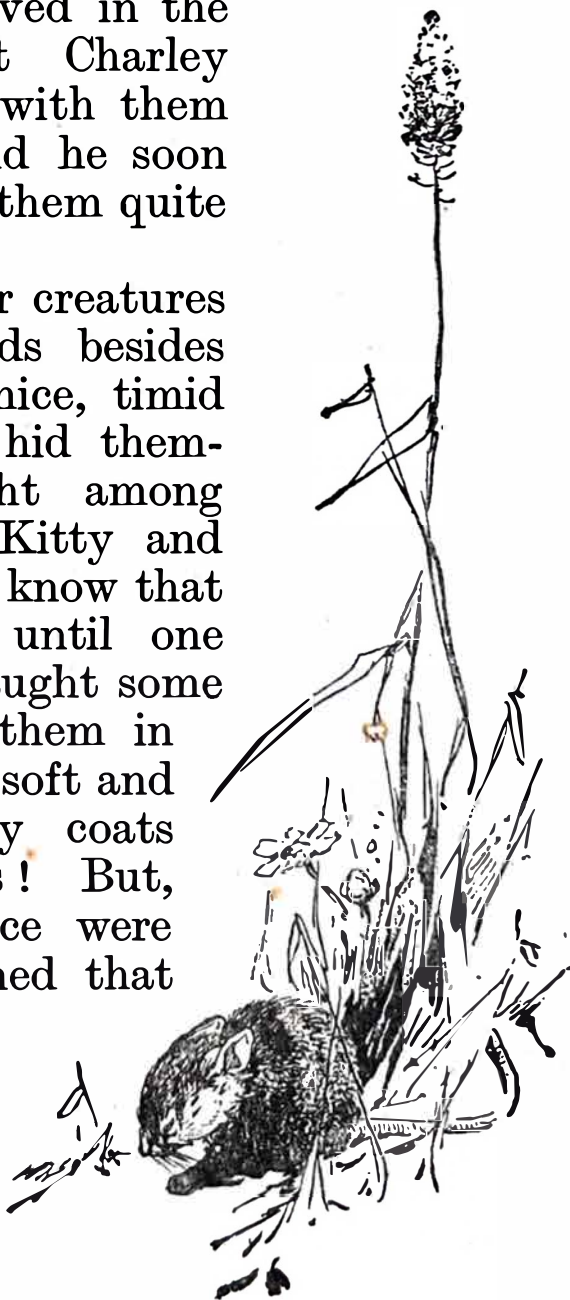
There was no name on the little dog's collar, nothing at all to shew where it came from, and no one ever asked for it back again, though some one must have been very sorry to lose such a dear little dog.

They called him Charley, and perhaps the name was something like the one he had been used to, for he quickly learnt to answer to it; but that was not

surprising when seven little voices called “Charley, Charley,” from morning to night, and when a new baby came and learnt to talk there were eight.

Brindle and Beauty, the cows that gave them milk, lived in the field outside, but Charley lived in the house with them like Pussy did, and he soon knew every one of them quite well.

There were other creatures living in the fields besides the cows: field mice, timid little things that hid themselves out of sight among the grassy roots. Kitty and Ettie did not even know that they were there until one day their father caught some of them and put them in their hands. How soft and velvety the pretty coats felt to their fingers! But, alas! the wee mice were so terribly frightened that their poor little hearts stopped beating and they died. They never



knew how sad the children were to see them die, and that they tried to warm them back to life.

Five of the girls, Edie, Polly, Tannie, Kitty, and Ettie, went to school, and Charley went too, to take care of them, but he only went as far as the room where they took off their boots and put on their slippers. And when school was over he sometimes came again to walk back with them, or met them on the way home.

They were taught many things at school; they learnt to say their tables backwards as well as forwards, and they learnt to knit. Little Ettie knitted a garter; day by day it grew longer and longer, and when it was quite finished she took it home and gave it to old Robert the gardener to tie up his stocking with.

When the frost came and there was ice on the pond near the house, the children had great fun sliding on it, and even if they tumbled down a good many times, no one was hurt, so it did not matter. Maggie Magpie found out where they were, and came hopping after them on to the ice; but though Mag was very amusing she was not

nearly such a favourite as Charley. She always hopped away when they wanted to touch her, and perhaps, too, they were a little bit afraid of her sharp beak.

The children wondered how Charley knew he must not go out with them on Sunday mornings. Maybe it was because everything was so different on that day. They did not get up quite so early, father did not go into town, and the children did not go to school; instead they all went out together, and mother went too.

Sunday afternoon was a very lazy time for Charley; he lay in front of the kitchen fire with Pussy close beside him, while Polly the parrot sat in her cage on the table. Sometimes Polly was naughty enough to call, "Charley, Charley!" just to make him think he was wanted to go for a scamper, or perhaps she would whistle and disturb him that way. She was often trying to tease him one way or another.

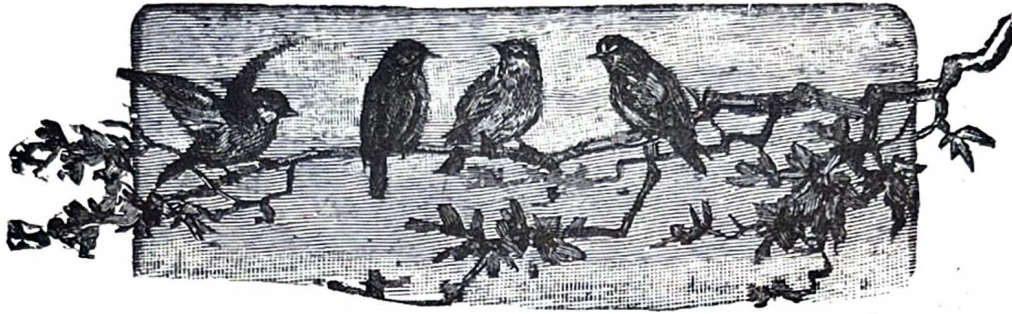
Sunday was the day mother read to the little ones out of a book with green covers. There were such beautiful stories in that book, all about the Lord Jesus when He was on this earth.

The one they remembered best told

how little children were once brought to Jesus that He might put His hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked those who brought them, but Jesus called them to Him and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and blessed them.

"I think when I read that sweet story of old,
When Jesus was here among men,
How He called little children as lambs to His
fold,
I should like to have been with Him then.
I wish that His hands had been placed on *my*
head,
That His arms had been thrown around *me*,
And that *I* might have seen His kind look when
He said,
Let the little ones come unto Me.

Yet still to His presence in prayer I may go,
And ask for a share in His love ;
And if I thus earnestly seek Him below,
I shall see Him and hear Him above,
In that beautiful place He has gone to prepare
For all who are washed and forgiven ;
And many dear children are gathering there,
'For *of such* is the kingdom of heaven.' "



CHAPTER II.

TWO LITTLE SPARROWS.

A YEAR or two after Charley came, Edie and Polly and Tannie and the rest of them all went to live in the town; but one day for a treat they were taken to spend an afternoon in the country with a friend of their mother's, whom we will call Mrs. Kindheart.

Mrs. Kindheart had four boys of her own; to be sure they were grown-up boys, and one was a sailor far off on the sea, but Mrs. Kindheart still had a mother's feelings and loved children. She had once had a little girl named Annie, but while Annie was quite young Jesus took her to live with Himself. Annie's mother was very sad when her little girl left her,

she would have kept her if she could ; but the Lord Jesus loved her even more than her father and mother did, and when He called, little Annie went to Him.

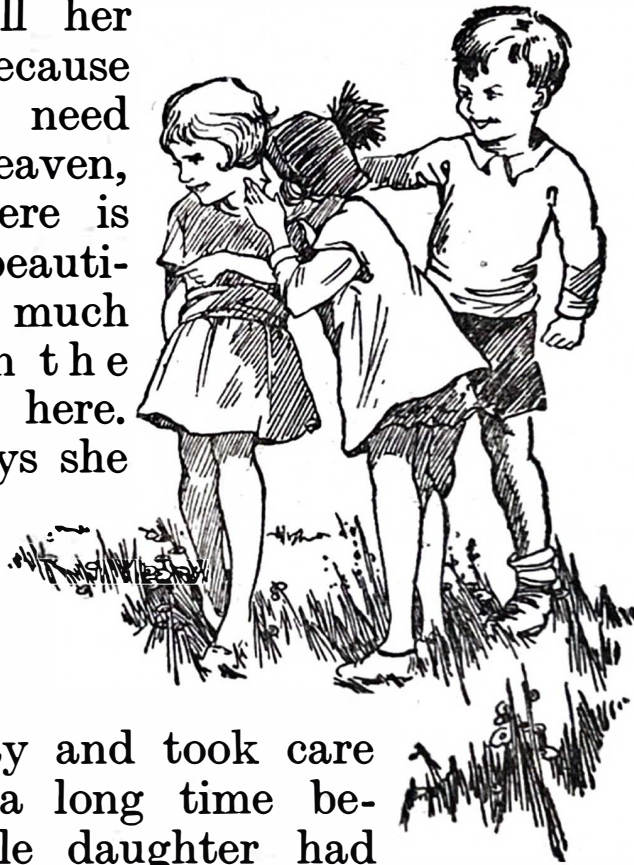
She left all her toys behind, because she did not need them in heaven, everything there is glorious and beautiful, so very much better than the things down here.

One of the toys she left behind

was a nice set of dolls' tea-things. Annie's mother

put them away and took care of them for a long time because her little daughter had played with them, but at last she gave them to her little friend Polly.

But I was going to tell you about Mrs. Kindheart's visitors. They climbed the steps that led to her garden gate and walked up the path to the front door. Whether their father and mother



took the whole eight of them I do not remember, but Kitty and Ettie were among those who went, and Polly, the one who had the tea-things, was almost sure to be there.

There were fruit trees in Mrs. Kindheart's garden, and before her visitors came she had been busy picking raspberries and making them into jam. Some of the jam she put into the very biggest jar she could find. It was round and red, and oh ! so fat ; it held pounds and pounds of jam. And before it was time for Polly and Kitty and Ettie and their mother to be going home, Mrs. Kindheart took them into her store-room and gave them this biggest jar of jam to take home with them.

They took something else home with them besides the jam, for while they were there a man who had been at work up a ladder brought down a nest with two baby sparrows in it, and Kitty and Ettie begged hard to have them for their own.

What the poor father and mother sparrow felt when their home was pulled down and taken away with the babies inside it, I cannot tell you, but no doubt they watched to see what would become of them.

When Kitty and Ettie reached home they put the nest with the little birds inside it carefully away in an outhouse, and fed them with crumbs soaked in milk, and covered them up warmly and left them for the night.

The little girls got up early in the morning and ran out to look at their baby sparrows. Yes! they were still alive, and very hungry. How wide they opened their beaks, why! you would not have thought a baby bird *could* have opened its beak so wide.

They were very often hungry, and Kitty and Ettie spent a great deal of their time for the next week or two in feeding their little sparrows. It was so lovely to see them thrive, and hear them say, "Chirrup, Cheer up!" even though they were not feeling sad.

The little birds grew fast, and at last the feathers in their wings were long enough and strong enough for them to try to fly. But, alas! neither Kitty nor Ettie could help them in this, and when the little birds fell to the floor there was no soft grass to keep them from being hurt, and first one and then the other died.

The Lord Jesus once said something

to His disciples about sparrows. His words are so beautiful that I think you will like to learn them by heart: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." (Matt. x. 29-31.)

God knew all about those little birds that Kitty and Ettie tried to take care of; He knew how much they missed the mother bird. He saw them fall to the ground and die, and He knew how very sorry Kitty and Ettie were about it.





CHAPTER III.

JACKY JACKDAW.

OF Jacky's early days very little is known except that he hatched out of an egg, and was not at all pretty to look at when first he came out of it and found himself a little live bird in a nursery that was built of sticks and twigs, and made soft and cosy by a lining of moss or feathers or wool, whichever his mother had been able to get.

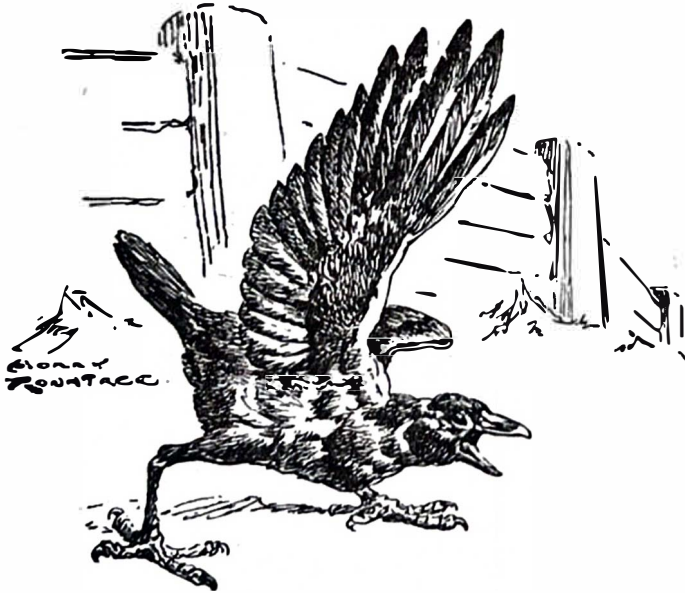
Though Jacky was very small when he was first hatched he had a very big appetite, and the little brothers and sisters who shared the nest with him were hungry too, so Mr. and Mrs. Daw were kept busy all day long finding food for them. They had to take so many journeys backwards and forwards that they must have been very glad when

night came and the babies shut their beaks as well as their eyes and went to sleep, and gladder still when the babies grew their wing feathers and learned to fly for themselves.

Jacky was a grown-up bird when he was given to Ettie, he had a handsome black coat and a strong beak, and he was well able to look after himself and find his own food if he had been allowed to do it. But Jack was a prisoner, and he had been a prisoner so long that he was quite happy and contented to be one. Even if his wing had not been clipped to keep him from flying away, he might still have been content to go

on living in the same little garden, never soaring up into the air in the bright spring time, or flying from place to place on quick beating wings.

Jacky was not at all lonely, for be-



sides visits from his mistress and her seven brothers and sisters, he had a cat and a dog for company. When a plate of dinner was put outside for pussy and doggie, Jack would hop slyly up to the plate and snatch pieces from it as his share, and even if doggie growled sometimes and pussy protested, he did not mind, for he knew they would not touch him.

Every night he was put to bed in the large cage that had once belonged to Poll Parrot. Ettie lifted up the door and Jacky hopped inside, and then the cage was put in the kitchen till morning, when he was let out again and given some bread and milk for his breakfast, for of course he could not find enough insects to last him all day in a small garden. In the winter when it grew dark before Ettie had returned from school, he sometimes came and tapped with his beak on the stone step of the house door, to tell that he wanted to hop into his cage and come indoors.

The children were very much amused one day when their father wrapped his white pocket handkerchief round Jacky's black feathers, and then held him with one hand and fed him with bits of cheese

with the other. But Jacky did not like being dressed up, and tried to peck ; even the cheese did not make him feel happy and good-tempered.

When the plants began to put up their delicate little green shoots, I am sorry to say Jack was very naughty ; he broke them off with his beak, and did so much harm in the garden that at last it was decided he could not be put up with any longer, he must go.

Jacky's mistress did not like the thought of parting with her pet, for she was still very fond of him in spite of his mischievous ways, and she was glad when the lady whose school she attended, said that he might come and live in the school garden and belong to her sister. Here Ettie was able to see him very often, and many a visit she paid him when lessons were over, talking to him and stroking his head, while he stood and looked at her in a very knowing way.

One day, looking through a window, a sad sight met her eyes : lying on the stones by the side of an uncovered cistern was a little black heap, she could hardly believe it could be poor Jacky. There he lay quite dead, his feathers all wet and bedraggled.

No one had stopped to watch him as he stood gazing down on the water in the cistern, and no one ever knew whether it was thirst, or his love for everything bright and glittering, that drew him to his death. Down he flew, and before he saw his danger it was too late, and soon he was drowned.

Poor Jacky ! he was deceived by the shining of what meant death to him, and he found out his mistake too late.

Boys and girls, and men and women too, are sometimes deceived by the glittering things which Satan shews them ; but these things are not really bright, with a brightness that lasts, for they are things of this world and they lead to death.

The true shining things all belong to Jesus, and He gives them to those who follow Him. "The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." This shining path leads to life, and at the end of it there is a shining crown.

Will you not pray this little prayer ?

" Jesus, who callest little ones to Thee,
To Thee I come !

Oh ! take my hand in Thine, and speak to me,
And lead me home,

Lest from the path of life my feet should stray,
And Satan prowling, make Thy lamb his prey."

The Lord Jesus will hear it even if you
say the words very softly, but you must
pray them with your heart as well as
with your lips.





CHAPTER IV.

BLUE LOBELIA.

WHEN Ettie was a little girl she usually had dinner in the nursery, but on Sundays as a special treat she came downstairs into the dining-room and had dinner with father and mother and the rest of the family.

One Sunday she did not behave at all nicely, and when her father said, "Stop doing that, Ettie," she still went on being naughty.

Her father spoke again, once or twice, but still Ettie did not stop. Then he took her into another room and punished her, for he loved his children too much to allow them to be disobedient. And he said that when next Sunday came Ettie must have dinner in the nursery.

The weekdays passed one by one, and soon it was Sunday again, but before it was quite time for dinner, Ettie's mother talked to her and persuaded her to go to her father and tell him that she was sorry she had been naughty.

Her father was in the garden, so she went out to him; she stood near him for a little while hesitating, and then at last she said, "I am sorry I was a naughty girl, father."

And her father was so kind to her, he quite forgave her, and he stooped down and picked a little bunch of pretty blue lobelia and gave it to her.

Children who trust in Jesus and listen to His words, know that they have a Father in heaven who loves them far more than an earthly father can love his children. He is grieved when they are naughty and disobedient, but oh! so ready to forgive them when they turn to Him and confess they have done wrong. Ettie's father could not see her heart, he could only see her tearful face and hear her words when she said she was sorry; but God can see our hearts and He knows when we are really sorry for being naughty. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive

us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 9.)

Next time you see pretty blue lobelia growing in a garden I hope it will remind you of the loving Father in heaven, and make you more than ever want to please Him.

Ettie's father was just as kind to her when she grew older as when she was little, and when she was old enough to be called Miss Ettie and asked to have a little dog of her very own, he gave her one.

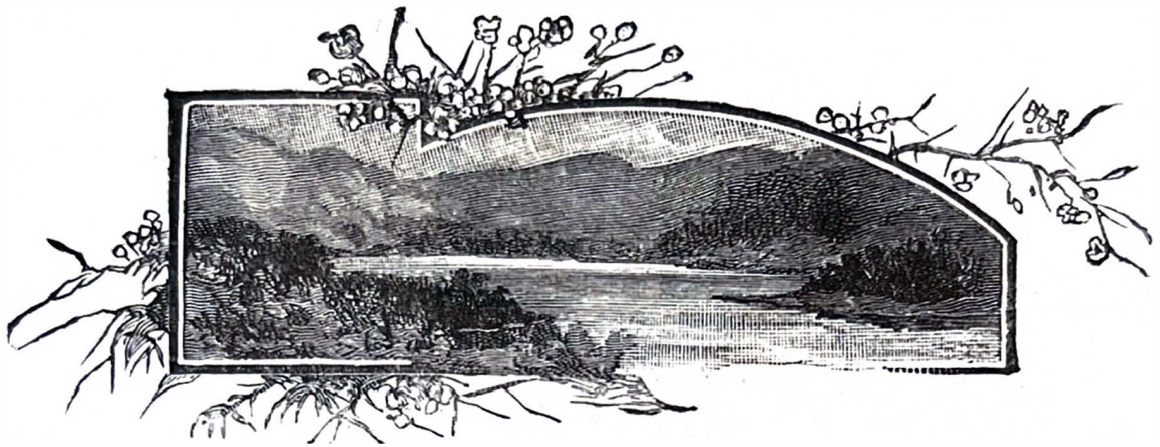
Gip was black and his coat was rough ; he seemed quite a nice dog, and Miss Ettie was very pleased with him ; she fed him herself and he was her little dog.

Sometimes her father took Gip to the office with him for a walk, and Gip liked going very much. When he got there he wandered about the yard, and caught rats, and enjoyed himself down by the river. One of the workmen took a great deal of notice of him, and gave him food, and patted him and said " Good dog," and Gip became very fond of this man. He forgot he belonged to another, and often ran away from home to be with him.

Gip was not like Charley, he did not really love his mistress or the rest of the family, and at last he was given to the master he had chosen for himself, and went to live with him, for Miss Ettie did not want to keep a dog that had to be chained up to prevent it from running away to some one else.

Telling the story of unfaithful Gip reminds me of the words of the Lord Jesus when He said: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. vi. 24.)

Jesus the Son of God loves us, He bought us with His own precious blood and we belong to Him, and now He wants us to love Him and serve Him best of all, better than any one or anything there is in the world. He wants us to love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength and with all our mind. And when we are loving Jesus we are loving God.



CHAPTER V.

DISOBEDIENT DICK.



ELL, children, this is going to be a short story, for Dick was a naughty dog and it is not pleasant to tell about him.

He was white and smooth-coated, and rather good looking ; he was clever too, in some ways, but he was dreadfully disobedient, and no-

thing made up for that. He loved taking his own way and pleasing himself.

He behaved so badly that neither of Miss Ettie's brothers cared to own him. Miss Ettie was ashamed of him too, but she took him out for walks and nursed him when he was ill.

Dick was very fond of going for rides on the tramcar, but he always rode on the top, for dogs were not allowed inside. Sometimes he went for a ride by himself ; when the car stopped he jumped on, ran up the steps, and stayed on the top until he had had a long enough ride, then he came down and jumped off. The conductor never asked him for pennies, and Dick got his ride for nothing while other passengers had to pay.

Opposite to the house where Dick lived was a large garden, and he often trespassed there ; he took no notice when he was called, but stayed as long as he chose before he came home again.

One day he had a fight in the road, it would not have mattered so much if he had fought with a dog his own size, for dogs are only dogs, and it is their nature to fight ; but the dog he tried to bite was smaller than he was, and it was cowardly of Dick to touch it. You can think how ashamed Miss Ettie felt of him !

When he saw a motor-car he ran straight at it and barked as loudly as he could, and whippings never did him any good, he was as bad as ever next time.

But even after Dick had been so naughty he was given one more chance ; he was sent to a new home and a new master.

Mr. Harold was very kind to him. He liked to have a nice-looking dog walking at his heels ; but Dick would not walk at his heels, he started his old tricks again, in fact he never left them off. He went on the tram without paying the fare, he raced with the motor-cars, and he took no notice of whippings and corrections.

I really do not like telling you the story of such a naughty dog, but as you may guess, he never lived to grow old and die of old age like Charley did. No, he was a bad dog and he came to a sad end.





CHAPTER VI.

GRANNIE'S SURPRISE.

WHEN young birds grow up they leave the nest and fly away, and this is very much what happened to six of the children you heard about in our first chapter, they grew up and went away from home. God had taken their kind father from them many years before; but their mother was still living, and sometimes Polly or Tannie or one of the others came to visit her, bringing with them little children of their own, who called her "Grannie." Miss Ettie and Brother Jack were grown up too, but they still lived at home with grannie.

Brother Jack told his sister a secret one morning over the breakfast-table; there was no one else to hear it, for

grannie was having her breakfast upstairs in bed.

And this was the secret: "I have bought a little dog for mother. Don't tell her anything about it, I want it to be quite a surprise for her. It is a Yorkshire terrier, such a tiny thing that you could put it inside that hot water jug."

"And when will it come?" asked Miss Ettie.

"Oh! I will send old Barratt up with it some time on Friday. I bought it in the country, and the people will be coming in to market and bring it with them. Its name is Jacko."

Friday soon came, and as grannie and Miss Ettie were having tea they heard a ring at the front door bell, and there was old Barratt with a hamper. Grannie wondered what it all meant, and when the hamper was opened Jacko jumped out.

She was a little black and tan dog with a rough coat and a very pretty face, and though it would have been a tight squeeze to put her into the hot water jug, she certainly was very small.

Grannie was fond of her straight away, and sorry for the poor frightened little doggie that ran to the door and wanted

so badly to go home again. And when grannie noticed that Jacko had a lame leg she felt sorrier still and gave her some cream in a saucer to comfort her.

When bedtime came Jacko was put in a basket in the kitchen and left there for the night. The basket was a nice comfortable one, but Jacko did not like being there at all. In her old home she went upstairs with her master and slept on his bed, and now she felt lonely and unhappy. She cried, and scratched hard at the kitchen door; but no one came, and she had to stay where she was until the morning.

After a time Jacko was allowed to go upstairs for the night, and then she was a very happy little dog indeed.

In the daytime she was taken for walks, and one day even had a ride inside a tramcar. The conductor did not say, "That dog ought to be outside," he just let her stay there.

When grannie and Miss Ettie and Brother Jack went to live in another house, of course Jacko went too. She was quite content to live with them now, especially when grannie let her jump up and rest in her lap, and she loved them all so much that she could not have told

which she loved most, unless indeed it was grannie.

The morning after they went to the new house Miss Ettie had to go shopping in the town, and she took Jacko with her; but presently she forgot all about her, and when she looked round Jacko had disappeared. Oh! how sorry she felt, she went down one street and up another, and called "Jacko, Jacko!" but no little doggie came. Then she asked a policeman if he had seen a little lost dog, but he said "No." She walked to the old house to see if Jacko had gone back there, but still she saw nothing of her. At last Miss Ettie turned to go home again, and on the way she passed the house where grannie was staying for a few days while the new home was being put straight, and there on the door-mat lay Jacko, resting after her run, and very glad to see her and to be let in at the door to go to grannie.

The garden to the new house was not a very large one, but there were some trees and flowers in it, and now and then a man came to cut the trees and dig the borders over. Miss Ettie, too, did a little gardening sometimes, and so did Jacko; but somehow Jacko's gar-

dening was always the wrong kind, and although both grannie and Miss Ettie were very angry with her, she never quite learnt that she must not dig holes in the flower borders and lawns.

Once they had a visitor for the weekend, a little white kitten whose mistress was away from home. Jacko did not try to kill it, but she wanted to play with it all the time, and licked it so much that it grew quite tired, and hid away under a chair where she could not reach it. When kitty was put in the garden she escaped over the wall and had to be fetched back again.

Jacko had a grateful little heart, she was not big and strong, but she did all she could to shew that she loved those who fed her and cared for her. She was a good little house dog and barked well to give warning when any one came near by day or by night. And if a strange workman came into the house she kept close to his heels ready to bite him if he did anything wrong. And she never let a stray cat come into the garden if she could help it; they did not even like to sit on the top of the high garden wall when Jacko was barking furiously down below.

Little children are not big or strong either, but there are lots of ways in which they can shew mother and father that they love them. And there are ways, too, in which they can shew that they love the good God who gave them their parents and every good thing that they have.

Jacko was only a dog, she knew who put her dinner on the plate ready for her, and who took her for walks and spoke kindly to her; but she could know nothing of God who made the world, the earth and the sea and the sky, and all the trees, the animals, and the people. She did not even know that He put the sun in the sky, and the moon and the stars.

Little children may know all this and much more, for they may know that God sent His Son, Jesus, into this world to save them. Jesus was the Gift of God, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)





CHAPTER VII.

LOST LULU.

MRS. PETERS was on her way home rather late one evening when she saw that a little brown dog was following her. It was a nice little dog and wanted so badly to go home with her that she did not drive it away. She gave it some supper and kept it all night, and then she took it to the police station and told a policeman that she had found a little dog that somebody must have lost.

The policeman was a big man with a kind heart, but he did not know what to do with the little brown dog, as nobody had been to ask about it, and the lady did not want to keep it.

At last he said, "You had better take it into the town with you and lose it again, perhaps some one will take pity

on the poor little thing and give it a home."

Mrs. Peters took his advice, she left the dog in the town and came back without it. The poor doggie looked for her but could not see her anywhere, it wandered about, but could find no home.

It is a dreadful thing to be lost like this little dog was, but it is much worse to be lost because we have wandered away from God.

The Lord Jesus came into this world to save that which was lost. He saw that men and women and children were like lost sheep, and one day He said:

"The Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray."

And then Jesus said, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish," and "little ones" means

little children and those who are like little children.

* * * *

Whether any one was kind to the brown dog and gave it food I cannot tell you, but two or three days afterwards Mrs. Peters' servant went into the town on an errand, and she was very much surprised when this same little brown doggie ran up to her, wagging its tail and saying as plainly as a little dog could say, "I am so very, very glad to see you, and I am going home with you."

Mrs. Peters' house was quite close to where Jacko was living with grannie and Miss Ettie and Brother Jack. Grannie had another daughter, Mrs. Kitty, whose home was in the country a few miles away, and Mrs. Kitty was wanting a sharp little dog to bark at night if any one came near the house who had no business to be there. So Miss Ettie wrote to her sister and told her all about the little brown dog, and then she took it in the train for her to look at.

When Mrs. Kitty saw it she said, "What a dear little dog, I like it very

much." And as they walked up from the station she chose a name for it, and the name was Lulu.

Mrs. Kitty already had a big dog with a lovely long coat all golden and white, and a ruff round her neck, whose name was Nelly. Nelly had a big mouth and a very big bark, and in the daytime she took good care of the house and garden, but she did not bark at night, she thought that all good doggies ought to keep quiet and let their masters and mistresses sleep. That is why Mrs. Kitty needed a little dog to bark at night.

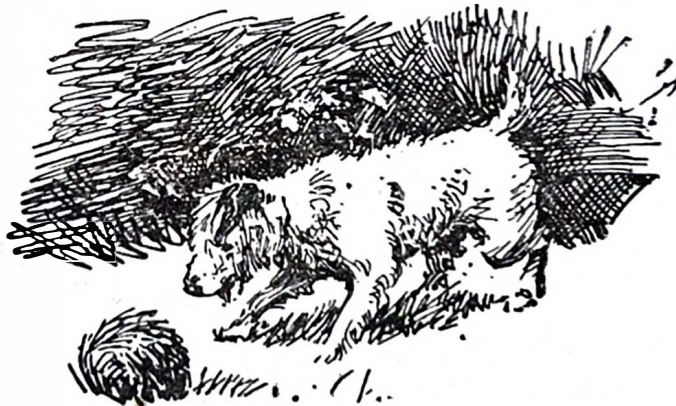
Nelly and Lulu were soon good friends, they scampered together through the fields and lanes, and although Lulu was a great tease and loved to catch hold of one of Nelly's ears as they ran along, Nelly hardly ever lost her temper.

But Lulu was not nearly so good a dog as Nelly, and she taught her to go rabbiting, which was a very naughty thing to do. Mrs. Kitty might call, "Nelly, Nelly!" "Lulu, Lulu!" but they were soon across one field, and then another, and beyond the sound of her voice. It was not often that Nelly did this, but Lulu often went by herself, and never learnt to leave the bunnies alone.

When she first went to live in the country she liked to chase the hens, and play with the smooth white eggs she found in their nests. The skin round her mouth was very loose and soft, and she could take up an egg in it, and throw it in the air and play with it very cleverly; but this was a trick that had to be stopped.

Taylor, the man who did the garden and looked after the pony, caught Lulu just as she was fetching an egg to play at ball with, so he whipped her well and called her a naughty dog.

Lulu did not forget this; she *almost* forgot one day and went part way up the steps that led to the loft where the hens were, but then she remem-



bered her whipping, stopped to think, turned and came down again.

One of the things Lulu liked doing very much indeed was going out with the pony carriage. She loved old Taylor, the man who tried so hard to make a

good dog of her, and she loved her mistress, and she was fond of Nelly and the pony and the scamper; but alas! she liked fighting too. And when they went for these runs she sometimes met other dogs she was not fond of, and then there was a scrimmage and Nelly joined in, so at last Mrs. Kitty said that when they drove into the town Lulu must be left at home.





CHAPTER VIII.

THE STUFFED BROWN RABBIT.

EVEN before Jacko went to live in the country she had two adventures with bunny rabbits. The first one was when Baby Valentine came to stay with grannie and brought with him a stuffed brown rabbit. Jacko was not very fond of babies, and she very much disliked the stuffed brown rabbit.

At last she got her chance of letting that stuffed rabbit know what very bad feelings she had towards it, for they were left in the room together. When Miss Ettie came back a little while after, a shocking sight met her gaze. At first she hardly knew what had happened,

there was such a litter on the floor, but



when she stooped down and looked closer she found all that was left of the stuffed brown rabbit.

Its coat was all tattered and torn, and a great deal of what had once been inside it was outside.

How surprised Jacko must have been when she saw the stuffed brown rabbit once more in Baby Valentine's hands, with the stuffing inside again and the rents stitched up. In spite of all her biting and scratching and pulling and shaking, Jacko had not got rid of the stuffed brown rabbit.

The other adventure was with Pepperpot, a real live black and white rabbit that belonged to a little girl named Joyce.

Pepperpot was a very different sort of rabbit to the stuffed brown one, he could kick so hard with his hind feet that cats were afraid to come near him, especially when they saw the length of his claws. And he could shut his eyes and lie quite still when he was told to die. Altogether he was so clever and

behaved so well, that he was allowed to run about the house as well as the garden.

One day Miss Ettie went to have tea with Joyce's mother, and Jacko went too. Jacko lay still while they drank their tea, and behaved quite prettily until she saw, oh ! such a big black and white rabbit come walking into the room. Then up sprang Jacko, and out of the room, and up the stairs after poor Pepperpot running for his life. After Jacko went Joyce's mother, and behind Joyce's mother came Miss Ettie, nearly tumbling over one another in their hurry. But Pepperpot was the quickest of all, and Jacko was caught, and nothing dreadful happened after all.

Not very long after this grannie went to live with her daughter, Mrs. Kitty ; she took Jacko with her, and after a time Miss Ettie came to live with Mrs. Kitty too. Brother Jack had married a wife and he stayed on in the old home.

When Lulu saw Jacko she ran up to her and asked her to have a game, but Jacko was feeling bad-tempered, and snarled, and did not want to play. Afterwards when they were more used to each other they often ran off together,

and Lulu taught Jacko where to go to find the wild bunnies in the fields. When they came home again they were all hot and tired and panting for breath, and sometimes they were covered with mud.



Lulu never touched the tame rabbits that lived in the orchard, she knew that they must be taken care of, but once when she was there with Mrs. Kitty she caught sight of a wild one that had got inside the wire-netting, and away she went after it. And I think we remember that Mrs. Kitty had rabbit for dinner very soon afterwards, and Lulu and Jacko enjoyed their share of it.





CHAPTER IX.

A VISIT TO FRANCE.

BEFORE Miss Ettie went to live with grannie at Mrs. Kitty's house she paid a visit to France.

The journey was very long, it took all day and all night, but she reached the end of it at last when it was very early in the morning, and was met at the station by an American lady who was governess at the pension where she was going to stay.

Mademoiselle, the lady who kept the pension, was waiting to welcome her at home ; she was a very tiny little person who could talk very fast indeed, and of course she talked in French.

There were about twenty schoolgirls

in her pension, their homes were away in the country, so they stayed with mademoiselle in term time, and every day the governess took them to school and fetched them back when school was over. They did not have meals with mademoiselle and Miss Ettie, but had a large room to themselves where the governess sat with them.

When one of the girls had a birthday, there was always something special provided for a treat; sometimes it was a huge flat gingerbread made in the form of a man or a fish or an animal, and then they were very pleased and thanked mademoiselle for her kindness.

At the back of mademoiselle's tall house there was a pleasant garden with trees and flowers, where the children played, and on wash days the clothes were washed there in two large tanks of water.

Beyond mademoiselle's garden was another garden, and beyond that again another, with a house in it where a little old gentleman lived with his housekeeper. The old gentleman was English, and Miss Ettie often went in to have a talk with him; sometimes she went in the morning, but often he would ask

her to come and have a cup of English tea in the afternoon, and then she poured the tea out of a little white teapot and they enjoyed it together.

He told her a story one day about himself when he was a lad. He was a cadet at that time, and in the barracks there were some men and boys who used to meet together to pray to God and sing His praises.

In those days the little old gentleman himself did not love God, and one night he put out all the lights in the barracks in order to stop these men from holding their meeting.

Only a few nights after that, it might be the very next night, God spoke to him. God did not speak to him in words, for He has many ways of speaking to men ; but in the night he woke up feeling very strange, so strange, that he wondered if he were going to die.

“I had better get out of bed and say a prayer,” he thought to himself ; so he got out of bed and knelt down, and tried to say the only prayer he could remember, the one beginning, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” But that did not seem to help him very much, for the words which the Lord taught

His disciples when He was with them, were not suited to his need.

God saw him kneeling there and knew he wanted to pray though he could not find the words to pray in, and He did not let him die there in the night.

The next day he asked a boy whom he knew to be a Christian what he should do. This boy must have been, oh! so glad to think that his friend wanted to be saved, and he did all he could to help him. I wonder if *you* could tell another boy how to be saved if he were troubled about his soul and asked you for help. Would you say to him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"? Have you yourself come to Him and let Him save you?

Miss Ettie did not learn whether this boy said these words to his friend or not, but he took him to the prayer meeting, and very soon he did believe on the Lord Jesus, and he was saved.



WARWICK
REYNOLDS

All that happened many years ago, but the old gentleman had never forgotten the night when God spoke to him in

his youth, and since that time he had been used by God to tell many others what they must do to be saved.

At last the time came for Miss Ettie to return to England; the very last day had come, she had said good-bye to most of her friends, her trunk was packed, arrangements were all made and she was out for a last walk, when she noticed a poor dog that had lost one of its front paws in an accident. It was walking along on three legs and looking very wretched indeed. The sight of it filled her with horror, it looked so dreadful. And then to her dismay she found the poor dog was following her, and it followed her all the way back to made-moiselle's garden gate.

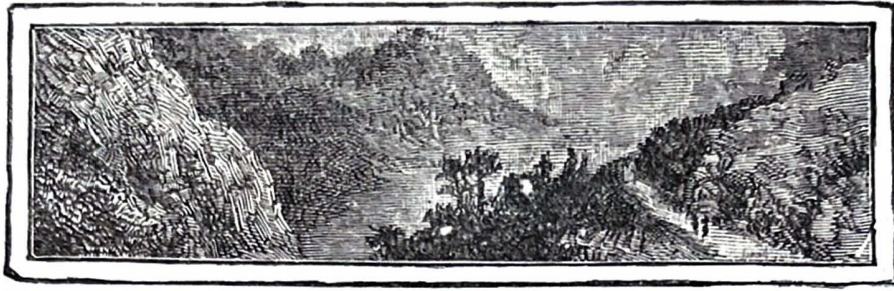
What could she do? she had no home of her own to take it to, and she did not know what to do for it. She tried to drive it away and shut the gate, hoping that some one else would take pity on the poor beast and help it.

But though Miss Ettie shut the dog outside she could not forget it and its misery, not even when she was miles and miles away and back in England.

And just about two years afterwards when she went to France again, she had

only been there a very short time when one day in the street she heard a voice calling "Quiqui!" and there was the old gentleman's housekeeper with a plate of bones, and a little way off was the poor three-footed doggie coming for his dinner! Some one had taken pity on him in his need, and not one person only, for ever so many people gave Quiqui food, and he was well cared for, though Miss Ettie never found out which of his friends he belonged to. And he looked so happy and contented that, excepting for his lame leg, she would not have known him for the poor miserable dog that had once so plainly asked her for the help she did not give.





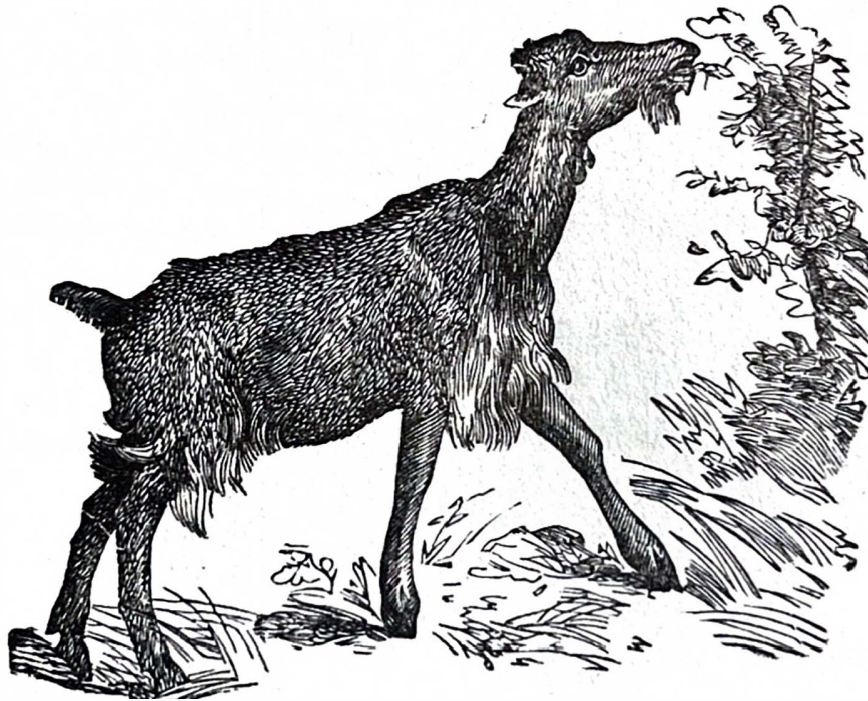
CHAPTER X.

NANNY THE GOAT.

ONE day a man came into Mrs. Kitty's garden ; he brought some planks of wood with him and started to build a shed. It was not in front of the house, but somewhere at the back not far from the old pig-sty. He put a roof on it, and a shelf inside, high up at one end, and a little window opposite that could open and shut, and he made a door in two pieces, so that the bottom half could be shut and the top left open, both at the same time. And if you had gone that way soon afterwards you might have seen a little white goat looking out of the top half of the door.

Nanny knew quite well that the hay put in the rack on the wall was for her

to eat, she would have liked to get at that stored away on the shelf too, but there was a board in front of it and she could not reach, not even by standing on her hind legs and lifting her front ones right off the ground.



Nanny did not always live in the shed, she sometimes spent the day in an orchard where there was plenty of grass all around her ; but even here she could not wander about as she liked because of the long chain fastened to her collar and fixed to a strong iron peg driven deep into the ground. It was only when she

was turned out into the farmyard, and when she went for walks with Nelly and Lulu and Jacko, that she was quite free to skip and jump about.

Not far from where Mrs. Kitty lived was a cottage with an old woman living in it, and Nanny once paid this old woman a surprise visit. The cottage door stood open and she walked right in without even knocking; but old Mrs. Gallimore did not mind, she was fond of animals, and even when it was war-time and food was scarce, she gave the little wild birds some of her bread.

Nanny liked to nibble the green leaves that grew in the hedgerows, they made a nice change from the hay and grass she had at home, and she found all sorts of dainty things there. When she was allowed to run loose she had time to look at them and smell them and make quite sure they were good for food before she ate them, and she never touched the foxglove leaves.

But Nanny's mistress once heard a sad story about another little goat which saw some green leaves in the hedgerow as it was being led along, and without having time to really look at them, it made a snatch with its mouth

and ate them. The leaves were poisonous, and the goat became dreadfully ill, and after a great deal of pain it died.

At first Nelly, Mrs. Kitty's big collie dog, did not know just what to think of the strange white animal that went out with them for their walks. When Nanny stopped to browse by the roadside Nelly treated her as though she were a sheep, and barked at her heels to try to hurry her up and make her keep with the rest of the party. But barking at a goat will never turn it into a sheep, and Nelly found this out, for Nanny turned round very quickly, and though she had no horns, she pranced about and butted with her head in such a threatening way that Nelly was frightened. She did not like to run away, because she was a big dog, but she learnt that it was best to leave Nanny alone.

After a time a kid came for Nanny to play with, he was Nanny's son, and his name was Billy. He could skip into the air and turn somersaults and do all sorts of funny things with his springy little body.

One day when he was out for a walk with Nanny, they met a tall farmer

who was walking up the hill with his little boy, and this little boy was called Billy too. They stopped to look at Billy the kid, and when Miss Ettie said that she wanted to find a home for him, and Billy-the-boy's father asked him if he would like to have Billy the kid for a pet, you can think how delighted he was. And very soon after that Billy the kid went to live at the bottom of the hill and belonged to Billy the boy.

It was some time after Billy went that Nanny wandered away from home. She was turned out into a large yard where she could see the farmers go past with their carts, and frisk about and enjoy herself, and when she felt hungry she could go into a little field at the back of the house and get something to eat. But would you believe it? she was not satisfied to stay there, and when the time came for her to be shut up in her little stable she was nowhere to be found.

Mrs. Kitty and Miss Ettie looked up the road and down the road and across the fields, but not a trace of her could they see, and for several days no one knew what had become of naughty Nanny.

And then one evening after it was dark, a man came to the garden gate and asked if any one had lost a little white goat, because he had found one; and after that Nanny was soon safely back in her old quarters, and she never wandered away again.





CHAPTER XI.

MOTHER MOLLY AND THE BABY BUNNIES.

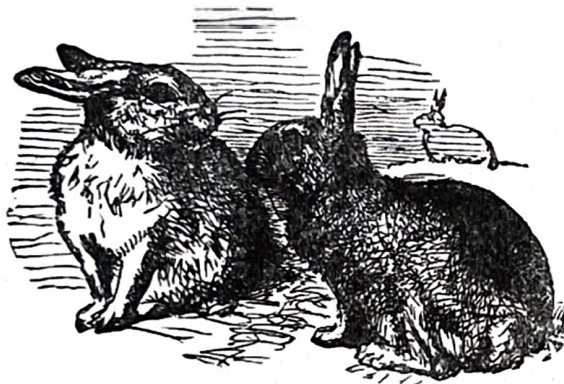
SIX little black and white bunnies in a basket carried on a bicycle, that was how they travelled home.

How pretty they were ! and although they all had long ears and round eyes, not two of them were alike.

They were put into a hutch and given plenty to eat, and yet in a few days' time one of them was dead. And then, one by one they sickened and left off eating, and at last lay down and died—all but one, and that one lived and grew until she was a full-grown mother bunny, and her name was Molly.

Molly's house had two rooms, the small room was for her and her baby bunnies to sleep in, and the large one

was their dining-room. They had no table or table-cloth, but their food was put in a large saucer on the floor, and they all sat round it in a circle and fed themselves without any spoons. The



baby bunnies had no bibs, but as they grew older they wore big white collars.

The collars were made of stiff card-

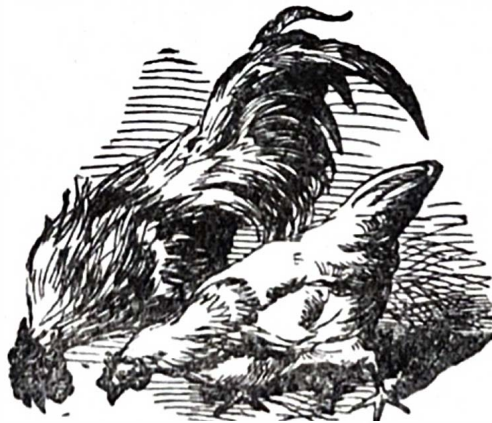
board and all the little rabbits wore them when they were let out of their hutches to play in the orchard and eat the nice green grass. Round the orchard there was wire netting, which they tried hard to squeeze through, but the collars were too big to go through the holes of the wire netting and the bunnies had to pull their heads back again and stay where they were.

One of them was very naughty, he saw some delicious green stuff in a garden the other side of the wire, and then found a hole big enough to get through, and out he went. But bunny did not stay there very long, for he was

caught and brought back again in disgrace.

Another of the bunnies was naughtier still, for he would not wear his collar, every time it was put on he managed to get it off. He was a clever little rabbit, but it is better to be good than clever, and if he had not very soon grown too big to get through the wire, something very dreadful might have happened to him.

There were hens living in the orchard where the rabbits ran about, and they thought the rabbits were funny looking creatures, with four legs instead of two, and fur instead of feathers—so very different from hens. They flew off the ground and tried to frighten them away by fluffing out their feathers and looking fierce, but the bunnies did not mind their looks and took very little notice of them.



Every evening before it was dark the little rabbits had a lovely game of "Catch-as-catch-can," for Miss Ettie put them all back in the hutches for the

night, and first she had to catch them. Sometimes one or two went home of their own accord, but most of them thought it great fun to sit on their hind legs waiting till she came close up to them, and then with a hop, skip, and a jump, off they went to wait for her somewhere else. But in the end they were always caught and shut safely in.

Ah! but I must not say *always*, for one evening, though Miss Ettie searched up and down the orchard and everywhere she could think of, and Mrs. Kitty searched too, two of the baby bunnies were missing. Where could they be? Had they hidden in a hollow among the grass? Were they behind the fowl-house or under one of the hutches? Or had they escaped from the orchard and skipped far away into the fields and woods?

At last it seemed hopeless to look for them any longer, so the hutch was shut with the two little rabbits left outside. Then the dark night came, and with it dangers they had never dreamed of. Those two little rabbits were found at last under the hutch, so near to safety, and yet because they were outside and not inside, they perished.

If you cannot read yourself, ask father or mother to read to you from the Bible about Noah and the ark that God told him to build. When it was finished Noah and his family and two of each kind of the animals went inside, and the LORD shut the door. Shem, Ham and Japhet were Noah's sons, they and their father and mother, and the animals with them, were quite safe inside the ark, but all who were left outside perished in the flood which God sent upon the earth to punish the wicked people.

God has promised that He will never again destroy the world by a flood, but He has told us that He will one day burn it up with fire ; the world and all the works that are in it will be burnt up. But God has given an Ark that we may flee to, and the door still stands wide open. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Ark, and even little children like you Harry, and you Mary, may come to Jesus and be quite safe. Do you think anything could hurt a little child who is safe in the arms of Jesus ? Oh, no !

“ Safe in Christ, the weakest child,
Stands in all God's favour ;
All in Christ are reconciled,
Through that only Saviour.

Safe in Christ ! safe in Christ !
He's their glory ever ;
None can pluck them from His hand,
They shall perish *never*."

" Behold, now is the accepted time ;
behold, now is the day of salvation."
(2 Cor. vi. 2.)





CHAPTER XII.

THE SOLDIER'S STICK.

THERE were no boys and girls at the house on the hill where Mrs. Kitty lived, but sometimes little Margaret came over to spend an afternoon there.

She went into the orchard with Auntie Kitty to see the cocks and hens and scatter corn for them, and she visited the bunnies and the nanny goat, and ran about in the garden.

After tea she sat in the drawing-room with father and mother and the aunties, and played at weighing parcels with the little scales that Auntie Ettie

used for her letters. Jacko did not mind her doing that, but when she saw Margaret sitting on her auntie's lap she was so jealous that she wanted to bite her. Was not Jacko a silly little dog?

And sometimes Auntie Kitty invited Harry to come and stay with her.

Then the pony carriage was got ready while Auntie Kitty cut sandwiches and packed up cake, and off they went for a picnic—Auntie Kitty, Harry's father, Harry's mother, and Harry himself—the pony carriage just held the four of them.



Peggy, the pony, must have been very glad it did not hold five. She was rather old and very fat; there was not much room to spare between Peggy and

the shafts, and if she had gone on getting fatter there is no knowing what might have happened.

Peggy never ran away, excepting once when a lot of ladies, and gentlemen in bright red coats, all mounted on horseback, came galloping near the field she was in, and Peggy forgot that she was

old, and away she went after them ; but she had no pony carriage behind her that time.

Peggy liked Mrs. Kitty to do the driving and have charge of the whip ; then she went very slowly, and whenever there was a hill in front of her, which was very often, she stopped so that some one might say, " I will walk up the hill." She knew quite well when Harry's father held the reins, for she looked round to see before they started, and then she went at her best pace and did not stop so often ; but before they got home again poor Peggy was very tired.

Auntie Ettie found a nice little cane on the road one day when she was out for a walk, not the kind they beat bad boys with at school, but the sort soldiers carry about with them. It would have been more useful to her if it had been a stick with a crook at the top for pulling down blackberry brambles, but she picked it up and took it home with her.

Harry liked that little stick very much, so Auntie Ettie promised that he should have it as soon as he learnt not to frighten the dogs with it.

Harry was not a cruel boy, he was only rather thoughtless, but thoughtlessness and cruelty sometimes look so much alike that little creatures like Lulu and Jacko could not tell the difference, and they felt safer when Harry had no stick in his hands.

A really kind-hearted boy soon learns to be thoughtful for the feelings of others and for the comfort of dumb animals, and we read in God's word that "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." (Prov. xii. 10.)

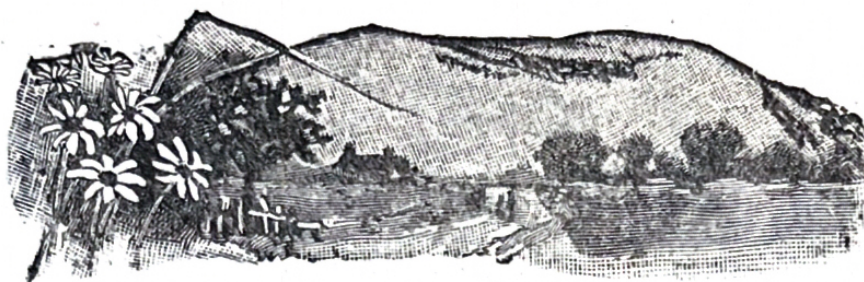
One morning, some time after Harry had gone home again, the postman brought a letter to the house on the hill, it was from Harry. The writing was crooked and the spelling was queer, but in it he told his aunties that mother said she thought he might have the little stick now, and they were very pleased to hear it.

Soon afterwards Harry received a long thin parcel, inside it was the soldier's cane, and we hope that he never, never used it to beat the dog with.

The cane that Harry was so pleased to have was not a very big present for his auntie to give him, and yet she was anxious he should use it in a right way.

God has given us hands to work with and feet to run with, minds to think with, lips to speak with, and hearts to love with. He has given us so many gifts that we could not possibly count them all, but perhaps now that you have been reminded of a few of them you can think of others. It is a good thing to ask ourselves sometimes whether we always use God's gifts in a way that pleases Him.





CHAPTER XIII.

ROGER AND PEGGOTY FIG.

IT was war-time and food was getting scarce, and Mrs Kitty and her sister Miss Ettie had been casting about in their minds as to what they could do to help.

And this is what they said: "We will buy two little pigs and give them all the waste green stuff out of the garden, and all the scraps that won't do for anything else. Of course we shall have to buy meal for them, but they will soon grow into nice fat pigs, and then we will send them to market."

The first thing to do was to examine the old pig-sty. It had not been used for many years and the yard was full of cinders, for Martha the maid emptied

the ashes there. All that had to be cleared away, and then a man was sent for to mend the holes in the roof of the little house, and the whole place was made clean and tidy. Fresh straw was laid inside on the floor and a nice little trough placed in the yard, and everything was ready for the little pigs when they arrived.

It was on a Friday they came, and it was Joe who brought them from the market in a cart. They squealed quite a lot before they were comfortably settled in their new home.

Mrs. Kitty and Miss Ettie were out when they arrived, but when they returned they made haste to go round to the pig-sty.

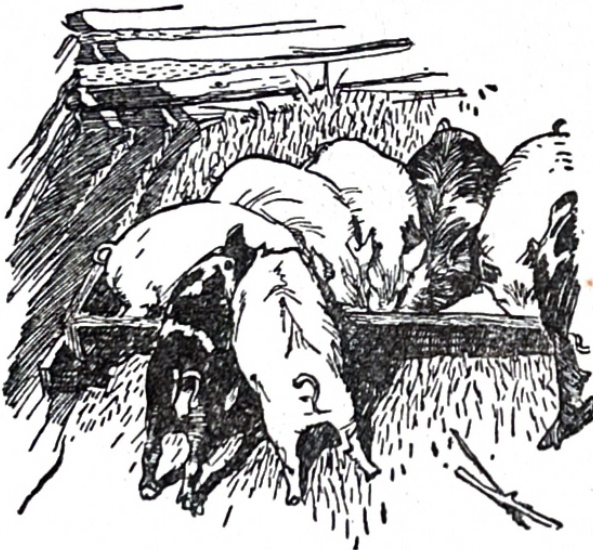
"This one shall be mine, I will call him Roger," said Mrs. Kitty.

"And mine shall be called Peggoty," said her sister.

They looked such nice friendly little pigs that even Miss Ettie did not feel afraid to go inside the yard with pailfuls of food to empty into their trough. But oh ! they had such greedy, guzzling ways ; Roger thought nothing of planting his dirty feet right inside the feeding trough, and Peggoty was just as bad.

And they were so rough and rude that they almost knocked the lady over in their eagerness to get at the pail she carried.

No matter what the weather was like those little pigs were always ready for their food; sometimes it was wet, and sometimes there was snow on the ground, but they never forgot to squeal when meal-times came round.



One day they were kept waiting a few minutes because Miss Ettie tumbled down on the slippery snow, and upset their pail. She had to pick herself up, and pick up the pail, and

fetch a fresh lot of food for them before they could have it.

All sorts of things went into that pail, the outside leaves of cabbages, roots, nettles, potato peels—when there were any—dish-washings, all were boiled down together and mixed with the meal the pigs delighted to swallow.

You would think they must have been terribly hungry to enjoy such food, and yet there was a poor man once who was much hungrier than they were, for he longed to eat the husks that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

Roger and Peggoty lived in a nice sty, and after all it was not very unpleasant work feeding them, but the young man who was so dreadfully hungry, hated feeding pigs. He had once lived at home with his father and had plenty to eat, and nice clothes to wear; but he left his father and went far away from home, and now he was ragged and miserable and starving.

You can read all about him in the fifteenth chapter of Luke's gospel, beginning at the eleventh verse. When you have read it once I hope you will want to read it again, because it tells of the loving welcome his father gave him when he came home again.

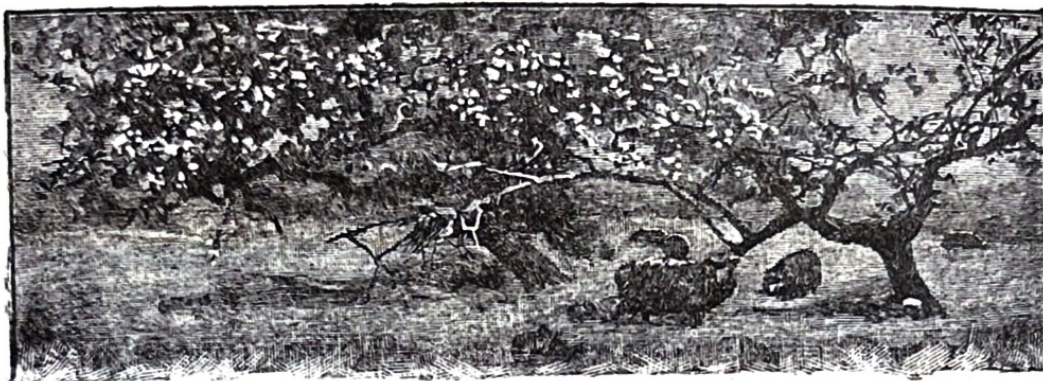
The story I am telling you about Roger and Peggoty is a real one because it happened; but this story in the Bible is true in a very different way. It is a story to hide away in your heart and keep there all your life, and it is only God's Holy Spirit who can make

you understand it, for it has a heavenly meaning.

One day Roger and Peggoty were missing; they had gone for a walk all by themselves, and nobody knew where they had gone, until after dinner Mrs. Kitty went to the top of one hill and down another to visit some friends. And there, at the bottom of the hill, she found them. They were very pleased to see her and were soon trotting along after her towards the friend's house. It was a good thing Joe came along just then looking for them, or they might have wanted to go in with her at the front door.

Well, Roger and Peggoty went on growing and growing, until you would not have known them for the two little pigs that came home from market in Joe's cart. At last they got so big and ate so much that Mrs. Kitty said, "It is time those pigs went to market again."

And so once more the cart was brought to the garden gate, but you should have heard the dreadful squeals those two big pigs gave as they were pushed into it! Then Joe drove away, down the hill, and round the corner right out of sight. And that was the last Mrs. Kitty and Miss Ettie saw of Roger and Peggoty pig.



CHAPTER XIV.

A GREAT SNOWSTORM.

MRS. KITTY'S cocks and hens had to go without breakfast one morning, for it snowed and snowed until the ground was all covered up, and then it kept on snowing until the white covering was so deep that Mrs. Kitty could not get from the house to the orchard, and Joe could not come from his home to help her.

The trees were all white as well as the ground, and the boughs and branches were so heavy laden with snow that they

bent down over the garden paths and showered the cold, cold snow on Mrs. Kitty and Miss Ettie as they set to work with shovel and spade to dig out a path.

When they reached the orchard they had to clear a space where the poor hungry fowls could stand to have their lunch, for by that time it was long past the hour for breakfast. But before the hard work was quite finished Joe came, and Mrs. Kitty and her sister were very glad to give up the spade and shovel to him.

Yes, the snow lay very deep that year round Mrs. Kitty's home, but further among the hills it was deeper still, and people had to dig a tunnel through it for the horses and carts to pass along.

All the snow had fallen in tiny flakes from the clouds; little feathery flakes falling so silently that no one heard them come, though every time the snow comes down it brings a message from heaven, a message from God Himself. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (Isa. i. 18.) Each little snowflake carries part of the message, but it takes very many of them to cover the earth and make it white.

King David was very unhappy once, he had done a wicked thing and he knew that it was sin against God. He loved God, and was very, very sorry when he thought he had grieved Him by sinning against Him. David knew that sin makes our hearts dark and black in God's sight, and so he prayed: "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Psa. li. 7.) God heard David's prayer, and He looked on to the time when Jesus should die on the cross and shed His blood to put away David's sin, and He washed David and made him whiter than snow.

Even little children need to be washed and made clean in the blood of Jesus; but God never forgets His promise, and all who pray David's prayer are heard and forgiven.

The thunder has a voice as well as the snow, but it has a very loud voice that every one must listen to.

Even Nelly and Jacko and Lulu heard when it thundered, and Nelly was very much frightened by it. She ran upstairs and jumped on grannie's bed, because that was the safest place she could think of. Grannie did not want her there at all, so poor Nelly was fetched

downstairs again, but she was dreadfully scared.

The thunder tells of God's majesty ; it is the God of glory who thunders.

Do you remember the surname that Jesus gave to James and John ? He called them Boanerges, which means "Sons of thunder." Many years after the Lord Jesus went back to heaven, John was sent to live on a lonely island called Patmos ; he was sent there by wicked men because he spoke about Jesus. While he was on this island he had a wonderful vision in which he was taken up to heaven and shewn things there, and the first thing he saw in heaven was the throne of God. (Rev. iv. 2.)

The throne of God is very dreadful to those who do not know Him, for God's throne is a throne of righteousness and a throne of judgment ; He will not let the wicked go unpunished, and out of the throne go forth lightnings and thunders and voices.

But those who have been washed in the blood of Jesus need have no fear of judgment, because Jesus, the Lamb of God, bore the judgment they deserved, when He died on the cross for sinners,

and He has clothed His blood-bought,
blood-washed saints in the robe of righteousness.

“ Around the throne of God in heaven
Thousands of children stand ;
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band,
Singing glory, glory, glory.

“ Because the Saviour shed His blood
To wash away their sin ;
Bathed in that pure and precious flood,
Behold them white and clean,
Singing glory, glory, glory.”





CHAPTER XV.

THE LITTLE STRANGER.

WHAT is Lulu carrying upstairs so carefully in that soft little mouth of hers ?

It is a dear wild baby bunny which she has found in the fields or in the garden. Perhaps she thinks it is one that belongs to Miss Ettie and she has brought it for her to see. Good little Lulu !

And now, what shall we give the baby bunny to eat ? and how shall we keep it warm ?

The best thing will be to give it to Molly to bring up with her own babies. She is such a nice kind mother bunny that we hope she will let the new baby

have its share of milk with the others. But if Molly *knows* that there is a strange baby in the hutch she may be very cross, so we must try to put it in without her knowing.

And then Miss Ettie took the poor frightened little thing up the orchard and opened the door of Molly's hutch. She gave Molly a nice feed of green stuff, and while she was busy eating it Miss Ettie took some of the hay from the bottom of the hutch and rubbed the baby bunny with it, and then she put it in the hutch among the other little bunnies.

Soon Molly looked round, she came and sniffed at the little stranger and a look came into her eyes that seemed to say, "That baby does not smell *quite* like one of mine." But Miss Ettie made haste to put something very nice just under Molly's nose, and she stopped to eat it, and forgot the baby with the strange smell.

But though Molly let it stay, it did not thrive, for Molly's babies were strong and they pushed the little wild rabbit out of the way when they were hungry. And it, poor little thing, was shy and frightened, and did not ask Molly to

feed it like the other babies used to, so it did not get enough to eat and soon pined away and died.

Molly was only a bunny and her babies were only bunnies, they could not know that those that are strong ought to care for and protect the weak ones. I wonder how many of the boys and girls who read this story know where to find the text that says, "Be ye kind one to another" ?





CHAPTER XVI.

BUSY BEES.

A STING on her nose ! that is what Miss Ettie got the first time she looked inside the hives.

She went indoors and some one took out the sting, and she had a good laugh because the little bee had chosen such a funny place to sting her.

Mrs. Kitty was already indoors, a bee had found itself caught in her hair, so the sting she had was on her head.

They had been having their first lesson in bee-keeping that afternoon ; some of it they forgot, but they always remembered that when you want to look inside a bee-hive it is safer to wear a veil.

When Frankie came to have his first lesson they wrapped him up well, so well that his own mother might have had to look twice before she found out who he was. But though his face was all covered up with a veil he could see



quite well, and when the top of the hive was taken off and the coverings inside it were turned back, one of the combs was lifted right out for him to look at.

You must not think it was anything like the comb that is used for combing

your hair, for the combs in a hive are quite different from that. Next time you pass the shop window of a dairy, look in and see if there are any little square boxes there filled with honeycomb, and that will help you to understand what the combs in a hive are like, although they are not the same shape.

When bees are put into an empty hive they make the whole of the combs themselves, fastening them to the roof of their home, from which they hang down one behind another; but the one that Frankie saw was a little different, for the bees had been given sheets of wax all ready to build on. Each sheet was fixed in a wooden frame and hung up in the hive, and the bees had built the walls of their little cells on both sides of the sheet, using it as a foundation. It was quite easy to lift the comb out of the hive because the top bar of the frame was so long that the ends could be used as handles.

There were hundreds and hundreds of bees at work on the combs. Some of them had been fetching pollen from the flowers for making into bee bread, and it was easy to tell which these were because of the bright coloured bundles

of red or yellow they carried in the little baskets on their legs.

There were tiny eggs at the bottom of some of the cells, and in others were little grubs which would grow bigger and bigger and in time turn into bees. The nurse bees were busy feeding the little grubs, while others were storing away the honey that had been brought in, or sealing over the cells that were full, with wax.

Such a mass of busy workers Frankie had never seen before, and when he had had a good look at them the comb was put back in the hive, and the covers over the comb, and the lid on the top, and Frankie took off his veil and went home to tell what he had seen.

If all the combs had been lifted out Frankie's sharp eyes might have found out one bee that was different from the rest. She had a long slim body and short wings, and she was the queen of the hive.

The queen bee never goes out to gather honey like the worker bees, but she is not idle. She goes from cell to cell finding out the empty ones; when she finds an empty one she puts a little egg in it, and there are so many cells

to be visited that she leads a very busy life.

Some of the combs are full of honey, and if you take one in your hands, holding it very carefully by the two ends, you will be surprised to find how heavy it is. And now that we have shaken the bees off it, and carried it into the house, let us take a little piece and taste it. Oh ! how sweet it is, so sweet that we want some more of it.

The Lord Jesus once took a piece of honeycomb and ate it. It was the day that He rose from the dead, and He ate it to shew His disciples that it was really Himself and not a spirit that had come into their midst.

The disciples had seen Jesus nailed to the cross, they had seen the wounds the nails made in His hands and feet, and they knew that He had died.

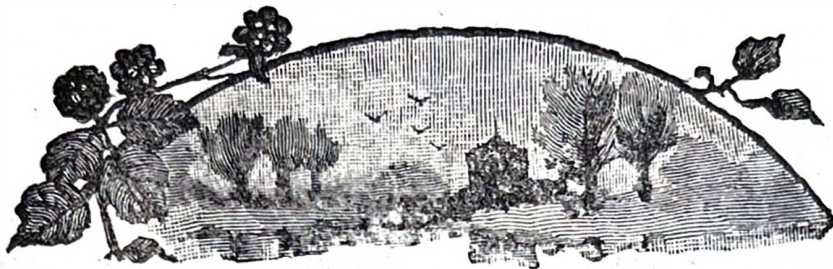
Jesus died for our sins, He shed His precious blood for us and bore the punishment we deserved. He was buried, and then after three days He rose again from the dead.

On the first day of the week, that very same day that He rose from the dead, the disciples were gathered together, and "Jesus himself stood in

the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them." (Luke xxiv.)

And then the disciples knew that it was Jesus Himself who had come to them.





CHAPTER XVII.

POTIFA AND PINNA.

“**C**OME, dickies ! breakfast is ready, it is on the roo-oof.” This is what little Doreen calls out to the birds when she throws the crumbs out of the dining-room window. She lives in an upstairs flat and that is why they fall on to a roof.

All the dickies are invited, father sparrows and mother sparrows and baby sparrows, Mr. Blackbird and Mrs. Brown his wife, shiny starlings and speckled thrushes, pretty blue and yellow tits, and dear little robin redbreasts ; but how many come I cannot tell you. I only know that Doreen calls them for breakfast, and sometimes for dinner.

Big grey and white seagulls fly overhead, but they never stop to visit Doreen, they are on their way to the place where the rubbish carts are emptied, to feed there; every morning they go, and toward evening they fly back to the rocks.

There are owls too in the trees not far away; if Doreen were to listen she might hear them hooting sometimes at night after she is in bed, but in the daytime they are asleep; besides, owls do not care for crumbs, they catch mice and sparrows and other little live things and gobble them up.

One afternoon when Doreen went into



the garden she found a very strange looking creature there. It was not much bigger than her two hands put side by side, but it had the queerest head and legs she had ever seen, and all the rest of it was hidden away inside a thick

shell.

“Oh! mummy,” she called out,

“there’s such a big crab on the rockery. Mummy, mummy ! come and look.”

And when Miss Ettie, who was living in the house beyond the garden hedge, heard Doreen calling to her mother, she knew the little girl had found Pinna, the tortoise, that had gone exploring to see what some one else’s garden was like. Doreen was sorry to part with this new pet which did not run away from her and seemed so tame ; but Miss Ettie was glad to have Pinna safely at home again.

Whether Potifa, who was Mr. Tortoise, was glad too, we do not know, but we think he was. Pinna herself was not at all pleased to be lifted off the ground and carried home, and she said so. Oh, no ! not in words, but in the way she behaved.

Potifa and Pinna went upstairs one day to visit a lady who was sick ; they were carried in a basket, and the invalid looked at them and touched them and admired them, but Pinna wanted to explore the room and tried to climb out of the basket.

They are both fond of clover, Pinna likes the leaves and Potifa likes the flowers as well ; he eats pansies too,

and is often creeping about in the bed where they grow.

As soon as the sun begins to go down Mr. and Mrs. Tortoise shelter under the leaves, and when it is wet and cold they stay there all day as well as all night. They have not always lived in England, they came from a land far away over the sea where it is warm and sunny.

And what will Potifa and Pinna do when winter comes? If they are wise little tortoises they will choose a sheltered spot and burrow down into the ground until they are quite buried, and there they will stay fast asleep, with plenty of earth on their backs instead of blankets, to keep them warm until spring comes. Then some fine day when the sun has warmed the air and the earth, they will come up out of the ground, a little thin perhaps because they have had nothing to eat for so long, but just the same Potifa and Pinna that went down.

When people die and are buried they are not asleep in the same way that Potifa and Pinna go to sleep for the winter and wake up again in the spring, for when any one dies their spirit leaves the body, and the body turns to dust.

And yet, when any one who is trusting in Jesus dies, God's word speaks of it as falling asleep. When you have been running about and are tired, it is very nice if mother puts you to bed and tucks you up and you fall asleep, but it is happier far when Jesus puts any one to sleep, for they wake up with Him.

Even their body will not always stay in the grave, because that too belongs to the Lord Jesus, and He will raise it up a glorious body like His own body of glory.

Since Jesus went back to heaven very many of those who love Him have fallen asleep, perhaps even some one you knew and loved very much—your father or mother or brother or baby sister—but the Apostle Paul wrote about them all in one of his letters. He said: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not

prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. iv.)

